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PALME DUTT ON SOUTHPORT CONFERENCE
THE "PLEBS" BRITISH IMPERIALIST "MARXISM" (!!?)

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FOR SOVIET POWER

(The 17th Anniversary of the October Revolution.)

I.

THE Anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution is the great, militant festival of the INTERNATIONAL proletariat.

From the very first days of its existence, Bolshevism regarded the coming Russian Revolution as the prologue to the world proletarian revolution. It is precisely in this that it saw its great historical significance. As early as in 1902, on the eve of the first bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, Lenin, in his pamphlet, *What Is To Be Done?* wrote:

"History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is MORE REVOLUTIONARY THAN ALL THE IMMEDIATE TASKS that confront the proletariat of any other country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, PLACES THE RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT IN THE VANGUARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT." (Our emphasis—Ed.)

At the beginning of the imperialist war, in December, 1914, Lenin, in his article *On the National Pride of the Great Russians*, showed that "the Great Russians must not 'defend their Fatherland,' but must desire the defeat of Czarism in every war."

Continuing:

"... If history will solve the question in favour of Great Russian, great power capitalism, then from this will follow the greater SOCIALIST rôle of the Russian proletariat, as the main driving force of the Communist Revolution which is being given birth to by capitalism."

Thus we see that at the time when Lenin raised before the Russian proletariat the task of the revolution (of preparing the defeat of its own government in the war), he explained it by the fact that the Russian proletariat should be "the main driving force of the Communist revolution," and its patriotism should be directed precisely along these channels. A year later, in August, 1915, in putting forward his famous thesis, that the uneven economic and political development of capitalism creates the conditions for the possibility of the victory of Socialism, at first, in several or even in one capitalist country, Lenin explained what this should lead to. He said:

"The victorious proletariat of such a country expropriating the capitalists and organising Socialist production would stand out AGAINST the rest of the capitalist world, attracting to its side the oppressed classes of other countries, inspiring uprisings against the capitalists and in case of necessity using military force against the exploiting classes and their states."

Thus, while PREPARING THE REVOLUTION in Russia, Bolshevism invariably considered it as the prologue to the WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION, and after the victorious October Revolution, Comrade

Stalin, in 1924, could say with the greatest assurance, that:

"The worldwide significance of the October Revolution lies not only in the fact that it was the first step taken by any country whatsoever to shatter imperialism, that it brought into being the first land of socialism in the ocean of imperialism, but likewise in THE FACT THAT THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION IS THE FIRST STAGE IN THE WORLD REVOLUTION AND HAS SET UP A POWERFUL BASE WHENCE THE WORLD REVOLUTION CAN CONTINUE TO DEVELOP."* (Our emphasis—Ed.)

World Revolution.

The development of the world proletarian revolution did not proceed as fast as it might have appeared originally. Seventeen years have passed since the October Revolution, and the banner of the Soviets is only developing victoriously outside of the Soviet Union in one-sixth of China. This was not unexpected. Lenin frequently spoke of and explained that the path of the proletarian revolution will be more difficult in the leading capitalist countries than in Russia and that "in comparison with the leading countries it will be easier for the Russians to BEGIN the great proletarian revolution," although it

"will be more difficult to continue it."

Immediately after the war, when the revolutionary crisis approached, when the people of Europe and America were still armed, when the objective conditions for the revolution were present, the attempts to bring about the revolution in various countries ended unsuccessfully as a result of the fact that in these countries there did not yet exist, in contradistinction to Russia, mass Communist Parties. However, when the mass Communist Parties of other countries were being built, there took place partial stabilisation of capitalism, and the imperialist world was no longer split into two warring camps. In addition, and this is a most important fact, it has become absolutely obvious that the bourgeoisie of the leading capitalist countries are incomparably stronger than the bourgeoisie of Czarist Russia, and that in the leading capitalist countries, particularly in Germany, imperialism

"is made, to our sorrow, of better steel and, therefore, does not break from the efforts of EVERY . . . young chicken." (Lenin.)

The great power of resistance of the western bourgeoisie, in comparison with the Russian bourgeoisie, is, amongst other things, conditioned by the fact that

"in the west—as Lenin said—the Mensheviks have more firmly 'colonised' themselves in the trade unions and

* *Leninism*, Vol. I., p. 216.

formed there a layer far stronger than in Russia of PROFESSIONAL, NARROW, EGOTISTIC, HARD, GREEDY, PETTY-BUR-
GEOIS, IMPERIALISTICALLY INCLINED 'LABOUR ARISTOCRACY'
BRIBED AND CORRUPTED BY IMPERIALISM."

Proceeding from this, Lenin already in 1921, at the Third Congress of the Communist International, presented his famous thesis:

"The more the proletariat is organised in a capitalistically developed country, the more thorough preparations for the revolution does history demand from us and with the greater thoroughness must we work towards the winning of the majority of the working class."

The path to the proletarian revolution in the leading capitalist countries was, and remains, more difficult than was the path to the revolution in the former Czarist Russia. It required years of the deepest world economic crisis and world historic victories of Socialism in the Soviet Union, to enable the Communist International finally to establish at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. that the world revolutionary crisis is maturing and that the world is approaching a new round of revolutions and wars.

Despite the protracted path to the proletarian revolution in the leading capitalist countries, the entire course of events for the past seventeen years confirms the correctness of the thesis of Comrade Stalin that the October Revolution CONSTITUTES "THE FIRST STAGE OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION AND A MIGHTY BASIS FOR ITS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT." The Soviet Union, from the moment of its existence was and remains the torch flaming ever clearer, lighting the path of the international proletariat to socialism and stimulating the forces of the world proletarian revolution. For the past seventeen years, from the very day of the October Revolution, there has not been a single moment that the Soviet Union did not play the rôle of the mighty lever and driving force of the world proletarian revolution. The developing Communist Parties drew their strength from the victories and achievements of the Soviet Union. The influence of the Soviet Union did not limit itself to the Communist vanguard of those countries. During all these years, millions of workers throughout the world have followed with untiring attention what was being created in the great land of the Soviets. Despite the lies, despite the slander of the capitalist class and its Social-Democratic agents, together with their Trotskyite hangers-on, the great majority of the proletarians throughout the world are now daily becoming more convinced that in the Soviet Union the real rule of the working class exists,—that here real Socialism is being built, that Soviet power does not carry on a policy of "Red Imperialism," that it is the only power which consistently carries out a policy of peace. Because of this, the sympathies of the great majority of the workers throughout the world are with the Soviet Union; because of this also the

international proletariat is convinced that the defeat of the Soviet Union would have been a catastrophe for the international proletariat; because of this, the international proletariat is ready to come forward to the defence of the Soviet Union in the event of a counter-revolutionary war against her.

Are Workers Ready to Follow October?

However, from all this it does not yet follow that the majority of the working class in the capitalist countries are already, IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES, ready to follow in the path of October. Thanks to the treacherous rôle of Social-Democracy—this main social bulwark of the bourgeoisie—although the majority of the workers in the capitalist countries have recognised that real Socialism is being built in the Soviet Union, they are not, however, as yet convinced that under their particular conditions it is necessary to take the same road. The majority of the workers in the capitalist countries have not yet recognised that the armed uprising and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets is the ONLY path to Socialism. However, in those countries where Fascism is violently advancing (especially in countries where the fascist dictatorship has already been established, generally where the revolutionary crisis is rapidly maturing), the workers are now already rapidly overcoming their democratic illusions, and there matures the recognition of the inevitability of the Soviet path. This is quite eloquently testified by the events of the past year. When the advance of fascism began in France, in the streets of Paris and of other cities, the workers passionately put forward the slogan of "Soviets Everywhere!" and at the same time, their urge for a united front with the Communists became irresistible. The Austrian workers, who were under the influence of social-democracy, who had taken up arms to defend themselves from the fascist attacks, did not, however, take up the offensive. Very quickly, however, during the process of the armed struggle, a fundamental change in their moods was marked. In the heat of the struggle, with unprecedented rapidity, they began to turn away from the social-democrats, who not long ago occupied a monopoly position in the Austrian labour movement, and towards Communism. In Spain, the Socialists took to arms only to defend the republic from a fascist uprising. But, in Asturias, where the Communists had the strongest position, and the armed uprising reached its greatest intensity, the struggle which began under the slogan of the defence of the republic, developed and grew over into a Soviet revolution, though it did not as yet lead to victory.

The experiences of the revolutionary events of the last year (as well as the earlier experiences of

the Chinese revolution) enable us to maintain with full assuredness: Even if, in the advance towards the revolution, the proletarian of one or another country does not, as yet, recognise that to be victorious the revolution must follow the path of the Soviets, at the moment, however, when the workers rise to a higher stage of the revolution, and approach the seizure of power, he, having before him the great experience of the Soviet Union with its world historic victories, is drawn with irresistible force towards Soviet power. No matter in what form a revolution begins in one or another country it can be victorious now only in the form of Soviets, be it a revolution of a democratic or of a direct proletarian character.

Why is "Soviet Power" Central Slogan Now?

Precisely because of this, the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. noted the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis and propitiously raised the SLOGAN "SOVIET POWER" AS THE CENTRAL POLITICAL SLOGAN FOR THE PRESENT TIME. This slogan should become our central slogan already now, so that the proletariat, in one or another country, independent of the degree to which the revolutionary crisis has matured, SHOULD KNOW IN ADVANCE THE ROAD IT MUST TAKE. This should not be recognised only *post factum*. Then at the decisive moment, due to unclarity regarding the aims, mistakes difficult to correct have been committed, as was the case in Austria and PARTLY in Spain in the days of the armed struggle.

In view of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis the slogan of Soviet power must now become our central slogan everywhere, in all capitalist countries. This does not mean that we should ignore the unevenness of revolutionary development in various capitalist countries at all. This unevenness, however, does not mean that we should remove the slogan of Soviet power as our central slogan in one or another capitalist country which is backward in a revolutionary sense. The unevenness of revolutionary development only indicates that we should adopt a variety of METHODS and develop various APPROACHES for the popularisation of this slogan to the widest masses in the various countries.

Take, for example, two concretely worked-out programmes for Soviet power—one, published in the economically developed, but, in the revolutionary sense, backward England. This programme was published by the Communist Party of the Lancashire district. The other programme was published two days before the general strike as the manifesto of the Communist Party in Spain which formulated the future programme for the workers' and peasants' government.

These two documents demonstrate how it is

possible and how we must propagandise one and the same slogan for Soviet power, how one must clothe this in various forms according to the level of the revolutionary maturity of the working class to whom we turn with our propaganda.

The Lancashire document is shaped in a form which takes the moods of the backward English workers into consideration, thus formulated by one of the textile workers of Ashton-under-Lyne:

"But you cannot expect us to be enthusiastic about theories so hazy and 'up in the air.' Why not explain what Soviet Power would mean in relation to this very town in which we live and to these very factories in which we work?"

The Spanish manifesto gives a concise and precise programme of the revolution corresponding to the militant moods of the Spanish workers as existent on the eve of their armed struggle.

II.

We must now popularise the slogan of Soviet Power in the broadest possible way. At the same time we must in our Communist Party, amongst our revolutionary active workers and amongst the working class in general, popularise the path by which the Bolsheviks brought about the October revolution. We must explain how the experiences of the heroic struggles of the Bolsheviks can and must be applied to the present circumstances and conditions.

In his article, *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*, and in a number of other articles, Comrade Stalin has given us the best, a classical analysis of the path taken by the Bolsheviks to October. The first thing to which Comrade Stalin calls attention to, in speaking about the October Revolution, is the rôle that the Party of the Bolsheviks played in the preparation for October.

"1. During the period of preparation which resulted in the October Revolution the Party was relying upon the spontaneous onrush of the revolutionary mass movement;

"2. While relying on the spontaneous onrush, the Party secured for itself the exclusive leadership of the revolutionary movement;

"3. This leadership made it possible for the Party to organise the political army of the masses for the October rising;

"4. Such a policy could have no other result than that of placing all the preparations for the October insurrection under the leadership of ONE Party, the Party of the Bolsheviks;

"5. The consequence was that after the October insurrection, political power was brought into the hands of ONE party exclusively, the Bolshevik Party.

"We see, then, that the main factor in preparing for the October days was that the preparations were made under the leadership of one party—the Communist Party. This is the fundamental characteristic of the October Revolution, THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC OF BOL-SHEVIST TACTICS IN THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION."* (Our emphasis—Ed.)

These words of Comrade Stalin regarding the

* *Leninism*, Vol. I., p. 201.

rôle of the party must, especially now, be firmly kept in mind when our Communist Parties are carrying through the tactics of the broadest united front of the Communists with the Social-Democrats in the struggle against fascism, against the attacks of the capitalists and against the danger of war.

In what in particular should the INDEPENDENT leading rôle of our Party have expressed itself and should express itself now in the face of advancing fascism?

When the open fascist dictatorship was established in Germany, the social-democrats and their Trotskyite hangers-on asserted that a whole historical epoch of fascism had come into being, meaning that the proletariat is smashed, that fascism will inevitably be victorious everywhere and there are no revolutionary prospects.

Under such circumstances, the task of our Party consisted, while basing ourselves on the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the present situation and not only what appears on the surface, in showing how under the conditions of raging fascism, the revolutionary crisis matures. This is similar to what Lenin did even during the imperialist war when the widest masses, encouraged by the social-democrats, were seized by patriotic moods, and when he was none the less able to uncover the process of the maturing revolution. Under the conditions of advancing fascism, the task facing our Parties has consisted in showing that this course towards fascism arises out of the weakness of the bourgeoisie. The victory of fascism means not only the strengthening of the positions of the bourgeoisie, but also creates the conditions for undermining its positions. The stronger the fascist terror rages the quicker will the revolutionary crisis mature.

No Basic Difference Between Parliament and Fascism.

When the frightful example of the Hitler terror gave a new impulse to the counter-offensive of the proletariat, social-democracy, under the pressure of the masses and out of fear of the fascist dictatorship, began to incline towards the united front struggles with the Communists, against fascism. A new danger, however, arose and continues to exist, in connection with this. When social-democracy enters the united front with us, it only aims at defending the bourgeois democratic order against fascism—as a certain degeneration of the present bourgeois state. Social-democracy thus attempts to bring the masses on to this path and to retain them there. Under such conditions, the independent and leading rôle of our Party consists in the following: while in every way defending the democratic rights of the workers, at the same time it must show the masses the incorrect-

ness of making a DISTINCTION IN PRINCIPLE between fascist dictatorship and the bourgeois-“democratic” dictatorship. Further, we must explain to the masses that the former grows organically out of the latter, and that the complete defeat of fascism is only possible through the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie in all of its forms. We must show that the proletariat can be victorious only when it will pass from the defensive to the offensive, only when the working class will fight for Soviet power.

The SECOND PECULIARITY in the tactics of the Bolsheviks, in the period of the preparations for October, consisted, in the words of Comrade Stalin, in that the leadership of the Bolshevik Party

“... proceeded along the line of isolating the COMPROMISING parties, as the most dangerous groupings in the period in which the revolution was coming to a head—along the line of isolating the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. . . the basic strategic rule of Leninism—said Comrade Stalin—is the recognition that the COMPROMISING parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period in which the revolutionary climax is approaching.”

“But how, concretely, did the Party carry into effect this policy of isolation, in what form, under what slogans? It is achieved in the form of the revolutionary mass movement for the power of the soviets under the slogan ‘All Power to the Soviets.’ In the fight to convert the soviets from organs of mass mobilising into organs of insurrection, organs of power, into the apparatus of the new proletarian state power . . .

“During the first stage this watchword betokened a rupture of the coalition between the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks with the Cadets, the formation of a Soviet government consisting of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (for at that time the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks predominated in the soviets), and freedom for the (that is, for the Bolsheviks) struggle of parties within the soviets . . . this plan . . . undoubtedly facilitated the conditions indispensable to the establishment of the dictatorship, for, by placing the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries at the head of things and forcing them to carry out their anti-revolutionary platform, it hastened the unmasking of the true nature of these pinchbeck heroes, precipitated their isolation, their severance from the masses.”*

Thus the Bolsheviks achieved the fulfilment of the main strategic rule of Leninism—namely, to isolate the compromise parties and to win the majority of the working class to its side.

How can the Communists bring about the isolation of the compromise parties of the Second International under the present conditions?

The road to the isolation of social-democracy from the masses lies now as well through the development of the revolutionary struggle for power. By organising the united front struggle against fascism, against the attacks of capital and against the war danger, the Communists expose the compromiser and lead the masses to the struggle for Soviet power. This is irrespective of the fact that due to the crisis which social-democracy is experi-

* *Leninism*, Vol. I., pp. 205-206.

encing, the united front may be and is being operated by us not only from below but also from the top, a state of things which makes it easier for us to approach the social-democratic masses.

There is no doubt that with the slogans of struggle against fascism and the capitalist offensive, the united front opens up great revolutionary possibilities before us. This is similar to the situation in 1917, when the slogan of the Bolsheviks addressed to the masses, namely: "All Power to the Soviets!" and "Down with the 'Ten Capitalist Ministers'"; the demand presented to the Mensheviks and S.R.s by the Bolsheviks, and that an end be put to coalition with Cadets, opened up great revolutionary possibilities before the Bolsheviks. The united front with the social-democrats will only present great revolutionary possibilities to us if we do not, by the tactics of the united front, tie up our revolutionary initiative and our independent development of the struggles, if we demand of the social-democratic workers and organisations with whom we enter into united front struggles, the further extension of these struggles. And also if we keep in mind the words of Comrade Stalin when he said in his report of the Central Committee of the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.:

"Only when the petty-bourgeois parties of the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had finally discredited themselves on the basic questions of the revolution, only when the masses began to convince themselves of the correctness of our policies, did we lead the masses to the uprising. HEREIN LIES THE ROOT OF THE IDEA OF THE UNITED FRONT. THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT WERE SET IN MOTION BY LENIN ONLY IN ORDER TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE MILLIONS OF THE MASSES OF THE WORKING CLASS IN THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES WHO ARE BURDENED WITH THE PREJUDICES OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC CLASS COLLABORATION, TO COME OVER TO THE SIDE OF COMMUNISM." (Our emphasis—Ed.)

After the defeat of the Kornilov uprising, the Bolsheviks won the majority of the working class over to their side. The Soviets, in their majority, were already under Bolshevik leadership and then the Bolshevik Party began to prepare the armed uprising.

The armed uprising is the highest form of the class struggle. During the armed uprising the verification of the whole strategy, of the whole tactics, of the whole organisation of the Party that leads the uprising takes place in action.

Two Lessons of 1917 for To-day.

What are the especially important lessons that our Parties can now learn from the direct preparations for the armed uprising carried through by the Bolsheviks on the eve of October? We will mention only two such lessons.

The Bolsheviks were opposed to any form of revolutionary adventurism, they did not play at uprising; they decided upon the uprising only

then, when, on the basis of their whole policy, they had succeeded in winning the majority of the working class to their side, and in obtaining a decisive preponderance of forces at the decisive points (this did not rule out the fact that in the July days of 1917 the Bolsheviks were compelled to head the spontaneous movement which broke out prematurely, in order to lead the masses into struggle with the least possible number of victims). From the moment, however, when the conditions for the uprising were established, the Bolsheviks took the line of the most determined offensive, and carried on a merciless struggle against the Right opportunist elements in their own ranks, i.e., those who showed hesitation and readiness to compromise in the period of attack.

Secondly, when the Bolsheviks assumed a determined offensive, and in connection with this, strengthened their fire against opportunism, they recognised, however, that

"for the victory of the revolution, if that revolution is really a people's revolution which draws in the masses in their millions, it is not sufficient to have the Party slogans right. For the victory of the revolution one more condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced by their own experience of the correctness of those slogans. Only then do the slogans of the Party become the slogans of the masses themselves . . . In other words, one of the special features in the tactics of the Bolsheviks lies in the fact that these tactics do not confuse the leadership of the Party with the leadership of the masses . . . in that these tactics represent the science, not only of leadership of the Party, but the leadership of the millions of the toiling masses." (Stalin.)

The Bolshevik Party entered on the struggle for Soviet Power and the armed uprising, with open vizor. In his famous April thesis, Lenin put forward the slogan of the Republic of Soviets. After the June days the Sixth Congress of the Party stated the following in its resolution:

"The only method which the international proletariat has of really doing away with war is, therefore, the conquest of power, and in Russia the conquest of power by the workers and the poorest peasantry . . . at the present time the peaceful development and painless transition of power to the Soviets has become impossible, for in actual fact power has already passed into the hand of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie."*

After the Kornilov offensive had been liquidated, the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, raised the question squarely of the armed uprising. On the 14th of September Lenin wrote that

"the question of power cannot be passed by, cannot be postponed."

On the 12th to 14th of September, Lenin wrote to the Central Committee of the Party that

"the Bolsheviks must seize power."

At the same time, in a letter to the Central Committee, Lenin explained the attitude of Marxism towards the uprising.† In this article, Lenin re-

* See *Preparing for October*, p. 51. Modern Books.

† See *Preparing for Revolt*, p. 82. Modern Books, Ltd., or Little Lenin Library.

puddiated the arguments of those who asserted that the Bolsheviks would not seize power. On the 7th of October, Lenin wrote that
"the crisis has come to a head."

Finally, on the 10th of October, on the basis of Lenin's report, the Central Committee of the Party adopted its famous decision, which stated that

"recognising thus that an armed uprising is inevitable and the time perfectly ripe, the Central Committee proposes to all organisations to act accordingly, and to discuss and decide all the practical questions from this point of view." (Lenin, Vol. XXI., p. 106.)

Beginning from April, 1917, the Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, openly prepared the proletariat for the seizure of power. After the June days the Party openly prepared the proletariat for the armed uprising. After the defeat of the Kornilov offensive, and the capture by the Bolsheviks of the majority in the Soviets in the big towns, the Party, led by Lenin, began to organise the preparation of the armed uprising tremendously energetically. At the same time, and especially in the storm months (September-October) Lenin adopted the most elastic tactics so as to draw on the millions of backward reserves into the decisive struggles.

After the delegates of the All-Russian Congress of Peasant Deputies had prepared instructions to their deputies, in the spirit of the Social-Revolutionary agrarian programme—Lenin, in September, 1917, proposed, in order to draw the peasants on to the side of the revolution, that this S.R. programme which the S.R.s themselves repudiated IN PRACTICE, be adopted. He did so with the following argument:

"The peasants want to retain their small holdings, to keep them within certain norms, periodically to equalise them. Let them. No intelligent Socialist would quarrel with them on this point. If the land is confiscated, it MEANS that the rule of the banks will be undermined; if the stock is confiscated it MEANS that the rule of the capitalists will be undermined, and UNDER THE RULE OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE CENTRE and with the transfer of political power to the proletariat, the rest will get along by ITSELF, will come as a result of the 'force of example,' will be prompted by experience itself." (Lenin, Vol. XXI.)

When the Bolsheviks prepared for the storm which was to establish the Republic of the Soviets, they none the less did not withdraw the slogan of the calling together of the Constituent Assembly which is a bourgeois parliament and is fundamentally opposed to the Republic of the Soviets. In this connection, Comrade Stalin has written:

"How did it come to pass that one month before the insurrection the Bolsheviks admitted the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly? Here are the answers:

"1. The idea of the Constituent Assembly enjoyed wide popularity among the masses of the population . . .

"3. In order to compromise the idea of the Constituent Assembly in the eyes of the masses it was necessary to confront these masses with the Assembly itself, to bring them with their demands for land, for peace, for Soviet Power, to the very walls of the Assembly Chamber, and thus to put them in the presence of an actual, a living Constituent Assembly.

"4. Only by such means, by their own experience, could the masses learn the true nature, the counter-revolutionary nature, of the Constituent Assembly and the need for its dissolution."* (Stalin, *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Bolsheviks.*)

In September and October of 1917 the Bolsheviks were most energetic in preparing the storm, the armed uprising, but beginning from the 10th of October, they discussed and decided all practical questions from this point of view. At the same time, during these very months of the storm, when the revolutionary proletariat was already fully prepared to take the offensive, the Bolsheviks, in order to draw the wavering elements on to the side of the proletarian revolution, covered up their offensive actions in a defensive wrapping.

In such a manner were the Bolsheviks able in the period of storm, to combine the determination to assume the offensive and merciless struggle against the wavering Right opportunist elements in their own ranks, with the flexible tactics that ensured that the broadest masses were drawn on to the side of the revolution.

* * *

The Seventeenth Anniversary of the October Revolution is the great celebration of the international proletariat. The international proletariat, and especially the proletariat of the Soviet Union, reaches this anniversary with no small success. The revolutionary proletariat, however, celebrates this great anniversary, not to rest on its laurels, but to draw from the experiences of its heroic struggles all the necessary lessons for the coming great battles in the capitalist countries, for the establishment of Soviet Power, for the World October.

* *Leninism*, Vol. I., p. 208.

**Copies of No. 6, 1934, are required. Offers should
be made to Publishers.**

THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE AT SOUTHPORT

WHILE the guns were thundering in Spain, while the Spanish workers, Socialist and Communist, were fighting in armed struggle their desperate battle against the assault of the class enemy, the British Labour Party was meeting in the peaceful seaside town of Southport to reaffirm its faith in capitalist institutions, in capitalist "democracy," and in gradual "constitutional" progress by the path of the ballot.

The contrast could not but strike the most careless observer. Indeed, just this contrast between the fate of the working class movements in country after country of Europe where faith had been placed in capitalist "democracy," and the aspirations of the Labour Party, seemed to have struck the Chairman of the Labour Party Conference, W. R. Smith, of the Boot and Shoe Operatives, when he declared in his opening address:

"Their opponents could not defeat them at the ballot box, so they were made the victims of machine-gun bullet, hand-grenade and artillery shell-fire.

"The happenings in Germany and Austria are a terrible object-lesson and warning to the workers of all lands."

But was this "terrible object-lesson and warning," this contrast between the paper character of all ballot-box defences, and the reality of class-war, including its highest form, civil war, studied and taken to heart at the British Labour Conference? On the contrary. From extreme Right to extreme Left of the leadership, from Henderson to Cripps, this lesson was studiously ignored. On the very eve of the Conference a book was published, with wide publicity in the capitalist and Labour press, of one of the leaders of the left-wing Socialist League, G. R. Mitchison, entitled *The First Workers' Government*. This book was issued with the official commendation of Lansbury, Leader of the Labour Party, Cripps, Webb, Cole, etc., and was widely in the hands of the delegates at the Conference. In it was described a rosy picture of how a Labour Government in 1936 would by peaceful legislative means carry through a complete transformation to "socialism." The administrative measures are described with laborious detail, even to the texts of parliamentary bills. But the class-war is left out of the picture. The Preface contains one revealing sentence, the sole reference to Fascism:

"As for Sir Oswald Mosley and his followers, I have not even mentioned them."

Such is the atmosphere which also the "left" leaders of the Labour Party are assisting to spread to lull and paralyse the workers for the struggle before them. This was the essential task and

significance of the Southport Labour Party Conference.

1. The Line of the Labour Party Leadership.

The storm which is passing through the international working class movement has not yet shaken the seats of the British Labour Party chiefs. German and Austrian Social-Democracy have bitten the dust; French socialism has, under the pressure of the masses, agreed to the united action with the Communists against fascism, war and the exceptional laws of the Doumergue Government. Spanish Socialism has passed to the united front and armed struggle. But the British Labour Party remains reaffirming and carrying forward the path of German social-democracy, the path of war on the Communists and other revolutionary workers and the united front with the bourgeoisie, paving the way to fascism.

