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THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY OF ACTION

By BELA KUN.

DURING the last week three Communist Parties have approached social-democratic parties with the proposal to organise joint activity to save the leader of the German proletariat, Comrade Ernst Thaelmann, from the hands of the fascist executioners. The struggle to save Thaelmann is a struggle to liberate all anti-fascist fighters in Germany, in Austria, and in all countries where fascism is triumphant. Communists have not hesitated for a minute when it has been a question of saving the lives of those anti-fascist fighters who were at one time in the ranks of Austrian social-democracy, or non-party workers, and who undertook a struggle against the oppressors of the working class.

The C.C. of the Communist Party of *France* has proposed to the Administrative Commission of the Socialist Party of France to organise joint demonstrations and protest meetings in a number of the chief industrial centres in the country, especially in those towns where there are consulates of Hitler's government.

The C.C. of the Communist Party of Switzerland has sent a delegation to the chairman of the Social-Democratic party of Switzerland with a similar proposal, namely to organise joint demonstrations against German fascism with a view to saving Thaelmann.

The C.C. of the Communist Party of *Great Britain* has made a proposal in the same spirit to the Labour Party, and to the leading bodies of the reformist trade unions and the Co-operatives.

At a personal interview between the representatives of the Socialist Party of France and the C.P. of France, the social-democrats expressed their agreement with the Communist proposal *on condition that* during the period of joint activity the Communist Party will refrain from *any polemics* against the social-democrats. The representatives of the Communist Party expressed their *readiness to stop* all criticism of the social-democrats during the period of joint activity in every locality where protest demonstrations take place.

The Executive Commission of the Social-Democratic Party of *Switzerland* has sharply rejected the proposal of the Swiss Communist Party. As a characteristic of the unbearable tone of this reply, it is sufficient to give a single extract :

"If the Communist Party of Switzerland calls on us to participate in demonstrations in front of the *German* embassy and consulates, we must demand that the Communist Party of Switzerland should hold demonstrations

in front of the Russian consulates in those countries where it is possible."

It is needless to polemise against such proposals.

Up to the moment when these lines are being penned (June 15, 1934) the leaders of the British Labour Party have not found time enough to reply to the proposal made by the Secretariat of the C.P. of Great Britain.

Such are the facts. We only wish to add a few remarks to these facts. The bourgeoisie, especially the German fascists, correctly estimate the unity of action of the working class as the greatest danger for capitalism. They correctly estimate the personal importance of Comrade Thaelmann and the importance of his defence in the development of the anti-fascist struggle. In connection with the proposal of the C.P. of France to the French social-democrats, one of the leading journals of German big capital, the "Berliner Börzenzeitung," wrote that :

"We here cannot remain indifferent to the fact that in order to 'save Thaelmann' the French Communists are preparing big meetings and street demonstrations in Paris, Rheims, Lille, Strassbourg, Bordeaux, Marseilles and other towns, and have even succeeded in inciting the French social-democrats to participate in this campaign and to form a united front."

For reasons not difficult to understand, the fascist journal attacks the movement to organise the united front of Communist and social-democratic workers. This attack is dictated by the interests of German fascism, and the interests of capitalism in general.

The very fact of such a reaction by Hitlerite fascism to the united front of the international proletariat which is developing against German fascism is sufficient to show that *in proposing to act in unison with the social-democratic parties, the Communist Parties acted correctly.* This step is a correct one, not only because the Communist Parties have made this proposal repeatedly, despite the fact that after Hitler came to power the Second International forbade the social-democratic parties to organise activity jointly with the Communists against Hitlerite fascism. The Second International acted in this way despite the fact that the Communist International, in its manifesto of March 5, 1933, proposed to its sections that they cease attacks on social-democracy during the period of joint activity. The significance of the new proposals made by the Communist Parties to the leading

bodies of the Social Democratic Parties also does not consist only in the fact that Swiss social-democracy has again proved that it prefers class collaboration with the bourgeoisie to the united front with the Communist workers, that the British Labour Party has not even deigned to reply to the proposal for united action, and that the French Socialists have made the joint struggle against fascism dependent on conditions such as imply a violation of working class democracy.

At the present moment, as these lines are being written, we still do not know what decision the Administrative Commission of the Socialist Party of France will arrive at when it hears the report of its representatives who negotiated with the representatives of the Communist Party. We do not know which will prove a stronger influence on the Administrative Commission, the will of the working masses to struggle, of the masses who demand unity of action, or the opposition of Frossard, Dormy and Rivière, who rejected the proposal of the C.P. of France. But irrespective of *what decision* the leaders of French social-democracy may adopt, irrespective of the decision *already adopted* by the leaders of Swiss social-democracy, and of the fact that the leaders of the British Labour Party *keep silent* and hide the matter from their members, *the Communist Parties will unswervingly continue and develop the struggle for the united front of the working class against fascism, against war, and to save Thaelmann.*

However hostile, following the example of the Swiss social-democrats, the reply of the social-democratic leaders may be to the proposal of the Communists to organise a joint united front of struggle, however they may foam at the mouth and declare the struggle against the split in the ranks of the working class to be a Communist manoeuvre, *for us Communists (and we hope for the masses of social-democratic and reformist workers also) the united front of the working class, the unity of action of the proletariat is and will continue to be a great and serious matter, a sacred matter.*

We Communists do not for a minute intend to abandon our political and organisational independence, and the independence of the Communist Party. We do not think it possible to unite the Communist International and the Second International. But we have firmly resolved with all our strength to strive for and to ensure the unity of action of the proletariat in the struggle against their class enemies.

Formerly, many social-democratic workers, members of the reformist trade unions and officers in these organisations did not understand this,

but now, in face of the monstrously growing danger of fascism and war, they are realising more and more that the Communists not only do not represent an obstacle in the path towards the establishment of the unity of the working class, but on the contrary contribute to this unity most of all.

Many social-democratic workers and officials were convinced by the manifesto of the Communist International of March 5, 1933, on the joint struggle against fascism and the capitalist offensive, that *the Communists are ready to make concessions in the interests of establishing the united front of the Communist and social-democratic workers against the bourgeoisie.* We state openly and unreservedly that when we renounce polemics against the social democratic parties and our attacks on their policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, this renunciation during the period of our joint actions against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and imperialist war, is a concession.

We make this concession although we are firmly convinced that our polemics against the supporters of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, are not only well founded, but *constitute an inseparable part of working class democracy.* By no means the least significant part of this working-class democracy is the fact that the workers, who are class brothers but who have different views and convictions, must in the ideological struggle influence one another by the method of mutual conviction. Working class democracy means not only the right, but the duty and obligation to carry on such mutual conviction. And for this concession on our part, we do not demand anything else from the social-democratic parties than that they should draw all the workers into the united front of our common struggle against the common class enemy.

We Communists will never abandon our principles and tactics—at any price. We shall never approve nor give our consent to collaboration between the working class and its class enemy, the bourgeois. We have advocated, we still advocate and always will advocate the revolutionary overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, whatever its form, whether it is in the form of fascist power or in the form of capitalist democracy. We stand for the unlimited power of the working class, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for Soviet power, which can only be established by the application of proletarian violence as an offset to the violence of the bourgeoisie, only by revolution. We have shown by the example of the Soviet Union that only the dictatorship of the proletariat, only Soviet power can bring about the widest democracy for all the

toilers and clear the path for Socialism. But we have always called on those workers who do not share our views as yet on all these questions of principle, to fight along with us against our common class enemy, against the immediate dangers menacing the proletariat. On January 1st, 1922, after the capitalist offensive on the working class had begun on an international scale we addressed the following appeal to the men and women of the proletariat of all countries :

"Well, you cannot make up your minds yet to struggle along the whole front, to struggle for power, for dictatorship, with arms in your hands. You cannot yet make up your minds to deliver a decisive attack on the citadel of world reaction? At any rate, then, unite in the struggle for a piece of bread, in the struggle for peace. March together in a united army for the sake of this struggle, unite as a proletarian class against the class of exploiters and devastators of the world. Break down the barriers which have been raised between you, stand in united ranks irrespective of whether you are Communists or social democrats, anarchists or syndicalists, so as to struggle against the hard poverty of the present day. The Communist International has always instructed the workers who stand for the dictatorship of the proletariat and for Soviets, to unite into independent parties. It does not withdraw a single word of what it has said on this matter proving the necessity for the formation of independent Communist Parties. It is convinced that every new day will more and more convince the working masses of the correctness of its actions. But despite all that disunites us, it says: Proletarians of the world, join your ranks for the struggle for the things which unite you, for the things which you look on as your common aim."

The Communists again repeat to the social-democratic and reformist workers and their officials: *Do you really not feel that the advance of fascism in a number of countries means the direct preparation of a new imperialist slaughter of the peoples, means the further worsening of the conditions of the working class?*

You follow your leaders, who, in our opinion, are carrying on an incorrect policy, a policy of *class collaboration*, a policy which is not in the interests of the proletariat but in the interests of the bourgeoisie. We consider that we are correct in criticising your party, but our attacks on the policy of your leaders have not been an end in themselves for us. For us they have always been and still are a means of struggle for the establishment of the unity of the working class against capitalism. While striving to bring about the severance of the bonds of class collaboration which bind to the bourgeoisie such a large section of the working-class as represented by the supporters of social-democracy, so that the social-democratic workers may be able to carry on a joint struggle together with us against the common enemy; while striving towards this minimum prerequisite for a successful struggle against fascism, we have declared and still declare our readiness to make this concession to

your leaders. We firmly hope that even under the conditions of a temporary renunciation of the *important prerequisites of working class democracy*, the polemic against an incorrect policy, that the joint struggle of the Communist and social-democratic workers will convince the social-democratic workers that the only correct tactics for the working class are not reformist policy, not class collaboration with the class enemy, but the irreconcilable revolutionary class struggle against capitalism and its rule.

It follows from this conviction that no hostile or polite replies received from one or other social-democratic party *can compel the Communist Parties to abandon this path of the consistent struggle for the unity of action of the proletariat.*

Irrespective of how the leading social-democratic bodies reply to our proposals for unity of action, we shall call on the workers, irrespective of the party they may belong to, to undertake joint actions against capitalism, fascism and imperialist war, in defence of the vital interests and rights of the working class. We are prepared to make proposals and we are also prepared to carry on negotiations with the leading bodies of the social-democratic parties. But we know that our unswerving duty is not to make these proposals only to the social-democratic party leaders, by carrying on negotiations behind the scenes. If some Communists do not yet understand this, they must now specially take into account the fact that *every proposal which we make to the social-democratic party or reformist trade union leadership must be accompanied by hundreds of proposals to all the branches of the social-democratic parties and reformist trade unions.* We must see that the supporters of the social-democratic party, the members of the reformist trade unions, are widely informed by broad mass work about every proposal made by any Communist Party regarding joint actions against the class enemy. If Communists in France, Switzerland or Great Britain have lost sight of this and have not been able from day by day to present resolutions to the social-democratic party organisations through their delegations, and to present them to the local trade union bodies or reformist trade union executives through Communist groups, if they have not been able to organise joint open-air and indoor meetings of Communist and social-democratic workers, this is undoubtedly a mistake. Such militant actions for the establishment of unity of action, as proposals for a joint struggle to save Thaelmann, must be widely spread about in tens and hundreds of thousands of leaflets. Such militant measures must be accompanied by the resolutions of hundreds of

Communist and social-democratic organisations and factory meetings. Only such a widely developed joint struggle of Communist and social-democratic workers and members of reformist and revolutionary trade unions, and the attraction of the broadest strata of unorganised workers to this struggle, can bring about unity of action. It is necessary to make up in the nearest future for all that has been neglected until now in this campaign against fascism and to save Thaelmann. We shall fight untiringly for unity of action. And despite all we shall bring it about by **struggle!**

Again and again we repeat to the social-democratic workers: You do not know us Communists if you think that we shall stop half

way. The struggle for the united front of the working class is included in the programme of the Communist International, and we, whose words never differ from our deeds, take our programme seriously. Despite all diplomatic evasions, despite sharp refusals of our proposals or the maintenance of silence about them, we shall appeal to you again and again, and propose that you should fight jointly with us against capitalism, against imperialist war, and against fascism, for our common class interests and for our direct demands.

And you, social-democratic workers, must also not stop half way. Join in the united front of the working class for victory over the class enemy.

DE MAN'S PLAN IS A FRAUD ON THE WORKING CLASS*

By E. VARGA.

A PICTURE OF DE MAN'S CAPITALISM.

IF De Man's plan should actually be operated, the following picture would be the result:

1. *The character of the state remains unchanged.* It remains as before the state of the dominating bourgeoisie. The king remains in his place. The army, the police, the gendarmerie remain as previously under the command of the old officers. The workers and peasants remain unarmed.

2. *The means of production, as previously, remain in the possession of the capitalists.* This is persistently stressed in the plan in relation to the "private" sector:

"All the branches of economy, which are not stipulated in the preceding chapters (i.e., credit institutes, raw material production and the extracting industry—E.V.) constitute the private sector of economy."

No changes will be introduced in this sector as regards the régime of ownership (emphasised by me.—E.V.).

As regards the "nationalised sector," here also the means of production *actually* remain in the hands of capitalists, in so far as the state will only purchase sufficient shares necessary to maintain "preponderating influence" in the nationalised enterprises; furthermore, the state, which is to enjoy this influence, still remains the old class state of the bourgeoisie.

3. *The property of the ruling classes remains inviolable.* Although their agitational speeches chatter about the "expropriation of the expropriators" this is nothing but absolute bluff, and is

a fraud. The plan itself persistently reiterates all along that either a voluntary sale of the shares will take place or there will be "expropriation" in the bourgeois sense of this word, i.e., the selling price of the shares will be fixed by a government commission.

The article by De Man ("People" of March 21, 1934) stated as follows:

"I even had to point out that in order to ensure that the plan is successfully carried out, it would be important that the expenses incurred by the transfer of the property be limited by a certain minimum required for the authority of the controlled economy. From this point of view the best solution of the question would be one such as would enable the Ministry of Finance and the Credit Institute to put into operation the 'preponderating influence' stipulated by the plan, even without buying up the shares, and moreover without expropriating the shareholders."

That is to say, not only is the property of big capitalists to remain inviolable, *but in all probability, they would be able to do excellent business in connection with the purchase of their shares by the government.*

Let us try to visualise this purchase of shares concretely. If Mr. Capitalist does not succeed in obtaining the price he wants on the basis of a voluntary agreement (*gré à gré*), the selling price is to be fixed by a government commission. But who is to compose this commission? Not the mill and factory workers, but high state officials, and lawyers, and maybe some isolated representative of the trade unions. In a word, in the majority of cases they will be the people of the same ilk, who by their class position, their training and "connections" are wholly and completely on the side of the bourgeoisie. (We do not stress

* Conclusion. See No. 12 C.I. for part I.

direct bribery—although in practice this method would certainly play a not unimportant rôle.) And as is always the case, when a transaction is made between the big capitalist and the capitalist state, it is always the capitalist who gets the best of it.

What sums are involved may be seen from the example of the Belgian coal industry, the largest of all those which are to be nationalised :

DATA ON THE BELGIAN COAL INDUSTRY.*

Years.	Income in mil- lions of francs ("benefices")	Income of nominal capital	Shares quota-
			tions in coal mines in July.
1928	193	11.3	157
1929	162	10.3	187
1930	346	14.6	116
1931	118	6.2	94
1932	6	3.2	51

As we see from the above, the income of the Belgian coal industry dropped down considerably despite the heavy wage cuts, which we shall deal with later, due to the crisis, to the competition of English and German coal, and to the big strike of coal miners in Borinage. Share quotations dropped accordingly.

At the end of December, 1932,* the total capital invested in the Belgian coal industry amounted to 2,514 million francs.

This amount includes 692 million francs worth of bonds which pay a fixed interest, as well as 1,882 million francs' worth of shares.

In order to attain "preponderating influence" the state would have to buy in round figures 900 million francs' worth of shares.

Thus the Commission would be confronted with the question of whether the shares are to be bought at the share quotation of 187,116 or 51. If the government were to purchase the shares at 51, it would have to pay out the sum of 459 million francs to the mine owners, whereas if it should buy at 187, the state would pay out to the mine owners the sum of 1,683 million francs for 900 millions' worth of nominal share capital. *Every additional per cent. on the share quotations would mean another 9 millions for the capitalists!*

It is easy to imagine that the capitalists would mobilise all their scientists and economists to prove that the shares must be bought at 187 and not at 51; and that every member of the government commission could receive huge bribes worth millions providing he was willing to meet the desires of the coal barons when fixing the purchase price! How many officials could you find who

would withstand such gifts, which exceed the salaries they could earn for their entire official career?

This refers just as much to the banks and to all other enterprises, whose shares are to be bought out by the government, as to the coal mines. And who would defend the interests of the state against such pressure from the capitalists? Probably Mr. De Man, the future "Commissar of Finance," the permanent, highly-paid contributor to the journal of the "National Bank," which in its turn is linked up to the coal magnates by thousands of threads! Or maybe, the leaders of the Belgian co-operatives which are working on purely capitalist principles? Or, perhaps the leaders of the "Labour Bank" which has a strong interest in the capitalist exploitation of the Congo, and which has accepted a subsidy last year in the shape of a credit of 82 million francs from the "National Association of Industry and Trade," and which only recently attempted to avoid bankruptcy through a large government grant.

It is obvious, that nationalisation in such circumstances, i.e., the participation of the state in capitalist enterprises would by no means imply the expropriation of the capitalists, but on the contrary would be a splendid deal as far as they would be concerned.

