

THE NEW TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT
MATERIAL FOR 7th WORLD CONGRESS
IN MEMORY OF COMRADE KIROV, ETC., ETC.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE



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CONTENTS
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CONTENTS

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	Page
1. IN MEMORY OF THE LATE COMRADE KIROV.	943
a. Statement by the C.C. of the C.P.S.U.	
b. Statement by a Group of Friends.	
c. Address of Comintern.	
2. From Shaken Stabilisation to the Second Round of Revolutions and Wars. (Material for 7th Congress.)	945
3. For the United Front of the International Proletariat.	959
4. The New "Emergency" Law in the Second International.	966
5. Citizen Vandervelde's Reply. By Martynov.	967
6. Swedish Social Democracy in the Second International. By M.M.	970
<u>15th ANNIVERSARY OF THE Y.C.I.</u>	
7. The 15th Anniversary of the Young Communist International.	973
<u>PARTY CONSTRUCTION.</u>	
8. The Initiative of the London "Daily Worker" in Dealing with Questions of Party Structure.	976
DISCUSSION FOR 7th CONGRESS.	
9. The Nature and the Sources of Sectarianism in the Communist Party of Italy. By Tunelli.	977
<u>INDEX FOR THE YEAR 1934.</u>	
10. Index of Articles Published in the "Communist International" during the year 1934.	982

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE COMRADE KIROV

FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET
UNION (BOLSHEVIKS)

With great sorrow, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks) informs the Party, the working class, all toilers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the whole world that on December 1st in Leningrad a leader of our Party, the ardent, fearless revolutionary, the beloved leader of the Bolsheviks and of all the toilers of Leningrad, the Secretary of the Central and Leningrad Committees of the C.P.S.U. (Bolsheviks), member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Sergei Mironovich Kirov, fell by the treacherous hand of an enemy of the working class.

The loss of Comrade Kirov, beloved by the whole Party and by the entire working class of the U.S.S.R., a crystal-clear and unswervingly steadfast Party member, a Leninist Bolshevik who devoted the whole of his brilliant and glorious life to the cause of the working class, to the cause of communism, is the most grievous loss suffered by the Party and the Land of the Soviets in recent years.

The Central Committee is sure that the memory of Comrade Kirov, the shining example of his fearless untiring struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R., will inspire millions of workers and toilers in the further struggle for the triumph of socialism, for the final extermination of all enemies of the working class.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET
UNION (BOLSHEVIKS)

(Reprinted from the "Pravda")

A MODEL BOLSHEVIK

Our Party has suffered a great loss. On December 1st, Comrade Kirov was felled by the hand of a villainous assassin sent by our class enemies. Not

only for us, his close friends and comrades, but for all who knew him through his revolutionary work, who knew him as a fighter, a comrade and a friend, the death of Kirov is an irreparable loss. The hand of the enemy has killed a man who devoted the whole of his brilliant life to the cause of the working class, to the cause of communism, to the liberation of humanity.

Comrade Kirov was a model Bolshevik who knew neither fear nor obstacles in attaining the great aim set by the Party. His straightforwardness, his iron determination, his splendid qualities as the inspired tribune of the revolution were combined with that sincerity and gentleness in personal comradeship and friendship, with that radiant personal warmth and modesty which are the attributes of a true Leninist.

Comrade Kirov worked in various parts of the Soviet Union, both during the underground period and after the October Revolution, in Tomsk and Astrakhan, in Vladikavkaz and Baku. Everywhere he held high the banner of our Party and rallied millions of toilers to its cause by his tireless, energetic, and productive work as a revolutionary.

For the last nine years Comrade Kirov led our Party organisation in the city of Lenin and in the Leningrad Region. In a short farewell letter of grief it is impossible to give an appreciation of his work among the toilers of Leningrad. It would be hard to find in our Party as fitting a leader for the Leningrad working class, one equally capable of welding around the Party all Party members and the entire working class. Comrade Kirov imbued the entire Leningrad organisation with that atmosphere of Bolshevik organisation, discipline, love and devotion to the cause of the revolution which were his own distinguishing attributes.

You were dear to all of us, Comrade Kirov, as loyal friend, beloved comrade, dependable companion-in-arms. To the last of our days and our struggle we shall remember you, dear friend, and will feel the weight of our loss. You were ever with us in the days of the hard-fought battles for the triumph of socialism in our country, you were

ever with us in the years of vacillation and difficulties within our Party. With us you went through all the hardships of recent years, and we have lost you at the moment when our country has scored great victories. In all this struggle, in all our achievements, much was due to you, to your energy, strength and fervent love for the cause of communism.

Farewell, our dear friend and comrade, Sergei!

J. STALIN	V. KUIBYSHEV
S. ORJONIKIDZE	Y. RUDZUTAK
V. MOLOTOV	S. KOSSIOR
M. KALININ	P. POSTYSHEV
K. VOROSHILOV	G. PETROVSKY
L. KAGANOVICH	A. ENUKIDZE
A. MIKOYAN	M. SHKIRYATOV
A. ANDREYEV	E. YAROSLAVSKY
V. CHUBAR	N. EZHOV
A. ZHDANOV	

(Reprinted from the "Pravda")

TO THE CENTRAL AND LENINGRAD
REGIONAL AND CITY COMMITTEES
OF THE C.P.S.U.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International, together with the proletarians, collective farmers and all toilers of the U.S.S.R., together with the proletarians of the entire world, grieves for the death of Comrade Sergei Mironovich Kirov, one of the best leaders of the C.P.S.U. and a companion-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin, who has fallen by the hand of a foul agent of the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship.

The example of Comrade Kirov's life, the life of a noble unbending proletarian revolutionary internationalist, a great tribune of the proletariat, will inspire millions of toilers and oppressed throughout the world to the struggle against fascism, reaction and imperialist war, for the banner of the Communist International.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL



SERGEI MIRONOVICH KIROV

FROM SHAKEN STABILISATION TO THE SECOND ROAD OF REVOLUTIONS AND WARS

(Material for the 7th Congress.)

In the present article we have by no means exhausted all the questions which will arise at the Seventh Congress. We have hardly touched the concrete problems and practical tasks which face the various parties.

All the questions which will arise at the Seventh Congress must, in accordance with the decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., be widely and thoroughly discussed during the period still remaining before the Congress, both in our journal and in the Communist press of the sections of the Communist International. The aim of the present article is simply to give the BASIS for such a discussion.

I.

SIX years separate us from the 6th Congress of the Comintern. During these six years the world has transformed, the changes taking the DIRECTION foretold by the 6th Congress.

The 6th Congress was convened in 1928, when the Social-Democratic Parties and the reformist trade unions were becoming increasingly fused with the State apparatus and the employers' organisations. "Social-democracy was passing from the shamefaced defence of capitalism to its open support" (Theses of the 6th Congress of the Comintern), and carrying with it the majority of the working class, still widening its influence everywhere. The leading Social-Democratic Party—the German Party—was still in the government.

Under these conditions, social-democracy prophesied long years of prosperity for capitalism. It preached "industrial peace," "economic democracy" and "organised capitalism" as the path to the "peaceful growth of democracy into socialism."

The prognosis and the line given by the Comintern were directly opposite to this. A year before the 6th Congress, at the 15th Congress of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Stalin stated that:

"... from stabilisation itself, from the fact that output is increasing, that commerce is growing, from the fact that technical progress is going ahead and productive possibilities are rising, while the world market, and the limits of this market and the spheres of influence of various imperialist groups remain more or less stable, it is precisely from this that the most profound, the most acute crisis of world capitalism will arise, pregnant with new wars and threatening the existence of any stabilisation."

Noting that the third period had begun, and in characterising this period, the 6th Congress of the Comintern indicated the prospect of the breakdown of capitalist stabilisation, a revolutionary upsurge, and a

"new period of imperialist wars and wars against the U.S.S.R., of national emancipation wars against imperialism, and gigantic class battles."

History has utterly shattered the hopes and prophecies of the social-democrats, and completely

confirmed the prognosis made by the Comintern.

Since the 6th Congress of the Comintern, the basic contradiction of the present day, the contradiction between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world, has tremendously sharpened. During the past six years the U.S.S.R. has achieved victories of world historic importance.

At the same time, during the past six years, the capitalist countries have displayed to the world a picture of increasing decline, the collapse of capitalist economy, and the destruction of the very pillars of capitalism. An economic crisis broke out on a scale and of an intensity hitherto unknown in the world. In 1932 the decline of capitalist industry reached its lowest point, after which a certain extension of production began. But this extension of production meant a "peculiar kind of depression," which will not lead to a new upsurge and boom in industry, although it will not bring industry back to the lowest point reached by the decline. It was brought about by means of the plunder of the

"workers, farmers and the peasantry in the colonies and the economically weak countries." (Stalin.)

The BASIC feature characterising the dynamics of development in the period since the 6th Congress of the Comintern is the collapse of capitalist stabilisation, the maturing of the REVOLUTIONARY crisis, though this has taken place unevenly in the various countries and has not proceeded along a uniform line in each country. Along with the growth of the revolutionary crisis and in close connection with it, and also as the reply of the bourgeoisie to this, there has arisen a new wave of fascism, while the war danger has grown far more intense.