What have been the effects of the world economic crisis, of the victories of fascism and the growth of the militant actions of the toiling masses in Europe on the Labour Party and on the membership of the Labour Party? To this question the conferences of the Trades Union Congress at Weymouth and of the Labour Party at Southport have provided a partial answer. The answer is only a partial answer, because the line revealed at these conferences is only the line of the upper bureaucracy, and no direct expression of the wishes of the workers. But they abundantly revealed that the trade union and Labour Party leadership have drawn the lesson from the advance of fascism, not that they must advance to working class unity in the class struggle, but that they must draw yet closer to capitalism and fight yet more fiercely against every sign of militant working class struggle. To achieve this the British workers have to be prevented from drawing the lessons of the events in Germany, Austria, France, etc., and have to have the idea driven into their heads that a "Third Labour Government" will not repeat the policy so fatal for the British working class pursued by the two previous Labour governments. Further, British monopoly capital has to be shown that a Labour government will carry into life all the measures necessary for the salvation and "improvement" of capitalism under the slogan of nationalism. This is the principal lesson of Weymouth and Southport.

The 1931 crisis, which brought down the Second Labour government and led to the open passing over of the principal Labour Party leaders, Mac-

Donald, Snowden and Thomas, to the capitalist front, profoundly shook the Labour Party. This was not only revealed in the loss of two millions in the Labour Party vote in 1931. It was also revealed in the wave of anger, disillusionment and anti-Right sentiments which passed through the entire membership. The Independent Labour Party, which had since the formation of the Labour Party been the organisation of the left wing within the Labour Party, broke away and disaffiliated from the Labour Party in 1932. At the Leicester Conference of the Labour party in 1932, Henderson could with difficulty secure a hearing. Denunciation of "reformism," of "gradualism," of the record of the Labour Government, was general. The Executive had to make a show of bowing to the storm. The "end of reformism" and the beginning of a "frontal attack on capitalism" was proclaimed in official speeches. At the Leicester Conference a resolution that a future Labour Government, whether "with or without power," must "immediately" introduce "definite socialist legislation," was carried unanimously in the face of the official opposition of the Executive, voiced by Henderson, against any attempt to "tie their hands." At the Hastings Conference, in 1933, a resolution was passed from the floor of the Conference, also unanimously, and this time with professed acceptance of the Executive, "to take no part in war and to resist it with the whole force of the Labour movement . . . including a general strike."

The Executive professed its acceptance, and bided its time to strike down these "extravagances."

The coming to power of fascism in Germany and Austria gave a further impetus to this awakening from below within the Labour Party. The united working class front began to extend, as seen in the Hunger March at the beginning of 1934, supported by many local labour parties and trades councils, the National Unity Congress with 1,420 delegates from working class organisations, covering 320,000 workers and including 227 trade union branches, in the development of the anti-war and anti-fascist movement, in the mass struggles against Fascism at Olympia, Hyde Park and over the country, and in the extending activity of common bodies, such as the German Relief Committee, in which, despite official bans, prominent Labour Party members took part, together with Communists.

By 1934 the Labour Party Executive, faced with the rising tide of demand for the united working class front, decided that the time had come for the application of decisive disciplinary measures so as to prevent the joint struggle of members of the Labour Party and the Communists against the capitalist offensive. The Right wing, that is, in reality, the inner governing group of the Labour Party, represented by Morrison, Henderson and

Clynes, as by Citrine and Bevin in the Trades Union Congress, decided that the hour had come to strike, and they struck. Last year at Hastings, the "left" proposals of the Socialist League had been treated with politeness and consideration; a division on them had been avoided by the promise that they could receive careful attention from the Executive. This year every proposal of the Socialist League, a body whose "left" character does not in the end profoundly differ from the official policy, was ignominiously voted down by overwhelming majorities. Rigorous discipline was announced against any Labour Party member, however prominent, who should in any way associate in any common activity with Communists. The programme of the Labour Party was newly and explicitly laid down in every sphere, including the question of support of imperialist war. The "victory of the Right" was complete.

THE LABOUR PARTY REQUIRED TO BE MADE SAFE AGAINST THE RISING LEFT CURRENTS IN THE WORKING CLASS, AND AGAINST THE RISING DEMAND FOR THE UNITED FRONT WITH THE COMMUNISTS TO BE MET WITH AMONG MEMBERS OF THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR PARTY ITSELF. THE GROUND HAD TO BE PREPARED FOR THE OPERATION OF THE POLICY OF SAVING AND REVIVING CAPITALISM, AND FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPERIALIST WAR UNDER THE COVER OF THE SLOGAN OF "SOCIALISM AND PEACE." THIS WAS THE TASK WHICH LABOUR LEADERS SET BEFORE THE SOUTHPORT CONFERENCE.

2. The New Programme—a Programme for the "Revival" and "Recovery" of Capitalism.

Three main fields of work carried out this line.

The first was the adoption of the new PROGRAMME OF ACTION, innocently entitled "For Socialism and Peace," in fact for capitalism and war. The new programme replaced the previous programme of "Labour and the Nation," which had been adopted in 1928 and preceded the Second Labour Government, and which in its turn had replaced the previous "Labour and the New Social Order" of 1918. Each successive programme has marked a further step to the right.

The character of this programme was sufficiently indicated by its reception in the capitalist press. Thus the *New Statesman and Nation* (28.7.34) remarked:

"'Socialism and Peace' raises hope rather than alarm in the Conservative press."

"Labour's Aims" are described in the programme as covering the following five points:

- (1) "Peace, freedom and justice."
- (2) "Equality of opportunity" and "standards of life and employment necessary to a healthy, independent and self-respecting existence" for "every member of the community."
- (3) "A planned national economy owned and carried on for the service of the community."

- (4) Extension of "social provision," i.e., social services.
 (5) Adjustment of taxation so that "surpluses created by social effort shall be applied for the good of all."

It will be seen that these vague phrases, ignoring all class issues, cover in reality a programme of capitalist reconstruction.

Least there should be any doubt on this, the specific proposals of the programme and the divisions at the Southport Conference abundantly prove it.

The type of "Socialism" advocated by the Labour Party is the type of the "PUBLIC CORPORATION." This type was illustrated in the London Passenger Transport Act, which was initiated by the last Labour Government and directly taken over by the Conservative "National" Government and carried into law by the latter. By this system a given industry is unified and taken over under the capitalist state; the existing shareholders have their stock transformed into new state-guaranteed stock with a guaranteed minimum dividend; operation is carried out by a Board appointed by the State, but not answerable to parliament. Similar measures have been worked out in detail by the Labour Party for the iron and steel industry, to be organised as the Iron and Steel Trades Corporation, and for the cotton industry under a "Cotton Control Board." The openly capitalist character of this policy has been stated by the Leader of the Labour Party, Lansbury, when, speaking with regard to the Iron and Steel Trades Corporation scheme, he declared (*Daily Herald*, 20.8.34):

"We want to give effect to such proposals as you may have read of for the iron and steel industry. They mean that we must say to the capitalist: 'You can only have state aid for the benefit of the whole nation, and not for the benefit of the few.'"

"STATE AID TO THE CAPITALIST"—of course, "for the benefit of the whole nation"—this is the declared policy of the Labour Party to-day, according to the definition of its Leader. It will readily be seen that this policy is not one for the destruction of capitalism, but for its preservation and revival, and is a policy operated in the interests of monopoly capital.

The open throwing overboard of the aim of Socialism ("chimerical notions of the social millennium") had already been the keynote of the Weymouth Trades Union Congress in the previous month. The chairman of the Trades Union Congress had declared in his opening address:

"We are not concerned with chimerical notions of ushering in a new social millennium that is just round the corner, but with organising the wage-earners and using the power of our organisation to secure for them positive, immediate and practical benefits."

Citrine, echoing this language and even drawing the lesson as a lesson from fascism, had similarly declared:

"From the methods of fascist propaganda, Mr. Citrine drew a lesson for the Labour movement. He asked: 'Is our programme so immediate and specific as it needs to be? Are we not looking too far ahead, and not seeing the ground beneath our feet? Let us see that our programme is of such a character that, instead of waiting for the social millennium, we shall progressively raise the standard of life.'"

In place of "chimerical notions of the social millennium," i.e., Socialism, is thus adopted the REALLY CHIMERICAL notion of "progressively raising the standard of life" in the midst of the capitalist decline and along the path of co-operation with capitalism.

Two debates at the Southport Conference brought out the capitalist character of the programme. One was the debate on COMPENSATION, to be paid to the capitalist owners of industry. There was no division on the issue of compensation; not even the "extreme left" of the Labour Party proposed confiscation. But the Socialist League put forward an amendment that the capitalist owners of industry should be compensated with terminable annuities, paying to them for twenty-five years the equivalent of their dividends (that is, in the end a total more than the total capital represented). The official policy, on the other hand, rejected this and demanded payment of the "net reasonable maintainable value"—that is, the full existing capital value. The amendment was rejected by 2,118,000 votes to 149,000. Thus, under Labour Party "Socialism" (whether "Left" or Right) the capitalists must remain in possession of their full capital holdings.

The other debate was on the Iron and Steel Trades Corporation scheme. The Socialist League put forward an amendment for some form of parliamentary control and of trade union representation in the administration.

Their speaker declared:

"The issue was between a form of organisation leading to the Corporate State, and a form of organisation leading to Socialism."

The amendment was rejected without a division.

3. The Support of Imperialist War.

The counterpart of this programme of capitalist reconstruction was the programme of open support of imperialist war, in the declaration adopted on "War and Peace."

The Hastings Conference last year, as already noted, had adopted unanimously a resolution "to pledge itself to take no part in war and to resist it with the whole force of the Labour movement . . . including a general strike."

This resolution was officially declared at Hastings to be accepted by the Executive. It was, of course, if literally taken, in glaring discord with official Labour policy, even as declared in other resolutions at the same Hastings Conference. Its tem-

porary acceptance was necessary at the time to the leadership in order to counter the growing appeal of the anti-war movement. But for it to remain as an official statement of Labour policy, with the consequent stimulus to the rank and file to conduct anti-war agitation, was too dangerous. The passing over to support of imperialist war could no longer be left to the moment of war as in 1914. TO-DAY, IN THE PERIOD OF THE "TOTAL MOBILISATION" OF THE NATIONS FOR WAR, CAPITALISM REQUIRES THAT THE LABOUR ORGANISATIONS UNDER ITS CONTROL MUST BE SPECIFICALLY COMMITTED TO THE SUPPORT OF IMPERIALIST WAR ALREADY BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR.

This was the task of the War and Peace Resolution of the Southport Conference. The War and Peace Resolution wipes out the Hastings resolution "to take no part in war and to resist it." On the contrary, it enjoins on the Labour movement the OBLIGATION to take part in and support a war of British imperialism under specific conditions.

"There may be circumstances in which the Government of Great Britain might have to use its military and naval forces . . . the duty of supporting our Government unflinchingly."

Finally, it rules out in practice the general strike against war, on the grounds, first, that the trade union movement having been destroyed in the fascist countries, a general strike against war becomes impossible, and second, that "the responsibility for stopping war ought not to be placed on the trade union movement," but was an equal concern of all "citizens."

This open support of imperialist war is covered under the usual form of support of the League of Nations, of the "collective peace system," opposition to "aggressive" war, etc. The policy of resistance to all war without distinction adopted at Hastings is now redefined as resistance to "aggressive" war. How complete a change even on previous declarations of the Labour Party is involved in this is shown by comparing the resolution unanimously adopted at the Margate Labour Party Conference in 1926:

"This Conference calls upon the workers to make clear to their governments that they will meet any threat of war, SO-CALLED DEFENSIVE OR OFFENSIVE, by organising general resistance, including the refusal to bear arms, to produce armaments or to render material assistance."

In 1926 the distinction of "so-called defensive or offensive" wars was explicitly repudiated. In 1934 it is made the cornerstone of the policy of support of imperialist war. That the expression of opposition to "aggressive" war is exactly not intended to cover opposition to war of British imperialism, but only to support of war against the enemies of British imperialism, was made clear by the statement of the member of the Trade Union Congress General Council officially introducing the same

war report before the Trade Union Congress at Weymouth:

"There is little likelihood that this country would be an aggressor nation."

The war significance of the resolution was stressed by the official speakers. Henderson spoke of the necessity

"to strengthen the system and PARTICULARLY THE SANCTIONS OBLIGATIONS OF THE COVENANT."

Bevin still more specifically emphasised

"the responsibility for giving effect in certain eventualities to a decision of the League of Nations which might involve THE EXERCISE OF WAR SANCTIONS."

Bevin further stated:

"I would do my damndest to stop war, BUT AT ANY PARTICULAR MOMENT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY CHANGE."

Widespread opposition has been aroused in the Labour movement to this open adoption of support of imperialist war even before the outbreak of war. This opposition reflected itself in the highest vote of the Conference against the Executive policy. The general resolution was carried by 1,953,000 to 269,000. An amendment to pledge the Labour movement to the general strike against all war was defeated by 1,519,000 to 673,000. It may be noted that the opposition vote of 673,000 included two of the largest unions, the Miners' Federation with 400,000 and the Distributive Workers with 100,000.

Nevertheless, the war resolution was carried, and the Labour Party thus stands committed to imperialist war. The welcome of the capitalist press for this decision was universal. The Liberal-Labour *New Statesman and Nation* sardonically commented (6.10.34):

"The difficulty of British Labour will be to differentiate its policy from that of Mr. Winston Churchill and the French Government."

4. War on Communism and the United Front.

The other most important aspect of the line of the Executive and the decisions of the Southport Conference was THE INTENSIFICATION OF DISCIPLINE AGAINST COMMUNISM AND THE LEFT WING.

The disciplinary resolutions of the Labour Party leadership to check the growth of Communism in the Labour Party membership began at the Liverpool Conference in 1925 with the expulsion of Communists from membership of the Labour Party, and have thereafter proceeded through a series of tightening stages involving the successive banning of all forms of common organisations, including Communists and Labour Party members working together. This process was carried to a new stage by the Southport Conference in 1934 by banning, not only membership of common organisations, including Communists, but even any form of united action with them. The statement of the Executive submitted to the Conference declared:

"The National Executive Committee is convinced that

loose association with the Communist Party is just as dangerous to the interests of the Labour Party as is Communist membership itself, and the following resolution was adopted by the Committee at its meeting last May:

"That united action with the Communist Party or organisations ancillary thereto without the sanction of the N.E.C. is incompatible with membership of the Labour Party, and that the N.E.C. seek full disciplinary powers to deal with any case or cases that may arise."

The refusal of the united working class front in 1933 is thus followed up by a direct blow at any form of common working whatever between reformist and revolutionary workers. To such lengths is the Labour Party Executive driven by its fear of rising Communist influence in the working class. The view of the leadership that only by such disciplinary measures, disintegrating the working class organisations and destroying democracy in the trade unions and working class organisations, could they maintain their hold, was openly stated by Bevin in advocating this ruling:

"It was said that the Communist Party was an insignificant party in this country. It would not have been if these individuals had had their way. The Labour Party would have been split here as it had been in Germany."

Thus in the view of the Labour Party leadership had democratic principles been allowed to operate in the Labour movement, had the workers been freely allowed to express their real wishes and choice of representatives through their organisations, Communism would have undoubtedly already won a very considerable strength in Britain. Such an admission is worth noting in relation to the parallel statements of the same leadership in public that Communism is "alien" to the spirit of the British workers. A reformist leadership which admits that it can only maintain its dead hand on the working class by sitting on the safety valve of proletarian democracy is only thereby making the more certain the explosion that will finally destroy them.

The immediate issue over which this new extension of reactionary discipline was carried out was that of the German Relief Committee. This committee united not only prominent Labour Party members and Communists, but also leading bourgeois representatives, liberals, scientists, authors, bishops, etc.; and in addition to its work of relief for victims of German and Austrian fascism it had carried on invaluable publicity both over the Reichstag trial and to-day for the release of Thaelmann. That the Labour Party chiefs should without compunction seek to stab in the back the work of this committee is a proof of their efforts to smash the movement of the broad masses of the toilers for the benefit of the bourgeoisie moving towards fascism. AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION FOR THE RELEASE OF THAELMANN WAS NOT ALLOWED TO BE PUT BEFORE THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE—although it was sponsored by one of the principal trade unions

and even *The Times* and similar bourgeois organs were raising direct protests on behalf of Thaelmann at the same time.

Many delegates objected that while such ruthless discipline was being enforced against any Labour Party member who appeared on the common platform with a Communist, the same Labour Party chiefs who were enforcing this were themselves constantly on a common platform with the leaders of the bourgeoisie, at Industrial Peace dinners, etc. Why such hostility to the working class Party, the Communist Party, and no hostility to the capitalist parties? Which then was the enemy? To this the Labour Party leader, Morrison, replied in a memorable statement THAT THE MAIN ENEMY WAS THE COMMUNIST PARTY, AND NOT THE CAPITALIST PARTIES:

"The Communist Party was singled out for exceptional treatment because it was an exceptional political party. IT WAS THE ONLY POLITICAL PARTY THAT SET OUT TO MAKE TROUBLE FOR THE LABOUR PARTY, the trade unions and the Co-operative movement."

Thus the Conservative and Liberal Parties, the parties of the bourgeoisie, do not "make trouble for the Labour Party"; they are recognised as friendly rivals; the only basic enemy is the Communist Party. Could there be any clearer statement, from the lips of its own leaders, of the Labour Party as a BOURGEOIS PARTY, despite its working class membership? And from this fact follows necessarily the continually greater need of sharper discipline to deprive the working class membership of freedom of expression or control of policy or choice of leadership. The organisational measures are in fact a political index and exposure of the Labour Party.

5. The "Collapse" of the Socialist League—the Exposure of "Left" Labourism.

The Southport Conference was marked by a DIVISION of opinion which showed itself in an opposition vote on every important issue before the Conference. This opposition could not directly reflect the rising working class opposition outside; the disciplinary system which almost completely excluded militant representation (Communists or militant workers associated with Communists) prevented this. Therefore the "opposition" could only appear in a distorted mirror, as expressed by the "Left" wing of the reformist leadership. Nevertheless, even this opposition had its significance as an indication of the rising opposition among the rank and file, and of the consequent complicated manoeuvring within the Labour Party leadership. The leader and expression of this "loyal left opposition" within the Labour Party was the Socialist League.

The Socialist League was formed in 1932, when the Independent Labour Party, the previous organ

of left reformism within the Labour Party, finally, under the growing leftward pressure of its membership, broke away from the Labour Party. The section of the leadership of the I.L.P. which preferred to stay in the Labour Party, represented by the late E. F. Wise, joined forces with a group of dissatisfied intellectuals in the Labour Party, represented by Cole, Mellor, Horrabin, etc., and with one or two "left" leaders of the Labour Party, notably Cripps (former Solicitor-General in the MacDonald Labour Government) and Trevelyan, to form the Socialist League. The Socialist League contained a considerable proportion of Communist renegades, such as Mellor, Horrabin, Murphy, etc.

At the outset the Socialist League was intended to fill the place left vacant by the departure of the I.L.P., and to provide a model of a loyal propagandist auxiliary body within the Labour Party, which would not take upon itself to represent an alternative policy or challenge to the leadership. Its leaders boasted that they would avoid the errors of the I.L.P., and show how to work for socialism within the Labour Party. The subsequent working out of this process has thrown an instructive light on the rôle of "left" reformism. The Socialist League is mainly a group of leaders with a very tiny membership — less than three thousand. Even so this membership, as its Conferences have shown, continually pressed for a more active left policy, for a definite fight against the official policy. Within two years of its foundation the Socialist League found itself presenting an opposition platform to the official platform, being steadily voted down by overwhelming majorities, and in a position bearing certain resemblances to that of the I.L.P. in the years 1927-1931.

The Socialist League, during the past two years, has poured out a mass of rosy propaganda of the immediate painless peaceful parliamentary transformation to Socialism which will be accomplished under the next Labour Government. The propaganda for its "Socialism In Five Years" is similar to that of the I.L.P. in the preceding period for "Socialism In Our Time," with the difference that the leader of the "lefts," Sir Stafford Cripps, especially stressed the necessity for "emergency powers" to be given to the government of a "strong state," not forgetting the preservation of the monarchy. The Labour Party found good use for the Socialist League as a propaganda department to arouse fantastic and impossible hopes in a future Labour Government; where Clynes and Henderson could only awaken disgust and even articulate protest in working class meetings, Cripps could still win enthusiasm from a considerable section of the workers. But so soon as this propagandist rôle might seem to trench on the sphere of policy, the Labour

Party leadership sounded a warning note and stepped in to establish its control.

The glaring contrast, however, between the Socialist League promises of immediate socialism through a Labour Government and the realities of official Labour policy could not be indefinitely concealed. At the Hastings Conference last year a conflict was successfully avoided: the Socialist League proposals were withdrawn on a promise of consideration by the Executive. But the publication of the new programme brought the issue to a head. For the Socialist League to have accepted passively this programme of capitalism and war would have been to sign its own extinction as a would-be organ of the left in the Labour Party. The Socialist League leaders had no stomach for a conflict; but they were compelled to range themselves in opposition to the Executive. To the twenty-five pages of the Programme, they offered no fewer than eighty-six amendments, covering thirty-nine pages (to prevent the repetition of this process, the Executive has forbidden in future the presentation of more than two amendments or resolutions by an organisation).

Widespread expectation was spread and loudly canvassed in the capitalist press of a great "conflict" between the Socialist League and the Labour Party Executive. The I.L.P. organ, the *New Leader*, hopefully wrote (21.9.34):

"It is an open secret that a large part of the membership of the Socialist League, as well as of local labour parties, have made up their minds to resign if they are defeated at the Southport Conference.

"The leaders of the Socialist League will no doubt retain their membership, but they will do so with cynicism and despair."

"War in the Labour Party—Sir Stafford Cripps to Attack on a Wide Front" were the headings of even the non-sensational Liberal *Manchester Guardian*.

Such exaggerated expectations meant to fail to understand the rôle of left reformism. The amendments were in fact put and were voted down with monotonous regularity; the Socialist League was not even able to muster as much support as the Communist Party used to win in the Labour Party. But in fact the great "conflict" disappeared into secret behind the scenes negotiations between the leadership, and ended in a "bargain" before the Conference began.

What was the "bargain"? It is difficult to repeat its terms without laughter. The Labour Party Executive made an extremely vague promise to meet opposition of the House of Lords "if" the House of Lords should "sabotage" Labour measures, and further to bring forward proposals for the "abolition" of the House of Lords "as a legislative chamber" (i.e., to reconstruct it as a "revising" chamber—which is also the aim of the Conservative Party). Further, the Labour Party

Executive solemnly promised that "if there were an emergency" it would take emergency measures. On this basis Cripps declared his complete satisfaction to the Conference; "this solved difficulties to the satisfaction of both sections." The faithful Cripps was thereon placed on the Labour Party Executive. Morrison concluded the incident by declaring with amused contempt that the Socialist League opposition had been "the mildest fizzle" the party had ever known. The bewildered capitalist press reported with surprise the "Collapse of the Socialist League," "Unexpected Retreat of Sir Stafford Cripps."

This typical episode of "left" reformism is important only as a symptom of the situation in the Labour Party. The issues of the rising opposition from below, which were first travestied and then betrayed by the Socialist League, remain. The Socialist League itself, if it is to continue any political rôle, will find that its problems are not ended with the "bargain." The advent of a future Labour Government will enormously develop these issues. The question of the opposition in the Labour Party is to-day of greater importance than ever.

6. The Issues Facing the Opposition in the Labour Party.

The Southport Conference decisions mean that the Programme of Capitalism and War is now definitely carried as the basis of any future Labour Government. The illusory hopes of a rapid parliamentary advance to socialism through a Labour Government, voiced by the Socialist League as an answer to all the questionings of the left workers during the past two years, have now been decisively defeated and rejected. THE OPPOSITION IN THE LABOUR PARTY HAS TO FACE THE QUESTION: WHAT NOW?

Continuance of support for and belief in a future Labour Government means to be chained to the Programme of Capitalism and War, to surrender the fight for socialism.

Does this mean that there is no room for an opposition in the Labour Party? No. There is room for an opposition in the Labour Party, but for a MILITANT OPPOSITION ON THE BASIS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE, not for an illusion-fed opposition which dreams of future peaceful parliamentary transitions to socialism, while ignoring the present issues of the class struggle which the Labour Party leadership is betraying.

The basis of this working class opposition in the Labour Party is already present. The relative smallness of the opposition votes at Southport should not lead to under-estimation of its strength; since the system of controlled selection of delegates, close control of local Labour parties and the

bloc vote necessarily leads to under-representation of its strength. EVEN SO, ROUGHLY ONE-THIRD OF THE LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES CONSISTENTLY VOTED AGAINST THE EXECUTIVE. The fact that in the division on the general strike against war, two of the largest unions, the Miners' and Distributive Workers', uniting half a million workers, voted against the Executive, further indicates the possibilities of the position if the organisation of the opposition in the trade unions is intensified. Similar indication of mass support was revealed in the Hyde Park counter-demonstration against fascism on September 9; despite the ban of the central leadership, a considerable number of London trade union and labour organisations took part, and even the hostile capitalist press estimated 100,000 to 150,000 anti-fascist workers present in the Park—a demonstration unequalled since the days of the General Strike, and in the face of the express commands of the central Labour leadership to "stay away." The official Greater London Labour Conference on Fascism, on September 22 (the initiative for which had originally come from the militant section on the London Trades Council) brought together 1,300 delegates from London working class organisations; although every delegate was compelled to sign a document of acceptance of official Labour policy, the Labour Party leaders, Clynes and Morrison, met with an angry hearing; almost all the speakers from the floor attacked the platform; and one-third of the delegates directly voted against the official resolution. Significant, too, is the process developing in the Labour League of Youth, the entry of many sections into the united front, and the rejection by the London Labour Youth Conference of the Executive war policy.

ALL THIS DEVELOPMENT OF THE REAL WORKING CLASS OPPOSITION IN THE LABOUR PARTY HAS GONE FORWARD IN CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY, ALONG THE LINES OF THE UNITED FRONT. It is noticeable that the Socialist League leaders have taken no part in these developments or in any phase of the actual fight confronting the workers.

The force of events, the further phases of the class struggle and of the capitalist and fascist attack, and the further exposure of the rôle of the Labour Party leadership, provide the basis for the enormous further carrying forward of this process. The Labour Party leadership, as a capitalist commentator has acutely observed (*New Statesman and Nation*, 6.10.34), is gambling in its programme and policy on the prospect of capitalist recovery; and, indeed, they can do no other without facing the issues of the class struggle:

"In deciding in effect for gradualism the Labour Party is assuming a measure of economic recovery. If that assumption is justified, Labour may succeed with political

tact in becoming a successful reformist alternative to Conservatism. It is not preparing for economic crisis; it is gambling on economic recovery."

The realities of the world crisis, the spectre of unemployment and worsened conditions, the colonial struggles, the advance to fascism and war, if the C.P.G.B. carries on energetic and correct work will inevitably blow skyhigh the empty illusory promises and hopes the Labour Party leadership endeavour to hold out to the workers, will reveal that leadership more and more in their true rôle as agents of the bourgeoisie against the working class, and will compel wider and wider masses of workers to face the issues of struggle.