And such has always been the case when any capitalist state has bought up the shares of a private company. It is only a *revolutionary* state, only the armed power of the workers and peasants that will scatter the old state apparatus, and replace it by soviets of the toilers, which will chase the old officials out and expropriate the big capitalist enterprises without compensation, only such a state is really able to operate nationalisation in the interests of the toiling population. While the scheme mapped out by De Man and by the leaders of the Belgian Labour Party will, in the event of its realisation, be nothing but "nationalisation" in the interests of the big capitalists!

4. *The distribution of incomes remains unchanged.* One and the same idea occurs quite frequently in all the articles and speeches which popularise the plan of De Man, viz., any attempt to alter the distribution of incomes to the benefit of the workers by means of strike struggle is

* In one of his pre-war pamphlets De Man wrote:

The co-operative weaving factory in Ghent financed by Foornyt was recently turned into a joint stock company. . . . Since the enterprise still belongs to the Party, and the possession of even one share in it makes its owner a member of the Party, it is now possible to be promoted to membership of the Party on the stock exchange by merely buying one share of this capitalist enterprise. ("The Labour Movement in Belgium," p. 20.)

* All data are taken from the "Economic Position of Belgium in 1932."

* Ibid. See page 267.

absolutely devoid of any prospects of success in the period of the crisis. This is the reason, why it is necessary to "fight" for the change of the "structure of capitalism" in the spirit of the proposed plan.

What is the logic of this way of thinking, from the point of view of the workers? What benefit does the worker derive, what affair is it of his at all, as to how the shares are distributed among the various capitalists, the "Societe Generale" and the capitalist class? Under the capitalist system what the worker is interested in is only the wages he receives for his heavy work! It is not the "structure of economy" that interests him, and as long as the means of production and the commodities produced by his labour belong to his class enemy, to the exploiters, it is precisely the distribution of the product of his labour between himself—the worker—and the capitalist, that alone interests him. The worker is entitled to demand from the execution of the "Great Plan" at least an actual improvement in his conditions, an increase in his wages.

In all the countless articles and speeches on the plan we would seek in vain for a clear and explicit promise to the effect that a 10 or 20 per cent. increase in wage rates will take place in the "nationalised branches of industry." We find plenty of general, handsome and high-sounding words, but nowhere do we find any clear promise that the wage cuts, which, for example, were carried out in the coal industry during the crisis, will be restored simultaneously with the "nationalisation" of the coal industry. Yet this question

is far more important for the Belgian workers than all the eloquent but vague palaver about the "expansion of the home market," the "growth of economic prosperity," and about "living down the crisis."

For even before the crisis, the conditions of the workers in Belgium were worse than in any of the neighbouring countries. As a proof we shall cite the indices of the Geneva Labour Office which were certainly made out without premeditation:

*The comparative index of real wages in different cities, computed on the basis of the value of necessities of life.** (London, July, 1924 — 100 per cent.).

	Jan., 1928	Jan., 1929
Berlin	68	77
Brussels	47	52
London	103	106
Paris	61	59
Philadelphia	194	296

Of course it is only an approximate computation, but nevertheless it shows, if even roughly, in an approximate fashion that the Belgian workers could buy for their earnings only one-fourth of the goods which American workers could with theirs, about half of what the English workers could buy, about 30 per cent. less than the German workers, and 15 to 20 per cent. less than the French workers.

During the crisis, Belgian capital has continued to ruthlessly cut down wages. Below are the figures given by the International Labour Office:

Usual or Minimum Rates of Pay per hour for Adult Workers.

	Engineers		Building Industry		Woodworking Industry	
	Metal Turner	Unskilled Worker	Carpenter	Mason's Labourer	Joiner	Polisher
June 1930	6.25-7.50	4.50-4.75	7.50-7.75	5.75-6.00	7.05	7.25
1931	5.80-6.90	4.20-4.45	6.75	4.75	6.75	6.75
1932	5.40-6.45	3.70-4.20	6.00	4.25	6.30	6.30
1933	5.40-6.45	3.90-4.20	5.50	4.00	5.85	5.85

The wage cut during the crisis amounts to 15 to 33 per cent.*

But maybe the International Labour Office is not a reliable source. We will cite here an extract from an absolutely capitalist source, namely, the "Annual Report of the National Bank of Belgium," on wage cuts in the coal industry†:

"When the crisis set in, the coal enterprises had to limit themselves in the beginning to only a part of this cut. On July 6th, 1930, they restored the 6 per cent. increase over and above the one stipulated in the agreement. On August 4th, 1929, as well as on October 5th,

1930, they again cut wages by 4 per cent. as against October 20th, 1928. By June 11, 1931, the wage cuts made under the agreements, which were repeated five times, reached 25 per cent. In order to see how these cuts affected the mining population we must add to this another 10 per cent. cut . . . The last 5 per cent. cut under the agreement took place on June 19th, 1932."

If we add up all the cuts in the wages of miners enumerated here we will obtain total cuts of 40 per cent. during the period of the crisis. The official index of the cost of living has dropped for the period from 1929 to 1933, from 220 to 182 (if the cost of living in 1931 be taken as 100 per

* "Revue Internationale du Travail," October, 1933.

† "Information Bulletin" of the National Bank of Belgium, April 26, 1933, p. 265.

* "Revue Internationale du Travail," April, 1929, p. 198.

cent.), or a decrease of 17 per cent. Thus, *even according to the computation of the capitalists themselves*, the miners who are employed for a full working week can buy for their earnings 28 per cent. less bread, meat, footwear and clothes than they could four years ago! The position is still more complicated by the very acute unemployment existing among the coalminers.*

In order that the "nationalisation" of the coal industry should bring anything at all to the coalminers, the least that is required is the abolition of these wage cuts suffered by the miners during the crisis. But we would look in vain for even a word in the plan and in the articles on the plan which would introduce any clarity into the question of wages.

The famous nationalisation will only result in the mining magnates disposing of part of the shares to the Government at a high price, thus doing a brilliant and profitable stroke of business.

The very fact that De Man and those who support his plan invariably stress that it is merely "a change of structure" that is provided by the plan, and not an alteration in the distribution of incomes, shows clearly that this famous nationalisation will bring no change in the present distribution of incomes, which ensures tremendous profits for a handful of capitalists, while dooming the workers to eternal privations and destitution.

The distribution of the national income under which the whole mass of the workers is chronically on the brink of starvation, while several hundreds of people receive yearly incomes ranging from one to over 10 million francs, is to remain unchanged after De Man's plan is put into practice as well!

With regard to the *private* sector, which is to compose the overwhelming part of Belgian economy, the plan persistently stresses that:

"In all the branches of industry organised on a capitalist basis, but which do not belong to the category of credit monopolies, electrical industry, or the production of raw materials, as provided for in the preceding chapter, the existing system of free competition, rid of all bonds of political capitalism, will be maintained.

"In this sector, free competition should be allowed to give everything it can give in the sense of developing initiative and of the inventive spirit in the search for increased productivity of labour and profitability."

The most essential are the *last* words, and they mean that every capitalist in the private sector, *i.e.*, in nine-tenths of Belgian industry, may, as hitherto, set all the means of free competition going so long as he attains an "increase of

income, an increase of profitability"! In other words: After the plan is put into operation, all the employers in the textile, engineering and chemical industries, etc., can, unhindered by the Government, strive "to increase the productivity" by accelerating the conveyor and speed of their machinery to squeeze even more work out of the workers than hitherto. Without any interference on the part of the State, the capitalists can continue to cut down the wages of their workers for the purpose of achieving "a growth of income." As for the State, it will, being a respectable bourgeois State, preserve "neutrality," as heretofore in the struggle between capital and labour, without interfering in the play of the forces of free competition, until the "vital interests of society" become jeopardised!

But if in the process of a big strike, danger threatens the supplies of the cities, transport facilities, or the defence of the country, then the future socialist Prime Minister, or the Minister of Belgian National Economy, will mobilise strike-breakers protected by armed forces, in the very same way as it has been done by the Belgian capitalist ministers, by MacDonald in England, or Severing in Germany! A capitalist State must act in the interests of the capitalists and against the workers, even if "socialists" occupy the ministerial chairs. The entire historical experience of the post-war period is proof of this. A State can be dominated *either by the bourgeoisie or by the proletariat!* If, however, the bourgeoisie continues to own the means of production and preserves its property and income, while remaining the ruling class as before, the State remains *its* state, a bourgeois State, which *must* oppress the workers, *even if* "socialists" are at the head of the government.

Thus we may state that in the "private" sector *the distribution of income, as well as everything in general remains as of old.* Although the plan states as though in self-justification that:

"Nevertheless, this private economy will be a-controlled economy, in so far as it will be subordinated to the same conditions as the nationalised sector, to the general directives, provided for in Chapter VI."

But this is nothing but empty blather without any definite content, as we shall prove further down.

But the plan will not do any harm either to the property or the incomes of those capitalists whose enterprises belong to the nationalised sector. Part of their shares will be purchased by the State at a handsome price. They will be able to invest the money they receive for their shares in the "private sector" without any restrictions whatsoever, they will be able to buy government bonds, or invest this money in foreign enterprises operating in Belgium, or in the Belgian enterprises

* In 1927 175,544 workers were employed in the Belgian coal industry, while in 1932 their number amounted to only 130,143. The crisis deprived over 45,000 miners of employment! Every fourth worker in the coalmining industry is unemployed.

operating abroad,* or use it for the profitable exploitation of negroes in the Belgian Congo, after the example of the Belgian socialist co-operators. The capitalists will not become any poorer even by a penny as a result of this "nationalisation"; neither their property, nor their income will be decreased by a centime. They will rather become even richer!

5. In so far as the entire economy of Belgium will remain capitalist, and free competition will continue its sway in nine-tenths of it, in so far as over 50 per cent. of Belgian commodity production is exported, necessarily competing on the world market against the goods produced by other capitalist countries, and in so far as 50 per cent. of goods consumed are imported from abroad, *the anarchy* of capitalist production will remain unchanged. This means a chronic general crisis, periodic economic crises, and mass unemployment.

It is true that in his speech at the Congress De Man promised nothing more nor less than the establishment of crisisless capitalism:

"The object," said he, "is to create such an economic régime as will destroy the causes of the crisis and first and foremost under consumption."

But this is either nonsense, or deliberate demagoguery. Capitalism, which is based wholly or partly on free competition, or which is either entirely private or bears the mark of State capitalism, inevitably results in periodically returning crises. This has been theoretically proved in Marx's teaching, proved in practice by the whole history of capitalism in all the countries of the world. If the "nationalisation" of credit and of the extracting industries, as well as of the industries producing raw materials, is carried out within the framework of the bourgeois State, it will not change this position by an iota. And "under-consumption" will not cease, since the working class will as hitherto continue to receive only part of the products of their labour in the form of wages, whereas the remaining part will be used by capitalists as surplus value for the multiplication of their capitals. Capitalism is unthinkable without "under-consumption," without the income of the workers being reduced to a minimum!

We can now summarise the above.

The fulfilment of the plan would not change the economic and social conditions in Belgium.

In particular:

The state would remain as hitherto the *old capitalist state*, which in the struggle between

* The plan reads: "The régime of foreign capital investments in Belgium and of Belgian capital investments abroad will be subordinated to the same principles (as the private sector), namely, freedom of circulation, restricted by the requirements and needs of national prosperity, etc."

capital and labour, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat inevitably and invariably defends the interests of the bourgeoisie against the interests of the proletariat;

the means of production would, as hitherto, remain in the possession of the capitalists;

the distribution of income would remain unchanged: the workers would, as of old, receive only just enough so as not to die of starvation; while the big capitalists would still continue to put millions in their pockets every year;

the mode of production would continue to remain capitalist with periodical over-production, with permanent "under-consumption" on the part of the toiling masses, with crises and mass unemployment, and with all these well-known scourges of the capitalist mode of production, which overwhelm the proletariat;

Such is a true picture of Belgian economy in the event of De Man's plan being operated.

In whose interests must economy be "managed"?

Like De Man in the above quotation, the advocates of the plan would probably reply: It is not important just what, and how much will be nationalised; what counts is that economy will no longer be "managed" in the interests of monopolist capital, but in the interests of the workers.

But the entire experience of the post-war period, all the "Socialist" governments in Germany, England, Austria, and of the Scandinavian countries show that it is absolutely impossible in a capitalist state to carry out a policy which is in the interests of the workers and against the interests of the big capitalists with the aid of the apparatus of the capitalist state, even if the social-democratic ministers are guided by the best possible motives, which, by the way, is an absolutely unreal assumption regarding these ministers, who have merged with the capitalist state.

As regards De Man's plan, it is not difficult to prove that the policy foreseen by him is not directed, in actual fact, against the big capitalists, unless in some places it is so stated *in words*. On the contrary, the workers are promised very little and even that is in a vague form, but a great deal is given to the capitalists, and in quite definite form too.

Well, what does the plan promise the workers?

"A policy of labour which strives for the reduction of the working day and the regulation of wages by the introduction of a legalised system of labour agreements, the recognition of the trade unions, arbitration commissions, collective agreements, minimum wages."

The above lines make clear to everybody that the *plan promises no increase in wages*, but

merely the "regulation" of wages, and the establishment of a minimum wage! This means, obviously, that the present unheard-of *cut wages* will be considered as "standards," and fixed as minimum wages! If it were otherwise, then the plan would simply have read: wage increases! But we would search in vain for these decisive words which are of such importance to the workers. But in the capitalist state, the minimum wage-rate always has a tendency to become the *maximum* rate, as is most glaringly proved by the example of the United States of America, where Roosevelt, who is by no means socialistically inclined, has also introduced the general minimum-wage rate.

But some hope of improvement must still be given to the workers, otherwise they will not declare for the plan. This is the reason, why the following highly obscure clause has been inserted in the plan:

"The monetary policy, which while preserving all the advantages and benefits which Belgium secures from the importance of its gold fund and the stability of its currency, will allow of an *increase in the purchasing power of the various categories of the incomes of the*

What the devil does this mean? How can a "monetary policy" achieve an increase in the "purchasing power" of wages while preserving the stability of the currency, without increasing the rate of wages concerned? Does it mean that prices will be reduced by an artificial contraction of money circulation? *But the Belgian capitalists will never allow this.* Why, the capitalists of all countries have made the struggle against the sharp drop in prices during the crisis the principal object of their affections. It is precisely on this account that all the capitalist countries resorted to inflation, to screw up prices, and this refers to the United States of America and England, to Japan and the Scandinavian countries, and so forth. How, then, would a capitalist government in Belgium, if even it had a majority of "socialists" be able to promote an opposite policy? If things should go so far as such an attempt, the capitalists would transfer a considerable amount of their capital to foreign countries (as we have seen above, the plan persistently stresses the freedom of the international circulation of capital) and Belgium's balance of payments would become adverse and inflation would become inevitable. An increase in the purchasing power of wages by means of "monetary" policy is not practicable. De Man himself writes in his different articles about the necessity of "increasing money circulation," *i.e.*, inflation.

In conclusion we find in the plan a very conditional promise to introduce universal social insurance. This clause of the plan reads:

"The tax policy, which will utilise part of these super-budget receipts for the organisation of a multiform system of social insurance on the basis of sufficient payments made by the insured and their employers, and will increase that part of the national income which is spent directly on consumption (!)."

The meaning of this clause is as follows: If the anticipated economic improvement results in a budget surplus, a system of social insurance is to be organised. But just when this is to happen, in the conditions of a protracted crisis is absolutely undefined.

But it would be absolutely wrong to simply allege that social insurance would mean an increase of the part of the national income directly expended for consumption.

Let us analyse this question.

If half of the insurance expenses are paid by the workers and half by the employers, then it is quite clear that as regards half the benefits received, we receive nothing, this is but a book-keeping transfer, without any increase in purchasing power. As regards the other half, the payments made by the employers, these, of course, could help in a growth of consumption on the part of the working class, but under one condition only, namely, if the employers do not strive to shift their payments to the social insurance fund on to the shoulders of the workers, in the form of wage cuts! This, however, can be achieved, neither by government decisions nor by a plan, but by the economic struggles of the working class!

Taking into consideration the will of the workers, as well as the desires of considerable strata of the capitalists who would like to sell their merchandise to the Soviet Union, the plan graciously promises "recognition" of the U.S.S.R. After the Soviet Union has been recognised by all the great powers, Belgium is at last also allowed to take this step, at least in the plan!

The blessings promised to the capitalists by the plan are much more concrete and clear.

(a) *Security of profits.*

"A policy of prices, which organises the prohibition of monopolist extortions and speculation with merchandise, and which *strives to stabilise the profits in agriculture, industry and trade.*"

In this clause the essential words are underlined, namely the security of profits for private capital, by means of a government price policy. So as not to immediately repel the workers the matter is represented as if the security of the capitalists' profits will take place at the expense of the monopolists, and not at the expense of the workers. But this is the sheerest demagoguery, for

the source of the profits of capital is the exploitation of the proletariat. Once the security of the capitalists' profits is set up as the object of economic policy, then it means the preservation of the present degree of the exploitation of the Belgian proletariat—and nothing more!

(b) *Reduction of taxes for the bourgeoisie.*

"A tax policy which will mainly reduce such taxes as constitute a direct burden on industry and trade, at the expense of super-budget receipts resulting from the increase of economic activity."

The capitalists are to get security of profits and reduction of taxes; whereas the proletariat are to receive no wage increases, but vague promises for some remote future! Such in essence is the content of the planned "leadership" of economy.*

The workers, who are acquainted with the plan only from the smooth and pretty articles in the "People," and through speeches of the leaders made at meetings, will probably be astonished at our conclusions! Is there anything they have not been promised in the event of the Belgian Labour Party coming to power and putting the plan into operation. They are to achieve the termination of the crisis, a new improvement, the elimination of crises in general, the liquidation of unemployment for evermore, the reduction of the price of necessaries, wage increases, the expropriation of the capitalists and the peaceful realisation of socialism. But not a word of all this is to be found in the plan itself.