* * *

Questions Before World Congress.

At the 7th Congress of the Comintern we shall have to give a clear reply to the questions of THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE, THE MATURING OF THE WORLD REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS, THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH IT IS MATURING, THE WEAKEST LINKS IN THE

IMPERIALIST CHAIN, AND THE PROSPECTS OF REVOLUTION, IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHAT MUST BE THE BASIC OBJECTIVE and what are the tactical tasks facing the Comintern in the near future, of which we shall speak below.

Even before the February events in France and Austria, and the recent events in Spain, the 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was able to note that "the world revolutionary crisis is maturing,"

and that

"at any moment a change may come which will mean the conversion of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis."

Comrade Stalin, when characterising the present situation at the 17th Party Congress, had every reason for stating that

"the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses,"

that

"the revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to do so,"

and that

"the revolutionary crisis will grow all the more rapidly in proportion as the bourgeoisie become more involved in their warlike combinations, and as they more frequently resort to terrorist methods of struggle against the working class and the toiling peasants."

Why do we speak of the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, in spite of the uneven nature and lack of directness of the development of the revolution? We do so for the following reasons:

1. "The peculiar kind of depression" which began in 1933 does not augur prospects of an industrial boom, and still less the stabilisation of capitalism. The transition to a depression has not only failed to bring about a new boom, but

"the improvement in the economic situation in the decisive capitalist countries—U.S.A., Germany and Britain—came to an end again at the beginning of the summer of 1934 and a new decline has begun." (M. Varga, *Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftspolitik in Zweiten Viertel Jahr, 1934*.)

Of much greater importance than these variations in the economic situation (unequal in various countries) is the fact that the conditions of the working class and peasantry are deteriorating in all capitalist countries. The elements and symptoms of the disintegration of the system, and undermining of the foundations of capitalism are becoming more evident (the decline of the international financial and credit system, the continuation of the devaluation of currency, the non-fulfilment of international obligations, the continued absence of the export of capital, etc.). No prospects of capitalism stabilising are visible in view of the impoverishment in the capitalist and colonial countries, tempestuous socialist growth in the U.S.S.R., revolutionary upsurge in capitalist countries and the growth of international contradictions.

2. The passage to a "depression of a special

kind" has not only failed to weaken the class struggle. As experience shows, this struggle has become still more intense.

3. The bourgeoisie are feverishly preparing for imperialist war, primarily for a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. But the sympathy of the masses for the Soviet Union is growing day by day. Therefore, the preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. hasten the maturing of the revolutionary crisis. When war breaks out, if our parties carry on genuine Bolshevik work, it will inevitably grow into civil war.

4. The ever-spreading wave of reaction, fascist violence and terror not only hinders but also hastens revolutionary development. It arouses indignation in the masses, and fosters the idea of the need for storming capitalism.

5. Social-democracy, the main social buttress of the bourgeoisie in the industrial countries, is now undergoing a policy and organisation crisis which will deepen. If we carry out a correct policy this crisis will facilitate the passage of the social-democratic workers to Communism. And, finally,

6. During the First Five-Year Plan the Soviet Union secured a victory of world historic importance. In the Second Five-Year Plan it is successfully solving and will finally solve the food question, the question of supplies for the toiling masses. It will thus beat the last trump card out of the hands of the bourgeoisie in their anti-Soviet propaganda, by proving even to the most backward workers that the only path of salvation is that of the October Revolution. This reason is of first-rate importance.

That the world revolutionary crisis is maturing is shown by the events occurring in recent years.

Firstly, revolution has been proceeding in two countries for years.

In Soviet China the victorious revolution (personified in the heroic Chinese Red Army) has repulsed five campaigns undertaken by the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang. It has finally defeated the more thoroughly prepared 6th campaign, preserved its forces by manoeuvring, and, retreating in some districts, is victoriously occupying others. The Soviet revolution in China exerted and continues to have an enormous influence on all the colonial countries, in which great re-groupings of class forces have ensued during the last six or seven years, in respect to the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat. At present not only in China (where the leading rôle (hegemony) of the proletariat has already been put into operation under the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in the form of Soviets), but also in Indo-China, India and other countries, the proletariat is fighting with greater intensity and not without

INDEX OF ARTICLES PRINTED IN THE "COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL" FOR THE YEAR 1934

LEADING ARTICLES.	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Page</i>
The Maturing of the World Revolutionary Crisis. The Fight for Soviet Power Throughout the World		(See Comintern 13th Plenum)
Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin (10th Anniversary of Death of Lenin) ...	3	83-87
The 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Struggle Against the War Danger ...	3	87-93
The Congress of Victors, the Congress of the Construction of Classless Society	4	115-125
Vanguard Struggles of the Second Round of Revolutions	5	147-153
The World Proletarian Party of the New Type	6	195-204
The Proletarian Revolutionist — Gregory Dimitrov and the Fight Against German Fascism	7	247-252
The Popularisation and Realisation of the Decisions of the 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I.	8	291-302
The Leader of the World Proletarian Revolution (V. Knorin)	9	331-334
May-Day Review of the Revolutionary Forces of the Proletariat	10	371-376
Spring Indices in the U.S.S.R.	12	463-468
The Struggle for Unity of Action. By Bela Kun	13	511-514
June 30th—and What Next?	16	619-627
The Struggle for the United Front in France	17	655-658
The Brandlerites and their Letter to the E.C.C.I.	18	691-694
How the Revolution in Spain can be Victorious	18	695-701
The U.S.S.R. and the League of Nations	19	727-732
From the First to the Third International	20	763-769
The Revolutionary Upsurge in America	20	770-774
Three Lessons of the October Revolution. By Bela Kun	21	805-810
For Soviet Power	22	839-844
The Struggle Against Fascism for Power, and the Workers' and Peasants' Republic in Spain	23	899-910
From Shaken Stabilisation to Second Round of Revolutions and Wars ...	24	945-959
AMERICA.		
Review of the "Party Life" Section of the American "Daily Worker," from October 22nd to November 2nd, 1933	1	33-36
What is the American Workers' Party and who are its Promoters? By L. Platt	7	264-271
The Eighth Convention of the C.P.U.S.A. and Some Conclusions. By B. Sherman	14	551-555
The San Francisco General Strike and Its Lessons	17	659-662
The Revolutionary Movement in the U.S.A. in the Conditions of the "New Deal" of Trustified Capital. By Kutnik	18	702-710
The Growth of Terror Against the Rising Strike Wave in the U.S.A. By B. Sherman	18	711-714
Company Unions in the U.S.A. By B. Sherman	19	747-749
The Revolutionary Upsurge in America	20	770-774
ARMY.		
Examples of the Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Army	1	28-32
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army. By Takao	14	568-572
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army—Part II. By Takao	15	613-614
ARMED UPRISING.		
Military Tactical Lessons of the Armed Uprising (Austria). By Kurt ...	6	232-243
The Lessons of the Armed Uprising in Cracow in 1923. By B. Ksaver ...	8	308-320
Some of the Experiences of the Civil War in Finland in 1918. By T.L. ...	9	355-361
The Black Sea Revolt. By André Marty	11	456-459
Why we were Victorious in Hungary and Why we Did Not Maintain Power. By Bela Kun	13	533-541

The world revolutionary crisis is maturing, but the process of this maturing does not follow a uniform straight line, but ensues in zig-zag fashion. Especially in those places where fascism has succeeded in seizing power do we find the movement being temporarily held up. In Poland, on the eve of the fascist coup in Germany, the number of strikers was larger than at any time during the previous five years, and in 80 cases out of 100 the strikes were led by Communists. Simultaneously a broad wave of the peasant movement arose in Poland, assuming the character of the beginning of an agrarian revolution. All this together allowed the 12th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. at that time ample grounds for stating that "Poland is approaching closely to a revolutionary crisis." In Czecho-Slovakia also tremendous economic battles took place at that time, led by the Communists, e.g., the general miners' strike in Northern Bohemia. In Germany also, on the eve of the 12th Plenum, the class battles assumed extreme intensity, though in other forms (the struggle against fascism), sometimes taking on the appearance of a minor civil war (Altona, Luebeck), while immediately after the 12th Plenum a big transport strike took place in Germany (in November, 1932), as well as a large number of strikes in connection with the Papen decrees to cut wages by 50 per cent. After the temporary defeat in Germany, the establishment of an open fascist dictatorship there, and connected with this, we have a temporary weakening of the movement in Central Europe. In Germany under the Hitler régime, strikes have been and still are of extremely short duration and almost always spontaneous in character. In Poland the strike wave has not fallen, but owing to the increase in the "Left" manoeuvres of the P.P.S., the leadership of the strikes in many cases passed into the hands of the P.P.S. In Czecho-Slovakia also our independent leadership of economic struggles weakened owing to the fact that the social-democrats were able to take advantage of the fear of the masses of fascism to secure support for the social-democratic policy of the "lesser evil." All this could not hold back the growth of the revolutionary crisis on a world scale, but in these countries the upsurge has come to a standstill for a time or has temporarily weakened (the curve of the movement there has now begun to rise again).