On the unresisting paper of their books of imaginary utopias the heroes of the Socialist League can boast that they "have not even mentioned" fascism. In the real world the workers will have to face the enemy, and find the means to defeat him.

The issues are pressing and urgent. It is essential to organise for the struggle to-day. It is essential to build up the opposition in the Labour Party. THE UNITED FRONT CAMPAIGN AND THE BUILDING OF THE ANTI-FASCIST FRONT PROVIDE THE MEANS OF MASS ORGANISATION OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE LABOUR PARTY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VICTORIOUS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT.

The Labour Monthly

(Editor: R. PALME DUTT)

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 By GEORGE GILMORE
- MARX AND ENGELS ON THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS
 MOVEMENT, 1879-1895, X**

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DISCUSSION ON QUESTIONS FOR THE VII CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In preparation for the VII Congress of the Communist International the editors are publishing discussion articles and materials connected with the questions on the agenda of the Congress.—Editorial Board.

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BASIC LESSONS OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ITALY AGAINST FASCISM UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE "TOTALISED" REGIME

By K. RONCOLLI.

VERY frequently, comrades from other countries ask us Italian Communists questions somewhat like the following :

"You claim that the vast majority of the working class are opposed to fascism, and that there is great discontent and despair among all strata of the toiling population of town and village. There are plenty of reasons for this—the constant worsening of the conditions of life of the toilers, the enormous spread of unemployment, the almost unceasing wage cuts, the increase in the burden of taxation, the disastrous position of the poor and middle peasants, and of the small and middle traders. In short, the whole of the policy of the fascist government is operated in the interests of monopolist capital, against the working class and even against the small and middle bourgeoisie,—the strata which used to form the mass social basis of fascism. But if it is true, as you say, that the feelings of the broad masses are those of despair and hostility to fascism, how can you explain the fact that the development of the mass movement in Italy lags behind as compared with that in many other countries, that all the contrasts and contradictions which you point out do not (with very few exceptions) come to the surface, and that in the long run the fascist régime gives the impression of stability, consolidation and strength, a thing which is not the case in Germany for example? In the latter country, fascism, after a year and a half in power, is already showing signs of crisis and the internal contradictions in the régime are showing themselves day by day in ever more acute forms."

An answer should be given to this question, which is earnestly asked by comrades who have no adequate acquaintance with the situation in Italy. It is particularly important to do so, now, on the eve of

the 7th Congress of the Comintern, because this will enable us to give a characterisation, at least in general terms, of the successes and failures of our Party during the past few years, i.e., a summary of the work and experience of our Party with which it comes to the 7th Congress of the Communist International.

Under What Circumstances Did the Communist Party of Italy Arise and Develop?

It has been repeatedly remarked, and Comrade Ercoli dealt with this matter at the 12th Plenum of the E.C.C.I., that we must first of all recognise one important circumstance in making a comparison between the situation in Italy and in Germany, namely, that whereas Hitler came to power in 1933, when the relative stabilisation of capitalism had ENDED, the "march on Rome," on the contrary, took place in October, 1922, ON THE EVE of relative stabilisation of capitalism, which fascism was thus able to use for its relative consolidation.

What results arise from this fact ?

Firstly, a period of 7 years passed from the time when fascism came to power in Italy to the time when the results of the economic crisis began to make themselves felt in Italy and throughout the world. During these seven years fascism was able to greatly strengthen its state apparatus owing to the favourable economic situation, the inflow of foreign

capital, etc. It was able to create and develop its mass organisations and, to a certain degree, to preserve its mass social basis in the towns and especially in the villages and to become the big and only Party of the Italian bourgeoisie.

Secondly, Hitler came to power after fourteen years of the existence and struggle of the Communist Party of Germany. During these 14 years, the German Communist Party became strong, developed and grew into a big mass Bolshevik Party, a Party with many cadres* and with a leadership and a leader known and loved by the masses. It enjoyed the complete confidence of the Communist International, and was the second party in the Comintern. In contrast to this, the Italian Communist Party came into being in January, 1921, at the moment when the terrorist attack of fascism was in full swing, when Communist activity was almost completely illegal, actually if not formally, and when the mass movement (despite a number of examples of brilliant fights at this period) had on the whole subsided. On the other hand, the Communist Party of Italy was not as yet a real Bolshevik Party during the first years of the fascist dictatorship, which coincided with the first years of the existence of the Party. On the contrary, the Party was imbued from top to bottom, to a great extent, with the ideology of Bordigism, which, as we know, is the embodiment of a shallow "maximalism" and the narrowest sectarianism.†

In the succeeding years, especially in 1924-26, it is true, the Party, under the personal leadership of Comrade Antonio Gramsci, trained a considerable number of skilled cadres who helped the Party to make big steps forward along the path of Bolshevisation. But the blows struck by the police, at the time of the exceptional laws and in subsequent years, almost completely deprived the Party of its old cadres and compelled it to actually labour like Sisyphus to continually create cadres who, to some degree, could take the place of those arrested.

Therefore, to use a somewhat crude comparison, we may say that German National Socialism, at the time when it began its attack on the working class, found in the Communist Party an adult, strong and healthy, while Italian fascism, on coming to power, saw before it a youthful creature which was still weak and dangerously sick with "Bordigan" "Leftism."

While fascism sets itself the task of isolating the Communist Party from the masses, of breaking its contacts with the mass organisations, of physically destroying the cadres of its activists, the weakness and sectarianism of the Party in turn handicap the work of the Party among the masses. All this made

* Cadres: See No. 19.

† For a characterisation of Bordiga's errors, the reader should refer to *Left Wing Communism*, Lenin.

it easier to carry on the fascist policy, which was directed first of all towards the disorganisation and scattering of the toiling masses, and later to organising them and controlling them through its own fascist mass organisations.

If we do not take account of these basic facts, at least, it is difficult to understand why the mass movement in Italy lags behind in comparison with many other countries, why the internal class contradictions show themselves in Italy in a comparatively weak form, and why the fascist regime in Italy produces the impression of stability.

Opportunist Trends in the Communist Party of Italy.

The ideological weakness of the Communist Party of Italy as a whole and the spread of non-Leninist tendencies in its ranks finds its first explanation in the character, traditions and development of the Italian working-class movement. It is probably unnecessary and too lengthy a matter to analyse these facts here, in view of the aim of the present article. The objective situation created by fascism at the same time greatly assisted Right and "Left" opportunism, the basic features of which we will try to set out in general terms.

The Rights said:

"The alignment of forces is still unfavourable for the proletariat. Fascism is able to bring enormous terrorist pressure to bear on the masses and to keep them in a state of almost complete immobility. Until a strong SPONTANEOUS mass movement arises or until other factors intervene (i.e., the interference of some section of the bourgeoisie) to cause a breach inside fascism, to force it to moderate its reactionary pressure, to give our Party certain freedom of action, so long as the objective situation, irrespective of the work of the Party, does not undergo a big change in our favour, the Party has nothing to do but wait, partly abroad and partly locked within itself in Italy, until a new situation exists, giving it the possibility, together with other anti-fascist parties, of standing at the head of the masses WHO ARE ALREADY IN MOTION and leading them to the overthrow of fascism."

The "Lefts" said and still say:

"At the present moment, when the masses are subjected to such tremendous pressure and control by fascism and cannot put up any serious resistance, when they are organised by fascism and are under its influence to a greater or less degree, any work done by our Party which is directed towards fusion with the masses, and everyday leadership of them will, on the one hand, make easier the repression exerted by the police, will lay bare our activists, and on the other hand may lead the Party to the violation of the revolutionary purity of its line and incline it towards legalism, towards capitulation to fascism. The main task of the Party at the present moment is thus to maintain its purity, not to pass the threshold of its 'ivory towers,' to guard and improve our organisation and cadres, without going into mass work further than the distribution of illegal literature and teaching the vanguard of the proletariat the principles of the Party on the basic questions of the working class movement. As a result, all this will lead to the working class recognising the Party as its leader and guide at the moment of upsurge."

There is no need to make a profound analysis of these two points of view—the Right and the "Left"—

to see that on the whole they coincide. Each of them condemns the Party to complete passivity—to waiting for better times! It is also not difficult to understand that the development of such views was greatly assisted by the tremendous material and ideological pressure which fascism for 12 years exerted on the working class, and consequently also on the Party of the working class.

It should be noted that though the Party, under the leadership of the Comintern, acted with sufficient energy and rapidity, against the open opportunist trends and against their representatives (Taska, Serro, Santini, Blasko, Ferocci and Pasquini) and against the fractional work of the Bordigists, nevertheless, it did not carry on a sufficiently determined struggle against sectarian and “carbonarian” tendencies which hid behind “Left” phraseology and opportunism, which was equally dangerous and harmful for the Party.

The Cause of the Weakness of the Party.

In 1929-30, the Party was able to give a correct analysis of the characteristic peculiarities of the economic crisis in Italy and, in the course of it, foresee the further developments of a strong worsening of the conditions of life of the toiling masses, a growth of their fighting powers. It therefore predicted the sharpening of the contradictions in the ranks of fascism which the crisis would inevitably bring out. On the basis of this analysis and perspectives, the Party carried on a struggle against the defeatism and gradualism of the opportunists, and brought about a steady change in all of its work. But only later, very much later, the Party, and afterwards the Y.C.L. and the General Confederation of Labour, clearly realised some of the facts which are of exceptional significance for determining and characterising the situation in Italy (the cause of such lateness is to some extent the almost complete separation of the centre from the Party rank and file, and the rank and file from the masses, which was caused in 1928-29 by the blows of the police terror).

(1) Seven or eight years of the fascist regime and three or four years of “totalitarian” fascism have had a strong ideological influence on the broad strata of the working class, especially among the youth, not in the sense, of course, that they have become FASCISTS, but in the sense that they have lost faith in their own forces, and in the revolutionary rôle of their class. They have absorbed the point of view that “the crisis demands sacrifices from ALL CLASSES,” and that therefore, during the crisis all its burdens should be accepted without a murmur; they look upon war as the only way out of the present situation (a very widespread formula “let war come, and then we shall get arms and shall be able to overthrow fascism” is only another form of this conception),

etc. In this respect it should be noted that the everyday propaganda of the old social-democratic cadres who remained in Italy had no other aim and results except to assist in inculcating passivity and disappointment among the masses.

(2) After the coming of fascism to power, very important changes took place in the very organisational structure of the working class. Considerable sections of the old cadres of the working class in general and the Communist Party in particular were driven from industry, i.e., were arrested or deported. Some were forced to emigrate or doomed to chronic unemployment. These cadres were replaced by young workers, who were also dissatisfied with the fierce exploitation, but who had no experience of organisation in the class struggle and were strongly influenced by fascism, under which they grew up.

(3) Under the influence of the crisis and its results and especially after the appearance of the first symptoms of the mass movement which came forward in this period, fascism made quite deep changes in some forms of its policy, so as to prevent the collapse of its social basis, to deaden the discontent of the masses, to hinder the mass movements, to include the masses in its organisation and handicap the work of the Communist Party. This change included the treaty with the Vatican, various attempts at compromise with various groups of the social-democratic leaders of Italy and abroad, the slogan, “Face to the people,” the development of the organisation “Dopo Lavoro,” and organisation of aid for the unemployed and children’s summer camps. The demagogic campaign for public works and for the application of the 40-hour week ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE, the campaign which was the synthesis of all the latest fascist policy under the slogan “For the corporative super-class state,” and on the other hand, the tremendous growth of the police apparatus and the constant increase of repression against the Communist Party, against any “dissidentism” inside of the Fascist Party—all these facts, and others which could be given, are features and forms of the fascist policy, the object of which was to counteract the despair of the masses. These are indications of the manoeuvring ability of fascism, even in the relatively narrow limits permitted by its “totalitarianism,” indications of its flexibility, to which, unfortunately, there does not always correspond a similar flexibility and similar manoeuvring powers on the part of our Party.

(4) The old formula “fascism disunited and scattered the working class and the masses of toilers,” which was true until 1924-25, and from which there arose one series of tasks for the Communist Party, was no longer true in 1929-30, and thus the tasks of the Party had to be changed accordingly. In reality, after fascism had “disorganised and scattered”

the toiling masses, destroying their organisations, removing their leaders or forcing them deeply underground, it changed the situation. Not in the sense that it returned the freedom of organisation to the masses, but on the contrary, utilised the weapon of monopoly and violence, for the possibility of uniting the majority of the active population of the country (in its OWN organisations in the mass fascist organisations—trade unions, "Dopo Lavoro," co-operative societies, mutual aid societies, etc.). In the first years of the fascist dictatorship, when the fascist organisations embraced only an insignificant number of toilers, it was possible to understand such tactics, which did not place the work in these organisations in the foreground. Under the new conditions, however, such tactics have inevitably helped to isolate the Party from the masses and hindered the leadership of the masses.

The fact that the Party was late in estimating, understanding and solving the problem of Party tactics and organisation arose on the whole from the sectarianism which still prevails in the Party. It expressed, on the whole, the relics of Bordigan "anti-situationism" (the denial of the significance of changes in the situation for our tactics).^{*} Insufficient energy and consistency in the struggle was displayed against manifestations of this Bordigism in concrete work.

The Progress of the Party in 1930-32.

It should not be thought that the Party, in struggling for a change in 1929-30 and in the struggle to bring this change into effect, did not see the necessity of standing at the head of the organisation and leadership of the masses, among whom the first signs of an upsurge were to be noticed. All its polemics against the opportunists, all its policies, all its everyday activity, were openly DIRECTED towards this aim. And with this aim, the Party developed and extended its activity after 1929. But on the other hand—and this side of the question must be stressed—THE TYPE AND THE CHARACTER of the work of this period did not differ in essence from that of previous years, after the "March on Rome."

In 1930-32, the Party centre restored contacts with the majority of the existing lower organisations, which developed great activity. The illegal press

^{*} The study of the situation is a necessary condition for the solution of practical problems, but to the extent that the Party has, in its consciousness and critical experience, "already foreseen a definite development of the situation and has thus pointed out the tactical possibilities which should be developed in various phases," it "must try to have as much influence on it as possible. To wait until the situation gets more complicated so as to come under its effect eclectically and from incident to incident, and to submit to it, is the characteristic method of social-democratic opportunism." (Theses of the Second Congress of the Communist Party, Italy, January, 1922.)

reached many tens of thousands of toilers, showing to the masses that the Party and the General Confederation of Labour was alive, and bringing its revolutionary slogans to the masses.

The energetic and bold conduct of thousands of Communists before the special court sessions which sentenced them to long terms of imprisonment, in many cases from 15 to 22 years, also helped to increase the sympathy of the workers towards the Communist Party and won the admiration of the workers for the heroism of the Party members. At the same time, thanks to active work among the masses, the Party greatly increased its membership. During a period spreading over a little more than two years, the Party membership increased five times. In some of the provinces, where there had only been a few passive individual Communists on the eve of the "coup" in 1931-32, there were already cells, district and federal committees. The Communist Party of Italy, which in 1928-29 was reduced almost down to a tiny Party of "emigrants," was already a fighting and organised Party in 1931-32 having thousands and thousands of bold active members of the Party inside of the country, full of revolutionary enthusiasm.

The under-estimation of these facts, of these successes, would be a very serious mistake, which might cause dangerous illusions among the members of the Party with very harmful results.

It would be equally mistaken to think that the leaders of the Communist Party of Italy did not set themselves during this period the task of working in the fascist organisations. In a number of documents and articles issued in 1929-31, the necessity for this work was emphasised, and at almost all meetings of the leading bodies this problem was discussed and elaborated. But in this period the utilisation of legal possibilities was still regarded as ONE of the many tasks of the Party and the General Confederation of Labour. This task was not placed in the foreground. There is no realisation as yet that the work in the mass fascist organisations in a "totalitarian" state, where these organisations include the majority of the workers of the country, and at a time when the masses are trying to get out of a state of passivity and act in defence of their immediate demands, the work in these fascist mass organisations must not only form the basis of ALL THE MASS WORK of the Party, but must also determine all the forms of organisation and leadership. In the long run, this must determine ALL-THE FORMS AND THE NATURE OF THE PARTY'S WORK from top to bottom, from the leadership of campaigns to the methods of concealing our legal activity, from agitational and propagandist work to anti-militarist work.

The Party did not understand this position and

continued to work until the end of 1932 using the old methods, the methods of the period of semi-legality (1922-26), which was partly incorrect even for that period, and was partly unsuitable under the new conditions.

Basic Mistakes of the Communist Party of Italy in Mass Organisational Work.

Thus, during the period under review :

(1) The leadership of the lower work was mainly not carried out by groups from the "legal" elements, unknown to the police and living day by day the same life as the rank and file, in unbroken contact with the masses in the factories and in the mass fascist organisations. It did not strive first and foremost to develop its initiative, ability to lead, or the critical spirit, and the political co-operation of the comrades in the lower organisations with the centre. On the contrary, this leadership was always carried out through "illegal" instructors (i.e., comrades already known and sought for by the police), who, being in danger of arrest, were forced to live an abnormal life, which interfered with their contacts with the masses. In view of the fact that these instructors could not remain more than a few weeks or at the most a few months in one place, they had no time to develop the ability of the lower committees to lead and thus they always showed a tendency to replace these committees. Therefore, if an instructor succeeded in avoiding arrest, he nevertheless almost always left the organisation in a situation differing very little from the one in which he found it. After his departure and until the arrival of a new instructor, the absence of real leadership was felt again, and insufficiently constant and detailed information about the given place arrived at the Party centre.

(2) The election and changing of the composition of the leading committees was not carried out in the vast majority of cases with consideration for the wishes of the rank and file (in a form permissible by conspiracy) from among the comrades who had showed themselves in practical work and especially in mass work to be the most active and capable. The elections were not carried out on the basis of a political struggle against Right and "Left" opportunism and for the Party line, but by an instructor from the centre on the basis of old information, on the basis of the general political orientation of the "candidate" and by an investigation on the spot which was bound to be hurried and shallow. This circumstance helped to a greater degree to separate the centre from the rank and file and therefore from the masses.

(3) The Party organisations (and with them the Y.C.L., the general Confederation of Labour and the Red Aid) lived a closed-in life, instead of obtaining wide contact with the masses, which means

concealment in organisations containing a large number of workers (in the fascist unions, in the local sections of "Dopo Lavoro," in the mutual aid societies, co-operative societies, etc.), and thus gaining the possibility of carrying on work for the organisation and leadership of the workers in these organisations and with the help of the latter in the factories and among the unemployed. In the majority of cases, the cells were organised according to the old system of street and village organisations. The functions of the so-called "factory cells" consisted simply of very rare and brief meetings of members of the Party organisations and the exchange of printed material in the streets or houses. With such methods it was impossible to organise systematic work and really win leadership of the masses by the Party organisation either from the conspirative or the political point of view.

(4) There was practically no real division of labour between the members of the Party, a division of labour according to which some would carry on strictly conspiratorial work, while others connected with the former only by a thin and elastic thread, would carry on "legal" or semi-legal work for information, propaganda, agitation and the leadership of the masses in the fascist mass organisations. As for the basic work of all the Party members, it consisted to the extent of 90 per cent. or sometimes entirely of the distribution of literature and the recruitment of new members, which was done ENTIRELY ON THE BASIS OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE, i.e., on a strictly conspirative basis. It is obvious that irrespective of the political orientation of the comrades, the conducting of strictly conspirative work day after day was very dangerous, that it paralysed the OPEN work of the comrades among the masses so as to rally them on the basis of the legal fascist organisations, and attract them into the struggle.

(5) The sympathy, the efforts of the non-Party workers and peasants or those belonging to other political tendencies to approach the Communist Party, their sympathy for the U.S.S.R., was not utilised in most cases to carry out the united front, to draw these workers not directly into the Party, but into a mass of "other organisations, calculated on the public at large, and therefore possibly less definitely formed and less conspirative, organisations, with the most varied functions" (Lenin). The work in the various fascist organisations, the reading and distribution of literature, etc., was all used entirely for recruiting into the Party. On the other hand, recruiting on the whole was not conducted on the basis of mass work, on the basis of the fighting ability, the courage and boldness shown by the best workers during mass actions, but, as we have already pointed out, always on the basis of the distribution

and reading of illegal literature. Frequently anyone who distributes Party literature is looked on as a Party member. In this way the Party grew formally from among the non-Party workers, socialists, anarchists, etc., who had not yet sufficient political, organisational and CONSPIRATIVE TRAINING necessary for a Party member. This meant the confusing of sympathisers with Party members,

"erasing the boundary between them, extinguishing among the mass the conception which was already tremendously dimmed, that in order to 'serve' the mass movement we need people specially devoting themselves entirely to social-democratic activity, and that such people must patiently and stubbornly MAKE THEMSELVES into professional revolutionaries." (Lenin.)

This mistake was also of a sectarian character, though at first sight it may seem different, because it arose from the fact that the comrades looked on the Party as the only organisation of the working class and forgot the necessity of having a "system of transmission belts" from the Party to the masses. The results of this mistake in practice were the political weakness of the lower organisations which had its effect on all their work and their fragility from the point of view of conspiracy. This fragility caused frequent and big losses owing to police activity and led to extraordinary narrowness on the question of the organisation of masses of sympathisers and their utilisation for the fulfilment of various Party work.

(6) The trade union class organisation—the General Confederation of Labour—should have had the character of a

"secret organisation, but so 'free,' unformed, 'lose,' as the Germans say, that conspiracy for the masses of members amounted practically to zero" (Lenin),

an organisation which has, so to speak, its "address," its fundamental basis of work in the mass fascist organisations; which based itself in its work on the utilisation of all existing legal possibilities (fascist, mass organisations and meetings, trusted people in the fascist unions, worker correspondents, the conclusion of collective labour agreements by the fascist unions, the demagogic slogans of the union leaders, etc.). Instead of this the General Confederation of Labour was looked on as an organisation having the same nature, the same degree of illegality as the Party, and in the long run it became simply a duplicate of the Party. AMONG OTHER TASKS, it had that of carrying on work in the fascist unions. In these conditions, it is not surprising that in practice no work was done in the hostile organisations at all or else it was pushed into the background.

The work and organisational forms of the Y.C.L. were approached from the same—or possibly still more limited—point of view, which for these reasons was and still is nothing but a duplicate of the Party, i.e., it is not an organisation of the "Communist youth" but of "Young Communists," organisation-

ally narrower than the Party and weaker from all points of view.

(7) The press at this period was the chief branch of Party work. In the long run it had to satisfy all the needs of the Party in the various fields of its work—trade union work, agitation, propaganda among the youth, among women, among the nationalities oppressed by Italian imperialism, struggle against war, etc. In reality the press far from fulfilled these tasks, even to the extent that this was possible. The weakness of the lower press, the only one which can follow up the problems of the workers of various places and factories day in and day out, that can promptly raise these questions for solution and give suitable slogans was above all the result of the political weakness and the absence of initiative among the rank and file of the Party. In general, the organisations limited themselves to the distribution of literature published and edited in the centre. If for some reason literature did not arrive from the centre, this activity completely stopped. But the central press was too far removed from the real life of the workers. As a whole it had a too general character in spite of attempts to concretise it, and very frequently replaced the concrete and everyday needs of the masses and the preparation of slogans which could mobilise the workers in a definite place, by general slogans which did not correspond to the concrete circumstances and which were frequently too far ahead. It did not call attention day after day to the policy, acts and slogans of fascism, and its language was not always plain to the workers, who for years read only the fascist press every day and for years had not had the possibility of participating in political life. All this paralysed the efficiency of the Party and the trade union press.

The Causes and Results of Mistakes.

All these weaknesses, which found their sharpest expression at this period in serious mistakes which were made in the most delicate sphere—conspiracy—prevented the Party from securing the greatest possible results in the struggle against the employers and fascism. It stopped it from utilising the growing discontent of the masses, their increased fighting powers, and the growth of their sympathy toward the U.S.S.R. and Communism.

Of course, the slogans of the Party, and its everyday work in its own ranks assisted towards the fact that in spite of these shortcomings the Party struggled among the masses against the ideological influence of fascism, made these masses feel that they were not absolutely without leadership and gave them direction in the struggle. It is no chance, of course, that the periods of the widest and most rapid development of the movement coincide with the periods of the widest and most intense Party work.

But owing to the weakness of the Party and its

mistakes in the sphere of conspiracy, the Party organisations had not sufficient initiative, were not deeply connected with the masses. Party work suffered from long and serious intervals to which there almost always corresponded periods of a relative fall of the mass movement. The Party is still by no means always capable of rousing the masses on every occasion when this is objectively possible and inflaming their will to struggle, even in actions which are not spontaneous in character. Though the total number of actions increased in 1931-32, they were entirely spontaneous. They lasted only for brief periods. They were not linked up with each other or raised to a higher level. They were not accompanied by serious resistance to violence and to the fascist manoeuvres. The work of the Party and the mass actions connected with it developed in breadth, IN QUANTITY, but their TYPE, their character, did not change to such a great extent as to lead to a decisive change in the relationship of forces between fascism and the working class (to force fascism to undertake more extensive manoeuvres and thus make it possible for the Party of the working class to come out from underground conditions to which it has been doomed for many years).

Where can we find the cause of these weaknesses of the Party?

At the beginning of the article we touched on causes of an objective nature, i.e., the pressure of fascism, the peculiarities in the formation of the Party, the loss of the best Party cadres as a result of mass arrests, the loss of almost all the cadres who were formed in the struggle against Bordiganism. It is useless to return to this.

If we want to analyse the origin of these weaknesses we may state that it can be reduced to the widespread tendencies of sectarianism and the bowing down to spontaneity, which do not mutually neutralise each other, as might be expected from a shallow analysis, but on the contrary are linked together and strengthen each other.

Sectarianism, "carbonarism," as Manuilsky correctly defined it in the specific case of the Communist Party of Italy, leads to the Party being locked up in itself, and deprives the comrades of all flexibility and manoeuvring powers under the pretext of preserving the "purity" of the Party. Under Italian conditions, though especially under the "totalitarian" state, with an enemy who is undoubtedly agile, strong and cruel, it is necessary to be very flexible, to develop great manoeuvring power so as to fuse with the masses and in spite of all bring about their unity in the struggle.

On the other hand, we encounter the resistance to attempts to utilise legal possibilities, to convert the work in the fascist organisations into a basis for all mass Party work, and to begin a mass movement with the simplest, most elementary "legal" demands.

The conception of mass work as consisting entirely of the distribution of illegal literature, the too general character of this literature, with slogans which ignore the level of the movement reached, the absence of any response to demagogic fascist agitation, the difficult language of this literature—all this in essence was an expression of the conviction that the workers themselves, without the EVERYDAY INTERFERENCE OF THE PARTY, would SPONTANEOUSLY be able to make up for the shortcomings in Party work. It was an expression of the conviction that the leaflets, the newspapers, the call to struggle are sufficient to rouse the workers to action and raise the movement to a higher level, to ever more radical aims.

How the Party Works in Order to Head the Mass Movement.