To illustrate how the leaders of the Labour Party of Belgium interpret the gist of the plan to the workers we will quote several extracts from speeches.

In De Man's speech at the council of the Belgian Labour Party, the object of the plan is outlined as:

"... The socialisation of the large-scale industry . . . as the ultimate establishment of an economic system based on the needs of the consumers, and not on the profits of a minority."

How lovely it sounds! But an analysis of the text of the plan shows that Belgian economy will still remain capitalist even after the plan is operated, and will, therefore, also be based "on the profits of the minority" in the future, and not "on the needs of the consumers."

In the same speech, De Man points out that the operation of his plan "would ensure the population a serious improvement of its standard of living." This platitude, which contains an extremely vague promise, is included in the plan

itself, the economic section of which ends in the following way:

"The bureau of social investigation will study the possibilities of realising these tasks within the framework of a Five-Year Plan, which will permit an increase of the consuming power on the home market by at least 50 per cent. in three years and by 100 per cent. by the end of the fifth year."

This is the most brazen and shameless demagogic plagiarism on the Five-Year Plan of the U.S.S.R. We ask any worker with enough common-sense, how it is possible to increase home consumption by 100 per cent. once the workers' wage-rates are, as stated above, not increased, but merely brought to a "norm" on the basis of the present standard.

At the congress of the Belgian Labour Party, Mertens, the Secretary of the reformist trade unions declared that:

"De Man's plan not only strives to eliminate unemployment, but even to find work for young people after they leave school."

"By means of this labour plan we are striving to eliminate the material and moral destitution oppressing our youth."

An analysis of the plan shows that its realisation would not reduce chronic unemployment by one iota.

We could quote an endless number of similar extracts here. But these examples are quite sufficient to show how remote is this interpretation of the plan which is intended to deceive the workers, from the concrete, actual content of it as intended for the capitalists.

Whence do we get this disparity between the literal text of the plan and the speeches and the articles about the plan?

The explanation is the following:

The plan is in itself an important document: it is the *political platform of a possible future coalition government comprising the Belgian Labour Party and one or several bourgeois groupings*. This is the reason why everything in the plan must be formulated in such a way as to make it acceptable for the bourgeoisie, as the platform of the future coalition government. Everything, on the other hand, that the leaders of the Belgian Labour Party in their articles and speeches put before the workers or that they promise the latter—is their own private affair! The Belgian capitalist class understands quite well, that the more the working class trusts in this plan as a peaceful way out of the crisis, as "a transition path to socialism," the less will it be susceptible to Communist ideas, the less will be the number of workers passing from the Belgian Labour Party to the Communist Party of Belgium, and the more seldom will the working class resort to revolutionary means of struggle. On this point the interests of the leaders of the

* The whole plan, by the way, contains not a word about the Belgian peasantry who are bending under the burden of the agrarian crisis. What help will the peasants receive in the future "regulated society"?

Belgian Labour Party and the Belgian bourgeoisie absolutely coincide. This is the reason why the Belgian bourgeoisie does not object in the least to the interpretation of the plan made by the leaders of the Belgian Labour Party, who adorn it with sonorous revolutionary phrases.

This character of the plan, as a platform for a possible future coalition government has its counterpart also in its position on two decisive and most important points, namely, regarding the colonies, and the question of war.

The terrible exploitation of the natives in the Belgian Congo is universally known. But it would be futile to spend any efforts in attempting to find in the plan at least such hypocritical reforms as the Second International from time immemorial usually puts forward allegedly in the interests of the colonial population. Not a word is said in the plan about the fate of the nine million Negroes in the Belgian Congo. There is only one laconic sentence, which is, however, of the highest importance for the Belgian bourgeoisie, about the "complete inclusion of the Congo into the new system of national economy." The colonial super-profits of the Belgian bourgeoisie must remain intact. There is not a word to be found in the plan *about war*, but in De Man's speech at the congress, the bourgeoisie are promised that in the event of a coalition government coming to power on the platform of the plan, the Belgian Labour Party will mobilise the Belgian workers to serve the interests of Belgian imperialism.

"The problem of national defence cannot be the same in a monopolist state, as it is in a state which has a form which is transitory to Socialism."

That is to say, in the new "state of the transition period" the workers must defend the interests of the capitalists with greater patriotism, and shed their blood on the battlefield in the approaching new world war with greater readiness, than they did during the first world war.*

The workers who to-day still regard the plan merely as a means for establishing Socialism, should ask themselves the following question: if the realisation of the plan would really make a breach in capitalism, and would be a transitory step to Socialism why, then, does the capitalist class not mobilise all its forces against the plan? Why is it, that we do not see the capitalists giving any sharp rebuff to the plan, but on the contrary, we find that what predominates is a favourable attitude on the part of the capitalists to the plan? Here are a few examples:

* We must tell ourselves firmly, that we are in favour of national defence, and for an even more effective one, than proposed to us by our rulers. ("Peuple," December 20, 1933.)

1. Delain writes in the "Peuple" of December 1, 1933:

"It has been recently reported that the plan of our friend De Man has met with a certain sympathy . . . in financial circles and in heavy industrial circles."

In the editorial of the "Peuple" of March 15, 1934, A. Devigne gives the following news:

"The correspondent of "Nieuwe Courant" is constrained to admit that the 'plan' is quite acceptable to all those who sympathise with Catholics and who take in earnest the encyclical of the Pope!"

We could, if we wanted to, multiply examples of such bourgeois approval of De Man's plan almost without end.

The plan is a wisely developed anti-Communist manoeuvre.

But the genuine object of the agitation raised around the plan is by no means the desire to put it into operation (although it is with the greatest pleasure that the leaders of the Belgian Labour Party would be prepared to come to power with the aid of this plan); in essence, the object may be reduced to the desire to intercept the growing discontent of the workers, and to arrest the radicalisation of the masses. An "active campaign" for the carrying out of the plan is meant to keep the workers back from passing to the revolutionary path under the influence of the Communist Party. This follows absolutely clearly from all the utterances of the leaders of the Belgian Labour Party. As for the very idea of a *genuine proletarian revolution* it is a scarecrow for the leaders of the B.L.P., who are linked up indissolubly with the bourgeoisie through the "Labour Bank," through the large-scale co-operative enterprises, through their ministerial post and in the hope for ministerial portfolios in the future.

"*The plan itself is nothing, it is the action in its favour that is everything* — openly declared De Man in his speech at the Congress.*

Fear of the radicalisation of the masses, and particularly of the unemployed, and dread of Communists runs like a red thread through all the speeches and articles of De Man and of his ilk:

"We are threatened with the danger of seeing how a social stratum will form in the bowels of the organised working class, whose interests will differ from those of the toilers, who are still fortunate enough to be regularly employed.

"The Communists are few, but among them are active elements, capable of doing much harm . . ."

The political meaning and object of the plan is to raise a dam against the dissemination of

* The following excerpt from De Man's speech at the congress shows how little importance the leaders of the B.L.P. attach to the urgent carrying out of the plan:—

"It is imperative to make extensive investigations. Twenty-two special commissions are busy working out the principal items of the plan."

"dangerous" ideas among the working class, in order to gain time, until, as they hope, the economic crisis passes and the normal times return, and the *revolutionary fermentation among the working class wanes*. The development of the plan, and the concentration of the proletariat's attention on the plan is to serve this object.

We must admit that the manoeuvre has been executed with great cunning.

On the basis of the experience of the post-war period, the proletariat have found out that the participation of the social-democratic leaders in a capitalist government has never led to any construction of Socialism, but in the long run has led to fascism.

The leaders of the B.L.P. answer the workers as follows: Yes, that's true. But the cause of the failure lies not in the impossibility of a peaceful and gradual transition to Socialism by means of participating in the government; the cause, they say, lies in the fact that the social-democrats took the power or participated in the government *without any firm plan*. But by linking participation in the government with the acceptance of the plan as a government programme, we, they add, thus ensure the "re-organisation of the structure of economy, the building up of Socialism." But the workers, of course, have not to know that the plan will not change the existing situation, even if it is put into operation.

Our *slogan of the united front* in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, troubles the leaders of the B.L.P. very much. Hitherto they have been unable to oppose it with anything. But they have now invented a means, namely, the "*labour front*," in place of the "*united front*."

"A workers' labour front must be created," writes De Man, "in these conditions" (if the entire attention is concentrated on the plan.—E.V.) "I think the question of the united front will be liquidated of itself." (De Man's speech at the Congress.)

In the hullabaloo raised around the plan the struggle against the united front is the leading motive. But the Belgian workers will not catch the bait of the "Labour Front." A fine "labour front" this, in which Catholic bishops, capitalist exploiters, and all the enemies of the proletariat participate. If the capitalists and their banner-bearers shout that they are getting ready to "fight" for the cause of the workers, they must have only one aim in view, namely, to sabotage and betray the struggle of the working class. The workers and the poor peasants must be in one united front; while the capitalists, bishops and all kinds of professors and bank directors, even if they do belong to the Belgian Labour Party,

belong to the enemy front. As long as the working class not only tolerates its class enemies in its party, but even grants them leading posts in this party, it cannot win. It is only in Russia that the proletariat was able to gain power, because it purged the ranks of its Bolshevik Party ruthlessly and promptly of all traitors, of all its class enemies. The toiling masses of the whole world, Belgium included, see in the U.S.S.R. their model, and an example for themselves. The leaders of the B.L.P. and De Man himself in particular, are trying to intercept these moods in their favour. For the sake of appearances, De Man's plan claims a certain similarity with the Five-Year Plan of the Soviets: it provides for the establishment of "commissariats" and of a "Council of National Economy," just as in the U.S.S.R. There is talk of a "Five-Year Plan," just as exists in the Soviet Union. De Man had even the impertinence to make a comparison in his speech at the Congress between the "mixed economy" mapped out by him, and the economic system prevailing in the U.S.S.R.

"What objections can they (the Communists) find to our plan? That a mixed economy is being planned? We can reply that in creating a mixed economy we, in Belgium, are starting at the point where they have finished off in Russia." (Emphasised by me.—E.V.)

"The great scholar" De Man, evidently thinks that the Belgian workers are fools, if he imagines that they will be caught in the trap of such a brazen bluff.

Was the property of the Tsar, and of the big landowners and capitalists in Russia confiscated without any compensation? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, is it proposed to confiscate the property of even a single capitalist without compensation? *No!*

Is there even a single capitalist enterprise left in the Soviet Union? *No!* (Foreign concessions have also been liquidated.)

And according to the plan is not private capitalism to be preserved in Belgium to the extent of nine-tenths? *Yes!*

Has the land in the Soviet Union been nationalised and handed over to the toiling rural population for free exploitation? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, is it proposed to nationalise the land, will land rent and land bondage be liquidated? *No!*

Were house tenements in the cities of the U.S.S.R. expropriated without payment and handed over into the possession of the city Soviets? *Yes!*

And in Belgium, will the house property of the capitalists in the cities, and thus housing speculation, be affected under the plan? *No!*

Have the old state apparatus, the old army,

the gendarmerie and the police been dispersed in the Soviet Union and substituted by a new apparatus, consisting of the workers and peasants *Yes!*

And does De Man project at least some changes in the state apparatus, in the army and the police? *No!*

Is it true that in the Soviet Union all former landowners and capitalists (in so far as they have not escaped abroad) the kulaks, and all the enemies of the proletariat have been disarmed, while the proletariat has been armed? *Yes!*

But do the leaders of the B.L.P. contemplate the arming of the proletariat, and the disarming of the capitalists and of their class army? *No!*

To place the "mixed economy" planned by De Man alongside of the economy of the Soviet Union is the most brazen fraud imaginable!

All this clearly shows the true meaning of the hullabaloo around the plan, namely, to distract the workers from the struggle to raise their wages, to arrest the radicalisation of the masses, to smash the united front movement of struggle, to prevent the flow of the workers from the B.L.P. to the Communist Party of Belgium, and to somehow live through the crisis period which is so dangerous for capitalism and for the B.L.P.! "The Labour Plan of work" is a plan to defend capitalism in Belgium!

DE MAN'S PLAN CLEARS THE WAY FOR FASCISM.

Although the plan speaks about "strengthening the foundations of democracy," nevertheless the proposed "political reform" actually means the transfer of the most important functions of the parliament to "commissariats" which are to be established, the strengthening of the bureaucratic apparatus at the expense of parliament exactly in the spirit of fascism. The concluding clauses of the plan read:

"(5). This chamber whose methods of work must be simplified and adapted to the needs of the modern social organisation, will avail itself, when working out laws, of the assistance of consultative councils, *whose members will partly be drawn in from outside parliament on the basis of their recognised competence in the given questions.* (Emphasised by me.—E.V.)

"(6). To avoid the danger of etatism, parliament grants to the organs which are entrusted with the management of economy, a special warrant necessary for rapid action and for the concentration of the entire responsibility."

Clause 5 means that in the future the elaboration of laws will constitute the task not of parliament alone, but also of extra parliamentary councils consisting of "people with recognised competence," i.e., of prominent capitalists, bourgeois scholars, and loyal "specialists" from the upper strata of the Belgian Labour Party,

the co-operatives, the banking bosses and T.U. bureaucrats.

Clause 6 implies that the new bureaucratic apparatus will receive "special rights" from parliament, in other words, all methods are to be made use of, by means of which the fascists everywhere subject parliamentarism to their dictatorship.

De Man's agitation for a "strong" state is absolutely obviously ideological preparation for fascism. In his speech at the Congress, De Man declared:

"Yes, we want to have a strong state, but we want it in order to demolish the dead wall of money, while others are striving for a strong state, in order to strengthen this dead wall."

Familiar tunes! Did not Wels, at the last Congress of German social-democracy, say: "It a dictatorship, then at least let it be ours." But in a *bourgeois* state, where the bourgeoisie owns enormous wealth, where the state apparatus belongs to *it*, where it is possible for it to organise private military detachments and to arm fascist gangs, there can be no "strong state" against the bourgeoisie, against the "wall of money." While the bourgeoisie owns the means of production, while it possesses its wealth, it is the ruling class; and every "strong" state as long as the bourgeoisie is dominant means a "*strong*" state against the proletariat, it means strengthening the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and is a step towards a fascist state. De Man's propaganda in favour of a strong state is clearing the way for fascism.

We will draw a parallel between the methods, by which Hitler in Germany came to power, and the methods by means of which the B.L.P. is striving to attain power in Belgium. Hitler promised a new social order, a "third empire"; the "labour" plan also promises a "structural change" of society. Hitler promised the nationalisation of monopolies; the same is promised by the "labour" plan.

Hitler promised the petty-bourgeoisie "to break the bondage of interest"; the "labour" plan promises the nationalisation of credits, or in other words, the same thing.

Hitler promised the liquidation of unemployment; the same is promised by the "labour" plan.

Hitler wages a struggle against Communism; the Labour Party of Belgium is acting in the same way.

Hitler fights against "Marxism"; de Man also stands "on the other side of Marxism."

Hitler slanders the Soviet Union; so does De Man.

In his speeches and reports to the big capital-

ists about his plans Hitler soothed them with assurances, that his speeches at the mass popular gatherings should not be taken in earnest; Vandervelde and De Man are doing the very same thing.

Despite his fiery speeches against "grafting capital," Hitler was friends with the capitalists just as the leaders of the B.L.P. are.

Hitler received money from the big capitalists to finance the fascist movement; the B.L.P. likewise received money from the big capitalists through its enterprises.

The language which De Man uses when speaking with the capitalists is exactly Hitler's language. Here is proof.

At the end of March De Man made a report in the big bourgeois "Belgian Society of Political Economy," before an audience which, according to the "People" of March, 29, 1934, "consisted of industrialists, economists and business men." Well, and what did De Man tell the big Belgian capitalists?

"Nationalisation is only provided for where we encounter monopolies. It is not a question of taking over the ownership, but first and foremost of taking over the authority . . . *"The 'labour' plan does not provide for any decrease of profits: it only strives towards stabilisation and profit . . . the plan represents an attempt to find a way out of the crisis which has struck all classes."* (Emphasised by me.—E.V.)

Hitler could have said exactly the same thing, word for word.

The meaning of the "labour" plan is now clear to every worker. It is a cleverly-conceived manoeuvre for the temporary pacification of the

justly indignant Belgian workers, to distract them from the revolutionary path, from the united front, from the Communist Party. And the plan itself is a platform for a coalition government of the B.L.P. and other bourgeois parties. In the event of it being carried out, it would mean maintaining the profits of the bourgeoisie at the same high level, and the perpetuation of the present-day starvation and beggarly wage rates received by the workers. The agitation for the participation of the B.L.P. in the government on the basis of the plan is waged in the fascist spirit, and serves the cause of preparing the advent of fascism to power in Belgium.

The Belgian workers, who have proven their revolutionary spirit in a number of glorious mass fights, must not succumb to the bait of this manoeuvre of the B.L.P. There is only *one* way to Socialism and that is the way mapped out by revolutionary Marxism; the way which was followed by the Russian Bolsheviks, the way of the Communist International and of the Communist Party of Belgium. It is the path of the violent overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Only under the leadership of the Communist Party of Belgium can Socialism be achieved in Belgium, and not under the leadership of the B.L.P., whose leaders have long ago merged with the bourgeoisie, who have long been of the same feather as the bourgeoisie.