These victories achieved by fascism, and the temporary weakening of the movement in connection with them in some industrial countries in Central Europe were prepared for and brought about in the main at the decisive moment by the treachery of social-democracy. But a certain part of the responsibility for this—for the fact that we were unable to paralyse the treacherous attack of social-

democracy—must be borne by us as well, by our Parties, through their lag behind, and their mistakes. The Comintern has repeatedly pointed out this lagging behind and these mistakes. For example, in connection with the fascist coup in Finland and recently Bulgaria. In Germany also, on the eve of the seizure of power by the fascists, at the 12th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. the members of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, including the leader of the German Communist Party, Comrade Thaelmann, criticised the mistakes of the C.P.G. and its lagging behind. The mistakes and lagging behind of the Party must now be submitted to the most thorough self-criticism. We must not forget that in spite of the zig-zags, the revolutionary movement is going ahead, along a rising curve. This is due, not only to objective conditions, but to a very considerable extent to our Parties and the Comintern. If international social-democracy is now undergoing a crisis, and the Social-Democratic Parties of Germany and Austria have been destroyed since the establishment of open fascist dictatorship, while our Parties, subjected to much more fierce terror, have remained at their posts, and in Austria our Party is growing rapidly, particularly at the present time, this is obviously the result of their good work.

The process of the ripening of the revolutionary crisis is taking place UNEVENLY. Now, after Hitler's victory, there is a period of calm in the mass movement in Germany. At the same time we see a rise of the mass movement, varying in degree and form, in the strongest capitalist countries—France, Great Britain and the U.S.A. When speaking of a lull in the mass movement in Germany, we must not forget that big mass strikes, and still more the general strike, would have an absolutely different nature and different results in fascist Germany from the mass strikes and general strikes which have taken place in France or the U.S.A. In Germany the general strike, irrespective of its result, would signify the beginning of revolution. Therefore a far greater accumulation of forces, a much stronger degree of revolutionary indignation and enthusiasm is necessary to precipitate a general strike in Germany. When it breaks out it will take incomparably more tempestuous revolutionary forms.

These processes of discrediting the government and the accumulation of revolutionary forces are now taking place in Germany. They are greatly assisted by the bankruptcy of the demagogic Hitler economic promises. They will take place much more rapidly when we are able to bring about frequent, rapidly alternating, even though small, strikes there, and impromptu demonstrations in various places. These processes are even

now being accelerated by the rise of the revolutionary movement in the neighbouring "democratic" countries, not to speak of the tremendous influence of the victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R. We should not judge the length of the path of Germany towards the revolution on the basis of the temporary lull there. This lull is a very deceptive one. It is the calm before the storm.

Such are the conditions of the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis. Such are the prospects of revolution.

* * *

Still other prospects face us — those of war. Revolution will inevitably grow out of war, however. In the present circumstances, moreover, the growth of war into revolution will be much more rapid than in the first round of wars and revolutions.

In the period of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, "pacifism" prevailed; there was a certain equilibrium between the imperialist countries on the basis of agreements for the partition of the world after the war. There was a "breathing space" in respect to the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist countries. After the 6th Congress of the Comintern, the era of pacifism came to an end. Imperialist war is coming nearer, and still nearer is the counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. Of this war the Japanese military clique and the German fascists have now been talking openly for a long time.

Very recently a certain zig-zag can be seen in this sphere as well. The invitation of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations and its entrance undoubtedly signify certain hindrances to the unleashing of war. But it would be a harmful and dangerous illusion to think that it is a GUARANTEE against war, above all against an anti-Soviet war.

Firstly, it is by no means essential that a wide-anti-Soviet bloc be formed before an anti-Soviet war breaks out. The war instigators hope that when they face the other imperialists with an accomplished fact, the latter will change their position.

Secondly, the entire capitalist world is by no means pleased with the prospects of the successful completion of the second Five-Year Plan in the Soviet Union.

Thirdly, the intensity of the imperialist contradictions show the danger of imperialist war. Therefore, the prospects of imperialist war and above all of an anti-Soviet war are not removed. The fact that these prospects are connected with the prospects of the victory of the revolution in a number of countries was explained sufficiently

eloquently by Comrade Stalin at the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U.

* * *

Thus, WE ARE NOW AT THE EVE OF THE SECOND ROUND OF REVOLUTIONS AND WARS. One of the peculiar features of the situation wherein this is maturing is that it is in conditions where fascism is growing and social-democracy in a crisis.

The advent of fascism to power and the substitution of open fascist dictatorship in Germany, Austria and other countries, in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie concealed behind parliamentarism, represent a severe blow at the proletariat and its Communist vanguard. The fascist form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is the most savage and hateful one. It is the dictatorship of the most terroristic, reactionary, the most chauvinistic and imperialistic sections of finance capital, which grows under modern conditions out of the bourgeois dictatorship which is concealed behind parliamentarism.

How Will Fascism Affect Crisis?

But how and to what degree will the advent of the fascists to power affect the maturing of the revolutionary crisis? First of all, what is the meaning of the fact that the bourgeoisie are PUTTING THEIR STAKE ON FASCISM everywhere now? The answer is—the growing danger of revolution, in face of which the bourgeoisie are no longer able to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. THE FACT THAT THE CAPITALISTS ARE STAKING THEIR ALL TESTIFIES TO THEIR WEAKNESS. That fascism has BEEN VICTORIOUS in a number of countries, and the bourgeoisie in some countries have been able to establish an open fascist dictatorship, is

"not only a recognition of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, but also a recognition of the weakness of the proletariat and a result of the treachery of social-democracy to the working class, which cleared the way to fascism." (Stalin.)

That the bourgeoisie deliberately TOOK THE LINE OF FASCISM is to be explained first and foremost by their weakness. They felt, and still feel themselves forced to adopt this course, although they realise that it is fraught with the following dangers as far as they are concerned. Firstly, when fascism destroys the parliamentary system and unleashes civil war, it unwillingly causes the proletariat to pass through a revolutionary schooling, more speedily outlive their democratic illusions, and become trained for the violent overthrow of the bourgeois system. Secondly, fascism, which establishes itself a mass basis by means of social and nationalist demagoguery among the ruined petty bourgeoisie and partly among the declassed workers and those sections of the people filled with anti-capitalist sentiments, cannot help displaying

its utter inability to fulfil these demagogic promises after it comes to power. It is already doing so. This is bound to cause a revolt sooner or later among the deluded petty-bourgeois masses and declassed workers, IF THERE IS A SUFFICIENTLY STRONG COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AMONG THE MASSES. This is already taking place in Germany. Therefore, while the bourgeois are everywhere heading for fascism, and bringing the fascists to power, they realise that they are taking a big risk.

When the fascist dictatorship was established in Germany, social-democracy and the renegades from Communism, followed by certain unstable elements in the Communist Parties, advanced the thesis that a whole HISTORICAL EPOCH OF FASCISM had set in. They meant that fascism will INEVITABLY be victorious everywhere. They considered the resistance of the proletariat smashed, and that there are no revolutionary prospects. Facts have shown that this capitulatory, fatalistic theory is doubly incorrect. Firstly, the very fact of the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, and the frightful example of the Hitlerite terror, have caused great alarm among very large sections of the proletariat in various countries. They have therefore given an impulse to a tempestuous counter-offensive by the proletariat against fascism in these countries. We need but recall the tremendous battles in February in France, the heroic armed struggle of the Austrian workers against fascism, the general strike and the armed rising of the Spanish workers in reply to the inclusion of the fascists in the Government. No small part was played by the passionate desire of the French, Austrian and Spanish workers to avoid the fate of the proletariat in Germany in this. Secondly, although the Hitlerite régime in Germany itself, with frantic terror and unlimited demagogy, placed great difficulties in the way of the mass struggle of the proletariat, yet it was unable to smash the Communist movement. Now Hitler's rule has already aroused certain resistance of the workers, which found expression in the factory representatives' election. The results of these elections have been qualified by the fascists themselves as "a blow in the face for the nationalist socialist outlook." Soon after this, a revolt began among the petty-bourgeois masses who had been deluded by fascism. Considerable unrest arose among the Storm Troops, who demanded that Hitler should carry out his demagogic promises, while the real masters of Germany, the Thyssens and Krupps, demanded a further capitalist offensive. This, and to some extent the conflict between the Reichwehr and the Storm Troops officers, led to the sanguinary events of June 30th, which, although they by no means imply the collapse of German fascism (it will col-

lapse only under the blows of the proletariat), yet nevertheless implied the BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS OF GERMAN FASCISM.