The working out of its own experience, the analysis of its own mistakes, changes in tactics and in the methods of work—all this was done by the Communist Party of Italy during these years under the continuous and powerful fire of the enemy, the attacks and severity of whom never ceased for a single moment. Any mistake, any attempt to improperly correct it, every additional experience cost the Party almost entire organisations, scores of activists and leaders. In spite of this, in spite of very heavy and very frequent blows, despite the necessity for constantly restoring its organisations under extremely difficult circumstances, of restoring its cadres and part of its leadership, the work of the Communist Party of Italy never ceased for a moment throughout these years. Even at the time when the centre was almost without contacts with the rank and file for several months—in 1927-28 and in 1932—the latter continued their work, though with many mistakes and shortcomings. In general, even in the years when the exceptional laws were in operation, there was not a single district in Italy in which the Party did not exist—even though interruptedly—and where its voice could not be heard calling on to struggle. The Party always found in the midst of the Italian working class the necessary energy to carry out this work.

Mussolini stated in one of his first speeches after the "March on Rome," in February, 1923, that he had "broken the back of the Communist Party." This statement of Mussolini proved to be just as unfounded as his other statement of the same period, when he promised greatness and welfare to the entire Italian people in a short time. After five years of power, after a year of "totalitarian" policy, Mussolini was forced to admit publicly at the end of 1927, that fascism has by no means won the majority of the working class. Not long ago Mussolini, Bogati, and others, found it necessary to polemise with our Party and sound the alarm against the Communist

danger. In spite of 12 years of fierce reaction, in spite of the fact that this reaction has, probably, no equal in the history of Communist Parties in its "perfection" and cruelty, nevertheless the Communist Party of Italy, stands continuously at its fighting post. On the contrary, during the last few years, especially last year and this year, under the leadership of the Comintern it has corrected its worst mistakes to a great degree, has eliminated some of its shortcomings, and can therefore look confidently towards the future.

Since the beginning of 1933, the leading centre of the Communist Party of Italy has directed all its efforts mainly to the formation of new cadres capable of utilising legal and semi-legal possibilities, to the development of the capability and initiative of the rank-and-file and the strengthening of the factory local organisations, simultaneously transferring the centre of their activity to the fascist mass organisations in the localities and in the factories. It widely carried out the division of labour among its activists, throwing the greater part of its forces into the work in the mass fascist organisations, ensuring a greater degree of safety for the comrades carrying on strictly illegal work. It carried on an energetic struggle to raise the meaning of being a Party member, so that though the number of Party members from the former point of view fell from 1931 to 1932, nevertheless the Party became stronger, and its work, its contacts with the masses, improved, just as its work and its contacts with the masses in the Federation of Youth and in the General Confederation of Labour improved. The central Party press, the press of the youth and of the Confederation had great success and, at least partly, assumed a character which was not merely agitational, it served the aims of direct leadership in the Party and in the masses.

But the result of these improvements, which were sometimes very palpable, were nevertheless extremely modest and limited. Under Italian conditions, experience of the whole Party is very slowly passed on from the centre to the rank and file, and from the rank and file to the masses. The mobilisation of all the forces of the Party or those forces which the Party can mobilise among the working class on definite grounds and for a definite aim, takes place very slowly.

But nevertheless results can be seen. In the last year, especially during the last few months, the number of actions taking place under the leadership and influence of the Party, has continually increased. A widely spread method of work was participation in the meetings of the mass fascist organisations with the aim of putting forward there the most urgent demands of the workers, of protesting against the greed of the employers and the plunder carried out by the fascist leaders, to get workers' commissions

elected to carry on negotiations directly with the factory owners or the authorities over the heads of the fascist leaders. This participation in fascist meetings has become a mass phenomenon, it may be said, an extremely POPULAR method which the workers use according to the instructions of the Party even in many cases where the Party is actually not there.

We frequently have to do with forms of mass activity, still very timid and cautious, but important, simply because they are extremely widely spread. The main task of the Party at this period is to widen and extend still further the activities of the workers in the fascist organisations, convert them into an open struggle for the most important economic and political demands, so that all the workers will recognise the Communist Party as THEIR PARTY, the Party which leads them to the overthrow of fascism and for the winning of power.

At present, as we have already stated, the Party has by no means achieved such results. A proof of this, unfortunately, is the extremely poor way in which the whole Party and the masses reacted to the comical plebiscite on March 23 and to the Austrian events in February and July, 1934.

A rapid and profound explosion is possible. This is shown by the improvement of Party work, the growth of the activity of the masses, the continual intensification of the objective situation, and the growth of discontent among the toiling strata of the population in view of the recent general wage-cut. It is expressed in the great sympathy for the U.S.S.R., and symptoms of discontent and disorganisation in the ranks of the Fascist Party and in the very leadership (the arrest of Arpiniati and scores of other fascist leaders). Great enthusiasm greeted the first information of the carrying out of the united front between the Italian Communist Party and the Italian Socialist Party. This removes the last hindrance to unity of action between Communist workers and those who are still connected with the Socialist Party for sentimental reasons. It will disrupt the attempt of Mussolini to drive these workers along the path of compromise through the help of various socialist leaders—Caldar, Veratti, etc.—who have entered the service of the "corporative state" in Italy.

The decisive factors are the mass movement, and the activity of the Communist Party as the leader of the working class and whole mass of toilers. Between this activity and the development of the objective situation there is still a fairly deep gap. The Party must secure great and rapid successes in the leadership of the economic struggles and their conversion into political struggles. Also in the work among the peasants and the oppressed nationalities, especially in winning the youth to the struggle against war, nationalism and passively waiting for

war. It must improve if it does not wish to be left behind by the developments.

The revolutionary enthusiasm of thousands of Party members, their loyalty to the cause of the working class, the experience which they have obtained at the cost of great sacrifices in the course of twelve years of the bitter struggle against the merciless enemy are our standby. The strict self-criticism to which they subject all their activity, and mainly their discipline and absolute loyalty to the Communist International—all this provides a

guarantee that the Party will be ready to solve the serious tasks put before it by the situation, i.e., the task which, to-morrow, the 7th Congress of the Comintern will put before it in the name of the world proletariat. This the Party can do if it can eliminate all its serious shortcomings in everyday practical work, in organisational work and particularly in mass work, if, in short, the Party succeeds, as we are sure it will, in developing to the necessary extent all those gains which have been made during the recent period.

THE CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE NEW MANŒUVRES OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS IN INDIA

By G. SAFAROV.

1. The Pseudo-Socialism of the Congress.

AN All-Indian Congress Socialist Party* has been organised in India. At its conference in Patna it adopted a programme full of many promises.

Here is this programme (published *Times of India*, May 18th, 1934):—

(1) Transfer of all power to the producing masses.

(2) Development of the economic life of the country to be planned and controlled by the state.

(3) Socialisation of the commanding branches of industry, such as steel production, cotton, jute, railways, shipping, mines, banks and enterprises of social utility, with a view to the progressive socialisation of all the means of production, distribution and exchange.

(4) State monopoly of foreign trade.

(5) Organisation of co-operative societies for production, distribution and credit in the unsocialised sector of economic life.

(6) Elimination of the princes and landlords and all other exploiting classes.

(7) Redistribution of the land for the benefit of the peasants.

(8) State to encourage and develop the co-operative and collective cultivation of the land, with a view to the full collectivisation of the whole of agriculture in the country.

(9) Liquidation of debts owed by peasants and workers, according to particular needs to the basis ultimately of distribution of economic good.

(10) There shall be adult franchise which shall be on functional basis.

A first glance at this programme makes it clear that Congress socialism is a forced tribute to the revolutionary process going on among the masses of workers, peasants and the petty-bourgeois strata of India.

Even in India, strictly isolated from the rest of the world by prison bars and the police-imperialist dictatorship of British imperialism, the news of the great victories being achieved by socialism in the Soviet Union are reaching the masses. All the surrounding circumstances make the masses particularly receptive to this.

During the last few years, India has passed through a period of big mass struggles. THE GENERAL TEXTILE STRIKE, which ended recently, marks a serious step forward along the path of the class awakening and solidarity of the Indian proletariat. In the course of the years 1930-33, the revolutionary peasant movements which swept in a mighty wave over the whole country, from Burma to the North-west frontier, from the Presidency of Bombay and the United Provinces to the feudal states of Kashmir and Alwar, set the Indian villages in motion. The petty-bourgeois masses of the towns, driven into an impasse by the capitulatory policy of the Indian National Congress, are striving towards a decisive struggle against imperialism. The Communist vanguard is beginning to rally together and win influence over the working class movement.

But at the same time imperialism is continuing its offensive against India, from which country it drained over 2,000 million gold rupees and mountains of devaluated raw material during the years of the economic crisis. Many millions of peasant farms, crushed in the vice of imperialist exploitation and servitude to the landlords and money-

* It was organised as part of the Indian National Congress, within the framework and on the platform of the National Congress.

lenders, have been finally ruined. Hundreds of thousands of peasant families have been driven out of their plots of land. A narrow stratum of new compradore* elements of the trading-usurer type has grown rich and improved its position out of the ruin of the peasants. This stratum has done its bit to increase the whole system of oppressive exploitation and dependence, the system headed and directed by British imperialism.

The offensive on the working class of India by British and Indian capital, whipped up by Japanese competition, is continuing. After the close of the textile strike, wages were again cut by 7 per cent. The British government is carrying through a bill on "conciliation courts," which deprives the workers not only of the right to strike, but even of the right to send their representatives into the arbitration bodies. No one who has been prosecuted can serve as a representative of the workers, and in addition the Anglo-imperialist arbitrators are given the right of removing all workers' representatives whom they disapprove of.

After stopping its campaign of civil disobedience, the National Congress is "getting up steam" for participation in the "legislative councils"† and for further compacts with imperialism. A number of groups, sharply conflicting among themselves, are taking shape among the upper ranks of the Congress.

All these things taken together are compelling these elements of the working class and the petty-bourgeois strata, who are in a process of becoming politically more active, to seek THEIR OWN reply to the questions of the struggle; all these things are causing them to strive to comprehend the process of the mass struggle, and to sum up its lessons.

It is to these very elements that the Congress Socialists are appealing. A mere acquaintance with the points of their programme immediately suggests a cunning forgery, a desire to counterfeit revolutionary sentiments.

"All power to the producing masses." It is well-known that the utopian Fourier considered the industrial bourgeoisie to be a producing class. It is well-known that in the days after the October Revolution the social-democrats based the whole of their struggle against the proletarian revolution on frightening the masses with the destructive effects which would follow on the expropriation of the expropriators, the violent removal of such a "productive" element as . . . capital.

The Congress Socialists have most carefully removed all mention of the bourgeoisie from their

* Compradore: Used throughout the East to denote native middle-man "go-between" the populace and imperialists.—Ed.

† The Provincial Legislative Councils have no legislative power and to the extent of one-third consist of persons appointed by the Governor under whom they exist.

programme, and along with this they loudly announce for all to hear that their aim is "an Indian independent socialist state." In other words, they confuse the programme of the bourgeois-democratic revolution with that of the socialist revolution, without very skilfully saving the Indian bourgeoisie and "national" Indian capital from harm.

The Congress Socialists avoid speaking even of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasants. This is natural. They are trying to make capital out of the influence of the victories of the Soviets without undertaking any obligations on themselves in respect to the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution in India.

The picture becomes clear when we analyse these radical hieroglyphics further. In reply to the publication of the programme of the Congress Socialist Party, the "Congress Working Committee" (the executive body of the National Congress) condemned the class war as incompatible with the tactics of non-violence.* The Secretaries of the Congress Socialist Party immediately hastened to give their explanation:

"The symbol of faith of the Congress is the achievement of PURNA SWARAJ† BY PEACEFUL AND LAWFUL MEANS. In our programme adopted at Patna, there is nothing that contradicts this symbol of faith in any way. We are also striving to achieve independence, and the very fact that we are in the ranks of the Congress shows the peaceful and lawful methods which we have adopted. We ask how the idea of the class war serves as a challenge to the (Congress) symbol of faith. As for confiscation, our aim, as already stated, is the socialisation of industry, trade, etc. The programme, as can be gathered from the resolution adopted in Patna, will be carried out by the Indian state after the achievement of political freedom. This, of course, will be brought about by legal means."

In the election of the leading body of the Congress in Bombay, the Congress Socialists again emphasised their loyalty to Gandhite methods of non-violence.

The Congress Socialists are for "Purna Swaraj," i.e., for the Gandhite conception of the national liberation of India, in the spirit of a bargain with British imperialism, while preserving for the latter its dominating position in their enslaved country.

They are for peaceful and lawful methods of struggle! They do not want to exceed the framework of British imperialist "legality," Within the framework of this imperialist lawlessness and license, the Congress Socialists promise to bring about political freedom and the further introduction of socialism by "legal means."

For many years bourgeois-nationalism has exploited the humiliated and downtrodden state of the enslaved people of India, their patriarchal

* The repudiation of violent methods, including strikes.

† Purna Swaraj—the hypocritical and elastic formula of Gandhi, containing the demand for a scanty autonomy for India while actually preserving the domination of British imperialism.

peasant belief in the success of revolt while on their knees, and unconscious trust in the bourgeois leaders and liberal landlords, to emasculate and destroy the mass anti-imperialist struggle, by betraying the struggling masses at every stage. The doctrine of non-violence served as a means to this end. The bourgeoisie laid the path to their political influence between fire and water, between revolution and imperialism, by constantly calling on the British financial oligarchy to:

"Give way to us, otherwise these rebellious masses will take it by force."

The Indian bourgeoisie concealed their conciliatory policy very cleverly and well by their defeatist speculation on the invincibility of the military-police colossus of British imperialism.

The actions of the workers and peasants and the mass anti-imperialist struggle in general, during the period 1930-1934, made many breaches in the psychology of non-resistance. The deepening and sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism found its reflection on Indian soil in the accentuation of all the contradictions of the colonial régime. The expropriation of the peasant masses by British finance capital, the semi-feudal landlords and the money-lenders, has assumed enormous proportions. The offensive of British and Indian capital on the beggarly colonial standard of living of the Indian workers has sharpened the antagonisms between labour and capital. In the imagination of the masses, awakened by the struggle and the severe worsening of their conditions, the tasks of the struggle for NATIONAL liberation from the imperialist yoke have approached and become INTERTWINED with a craving to ruthlessly SMASH the rotten agrarian system which is supported by the parasitism of foreign finance-capital and the semi-feudal monopoly of the Indian landlords over the land.

To ensure support among the landlords for the claims of the National Congress, the "holy" Gandhi sent his assurance to the zemindars (landowners), which he decorated with the palm branches of "native socialism" as follows:

"Our Socialism or Communism should therefore be based on non-violence, on the harmonious collaboration of labour and capital and the landlord and tenant . . . But supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property, you will find me fighting on your side . . . Once you turn a new page in the relations between zemindars and the ryots (peasants) you will find us on your side, zealously guarding your private rights and property." *Mahratta*, August 12th, 1934.

Until now, Gandhism has fed the masses with the promises of national liberation and independence, and has at the same time, tied the masses up with its tactics of non-violence.

The relationship between politics and economics has now changed somewhat. The results of the economic crisis and the lessons of the struggle

have "settled" in the minds of the masses, and have introduced a new element into their psychology. They are raising the question of the relations between the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation, that of the working class against capitalism, and peasants against the rotten parasitic agrarian system in a revolutionary way.

This Congress pseudo-socialism hastens to help traditional Gandhism. It widens . . . the extent of the promises made! It promises not only independence, but socialism as well, ready made and all in order, with the "power of the producing masses," the socialisation of industry and the banks, and even the collectivisation of agriculture. In a word, almost the same can be obtained by the universal means—"non-violence" as is in being on the other side of the Himalayas.

The anti-imperialist revolution TOGETHER WITH the anti-feudal revolution and even a socialist coup are fused into a single . . . nebula in the sky! Why should the workers quarrel with the capitalists, why should the peasants raise their hands against the landowners? Why should the revolutionary struggle against imperialism be let loose in a plebeian manner under the leadership of the proletarian vanguard? All this can be conducted into legal and peaceful bounds! All that needs to be done is to add a prayer for socialism to the prayer for independence.

It is with this that the Congress Socialists come to the masses. They calculate on the general "all-national" illusions of unity with the conciliatory bourgeoisie still being strong among the masses, and that all that is necessary is to RENOVATE these illusions with a sprinkling of socialist balm.

And they play at opposition to Gandhi and Gandhism. One of the mouthpieces of the Congress pseudo-Socialists strikes a pose and declares:

"We are coming forward in an endeavour to save the country from the confusion of thought created by Gandhi's socialism." (*Bombay Chronicle*, August 11, 1934.)

In India, the gap between the level of the SPONTANEOUS process of the revolutionisation of the masses of workers and peasants and urban petty-bourgeoisie, and the POLITICAL shaping of this growth of revolutionary tendencies is extremely great. Up to the present time, in spite of all the partial breaks in the front of non-violence," the Indian bourgeoisie have been able to keep the mass movement within the bounds of their leadership. BUT THE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE PRESENT STAGE OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST, WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' MOVEMENT IS THE STRIVING OF THE MASSES OF WORKERS, PEASANTS AND URBAN PETTY-BOURGEOISIE (EVER MORE POWERFULLY BURSTING TO THE FOREFRONT), TO DRAW THEIR OWN LESSONS FROM THE BANKRUPTCY OF NATIONAL REFORMIST CONCILIATION. It is on these elements, who have begun to

grow active, that the Congress Socialists are palming off their programme, in the attempt to distract their attention from criticism of the methods of non-violence, from the basic question of struggle.

The question of the methods of struggle and organisation of the masses are naturally brought to the forefront by the whole course of events. The last civil disobedience campaign died out in the individual civil disobedience of Gandhi, who alone had developed as far as using disobedience in the spirit of completely repudiating any idea of violence. The Swarajites co-operate with imperialism. All the Congress leaders are absorbed in plans for "winning" the legislative councils. But along with this, behind the workers, is the experience of the general textile strike and the preceding clashes with imperialism and the employers; the peasants have experienced a series of uprisings; the rank and file of the petty-bourgeoisie in the National Congress have been educated by the lessons of the struggle since the Lahore Session of the Congress in 1929).* The revision of the Congress leadership, and of the Congress programmes and methods, arises out of the new situation. The Congress leadership has led a number of mass movements into an impasse; despite the heroic efforts of the masses in the struggle for independence, the Congress programme has not absorbed a single grain of this revolutionary state of the masses. The Congress methods, which showed their bankruptcy in the campaign for civil disobedience, have only evolved further in the direction of sham constitutional collaboration with British imperialism. The conclusions from the lessons of the mass struggle differ irreconcilably from the orders, exhortations and doctrines of the Congress leaders.

The Congress Socialists pretend that they want to satisfy the rightful demands of the masses. They are against imitating the masses, who are forsaking their obedient posture before Mahatma Gandhi's exhortations about the external character of capitalism and of the landowning system, etc. These exhortations, by the way, are termed by them "Gandhi Socialism"!

It is just for this very reason that the Congress Socialists come into the foreground with the demand for Purna Swaraj but with socialism—for the Congress, but with wide rank and file democracy, for non-violence, but with SHAM SOCIALIST ILLUSIONS!

Possibly the advanced elements of the mass movement are insufficiently conscious and organised to draw independent political conclusions in an organised way and to consolidate them. This

* At this session the Congress hypocritically announced that its aim was the independence of India.

is what the Congress sham socialists are hoping for, imagining that flanking tactics are much more preferable than a head-on attack.

2. "The Elimination of the Princes, Landlords and all Other Exploiting Classes" or the Elimination of the Irreconcilables from the Working Class Movement.

One of the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party, Jhabwala, explained the practical views and intentions of the Congress Socialists in very great detail.

First of all he set out his attitude to the "conciliation bill":

"Conciliation is but an expedient in particular stages of all true labour movement, which is fundamentally based upon class-consciousness."

"Strike is not to be engineered. If men voluntarily come out the Union leaders may lead, but leaders themselves should never ask the men on their own initiative to down tools. I am against the last textile strike, not that the workers had no complaint, but because we were not prepared in the true sense of it to fight a strike . . . When our own house is not in order how can you give battle to other? That was purely why the strike collapsed. There was quite good smooth-sailing for the men so far as the wage-cut was concerned; the men would have won, but for the incorrigibles, irremediables, the impossibles in labour to-day."

"The Socialist Party may help a great way in eradicating the irreconcilables from the ranks of Labour. Then the Congress must revive its relations with the millowners and other industrial companies by giving them a guarantee of consumption of manufactured goods on the strength of proper Swadeshi propaganda on the owners' acceptance of a gradual socialisation of all the industries."

It is difficult to believe that a person with such views was one of the Meerut prisoners, who deservedly obtained authority in the ranks of the proletariat far beyond the confines of India.

The arguments of Jhabwala are typical of an agent of capital in the working class movement. He gives his blessing to arbitration and conciliation, though without too widely advertising the participation of the British Secret Service, at the very time when this "conciliation" means conciliation with the continuation of the ever-more impudent offensive of British and Indian capital. Jhabwala is copying Gandhi.

The "holy" Gandhi promises the landlords a warm defence of their property. The Mahatma speaks weightily and distinctly about the defence of their rights as landlords to exploit the peasants, and proclaims the ETERNITY of landlord property as the unshakable foundation of Indian national life at the very time when the ruin of the peasant farms by semi-feudal land-owners and usurers has reached unprecedented dimensions. Now, when the further preservation of the semi-feudal agrarian system, which has fused with imperialist exploitation, may be bought only at the price of the direct EXPROPRIATION of hundreds of thousands and millions of peasant farms, and enslavement of the many millions of the peasant masses.

Gandhi prefers the expropriation and ruin of the peasants by the landlords and usurers to that of the landlords by the peasants.

There is nothing surprising in this. During the period of the economic crisis, new contacts have developed between the Indian bourgeoisie and the strata of NEW LANDLORDS, who have come forward and seized quite large quantities of peasant land.

Jhabwala raised the question of the workers in the same manner as Gandhi puts that of the peasants. In a situation where the capitalists are making a frantic attack, strikes, in his opinion, can only be a spontaneous, unavoidable evil. The "true leaders" of the trade unions must not organise strikes. Jhabwala goes further in his warm efforts to hand over the NON-UNION workers, bound hand and foot, to the onslaught of the imperialists and the Indian capitalists. He joins the voice of the Congress Socialists to the united chorus of British imperialists and Indian employers, demanding that the working class movement be purged of insidious agitators, irreconcilables, and Communists. He offers the services of his party in the fulfilment of this task. At the same time, instead of organising the proletarian front of resistance against the onslaught of capital, he offers the workers the mediation of the National Congress. The National Congress must obtain the consent of the capitalist sharks to its "gradual socialisation," in return for which the sharks must be guaranteed the sale of their goods by means of "swadeshi."

The entire tight-rope walk of the newly-hatched Congress Socialists is bounded by the framework of traditional Gandhism. The rope is stretched from Purna Swaraj and non-violence to swadeshi, to the demand for the consumption of goods of only local "national" production. The Congress socialist acrobats are balancing on THIS rope with the "power of the producing masses," "socialisation," "collectivisation" and "planned economy" in their hands. The starving workers who are thrown out of the factories in thousands so as to increase the productivity of "national industry" must turn into COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS FOR THEIR EXPLOITERS as part of their "national self-discipline." "Swadeshi," the doctrine of the consumption of only "national" cloths and national products, can no longer claim popularity in the old form of a commercial advertisement issued by national capitalists.

Let us stick a socialist label on to "swadeshi," say Jhabwala and Co. This will help Indian capital in the struggle for the home market against sinking Lancashire and Japanese dumping. The workers can be told that the capitalists will be kinder if the whole nation becomes one huge office for the sale of "their own" manufactures.

Thus, when we look more closely into the programme of the Congress Socialist Party, all its mysterious contents become plain.

"Power to the producing masses" includes the participation of the "national" capitalists who have given a vague consent to a still more vague "socialisation." "Planned economy" (this has to be mentioned after the victory of the Bolshevik Five-Year Plan), turns out to be "swadeshi" in the plan of the "socialist" reconciliation of capital and labour. The socialisation of industry and the banks, not only of local capital, but also of the financial capital of Great Britain, proves to be a PLAN FOR BUYING OUT THE IMPERIALIST "COMMANDING HEIGHTS," stretched over a whole number of generations, plus the buying out of factories belonging to the local capitalists. The collectivisation of agriculture without the previous confiscation of the irrigation works and the land belonging to the imperialists, the princes and the landowners, turns out to be a plan for BUYING OUT THE LAND from the imperialists, princes and landlords.

The Congress Socialists are thirsting to load the workers and peasants of India with benefits just as the Russian cadets wanted to pour blessings on the peasants of Czarist Russia by proposing to buy out the landowners' land at a "fair price."

This counter-revolutionary and niggardly phantasmagoria has ITS OWN LOGIC, however, strange though it may seem. It is the logic of Purna Swaraj and non-violence. The achievement of almost independence within the bounds of a dominion constitution has been regarded by the Indian bourgeoisie throughout all the post-war years as their rightful possession. One of the heroes in the works of the prominent Russian satirist, Shchedrin, claimed that truth is the product of legal proceedings. The Indian bourgeoisie has steadily tried to convince all and sundry that national liberation can only be the result of negotiations and commercial undertakings between them and British imperialism. Gandhi and his inseparable pundit, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the inspirer of the new Congress pseudo-Socialist Party, constantly called on the oppressed and enslaved India to forswear any idea of violence, thus clearing a path for themselves THROUGH THE MASS MOVEMENT to negotiations with the Viceroy and to the Round Table Conference. They could not and cannot now surrender the support of the masses. Should they do so, their solicitations to British imperialism would lose the force of political pressure. It would not be possible, were such the case, to bolster the claims of the bourgeoisie with a certain amount of popular support. This would contradict the class interests of capital in a colonial country, and its striving to national independence. But the Indian bourgeoisie have carried

on a policy of conciliation with imperialism with rare consistency, and still carry it on as a counterpoise to the struggle for the revolutionary liberation of India. This policy CONTRASTS the Indian bourgeoisie to the struggling masses. The Indian bourgeoisie can only guarantee their political hegemony in the mass movement by artificially maintaining a definite proportion, a definite relationship between their class diplomatic-conciliatory activity and the mass movement, overflowing the dam of their conciliatory policy. Hence, the peculiar national MASKING of the treacherous policy of conciliation systematically carried on by the elastic Purna Swaraj. This is treated both as "independence in general" and as "independence" within the framework of the British Empire. Hence the national specific bourgeois METHOD OF EMASCULATING the revolutionary contents of the mass movement with the help of the doctrine of non-violence.

The vicious circle of the national-reformist capitulation and conciliation policy consists in the fact that the bourgeoisie of a colonial country cannot GIVE anything worthwhile to the masses in the sense of satisfying their urgent demands. At the same time they neither dare nor wish to suggest that the masses should take what is not given to them. Hence the necessity for the systematic DECEPTION of the masses, adapted to the concrete political and economic situation on each occasion. Hence the constant FABRICATION OF ILLUSIONS, which exploit the thirst for national emancipation that exists among the masses in a colonial enslaved country. The stronger and more stubborn the pressure of the rank-and-file, the more powerfully events drive forward towards a general differentiation of classes, then the more are the bourgeoisie forced to RE-WRITE THEIR PROMISSORY NOTES, SUPPLEMENTED BY NEW DECEPTIVE PROMISES. In the promises of the Congress Socialists to "introduce socialism" by the Swaraj "buying-out" method, there is just as much political reality as in the Purna Swaraj which they claim can be carried on by non-violence.