The place of every class-conscious revolutionary Belgian worker is in the ranks of the Communist Party of Belgium!

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STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE WORKING CLASS OF ENGLAND

By P. POLIAK.

THE process of constant structural changes in the working class, indicated by Marx in his "Capital," and by Lenin in his "Imperialism," has become aggravated to an unusual degree during the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism and particularly for the last decade. In analysing the results of the introduction of machinery, Marx wrote :—

"The immediate result of machinery is to augment surplus value, and the mass of products in which surplus value is embodied. And as the substances consumed by the capitalists and their dependents become more plentiful, so do these orders of society. Their growing wealth and the relatively diminished number of workmen required to produce the necessaries of life beget simultaneously with the rise of new and luxurious wants, the means of satisfying those wants" ("Capital," Vol. I, p. 486, Kerr Edition).

Marx directly connects the appearance of new branches of production and of the new spheres of labour with the growth of the unproductive consumption of the capitalist class and "its clique." Marx especially stressed the unusual growth in England of the number of domestic servants employed, these modern "domestic slaves," and linked up this growth with the introduction of machinery and with the growth of large-scale production. Lenin continued and developed the teachings of Marx in his work on the latest capitalism entitled "Imperialism—the Last Stage of Capitalism," and wrote that—

"Imperialism is the enormous accumulation of money capital in a few countries . . . Hence the unusual growth of the class, or rather of the stratum of rentiers, i.e., of people who live 'by clipping coupons,'—people who are absolutely devoid of participation in any enterprise whatsoever, people whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, which is one of the most fundamental economic bases of imperialism, still further increases this absolute separation of the stratum of rentiers from production, and puts the stamp of parasitism upon the whole country which lives by the *exploitation* of the labour of a few trans-oceanic countries and colonies." The aggressiveness of the "imperialism of Great Britain," wrote Lenin, further, "is to be explained by the sum of 90 to 100 million pounds sterling, which represents the income of the stratum of rentiers from 'invested capital.'

"The income of the rentiers is five times as large as the income from the foreign trade of the most 'commercial' country in the world! Such is the essence of imperialism and of imperialist parasitism" ("Imperialism").

The characteristic feature of the post-war period of English capitalism is the fact that despite its victory in the World War, England underwent the effects of the general crisis of capitalism more than any other country among the "victorious Powers."

The tremendous growth of parasitism and decay, the hyperthropic increase in the number of rentiers along with the progressive decline of the basic and most important branches of industry, the fact that industry to a great extent works chronically below capacity as well as the considerably chronic unemployment, and the crisis of the colonial system—all these basic features of the general crisis found their most glaring manifestation in the classic country of decaying capitalism. *This is the reason why in the post-war period Great Britain began to lag behind the other countries even more than it did before the war,* and developed along the lines of an extreme growth of parasitism and decay, thus wholly and fully corroborating the analysis of imperialism, as made by Lenin.

The tremendous growth of parasitism is to be seen in the first place from the unparalleled growth of the share of England's national income belonging to the rentier, as well as in the absolute growth of the profits of the latter.

According to calculations made by a number of bourgeois economists, the income of the rentiers amounts to one-third of the total national income of the country. As an example of the absolute growth of the income of the rentier we have the fact that even before the crisis, about 350 million pounds sterling, or 40 per cent. of the budget expenditure, went in payment of interest and funding of state debts alone, whereas before the war this expenditure absorbed only 12 per cent. The internal debt in 1933 reached 6,584 million pounds sterling, which exceeds the indebtedness for 1914 more than tenfold. Let us note that after a certain decrease over a number of years the internal debt grew last year by 240 million pounds sterling and reached its apex. The amount of interest alone paid since the war almost reaches the amount of the debt itself, but the debt still remains where it was. It is true that in the budget of this year the interest was decreased to 234 million pounds sterling after conversion.

Particular stress must be laid upon the big growth in the incomes of land and house owners, which rose from 229 million pounds sterling in 1913-1914 to 382 million pounds sterling in 1930-1931 and to 432 million pounds in 1931-32. The crisis resulted in a decline in the income from the 4 billion pounds sterling invested abroad, which fell from £231 millions in 1929 to £152 millions sterling in 1932.

This decline in income gives rise to the ten-

dency to exert still greater pressure on the colonies with a view to squeezing out bigger profits.

A considerable decline in the import trade is to be observed in the colonies and dominions in recent years in consequence of the decline in consumption, the result being that the exports exceed imports: thus, for instance, in Australia, exports exceeded imports by 15 million pounds sterling in 1930, while in 1931-1932 this excess reached 37.5 million pounds sterling and in 1932-1933 27.5 million pounds sterling.

In New Zealand the excess of exports over imports for the corresponding years amounted respectively to £1.5 millions, £9 millions and £10 millions, while in South Africa the favourable balance for the period from 1929 to 1932 rose from 14 to 36 million pounds sterling. Hence we see that British capitalism has succeeded in restoring the paying power of its dominions.

By robbing all the countries of the world, and its colonies in the first place, England has accumulated enormous riches particularly in the southern part of England (mostly around London).

By the middle of 1933, deposits in the English banks reached the enormous figure of 2.5 billion pounds sterling.

A no less significant picture is shown by the growth in the total sum of wealth inherited from deceased capitalists in England. In 1913-1914 it was 300 million pounds, in 1929-30 538 million, in 1931-32 467 million and in 1932-33 516 million. All this tremendous wealth, which is concentrated in the hands of parasite-rentiers, leads to considerable changes in the entire economic life of the country.

Despite the crisis a constant demand is to be observed in England for articles of luxury, for automobiles of particularly expensive makes, etc. The press recently advertised, for instance, the sale of expensive handkerchiefs, the cost of each handkerchief being equal to the weekly dole of an unemployed man.

The extraordinary growth of parasitism is to be noted first of all from the fact that the income from the capital "invested" in the colonies and abroad has grown from 90-100 million pounds sterling before the war to 231 million pounds in 1929 and to 152 million pounds in 1932.*

Thus even during the year of the deepest crisis the income of the rentier was nevertheless one and a half times higher than it was before the war.

In his work, "Imperialism—the Last Stage of Capitalism," V. I. Lenin pointed to the heavy decrease of the percentage of the productive popu-

lation in England in the second half of the nineteenth century. From 1851 to 1901 the percentage of workers employed in the basic branches of industry as compared with the total population dropped from 23 per cent. to 15 per cent.

This process was the result of the parasitic degeneration of English capitalism as early as the second half and particularly at the end of the nineteenth century. This process also continued in the twentieth century, and assumed particularly acute forms in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism.

The 1921 census showed a heavy growth in the number of workers engaged in unproductive branches of industry. Thus, for instance, 2.2 million persons were employed in commerce and in the banks, 2 million persons were engaged in personal service, 1.2 million worked on transport, and 1 million in the state apparatus.

If, before the general crisis, the percentage of workers engaged in the basic branches of industry fell in proportion to the total population, while their absolute number increased—even though slowly—in the epoch of the general crisis, on the other hand, this number decreased not only relatively, but also absolutely. At the same time, the number of persons engaged in unproductive branches of economy increased to a great degree. Since the 1931 census is not yet available, its final results not yet being published, we avail ourselves of the data of the Ministry of Labour on the distribution of insured workers and employees in England for the period from 1923 to 1933.

These data show that in this ten-year period the percentage of workers insured in the three basic branches of industry, mining, metal, and textiles, dropped from 42.5 per cent. to 34.6 per cent. For the same period the percentage of those insured in commerce rose from 10.9 per cent. to 15.5 per cent. The juxtaposition of these two sets of figures gives us the picture of the rapid growth of parasitism in England, especially during recent years.

We must give Hobson, the English bourgeois economist, his due, who succeeded many years ago in giving a correct prognosis of the tendencies of development of English-capitalism. V. I. Lenin emphasised this particularly. Hobson gave a picture of the future England after the partition of China, and wrote that England, her ruling classes, will then receive—

"a great tribute from Asia and Africa with which they support great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy . . . the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa."

*The figures we give here are taken from the official data of the Balance of Payments. The actual income from the foreign investments is approximately 50 per cent. higher.

The extraordinary growth of parasitism and the decay of British capitalism in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism have resulted in a situation where, parallel with the growth of unproductive branches of economy, chiefly in the southern section of England, we see the decline and dying out of the old industrial regions and towns, the centres of the heavy and export branches of industry, taking place and continuing very rapidly, a process which brings untold suffering and privations to millions of workers' families.

Particularly rapid in the last five years has been the process of the decline of the regions of the heavy and export branches of industry, a period when the world economic crisis still further aggravated the chronic crisis in that part of British industry which is connected with the world market most of all. The great growth of unemployment took place to a considerable extent at the expense of those regions, where the export branches of industry, shipbuilding and navigation are concentrated.

Prolonged unemployment has inevitably resulted in a certain ebb of the workers from these branches of industry, as well as in total impoverishment, declassification and scattering of some of the strata of the working class in these regions. One of the symptoms of this process of the scattering of the trained proletariat is the absolute decline in the number of insured, including the unemployed as well, in the basic branches of industry.

The number of insured workers in the mining districts in the ten years (from 1923 to 1933) has dropped by 14 per cent., in the machine construction industries by 17.7 per cent., in metallurgy by 19 per cent., in shipbuilding by 35 per cent. Hence, it is clear that the absolute decline in the number of insured primarily affected the workers employed in the heavy industry. The decrease in the number of insured is somewhat lower in the textile industry. The decrease was 11 per cent. in the woollen industry and 10.7 per cent. in the cotton industry. For the same period the number of insured in commerce and transport grew by 42.6 per cent. Still greater is the decrease of the absolute number of workers actually employed in the heavy industry. The "Economist," for instance, considers that the number of workers in the heavy industry decreased by 39 per cent. in the period between 1924 and 1933.

According to the data of the Ministry of Labour, the number of workers engaged in the extracting industry has dropped by 44 per cent. in the last 10 years, and in the manufacturing industry by 1 per cent., the total decrease in the number of employed workers in the whole of industry being

13 per cent. Hence the absolute decrease of the number of the industrial proletariat is taking place at the expense of a heavy decrease of employment in heavy industry.

These data give us already an opportunity to draw our conclusions about the nature of the structural changes in the working class, which have taken place in England over the last ten years. The first conclusion is the continued heavy decrease of the proportion of workers engaged in the productive branches of economy, while the second conclusion, as a result of the first, is the general decrease of the number of the industrial proletariat.

In connection with these processes the relative importance of female labour grows considerably. The decrease of employment has taken place mainly in the heavy industry, where male labour was almost exclusively applied. This fact alone was bound to considerably increase the relative importance of female labour. Other causes, however, have acted in addition. The processes of the production of automatism, mechanisation and rationalisation in the majority of branches of the manufacturing industry resulted in the growth of the relative importance of female labour, while in a number of branches it resulted not only in a relative, but even in an absolute growth of female labour, and particularly in the growth of the number of girls employed in production.

In recent years, an intensive process of ousting male labour has taken place in all branches of industry. It has developed with particular intensity in the new branches of industry, in electro-machine construction, automobile, radio industries, etc. According to the data of the Ministry of Labour, the number of men employed in the light machine construction branches of industry dropped by 168,000 in the last ten years, while the number of women has grown by 28,000. In the same period, the number of men in heavy engineering and metallurgy decreased by 222,000, while the number of women dropped only by 15,000. According to the data of the Engineering Manufacturers' Union, the number of highly-skilled male workers in all the branches of engineering decreased in the period between March, 1928, and March, 1933, by 32.2 per cent., while the number of women increased by 7.8 per cent. A similar process is taking place to a greater or lesser extent in all branches of industry. Even if we take the total number of insured workers and employees, actually employed, we will see, that for the period between 1923 and 1933 the number of employed males has grown by a mere 0.5 per cent., while the number of employed women has grown by 16.7 per cent. If, in June, 1923, women

represented 27.4 per cent. of the total number of employed workers and employees, in June, 1933, they amounted to 30.4 per cent. of the total.

All these data about the growth of the relative importance of female labour give us reason to make a third conclusion about the nature of the structural changes in the working class of England: the decrease of employment in the principal branches of industry took place almost exclusively at the expense of males, whereas the growth of employment in unproductive branches of industry took place mainly in connection with female labour. The growth of employment of men on transport, in commerce and institutions, etc., was almost equal to the decrease of employment in the principal branches of industry. This fact, however, does not by any means imply a mutual compensation between these two processes for the working class of England. It shows great changes in the standard of living of considerable strata (approximately one half) of the proletariat connected with the main branches of industry. These strata are compelled to bear on their shoulders the heavy burden of unemployment and the wage-cuts.

The basic mass of the working class is divided into two large groups. The first group is in a particularly difficult situation owing to continued unemployment and low wages, and is in a very great degree in an impoverished condition, while the conditions of the second group are somewhat better. To the first group belong the unemployed, who live on the dole they receive from the state or from the municipalities, and the workers whose wages are so low that their conditions are not much better than those of the unemployed, that is to say, employed women and adolescents, who are usually paid from one-third to three-fifths of the wages received by men, and some categories of unskilled male workers, and also the workers employed short time. The second group includes workers who earn from 40 to 60 shillings per week, and embraces a considerable part of the workers employed in the heavy and export branches of industry.

Even such bourgeois economists as Siegfried, who call on British capitalism to reduce wages as a panacea for all evils, is forced to state in his work, "The Crisis of Britain in the Twentieth Century," that considerable sections of the working class in England, such as miners, engineers, shipbuilders, textile workers and others receive much lower wages than before the war. He likewise expresses his doubts about the much-boasted high standard of living of the British working class. True, according to Siegfried, the whole evil lies in the fact that English workers' wives are lazy and do not know how to economise. The

facts cited by Siegfried absolutely refute his theory. It is precisely in those branches, which, according to Siegfried, are the mainspring of the crisis, due, as he alleges, to high wages, that wages are considerably lower than in the sheltered trades which serve the home market.

According to the data of the investigation of the budgets of workers' families in London, carried out even before the crisis, and the "objectivity" of which is more than dubious, the number of workers' families living on the brink of squalor, with a budget below 40 shillings a week, varied from 15 to 25 per cent. in different regions of London. The second group of workers' families, consisting of unskilled workers, amounted from 37 to 52 per cent., the budget referring to average incomes of 40 to 60 shillings per week. It should be noted here that the investigation took place before the crisis, and, besides, the situation is better in London than in the rest of England, for the basic depressed and export branches of industry are comparatively poorly represented in London, while there is a big development here of transport, municipal enterprise as well as the new branches of industry, which give permanent employment to a considerably larger section of the workers than in the rest of England.

Hence, the relation of the section of the working class which has already been reduced to poverty to the section which still enjoys permanent employment is quite different throughout the whole of England from what it is in London. It may be assumed that in the whole of England not less than one-third of the basic trained proletariat finds itself in particularly difficult circumstances, whereas not less than one-half of the whole of the working class belongs to the second group, where earnings are somewhat higher than the unemployment dole. Hence it is clear that if, before the crisis, this second group of the working class was in a somewhat better position, the crisis has brought this group closer to the position of the first group which fell into poverty even before the crisis. Characteristic in this respect are the data from an investigation of the position of the workers in Sheffield.

In the winter of 1931-1932 an investigation was carried out in Sheffield into the position of workers' families there. It was found that one-third of the workers' families in Sheffield have an income below 42/6 a week, while another third has an income from 42/6 to 62/6, and the income of the remaining third is above 62/6.

The investigators established that one-fifth of the workers in Sheffield have an income which is not sufficient for a subsistence at a starvation minimum. In reality, however, a considerably greater number of workers' families, approxi-

mately from one quarter to one third of the total, are subject to systematic starvation.

The investigation bases its conclusions upon the extremely curtailed expenditures of the workers' families, which in reality are considerably higher. The investigators themselves make a reservation that their conclusions hold good only providing there is a good housekeeper in the workers' family, who maintains rigid economy, and if no money is spent on tobacco, newspapers, cinema, football excursions, drinks and so forth; but this is absolutely impossible to avoid altogether, even in starving families.

Hence the report admits that in addition to the number of starving workers' families (one-fifth) which they have established, there is a rather considerable amount of so-called "superfluous poverty," which is the result of certain expenditure being made on different wants, not accounted for by the investigators.

The most characteristic data provided by the investigation are those showing the source of the income of the workers' families. It appears that 35.3 per cent. of the total working population live on unemployment benefit, and 8.6 per cent. on poor relief. In addition to that a considerable section of the working population receive different kinds of pensions, such as old age, widows' and war pensions, etc. It goes without saying that in many cases one worker's family simultaneously receives several kinds of relief, or pension. The investigation established that the unemployment benefit received is not sufficient to cover even the most urgent needs, such is even the opinion of the investigators.

A family of two adults requires for its "minimum needs" (in reality this is starvation) 24/2 per week, while the "dole" amounts to 23/3. In proportion as the worker's family grows, the gap between the amount of the "dole" and the expenditures for minimum requirements grows more and more, since only two shillings a week are paid additionally for each child.

For a family consisting of two adults and four children of school age, the investigation establishes the sum required for expenditure on minimum needs as 39/8 per week, whereas the "dole" amounts to 31/3, the deficit of 8/5 being covered at the expense of starvation, it being impossible to cut down a number of various expenses. It is characteristic that the investigation established at the same time that the "average" rent amounts to 9s. per week, and that families which have an income below 40s. a week have to pay for their rent from one-quarter to one-third of their total income.