German fascism strengthened the apparatus of the army and the State. After June 30th it reinforced it to a still greater degree; at the same time it is losing its mass basis. This is an excellent confirmation of the Comintern thesis that fascism not only STRENGTHENS, but at the same time UNDERMINES the position of the bourgeoisie. The present wave of fascism (as distinguished from that on the eve and during the partial stabilisation of capitalism) arose not as the result of the defeat of the proletariat, but owing to the pauperisation of the middle classes, the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat and the capitalists' fear of the approaching revolution. Industrial Germany is not Italy. The German proletariat is much stronger than the Italian proletariat. The present German Communist Party is incomparably stronger in all respects than the Italian Party was when Mussolini came to power.

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The process of the revolutionisation of the masses, on the one hand, and the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany and Austria on the other, have led to the crisis of international social-democracy. In Germany and Austria they have led to its collapse. THE CHIEF SOCIAL BUTTRESS OF THE BOURGEOISIE, IN THE SHAPE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY, HAS BECOME FAR MORE RICKETY THAN AT THE TIME OF THE 6TH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN. This is confirmed by the words of Lenin at the Third Congress of the Comintern:

"Petty-bourgeois democracy in capitalist countries, represented by the Second and Second-and-Half Internationals in its advanced part, is the chief buttress of capitalism at the present moment, inasmuch as the majority of an important section of the industrial and commercial workers and employees are still under its influence, and they fear in case of revolution to lose the middle-class state of comparative prosperity created by the privileges of imperialism. BUT THE INCREASING ECONOMIC CRISIS IS EVERYWHERE WORSENING THE CONDITIONS OF THE BROAD MASSES, AND THIS CIRCUMSTANCE, TOGETHER WITH THE INCREASINGLY CLEAR INEVITABILITY OF NEW IMPERIALIST WARS WHILE CAPITALISM REMAINS MAKES THIS SUPPORT EVER LESS RELIABLE." (Our emphasis, Ed.)

Crisis of Social-Democracy.

Social-democracy is still drawn into participation in the government by the bourgeoisie, here and there. As is shown by the recent elections in Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the Scandinavian countries, and by the growth of the A.F.L., its influence in some countries is still growing. But, in general, it is undergoing a deep CRISIS.

This crisis is expressed in the fact that in a number of countries, such as France, groups are splitting away from it, from the Right and Left.

Those who split away from the Right have OPENLY passed to the side of reaction and fascism (MacDonald in England, Renaudel-Marquet in France). The Social-Democratic Parties in a number of countries have begun to use "Left" phrases on an unprecedented scale (cheap drivel about the "temporary dictatorship of the proletariat," the "dictatorship of the masses," etc). They resort to "Left" actions, which at first mainly had the character of manoeuvres (leading strikes to either break them or limit their extent, to keep the leftward moving masses under their influence, and prevent their going to Communism). Then, under the increasing pressure of the masses, these actions have sometimes assumed the character of an actual struggle against fascism and war. Some of the Social-Democratic Parties, under the pressure of their members, and to some extent out of fear of sharing the fate of the German social-democrats if fascism should be victorious in their country, have been inclined to form a united front with the Communists (France), though with all kinds of conditions and hesitation.

In Spain fear of the fascist coup which Robles was preparing, and the pressure of the revolutionary masses compelled even the Left majority of the Socialist Party, led by Largo Caballero (which had participated comparatively recently in the bourgeois government) to consent to the united front with the Communists in spite of the resistance of the Right Socialists. They had to make technical preparations for armed action in defence of the Republic and participate together with the Communists in the armed struggle, which grew in Asturias and Biscay into a mass armed uprising under Communist leadership. There is an increasing feeling in favour of the united front with the Communists among the social-democratic rank and file.

In Germany and Austria, only the former leaders, now in emigration, who (to a certain extent) constitute a staff without an army, have retained their old standpoint. The same is true of a small section of the activists connected with them, who work in the respective countries in conformity with fascist savagery. There are strong relics of social-democracy in the minds of the numerous social-democratic workers who, having left their parties, are now absolutely passive in Germany and Austria, evidently in anticipation of fascism "falling by itself." They dream of a new, "good" social-democracy appearing in place of the "bad" social-democracy which has gone bankrupt before their very eyes. A certain section of the social-democratic workers have gone to the fascists. Some of the German emigrants of the "Left Wing" have taken note of the leftward moving process going on among the workers and are

now trying to revive the Social-Democratic Party on the basis of a new eclectic "revolutionary-socialist" programme. A process of differentiation has begun among the "revolutionary socialists" of Austria. Some have gone over to the Communists. Others have adopted a number of radical decisions at their conference, but, at the same time, decided to remain in the ranks of the Second International.

Considerable numbers of ACTIVE social-democratic members, groups and organisations which work illegally in these countries, have arrived at the cross-roads. A definite number of them show their leanings towards Communism. Some have already come. Under these conditions of the crisis of social-democracy we cannot assert that every social-democrat making a step to the left is only manoeuvring. We must make a distinction now between the "Left" social-democrats in inverted commas—and those who are genuinely Left.

In a number of countries which have taken the fascist road it is no chance that the bourgeoisie, while bearing well in mind that the social-democratic theory and practice of the co-operation of the workers' party with the bourgeoisie had done them an irreplaceable service, yet, on the other hand, takes into account that the social-democratic organisations are workers' organisations as far as membership is concerned (as are all mass organisations not directly led by the fascists). They are now becoming a menace to them, and therefore require to be eliminated. We must therefore carry on such flexible tactics in accordance with these facts that, while striking unceasing blows at social-democracy, and those who hold its outlook, we shall draw the social-democratic workers to our side.

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The New Tactics of the United Front.

II.

"The revolutionary crisis is maturing and will mature." But "the victory of the revolution will never take place by itself. It must be prepared and must be won. And it can only be prepared and won by a strong revolutionary proletarian party." (Stalin.)

How do matters stand in respect to the existence of strong revolutionary proletarian parties? During the first round of wars and revolutions, the sections of the Comintern, with the exception of the C.P.S.U., were not yet such parties. The Comintern, as a whole, was a united world proletarian party of a new type to only a small degree. At that time it was only such a party in embryo. After the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, in the period between 1928-30, it was already possible to register the consolidation of the majority of the sections of the Comintern, and the conversion of the Comintern itself into a monolithic world prole-

tarian party of a new type. The results of the bolshevisation of our biggest sections, their consolidation, and the transformation of the Comintern into a really united world monolithic party did not fail to make themselves felt. It was precisely after the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in 1929 that it was possible to register the rapid growth of the political influence of our Parties, as well as a number of big successes for the strongest of them, namely, the German, Chinese, Polish and Czecho-Slovakian parties, etc.

Did the consolidation of our Parties, and the Comintern as a whole, safeguard us from lagging behind for the future? No. And right up to the present time we must admit that our Parties are lagging very much behind in the winning of the majority of the working class and the strengthening of the contacts with the masses. They are backward in selecting new revolutionary cadres closely connected with the masses, and penetrating into the big factories, into the reformist trade unions and the fascist mass organisations. They are slow in developing mass struggles under our leadership, and winning allies for the proletariat. All this makes it essential for us to develop the widest SELF-CRITICISM.

The characteristic feature of the present time is the coming of sharp, sudden changes. Such changes require changes of tactics. But in these unexpected changes and tactical alterations, vacillations are possible and even inevitable in various sections of the Parties, or in entire Parties. The difference between the present situation and the former one, when our Parties were not yet consolidated, is merely that these vacillations and mistakes are now corrected and outlined more rapidly and do not give rise to Party crises, as was formerly the case.

At present there are big changes in the situation in connection with the establishment of an open fascist dictatorship in Germany and Austria, the advance of fascism in other countries, and the increased danger of war. New features arose with the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, and the revolutionising of the proletarian masses. The profound crisis of social-democracy, and strong urge of the social-democratic masses to the united front of struggle alongside the Communists present new problems. All this requires that we advance the slogan of Soviet power as our central political slogan, as was done by the 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. At the same time it requires that we change our methods of conducting the tactics of the united front to suit the new and changing situation. We do not change our tactics because our former tactics were incorrect, as the social-democrats and the renegades from Communism are now trying to prove. In spite of isolated mis-

takes made in the localities, and sometimes by Party leaders, our former tactics were correct. We are changing the tactics of the united front now because conditions have changed.

The nature of the change in the tactics of the united front was set out in the manifesto of the E.C.C.I. to the workers of all countries on March 5th, 1933, on the establishment of the "united front of struggle of the Communist and social-democratic workers against the offensive of capital and fascism."

In this manifesto our Parties were recommended to

"abstain from attacking the social-democratic organisations DURING THE JOINT STRUGGLE against capital and fascism"

if the social-democrats observe two conditions, namely, to carry on a real struggle against fascism and against the lowering of the standard of living of the workers and the unemployed, and on condition that

"a most merciless struggle be carried on against all those who violate the conditions of the agreement for the united front as strike-breakers violating the united front of the working class."