In the introductory part of their basic resolution, adopted at Patna, the Congress Socialists made the following declaration:

"Whereas the preamble to the Fundamental Rights resolution of the Karachi Congress declares that in order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom for the starving millions, and whereas in order to WIDEN THE BASIS OF THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, and ensure that even after Swaraj comes the masses do not remain victims of economic exploitation, it is necessary that the Congress should adopt a programme that is socialist in action and objective. The All-India Committee of the Congress recommends to the Congress to declare as its objective a Socialistic State, and after capture of power, to convene a Constituent Assembly on the basis that every adult vote shall have, with the exception of those who have opposed

the struggle for freedom, and that representation shall be organised on a functional basis for the purpose of formulating the constitution for the Indian state on the following political, social and economic principles."

This is followed by the programme of the Congress Socialist Party (see p. 861). In conclusion the resolution says:

"The All-Indian Committee of the Congress recommends the METHOD OF ORGANISING THE MASSES ON THE BASIS OF THEIR ECONOMIC INTERESTS AS THE ONLY EFFECTIVE METHOD OF CREATING A MASS MOVEMENT, and the organisation by Congressmen of 'Kisan' and 'Maxdoor Sanghs' (Workers' and peasants' associations), and entry into such sanghs where they exist for the purpose of participating in the day-to-day struggle of the masses and with a view to lead them eventually to their final goal." (*Hindu*, May 18, 1934.—Ed.)

The workers and peasants are "important" for the Congress, state the Congress Socialists. They cannot do without them. A choice must be made—either let these mutinous forces take their own way, or else subject their struggle and their organisation to the leadership of the National Congress. In the former case, the separation of the Congress from the masses is only of benefit to the irreconcilables, who have to be cleaned out of the working class movement. In the latter case, there are chances of isolating these irreconcilables, by surrounding the commanding heights of the Congress with a new chain of forfeited positions in the trade unions, and peasant and student organisations. The pseudo-constitutional illusions regarding the achievement of independence by the methods of non-violence must be enlivened and expanded to the extent of pseudo-socialist illusions.

Along with the class awakening and consolidation of the proletariat and under the influence of the latter, the political awakening of the petty-bourgeoisie is to be observed in modern India. They are seeking positions of independent bourgeois democracy, independent of the guardianship of the national-reformist bourgeoisie. The weighty influence which the terrorist groups exert on urban petty-bourgeois circles, and on the students, teachers, etc., is, in part, an expression of this process. At the same time, the most politically active section of these strata is increasingly striving towards direct participation in the working class movement and that of the peasants. These strata, much more than others, are feeling the crisis of the national reformist policy of conciliation and capitulation as one of their whole world outlook. Small wonder the demand for Marxist literature in India has increased so tremendously in recent years.

The Congress Socialists act as errand boys for the national-reformist bourgeoisie. They include a mixed collection of the demands of the bourgeois-democratic stage and those of the socialist

stage of the national colonial revolution in their programme, in a way calculated in advance. They attire bourgeois-democratic demands in "socialist" clothes, and place the "redistribution of the land for the benefit of the peasants," cheek-by-jowl with all kinds of promises of "socialisation," TO TAKE THE REVOLUTIONARY STING OUT OF ALL THE DEMANDS, whether bourgeois-democratic or socialist.

Time and time again in India have bourgeois-democratic illusions in a NATIONAL EMANCIPATION DRESS saved bourgeois-national reformism. The terrorist movement of the petty-bourgeois elements demonstrates this with sufficient clarity. It has not yet broken away from its political dependence on bourgeois-national reformism, and the bomb and the revolver, which serve as the weapons of terror of isolated individuals against the British invaders, are not directed by a movement which has taken political shape in OPPOSITION to the National Congress in the slightest degree.

In 1930-33, heavy PEASANT reserves came into action in India, which indicated that they are being awakened by the flames of insurrection against the imperialists, landlords and money-lenders. This repelled the petty-bourgeois youth still further from the national-reformist conciliators. While the national-liberation bourgeois-democratic illusions of the petty-bourgeois strata have hitherto been utilised by the Indian bourgeoisie to constantly POSTPONE the struggle "for the sake of more certain victory," nowadays, on the other hand, in addition to this, events have placed the utilisation of bourgeois democratic illusions in the ECONOMIC sphere on the order of the day. So far, the bourgeois politicians and manufacturers of illusions have called on the petty-bourgeois masses to restrain their revolutionary impatience for the sake of the victory of the "national cause." The time has now arrived for the assurances of the Congress socialists to the effect that socialism will be won along with national freedom and the elimination of the princes and landlords. A socialism better and more "national" than the Bolsheviks have secured. But . . . WAIT, wait for Purna Swaraj and don't resort to violence! The greater goal requires greater patience!

The deepening and sharpening of the mass struggle against the imperialists, landowners and capitalists are making it essential for the Indian bourgeoisie to change its METHODS OF ORGANISATION AND MASS WORK, AND TO DEPICT THIS CHANGE AS A POLICY. The bourgeoisie can no longer maintain their political monopoly in the mass movement by the old methods, with the aid of the old organisational forms. Formerly the masses were sufficiently backward and unpretentious to be satisfied

by the organisation of the Congress on, it might be said, feudal-patriarchal lines. This includes a handful of "recognised" leader-dictators, electing each other everywhere, with Gandhi at their head, the appointed committees of the Congress directing everything, and the unorganised populace merely invited from time to time to express a loud-sounding approval of Gandhi and Co. — at meetings and sessions of the Congress — and to present their backs to the "lathis" of the police during the conduct of campaigns.

Shouts can everywhere be heard now against the dictatorship of Gandhi and the group of infallible leaders. The differentiation of classes has gone so deep that the struggle for influence over the workers and the peasants has to be conducted through special workers' organisations, the trade unions, and through peasant associations. To carry the conciliatory policy of the bourgeoisie through, and subordinate the mass movement to it, it is necessary to penetrate deeper among the rank and file with more radical, almost socialist methods and forms of deceiving the masses. The Congress Socialists have good reason to reiterate the names of Purcell, Lansbury and the English Labourites at every step. The mass work of these gentlemanly pseudo-socialists fills them with envy. But alas! India is not England, but . . . an English colony. It is impossible to operate in India even with the memory of sops given from above. Only a mist of illusions will save the situation in this case. But even this is being scattered by the revolutionary monsoons, gathering strength.

3. The Sham Constitutional Manoeuvres of the Congress Around the Slogan of the Constituent Assembly.

From their very first steps, the Congress Socialists established "decent" relations with the Swaraj party, which openly demands collaboration with British imperialism on a pseudo-constitutional basis. The Swarajites, without waiting for the other sections of the Congress, proclaimed the beginning of a constitutional era in India. Since there is a dispute between Baldwin and Churchill, and they are engaged in a quarrel as to whether the British Viceroy of India must be gracious or not, this means that there is a field for the Indian bourgeoisie, who are growing into compradores, to carry on constitutional activity—an almost parliamentary field

The Congress Socialists sent their credentials for friendly contacts with the Swarajites, to Dr. Ansari and his friends:

"The Congress Socialists—they declared—have no feelings of hostility for the Swaraj party. They cannot act against an organisation recognised and included in the Congress. They merely think that the programme of the Swaraj party can and must be improved in the sense of

bringing it nearer to socialism." (*Bombay Chronicle*, May 25, 1934.—Ed.)

On the other hand:

"Appealing to the Socialists, Mahatma Gandhi said that if they wanted to get into contact with the masses and do work among the masses, they could do this not through the councils" (provincial legislative councils without rights, to which the Congressites are straining in hopes of getting sops from British imperialism, R.S.). "Let them operate among the masses. In England" (again the gentlemanly example! R.S.), "not all good people and public men get into the House of Commons. First-class people remain outside its doors and give help." (*Bombay Chronicle*, May 21, 1934.)

The All-Indian Congress Socialist Party, according to Gandhi, must play the part of one of the driving belts of the Congress, the leaders of which correspond more and more to the Swaraj party. The Congress Socialist Party must serve to provide contacts with the masses and to agitate among the masses.

The leaders of the Congress themselves, however, are not confident of the possibilities of the Congress Socialist Party obtaining such serious successes as to render more important, so to say, decisive manoeuvres, unnecessary.

First of all, the Indian bourgeoisie, drawn along by their *COMPRADORE* wing, will not GIVE WAY and allow the masses to participate in the legislative councils, to participate in the barter around the British imperialist project of a pseudo-constitution, around the "White Paper." The Indian bourgeoisie are trying to turn to their own benefit the shifting of the textile industry nearer to the source of raw material and to colonial markets, a process which can be seen on a world scale. They are interested in getting profit out of "imperial co-operation," particularly out of the growth of the production of sugar cane and the replanning of crops in connection with the devastating results of the crisis. The questions of money circulation, of the reorganisation of banking and tariffs, are all questions of capitalist life. And here again there are hopes of increased incomes and rights for native capital when official posts, parliamentary seats, subsidies, etc., are distributed, with certain pseudo allegedly-constitutional concessions from imperialism!

The policy of the Congress has failed both at the top and at the bottom. The basic source of this failure is the fact that this policy COULD NOT EVEN TO ANY NOTICEABLE EXTENT RESTRAIN AND WEAKEN THE BRITISH IMPERIALIST OFFENSIVE ON INDIA DURING THE PERIOD OF THE CRISIS. There is confusion in the upper ranks of the Congress, a decline of Gandhi's authority, an unauthorised establishment of the Swaraj party, a split-away of a section of the Congress leaders under Malawia, who refused to accept Gandhi's compromise with the Mussulman bourgeoisie and landlords on the

question of communal curias. There are attempts by Bose to find refuge in the bosom of Italian fascism, and an unauthorised formation of the Congress Socialist Party without Gandhi's blessing—all these reflect the clash of various trends which cannot come to terms as to the necessary DEGREE OF CONCESSIONS to be made towards imperialism, on the one hand, and towards the mutinous masses, on the other.

Sufficient has been said about the crisis in the confidence of the rank and file in the Congress.

In just such complex and contradictory conditions, the Congress issued the slogan of the constituent assembly. It became necessary to take the line of "convening" a constituent assembly, because this slogan was intended to bribe the masses with its "revolutionary" appearance. At the same time, it makes it possible to REPLACE the struggle AGAINST the British imperialist project of a FAKE CONSTITUTION by the decorative and fruitless preparations for the calling of a constituent assembly, which is to receive constituent rights, no one knows how or whence.

The slogan of the constituent assembly came just at the right moment for the Congressmen, for the additional reason that it provided additional concealment for the capitulatory *compradore* entrance of the Congressmen into the legislative councils. It became possible to kill two birds with one stone, namely, to draw the sting of the revolutionary struggle against the slave pseudo-constitution, which is raising a wave of mass indignation at this imperialist mockery, and to conceal the *compradore* rear of the National Congress, which has become the vanguard of the Congress on the path that leads to the provincial legislative councils.

The followers of Roy, who have long been the purveyors of tactical tricks and acrobats for the treacherous national reformists, were the first to set the slogan of the constituent assembly going. But it did not rise on Roy's yeast, as some limited sectarian elements in the Communist movement of India attempted to represent matters. The Royites whom the same confused minds have tried to depict as the only and all-embracing menace, made their debut only as petty commercial travellers offering the buyer a set of the latest samples. Things took an entirely different turn when these got into the hands of the big wholesale firm which supplied their own regular brands of diluted products, the National Congress itself. The slogan of the constituent assembly became a means of political self-advertisement for the Congress. The columns of the bourgeois press, which hitherto had been occupied with a profound analysis of the stops and commas in the speeches of the British county rulers and the influence of this on the fate

of India, immediately plunged into a discourse on bourgeois revolutions. It is well known that in the history of bourgeois revolutions, constituent assemblies were usually the result of a revolutionary victory, the victory of a revolutionary uprising, and were convened by the revolutionary power to give official form to the new government system. The bankrupts of the National Congress pretend that their aim is to convene a constituent assembly which would not only write a constitution according to the demands of the people, but would transform the entire state and social order in a miraculous manner.

They do not think it necessary to enter into explanations as to how it is possible, while the imperialist dictatorship remains and semi-feudal serfdom continues to exist in the villages, to conduct the elections to a representative body capable, if only to a distant degree, of claiming to represent the will of the people.

The Congress leaders in THEIR OWN CIRCLE state without ceremony that the constituent assembly is simply the National Congress.

The most unceremonious of them brazenly offer the advice in the press that this home-made Congress assembly should be convened for such a time and place as will make it possible to calculate without a doubt on proceeding from this sham constituent assembly direct to a NEW ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE IN LONDON. The latest Congress edition of the constituent assembly is simply a papier maché pedestal for the glorification of a new pilgrimage to Canossa—that is, to London—to make their bows to the thoughtful, die-hard Baldwin.

Nevertheless, the National Congress would not be the National Congress if its new manoeuvres in respect to the struggling masses did not contain a new manoeuvre towards BRITISH IMPERIALISM. Addressing themselves to Lord Willingdon and his cleverer masters in London, the Congressmen say approximately the following:

“You attach no importance to our efforts which aim at quietening down masses who are becoming more radical, and you do not take into account that our manoeuvres with socialism and the constituent assembly are taken against our will. But in India there are many millions of people who you cannot bridle by participation in the legislative councils and whom you cannot pacify with subtle arguments on constitutional rights. They have forced us to talk of the constituent assembly and socialism, but all the objective and subjective prerequisites are present for them to enter on the struggle seriously, i.e., not in the national reformist manner, for the power of the people, against the pseudo-constitution of the imperialists, and to cleanse India of the rajahs, landowners, and money-lenders. Give way to us, who are prepared to grovel in the legislative councils, otherwise they will throw off our leadership and use force over our heads to tear incomparably more from you.”

The dual character of the CLASS POSITION OF THE NATIONAL REFORMIST BOURGEOISIE IN INDIA DETER-

MINES THE CONSTANT ZIGZAGS IN THEIR CONDUCT, AND GIVES A DOUBLE MEANING TO EVERY POLITICAL STEP THEY TAKE.

The national reformist bourgeoisie are reaping political capital out of the pseudo-constitutional illusions which they spread regarding the possibility of introducing the best constitution without winning power, and cramming this quackery and deceit into the masses. They are speculating on the emasculation of the mass movement, without which they are not in a position to maintain their hold on its leadership. At the same time, their TRUMP CARD in the bargaining they undertake with imperialism, in enabling them to secure partial concessions, is this very revolutionary scope of the mass movement, the strength and stormy nature of the mass discontent, the fact that the masses are going beyond the framework of “lawful and peaceful means,” away from the control of the national reformist leadership. This dumping of false illusions, however, costs them the loss of their “all-national” authority.

The Indian bourgeoisie are feeling this now with special force. It is as if they had set out the cards for a game of patience or fortune-telling: (1) at the end of October—a session of the Congress; (2) before this, democratic elections with universal suffrage, for the leading bodies of the Congress; (3) participation in the elections for the legislative councils; (4) in prospect—the constituent assembly and a new Round Table Conference. But it is impossible to angle even the most meagre pseudo-constitution from the legislative councils.

The Indian bourgeoisie and their various subsidiary detachments have been able to keep control of the anti-imperialist movement so far, by no means due to the exceptional brilliancy of their political talent, but because at critical moments they have always been aided by the difficulty of setting the scattered and backward population of 350 millions into motion on an all-Indian scale. They have been helped by the lack of organisation and the inadequate class-consciousness of the workers and peasants, who find difficulty in forsaking their faith in the bourgeoisie, WHO HAVE USURPED THE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION OF THE NATIONAL INTERESTS, and the fact that the proletarian vanguard lacks political shape and training in tactics.

But the weaknesses, mistakes, and sicknesses of the movement are being overcome by the deepening and sharpening of the mass struggle and the organisation of the masses. There is also the development of the political and organisational initiative of the Communist vanguard, primarily in the conduct of the tactics of the united front in the anti-imperialist struggle, and the struggle for the unity of the trade union movement.

The "socialist" and "constituent assembly" manoeuvres of the Congress, face the C.P. of India not only with the task of exposing them, but also with that of fighting for political and organisational initiative in the struggle against the onslaught of imperialism, the offensive of capital,

and the semi-feudal landlords, and the treacherous conciliatory bourgeoisie. The separation of the struggle against national reformism from the struggle with imperialism is the most dangerous vice which helps the national reformist politicians to carry on their capitulatory game.

"MARXISM" IN THE SERVICE OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM*

By T. DEXTER.

IF there are any workers in Britain who still believe that the National Council of Labour Colleges "extends independent working class education," or that it is a Marxist institution, the booklet recently published by the N.C.L.C. Publishing Society, and written by Ellen Wilkinson and Edward Conze, entitled *Why War?* should help to disillusion them once and for all in this regard.

It is no accident that just at the present period such a book should appear — a book which Mr. Millar, General Secretary of the N.C.L.C., states in his introduction "does not set out to lay down the law on such matters (i.e., policy) . . . but rather does it attempt to lay down a basis for discussion of one of the greatest issues facing the Labour Movement."

Twenty years after the outbreak of the first World War—seventeen years after the Russian workers and peasants, led by the Bolshevik Party, transformed the world imperialist war of 1914-1918 into a civil war which ensured the victory of the proletarian revolution, years after the Communist International issued its complete Marxist-Leninist analysis of the war question and indicated how the toilers throughout the world have to carry on the fight against the warmongers, at a time when the war danger assumes an ever more threatening appearance with every day that goes by, the "Marxist" N.C.L.C. can do nothing better than to lay down a "basis for discussion" on the war question. Mr. Millar even goes so far as to make the assertion that "it is difficult to find a publication that explains simply the root causes of war . . . etc.," though the works of Lenin, particularly *The Collapse of the Second International*, *Imperialism*, *The Proletarian Revolution* and *Karl Kautsky*, *the Renegade*, were in circulation more than ten years ago in England, when Ellen Wilkinson was still a member of the Communist Party, while the Comintern's Sixth World Congress Theses† on the

Struggle Against Imperialist War have been in circulation in England also for years.

If the N.C.L.C. leaders therefore see fit to issue this booklet now, it is by no means, as we shall see later, to "explain simply the root causes of war," but to be of service to British imperialism, using, however, the terms "Marxist," etc., in order to do so.

We shall only deal with what we consider the basic points of criticism of this booklet.

"In modern times," we are told (p. 7), "we can distinguish between three main types of wars — national wars, imperialist wars and civil wars."

Very good! But how, dear Miss Wilkinson and partner, does the question of counter-revolutionary war against the Socialist Soviet Union, fit in with your "Marxist" scheme? Have you heard of Japanese preparations for aggression against the Soviet Union—you yourselves admit that Germany is seeking for a way out of the crisis by preparing war with a view to annexing Soviet Ukraine—perhaps you are not aware that were it not for British imperialism openly and secretly supporting both Japan and Germany, these two main instigators of a new war could not develop their criminal activity? We put this question because every honest worker wants to know on which side you will be in case such a war breaks out, whether you will be openly or otherwise for this counter-revolutionary war on the U.S.S.R. or whether you will be with the workers for victory at all costs for the U.S.S.R., the workers' Fatherland!

Quotations from this booklet give us a pretty good idea where Miss Wilkinson and her friend will be. "It is forgotten," we read on page 37, "that the Moscow Government is in fact the head of a huge colonial empire—a legacy from Czarism" . . . "as realists the Russians train their youth for war. No one knows, however, better than the present rulers of Russia how unprepared, technic-

* Being a review of *Why War?* by Ellen Wilkinson and Edward Conze, published by the N.C.L.C. Publishing Society.

† *The Attitude of the Proletariat to War*. Modern Books, Ltd.

ally, *Russia still is for a large-scale war.*" Well then, if "*Russia . . . is a huge colonial empire,*" then it is an imperialist country, and an imperialist country (as long as it is not Great Britain) can surely not expect the support of the Wilkinsons and Conzes! Is it any wonder that later on (p. 50) this worthy couple ask "*would they (the Communists) oppose with equal heroism (as the Japanese Communists—D.) a war whose aims were favourable to the aims of Russian foreign policy?*"

The Soviet Foreign Policy.

The authors of this booklet attempt in the first place to hide the fact that it was only the November, 1917, revolution that really gave the oppressed peoples of the Tsarist Empire the right to self-determination, which resulted in the establishment of the voluntary Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Secondly, they attempt to put the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union on a par with the "peace" policies of the imperialist states. We read literally the following (p. 35): "*The U.S.A., France, Russia and of course (my emphasis—D.) Britain, are the nations who are all for peace just now.*"

And finally their quotation shows that they place a sign of equality between the imperialist war being unleashed by Japanese imperialism and which the Japanese Communists are correctly trying to transform into a civil war against their "*own bourgeoisie,*" and a war waged by the Soviet Union, forced on it by the imperialists and which Miss Wilkinson and Conze have the audacity to call "*a war favourable to the aims of Russian foreign policy.*"

What kind of war is this, Miss Wilkinson? What are the aims of the foreign policy of the Soviet Government?

By word and deed the Soviet Union has proved and is proving that "*the U.S.S.R. does not think of threatening anybody—let alone of attacking anybody . . . those (however) who try to attack our country—will receive a stunning rebuff to teach them not to poke their pigs' snouts into our Soviet garden.*" (Stalin, Seventeenth Congress C.P.S.U.). It is clear that by their talk of the U.S.S.R. as a "*colonial empire*" and of a "*war . . . favourable to Russian policy,*" the authors wish to assist the "*imperialist swine,*" to whom Comrade Stalin refers, and to prevent the toilers of all lands from rallying to the aid of the Soviet Union in the event of the imperialists developing a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R., the bulwark of the proletariat throughout the world.

But let us return to the first of the three main types of wars referred to in the booklet—national wars. We cannot, however, resist the temptation of quoting the following "Marxist" gem in full

(from p. 7) "*of course, in order to say precisely what is a national war, we ought to know what is a nation. The dictionaries give definitions, every word of which is a challenge to an argument. But though no political scientist can tell us exactly what a nation is, THE PEOPLE CONCERNED KNOW AND THAT IS ENOUGH.*" (My emphasis.—D.)

Can it really be that Miss Wilkinson and Conze have never seen a Marxist scientific definition of what a nation is in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin? We can but refer them to Stalin's famous article, *Marxism and the National Question*, printed in the *Labour Monthly* some years ago. Perhaps, however, they are not such ignoramuses after all, but are merely concerned with distorting the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism. "*National Wars,*" we are told (p. 7), "*play a predominant part in the first phase of the development of the European bourgeoisie, until 1870.*" In general this is correct. But have there been no national wars since 1870 in the imperialist epoch? This question is not dealt with. At best we learn that "*strong nationalist movements have arisen in the non-European countries, which MAY (our emphasis—D.) yet lead to national wars and prove disastrous to the imperialists who spoke so feelingly of the right of small nations.*"

National Wars.

Our worthy writers do not want to see the special character which the national question assumes in the period of imperialism, and are content to indicate the possibility of national wars arising which may do harm to the imperialists. They maintain silence about the fact that the Chinese people are carrying on such a war against Japanese imperialism, under the banner of the Soviets. They refuse to take note of the fact that in the imperialist epoch "*The national question thus grows from the partial question of struggling against national oppression to the general question of liberating the nations, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism*" (see *The October Revolution and the National Question* by Stalin). Therefore, these wars are historically progressive and revolutionary, and the proletariat of the imperialist countries, struggling to smash the power of their imperialist oppressors, are faced with the task of making such wars a component part of their own struggle, under the slogan of "*self-determination to the point of separation*" for the colonies and dependent countries.

Neither the heroic struggle against the imperialist onslaught on Shanghai (Chapei), nor the partisan national-revolutionary war in Manchuria, nor the struggle of the Chinese Soviets against the Kuomintang, supported by the imperialists, are referred to.

The fact of present-day national revolutionary liberation movements is in effect denied. We are told that "*national wars are always led by the bourgeoisie*" (p. 7) and that "*no proletariat can become class-conscious if its nation is not politically free.*"

Thus the proletariat in the colonies are, according to this argument, condemned to trail at the heels of the bourgeoisie. But history in both China, India, etc., shows the opposite, namely, that the bourgeoisie betrays the national struggle for liberation out of fear of the proletariat (the Kuomintang in China, the National Congress in India, etc.), and this historical experience shows that it is precisely the proletariat in the colonies which comes forward as a consistent fighter for the national independence of their countries against imperialism. As for the responsibilities of the British proletariat in relation to the peoples oppressed by British imperialism (over 300 millions in India, etc.), our "Marxist" authors in their book reject the famous thesis of Marx and Lenin to the effect that the British working class cannot be free if it does not emancipate the peoples oppressed by British imperialism. The authors are silent regarding Marx's famous declaration to the effect that "*the British working class will never achieve anything until it rids itself of Ireland . . . English reaction is rooted in the enslavement of Ireland.*" But their attitude towards the colonies is quite clearly defined later on in the book. "*Suppose,*" we are told (p. 42), "*for the sake of argument, that the working class did decide to fight against British imperialism, and decided that the next Labour Government must give up the non-self-governing colonies as an initial act of justice, what would be the result? There would be a repetition of what happened in Germany . . . where the middle class . . . crushed the proletariat as an organised class.*"

(We must intervene to state that in the first place, the workers as an organised class in Germany have not been crushed. The rising activity of the vanguard of the German working class, the C.P. of Germany, the results of the factory elections of "trustees" and the plebiscite election results prove this. Secondly, fascism came to power in Germany by no means because the working class in Germany "*gave up its non-self-governing colonies,*" but because fascism succeeded in raising a wave of nationalism in Germany, a country defeated in the world war (and which has been deprived of its colonies precisely by England). And fascism was able to do so to a great degree because social-democracy, for a period, chained the majority of the German proletariat to the chariot of German imperialism by its policy of "fulfilment." Thirdly, the blows dealt at the working

class of Germany were the blows of GERMAN FINANCE CAPITAL, which was able to utilise the deluded middle class against the working class because the latter was split by German social-democracy.)

And so when Wilkinson and Conze raise the bogey of the middle class, they do so to frighten the workers and to maintain the imperialist colonial policy of the bourgeoisie; just as later on (p. 48) the same bogey is raised to justify the defence of the capitalist fatherland by declaring that if the trade unions declared a strike during war "*they would be swept away under the wave of fear and fury which would follow.*" Are we not entitled to assert therefore that what there is in this book about national wars is actually propaganda to maintain the domination of British imperialism?

Imperialist Wars.

Now as to the second category of wars—imperialist wars. These, we are told, are of two types: Firstly, "*Those in the early stages were directed against technically backward countries*"—we have already dealt with these.

The second type of imperialist wars is, we are told, between the chief capitalist powers, between "*the national states striving to achieve greater self-sufficiency*" (p. 21). "*Inevitably,*" we read (p. 22) "*the conflict sharpens between the capitalist states striving for economic self-sufficiency.*"

Is it an accident that we find here a rejection of the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the struggle between the imperialist powers as being one for the redivision of the globe, for MONOPOLY DOMINATION, and instead get the substitution of "*the struggle for economic self-sufficiency*"? (Note the cunning sleight-of-hand trick whereby the use of "*economic self-sufficiency,*" or "*autarchy*" AS A WEAPON in the fight for monopoly domination is transformed into the STRUGGLE FOR "*economic self-sufficiency*"!). No—it is no accident at all, for if the imperialist countries only struggle for "*economic self-sufficiency*" then once they attain it they have no need to be in any way aggressive. Actually, however, as Lenin clearly shows in his struggle against Kautsky, in his *Imperialism*, the relationship of forces is constantly changing between imperialist powers, both economically, militarily and so on, and this leads to new imperialist wars for the re-division of the globe.