Having established all these facts, the investigators, nevertheless, come to the conclusion that

only two-thirds of the workers' families living on "doles" and pensions have a standard of living below the starvation minimum as fixed by them (the investigators). At the same time among the workers' families, whose standard of living is above this minimum, about 30 per cent. receive unemployment benefits, and over 25 per cent. receive all kinds of pensions and reliefs. These conclusions really prove the "objectivity" of this investigation. For while the inadequacy of the "dole" to satisfy the minimum requirements is a generally recognised fact, the investigators include a considerable number of workers' families which receive relief and pensions in the category whose living standard is above the starvation minimum. Reality is falsified here in an absolutely unadulterated manner. There is another feature of extreme importance disclosed by the investigators, namely, that while one-fifth of the workers' families live below the starvation minimum, the percentage of children in these families amounts to 31.7 per cent. of the total number of children. Thus, in Sheffield—the centre of the steel industry of England—nearly one-third of the total number of children in the families of the workers are living in the state of starvation.

* * *

By exploiting the whole world, British capitalism was in a position to bribe indirectly, and not infrequently directly, the upper layer of the working class, and the leaders of trade unions in particular. Marx and Engels repeatedly pointed this out.

Engels spoke repeatedly of the bourgeois proletariat in England — the upper stratum of the working class, which utilises England's industrial and colonial monopoly on the world market, receiving "lasting advantages" from this monopoly, while the "broad masses at best enjoyed merely a short-lived improvement."

Lenin formulated the changes which were introduced by imperialism into the position of the working class, as follows:—

"The trusts, the financial oligarchy, the high cost of living, and so forth, while *allowing* of the bribery of a handful of the upper strata, press, crush, ruin and torture the *mass* of the proletariat and semi-proletariat ever more and more."

In the pre-war period the principal ground of the workers' aristocracy was that of the workers engaged in the export branches of industry, chiefly heavy industry. The engineers, shipbuilders, miners, etc., who received the highest wages, constituted the basis upon which British "trade-unionism" and reformism grew.

As Lenin repeatedly pointed out, the upper strata of the workers in the heavy industry were a concrete object sought out for corruption by

British imperialism, who cast the crumbs of their enormous profits to these upper strata.

"... Capitalism" — wrote Lenin — "singled out at present a *handful* . . . of particularly rich and powerful states, who are robbing the whole world by a mere clipping of coupons. The export of capital brings an income of 8 to 10 billion francs per annum at pre-war prices, according to pre-war bourgeois statistics. It is, of course, much higher now. It is understandable that these gigantic *super profits* (for they are obtained over and above the profits squeezed out by the capitalists from the workers of their 'own' country) *make it possible* to bribe the leaders of the workers and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And the capitalists of the 'advanced' countries do bribe them—they bribe them in thousands of ways—direct and indirect, open and concealed.

"This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, or 'labour aristocracy,' are quite philistines in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings, in their world outlook; they constitute the chief bulwark of the Second International, and in our days are the main *social* (not military) *bulwark of the bourgeoisie*. For they are the real *agents of the bourgeoisie in the Labour* movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, the real promoters of reformism and chauvinism. In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, they will inevitably side with the bourgeoisie, and not in small numbers either, they will take the side of the 'Versaillians' against the 'communards'." (Lenin, "Imperialism.")

The following estimate of opportunism given by Lenin is more true of England than of any other country :—

"Opportunism . . . has finally matured, it is over-ripe, and gone rotten in a number of countries, having become completely merged with the bourgeois policy, as social-chauvinism" (Lenin, "Imperialism.")

In the last 10-15 years new strata of labour aristocracy have begun to stand out ever more distinctly in England.

These strata are, on the one hand, characterised by their very high earnings, and, on the other hand, by the fact that they are most firmly planted in production.

As a result of these factors the yearly income of these strata is considerably higher than that of the majority of workers. These new strata of the labour aristocracy are chiefly employed in the printing industry, in municipal enterprise, in road and rail transport, and in the food and automobile industry.

For England the post-war period is characterised by large investments made in municipal economy. The considerable means allotted to the municipalities from the state budget, the large investments in separate branches of municipal economy, namely electric power and gas supply, transport, etc., were bound to give rise to new strata of the labour aristocracy, who receive the highest wages, which are regular.

In addition to this, we observe the formation of new strata of labour aristocracy in connection with rationalisation.

In addition to ousting skilled labour, rationalisation results in attaching to production a small and narrow group of rate-fixers, supervisors, and adjusters, who are placed in a privileged position by the employers as compared with the majority of workers. These changes in the position of the various strata of the working class are reflected in the great change in the structure of the income of considerable strata of the working class.

The parasitic degeneration of English capitalism has resulted in the very serious decline of the old branches of heavy industry, the further result of the latter being that the one-time base of the labour aristocracy has been undermined. For the sake of comparison we give below the wage rate before the war and at the present time of several typical branches of the light and heavy industries :—

Trained Workers	Weekly wage rates		Percentage Increase in nominal wages*	Actual money earnings in Oct., 1931
	4th Aug., 1914	31st Dec., 1933		
Typesetters	35/8	73/10	107	93/2
Bookbinders	33/11	73/7	117	68/1
Furniture makers	37/5	67/11	81	60/6
Metal workers	41/8	62/4	50	52/6
Shipbuilders	41/7	60/-	44	51/10
Builders	39/8	65/5	35	58/6

This table shows that if before the war the wage rates of the workers in certain branches of the light industry were below those of the heavy industry, it is quite the contrary at the present time.

In actual fact, weekly earnings are also higher in the first group than in the second. If in addition to this we add the existence of heavy unemployment in the heavy industry, which reduces the annual income of the workers to an enormous

degree, it becomes quite clear that the conditions of the first group of workers is considerably better than that of the second group, which constituted the basis of the labour aristocracy before the war. Nothing but a memory remains now of the one-time high standard of living enjoyed by the majority of these strata of workers.

It goes without saying that a very limited sec-

*The rise in the cost of living must be borne in mind when estimating real wages.

tion of the workers in these branches of industry still continue to enjoy certain privileges, but this can never be of such serious importance as previously.

The workers who have comparatively fair earnings, and who now constitute the base for the new strata of the labour aristocracy, are precisely the workers employed in those branches, whose development is characteristic for English capitalism in the epoch of its decline.

We give below the table of the number of workers who actually receive over three pounds a week (or 60 shillings) according to the same census of October, 1931:—

	Average earnings of male workers	Number of workers
Newspaper typesetters ...	93/2	31,161
Furriers	73/7	1,369
Workers in the canals, docks and harbours ...	71/7	28,122
Printers and bookbinders	68/1	49,006
Tailors	67/1	2,161
Tramway and bus workers	66/10	156,808
Cement workers	65/3	9,896
Sugar refiners	66/10	13,605
Railway (shopmen) ...	64/-	114,888
Electricians	64/2	48,805
Railwaymen (service and track)	63/7	382,443
Furniture assemblers ...	65/5	9,156
Gas workers	63/2	53,867
Confectioners (cocoa, chocolate)	63/-	14,862
Cardboard makers	62/3	5,095
Tin workers	62/2	32,888
Flour mill workers	61/9	15,328
Chauffeurs	61/8	90,133
Tailors (ready-made clothes)	61/1	3,852
House workers (heating and machinery)	60/7	6,777
Workers in musical instrument factories	60/6	5,258
Municipal workers (water supply)	60/3	19,484
Silk industry workers (natural and artificial silk)	60/1	14,789

This table gives the "average" actual earnings of male workers. It is quite clear therefore that there are certain deviations in both directions from this "average," so that the real labour aristocracy constitutes only a part of the groups of workers mentioned in this table. Thus, for instance, among the railwaymen, 120 thousand workers are paid less than 50 shillings a week, just as there is a considerable number of workers

who receive low wages among the other groups as well.

The sharp policy of protectionism operated by the "National" government, particularly with regard to metallurgy, and the tempestuous growth of armaments has resulted in a certain improvement in the conditions of certain branches of industry during the last year, especially of those which are of direct or indirect war importance.

Thus, for instance, according to the data issued by metallurgical manufacturers, the number of workers employed in metallurgy has grown in the last year and a half from 81,000 to 111,000, while average earnings have increased from 54/- to 61/6.

A similar process is taking place in the chemical, automobile and aviation industries.

The improvement of conditions in the ship-building industry is considerably weaker. Here the number of employed workers has increased from 67,000 to 79,000, whereas the number of unemployed still remains about 90,000. At the same time it should be noted that the employers have begun a new offensive against wages, under cover of the electrification of certain processes of production which employ the most qualified workers. A certain improvement in the conditions of certain sections of the working class, which is the result of the passage to depression, and a livening up in a number of branches of industry, especially of war importance, is taking place on the background of a further worsening of the position of the overwhelming majority of the working class.

The systematic growth of destitution and pauperism among the working masses is indirectly reflected in the official statistics which mark the number of people receiving Poor Law relief.

Simultaneously there is an increase both relatively and absolutely in the number of unemployed who have been out of work for a long period.

The new Unemployment Bill ratified by Parliament virtually means the abolition of unemployment insurance for a considerable majority of the working class. Agrarian protectionism is resulting in an increase of the prices of food products, which considerably curtails the consumption of the basic mass of the working class.

On the basis of the above described processes of structural changes going on in the working class for the last decade, considerable political changes have occurred in the British working-class movement. An ever-growing fermentation is embracing the workers in the regions of heavy industry, where the influence of the Communist Party is growing slowly but surely. At the 1931 elections in Scotland, in the seven electoral districts where the candidates of the Communist

Party were nominated, over 30 per cent. of the electors gave their votes to the Communist Party. In South Wales the Communist Party received up to 25 per cent. of votes cast in certain districts. The municipal elections in 1934 have shown a considerable growth in the influence of the Communist Party, expressed in the fact that its candidates received over one-third of the votes cast in a number of working-class areas. The influence of the revolutionary opposition is growing ever greater in the South Wales Miners' Federation. The candidature of Horner for the post of vice-president of the S.W.M.F. received over 40,000 votes, only a few thousand votes less than the reformist candidate received.

All these facts show that the regions of heavy industry are beginning to lose their rôle as a basis for opportunism. It goes without saying that the speed at which this departure from opportunism proceeds depends first and foremost from the skilled work of our Party. But we may point out, for instance, the fact that the influence of the Communist Party is very weak in Durham, which is one of the most important regions of heavy industry, although the ground for work there is not worse than in the other regions. The same is true of Lancashire. Very considerable strata of workers have already broken with reformism, but have not as yet come over to the camp of Communism. The tactics of the united front, successfully promoted by the Communist Party, enjoy considerable success among these workers. The fate of the I.L.P., where a strong process of differentiation is taking place, is of great importance in the winning over of these strata of workers.

Along with these processes of the revolutionisation of considerable strata of the British working class, new movements have been noted, as shown by the departure of considerable numbers of workers from the open bourgeois parties who belong to the upper strata, and who are now passing over to reformism. In England two-thirds of the total number of voters are workers, and a considerable number of them, even now, vote for the Conservatives or for the Liberals. The acute discontent in the country at the policy of the "National" Government has made it possible for the "Labour" Party to win over a section of these strata of workers to its side. The recent municipal elections, particularly in London, have shown the growth of reformism in the southern part of England, where, until recently, the most privileged upper strata of the working class followed the Conservatives or the Liberals, while frequently being members at the same time of trade unions affiliated to the "Labour" Party.

Two tendencies are becoming ever more clearly

disclosed among the ruling classes in England, namely, the growth of "Fascist" tendencies on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the inclination of the moderate wing of the bourgeoisie to admit the Labourists to power.

The Labour Party long ago took up the position of third bourgeois party in England, and has now really become the second bourgeois party, and for this reason its advent to power presents no danger to the bourgeoisie, who are quite well aware that the Labourists are just as much afraid of the ever-growing revolutionisation of the masses as they are themselves.

Nevertheless, the possibility is not excluded that at the very moment of a Labour victory at the elections, a more open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie will be proclaimed which will be a transitory step to fascism.

In the conditions of the powerful aggravation of class contradictions in the country it is the task of the Communist Party to achieve a maximum extension of its influence primarily in the most important industrial districts of the country. It is here that the whole attention and all the efforts of the party should be concentrated.

The party will never be able to score any serious successes in its work unless it sets up strong organisations in these most important districts. It has only been by means of persistent work in gathering cadres together that certain successes have been scored in South Wales and in Scotland. The whole party must help in carrying out similar work in the other most important regions as well.

Unless the party sets up such a network of organisations, it will be compelled to start its work from the beginning on each occasion even if it is successful in leading various strikes.

The whole activity of the party must be reconstructed to correspond to this task. The party press must devote more attention to these regions by regularly publishing pages devoted to the work in these districts.

The party must do everything in its power in order to secure in the shortest possible time the creation of a strong organisation in such a region as Durham, for instance, to wrest the initiative out of the hands of the bourgeoisie and the priests, who pretend that they are waging a struggle for a way out of the blind alley of hunger and despair in which the working masses find themselves in this and other similar districts.

There can be no success in the struggle for leadership over the masses if the party merely concentrates all its attention on the current struggle of individual groups of workers and enterprises. This work must be done, but it must

not absorb all the forces of the party, otherwise the party will find itself at the mercy of spontaneous upheavals.

Cadres must be gathered together step by step, and their positions in the most important districts of the country strengthened, and then the partial struggles of the workers in one or the other dis-

trict or branch of industry will assume quite a different character and scope. Only by concentrating its attention and forces on the work in the most important industrial regions of the country such as Lancashire, Durham, Scotland, South Wales and so forth, will the Communist Party achieve big success.

WHY WE WERE VICTORIOUS IN HUNGARY AND WHY WE DID NOT MAINTAIN POWER

By BELA KUN.

FIFTEEN years ago, on March 21st, 1919, the proletarian revolution achieved victory in Hungary under peculiar circumstances. The peculiar feature of the establishment of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic was that the transition of State power into the hands of the proletariat did not take place directly in the form of an armed insurrection. In his speeches and written works, Lenin dealt repeatedly with the peculiar forms in which power was seized in Hungary. On March 23rd, 1919, at the 8th Congress of the R.C.P. (b), he emphasised these special features when he said that:

"We are sure that *this will be the last difficult six months*. We are specially strengthened in this belief by the information which we gave to the congress a few days ago regarding the victory of the proletarian revolution in Hungary. Seeing that the allied powers wanted to carry their troops through Hungary, seeing that the untold burden of a new war was falling on Hungary once again, the bourgeois government, the conciliatory bourgeois government resigned, and entered into negotiations with the Communists, the Hungarian comrades who were in prison, and itself recognised that there was no alternative but to hand the power over to the toiling people."

Lenin was completely alien to the point of view adopted by Paul Levi, the then leader of the German Communists, and by many others with him, that the Hungarian proletariat should not have utilised this breakdown of the power of the bourgeoisie to take power into their hands. On the contrary, Lenin repeatedly expressed the viewpoint that the victory of the proletariat in Hungary, which assumed such special forms, meant not only the victory of Soviet power in general, but also our "moral victory."

He returns to this idea again in his speech on April 3rd, 1919:

"This is why the Hungarian revolution, by the fact that it was born in a different way from ours, shows the whole world something that was hidden in respect to Russia, namely that Bolshevism is linked up with a new proletarian workers' democracy which takes the place of the old parliament."

The special and peculiar features of the Hungarian proletarian revolution after its defeat in

1919 gave rise to the opinion among many people, even among Communists, that on March 21st power dropped like a ripe fruit into the hands of the Communist Party, into the hands of the proletariat, without a struggle. This view was widely spread by the Second International, especially by Austrian and German social-democracy. These social-democratic parties tried to convince the working class that the victory of the Hungarian proletarian revolution and the establishment of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic were nothing but the purest "chance," a manoeuvre on the part of the Hungarian bourgeoisie to counteract the imperialism of the Entente and a big *historic mistake on the part of Hungarian social-democracy*.

Such views can occasionally be met with in Communist circles as well. Instead of disclosing the mistakes committed by the Communist Party in the Hungarian proletarian revolution during and after the seizure of power, these comrades depict the proletarian revolution as one long mistake. Such an attitude is also exceptionally useful for slandering the heroic struggle which the Communist Party of Hungary carried on against the Hungarian bourgeoisie, against Hungarian social-democracy, against world imperialism, and for Soviet power, before March 21st, 1919.

When, through Colonel Wicks, the head of the French military mission, the imperialist powers of the Entente delivered their famous ultimatum to the bourgeois democratic government, in which they demanded the surrender of the greater part of the territory of Hungary, they really drove the bourgeoisie into an impasse, and forced them to surrender their power over more than ten million Hungarians and their control over the richest markets for their goods and the chief sources of raw material for Hungarian industry. In other words, Entente imperialism invited the Hungarian bourgeoisie to give up the greater part of their political and economic power. This ultimatum, which was backed by the Balkan army of the

Entente (200-220,000 troops under General Franche d'Espere, whose staff headquarters was in Belgrade), by the military power of Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia, and Roumania, was in reality a demand that the Hungarian bourgeoisie should abandon power altogether in favour of the Roumanian, Czech and Servian bourgeoisie.

But the power of the Hungarian bourgeoisie was threatened not only by the danger from without, in the shape of the Entente ultimatum. This bourgeois power, which was shattered by military collapse, which had no considerable armed support, and which had to a great extent lost its mass basis, was faced inside the country with the opposition of the proletarian masses in alliance with still greater masses of peasants, under the leadership of the Young Communist Party of Hungary.

The C.P. of Hungary, which we had founded on November 21st, 1918, about 4½ months before the seizure of power, raised the question from the first moment of its activity of Soviet power and the armed uprising against the bourgeois state, with a clarity and sharpness equalled by no Communist Party but the Russian. The every-day slogans used in the agitation of the C.P. of Hungary were that the bourgeoisie be disarmed, that the proletariat be armed and that preparations should be made for the armed insurrection.