These tactics when carrying through the united front, are new tactics corresponding to the new situation. Formerly, we applied them only in individual cases. (In July, 1932, and in January, 1933, the C.P. of Germany approached the social-democratic leadership with a united front proposal, and in 1922, when Lenin was still alive, and the international situation different, the Comintern attended a conference with the Second and 2½ Internationals.) These new tactics of the wide application of the united front in 1934 have already led to a number of big successes. They helped our French comrades, who took the initiative in the counter-offensive against fascism during the February days, to attract the socialist workers to their side, and gave enormous scope to the movement. They helped our little Austrian Communist Party to increase its influence enormously among the working class in the armed fights in February, at the expense of the bankrupt Social-Democratic Party and to treble its membership. They helped our French Communist Party to overcome the resistance of the Socialist Party to establish the united front and to obtain socialist agreement. They helped our Dutch comrades to develop the revolutionary struggle of the unemployed in July, 1934. They helped our American comrades not long ago to carry out the successful general strike in San Francisco, etc. They helped our Spanish comrades to create better conditions for obtaining contacts with the masses, and for the mobilisation of these masses by joining the "Allianza Obrera." They helped our Spanish comrades to carry through in Spain, with the socialists, a general

strike and an armed struggle. But when the movement reached its highest phase, namely, the struggle for power, for Soviet power (in Asturias and Biscay), it became clear that the socialist organisations, which were ready to go as far as the defence of the republic, jibbed at this highest stage of the struggle.

These are only the first steps in the application of the new tactics of the broad united front. THEIR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OPENS UP BIG PROSPECTS BEFORE US. WITH THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF THESE TACTICS WE SHALL BE ABLE TO ENTER INTO CLOSER CONTACT WITH THESE MASSES OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS WHO ARE MOVING TO THE LEFT. THEY ENABLE US TO MOBILISE A WIDE FRONT FOR THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM, AGAINST THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE AND THE WAR DANGER. With these tactics we can lead these masses to the decisive struggle for power. To carry out the TACTICS of a broad united front concretely, avoiding its dangers, we must have a CLEAR AIM IN VIEW.

Soviet Power is Central Slogan.

We are at present on the eve of a new round of revolutions and wars. NO PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION CAN BE VICTORIOUS AT THE PRESENT TIME OTHER THAN UNDER THE BANNER OF THE SOVIETS, regardless of its slogans or character, democratic or proletarian. The Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., noting the maturing of a world revolutionary crisis and the approach of the eve of a new round of revolutions and wars, at the same time advanced the slogan of SOVIET POWER AS THE CENTRAL POLITICAL SLOGAN OF THE PRESENT PERIOD. It is clear that this slogan must now be the principal political slogan even in countries backward in the revolutionary sense, for the workers there also must know beforehand the path they must take. But millions of workers in the capitalist countries are still not conscious of the meaning of the slogan "Soviet Power." Their sympathy towards the Soviet Union and its consistent peace policy is growing from day to day. They are daily being convinced that socialism is really being built in the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, the majority of workers in the capitalist countries, thanks to the long-standing influence of the social-democratic agents of the capitalists, are not sure even now that an armed uprising and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets is the ONLY way to socialism. They are not so certain that there is no other road to victory, irrespective of the peculiarities existing in this or that country. It is still necessary to LEAD them to the struggle for Soviet power. To achieve this, it is necessary to propagate the slogan of Soviet power tirelessly everywhere. This propaganda must be carried on in actual forms corresponding to the peculiarities of every country. But

propaganda alone, however widespread, is quite insufficient to achieve this. The masses will be convinced of the correctness of Communist policy and slogans sooner and easier on the basis of their own experience in struggle. Last year's events have presented many striking examples proving that in present conditions the social-democratic and non-party masses can be best led to the struggle for Soviet power by drawing them into the fight against fascism, the capitalist offensive and the war danger through the wide application of the united front tactic. The more the mass united front developed this year, the more receptive have they become to our slogans for Soviet power (France), outlived their social-democratic prejudices and increased their urge towards Communism (Austria). Finally, when a revolutionary situation arose, the more rapidly did they enter the struggle for Soviet power (Asturias). This is precisely why the Comintern is paying so much attention to the question of the united front to-day.

But it is only under CERTAIN CONDITIONS that the united front of struggle against fascism, the capitalist offensive and the war danger leads the social-democratic and non-party masses to the struggle for Soviet power. We must remember, first of all, that the very sense of the words "united front" presupposes the existence of at least two parties in the working class. When Communists fight shoulder to shoulder with other Communists, or Y.C.L.-ers, or members of the Red trade unions, we do not call this the united front. But the proletariat can conduct the struggle for Soviet power successfully under the leadership of ONE PARTY ONLY, the COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH LEADS THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS. Secondly, social-democracy agrees to form a united front with the Communists only to the extent that the DEFENSIVE TASK is fulfilled, namely, that of repulsing the offensive of fascism, defending the democratic rights of the workers from its attacks and hindering and delaying the outbreak of war through the joint action of the anti-fascist forces. Social-democracy agrees to a united front with the Communists WHILE ADHERING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY. THE AIMS WE PURSUE ARE NOT ONLY DEFENSIVE BUT ALSO OFFENSIVE, we not only want to repulse the offensive of fascism, or win back positions it has seized. What we want IN ADDITION IS TO SMASH FASCISM and the CLASS RULE OF THE BOURGEOISIE IN GENERAL, and set up the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet power. We cannot achieve this in a bloc with social-democracy, but in the course of a struggle against it. From this it follows that THE UNITED FRONT STRUGGLE CAN LEAD THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC AND NON-PARTY MASSES TO THE STRUGGLE FOR SOVIET POWER ONLY IF IN THE PROCESS OF THE UNITED FRONT STRUGGLE WE WIN OVER THE MAJORITY

OF THE WORKING CLASS TO OUR SIDE, AND LIQUIDATE THE MASS INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

This requires, first of all, that the initiative for the united front struggle must come from us. Secondly, we must expose not only social-democrats who resist the establishment of the united front, but also those who attempt to replace the slogan of the united front by the slogan of "organisational unity." This aims at wiping out the line between Communist and social-democracy, and drawing the Communist workers into the social-democratic path of conciliation. Thirdly, we must not hide the face of the Party when entering the united front, neither must we tie our hands, nor abandon our revolutionary initiative in the development of struggles. At the same time, in proportion as the united front becomes consolidated and more widespread, we must broaden the demands which we present for united front action in every way. We must present demands for an ever greater intensification of the struggle. Only in this way shall we be able to accelerate the process of differentiation in social democracy, and eliminate those social-democrats who cannot or will not break with class-collaboration from the united front. This is the way to draw the majority of the social-democratic workers more closely towards us, and also those social-democratic organisations or officials prepared to fight with us to the end.

At the 15th Congress of the C.P.S.U., Comrade Stalin stated that:

"Only when the petty-bourgeois parties—the S.R.s and the Mensheviks—have become utterly discredited on the basic questions of the revolution, only when the masses have begun to convince themselves of the correctness of our policy, can we lead the masses to the uprising . . . THIS IS THE ROOT OF THE IDEA OF THE UNITED FRONT. THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT WERE ONLY PUT INTO OPERATION BY LENIN IN ORDER TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE MILLIONS OF WORKERS INFECTED BY THE PREJUDICES OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC CONCILIATION TO COME OVER TO THE SIDE OF COMMUNISM." (Our emphasis—Ed.)

We do not regard the united front as a manoeuvre. We make it easier for the social-democratic masses to come over to the side of Communism, by showing them in practice, in the practical work of the united front, that we alone carry on a CONSISTENT struggle against fascism, the capitalist offensive and the war danger. But we do not conceal the chief aim of the united front.

THE CHIEF AIM OF THE UNITED FRONT IS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC MASSES TO COME OVER TO THE SIDE OF COMMUNISM FOR THE CONQUEST OF SOVIET POWER. THIS WAS AND STILL REMAINS OUR CHIEF OBJECTIVE IN THE NEW TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT.

Our new united front tactics have to be co-ordinated with, and subordinated to this.

Changes in United Front Tactics.

What changes will have to be made in the tactics of the united front at present to conform to the new and changing conditions? Three points should be noted.

(1) As we know, the slogan "class against class" was put forward on the eve of the 6th Congress of the Comintern, at the 9th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. This slogan, of course, did not and does not mean that the bourgeois class must be opposed only by one class, the proletariat, without allies. This slogan merely intensified the struggle against the conciliators.

The slogan of "class against class" was first put forward to meet the tasks facing the French and British Communist Parties in connection with the change proposed by the 9th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in the electoral tactics of these parties (opposing Labour Party candidates in Great Britain with our own candidates, putting forward candidates against the socialists at the second ballot in France). But it would be a gross mistake to consider that the main feature of the slogan "class against class" was the change in electoral tactics. This is how the renegade Doriot is now interpreting this slogan. On this basis he claims that by changing our electoral tactics in France again, we have tacitly abandoned the slogan of "class against class." Doriot's point of view merely testifies to his parliamentary cretinism. The change in the electoral policy, as we wrote in 1928, "is a particular instance of the operation of the general line of the Comintern and the Communist Party." And this general line as set out in the slogan of "class against class" has consisted in emphasising that "we are the only genuine Party of the working class," that "the Party must correctly combine all the forms and methods of struggle, PAYING CHIEF ATTENTION TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MASS STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS." We were unable to lead the mass struggle of the working class without "taking the line of intensifying the struggle against social-democracy," which at that time had power and used it to place enormous obstacles in the way of the development of the mass struggle.