The theory regarding the fight for "*economic self-sufficiency*" enables the authors to defend the policy of imperialist Britain as being one of an allegedly "defensive" character. "*The ruling classes of Britain do not want any more territory at present*" (p. 36). "*France and Britain are well provided with colonies and could not gain much by a war,*" whereas "*compared with the satisfied*

nations, Germany, Italy and Japan are comparatively poor in natural resources" (p. 37). All of which our authors required so as to justify the following theses: "From which general sketch of the situation it can be concluded that the fascist countries have an aggressive, and the democratic countries a DEFENSIVE imperialism, in the present situation" (p. 39). (Our emphasis.—D.)

First of all it should be noted that Miss Wilkinson and Conze transform the DEFENCE OF PLUNDER into "defence." Among other things the authors try to completely identify the policies of Britain and France and thereby to cover up the special features of the policy of British imperialism in the present moment. Although the policies of both these countries has borne and now bears an IMPERIALIST character, there is none the less a difference between them now. France fears the loss of its world hegemony in Europe and is not therefore inclined at the present time to support the warmongers (of Germany and Japan) and has therefore come closer to the U.S.S.R. which is carrying on a consistent peace policy. Great Britain is actively supporting Japan in the Far East in its preparations for counter-revolutionary war on the U.S.S.R., and assumes a highly ambiguous position in relation to fascist Germany, especially as regards the latter's plans for expansion eastwards, i.e., once again against the U.S.S.R.

The whole of this line adopted by our worthy authors is, as we see, directed towards the defence of the policy of imperialist Britain, as a "non-aggressive country." They thereby carry through the manoeuvres recently adopted by the T.U.C. leaders in connection with war.

The General Strike.

That the "Marxist" Wilkinson and her friend burn with the desire to defend their capitalist fatherland, is shown by the way the "General Strike" in case of war is rejected. "Suppose the enemy among its preparations for war has taken the precaution of being fascist. At the outbreak of war, it will have no general strike, and while the British and French strikers are arguing the matter out with their governments, the fascist aeroplanes will bomb the big towns" (p. 48).

So therefore no strikes, etc., against wars waged by the "democratic" British, French and American bourgeoisie against "aggressive fascist countries"! And to justify this treacherous argument, they, as was to be expected, resort to slander. "None of the Socialist or Communist Parties of Europe can escape the charge that they have all taken a hand in the moral preparation for the next world war." The Communists, who for twenty years have been fighting war under the slogan that "the main enemy is in the home country," who have consist-

ently been led in their activity by this slogan, who have continued to carry on heroic anti-militarist work (Japan, Bulgaria, France, etc.), and are organising the united front against war, in spite of the sabotage of the "Socialist" Parties, and the Second International, are put in the same category as the socialist leaders who have participated in capitalist governments, built cruisers, and helped to mobilise the civil population for war. And Ellen Wilkinson and Edward Conze self-righteously wash their hands of it all.

"All that probably remains for Socialists and Communists to do is to discuss how to make use of the war situation when it comes in order to destroy capitalism" (p. 54). What a fine perspective! Marxism is invoked to prove that war cannot be fought against, it being inevitable under capitalism—therefore wait for it, assist your own bourgeoisie against the fascist aggressor, and then after some miracle destroy capitalism! They advise their readers that the "only effective work we in this country (Great Britain) can do for peace is to carry on an unceasing struggle for a planned economy" (p. 35), i.e., give up the revolutionary struggle against war.

One other question—that of averting war by revolution, and if imperialist war breaks out then to transform the imperialist war into civil war.

To make clear the attitude of the authors we had better return to their section in the first chapter which deals with civil wars.

"The attitude towards civil war," we read on p. 13, "even of those who definitely call themselves Marxists is not by any means a uniform one."

Obviously not, when one section (including the "Marxists" Wilkinson and Conze) are definitely opposed to it.

"Only one section," we read, "the Communists, is prepared to argue the case for establishing socialism in its own country, by civil war, without regard to legality"—one of the few truthful sentences in the book. As for the non-Communists, Wilkinson and Company, they adopt the air of "knowing all about it" by showing that the Communists "forget the three essential technical conditions which must exist before an aggressive civil war . . . can be successful . . . conditions ascertained by a close study of armed insurrection of the workers during the last sixty years" (p. 24). What in their opinion are the technical conditions essential for success? "One, the weapons must be in the hands of the war-trained workers; two, bourgeoisie must be demoralised (as in Russia in 1917); three, the troops must be unreliable as far as the government is concerned, and not offer any resistance to the workers."

We will not argue as to whether the demoralisation of the bourgeoisie and its army is a "techni-

cal" condition or not. After Invergordon and the uprisings in the Chilean and Dutch fleets, can it be asserted that armies and fleets are absolutely reliable weapons in the hands of the capitalists against the workers? Do our worthy authors not know the basic lesson of these events, which is that soldiers and sailors are sons of their own class? We ask—is it an accident that these "*Marxist military strategists*" do not deal with the POLITICAL conditions essential for success in civil war of the workers against the bourgeoisie? Not at all! Our authors are anxious that their readers should not inquire into the POLITICAL conditions essential for the success of civil war! The revolutions after the war in Germany, Austria, Hungary, etc., show that among the prime political causes of the defeat of these revolutions was the treacherous part played by social-democracy, determined to save capitalism at all costs.

In the whole of this collection of distortions, entitled *Why War?*, the Russian Revolution, as an example of the successful transformation of imperialist war into a civil war, and the rôle of the Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, is never once referred to. But among the external and internal reasons making for the success of the Russian Revolution were precisely the following internal causes:

"In the first place, the October revolution could count upon the support of the most active majority of the workers throughout Russia.

"Secondly, it could count on the support of the poorer peasants and that of the ever-weary and land-hungry soldiers.

"Thirdly, it was led by an experienced Party, the Party of the Bolsheviks, whose strength lay, not only in its past experience and its discipline, forged during long years of training, but also in its intimate ties with the labouring masses." (Stalin, *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists*. Leninism, p. 182.)

The October Revolution was not the result of the automatic collapse of capitalism, but was the result of years of persistent work by the Bolshevik Party among the workers, peasants and in the Tsarist Army, years of persistent work to liberate the masses from the influence of the bourgeois cadets, the Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks.

"No Hope."

The authors of this booklet do not deal with the lessons of the October Revolution because they actually do not want revolution, as is shown by their statement that "*without these conditions* (the 'technical' conditions referred to.—D) *which can only BE FORMED AFTER A DEVASTATING WAR* (my emphasis.—D) *there is no reasonable hope for a victory of a workers' revolution.*" On what Marxian grounds this law is established we do not know. But history itself shows that it is by no means

essential for war to take place for the workers to be able to get arms. By bold actions (e.g., the Cracow and Hamburg uprisings in 1923)* the workers are able to seize arms, and develop the struggle to win the soldiers to the side of the revolution. The "*demoralisation*" of the bourgeoisie, which the authors say was the case in Russia in 1917, is also by no law essentially bound up with the end of a "*devastating*" war.

The "*demoralisation*" of the Russian bourgeoisie was intensified to the extent that the Russian proletariat was won by the Bolshevik Party and went into battle leading the millions of oppressed peasants, etc. Similarly to-day, in Germany, in Spain, Austria, etc., the "*demoralisation*" of the bourgeoisie has as one of its conditions the unification of the working class under the leadership of a mass Communist Party. But as in Cracow and Hamburg, in 1923, and in Austria (February, 1934), etc., the factor that prevented the complete "*demoralisation*" of the bourgeoisie has been the Social-Democratic Party.

If then we are given this argument of the impossibility of revolution except after a devastating war, it is given in order to show the workers that they must make no attempt now to develop civil war against the bourgeois oppressors.

* * *

The British workers to-day are faced with the task of organising their forces to prevent a new war, against fascism and the capitalist offensive in England, and to prepare the proletarian revolution. What they need is to find an answer to the question as to what means they need to employ to beat off the enemy's onslaught, to prevent the oncoming war and to achieve victory in the revolution. What answer do they receive from the N.C.L.C. and the book by Wilkinson and Conze? They assert that a general strike must not be begun, that revolution, armed uprising and civil war are doomed beforehand to defeat and that a "*devastating*" war is inevitable. They swear that British imperialism will defend itself in this war and that the British workers are under an obligation to defend it. But Wilkinson and Co., on the other hand, make the discovery that the U.S.S.R. is an imperialist country, and consequently the workers should not defend it at all. Under cover of quasi-"Marxist" phrases they fulfil the tasks set by the bourgeoisie, namely, to disarm and withhold the masses from the struggle to overthrow the British bourgeoisie—and this is why the leaders of the N.C.L.C. are so interested in spreading this book among the workers.

* The early 1934 issues of the C.I. should be consulted for articles dealing with these.—Ed.

SPECIAL FREE SUPPLEMENT

Problems of the International Trade Union Movement*

*These questions and answers represent a digest of the transcript of the report given to the meeting of Communists in the Red International Labour Unions (R.I.L.U.) on August 2, 1934.

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PROBLEMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT*

By O. PIATNITSKY.

OF all the questions I have received, I am replying to those which appear to me to be the most important at the present moment, and I have grouped them according to separate subjects. We can expect that the Seventh Congress of the Communist International will deal with questions of the international trade union movement; and therefore I want to make it understood now that it is possible, and even probable, that one or another of the answers I am giving to the questions asked will be changed during the course of preparations for the Congress or at the Congress itself. That is up to the Congress. As for myself I shall answer these questions as I understand them now.

Question : IS IT ESSENTIAL IN THE WORK OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONS AT THE PRESENT TIME TO LAY SPECIAL STRESS ON SETTING UP A UNITED FRONT IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, AND ALSO ON THE QUESTION OF UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS?

Answer : Undoubtedly yes. We have never stopped insisting on the necessity for this. But what is new and decisive at the moment is the fact that even the workers in the reformist, autonomous, "independent," catholic, and other trade unions are beginning to be convinced of the need for unity. And this means that unity of the trade union organisations is now becoming more possible than ever before.

During all the years that followed the war, the reformist and other non-revolutionary trade unions pursued a policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary labour movement which swept throughout the whole world after the world war wrested a number of concessions from the bourgeoisie, which the Social-Democrats and reformists falsely declared were the result of their own reformist policy. However, the bourgeoisie, after having crushed the revolutionary advance of the workers, began with the help of these very same reformists, to take back more and more of the concessions they had made to the workers. The position of the working class in the most important capitalist countries at the beginning of the economic crisis became still worse than before the war.

The revolutionary trade union movement de-

veloped its policy on the basis of struggle against the bourgeoisie. In countries where the revolutionary trade union movement was strong, it was able to achieve considerable successes in this struggle. During the period of the crisis, when the bourgeoisie in all countries was systematically worsening the position of the working class, the workers, under the influence of the revolutionary trade unions and the revolutionary trade union opposition, carried on several militant strikes in resistance to the offensive of capital.

With the sharpening of the crisis, the reformist illusions of the workers who still followed social-democracy gradually disappeared. In spite of the fact that it became more difficult to carry on strikes during the crisis, the reformist trade unions were compelled to participate in strikes; and joint action on the part of workers' organisations affiliated to different trade union centres became more frequent. In this joint struggle workers in the reformist unions became more and more convinced of the fact that the trade union bureaucrats, while taking part in and even leading strikes, were pursuing the line of capitulating before the bourgeoisie, and that the Communists and revolutionary workers were in the front line of struggle fighting for the interests of the working class.

With the transition of the crisis to a depression of a special kind ("... the transition from the lowest depth of the industrial crisis to a depression, not an ordinary depression, but to a depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline"*) ever broader masses of the workers are becoming convinced that all the talk of the reformists that prosperity will return again soon, that the standard of living of the workers will improve, that the unemployed will receive work in industry and so on, is nothing more than a pack of lies. Despite the fact that industry is increasing in the most important capitalist countries, unemployment is decreasing only to an extremely insignificant extent, and in several cases is not decreasing at all because of the intensified exploitation of labour. Real wages have remained at the same miserable level as during the period when the crisis was sharpening, and in some countries, as for example, America, they have even dropped. Together with the worsening of their material position, the workers are being deprived more and more of all civil

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* Stalin—*Socialism Victorious*, p. 9.

rights and are becoming more and more enslaved, especially in the fascist countries. This worsening of the position of the working class takes place under circumstances when the profits of the trusts and monopolists are steadily mounting. The experience which the working masses are now gaining from the offensive of capital, especially the coming to power of the fascists in countries where the reformists were leading the majority of the workers—Germany and Austria—is helping the working class lose its reformist illusions more rapidly. An ever broader stratum of workers is beginning to be convinced of the necessity for joint struggle to defend its interests against the class enemy.

Two ways that have already been tried are open to considerable masses of the workers: the way of reformism and class-collaboration, which set the working class fifty years behind in the economic and political sense in several countries, and the second way of revolutionary struggle led by the Communists against the bourgeois, for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. The first way has led to fascist slavery even in a country where there was a highly organised working class movement like in Germany. The second way—the way of the October Revolution — has led to the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. The disillusionment felt by ever larger masses of workers concerning the reformist way, and the indisputable successes of the revolutionary way, explain the desire of the workers for unity of action with the Communists, for the united front, for the establishment of unity of the trade union organisations.

But it is not enough merely to talk about the need for and the possibility of achieving unity. The Communists must fight still more determinedly, still more persistently for unity of the trade union organisations, by displaying the maximum steadfastness and flexibility in solving this most important task, and by taking into consideration the serious obstacles placed in the way of its realisation by the trade union bureaucrats.

In spite of all the existing difficulties, unity of the trade union organisations is nevertheless possible if a systematic, stubborn, skilful struggle is carried on for it. To-day, with the increased activity shown by the masses organised in reformist trade unions and the common desire of the workers for unity, the background for this struggle is more favourable than it has ever been, shall we say, during the last ten years. Of course, it is considerably more difficult to bring about unity of the trade union organisations than to establish a united front action if only because of the fact that the united front has been realised in actions on separate questions or groups of questions and over

a definite period of time, while trade union unity requires unity of organisation.

It should also be borne in mind that the trade union movement is extremely scattered and takes on different forms and tendencies in different countries. In France, for example, there are the reformist, the Red, the autonomous, the Christian, and other trade unions. In Spain—the reformist, anarcho-syndicalist, Red, autonomous and national trade unions (Basques, etc.). In the United States of America—trade unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labour, trade unions affiliated to the Trade Union Unity League, the independent trade unions, not to mention the company unions, into which the employers, with the support of the government, have managed to drive as many as five million workers. In Poland and Czecho-Slovakia — all the parties (of which there are not a few) have their own trade unions. Only in England the reformist trade unions are the biggest mass organisations, having no big rivals in the form of a trade union movement of other tendencies. For us, Communists, the fact that the task is a difficult one means, least of all, that we should refuse to find its solution. It only means that we cannot achieve unity of the trade union organisations in the different countries on the same basis or in the same way. We must take as our starting point the concrete condition of the trade union movement in each country separately, in order to develop the struggle for unity *outside*, and especially *inside*, the reformist and reactionary trade unions.

There can be no question of success in the struggle for unity of the trade union organisations if the Communists do not at last undertake the work seriously inside the mass non-revolutionary trade unions, and if they do not carry on systematic work in the factories to explain to the organised as well as the unorganised workers the need for the united front and for unity of the trade union organisations.

Question: ARE THERE ANY REALLY ESSENTIAL CHANGES IN THE OBJECTIVE SITUATION, WHICH INFLUENCE THE APPLICATION OF OUR UNITED FRONT AND UNITY TACTICS, OR IS IT A QUESTION OF CORRECTING MISTAKES IN THE APPLICATION OF OUR UNITY TACTICS (LIKE THE UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW TACTICS) AND IMPROVING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SPONTANEOUS MOVEMENT OF THE BROAD MASSES ON BEHALF OF UNITY?

Answer: I consider that in comparison with the Sixth Comintern Congress and the Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress, big changes have, without doubt, been taking place of late in the working class and in the labour movement. After the temporary defeat of the German working class in January, 1933, and the breakdown of German

social-democracy and, in particular, after the February events in 1934 in Austria, a two-fold process could be seen taking place in the working class: not only was there disillusionment at the reformist policy and in some places desertion from the Social-Democratic Party, but the more class-conscious section of the workers in the reformist unions also displayed a growing desire for the united front, for organisational unity and, in certain places a desire for joining the Communists. Of course, the social-democratic and trade union leaders attempted all kinds of manoeuvres with a view of retarding this deep going process, but can they manoeuvre now with the same success as they did, for example, in 1918-20? No, it is not possible for them to do so now, first and foremost, because these changes in the working class and in the labour movement are taking place in circumstances of profound economic crisis, when the crisis of capitalism is sharpening.

How did the Social-Democratic Party and the trade union bureaucrats circumvent and manoeuvre at that time?

In Germany, the Social-Democratic Party, when in power, shot down the revolutionary workers during those years; Noske's guards fired into the demonstrations in January, 1920, as they passed by the Reichstag in connection with the debate on the Factory Councils Bill. But at the same time this same Social-Democratic Party tried to throttle the revolutionary movement of the working masses with reforms which were of importance to every worker: collective wage agreements, the eight-hour working day, the usual civil rights, the right of shop committees to participate in drawing up internal factory regulations, etc.

After the war, in several countries the workers enjoyed more civil rights than before the war, when the trade unions had had to fight for recognition by the employers, etc. Labour legislation in Austria was introduced on a broader scale than in Germany. In England unemployment insurance was established. In France, legislation was passed granting health insurance, and the workers there also found their position relieved somewhat as compared with previous times. In a word, at that time the social-democratic leaders and trade union bureaucrats were compelled to "introduce" several reforms to improve the position of the workers, although at the very same time they were shooting down revolutionary workers and Communists. A large section of the organised and unorganised workers who benefited somewhat from these reforms, left the revolutionary organisations; and all these crimes and betrayals by the reformists passed off with impunity for them in those days.

Can the reformists now speculate on what they allege to have achieved for the broad strata of the workers? Not at all. During recent years, in every single country, the bourgeoisie have tried to find a way out of the economic crisis at the expense of the toilers and with the help of the Social-Democratic Party, by abolishing or adversely modifying the legislation introduced immediately after the war. With the help of the reformists, the bourgeoisie have worsened the economic position of the workers. In several countries an ever broader mass of workers is becoming convinced that the reformist policy with its "peaceful," easy way to socialism ultimately leads to fascism. Side by side with increased exploitation and an even greater denial of civil rights for the workers, the latter are ever more rapidly losing their social-democratic and reformist illusions. And so the Social-Democratic Party cannot now deceive the working class as it did in 1918-20. This gives the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement an opportunity of utilising the dissatisfaction felt by the masses with the reformist policy and their desire for unity. Thus the struggle to realise the united front of joint action and unity of the trade union organisations is now the centre of our work.

This new feature demands that, first of all, we make our tactics more concrete, that we modify them somewhat and, most important that we improve our methods of working, the form in which our work is expressed and its content.

How should the united front tactics be pursued? From the way in which this question is formulated it would seem that we now reject the tactics of a united front from below. This, of course, is not true. **THE UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW HAS ALWAYS BEEN, AND STILL REMAINS, THE FUNDAMENTAL FORM OF THE UNITED FRONT.** But this in no way means that we exclude the adoption of tactics for a united front from above. In many cases even now it will be possible to get a united front only from below, **BUT THERE CANNOT BE A UNITED FRONT WHICH COMES ONLY FROM ABOVE.** Let us take Great Britain. The Labour Party, the trade unions, the co-operatives, still refuse to establish a united front with the British Communist Party. And the masses follow them. Should the British Communist Party cease to adopt the united front tactics in its daily economic and political struggle? Of course not. The Communists should redouble their efforts in the struggle for a united front from below, using at the same time every opportunity of raising again and again before the leadership of the Labour Party and the trade unions the question of unity of action in the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and the

danger of war.* But I may be told that the Communist Party of Great Britain has established the united front with the Independent Labour Party by an agreement from above. True, but this agreement was arrived at because the National Council of the I.L.P. was forced to enter into the united front with the Communists under the pressure brought to bear upon it by its members, thanks to the fact that the struggle of the Communists for a united front from below was successful.

Let us take France, where an agreement has now been arrived at between the leadership of the Socialist Party and the Central Committee of the Communist Party for joint action on certain questions. Why, only quite recently, in the beginning of 1934, the Central Committee of the Socialist Party and the Socialist Party Congress refused — although with quite a considerable minority objecting — to negotiate on the question of the united front. But after this refusal the rank-and-file organisations of the French Communist Party again made an appeal direct to the rank-and-file organisations of the Socialist Party, proposing joint struggle against fascism; as a result, the united front began to be realised in practice in Paris and other industrial towns. And this pressure from below turned out to be so strong that the leaders of the French Socialist Party, Faure and Blum, were compelled to go on record at their National Council to the effect that the united front is gaining great success in spite of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party, and that they would only stop their members from establishing without authorisation the united front from below by themselves entering into negotiations with the Central Committee of the French Communist Party from above. Can it be said after that, that the united front in France was brought about by agreement only from above? Of course not.

Surely it is no time to talk about the united front from above now that in several countries (France, Great Britain, and even more so in Austria) a considerable section of the members of reformist trade unions and of the Social-Demo-

cratic Party is, in many cases, not only beginning to insist upon achieving the united front, but is establishing it independently of the decisions of the leaders. The Communists never denied the fact that it is also permissible to adopt the united front tactics from above. Therefore, what is new now in pursuing united front tactics is not that we are changing the appraisal in principle of one or another form of the united front, but that we are much more persistent, bolder and more flexible in operating these tactics, that we fight to the utmost to spread them, and that we are starting a determined offensive against social-democratic leaders and trade union bureaucrats who sabotage the united front of struggle. By doing this the Communists are eliminating the weakness which they have shown in the past in the question of struggling for the united front. We only too easily submitted to the sabotage of the united front by the reformists and displayed insufficient energy in the direction of striving for the thing we aimed at.

Now the support of the broadest masses is ensured for the cause of united struggle; now the Communists are fighting systematically and stubbornly for the united front; and this is the guarantee of victory for unity of struggle. Can it be said that the desire for the united front to-day is only a spontaneous phenomenon? Not at all, the Communists have always pointed to the need for a united front, and during the last two years, in connection with the offensive of fascism and the growing danger of war, the question of the united front has never left the pages of the Communist and revolutionary trade union press, and this in turn has forced the socialist press to talk about the united front as well. The events in Germany and Austria, and partly in France as well (the fascist demonstrations on February 6) considerably alarmed the broad masses of workers and they began to respond more actively to the appeals of the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions for the united front. Both the need for the united front of struggle and the possibility of establishing it have increased of late.

Until now the united front has been achieved on the initiative of the Communists, and two kinds of tactics have been adopted. In certain cases the united front was realised on separate questions between the leadership of parallelly existing trade unions or political parties, and the Communists and revolutionary trade unions simultaneously appealed to the members of these organisations as well as to the broad masses of workers for united struggle. In other cases, when the central leadership of the reformist trade unions and socialist parties refused to establish a united front, the revolutionary trade unions and Communist organisations appealed to the parallelly existing lower

* Despite the leadership of the Labour Party and the General Council of reformist trade unions, the united front made a considerable step forward in England: on September 9, 1934, in response to an appeal of the Communist Party and of the British Independent Labour Party, more than 100,000 workers staged a counter-demonstration against fascism, notwithstanding the call of the Labour Party and of the leadership of the reformist trade unions urging the workers not to participate in the demonstration. Moreover, thirty-four rank and file regional trade union organisations; two trade union organisations of London; two Central Committees of Trade Unions, and thirty regional (district) rank and file organisations of the Labour League of Youth joined the call for the demonstration and actively participated in it.

organisations of the reformists, over the head of the reformist leadership.

We know that in France on February 9 and 12, 1934, a considerable number of the French proletariat, including members of reformist trade unions and the Socialist Party, came out and demonstrated in response to the appeal of the French Communist Party, in spite of the fact that the leadership of the reformist trade unions directly appealed to their members not to take part in these demonstrations, and the Socialist Party even called a general strike for the same purpose of preventing the working masses from participating in the demonstrations. This shows that when the Communist Party and the Red trade unions were able to choose a suitable moment for action, to put forward correct slogans which appealed to the masses, and to popularise these slogans extensively and carry out all the necessary organisational measures, the result was that the Communist Party and the Red trade unions were able to draw into the struggle against the fascists the workers who followed the reformists and Socialists in direct opposition to the will of their central leadership. As we know, the Socialists called a "down tools" strike on February 12, but without any demonstrations, without any meetings, etc. The Communist Party of France joined in this strike, but at the same time called upon the workers to demonstrate in response to the Communist Party appeal.

It is this that is inducing the leadership of the Socialists and individual reformist trade unions to accept the united front proposals of the Communists.

In several countries, the reformist leadership continues its old tactics of openly sabotaging the united front. In these countries the Communist proposals for a united front are being accepted by the lower reformist organisations (England and Czecho-Slovakia) and result in class solidarity in the struggle.

Thus in the overwhelming majority of cases, the united front has been achieved as the result of the activity of the Communists and revolutionary workers, who have been able to rely upon the desire of the working masses for joint struggle against the economic and political offensive of the bourgeoisie and against the fascist danger and fascism.

What does the united front of struggle bring to the workers? First and foremost it increases the power of the working class for struggle against the bourgeoisie. This is why it has enraged the bourgeoisie of France. Secondly, it increases the fighting capacity of the proletariat and their confidence in their own power. Thirdly, it raises the authority of the Communist Party in the eyes of the masses,

and breaks down the legend that the Communists split the labour movement. Fourthly, it puts the social-democratic workers on to the road of class struggle. Fifthly, by encouraging a rapprochement between the Communist and social-democratic workers it increases the power of the Communist Party to influence the social-democratic workers.

Let us take another case. The social-democratic parties and the leaders of the trade unions refused to establish a united front, and the members of these organisations and the workers who follow them, responded to the appeal of the Communists and revolutionary workers and acted jointly with them. In this case the conducting of the united front is a big step forward again in the cause of directly freeing the workers from the influence of their leaders, who openly try to prevent the united front. It will be easier for the Communists to continue to work in future among these workers. These workers will help and support the Communists in their work in the reformist organisations. Of course, this is on condition that the Communists really work well and pursue the correct policy, that they are tactful in their approach to the reformist workers. Thus in both cases the workers will gain by the united struggle.

We are still only at the beginning of conducting the united front. We have done only very little so far in this respect, but what has already been achieved in some places has meant an important step forward in the cause of bringing the Communists closer to the masses of the workers. In this way the solution of one of the most important tasks of the Communists is facilitated: the liberation of the working masses from reformist illusions, their transfer to the position of class struggle. The Communists must be ten times more strenuous in the struggle for the united front. They must intensify the work of establishing it in practice.

Question : (a) WHAT IS THE PLATFORM FOR CREATING A UNITED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, WHAT IS THE PLATFORM OF UNITY IN PLACES WHERE THE QUESTION HAS ALREADY BEEN CONCRETELY RAISED (FRANCE, SPAIN)?