But the Party not only proclaimed the slogan, calling for the proletariat to be armed, it also organised and prepared the fulfilment of this task by its every-day work. The headquarters of the C.C. of the C.P. of Hungary, which were situated on Visegrad Street, were not only a staff leading widespread mass work for the arming of the proletariat, but bore a strong resemblance to an armed camp. The bourgeoisie had no single military formation, no single armed organisation, whether army, national guard, popular guard, etc., where the Communist Party did not have its organisations, and in many cases decisive influence as well. The Party leaders and the Party organisations took advantage of every incident to increase their stores of arms. The slogan was issued that the demobilised soldiers should not give up their arms in the barracks. The Communist Party expropriated no fewer than 35,000 rifles from the Mackensen army which returned from the Balkans to Germany through Hungary. It was only when imperialist intervention began against Soviet Hungary that we handed these arms over to the war commissariat. Not only did the Communist Party carry on an anti-imperialist campaign in the barracks and among the armed formations of the bourgeois democratic government. As an offset to the radical pacifist agitation of the social-democrats, one of the advocates of which, the war minister of the Barolia Government, proclaimed the slogan, "I don't want to

see any soldiers again," the Communist Party launched the slogan for the soldiers: "Keep your arms and use them for the struggle for the power of the proletariat." The objective of the agitational and organisational work of the Communist Party was to attract the soldiers to the side of the revolution, to win over to the revolution all the military formations of the government (with the exception of the police). The Communist Party had its agitational points everywhere, from the war ministry to the troops guarding the frontier line, and kept contacts with the soldiers everywhere. In many cases these contacts did not have a definite organisational form, but nevertheless they showed that the Communist Party had not only agitational influence on the armed forces, but was the leader of considerable masses of soldiers at many and frequently decisive points.

Without wavering, the Communist Party decisively turned down all proposals, no matter from whence they came, to establish some intermediate form of government for the time being, instead of the intermediate establishment of the Soviet power. The leaders of the bourgeois democratic revolution besieged the Communist Party with proposals from the first day of its formation, trying by means of a compromise with the Communist Party to reach a temporary solution, a *modus vivendi*, in the struggle with the external enemy. When through his intermediaries the President of the Republic, Michael Karolya, offered the war ministry in the provisional democratic-republican government to the Communist Party, the latter sharply rejected the proposal. When two of the most prominent representatives of the social-democratic party, Sigmund Kunfi and Jakob Weltner, made a proposal that we stop our "disorganising" work, at least among the troops stationed on the frontier line against the Roumanian and Czecho-Slovakian imperialists, we replied that we could only carry on negotiations with such people on one question, namely, the reconstruction of the workers' councils in such a way that they would cease to be organs for the wide representation of the social-democratic party and the reformist trade unions, i.e., on the question of the election of the councils on a factory basis. We wanted to carry on a struggle for the majority of the working class inside the councils, without, however, submitting the question of power to the decision even of the workers' councils. On the instructions of the C.C., the representatives of the Communist Party in the workers' councils under the leadership of Comrade Bela Vago, categorically rejected all attempts to form a so-called "labour government," a "pure social-democratic government." These attempts were made by the left social-democrats, who wanted to direct the strivings of the workers

towards Soviet power into their own channels. In reply to these attempts we put forward our demands in which we demanded the immediate formation of a Soviet government.

In carrying on the struggle for Soviet power, the Communist Party did not allow itself to be restricted by any bounds of bourgeois law. The Communist Party did not restrict its struggle for power, even when the Entente, with the consent of the bourgeois democratic government and its social-democratic members brought Spahi troops from the Balkan army to Budapest. On the contrary, the Communist Party immediately developed agitation among these troops, and not without success.

From the first day of the foundation of the Communist Party and up to the taking of power, ever more frequent armed clashes took place with the organs of the bourgeois government. Beginning from December 12th, 1919, when the Budapest garrison came out on to the streets in an armed demonstration against the war minister of the provisional government (the left social-democratic leaders of the council of soldiers' deputies took part in this demonstration), there was probably not a single day in which the press did not report some bloody skirmish between revolutionary workers and soldiers and the armed detachments of the government forces, especially the police. Not only in Budapest, but also in the provinces, the Communists organised mutinies and risings one after another. On December 25th, 1918, the revolutionary-minded Hussars in Kechkemet occupied the barracks and disarmed the officers. On December 26th there were bloody clashes between the workers and the armed forces of the government, in which a number were killed and wounded. On December 31st, bloody clashes took place again between the units under Communist influence and units loyal to the government in two of the biggest barracks in Budapest. These clashes were accompanied by armed demonstrations of the soldiers against the government and the social-democrats. In January, 1919, mass demonstrations began in Budapest under the leadership of the Communists against the bourgeois press, and the editorial offices and the publishing houses of the bourgeois papers were wrecked. At the same time in the biggest factories in Budapest and the provinces there began the forcible removal of the managers from the factories, and in many cases the seizure of the factories. In the centre of the coal basin, in Shalgotorian, an armed uprising broke out, as a result of which 16 persons were killed and almost 100 wounded. Soon after this, in Sarvash, in one of the agrarian centres of the province, the farm workers took part in street fights, as a result of which 10 persons were killed and over 40 wounded.

In the second half of January, 1919, armed conflicts in Budapest and in the provinces continued and became more and more frequent. In the barracks the soldiers began to offer armed resistance to the orders issued by the war minister for the disarming of soldiers, chiefly the youth, who were under Communist influence. After bloody fighting, the Communists were able to retain their arms.

One after another there followed armed demonstrations of demobilised soldiers, wounded soldiers, and non-commissioned officers. The Communist Party redoubled its energy and prepared the organisation of the armed forces against the bourgeois democratic government and against the monarchist counter-revolution of the big landlords.

Along with the slogan of the seizure of the factories, the Communist Party launched the slogan of the seizure of dwelling houses. February saw the beginning of the seizure of big estates by agricultural workers, in many places under the leadership of the Communist organisations of the industrial centres in the province.

On February 21st, the armed masses demonstrated before the premises of the C.C. and the central organ of the social-democratic party. In the conflict that ensued seven persons were killed and many injured (most of them were police and national guards). In March there began the disarming of the police and the loyal military units in many places. The government was helpless against the organisations composed of demobilised soldiers, which soon had hundreds of thousands of members, and against the organisations of the unemployed. At about the same time, at the beginning of March, the end of the power of the employers in the factories came. In the biggest of them the orders began to be given by factory committees, and, moreover, these factory committees were elected and acted not on a "legal" basis but on the basis of revolutionary law.

At the same time, when the Entente demanded in the so-called Wicks Note that the Hungarian government should abandon its power over a large part of the territory of Hungary, the social-democrat, Wilhelm Böhm, characterised the feelings of the workers on March 18th, 19th and 20th almost as though he was making entries in his diary :

"March 18th. In the name (but without the knowledge) of the workers of the Chepelev factory (the biggest factory in Hungary at that time, employing 40,000 workers), the factory representatives were called together, who decided that on March 28th they would liberate those Communists who had been imprisoned by armed force. The board of representatives of the Communist soldiers approved of this decision.

"March 19th. The workers of Budapest held a meeting

in Tattersall. From this point several thousands of people went to Burg. A delegation was sent to the social-democratic minister, Julius Peidlu, with the demand for the payment of 500 kron as an immediate grant and in addition special food cards by which the unemployed would receive a 50 per cent. reduction at government expense. They demanded the payment of their rent by the government and the immediate socialisation of the land and the means of production. The delegation was led by Communists. For hours they stood before the ministry of Social Relief stating that they would not go until their demands were granted.

"It was only possible to scatter the masses when Peidlu promised to present the demands of the unemployed to the council of ministers for consideration. He invited a delegation to come to the offices of the council of ministers in the evening to receive a reply.

"March 20th. In Budapest, the printers, who hitherto have been the most disciplined and reliable section of the workers from the socialist point of view, declared a general strike against the will of their leaders owing to discrepancies in wage-rates. The old leaders who had worked for tens of years and with whom the workers had been so satisfied, were removed. New strike leaders were elected, among whom the Communists had the decisive influence. A large section of the strikers want to forcibly prevent the appearance of the social-democratic papers. Owing to the absence of papers, the most fantastic rumours are spreading round the excited town, raising this excitement to the point of madness.

"Note of Colonel Wicks."

From this short extract it can be seen that not only was the Communist Party of Hungary taking a firm, unwavering and direct line for the armed insurrection, for the armed suppression and destruction of the power of the bourgeoisie, for the proletarian dictatorship, but it was actually putting this line into practice in its every-day work in the struggle for power. The Communist Party not only kept its storehouses full of arms, but used these arms in the every-day class struggle for power! The leading rôle of the Party, even after the arrest of the majority of the leaders on February 21st, 1919, was not interrupted for a minute. For several days the members of the C.C. who had not been arrested maintained the leadership. But we soon arranged to carry on the leadership of the workers and the poor peasants from prison. This leading work was so successful that, in spite of the pogrom organised by social-democracy on February 21st, when 200,000 people demonstrated against the Communists, the mass influence of the Communist Party grew day by day.

Of course, this mass influence was by no means sufficiently organised. But in the course of the four and a half months which had passed between the foundation of the Communist Party and establishment of the Soviet power, it was impossible to fully consolidate organisationally such a gigantic and tempestuously growing mass influence, even if we had possessed numerically large and more developed Bolshevik cadres than we actually

had. But thanks to the correct political and organisational line of the Party, we were able, even during this short period, to extend our political influence to the wide masses, at any rate in Budapest and in all the industrial centres in the provinces. This was due primarily to the fact that from the very first day of its existence the C.P. of Hungary clearly realised that it would obtain influence on the working class only if it developed its agitational and organisational work first and foremost in the big factories and the trade unions. And in reality, the factory and trade union work of the C.P. of Hungary was not only shown in resolutions, but also in practical work.

The territorial organisations in the C.P. of Hungary played a very insignificant rôle. The main centre of the agitational and organisational work was transferred to the factory organisations (they were not called cells at that time). There was never a day or any outstanding event on which the entire agitational guard of the Communist Party failed to turn up at the chief factories to call the workers to the struggle. The so-called "flying agitational detachments" penetrated even into those factories where we had no contacts whatever. For this purpose they came to the factory gates and held "impromptu open-air meetings" at the end of the working day. In the course of the four and a half months of a revolutionary struggle which passed between the foundation of the Party and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, there was never a single mass action carried through by the working class in which the demands brought forward were not formulated by the Communists, or which was not led by Communist groups. The Party attached the greatest importance to partial demands and partial struggles, and was able to link them up with the slogan of the struggle for power.

Beginning from the time it was founded, the C.P. tried to fix its influence deep in the trade unions. Neither the trade union bureaucrats nor the authorities succeeded in driving it from the trade unions. With the most incredible stubbornness, the Party was able to prevent the trade union bureaucrats splitting the trade unions by expelling the Communists and revolutionary workers. The majority of the Party leaders fought mercilessly against the proposal of the minority, who, quoting the example of the Spartacists, wanted to boycott the trade unions.

In addition, the mass organisations formed around the unemployed committees attached to the trade unions and the points where the unemployed gathered together, as well as in the organisations of demobilised soldiers and non-commis-

sioned officers, served as transmission belts for mass work.

Behind the armed workers and soldiers stood the broad masses of workers and poor peasants, while the Hungarian bourgeoisie, whose only mass basis consisted almost entirely of social-democracy, found itself between two fires, namely, the cross fire of the Entente ultimatum on the one hand, and the working class struggling for power, on the other hand.

THE CO-RELATION OF CLASS FORCES IN HUNGARY ON THE EVE AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

The organisation of the counter-revolution was begun under the leadership of the big landlords and the bourgeoisie directly before the outbreak of the proletarian revolution; it was chiefly under anti-Communist slogans, but was also partly directed against social-democracy. As the result of the war, the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie were politically, economically and organisationally bankrupt. They had lost a large part of their social connections with those petty-bourgeois and peasant masses who formerly constituted their mass basis.

Almost all the ruling groups of the old Hungary were united in the Party which was obviously the leader of the bourgeois revolution, namely, the Karolya Party, at the time when the bourgeois-democratic revolution began. These elements were chiefly groups without any orientation and without any mass following. The danger of a Soviet government, the waverings of the Karolya government and the helplessness of the National Council which symbolised the government (being the symbol of the power of the National Council), soon caused differentiation inside the Karolya Party. One group of old politicians, Count Stefan Bethlem, Count Theodor Batayani and Martin Lovaschi, tried to form a rallying point with a view to crystallising the counter-revolutionary forces of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie. They wanted to bring the country as rapidly as possible to the point of calling a constituent assembly, and thus bar the path to the further development of the revolution. Some of the officers led by the present Prime Minister, Julius Gembesh, joined them. They tried to take complete possession of, to monopolise, so to speak, the propaganda of the slogan, spread by all the bourgeois parties and by social-democracy, namely, of the "territorial integrity of Great Hungary." The higher clergy, who were at the head of the organisations of the clerical counter-revolution, also hurried to their assistance. The counter-revolutionary big landlords and the big bourgeoisie proceeded to build up mass organisations. They tried to create their own organisa-

tion, "Awakening Hungary," which later, after the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship, played a big part, and which was composed mainly of unemployed intellectuals, students and partly of the urban petty-bourgeoisie who had fled from the Entente troops in occupation.

The Communist Party promptly understood the entire significance of the counter-revolution being organised by the old rulers of Hungary. Social-democracy, however, including its members who held ministerial posts and all the social-democratic leaders, tried to belittle the meaning of this counter-revolutionary movement to the masses, although it was directed not only against the Communists, but also against "excesses of democracy." Under the leadership of the Communist Party, broad masses of members of the social-democratic party participated in the struggle against the counter-revolutionary organisations and made it impossible for them to carry on any mass actions in the capital and in the industrial centres.

The petty-bourgeoisie were also disorganised when the bourgeois-democratic revolution broke out. The old leader of the democratic party, Wilhelm Vapsoni, had disorganised the petty-bourgeoisie even during the war by his extremist policy of supporting the war to the bitter end, and his support of the Hapsburg dynasty. The doctrinaire and politically inexperienced group of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia, estranged from real life, led by the minister, Oster Yassi, tried to organise the urban petty-bourgeoisie into a radical party. A struggle for influence over the petty-bourgeoisie, and especially over the office workers and officials began between the Karolya Party, the radicals and the social-democrats. In this struggle victory was attained in the capital by social-democracy, but in the provinces the Karolya Party was the victor. The radical party broke to pieces in the process of this struggle and was compelled to dissolve itself on the eve of the victory of the proletarian dictatorship.

The Karolya Party became the rallying point of the upper and middle sections of the peasants. A large section of the bureaucracy was compelled to join it, without, however, having any confidence in the Karolya Party. A large section of the intelligentsia which attributed the destruction of Hungary, with its twenty million inhabitants, to Count Karolya did not support his party in practice owing to this reason alone. This distrust in this party increased still more because it did not call for determined action against the Entente. The intelligentsia did not see any force either inside or outside this party, which was in a position to defend the inviolability of Hungary against Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia and Roumania, on

the one hand, and, on the other hand, to repulse the working class and defend capitalism.

Counter-revolution placed its greatest hopes on social-democracy in the struggle against the Communist Party. The broad masses of the petty-bourgeoisie, the officials and even the officers, gravitated towards the social-democratic party. The lower and middle ranks of the officers, police and the gendarmes were organised in the social-democratic party. Thus they tried to save themselves from the consequences of the rage and fury which had accumulated among the masses during the war and from the mass terror. But social-democracy was very much weakened by the fact that inside its own organisations there had broken out a struggle between revolution and counter-revolution. The industrial workers, farm workers and poor peasants continued to carry on the class struggle even inside the social-democratic party organisations, against the bourgeois and democratic elements which had flooded the ranks of social-democracy and on which the social-democratic party leaders relied. This circumstance greatly weakened the social-democratic party and the trade union bureaucrats.

It is true that the left social-democrats tried everything that was possible and impossible against the Communists. They participated in pogroms and the harrying of Communists, but in those heated times these did a great deal to cause the social-democratic leaders to lose influence over the masses in view of their own internal disorganisation. But they were unable to act decisively against the proletarian revolution. The leaders of the left social-democrats, under the pressure of the masses, were compelled to declare that the social-democratic party would dissolve the Constituent Assembly if they did not obtain a social-democratic majority in it. On the one hand this frightened the bourgeoisie, and on the other hand it put a weapon in the hands of the Communist Party for agitation against the Constituent Assembly and for the Soviet power. The rôle of the left social-democrats at that time was to weaken the counter-revolution somewhat, though to some extent against their own will, and to hinder its effectiveness.

At that time the Hungarian bourgeoisie had not yet been able to organise international contacts for the support of their counter-revolution. On an international scale, social-democracy was the only hope of the Hungarian counter-revolution, which was striving to preserve the territorial integrity of Hungary so as to be able to continue as hitherto its fierce oppression of the toiling masses of the national minorities, including Roumanians, Slovaks, Serbs and Horwadians. At the conference called to reconstitute the Second

International, the Hungarian social-democrats had nevertheless no success in their efforts to rouse their comrades from the victorious countries "to adopt a better attitude towards democratic Hungary."