At the same time, under the slogan "class against class," the Comintern understood the necessity of struggling against our enemy—the bourgeoisie—and PRIMARILY of intensifying the struggle against social-democracy and the leaders of the reformist trade unions. This arose out of the situation in being at that time. The fact that the process of fusion of the upper ranks of the workers' organisations, led by social-democracy, with the State apparatus and the employers' organisations, was going on a specially rapid pace. The leading

Social-Democratic Party—the German Party—was still in the government, other Social-Democratic Parties were either participating in bourgeois governments or on the point of doing so. This main social buttress of the bourgeoisie had not yet been split and shattered by internal discords. Therefore we needed ABOVE ALL to SHATTER this barrier to obtain the possibility of developing the mass struggle. At that time, the workers correctly estimated the slogan of “class against class.” This was the cause of our great successes at the parliamentary elections in France in 1928, when we first applied this slogan. At these elections we obtained 1,069,000 votes (20 per cent. more than in 1924). At these elections the influence of our Party increased particularly in the industrial districts. Our Party became the strongest Party in the proletarian districts of Paris and its suburbs. Tens of thousands of workers came over to us from the socialists.*

The situation has changed very much since that time. Social-democracy is now passing through a crisis, and in some countries (Germany and Austria) has been smashed up and has gone bankrupt before the eyes of the masses. At the same time fascism has grown very much and continues to grow, drawing masses of the petty-bourgeoisie and some declassed strata of workers with it, while in some countries it has taken possession of the State apparatus, which it utilised to terrorise the workers. Simultaneously changes have occurred in the sentiments of strata of the working class, particularly those who formerly supported the social-democrats and still follow them. Among social-democratic and non-Party workers there is a growing urge towards the united front with the Communists for the struggle against fascism, or an urge towards Communism. In these conditions the slogan “class against class” remains true at the present time, just as it remains true that our enemy is the bourgeoisie, and our aim is to develop the mass struggle against it. It is much easier now for us to develop the mass struggle, by widely adopting the tactics of the united front. We must now CHANGE THE FORMS OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY without weakening the struggle. We must now mobilise all anti-fascist forces for the struggle against fascism to repulse the fascist offensive. It is necessary to detach from fascism the masses who follow it, setting ourselves the aim of completely destroying fascism. This can only be achieved by the victory of the proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. As for social-democracy, it will be easiest for us now to put an end to its influence over the masses

by conducting the tactics of the united front of struggle against fascism (and war) properly and correctly. We shall do so IN THE PROCESS OF THIS STRUGGLE for the COMPLETE DEFEAT OF FASCISM and for the victory of the proletarian revolution. This will necessitate actions which we shall not be able to carry out in the united front with the Social-Democratic Parties under any circumstances. These will be conducted without and against these, although with considerable sections of social-democratic workers and organisations and some officials, whom we are able to influence in the direction of the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. All this at the present time constitutes the operation of the slogan—class against class.

(2) Formerly, during the 6th Congress of the Comintern, the tactics of the united front consisted firstly in exposure, for when carrying on these tactics for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and the mobilisation of the masses for it, we encountered strong resistance right at the outset from social-democracy. This had the majority of the working class with it. We had to begin with the merciless exposure of social-democracy. At present we also expose the conciliatory policy of social-democracy. But now, in view of the crisis of social-democracy, and the powerful urge of the social-democratic workers towards the united front with us, we can and must immediately mobilise the great masses by the united front. We shall then expose social-democracy best of all IN THE COURSE OF THE STRUGGLE. THIS MEANS THAT WE MUST CARRY ON THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REGARD THEM AS A MANOEUVRE ON OUR PART. THEY REALLY ARE NOT A MANOEUVRE.

(3) The 6th Congress of the Comintern proposed to “transfer the main weight to the united front from below.” This did not exclude the simultaneous application of the united front from above in principle. But at that time, during the 6th Congress, the necessary prerequisites for the application of the tactics of the united front from above did not exist. NOWADAYS, WHILE WE ALSO PLACE THE MAIN EMPHASIS ON THE UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW, WE CANNOT REJECT THE COMBINATION OR THE ATTEMPT TO COMBINE THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT FROM BELOW WITH THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT FROM ABOVE, WHEN THIS CAN BE BROUGHT ABOUT WITHOUT MAKING CONCESSIONS IN PRINCIPLE, WITH ALL THE CHANGES ARISING THEREFROM IN THE METHODS OF CRITICISM OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY, WHILE RETAINING THIS CRITICISM ITSELF. We must do this because conditions have changed very much since then. During the 6th Congress it was impossible for us to calculate on being able to compel one Social-Democratic Party or another,

* See “C.I.” No. 12 for 1928: “The Elections in France and the Policy of the Communist Party.”

or even a social-democratic organisation, or at any rate one or another of the prominent social-democratic officials to consent to even a limited united front with the Communists, and this rendered our approach to the social-democratic masses difficult. But nowadays the oppositional pressure exerted by the working masses from below on the Social-Democratic Parties has grown so powerful even among the social-democratic leaders, that the Social-Democratic Parties or organisations are not only being forced to make "Left" manoeuvres on an unheard-of scale, but some of the Social-Democratic Parties, without giving up their co-operation with the bourgeoisie, have been compelled to consent to the formation of the united front with the Communists in the struggle against fascism and war. Certain social-democratic organisations and prominent social-democratic officials are even prepared to pass into the Communist camp, and are already doing so.

The new situation is now such that we must **MAKE BOLD EFFORTS TO EXTEND THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT** if we wish to take advantage of the favourable objective situation to attract the masses of social-democratic workers who are not ready yet to become Communists to-day to our struggle. If we wish to utilise the favourable conditions to win the majority of the working class, rally all the anti-fascist forces together, and mobilise the masses in the struggle against fascism and the war danger, this is imperative. It will enable us to lead these masses to the oncoming decisive struggles for power, for Soviet power.

No Blurring of Differences.

ARE THESE NEW TACTICS OF A WIDER APPLICATION OF THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS? UNDOUBTEDLY THEY ARE. If the Social-Democratic Party as a whole, and as such, agrees to-day or to-morrow to conclude a pact with the Communist Party on the united front, the aims which it (the Social-Democratic Party) follows, if not its nearest aims then its more distant ones are different in principle from ours, and **IRRECONCILABLE** with them. When they conclude an agreement with us on the united front for struggle against fascism, they have the restoration or consolidation of the bourgeois-democratic régime as their final aim. **THIS IS ONE OF THE FORMS OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE BOURGEOISIE.** When we make such an agreement and are ready to fight with all our energy for the defence or the restoration of even the small democratic rights of the workers, or the smallest economic demands—our ultimate aim is to **DESTROY EVERY FORM OF THE DOMINATION OF THE BOURGEOISIE, AND ESTABLISH THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT.**

In view of this antithesis of ultimate aims, and

the differences in principle arising therefrom in tactics and organisation, the Socialist Parties can utilise the agreement which they make with us on the united front against us to weaken our struggle against the bourgeoisie. We have to admit that they are already doing this here and there—and not without success.

We must now carry on the united front tactics very boldly. But to avoid the dangers inherent in these tactics, we must never lose our revolutionary perspectives when applying them for a moment. We must link these tactics up closely with our strategic task of winning the majority of the working class for the direct struggle for power. We must subordinate these tactics to our strategic task and never leave the latter out of sight for a moment.

In practice, this means that when carrying on the tactics of the united front, we must not hide the face of our Party, nor limit ourselves for the sake of agreement when carrying through mass strikes and struggles. We must not limit our activity to the framework of the agreement, nor make it more difficult to undertake the independent leadership of the masses ourselves. This means that when concluding an agreement with the social-democratic parties, and making such concessions as to refrain from mutual attacks in those places where we are carrying on joint struggle, we conscientiously fulfil these obligations. At the same time we must not give up decisive and merciless criticism when this agreement is disrupted or sabotaged. We must also not refrain from criticism, which in form acts not as a provocation to break the agreement, but is directed towards widening the tasks facing the united front struggle. When organising the struggle from below, we must not refrain from breaking through the too narrow limits of the agreement. To secure new members for the Party and extend our influence over the masses and lead their struggle, we must not surrender either the propaganda of our programme or criticism, which though not abusive yet is clear, reasonable, definite and based on the principles of the programme, strategy and tactics of those with whom we enter into agreement, etc.