(b) HOW SHOULD THE QUESTION OF A UNITED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT BE RAISED IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS A CENTRALISED RED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT (FRANCE, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA, SPAIN, CUBA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA); HOW CAN UNITY BE ACHIEVED IN THESE COUNTRIES?

(c) HOW SHOULD THE CAMPAIGN FOR A UNITED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT BE CONDUCTED IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS NO CENTRALISED RED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, BUT WHERE THERE ARE ONLY A FEW INDIVIDUAL RED TRADE UNIONS (FOR EXAMPLE, BELGIUM, SWITZERLAND)?

Answer : In spite of the fact that all the countries enumerated in the first two questions have a centralised trade union movement, the question of unity of the trade union organisations must be raised in a different way in each country.

Take Czecho-Slovakia for example. Here we still have national-socialist trade unions of the Benes type, in addition to the reformist ones. Is unity possible with the national-socialist trade unions? The leadership of these trade unions will never agree to unity. This means that it is only possible to unite with them to the degree that the membership of these trade unions becomes freed from the leadership.

Is it possible to achieve trade union unity with the German and Czech social-democratic trade unions? Yes, it is possible, and this must be the starting point in bringing about unity of the trade unions in Czecho-Slovakia. But what is the attitude of the reformist trade union bureaucrats to this kind of unity? They are in the government and they support the entire programme of the bourgeoisie for getting out of the crisis at the expense of the workers. There, unity will become really possible only to the degree that the trade unions of individual branches of industry break away from the common, central leadership, or replace their leaders. In fighting for unity, the Red trade unions must put forward conditions which the masses of workers will understand, like the struggle for state unemployment insurance without any contributions on the part of the workers, instead of the Ghent insurance system; for the abolition of all the legislation which places the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the workers (passed with the help of the Social-Democratic Parties); for wage increases, for the unrestricted right to strike, etc.

There is not the slightest doubt that the organised and unorganised workers of Czecho-Slovakia will most certainly gain by uniting on a minimum platform of this kind, plus the guarantee of inner trade union democracy, proportional elections and right of criticism. The fact that the trade union movement is divided is one of the biggest reasons why the proletariat of Czecho-Slovakia has not up to now waged a real struggle against their constantly worsening standard of living. The fact that the trade union movement is divided suits the bourgeoisie, and it is not surprising that the bourgeois press is up in arms against the united front and working class unity. The reformist and national-socialist leaders of the trade unions who collaborate with the bourgeoisie against the workers, are also against a united trade union movement. But the members of these trade unions and the lower trade union organisations will accept unity of the trade unions. Agitation for this unity

must be carried on skilfully and persistently among the workers inside and outside their organisations. The Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party must energetically start work in the reformist trade unions (Czech and German) and in the unions under the influence of the Benes party, showing themselves before the workers as the determined champion of unity of the trade union organisations in the interests of the workers.

What about the question of unity of the trade unions in Spain? As we pointed out above, there are a few trade union centres in the country: Red trade unions, anarcho-syndicalist, reformist trade union centres; and lastly there are a host of autonomous trade unions as well.* Should the Red trade unions there raise the question of uniting all the existing trade unions? They not only must, but it appears altogether feasible at the present time, because members of trade unions of all tendencies participated in recent strikes even when the leadership of the reformist and anarcho-syndicalist trade unions did not call their members out on strike. Having in mind the revolutionary situation in the country, the platform put forward by them for unity should include approximately the following demands: The repeal of all anti-labour legislation, the fight against reaction, freedom of strike action, a forty-hour working week without cuts in pay, increased wages and the introduction of all forms of state insurance without any contributions from the employed workers, etc. The demand should be made for organisational guarantees as in Czecho-Slovakia: proportional representation at elections, the right of criticism and internal trade union democracy.

It is essential to note that our struggle for unity of the trade union organisations in Spain is re-

* The fragmentary condition of the Spanish trade union movement played a fatal rôle in the October events in Spain. The *Alianza Obrera*, which called the general strike and which subsequently turned into an armed struggle, consisted of Communist and socialist organisations and of Red and reformist trade unions. But the anarcho-syndicalist trade unions were absent in the *Alianza Obrera* (only in individual localities did the anarcho-syndicalist trade unions join the local *Alianza Obrera*, despite their central leadership). The anarcho-syndicalist unions are very strong in the most industrial sections of Spain—in Catalonia.

The vacillations of the Socialist Party and the reformist trade unions (they did not call a strike of the railroad workers), and the treachery of the anarcho-syndicalist leaders who sabotaged the strike and who called for a cessation of the struggle, brought about a temporary defeat of the Spanish proletariat. The workers took power into their hands only in Asturia, where the provincial organisation of the Communist Party of Spain had and continues to have a great influence upon the workers and where the Red trade unions are very strong and active. In Asturia the workers proclaimed a "Republic of the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers." The *Alianza Obrera* armed the proletariat in Asturia and that proletariat is fighting heroically against the government forces to this day.

tarded because of the fact that when the Red trade unions were organised, the work in the trade union unity committees was completely dropped, as a result of which these committees were actually reduced to nothing. It is essential that the trade union unity committees should resume their work in some form or another and become real factors in bringing about the unity of the trade union organisations.

The question of unity of the trade unions in France is in a somewhat different position. Here living events have put forward a new form of trade union unity. Here also the trade union bureaucrats are doing their utmost to sabotage trade union unity. Not so long ago the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (reformist trade union centre) replied to the appeal of the *Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire* (Red trade unions) for unity, by proposing that the Red trade unions join, and become dissolved in, the reformist trade unions entirely unconditionally. Moreover, the leaders of the reformist trade unions declared that only after the Red trade unions have joined the reformist organisations will they raise the question as to whether or not to convene the National Trade Union Congress. In simple language this proposal means: We, the reformists, will first of all see what the relation of forces will be after the Red trade unions have joined us; if the revolutionary workers turn out to be in the minority in all the trade unions, then we shall call the congress and make our control secure; if the revolutionary workers are in a majority in the big trade unions, then we shall postpone the Congress and convene it again only when we have won the workers over. If the trade union bureaucrats approach the question of unity in this way, it is clear that when the Red trade unions join the reformist trade unions on such conditions, the trade union bureaucrats will first of all take steps to expel the former Red leadership, on some pretext or other, from the united trade unions. The French trade union bureaucrats are very experienced in that sort of thing.

Before the trade unions split in France, whole organisations that had declared against class collaboration were expelled. Can the Red trade unions of France walk into such a trap? No, they cannot and are hardly likely to do so. But this means that they must fight for unity of the trade union organisations on the basis of at least a minimum platform, guaranteeing themselves suitable conditions for working in the united trade unions. Is it right to drop the idea of unity of the trade union organisations in France, once the trade union bureaucrats turn it down? On no account, the more so since it is just in France that the broad masses of working men and office

employees, including a considerable section of the reformist and autonomous trade unions, are already beginning to get accustomed to the broad united front, despite the trade union bureaucrats. These participants in the united front of struggle both want, and will adopt, unity of the trade unions. It is the task of the Red trade unions to make use of this mood and to broaden the campaign for a united trade union movement. To do this, it is necessary for the Communists, having started work inside the reformist trade unions, to rally around themselves all members of reformist trade unions who are dissatisfied with the reformist policy of their leaders, and to build up an influential revolutionary trade union opposition inside the reformist trade unions. This opposition should raise the demand inside the trade unions for unity of the trade union organisations, at the same time supporting the struggles of the Red trade unions on behalf of the daily interests of the workers. From this point of view, the most important fact is that we already have many cases where individual, parallelly existing trade unions, Red, reformist and autonomous, in leaving their own central trade union organisations, or still remaining connected with their own trade union centres, join forces and amalgamate into independent trade union organisations in one industry in the town or region. In this way, in France, 166 amalgamated trade union organisations have been set up and in particular 105 for railwaymen, 27 for tobacco workers, 12 for transport workers in the Paris region, 3 for miners, etc.

The joint meetings of the Red and reformist unions of the building workers and navvies in Paris discussed the question of amalgamation of this kind. The executive committee of the Red and reformist trade union organisations of the railwaymen of the southern railways called an emergency congress of their organisations to discuss the question of unity. The movement is embracing trade unions in other branches also. This form of unity cannot fail to bring pressure to bear upon the reformist leadership as well, however much they may try to put forward their own counter-plan—for the unconditional entry of the Red trade unions into the reformist organisations.* Should

* The session of the council of the reformist (Amsterdam) International passed a resolution on the report of Jouhaux, delivered in the beginning of September in Weymouth (England), in which, following the example of the *French Confédération Générale du Travail*, it is proposed that instead of achieving trade union unity by way of uniting trade unions of different tendencies, that the Red trade unions "dissolve, and their members return" to the reformist trade unions. However, in the same decision of the Amsterdam International nothing is said as to whether it is prepared to discontinue its practice of expelling revolutionary workers from trade unions; or prepared to extend to members of Red trade

the Red trade unions refuse this method of uniting? No, they should not. The Red trade unions should try to unite trade unions of different tendencies in one or another branch of industry even in this way. The trade unions which unite, when they leave the existing reformist (C.G.T.) and Red (C.G.T.U.) central organisations, or even remain linked up with them, may be playing a positive rôle in the cause of trade union unity. I consider that the Red trade unions, for their part, should do everything possible to come closer to those trade unions which are prepared to break with the central reformist leadership, as well as the autonomous trade unions, and to do so without any hesitation or delay. Since the Red trade unions are leading strikes and defending the interests of the workers and office employees, they will be able, provided the approach to the reformist workers is the correct one, to bring other unions into the joint struggle, which in itself is an important step towards the unity of the trade union movement.

We have spent years trying to prove that work in the reformist trade unions is necessary. It would appear that this need is no longer denied in words, but in actual fact there is still no steady improvement in this work for the period since the Sixth Congress of the Communist International.

Why is it that the decisions concerning work in reformist trade unions have not been put into practice?

The main reason is that the Communist Parties have not always been able to adapt these decisions to the peculiar conditions to be found in their own countries. For instance, in countries where Red trade unions exist, the Communists have not distributed their forces so as to guarantee that the work in both the Red trade unions and in the reformist unions was carried on simultaneously. In other countries, the revolutionary trade union opposition centred its work outside the reformist trade unions instead of inside, because of insufficient or incorrect leadership. In the third group of countries, the Communist Parties, having organised illegal Red trade unions which led individual strikes, but which, because of the terror used against them, were unable to develop into mass unions, did not carry on any work in the Kuomintang (China) and the fascist (Italy) trade unions.

Not infrequently decisions were carried out

unions joining reformist trade unions the right and opportunity of fighting for elective posts on the basis of trade union democracy. At the same time the Weymouth resolution shows that the leaders of the reformist trade unions are already unable merely to ignore the desire which is developing among the working masses for unity of the trade union organisations and are compelled to adopt more astute and cunning manoeuvres than hitherto in rejecting the proposals of the Red trade unions for unity.

mechanically; the slogans issued and agitation carried on were not always understood by members of the reformist trade unions, and the general approach to the masses was often of a sectarian kind.

One should add to the reasons enumerated above one other: that the decisions concerning individual countries did not always take into consideration the concrete situation existing or the difficulties to be met with in carrying out decisions in the given concrete circumstances.

The fact that these weaknesses and mistakes were present has given certain comrades cause to draw the conclusion that since we did not meet with enough success in our trade union work, then the trade union policy on the whole was wrong. This is not true. The experience of the work of Communists in the reformist trade unions of England, and then Sweden, Holland, Poland and the United States of America, had shown that where work in the reformist trade unions was carried on skilfully and persistently, undeniable results were to be seen from it. If the work inside the reformist trade union of one industry, or one town or one country, gives positive results, then there is no reason why similar work should not give similar results in another industry, town, or country, given more or less equal conditions, and if the peculiar circumstances of each case are taken into consideration.

What is the new trade union policy proposed by those comrades who are dissatisfied with the old one? The trade union policy they propose, it appears, should be that the Red trade unions should go over to the reformists unconditionally without any fight being put up for conditions. Maybe the trade union work would then improve. It is unlikely, however, that we will get any improvement in our trade union work on these lines.

May we exclude entirely the possibility of individual Red trade unions transferring unconditionally to parallelly existing reformist trade unions? No. This is possible in individual cases—in cases where the members of the Red trade union who transfer to the reformist trade union unconditionally, are actually permitted an opportunity of carrying on a struggle therein for the elective positions and of directing their activities towards the struggle for the workers' interests. Can individual cases of this kind become our general policy at the present time? No. Why? Firstly, because, as a rule, there is not and cannot be any reason to believe that the reformists will give an opportunity to the members of one or another of the Red trade unions who affiliate unconditionally to work inside the reformist union. Secondly, with the ripening of the revolutionary crisis, the Communist Party cannot liquidate mass trade union organ-

isations under its influence which embrace workers on a broader scale than the Communist Party, and through which it can spread its influence to broad masses of unorganised workers. Is it wise from this point of view to transfer the big Red trade unions in France and Spain unconditionally to the reformists? I do not think it is, because both in France and in Spain, there is frequently to be found in one and the same city, a large number of small unions in addition to the big Red trade unions, and to transfer in this way unconditionally might lead to the actual liquidation of the Red trade unions, and to throwing them upon the mercy of the reformist leaders.

A short time ago one of the foreign organs of the R.I.L.U. advised the R.I.L.U. supporters in the Lausanne trade union council, which has a social-democratic majority, but, nevertheless, had left the Swiss general reformist trade union centre, to return to the latter unconditionally, despite the fact that the trade union council has the support of the majority of the members of the Lausanne trade unions. This would mean returning unconditionally, without even the present secretary, without the present active fighters who have always struggled and are struggling against the reformist trade union centre. Moreover, it would be a rather curious state of affairs: the right Social-Democrats and the Communists in the Lausanne council would be in favour of returning unconditionally, while the Left Social-Democrats would be against.

Let us take this example: suppose the unemployed organisation in Holland, which includes fifteen thousand and over whom the Dutch Communist Party has influence, would go over unconditionally to the reformists, who are about to create a union of unemployed because they will receive some kind of concessions from the unemployed from the government. And suppose it did that even before it has been discovered exactly what concessions these are, whether the existing organisation of the unemployed could not get the government to give it the same conditions as the reformists and whether the reformist union of unemployed has any chance of becoming a broad mass organisation. Meanwhile, the Dutch Communist Party has six thousand members, and the unemployed organisation—fifteen thousand, and therefore covers a broader section of the workers than the Party. We know that the Communists played a big rôle in the recent events in Holland, which began after the government had cut down benefits to one category of unemployed and ceased payments altogether to another. There is not the slightest doubt that the Communist Party of Holland, during the eventful days, relied in the main upon this unemployed organisation. Would

not such a step of liquidating the existing organisation of the unemployed have bad consequences for the revolutionary movement in Holland?

When the Presidium of the Comintern passed its resolution on events in Germany,* which contains the statement that the social-democratic workers also bear the responsibility for the temporary defeat of the German proletariat (resolution of April 1, 1933), I had more than once to defend this position. The comrades who objected to this point argued in this way: we have always said that the rank-and-file members and even the active members in lower organisations of the Social-Democratic Party are not the same thing as the social-democratic leadership, and that our approach to them must be different from our approach to their leaders. How can you assert now, they ask perplexedly, that the responsibility for the temporary defeat of the German proletariat lies with the social-democratic workers also? We explained at the time that it was and still remains quite true that the approach to the rank-and-file members, and local officials, should be different from the approach to the leadership. Nevertheless, they also bear a certain amount of responsibility for the fact that they blindly followed that treacherous leadership at the decisive moment, and that thanks to that they did not adopt the united front; and this in spite of the fact that the Communist Party, as well as its local organisations and individual Communists, did their utmost to make it easy for the social-democratic workers to understand the need for the united front of struggle and to bring them into the joint struggle against fascism. So to the extent that the social-democratic workers did not take part in the united front of struggle against fascism, in spite of all these efforts of the Communists, part of the responsibility for the temporary defeat of the proletariat lies with them. Since fascist dictatorship was set up in Germany and Austria, the mood of the broad strata of social-democracy, even of the "democratic" countries, has changed considerably: an ever larger section of them are beginning to lose their reformist illusions and demand that their leadership conducts a joint struggle with the Communists against fascism. The decision of the Presidium, which revealed to the social-democratic workers of Germany the rôle they objectively played in not supporting the anti-fascist struggle of the Communists, has helped the social-democratic workers considerably to learn from their own experience.

A similar thing is happening now again on the question of the attitude towards reformist trade unions. The Comintern has told the Communist

* Reprinted from *Communist International* as pamphlet, entitled *Why Hitler In Germany?*

Parties more than once that the character of the work of the Communists inside the reformist trade unions must be improved, and has emphasised the fact that positive results can be obtained from the work when it is conducted sufficiently skilfully and systematically. Certain comrades, having learned this perfectly correct viewpoint, begin to argue in the following way: "If the work of Communists in reformist organisations, when carried on correctly, gives positive results, then why not liquidate the Red trade unions and transfer their members EN MASSE to the reformist organisations without putting forward any conditions? Then, of course, much greater successes will be achieved." I think that comrades who reason this all out so simply do not follow the question to its final conclusion and do not take into consideration the concrete circumstances in which we have to fight for unity in the trade union field. It is very praiseworthy of them to seek new ways to improve the work inside the reformist trade unions, but the road they propose as the easiest of all would result in weakening the revolutionary trade union movement and not in strengthening it. It is therefore absolutely impossible to agree to these proposals.

Let us consider the other side of the same question. Can the Communist Parties depend only on mere Party organisations when great events are unfolding, and be left without any strong, broad mass workers' organisations which bring the broad masses of workers under their influence? I do not think so. This refers primarily to those parties which are going forward directly to the decisive struggles. In this case the question must be especially carefully considered as to the advisability of liquidating even a small mass organisation which is under our influence, if by doing so there is no chance at all of really winning influence in a broader organisation still under the influence of hostile leadership. Let us take two examples in this sphere.

In Germany in 1923 there was a revolutionary situation which no one is likely to deny. But at the same time not a single trade union on a national scale followed the German Communist Party, and the German Communists (both "Rights" and "Lefts") refused to set up Soviets. True, the German Communist Party had unquestionable influence in the factory committees at that time, but these committees were not united in all the industrial centres, they did not have strong leadership and were not strongly linked up with the masses. The central organisations in the cities were not elected at meetings of those elected representatives of the factory committees, whom all the factory committees would have followed fully or at least the majority of the members, but were elected at meetings of the members of the factory

committees, where by far not all the members of all the factory committees participated and which did not always have the support of the majority in the factory committees.

And even if the policy of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party had been correct in 1923 (and we all know that its policy was absolutely wrong), it would not have been able to put it into practice, because the Party was not lined up organisationally with the broad masses of the workers. It is not enough to have a correct policy. That is very important, but not everything. It is essential to organise the work of putting the policy into practice. At that time, the Communist Party of Germany had no broad working class organisations through which it could make organisational contacts with the masses; it had no driving belts connecting it with these broad masses. The Central Committee of the German Communist Party did not even know the mood of the working masses in the biggest factories of the industrial centres at that time. And the German factory committees, which had a Communist majority, but were not linked up with the masses, differed extremely from the factory committees in Russia during the period between February and October, 1917, which had deep roots in the factories, which knew what was happening daily inside the factories, and which set the whole tone and led the workers in actual fact.

I would remind the comrades of an example from the history of the struggle of the proletariat of pre-revolutionary Russia just before October, 1917. On August 12, 1917, the Provisional Government and representatives of all the bourgeois and reformist parties arrived in Moscow from Petrograd, where the revolutionary struggle was rife, for the purpose of arranging a council of state. They had fled from revolutionary Petrograd to "conservative" Moscow. The Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party decided to celebrate their arrival. It was decided to organise a twenty-four-hour general strike. In Moscow, as in other Russian towns, a broad mass organisation already existed at that time—the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—but the Moscow Soviet, where the Mensheviks and S.R.s were in the majority, was against the strike. The Moscow Committee of Bolsheviks sent out a call, consequently, to the trade unions, and the Moscow trade unions endorsed the appeal for a strike together with the Bolsheviks. And so, the Bolsheviks, backed up by the trade unions and the factory committees which supported them, organised a general strike over the heads of the biggest mass organisation—the Soviet. The Soviet published an appeal against the strike; the Menshevik, S.R., and bourgeois newspapers shouted against

the strike, and yet the strike was a brilliant one. Could the Bolsheviks have organised this strike without having influence in the trade unions and in their leadership? No, they could not have done so. How did the Bolsheviks manoeuvre between February and October, when they still had no majority in all the trade unions in Leningrad? When it was necessary, they relied upon the factory committees and the soldiers' committees in their fight against the Soviets and the trade union council. In Moscow the trade unions and factory committees were used against the compromising Soviets. All this was possible because the Bolsheviks worked extremely skilfully and energetically, in all the mass organisations of the workers', soldiers', peasants' and office workers. Having decided upon the correct line and concrete slogans, the Bolsheviks fought for them inside all the mass organisations in which they were in the minority. Inside these organisations they actively supported all the activities of the Bolshevik Party, mobilising their supporters to participate in these activities.

Situations of this kind are not a national peculiarity of Russia; they may arise again in other countries. The Communist Party that is out to seize power should have broad organisations which in turn spread their influence over even broader strata of the organised and unorganised workers. Of course, the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917 were in a better position than the Communist Parties in capitalist countries of Europe and America are to-day. The Russian Bolsheviks were working in a revolutionary situation, when the masses rapidly became revolutionised and did not hold fast to their old organisations and parties, when the latter had ceased to satisfy their revolutionary requirements. In addition, although political parties supported by the workers had existed in Russia for a long time (illegally), the trade union organisations, although in existence since 1905 legally, had not been organised in all industries and in all towns, and they dragged out a miserable enough existence. Only after February, 1917, did the organisations of the workers, peasants and soldiers gain considerable strength, and the toilers' organisation became true mass organisations.

Despite the fact that many political parties existed in Russia, before the October Revolution, the mass organisations of the workers were on the whole not divided; the mood of the masses was one which made the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries hesitate, as a rule, about expelling the Bolsheviks from the mass organisations and splitting these organisations. All parties had an opportunity of fighting more or less freely for influence over the mass organisations. This was a very favourable moment for the Bolshevik Party;

the Bolsheviks had an opportunity of fighting inside the mass organisations for ideological influence and were able to make their successes secure organisationally. In the summer of 1917, the Bolsheviks had no formal majority even in the greater part of the workers' and soldiers' organisations, let alone in all of them, but in many towns they had a majority in individual trade unions, in district soviets, in factory committees, and in company and regimental soldiers' committees. They fought to gain influence through them and through the Communist fractions in all the mass organisations. That is why, when it was necessary in the interests of the revolution, the Bolsheviks were able to make use of the mass organisations which were under their influence against others where the reformists still held a majority.

In many countries of Europe and America, the Communist Parties were forced, at their very formation, because of the splitting policy of the reformists, to organise parallel non-party workers' organisations. We all know the enormous harm which these splitting tactics of the reformists caused the working class. On the one hand, they prevented the Communists from fighting for influence in the reformist mass organisations, where the majority of the organised workers were members, since the Communists concentrated their work upon the Red organisations which existed side by side; on the other hand, the existence of the parallel organisations, for which no one was to blame but the reformists, complicated the joint struggle of the workers against capital. Thus, in splitting the working class, the reformist leaders fulfilled their tasks as the agents of the bourgeoisie among the working class. Now that the influence of the reformists is declining and the workers are prepared to fight in the united front against the offensive of fascism and increased exploitation, the Communists and revolutionary workers must make use of the more favourable situation and lose no time in waging a determined struggle on behalf of unity of the trade union organisations. The struggle should be begun all along the line; by a standing appeal from both the central and local leaderships to the parallelly existing reformist trade unions and trade union organisations of other tendencies—an appeal which will contain concrete proposals for unity of the trade union organisations to suit the situation in each particular case—by strengthening the work of the Communists and revolutionary workers inside the mass trade union organisations of other tendencies, for the purpose of converting these organisations into ones which will defend the interests of the workers and support unity of the trade union organisations. But this does not at all mean that the Red trade unions should agree to unity without putting

forward any conditions at all. If individual Red trade unions and other mass workers' organisations go over to the reformists unconditionally, they will be unable to carry on any successful work inside these organisations. The reformist leadership of these organisations will continue as before their method of expelling the active Communists and revolutionary workers in order to deprive the Communists of the opportunity of depending upon the only remaining mass organisations, and especially so when the time comes when it will be necessary to act and to call the masses to action.

All that has been said above applies to the revolutionary organisations which already exist side by side with the reformist organisations. It is quite another question whether the Communist Party should build up its own trade unions in countries like England. On this particular question the answer is no.

The Communists cannot as a rule dissolve the already existing mass organisations under their ideological and organisational influence and recommend that they join the reformists without any guarantee of conditions there under which Communists and their supporters will be able to carry on their work freely inside the reformist organisations for transforming them into organisations of class struggle. But this on no account lessens, but on the contrary increases, the importance of a determined and skilful struggle for unity of the trade union organisations on definite conditions, and first and foremost the duty of Communists to explain persistently, patiently and convincingly to the reformist workers that the Communists put forward these conditions in the interests of the victorious struggle of the workers.

Question : HOW SHOULD THE QUESTION OF UNITY IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT BE RAISED IN COUNTRIES WHERE ILLEGAL RED TRADE UNIONS AND LEGAL REFORMIST UNIONS EXIST (POLAND, THE BALKANS AND THE BALTIC COUNTRIES?)

Answer : The Balkans cannot be taken as one whole. In Bulgaria and Greece the position is different from that in Rumania and Yugo-Slavia. The question is quite different in Poland and in the Baltic countries. The question must be studied thoroughly in each country separately. In countries where the Communists have strong mass organisations, they can propose unity of the parallelly existing organisations through straightforward, direct negotiations with the reformists. In the event of the negotiations being successful (when the reformists agree to introduce trade union democracy, freedom of criticism and proportional representation), the members of the illegal Red trade unions affiliating to the reformist unions then get an opportunity of working legally. In other countries, say in Yugo-Slavia, it

may be advisable for the Red trade unions to transfer to the reformists without putting forward any conditions and as an organised opposition to put up a fight inside the reformist trade unions for influence, for all the elective posts, for converting these mongrel trade unions into class organisations of the proletariat. This would be the correct way of utilising legal opportunities. As for the Baltic countries, in the majority of them there are no illegal Red trade unions, and in these countries it can only be a question of actually working in legal reformist trade unions and carrying out in practice the decisions passed in this connection.