Austrian social-democracy gave extensive support to the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries not only after the victory of the proletarian revolution but also before it took place, and in Vienna gave them wide rights of refuge. But the Austrian social-democrats at that time were occupied in crushing the strivings of the working masses towards the proletarian revolution. The German bourgeoisie only saw a perfidious ally in the Hungarian bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie of the Entente were not at all inclined to be indulgent towards Count Karolya for his sympathy towards the Entente during the war, and from the very beginning refused him any support. The Hungarian bourgeoisie were carrying on a fierce struggle against the bourgeoisie of the neighbouring countries (Roumania, Czecho-Slovakia and Yugo-Slavia).

The majority of the industrial proletariat, under the leadership of the Communist Party, wanted to place a knife at the throat of capitalism, and tried to pass directly to socialism. The farm workers and agricultural labourers on the big estates began to divide up the estates, a deed which the Karolya government could not at all make up its mind to do. And the peasants with their tiny farms, as well as the poor and middle peasants and even a considerable part of the kulaks, were hostile to the big landlords.

The apparatus of the bourgeois power was utterly disorganised and finally collapsed. In a number of provincial towns the workers removed the commissars of the Provisional Government, threw the officials on to the streets, and formed a directorate for administering the government, for the direction of the government in the locality. The national council itself ceased its spectral existence. The reorganisation of the military forces on the model adopted by Austrian social-democracy in the shape of a "trade union army" was disrupted by the mass actions and the agitation of the Communist Party. The gendarmes and other special military formations still wavered between bourgeois-landlord counter-revolution and fear of the Communists, but did not represent any serious support for the government.

Such was the situation when the Hungarian bourgeoisie were brought up against the alternatives of either resigning and abandoning the power to the Entente and its hirelings, the Czecho-Slovakian, Yugo-Slavian and Roumanian bourgeoisie, or of handing power over to the working class. Social-democracy, as the main social but-

tress of the bourgeoisie—as well as all the other parties of the bourgeoisie—were faced with the same dilemma.

The compulsory choice took place under conditions when Sigmund Kunfi, one of the most prominent and most dangerous members of the social-democratic leadership, said that “the government had in fact already ceased to exist, while the social-democrats were faced with the choice of either playing the rôle of Noske or of capitulating to the Communists.”

But Hungarian social-democracy did not take on itself the rôle of Noske towards the Communist Party and the revolutionary workers, simply because in the given circumstances it had not the strength to do so. It was precisely organised armed force which they were lacking, and not the moral or political boldness needed to fulfil the rôle of Noske. Therefore, when the bourgeoisie were faced with the question of surrendering power, social-democracy was also forced to sign the Communist programme, which had the backing not only of the newly-formed Communist Party, but also of the broad masses of the working class and a considerable part of the armed forces. The Communist platform was supported by force of arms, while the bourgeoisie at the same time was being squeezed also from the other side by the Entente imperialists.

The Hungarian bourgeoisie, the pillar of the conquered Mid-European imperialist group, would have tried to change their orientation to the imperialism of the Entente so as to raise their heads once again. But the reply to this effort was the Wicks Note demanding the partition of Hungary, the seizure not only of the greater part of the sphere of influence of the Hungarian bourgeoisie, but also the plunder of big territories really inhabited by Magyars. The Hungarian bourgeoisie tried to reply to the Wicks Note by an “orientation on the East,” but they were unable to carry this out as the ruling class. They had not the strength, which had been drained from them by their constrained position between the pressure of Entente imperialism and the onslaught of the proletarian revolution. The reply of the social-democratic party to the Wicks Note was to accept the platform of the C.P. of Hungary, which simultaneously meant the acceptance of the Soviet power as the basis of the new government. Hungarian social-democracy carried out this turn also between two fires, namely, under the pressure of the imperialism of the Entente on the one hand, and under the pressure of the revolutionary movement of the members of its own party and trade unions, who were under Communist influence, on the other.

This is the reason why the proletariat of Hun-

gary won power without an armed insurrection, and established the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic. But although it was without an armed rising, nevertheless it was not without arms and not without armed fighting. The bourgeoisie by no means brought power to the working class as a present. They were forced to abandon power when they had no means left to carry on the struggle for power.

WHY WERE WE UNABLE TO UTILISE OUR VICTORY?

The Communist Party of Hungary did not make the most dangerous of mistakes. It did not recoil in terror at the very threshold of power. In view of the existing international and inner political situation, it would have been extremely foolish to reply to the offer of the social-democrats to adopt the programme of the Communists, which made it possible to seize power, that we would wait at first until we could hurl ourselves with arms in our hands through the doors of the government which were already standing wide open. This type of reasoning, which was recommended to us by some of the leaders of the German Spartacists both before these events and afterwards, would not have helped the Hungarian proletariat to come to power and would have had no result except to compromise the Communist Party before the masses.

But, at the same time, the leaders of the Communist Party, and I myself, in the first place, made a mistake in regarding as genuine, to a considerable extent, the declarations of the social-democrats, who accepted the platform of the Communists, the proletarian dictatorship and the Soviet power in words. There is no doubt that the fall of Soviet power in Hungary was caused not only by the subjective mistakes of the Communist Party and its leaders, but also by the relationship of forces inside the country and outside it. But it is also beyond all doubt that the relationship of class forces inside the country, and partly even on an international scale, could have changed in favour of the Hungarian proletariat and their revolution, in favour of the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic, if we had not made the mistake of uniting with social-democracy, and, as a result of this, of abandoning the independence of the Communist Party.

This circumstance deprived the proletarian dictatorship in Hungary of its organised leading vanguard. This fatal historic mistake introduced the vacillations which later, in the course of the struggles, were bound to take possession of the toiling masses, the leaders themselves and the very existence of the government. Lenin pointed out this mistake a year after the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary in the following striking words :

"A number of articles in 'Rote Fahne' (Vienna) the central organ of the Austrian Communist Party, have disclosed one of the chief reasons for its doom, namely the treachery of the "Socialists" who in words came over to the side of Bela Kun and declared themselves to be Communists, but in reality carried out a policy which did not correspond to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but wavered, showed timidity, ran after the bourgeoisie, often directly sabotaged the proletarian revolution and betrayed it. The world powerful bandits of imperialism who surrounded the Hungarian Soviet Republic, i.e., the bourgeois governments of Great Britain, France, etc., were, of course, able to utilise these waverings in the government of Hungary and brutally crush it by the hands of the Rumanian hangmen!

"There is no doubt that some of the Hungarian Socialists sincerely came over to the side of Bela Kun and honestly declared themselves Communists. But the essence of the matter does not change in the least: They 'honestly' declared themselves to be honest Communists. But the essence of the matter was that instead of carrying on a mercilessly firm, unwaveringly determined, supremely bold and heroic policy (only such a policy corresponds to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat) they wavered and grew timid. Such a person can by his lack of character, his waverings and his indecision carry out the same treachery as a direct traitor does."

The leaders of the C.P. of Hungary (primarily that part of them who passed through the first stage at least of the school of Bolshevism in Soviet Russia before the Party was founded) did not waver, took up the position of forming an independent Communist Party and broke with the rights and the "left" social-democrats. In this respect we differed even during the war from the Luxemburgians, who could not understand the necessity of splitting with social-democracy and the necessity of establishing a Comintern. But when we were faced with the task of carrying out our correct views and principles in practice, in a new situation, it turned out that we were not capable of carrying this Bolshevik policy consistently, in a Marxian and Leninist manner, in opposition to the proposal of social-democracy to unite the two parties.

The Communist Party and its leaders consisted of extremely varied elements. Some of them gladly agreed to unification with the social-democrats, just as they had opposed the formation of the Communist Party in the hope that they would "improve" social-democracy, or because they considered the formation of an independent Communist Party to be premature. Others based themselves on various "syndicalist" considerations, holding the opinion that the Communist Party would not be needed at all as soon as the unity of the proletariat was established within the bounds of the Soviets. There were also those who later condemned unification mainly on the grounds that we should not have taken power under the given circumstances. In practice, however, when we accepted the proposal of the social-democrats regarding unification, we all, and I myself, above all, based ourselves in our reason-

ing on the incorrect, non-Marxian tactical assumption that if we could connect up with the troops of the Soviet Red Army which were already moving on Eastern Galicia (on March 18th it was announced by radio that the advance guard of the Red Army of the Soviet Republic had occupied Tarnopol), it would be possible to isolate the most unreliable of the social-democratic leaders who had not left their party when the parties united, as the Rights did. These tactics were non-Marxian, non-Leninist, because they were built not on facts but on possibilities, which might take place and might not, as was actually the case. In any case, the fact of unification with social-democracy was an indication of the political vacillations of the Communist leaders, who were politically young, had not sufficient experience and who were not sufficiently firm theoretically and in principle. These vacillations were primarily the result of the fact that the leaders did not weigh to the end and did not understand the rôle of centrism.

Our other mistakes, above all mistakes on the agrarian question, assisted in rendering the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic incapable of maintaining its power and repulsing the military forces cast against it by the Entente. However, the decisive mistake which deprived us of the power of changing the relationship of class forces in the international and internal struggle against the revolution in favour of the working class of Hungary was that we did not utilise our victory over social-democracy, when we had won its masses away from it, and driven it to capitulate to the Communist platform and the demand for the Soviet power. For the entire four and a half months a continuous struggle went on without stopping for a minute inside the united party and inside the Soviet government. The leading Communists all took a share to a greater or less degree in this struggle against the social-democratic leaders. But the leaders of the extreme left-wing of social-democracy, with very few exceptions, among whom chief mention should be made of Comrade Eugenie Varga, continued to carry out their previous rôle under the Soviet power also. In many respects they became the chief obstacle preventing the Communists from isolating the social-democratic leaders who were not hostile and who were vacillating most. A few of them, as the memoirs of the social-democratic leaders show, took part in plots aimed at violently removing the Communists from the government. When at the time of the congress of the united party matters almost reached the point of a split between the Communists and the social-democrats, it was precisely these "left" elements who betrayed the Communists and stood for "unity," while in reality they were on the side of the right social-

democrats. Although we did not trail behind social-democracy and did not look on this "unification" as something genuine, nevertheless we Communists were under the illusion that we should be able to liquidate the waverings of the centrists by the method of persuasion and by drawing them over to our side.

The chief source of our mistakes was our failure to understand the rôle of social-democracy. Above all, the thing which we Hungarian Communists did not understand in the question of the historic rôle of social-democracy was the rôle of social-democracy as the leader of the democratic counter-revolution in opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Social-democracy fulfilled this rôle in various ways during the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary as well. First of all this was expressed in the fact that the social-democratic leaders took the bourgeoisie under their protection against all the repressive measures of the proletarian dictatorship. From the Council of People's Commissars and in all the other Soviet organs right down to the village Soviets, the leading social-democrats carried on their undermining work unceasingly. Moreover, this counter-revolutionary work was conducted under the slogan of the "mild establishment of the dictatorship." The social-democrats opposed the firm Communist methods of carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat not only inside the leading soviet organs but also publicly, stating that the expropriation of the expropriators in reality meant already the liquidation of classes.

Still more dangerous was the defeatist propaganda of the social-democratic leaders. Every day they repeated that no help had arrived from the international proletariat in the shape of victorious revolutions, in the form of government aid from the proletarian dictatorships. Some of the social-democrats, particularly Sigismund Kumpfi, who later became one of the leading theoreticians of Austro-Marxism, openly agitated against a defensive war of the Hungarian Soviet Republic against the invasion of international imperialism. Kumpfi reproached the Communists with wanting to fasten the rôle of "Messiah" on to the Hungarian proletariat, since the latter were carrying on a revolutionary war not for themselves but for the liberation of the European proletariat, and moreover without any support from the proletariat of all countries. This defeatist propaganda was carried on quietly and secretly by other social-democrats as well, and not the least prominent in this matter was the commander-in-chief of the Red Army, Wilhelm Beman (who was removed later). In fact the social-democratic leaders concluded "mutual guarantee contracts" with the leaders of the bourgeois circles for mutual insur-

ance. They, the social-democrats, used every means in their power to defend the prominent bourgeois politicians so that if the Soviet power were overthrown, they in turn would be protected by these bourgeois politicians, bankers, landlords and manufacturers.

When the big armed outburst of counter-revolution took place on June 24th, under the slogan of "national social-democracy," some of the social-democratic leaders were not at all disposed to publicly disassociate themselves from this counter-revolutionary revolt. This position of social-democracy as the leader of the democratic counter-revolution was crowned after the overthrow of the Soviet dictatorship with the slogan, "The guilty must be punished." This social-democratic slogan served as the signal for setting in motion the most desperate white terror in Hungary.

And we did not perceive this rôle of social-democracy in all its depth during the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary. We thought that we could draw the greater part, if not all, of the social-democratic leaders to the side of the revolution. This was the greatest mistake, which we were unable to rectify. And this is one of the biggest but fundamental lessons of the Hungarian revolution.

Though with some delay, we set about developing the movement for the secret and illegal rallying of the old supporters of the Communist Party and the formation of cadres for a new broad Communist Party. In this work we were supported not only by the most influential of the old Communists, but also by a number of workers' leaders who only accepted the Communist platform after March 21st. These promising attempts were not successful only due to the fall of the dictatorship.

The lesson taught to the world proletariat by the struggle of the Communist Party of Hungary and the Hungarian Socialist Soviet Republic consists first and foremost in the estimate of the rôle of the Communist Party and the exposure of the historic mission of social-democracy. Lenin and the Communist International made this lesson known to the entire world proletariat. But we should also use the other lessons, especially those which were learned in the mass struggle for power.

All these lessons are preserved and utilised by the Communist Party of Hungary in its struggles. Taught by this experience and after a long drawn-out struggle, and after liquidating pernicious factional squabbles, our Party, a Party with a noble past, a fighting present and a rich future, is extending its influence wider and wider among the masses of the Hungarian proletariat, thrusting its roots deeper and standing once more at the head of the Hungarian masses.

THE PROGRESS OF THE TEXTILE WORKERS' GENERAL STRIKE IN INDIA

(Information Material.)

AT the end of April a tremendous strike of textile workers started in Bombay, which quickly embraced other textile centres of India

The Indian press to hand, which covers the first days of the strike, establishes the fact that "in spite of expectations the call for the general strike was exceptionally well responded to by the workers," and that "even the workers' leaders did not expect such results."

On the basis of the material appearing in the Indian press, the development of the strike is pictured as follows:—

On April 23rd, when the strike was declared, work stopped in eleven factories in Bombay, involving 30,000 workers. Every day the number of strikers increased, and by the fifth day forty-nine factories (out of 51) involving 85,000 workers, were already on strike. Thus, the overwhelming majority of the Bombay textile workers are participating in the strike. The strike continues on this level at the present moment. Only three factories are working with their full personnel, employing from three to four thousand workers. These factories have not joined the strike mainly because the employers do not let the workers leave the factory grounds even at night time, and provide food and bedding in the factory, etc.

The Bombay strike served as a signal for the calling of strikes in other centres. On April 26th 7,000 textile workers came out on strike in Delhi in solidarity with the Bombay strikers, and from the first days of May the strike spread to Nagpur (14,000), Cawnpore (several thousand), Kurla (3,000), and to several factories in Ahmedabad.* The textile workers of Sholapur (over 10,000) who declared a strike two months before the general strike, also joined the general strike. Strikes are also expected to be declared in the near future in Akola and Pulgaon (central provinces). The Indian press does not give any information about the development of the strikes in Dhulia and Chalisgaon, where the textile workers struck work even before the general strike. We can therefore assert that the general strike has at the present time spread to the most important textile centres of Bombay, the Central and United provinces (with the exception of the majority of the factories in Ahmedabad, and involves about

130,000 textile workers. But all the possibilities have not as yet been exhausted, and we can expect that new detachments of workers will join the strike in the very near future. The Congress leaders of the Ahmedabad trade unions are trying in all possible ways to prevent the strike spreading to the majority of the factories in Ahmedabad, and the agents of the imperialists are also doing this in the Madras province.†

At the same time we have to emphasise that united front bodies (strike committees and factory committees) have not been organised in the factories.

The supporters of the revolutionary wing in the Central United Council of Action and in the Central Bombay strike committee do not limit its work to Bombay. Due to the efforts of the supporters of the revolutionary trade unions a strike was declared in Kurla and in Nagpur. Preparations are being made to declare strikes in Pulgaon and Akola, and work is being carried on to mobilise the textile workers in Ahmedabad for the fight (meetings, leaflets).

While the strikes in Bombay and Cawnpore are being carried out on the basis of the united front, in Nagpur the united front has been smashed by the "left" reformist leader Ruikar, and the struggle between the revolutionary trade movement and the "lefts" has become very sharp. This is a result of the exposure of the treacherous policy of Ruikar, who from the beginning tried not to allow the general strike to be declared in Nagpur, and who later appealed to the government for arbitration. In Nagpur parallel meetings of the workers in connection with the general strike are being carried on by Ruikar and by the revolutionary unions.

The Indian bourgeois press, which gives information of a number of actions in connection with the strike (meetings, appeals, etc.), by the supporters of the renegade Roy (in the shape of the Bombay provincial party of the working class and the National-Reformist Congress of Trade Unions) and by a group of "socialist-congressists," does not give any information of the independent activities of the revolutionary organisations. However, a number of facts, information of which has even penetrated the bourgeois press, bear witness that the revolutionary trade unions are showing their face. An example of this, for instance, is the fact that a number of strikers have spoken at a public solidarity meet-

* The declaration of a strike in Ahmedabad is being broken up by the textile workers' union led by Ghandist elements; and in Madras by the union headed by the agent of imperialism, Shiv Rao.