In the sphere of trade union tactics we must call on our members to work in the reformist trade unions in every way and struggle for the unity of the trade union movement. At the same time, in places where the question of uniting our and the reformist trade union organisations arises, we must demand that this unity be built on the programme of class struggle and a democratic basis, i.e., on the basis of the election of the executive committee by the members, proportional representation and the permission of freedom of criticism. We must struggle against the demand that our trade unions

be absorbed into the reformist unions. We should oppose the demand that the trade unions remain neutral and forswear the political struggle. We ought to put forward the demand which is the reverse of this, namely, that the trade unions be transformed into militant class organisations, giving every support to the political struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie, fascism and war, etc.

The Sixth Congress of the Comintern stated that the chief danger in the Communist Parties at that time was the Right danger, without, of course, denying thereby the existence of "Left" mistakes and the necessity for struggle against them. The Plenums of the E.C.C.I. which followed the Sixth Congress of the Comintern also spoke of the Right danger being the chief opportunist danger at the given stage.

How do matters stand now with the question of the main danger? In the course of the whole period, beginning with the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the Right danger has been the main danger because this has been one of the breakdown and the end of capitalist stabilisation, the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, and the approach of a second round of revolutions and wars. It has been so because this has been a period of preparations for the oncoming revolutionary battles which require of the proletariat and its Communist vanguard supreme selflessness and firmness against the disintegrating influence of social democracy. The Seventh Congress will discuss questions of the period in which not only the preparations for decisive battles will take place, but in which battles themselves—in a number of countries—will occur.

In December, 1928, Comrade Stalin, when speaking at the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., directed his fire against the Right opportunists in the Comintern and said that

"those who do not wish to repeat the mistakes of 1923 must stimulate the thoughts of the Communists and call them to advance, must prepare the masses for the impending battles, must take all measures to prevent the Communist Parties from dragging at the tail of events, and the working class from being caught unawares."*

In the conditions existing on the eve of a new round of wars and revolutions it is pertinent to recall the famous words of Marx in the "Eighteenth Brumaire":

"... Proletarian Revolutions... are ever self-critical; they again and again stop short in their progress; retrace their steps in order to make a fresh start... Again and again they shrink back appalled before the vague immensity of their own aims. But at long last a situation is reached whence retreat is impossible, and where the circumstances clamour in chorus: 'Hic Rhodus, hic Salta.'"[†]

This danger of "shrinking back... before the vague immensity of their own aims," and lest the Communist Parties should be at the tail of events and the working class caught unawares, is NOW THE MAIN DANGER.

Fight on Two Fronts.

Still, the fact that for the whole of the present period the Right danger is the main danger does not in any degree relieve us of the duty of fighting on two fronts, when we remember that the danger against which we have ceased to fight may grow into the main one. It is particularly necessary at the present time to display the greatest vigilance in respect to those dangers which have arisen and will arise in connection with the necessity of conducting the tactics of widely operating the united front. To widen the application of the tactics of the united front it has been necessary in some places (and still is here and there) to overcome quite strong "Left" sectarian isolation (which, it should not be forgotten is very often combined with Right opportunist passivity). We know, for example, how strong was the contempt for work in the reformist trade unions among the members of our Parties. This was caused to some extent by "Left" sectarianism (and to a still greater degree by passivity, surrendering to the difficulties facing Bolshevik work inside the reformist trade unions). How neglected was the work in the fascist mass organisations, and how much our Italian Party, for example, suffered from this for a number of years! How it was isolated from the masses by this big shortcoming, caused to some extent by relics of "Left" sectarian Bordiganism (and to a still greater extent by a Right opportunist over-estimation of the powers of the proletariat, a passive anticipation of a "crisis at the top," and reliance on spontaneity)! Further, how difficult it was when the fascist dictatorship was established in Germany for our comrades to open wide the doors for the social-democratic workers who were ready to enter our Party, fearing that in conditions where there was a decline in our cadres, due to the fascist terror, a powerful inflow of social-democratic workers would alter the face of our organisations. Through tradition and routine, our comrades did not take the fact that the social-democratic workers who are ready to come to us under the conditions of the fascist terror, are very much different from the former social-democratic workers, into account. That they would be made much more rapidly into good Communists, naturally, if we exerted our influence. The central organ of the C.P. of Germany recently made a "Left" sectarian mistake in connection with the tactics of the united front. We also know how difficult it was (and still is) to shake off the idea

* "C.I." No. 5, Vol. VI., 1929.

† Eighteenth Brumaire, p. 2. Allen & Unwin, Ltd.

that every social-democratic official who uses "Left" language does this entirely for demagogic purposes, as part of his "Left" manoeuvres. We realise how difficult it was (and still is) to master the point that we must now differentiate between pseudo-Left social-democratic officials and those who REALLY ARE Left. We appreciate how difficult it was (and still is, to some extent) to grasp that the influence of social-democracy cannot be abolished merely by such harsh words as "social-fascist" and "social traitor." In present conditions it is more important to show that the social-democrats betray the cause of the working class by the practical experience of the struggle. All these views and habits constitute a "Left" sectarian danger at the present time. Therefore, to break the ice and clear a path for ourselves to the tactics of the broad united front, we have had in the past (and often have now) in various countries to direct a powerful and sometimes the main fire at the Left.

In proportion as the new tactics of the united front are not understood and adopted WITH THE ABSENCE OF A CLEAR OBJECTIVE, the Right danger arises. This is the danger of separating the tactics of the united front from our strategic tasks. This state of things not only goes to help the socialist parties at our expense, but can even compromise the very tactics of the united front IN GENERAL in the eyes of the revolutionary workers. The Right danger can grow more intense with the increase of agreements with the social-democratic parties and branches of these parties, unless our vigilance is sharpened. The Right danger threatens us all the more because, on the one hand, in spite of the crisis of social-democracy, the socialist parties are still increasing their influence in a number of countries. On the other, social-democracy is now using "Left" manoeuvres on such a scale and degree as never before. Our agreements with the social-democratic parties wipe out the dividing line between us and the social-democrats in the eyes of the masses. All the more, must we, therefore, emphasise this distinction? In countries where social-democracy has been driven underground, smashed up and the masses have left it, they have not come to us. They will not do so, unless we can convince them that the bankruptcy of social-democracy was no chance happening, but arises from the foundations of its policy. We must still further prove to the social-democratic masses that we can defend their interests better than the Social-Democratic Party can. But, since we have neither such big funds nor paid jobs at our disposal as the social-democrats formerly had, we can give much less help to the members of the Party and trade unions than it was able to. We can defend the interests of the masses only by

developing their struggle. Therefore, it will be very difficult to prove our superiority to social-democracy and the reformists, if, when forming the united front with the socialists, we tie our hands as far as independent struggle is concerned and restrict ourselves merely to holding meetings as is sometimes being done at present.

The Right danger now assumes the most varied forms. We have already indicated some of the forms it takes, when speaking of what concessions we may make in principle (and which our comrades are sometimes making). Among other things, the Right danger is expressed in the denial of the growth of the world revolutionary crisis, the exaggeration of the strength of the class enemy, and an underestimation of our forces. In the fascist countries the Right danger is expressed in the fact that we have at length begun to use legal possibilities, but neglect the task of breaking through legality. In our Spanish Party the Right danger was clearly expressed in the fact that while there was a development of mass economic struggles, our comrades (in the conditions of revolution) did not link up economic demands with the slogans of the struggle for power. The socialists not only talked, but shrieked about these slogans, even though under the pressure of the tasks of the moment.

Our French comrades were obliged to make a series of concessions, not one-sided, of course, to reach agreement with the French Socialist Party. The agreement has given good results, as shown by the Cantonal elections in France, at which we achieved greater success than the socialists did. But our French comrades sometimes gave way to the pressure of the socialists, and incorrectly interpreted the conditions of the agreement. They did not sufficiently raise the points which distinguish us in principle from the socialists before the masses, or prepare and conduct independent strikes after the socialists had refused to include strikes in the conditions of the agreement. This applies to an incomparably greater degree to the agreement between the Belgian young socialists and Y.C.L., in which our comrades made the grossest opportunist mistakes.

Even in the C.P. of Poland (which was steered in the struggle against Right opportunism), our comrades made a Right opportunist mistake (immediately corrected by the C.C.) when negotiating with the Bund* on the conditions of the united front, and agreed to recognise the Bund as a class party of the proletariat. A number of gross opportunist mistakes were made in the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia in connection with the tactics of the united front (the revival of the old opportunist

* Jewish Labour League.

slogan of forming a coalition government of Communists and social-democrats and a number of other mistakes).

The Right danger is the main danger through-

out the present period as a whole. This does not exclude the fact that here and there we have had to struggle with all our strength against "Left" sectarian deviations wherever they arise.

FOR THE UNITED FRONT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT.

THE Executive Committee of the Second International which met in Paris on November 13-16, 1934, REJECTED the proposal of the Communist International to enter into a UNITED FRONT to defend and help the fighting proletariat of Spain.