As for Poland, the weak point in the Communist Party of that country is that it carries on insufficient work in the reformist trade unions. One of the most important tasks of the Party is to get this work going properly. As for unity of the trade union organisations, this question in Poland is very confusing because of the large number of trade union organisations that exist. As is known, the Polish Communist Party has influence in the small unions. They should, in the first place, make a proposal to the parallelly existing trade unions controlled by the Polish Socialist Party and the Bund, for unity on lines similar to the conditions already mentioned. If the unions controlled by the Polish Socialist Party refuse to accept these conditions (the Bundists organise only Jewish workers in their trade unions), then the question arises as to whether the Red trade unions should unconditionally join the unions controlled by the Socialist Party. As a general rule, it would be unwise to do this for the reasons I already mentioned. It is my opinion that the Red trade unions should continue to exist as independent organisations, endeavouring to become mass organisations, strengthening, moreover, all forms of the struggle for unity of the trade union organisations, systematically seeking to conduct the united front with the reformist trade unions, relying in the struggle upon the opposition which must be extended and strengthened inside the reformist trade unions. In Poland more than in other countries, with the exception of Germany and Spain, there are sharpened class contradictions. There the economy continues to collapse, the poverty and distress of the broad masses is unbearable, the revolutionary crisis is ripening with accelerated speed. In these circumstances, even the small organisations which support the Polish Communist Party can play an enormous rôle, if they work energetically and skilfully among the Polish, German, Ukrainian, White Russian and Jewish workers, and especially if they co-ordinate their actions and rely upon the revolutionary opposition inside the non-revolutionary trade unions. The Polish Communist Party should develop strong opposition groups in the unions

controlled by the Polish Socialist Party, inside the fascist trade unions and inside different mass organisations which are led by the enemy. But unfortunately the Polish Communist Party has not yet managed this, and the Communists continue to work poorly and only to a small extent in the trade unions controlled by the Polish Social Party and the fascists. The fact cannot be denied that when the Polish Communist Party, in the beginning of 1934, called a general mass strike, the broad masses did not respond to its call; and when the Polish Socialists call a strike and the Communists join with them—the reformists calculate that the Communists cannot afford not to join such a call—then the masses come out on strike. What does this prove? First of all, that the unorganised workers support trade unions controlled by the Polish Socialist Party; secondly, that the Communists are so weak inside these trade unions that they cannot even mobilise one trade union controlled by the Polish Socialist Party to participate in a mass strike in response to the appeal of the Polish Communist Party and over the heads of the central leadership of the socialists. But the Polish Communist Party can and must improve its work in the non-revolutionary trade unions, without liquidating the Red trade union organisations that support it. The membership of the Communist Party has doubled itself during recent years. Consequently it can and should redistribute its forces so as to ensure that the greater part of it, moreover, the most active part, should work inside the reformist trade unions. In the course of this work, the Communists must energetically raise not only questions of wages and the struggle against cuts in insurance benefits and against the worsening of labour legislation, but also the struggle against “unifying” all the trade unions under fascist leadership.

Experience has shown that the Communists not infrequently get control of strike committees, but as a rule are not sufficiently strong to lead the strike to the end. Why is this? Because either before or during the strike the Communists put forward correct demands which correspond to the mood of the masses; they put through organisational measures which place them at the head of the strike struggle; but as the struggle develops, as a result of the arrest of the active Communists on one hand, and the manoeuvring of the reformists on the other, the Communists are unable to maintain the leadership to the end. This is quite understandable; the Communists are illegal, the reformists are legal, and when it is a question of breaking strikes, the latter have the whole of the state apparatus on their side. As a result the reformists often wrest the leadership of the strike out of the hands of the Communists. This will be

partially eliminated when the Communists win important posts inside the reformist trade unions.

All that has been said about the reformist trade unions before applies to the mass trade unions of Pilsudski and the Christian unions as well. Therefore, the question in Poland resolves itself into this: the work in reformist, Christian and fascist trade unions must be increased a hundredfold; the revolutionary trade union opposition inside them must be given constant and correct leadership by the Party organisations, and at the same time the trade unions which support the Polish Communist Party must be converted into strong mass organisations. If there is no positive reply to their proposals for unity of the trade union organisations the trade unions which support the Communists should appeal to all trade unions in one or another industry which exist side by side with them and should propose the establishment of a united front. For this purpose they can propose the setting up of unity committees. The main task is to get a correct combination of the work of the trade union organisations which support the Polish Communist Party and the work of the Communists inside the trade unions of other tendencies.

Question : THE CURRENT SLOGAN IN FRANCE TODAY IS THAT THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT SHOULD BE INDEPENDENT OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. IT IS REPEATED BY OUR PRESS AS A CONDITION UNDER WHICH THE TRADE UNIONS SHOULD UNITE, AND, MOREOVER, IS REPEATED WITHOUT ANY CRITICAL REMARKS AT ALL. LENIN CONTINUALLY CONDEMNED THE THEORY THAT THE TRADE UNIONS SHOULD BE NEUTRAL, SAYING THAT IT LED TO DEADENING THE CLASS STRUGGLE. ARE NOT THE FRENCH COMRADES, AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE BROADLY DEVELOPING MOVEMENT FOR UNITY, DISTORTING ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR UNITED FRONT AND UNITY TACTICS?

Answer : I think that the comrades who raise this question are wrong. Neutral trade unions are non-existent. That is well known. Trade unions cannot be neutral towards the bourgeoisie, provided they wage a struggle against them. It follows that trade unions cannot really be neutral towards the party that wages the class struggle against the bourgeoisie—namely, the Communist Party. This is clear. But in the given case, it is not a question of neutrality, but of the trade unions being independent of political parties. Let us approach this question concretely from the viewpoint of the situation in France. In France there are two parties—Socialist and Communist—and two large trade union organisations which support these two political parties respectively. The French Communist Party has set itself the task of uniting both these trade union organisations. If the French comrades raise the question in the following way: that the reformists must recognise the

Communist Party as the leader of the united trade unions, can unity be achieved? We can say in advance that in the circumstances which exist today, unity of this kind cannot be achieved. If the reformists in turn raise the question as follows: unity on the condition that the Red trade unions recognise the Socialist Party as the leader, then it is probable that even those comrades who would even be in favour of having the Red trade unions join the reformist trade unions unconditionally, would not accept such a condition put forward by the reformists. You must not make a dogma even of the most correct position. It would be making a dogma of a correct position to refuse to take into consideration the concrete circumstances in which the struggle for unity in the trade union field is developing in France. The comrades who work in the French revolutionary trade union movement wrote in their main resolutions—with a view to fighting against the anarcho-sindicalists—that they recognise the leadership of the French Communist Party. I do not know whether it was wise to pass such a decision even at that time; let us suppose, however, that it was necessary for the struggle against the anarcho-sindicalists. But when the Committee of Twenty-two, which was headed by the downright reformist, Chambellan, and which was joined by certain leaders of the unitary trade unions, railwaymen on state railroads, dockers and bakers, began its demagogic campaign for unity of the trade union organisations on the basis of trade union independence, the French comrades should have made it possible to fight more successfully against this Committee by avoiding any demonstrative emphasis of their old formula, and withdrawing instead the official recognition of the Communist Party leadership of the Red trade unions. The question of leadership of the trade union movement is not a question of a mere declaration, but the question of the correct policy and tactics which win over the masses to the side of Communist Party leadership. Unity in the trade union movement makes it possible for the Communist Party to influence broader masses than at the present time. Therefore the French comrades acted correctly when they avoided making the question of trade union independence an obstacle to unity. What does this independence mean? Does it mean that Communists give up their Communist fractions in these trade unions or give up the right to pursue their own policy there? Of course not. Even the Socialists do not give this up. In its articles on unity of the trade unions, the *Populaire* (No. 4215 of August 25, 1934) writes: "The right of every member of the trade union to defend his viewpoint inside the trade union should remain intact . . . We will leave the false slogan of no politics to the reactionaries. For, indeed, all trade union work is based upon a definite political philosophy."

Presumably, the victors in the trade unions will be those who work best and most energetically in the united trade unions, those who are able most convincingly to prove the correctness of their policy to the majority of the members. Either the socialists will be better organised than we are, will pursue their reformist policy more skilfully than the Communists pursue their policy of class struggle, and they will gain from unity of the trade unions, or the Communists will be able to convince the majority of the members that not only their line is the correct one, but they also work better than the reformists, raise all the trade union questions more opportunely, manifest more initiative in organising strikes and formulating demands, etc.—then the Communists will soon be the victors. In this respect I am starting with the supposition that there exists true working class democracy in the united trade unions.

If the Communists want to take a step forward in France in regard to unity of the trade unions, they should agree to the independence formula, without in the least rejecting the task of doing their utmost to influence the activities of these trade unions through their fractions. What use is it for the Red trade unions in France to declare at their congresses that they recognise the policy of the Communist Party as correct and subordinate themselves to it, if the work of the Red trade unions is not improved by these declarations, if, even up to quite recently, they have been unable to make use of the favourable situation and the unquestioned increase in their influence, for the purpose of organisational consolidation, of increasing the membership? It is not the verbal declarations and formulations that count; it is important that the trade unions in actual practice should support the Communist Party. Therefore, the Communists cannot make the formal recognition, in advance, of the leading rôle of the Communist Party in the united trade unions one of the conditions of unity, but by their work in these trade unions they should convince the majority of the membership in actual practice of the correctness of Communist leadership.

Question: WHAT SHOULD OUR SUPPORTERS IN THE UNITED TRADE UNIONS TAKE AS THEIR BASIC METHODS AND FORMS OF WORK?

Answer: I have already partially replied to this question. When the Communist fraction inside the united trade unions puts forward its demands during the daily struggle, it should as a rule put forward DEMANDS WHICH THE TRADE UNION CAN REALLY WIN IF CORRECT AND PERSISTENT WORK IS CARRIED ON. The Communists should give especially careful thought to the demands they put forward during strikes, popularising them among the trade union membership and striving to ensure

even before the beginning of the strike struggle that a compact mass will support them. If this is not done, the supporters of reformist methods will make use of the first failure of the trade unions to discredit the Communists. The Communists should make use of trade union democracy in the united trade unions to develop to the utmost the initiative and activity of the membership, helping them in every possible way to mobilise their forces for the struggle. We should avoid sharpening the conflict around secondary, formal questions and we should make concessions at times to the reformists on petty points, in order to be able all the more strikingly and convincingly to defend our viewpoint before the membership on more important questions. The Communists should combine the maximum flexibility with their steadfastness in principle. The broad masses of the members will then understand our policy more rapidly and the Communists will gain from the unity of the trade unions.

Question: WHAT IS THE CORRECT WAY OF PRESENTING THE QUESTION OF RECRUITING INTO REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS; AND IN PARTICULAR, IS THE SLOGAN "REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS, JOIN THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS," A CORRECT ONE?

Answer: If there are Red trade unions in existence in the country, then obviously the Communists will recruit into these trade unions. But that does not mean that in the factories where there are no Red trade unions the Communists cannot recruit into the reformist trade unions. Should the Communists, moreover, stress the point in the following way: only revolutionary workers join the reformist unions? No. We can increase our influence in the trade unions, in this case, in a simpler way. Suppose the Communists carried through a successful strike in a certain factory? Their very first task afterwards should be the immediate organisation of trade union groups in that factory, and having organised them, they can decide, on the basis of what will help to strengthen the revolutionary trade union movement most, where it is most advisable to direct them: into the Red trade union if one exists in that branch of industry, or into the reformist union. In case the groups join the reformist trade union, the Communists should recruit to the utmost in the given factory for this trade union, for the bigger this factory trade union group is, the stronger will the Communist influence be in this reformist trade union. Therefore, in this case, the slogan—only revolutionary workers join the reformist trade union—would be wrong. It is clear that the Communists should not only recruit many members in this trade union, but should work among the members they have recruited in order really to gain or extend their influence

among them. Is this possible? I think it is, although in practice our comrades are not always able to work in the reformist trade unions as Communists, and at the same time recruit new members—recruit not simply to increase the numerical composition of the reformist trade union, but to strengthen the influence of the Communists inside it with a view to converting the union into an organisation of class struggle. If Communists work to recruit members into reformist trade unions, then it is not only the revolutionary workers who should be appealed to. The Communists should work among the recruits, so as to increase, through them, their own influence.

Question: WHY IS IT THAT THE DECISION OF THE FIFTH R.I.L.U. CONGRESS CONCERNING THE WITHDRAWAL FOR GERMANY AND POLAND OF THE SLOGAN "JOIN THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS" WAS MECHANICALLY ADOPTED IN ALMOST ALL OTHER SECTIONS OF THE R.I.L.U.?

Answer: I am not aware of the special reasons for withdrawing this slogan in each country. The general reasons for arbitrarily and incorrectly withdrawing the slogan in all those countries where it was withdrawn, except Germany and Poland, were that it is not an easy thing to carry on revolutionary work in the reformist trade unions, and in the majority of cases it is not safe. It was often not easy for individual Communists to work inside reformist trade unions without proper leadership on the part of a Party organisation and without forming a properly functioning Communist fraction, the more so since they were faced by old-time reformists, who were both cunning and experienced. Instead of really trying to help individual Communists to start this work, our sections frequently shirked this work as they did with recruiting. Moreover, all kinds of sectarian reasons were put forward as excuses, as for instance, that the reformists are reactionary. Besides the Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress did not release the Communists of Germany and Poland from the duty of working in reformist trade unions; no such decision was made or could be made. If the Communists have a strong opposition in any reformist trade union in Poland, there can be no question of this opposition being forbidden to recruit into the reformist trade union where it is working for the express purpose of increasing its influence there. The comrades who arbitrarily withdraw the slogan: "Go into the reformist trade unions" (in countries where there are no Red trade unions, apart from Germany and Poland), made a very serious mistake, and if it were possible to find the actual guilty ones, they should be condemned.

Question: HOW SHOULD THE QUESTION NOW BE RAISED OF WINNING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TRADE UNIONS?

Answer : Now, just as during the Tenth and Twelfth E.C.C.I. Plenums a fight should be waged for every elective position, whether it be in the central apparatus (president, secretary, or simply a member of the central apparatus of the trade union of any industry), or whether it be an elective position in the central council of all the trade unions on a national, country, town, district, or branch scale. In a word, a fight must be put up for every elective post (and this means serious work to win and then to maintain the position), by demonstrating to the members of reformist unions in actual practice that the Communists really want and really know how to work in the trade unions. During the last few years, the Communists in England, Sweden and other countries have managed to win elective positions in the reformist trade unions where they have been working well. This proves that the Communists can, especially now that the trade union bureaucrats' powers of manoeuvring have begun to weaken, win most important posts from them in certain circumstances, and even be elected as members of the central leadership of individual trade unions.

The resolutions of the Twelfth E.C.C.I. Plenum on this question quite definitely stress the need for a determined struggle for EVERY elective position in the reformist trade unions.

Question : WHAT ABOUT THE QUESTION OF DEFENDING THE TRADE UNIONS, IF THEY ARE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMISTS?

Answer : If there is the danger of the reformist trade union organisations in a country being smashed by the bourgeoisie, the Communist Party should come out and defend them against fascism. The Communists should, moreover, speak to the reformist workers somewhat along the following lines: The reformist leaders have converted the trade unions from instruments defending the interests of the working class into instruments for collaboration with the bourgeoisie. When the members of the reformist trade unions understand that and choose to fight against the trade union bureaucrats in order to change the policy of the reformist trade unions, they will be able to do so; individual cases of this kind already exist. The Communists have always appealed, and will not cease to appeal, to the workers to change the policy of the reformist trade unions. The Communists are against the reformist policy of the trade unions, but they are still more against workers' organisations being destroyed by the bourgeois state. And so, while trying to change and calculating upon changing the policy of the reformist trade unions, the Communists are now ready to do all in their power to prevent their being smashed by the bourgeoisie. The Com-

munist in Germany issued the slogan "Defend the unions! Workers, unite to defend the unions!" during the period when the fascists were "unifying" the trade unions. That was quite right, but it does not mean that the Communists are defending the reformist policy, tactics, and organisational methods, etc. The Communists, at the same time, said to the reformist workers: let us defend the reformist trade unions together, but we shall try inside these trade unions to change their policy, tactics and organisational methods.

Question : WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR TACTICS TOWARDS THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS AND TOWARDS ALL THE OTHER KINDS: CHRISTIAN, "DEMOCRATIC," AND FASCIST—IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS NOT YET A FASCIST DICTATORSHIP?

Answer : It is difficult to answer this question in this general form. The Communists should work in all mass trade unions, but as a rule the Communist Party should concentrate its attention more particularly upon the reformist trade unions. Why? Because the reformist trade unions have their pre-war traditions which are not so bad; the pre-war reformist trade unions defended the interests of the workers, if only their narrow craft interests and if only by means of reforms. It is easier to urge the workers organised in reformist trade unions forward to the strike struggle, than, let us say, the workers of the Catholic unions.

In Poland there are fascist unions in the biggest industries and the largest factories. It is a big mistake to actually refuse to work in them.

Suppose in China, for example, there existed mass Kuomintang trade unions and smaller reformist trade unions; where should the Communists work the most? Of course, in the Kuomintang unions.

It cannot be decided indiscriminately in advance as to which trade unions the Communists should concentrate their work in first and foremost; the conditions in each individual country must be examined concretely first. One thing is clear: the Communists must work in all trade unions which have mass support. They must distribute their forces to ensure that the Communists are here, there and everywhere; but the main force must be concentrated in those workers' organisations which have the support of the basic proletarian masses.

Question : TO WHAT EXTENT IS THERE A CHANCE IN THE APPRAISAL BY THE COMINTERN OF GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AS THE MAIN SOCIAL SUPPORT OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND HOW SHOULD THESE CHANGES BE REFLECTED IN OUR TRADE UNION TACTICS IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA?

Answer : I think that we should first of all see what we had in Germany before fascist dictatorship and what we have to-day. We all know that

before Hitler's advent to power, the reformist trade unions and the Social-Democratic Party entirely supported the bourgeoisie, supported all the governments, one after another. The trade unions hindered the struggle, both political and economic. Take even the November transport workers' strike in Berlin just before Hitler came to power. After Hitler came to power, the reformists handed over the trade unions to the fascists. On May 17, 1933, the Reichstag social-democratic group voted in favour of the fascist foreign policy, and if the question of the domestic policy of the fascists had been taken up the same day, the Social-Democratic Party would probably not have dared to speak against it either. At that time the trade unions and the Social-Democratic Party still existed; at that time the Social-Democratic Party in Germany was still the social prop of the bourgeoisie. We cannot be sure that if and when its former influence would be restored to it in one form or another, it would again become the same support. But at the present moment, there are no reformist or any other kind of trade unions in Germany; no other reformist mass organisations exist at all. Neither does any centralised Social-Democratic Party exist. The social-democratic groups which show any signs of life at all are, without doubt, against the fascists. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility, of course, that the bourgeoisie will turn back—it would seem as if they were turning a little bit already in the direction of the reformist trade union bureaucrats, and entering into negotiations with them through certain intermediaries, as the *Manchester Guardian* reports. Fascism has brought about the destruction of all the trade unions, all the mass working class organisations, but it has already come up against the mass, though spontaneous, resistance of the workers who, with an overwhelming majority, boycotted the election of the factory trustees. Now that there are no mass organisations supported by the workers such as at one time supported the reformists (the fascists have been unable to secure this), the bourgeoisie is beginning to think about forming new organisations through their centralised system which would keep the workers under their influence. We do not know as yet what sort of organisations there will be. Perhaps they will again be reformist, or mixed reformist-fascist trade unions, created with the assistance of the reformists. And then, if these organisations managed to become mass ones, the reformists would again be able, to a certain extent, to play the rôle of social prop of the bourgeoisie. At the present moment, however, can we say that the social-democratic workers, who are carrying on agitation in small groups against the fascists, who are publishing leaflets and sometimes distributing Communist

literature, not to mention cases where they are joining the German Communist Party, are persecuted and arrested, and in places establish a united front with us—can we say that they are the props of the bourgeoisie? I think not.

What is the position in Austria? Recently the appeal of the revolutionary socialists and the Communist Party was published, calling for anti-war demonstrations on August 1. The platform of joint struggle which has been accepted is almost entirely a Communist one. Is this the same Social-Democratic Party that it was not only before 1934, but even at the moment of the February struggle against fascism, when the Social-Democratic Party as such still continued to follow leaders of the type of Bauer, Deutsch, Seitz and others? Of course it is not the same. Can we say that to-morrow Otto Bauer, Deutsch, Renner and Seitz will not get their party together again and that it will not once more support the bourgeoisie? We cannot be certain of this. True, some of the leaders like Bauer, for various reasons, and first and foremost, because of the fear of losing influence among the masses, display much radical demagoguery. We know that Bauer even "speaks in favour" of proletarian dictatorship. He says, we are in favour of proletarian dictatorship, but when we have established it, then we shall turn to democracy. What sort of democracy? For whom? Bauer and those who imitate him in other Social-Democratic Parties play with the words "proletarian dictatorship," but flee from the Soviets like the devil from holy water; they do not even mention the Soviets at all. They do not want Soviet democracy—real, true democracy for the toilers. They need proletarian dictatorship for the purpose of introducing bourgeois democracy. It is clear that they have not given up their class collaboration, that at the first call of the bourgeoisie they will go openly to them, and at the first opportunity they will try to knock together a party as well. But to-day such a party does not yet exist, and so the position of social-democracy in Austria has changed essentially and we cannot consider that individual social-democratic organisations which fight against fascism are also the prop and stay of the bourgeoisie at the given moment there. It would be wrong to use the same estimate of social-democracy at all times and ignore the fact that great events have changed the situation.

What are our tactics on the trade union question in Austria and Germany? In Austria the Communists and revolutionary socialists are trying to defend and strengthen the reformist trade unions which the fascists have not been able to compel to stop their activities. In Germany the Communists to-day aim at restoring free trade

unions, together with their best pre-war traditions, in order that they, first and foremost, organise a struggle against the legislation of January 20, 1934, which deprived the workers of Germany of all the rights they had won in struggle during the last fifty years. At the same time the German Communists must carry on work in the fascist mass organisations.

Question: SHOULD THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION OPPOSITION AT THE PRESENT STAGE BE BUILT UP AS AN ORGANISATION (WITH A MEMBERSHIP AND SO ON) OR AS A BROADER, LESS DEFINITELY SHAPED MOVEMENT?

SHOULD THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION OPPOSITION CORRESPOND TO THE SYSTEM OF THOSE UNIONS IN WHICH IT WORKS (OF COURSE, NOT INCLUDING GROUPS IN FACTORIES), OR ALWAYS BE BUILT UP ON THE INDUSTRIAL PRINCIPLE, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE SYSTEM OF THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS?

WHY IS IT THAT IN THE MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES, THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION OPPOSITION EMBRACES MOSTLY THOSE WORKERS WHO ARE NOT ORGANISED INTO TRADE UNIONS?

Answer: I think that the question of the organisation of the revolutionary trade union opposition cannot be decided for all periods and for all countries in the same way. Take fascist Germany and Austria. In the free trade unions which must be restored after they had been destroyed by the fascists, the Communists will be able to limit themselves to forming Communist fractions. If it were possible to create trade unions capable, as mentioned above, of fighting against the legislation of January 20, 1934, they would be more or less revolutionary organisations, and the Communists would limit themselves to forming fractions inside them.

Take England. Should the Communists have a revolutionary trade union opposition there with an apparatus complete from head to foot and parallel with the apparatus of the reformist trade unions, which would, as a general rule, organise strikes not through the trade unions, but separately from them, etc.? No, even if they wanted to do it, it would not work there. The Communists in England are still very weak, and this form of revolutionary trade union opposition would only isolate them from the trade unions. Consequently the type of revolutionary trade union opposition in England must be different from what it was, say, in Germany before the fascist seizure of power.

There is no need to dwell on the revolutionary trade union opposition in Czecho-Slovakia or in France, where there are Red trade unions. In these countries the immediate task is to create a trade union opposition in the reformist trade

unions, and then it will be possible to decide upon the organisational form it will take.

In the United States of America there can be no question of the Communists building up a revolutionary trade union opposition with membership dues and so on, parallel with the existing unions of the American Federation of Labour. There the task is to penetrate deeper into the A.F. of L. on the crest of the wave of working masses who are surging into these unions, to unite the radicalised workers in these unions, to win leading posts and get whole trade union organisations of the A.F. of L. under their influence. The experience of recent mass strikes, and especially of the general strike in San Francisco, has shown that it is quite possible to accomplish this task if only the forces of the Party are concentrated in action and not merely in words, upon work in the A.F. of L. unions.

In all countries the revolutionary trade union opposition should work inside the reformist trade unions, show some initiative, organise the conducting of strikes, and if suitable conditions exist for this, make use of its influence among the masses of the membership of reformist trade unions to get support for the strikes begun by the Red trade unions. It is this that will define its organisational form. In all that remains, the rôle of the revolutionary trade union opposition cannot be the same for all countries. We must study the national peculiarities and local conditions in each country before choosing the form of the revolutionary trade union opposition that best suits the given country.

It was a complete mistake to try to build up a revolutionary trade union opposition in all countries on the lines of the organisation which existed in Germany before Hitler's advent to power. In Germany itself it was quite right at the time for the revolutionary trade union opposition to build up its apparatus parallel to the reformist one, and to try to organise and lead strikes independently. But it was absolutely wrong that the revolutionary trade union opposition in Germany did not work inside the reformist trade unions, and this brought enormous harm to the German Communist Party and to the German working class as a whole. The question of membership, of membership cards, and so on should be decided from the viewpoint of ensuring that the largest number of workers come under the influence of the revolutionary trade union opposition according to the conditions existing in each country and in each industry.

I will now come to the second part of the question. I consider it to be inadvisable to make it a rule that the revolutionary trade union opposition should be built up on the industrial principle, because if organised in this way, it would find itself divorced from the trade unions inside which it

should be working. The revolutionary trade union opposition should be built up to correspond organisationally with those trade unions in which it is working. If it is working inside an industrial union, then obviously it must be organised in the same way. But if, let us say, it is working among the metal workers in England, where there are several metal workers' unions, or among the textile workers, where the situation is the same, then the revolutionary trade union opposition should be organised to correspond with these unions, in order to work more easily inside each of them. But of course this does not mean that the revolutionary trade union opposition of all the metal workers' unions or of the textile workers in England cannot all be linked up for the purpose of co-ordinating their work; they may even have a joint committee which co-ordinates their activities.

The main reason why in the majority of countries the revolutionary trade union opposition has primarily embraced the unorganised workers is that the Communists have been unable to convince the members of reformist trade unions that the revolutionary trade union opposition is not a parallel trade union organisation. Many members of reformist trade unions did not want to be members of two parallel trade union organisations at one and the same time. They looked upon the existence of the revolutionary trade union opposition as an attempt to split the unions and they feared this. The Communists did not sufficiently explain to trade union members the rôle of the revolutionary trade union opposition, as an opposi-

tion *INSIDE* the reformist trade unions. On the other hand, the revolutionary trade union opposition was unable to transfer its own members, who were unorganised in trade unions, into the reformist trade unions, with a view of increasing its influence inside the trade unions through these members. We must not deny the importance of the fact that a member of the reformist trade union who joined the revolutionary trade union opposition had to pay membership dues twice, even though the membership dues to the revolutionary trade union opposition were not large. The unorganised workers who joined the revolutionary trade union opposition also had no desire to pay an extra subscription when joining the trade union, and so they did not join the reformist unions. Try, for instance, to get the workers in England to pay membership dues twice in the trade union organisations. They are accustomed to paying directly to the trade union; through the union they are automatically organised politically; the trade union pays into the political organisation—the Labour Party—for them. Therefore, in future, perhaps the revolutionary trade union opposition should as a rule stop taking membership dues and adopt the method of voluntary, non-compulsory contributions, since the dues prevent the revolutionary trade union opposition from increasing its membership. In any case, this specific question must be approached in each country with an eye to the concrete situation just as is the case with the question of the general construction of the revolutionary trade union opposition.

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