† The railway line Bombay-Baroda-Central India.

ing called by the "left" Congressists in connection with the strike. As the "Bombay Chronicle" dated May 5th, 1934, writes, one of the workers who spoke at this meeting declared in reference to members of the National Congress that the campaign of assistance developed by them reminded him of the activity of the labour department set up by the National Congress in 1930, and which did all possible to split the ranks of the workers. He further warned the Congress leaders against organising such "assistance" for the workers as only had the aim of imposing their views upon the workers. "The workers"—stated this worker further—"are ready to accept assistance from the National Congress, but they will never agree to accept this assistance at the expense of their demands."

The success of the textile workers' strike and the sharp character of the struggle has alarmed all the open and hidden enemies of the working class. Different groups of "well wishers" are trying to interfere in the strike with a view to breaking it up. The group of "socialist-congressists" who are trying to participate in the strike under the pretext that they are developing a campaign to mobilise public opinion, and organising material assistance for the strikers are displaying great activity. This group has already organised several public meetings in Bombay. A "Committee for Assistance to the Strikers" has also been organised on its initiative and it is participating in it.

The "city fathers" of the Bombay municipality are trying to act as intermediaries between the employers and the striking workers. And, finally, the agents of the imperialists, the well-known reformist leaders, N. M. Joshi, Vakhil and others have also appeared on the scene recently. They have already been received by the governor of Bombay and have had a long secret meeting with him on the question of steps to be taken to stop the strike. So far, however, all these attempts to interfere with the strike and break it up have met with no success.

At all meetings the workers enthusiastically declare their determination to continue the fight until all their demands have been fully satisfied, because, as a group of strikers stated to a correspondent of the "Bombay Chronicle," "the workers have nothing to lose but their chains." The strike leaders declare that the workers will fight for not less than three months. A number of reports testify to the fact that the Communists are actively participating in the strike. The "Times" states that during the strike the Communist Party of India issued an illegal leaflet in which, besides general questions, a line is given on how to carry on the fight for partial demands.

We can assert now already that the general strike of textile workers is awakening the activity of the working masses in various branches of industry. The solidarity movement is spreading all over the country and embraces not only the working masses but also the petty-bourgeois strata of the city. Both working class and general city solidarity meetings have already taken place in many cities — Bombay, Calcutta, Thana, Madras, Karachi, etc. The peasants' union (Kisan Sabha) in Karadjan (Central provinces) adopted a resolution at a meeting called by them addressed to the Nagpur textile workers (even before they had declared the strike), calling on the Nagpur workers to immediately join the strike declared in Bombay. The "Kisan Sabha" is at the present time developing a campaign for the collection of bread for the strikers.

Under the tremendous pressure of the masses the reformist federation of trade unions in Karachi, which unites a number of unions, was even compelled to carry out a May 1st half-day solidarity strike in Karachi, which passed off amid great enthusiasm.

In England the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement are also developing a campaign in several cities organising solidarity meetings with the striking Indian textile workers, and the collection of funds. In particular a solidarity meeting has been carried out in Lancashire. The first contributions to the strike fund have already been forwarded to India. We must, however, note that the movement of solidarity and for assistance to the striking Indian textile workers has as yet been only weakly developed in England, and so far is more of a campaign (true, a rather wide one) in the revolutionary English press ("Daily Worker").

All the newspaper materials which we have at our disposal are witness to the fact that the workers' strike leaders are carrying out a correct policy. The workers have shown an example of heroism and at the same time have been able to correctly answer the blows of the police and the cunning tricks of the Congress leaders. The strike leaders must be able to show up the real character of the Gandhist policy. A statement was printed in the "Bombay Chronicle" from the chairman of the Ahmedabad Manufacturers' Association in which he showed that the Ahmedabad factory owners have factories in Bombay, and shares in a number of factories.

This statement should be given wide circulation. It must be shown that the Gandhist leaders of the Ahmedabad Labour Association are helping the factory owners to smash the Bombay workers. The Gandhists in Ahmedabad are telling the workers not to strike, are causing confusion with

their promises of showing profits (which in reality will only lead to wage-cuts and serve as the occasion to increase the exploitation of the workers), and thereby are helping the factory owners to attack the workers one by one. The leaders of the Ahmedabad Labour Association are playing the rôle of strike breakers, and it is not in vain that there are relatives of the factory owners and of the bourgeoisie intellectuals in the leadership of the association.

The Bombay workers must know that Gandhi and the Congress leaders break up the struggles of the workers and help the factory owners. If it becomes necessary to temporarily retreat in an organised manner, we must explain to the workers as widely as possible that the Congress leaders are to blame, and that they helped the factory owners and the police to smash the textile workers' strike.

The strike is developing with great enthusiasm and is distinguished by the sharpness of the struggle. The unheard-of terror on the part of the government (the ban on meetings, demonstrations, pickets, the mass arrests of the leadership, shooting of the demonstrators) only inflames the hatred and militant activity of the masses, and sharpens the struggles. The clashes of the strikers with the police (Bombay and Delhi) are almost a daily occurrence, often assuming the form of street fights, accompanied by the stoppage of all traffic over big territories. This is how one of such clashes is described by the bourgeois national newspaper, "Bombay Chronicle" of April 28th, 1934:—

"For a distance of half a mile the square was turned into the scene of bitter clashes. Even the railroad traffic in the districts near the B.B. and C.I. station were stopped for a time. The strikers hid in alleys and behind the houses, and carried on regular guerilla warfare. When the fight stopped, the entire district from the "Textile" factory till the Elphinstone Bridge was covered

with stones and all kinds of debris which the workers used as weapons in their fight."

The strike is going on in an organised manner. Every day, in spite of the Government ban, tens of meetings and demonstrations are being organised. At the present stage, mass picketing has not been resorted to, since, as the strike leaders declare, this is not necessary as yet. Even the bourgeois press is compelled to note the fact that in spite of the presence of 70,000 unemployed textile workers in Bombay, cases of strike breaking are very rare. Strike pickets are on duty at the gates of the factories where the transport of strike breakers under the protection of the police is expected.

The strike in Bombay, Cawnpore and some other cities is being carried through on the basis of the united front. The supporters of the revolutionary trade union movement have shown a great deal of activity in Bombay. It is not without their influence that the central strike committee in Bombay, which was originally composed of officials of unions with different policies, is at the present time adding representatives from the strikers elected on the basis of the united front in all the factories.

We must also note the following new point, namely, the Chawl Committees organised on the initiative of the Central Strike Committee, in the workers' living quarters. The main task of these Committees is to prevent strike breaking and to keep up the militant spirit of the workers by carrying on work directly in the homes of the workers. The election of the "Chawl Committees" assumes all the greater significance since meetings and demonstrations are actually forbidden in the open air, and since the factory owners on their part, helped by the "jobbers,"* are trying to develop work within the workers' homes in order to disorganise the strike.

* Jobber—an agent of the employers—a contractor, an intermediary who hires the workers.

WHY HITLER IN GERMANY? (Fritz Heckert)	2d.
HITLER AND THE TRADE UNIONS	1d.
FOUR WEEKS IN THE HANDS OF HITLER'S HELL-HOUNDS (Hans Beimler) ...	3d.

THE NEW UPSURGE OF THE STRIKE MOVEMENT OF THE WORKING CLASS IN KUOMINTANG CHINA

THE whole of China has been in the grip of a rapidly growing wave of strikes for some time past.

The economic crisis, the predatory attack of the international imperialists and the treacherous policy of the Kuomintang have created an intolerable situation for the masses of the population, and in particular for the workers who have to suffer sharp wage-cuts, lengthening of the working day, the introduction—by order of Chang Kai-Shek — of the ten-hour working day in Henan, Hubei, Anhwei, Tsiantsi and Futzian, mass dismissals, pauperisation, hunger and orgies of white terror.

The following facts testify to the gigantic proportions that the growth of the strike wave is assuming:—

In March a militant strike of 6,000 silk workers took place in Shanghai, being a struggle against the wage-cuts. *The workers of the silk factories, among whom there were many women workers as well, armed themselves with sticks and stones and for several hours waged bloody street-fights against the police forces.* In April a militant strike of 4,000 workers of the "Meyer" silk factory took place. *The strikers besieged the offices of the "Bureau for Social Affairs," and as a result 150 officials and representatives of the factory were detained by the workers and could not leave the building.* The workers encamped in the streets leading to the Bureau offices. Special workers' detachments were formed which supplied the strikers with food. The workers prepared for a prolonged siege. When the chief of police tried to start negotiations with the strikers the workers refused to be a party to them, declaring that they would not leave until their demands were accepted. The strikers conducted a militant demonstration together with workers from other factories. When large forces of the police attacked the strikers, *they received a determined repulse. For 18 hours the workers fought self-sacrificingly in the streets against the armed forces of the police, and in the end they beat off the attack of their opponents.* The latest information shows that the strike is still continuing. The workers published a proclamation in which they wrote that they are carrying on a life and death struggle against the capitalists. In Huchjei several thousand workers from the silk factories went on strike in April. *The workers surrounded the Town Hall and*

demanded that all who had been arrested be released. When a police detachment opened fire and wounded several persons, *the workers occupied the Town Hall after a stubborn and sanguinary struggle, disarmed the policemen and freed the prisoners.*

It is necessary to lay especial emphasis on the tempestuous development of the strike movement in North China. *Since January, the heroic miners of the Kailan coalfields have carried out three general strikes in which upwards of 50,000 workers participated, in protest against the reduction of the working week, demanding an increase in wages, protesting against the white terror and political oppression, against the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions, and declaring for the organisation of mass revolutionary trade unions.* The miners on strike engaged the police forces in sanguinary clashes on several occasions, and organised picketing. The pickets were armed with iron bars and long knives and they wore red armbands on their sleeves. The strikers drove out the leaders of the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions and in fact created mass revolutionary trade unions. This heroic strike evoked tremendous sympathy and hearty support from the widest working masses in all parts of China. It should especially be noted that on February 3rd, 1934, the General Council of the Trade Unions in the Soviet regions issued a special call to the strikers in which they urged them to undertake an active struggle against the treacherous Kuomintang executioners, and against the imperialists, organise an independent general strike committee and to make extensive use of armed picketing. At the same time the General Council of the Trade Unions in the Soviet regions, besides sending 1,200 dollars to aid the strikers, developed a wide campaign for the collection of money for the strikers, and placed the question of rendering them assistance before the Soviet Government of China.

Several thousand workers of the textile mills of Rua-Sin and of the cement plants of Taing-Sin went on strike in solidarity with the striking miners. The workers of these factories, together with the miners on strike, organised a militant demonstration and set forth demands for *wage increases, and for the right to organise revolutionary trade unions.* According to the latest information, the miners of the Madjagoi coalfields have again declared

a strike against the forced closing down of the local branch of the miners' trade union.

On May 1st, in spite of the declaration of martial law and the mobilisation of all the police forces in every town, more than 20,000 workers went on strike in Shanghai. In many places leaflets were seen pasted on the walls bearing the slogans: "*Down with the imperialists! Down with the Kuomintang! We will not permit the partition of China! We will not permit a war against the U.S.S.R.!*" Leaflets with revolutionary contents were distributed in many parts of the city.

The local English newspapers reported that all the Shanghai factories were shut down. *All the workers, including those working in the largest concerns, went on strike. Because of the printers' strike the Chinese newspapers did not appear.*

The anti-imperialist struggle of the Chinese proletariat jointly with the masses of the toilers of China, particularly the struggle against Japanese imperialism, is also developing alongside of the upsurge of the strike movement. In a number of towns various organisations have been formed under various names to carry on the struggle against Japanese imperialism. The revolutionary work of the anti-Imperialist Congress, founded in 1933, is being strengthened and broadened. The Chinese seamen and longshoremen in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Hankow often organise strikes and refuse to load Japanese goods. A number of Japanese textile mills went on strike as a protest against the occupation of the North China provinces by Japan. Some time ago the "Shanghai Workers' Committee for Struggle Against Imperialist War" was organised in Shanghai. It distributed leaflets addressed to Japanese soldiers, students and workers, calling on them to join in the May First demonstration.

In connection with the anti-imperialist struggle special stress must be laid on the strong development of the partisan movement in Manchuria. During 1933 the revolutionary volunteer forces increased up to 150-200,000 fighters. Organs of the People's Revolutionary Government and People's Revolutionary Armies have been set up in a number of places. The influence and rôle of working-class leadership has very much increased among these partisan forces. These revolutionary forces are carrying on a desperate and determined struggle against the Japanese military. They are becoming a powerful revolutionary force in the struggle against the offensive of Japanese imperialism.

On the basis of all that has been said above we can state:—

(1) In China we can observe not only a quantitative growth of the strikes, but also, and in particular, an increase in the relative importance of active revolutionary forms of struggle, despite the leaders of the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions. Strikes are often accompanied by militant mass demonstrations, and by the seizure of factories; governmental and administrative bodies are besieged, leaders of the yellow and Kuomintang trade unions are expelled and sanguinary clashes take place with the police. We see that there is a considerable rise in the fighting abilities of the Chinese proletariat. Besides, the economic struggle is more and more often interwoven with the political struggle. Without this interweaving "a real broad mass movement is impossible" (Lenin).

(2) The influence of the red trade unions has grown in the strike struggle and the disintegration of the Kuomintang and yellow trade unions has been intensified.

(3) The strikes which are developing in a situation of revolution, war and intervention represent an indissoluble revolutionary link in the chain of the development of the Chinese Soviet revolution. The strikes which are involving various strata of the workers and in the various branches of industry are vanguard fights which are preparing a broad field for the great political clashes of the near future, fights which will rouse and bring into action the backward workers and those insufficiently experienced in the struggle. "In such case, the proletariat plays the rôle not of just one of the classes of bourgeois society, but the rôle of hegemon, *i.e.*, the rôle of guide, advance guard and leader" (Lenin).

(4) And, finally, the strike movement in China is taking place simultaneously with the tempestuous development of vanguard revolutionary battles in all the capitalist countries on the eve of the second round of revolutions and wars; the heroic armed struggle of the Austrian workers, the general strike in France, the revolutionary hunger march in England, the strike movement in Spain, Belgium and America, the growth of the revolutionary movement in Japan and India, etc. The co-ordination of the revolutionary torrents of the proletariat in the imperialist countries, with the colonies and semi-colonies, adds special significance to the growth in the strike movement of the Chinese proletariat at a time when "the Chinese Soviet revolution has already become a great factor

in the world revolution" (Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.).

The Chinese proletariat has proved to the world proletariat by its heroic struggles and by the successes which it has achieved, that it is one of the powerful vanguard detachments of the world revolution. Under the banner of

proletarian solidarity, the Chinese working class calls on its brothers, the workers of all the capitalist countries, to still further intensify their active support and aid to the Chinese proletariat in the struggle for the final victory of the Soviet revolution throughout China.

THE LATEST "FASCIST" MOVE OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

(Conclusion.)

It should be added that on the day when the Bill was printed the "Daily Herald" loudly declared that the Bill was directed "against Communists and fascists." But the Labour leaders are under no illusions. "The Bill," declared Col. Wedgwood, in an interview, "would be misused and would certainly only be used against the Communists."

And indeed, in the House of Commons debate, the Labour spokesman (Mr. Lawson) in "opposing" the Bill, declared (see "Times," April 17th) that he did not think there was any section of the House that had any objection to the operation of Clause 1 of this Bill (i.e., the clause which declares it to be 'an offence to endeavour to seduce any member of His Majesty's forces from his duty or allegiance to His Majesty'). Having made this open declaration of solidarity in principle, with the National Government, this Social-fascist and the rest who followed were concerned with showing that "the Attorney-General had given no evidence whatever as to the effect of these publications on the soldiers and sailors," etc.

Sixty-three Labour and Liberal M.P.s voted against this Bill (MacDonald, Thomas, Simon, Runciman, etc., did not vote!)—but it is clear that the difference between the "opposition" and His Majesty's Government is not one of principle.

The Labour Party is quite as much concerned as the National Government is that His Majesty's army shall be "efficient" (to do the will of the imperialist war-makers). This has been shown by the recent discussions in the House of Commons, as, for instance, on March 21st, in the Labour Party's proposals "to obtain better results under a combined Ministry of Defence."

Similarly, in spite of the fact that Labour M.P.s voted with the I.L.P. M.P.s in favour of a clause "exempting troops from the obligations to take duty in trade disputes," they dared not reply to the challenge of Duff Cooper, the Financial Secre-

tary of the War Office, that "the Labour Government when in office refused this amendment" (a fact on which the I.L.P. M.P.s also kept silent). The Labour Party's "opposition" to the new Bill, therefore, is merely one of expediency—so that this point must be borne in mind in carrying on the fight against the Bill and against the increasing fascistisation of the state apparatus. It is clear that it is united front mass actions under the leadership of the Communist Party that will have to be developed if this Bill is to be smashed. The mass feeling against fascism which exists needs to be harnessed and given organised expression, but in such a way as to embrace the widest masses in a unified anti-fascist movement covering the various organisations now carrying on various forms of anti-fascist activity. Particularly have the masses under the influence of the reformists to be made aware of the fascist threat which menaces their organisations, making it clear that fascist developments in Great Britain are by no means limited to the development of Mosley's blackshirt movement, and a determined blow directed against the sham "opposition" of the reformists who are directing the masses away from mass action towards faith in a "third Labour Government."

The results of the recent Hunger March and Congress of Action have shown the masses what can be achieved by mass action—in this respect, then, a special drive must be made inside the reformist unions and the factories and among the unemployed, and steps taken to link up the fight against this Bill with the increasing number of economic struggles in which the workers are now being involved and with the struggle of the employed and unemployed against the new Unemployment Bill endeavouring all the time to raise the movement to the level of strike action to defeat the attempt to rivet the chains of open fascist slavery on the British proletariat.

D.

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