It took the Second International more than one month to reply to the Comintern proposal

"that immediate joint action be undertaken both in support of the fighting Spanish proletariat and in the struggle against support being given to the Leroux government by the governments of other capitalist countries."*

The Comintern delegation, Comrades Cachin and Thorés, who met the representatives of the Second International, Vandervelde and Fr. Adler on October 15, proposed forms of joint action that were perfectly CONCRETE, PRACTICAL AND ACCEPTABLE TO THE MASSES OF WORKERS, VIZ.:

(1) Joint demonstrations and meetings with the following slogan: "Down with the Leroux government, all for the defence of the Spanish workers and peasants fighting against reaction.

(2) Trade union organisations to draw up a common plan of action, aiming at preventing the transport of troops and munitions for the Leroux government.

(3) Socialist and Communist parliamentary fractions to act jointly in all countries, and to demand that Parliament be called to make a protest against the barbarous shootings, whose victims the Spanish people are now. Similar action to be organised by socialist and Communist municipalities.

(4) Immediate material assistance to be afforded jointly to the fighting Spanish proletariat and the victims of repression."

The representatives of the Second International, Vandervelde, its president, and Adler, its secretary, on purely FORMAL grounds, referred to the fact that only the Executive Committee of the Second International could decide this question and refused to indicate the attitude of the Bureau of the E.C. of the Second International toward the proposal made by the Comintern.

Further, they referred (on the same formal grounds) to the restrictions placed upon their mandate and refused to speak alongside the representatives of the Comintern at *one* of the meetings at least organised jointly by the Communist and Socialist parties of France. They further refused to hasten the calling together of the E.C. of the

Second International. At last, over a month later, the majority of the E.C. of the Second International have rejected the proposal made by the Comintern, although, it is true, they are no longer in a position to insist upon the prohibition of the united front in those countries where it has been brought about.

These are the facts. They prove that as an international organisation, the Second International HAS REJECTED ALL FORMS, EVEN THE MOST ELEMENTARY, OF THE JOINT EXPRESSION OF CLASS SOLIDARITY BY THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT ON BEHALF OF THE FIGHTING SPANISH PROLETARIAT. To conceal this fact, the antagonists of the united front in the ranks of the Second International have done their utmost to slander the proposal made by the Comintern, and Fr. Adler, in opening the meeting of the E.C. of the Second International resorted (not for the first time) to calumnious attacks to the effect that "the proposal made by the Comintern came too late," and therefore the proposal is "an unscrupulous manoeuvre." Friedrich Adler cannot but be aware of the fact, known to the proletarians of all countries, that the armed struggle of the Spanish proletariat against the bestial fascist bands of LEROUX and ROBLES is going on to this very day in the most industrial provinces in Spain, in Asturia and Biscay, and that therefore the Comintern proposal is not too late at all.

Is not the best answer to Adler and all the opponents of the united front in the E.C. of the Second International, the fact that the chief journal of the bloody hangman, Gil Robles, the *El Debate* of November 15, gave the following appraisal of the resolution adopted by the E.C. of the Second International:

"EVEN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL IS AGAINST THE INSURGENTS in Asturia."

This was the estimate given of the position taken by the Second International by the chief organ of the reactionary fascist bourgeoisie of Spain. Can the Spanish proletariat, can the workers who support the united front in other countries, characterise the position taken up by the majority of the E.C. of the Second International as anything other than STRIKE-BREAKING?

WHAT EXCUSES DOES THE E.C. OF THE SECOND INTER-

* Published in *l'Humanite*, October 11, 1934.

NATIONAL MAKE IN THE ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY ITS REFUSAL?

First of all, in rejecting the proposal made by the Communist International to organise immediate, joint demonstrations and meetings, the E.C. of the Second International refers to "the solidarity campaign that was begun even before the Comintern proposal was made." Can this "excuse" hide from the working masses the obvious truth that if the Second International had agreed to joint action, this would not only have further STIMULATED the solidarity campaign and the struggle of the Spanish workers themselves, but joint action of this kind on the part of the TWO INTERNATIONALS WOULD HAVE STRENGTHENED THE POSITION AND THE STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND A UNITED FRONT OF THIS KIND ON THE PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT WOULD HAVE DELIVERED A HEAVY BLOW AGAINST FASCIST REACTION, NOT ONLY IN SPAIN, BUT IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

By way of concrete examples of the campaign of solidarity being conducted by the Second International, the E.C., in its reply, refers to France and Belgium. In France, as we know, on the initiative of the Communist Party of France and thanks to its untiring work among the masses, agreement was arrived at, before the events took place in Spain, regarding the united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties, despite its general prohibition by the Second International; and during the events in Spain joint action was organised in defence of the Spanish revolution.

Referring to Belgium, the leaders of the Second International emphasise the fact in their reply that "in Belgium, WHERE THERE IS NO COMMUNIST PARTY OF IMPORTANCE, a big meeting was arranged, devoted to the Spanish events, where the president of the Labour and Socialist International made a speech."

The "argument" that it is impossible to develop the united front on an international scale in view of the small membership of the Communist Parties in some countries has been advanced previously by the leaders of the Second International, and in particular by Vandervelde in connection with the negotiations between the representatives of the Second and Third Internationals in Brussels. The *Pravda*, the central organ of the C.P. of the Soviet Union, has given a worthy retort to this:

"The leaders of the Second International have missed the fact that besides several mass parties in capitalist countries, the Communist International includes the C.P.S.U., which stands at the head of proletarian dictatorship, which is building socialism in the U.S.S.R. over one-sixth of the globe. Is it necessary to speak of the lack of comparison from all points of view of such magnitudes as the C.P.S.U. and the Labour Party?"

Moreover, the leaders of the Second International should not forget that it is not so long ago since the leaders of Austrian and Spanish

social-democracy, particularly Otto Bauer, used this same "argument" against the united front, and that a year has not yet passed since the working masses have turned towards the Communists. The relation of forces in the working class of these countries has changed sharply and is still changing in favour of the Communist Party.

Secondly, in reply to the proposal made by the Communist International to afford immediate material assistance to the fighting workers of Spain and the victims of repression, the E.C. of the Second International states that

"meanwhile we have COLLECTED DETAILED INFORMATION on the position in Spain, and our Comrade AURIOL, who was delegate to Spain, made an extremely important report to the meeting of our E.C. which will soon be published."

Needless to say, this intimation of the publication of Auriol's report at some future date, instead of immediate material assistance to the Spanish workers can only evoke furious INDIGNATION from all honest proletarians. Incidentally, as may be seen from the *Populaire* of November 15, 1934, AURIOL's mission was to hand a letter to the president of the Spanish Republic, M. Zamorra, which stated that:

"I SHOULD LIKE to have a word from you which will make it possible for me to tell my comrades that the republic will not adopt repression towards those who created it, and will not betray our organisations, their best fighters and their leaders, to the most ferocious enemies of freedom who have become more insolent than ever before throughout the world. Permit an enthusiastic friend of Spain, permit republicans and socialists, still to nourish hope in this direction."

This is the "moving letter of VINCENT AURIOL" (as the *Populaire* christened it), on the magic effect of which the Second International builds up its . . . help to the fighting proletariat of Spain. Auriol's "hope" that the interference of the President of a Republic on the road to fascism would be a substitute for the struggle against fascism, was as justified, as the hope of German social-democracy on another day, concerning the interference of Hindenburg against Hitler. The government of Zamorra, who is so "friendly" towards AURIOL, immediately prohibited all trade union organisations in Spain and began to smash them up, increasing the fascist terror against the toilers still further. This is how things stand with regard to the other "argument" of the E.C. of the L.S.I. against the united front of struggle of the international proletariat.

Thirdly, in rejecting the proposal of the Communist International to act jointly against support to the Leroux government, the proposal that the trade union organisations should elaborate a common plan of action with a view to preventing the transport of troops and ammunition for this government, and to making joint protests in Parliament and the municipalities against the bloody

terror raging in Spain, the E.C. of the Second International is only repeating what Vandervelde and Adler referred to during the negotiations in Brussels, namely, that

"the position in individual parties affiliated to our International differs according to the situation existing in each country."

But the different position existing in the different sections of the Second International DID NOT PREVENT the E.C. prohibiting the conclusion of the united front in individual countries until such time as agreement was reached between the Internationals, in its resolution of March 18-19, 1933, in reply to the appeal made by the Comintern of March 5, 1933, which recommended its sections to enter into an agreement for the united front with the Social-Democratic Parties on the basis of the concrete conditions existing in their countries.

Thus, in 1933, when Hitler's fascist dictatorship was set up, and fascist terror stalked throughout Germany, the Second International forbade the conclusion of the united front in separate countries, the excuse being that agreement was first of all necessary between the Internationals; and NOW, in 1934, when fascism is advancing against the Spanish revolution, when international joint action has been prepared for by the big successes achieved by the Communist Party in establishing the united front in several countries, the Second International refuses to establish a united front between the Internationals, THE EXCUSE BEING THE DIFFERENT POSITION EXISTING IN THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

We all know that the central committees of several of the Social-Democratic Parties (and they form the MAJORITY), backed up by, and on the basis of, the resolution of the Second International of March, 1932, rejected the proposal of the Communists for the establishment of a united front, and especially the proposal for joint action in defence of the Spanish revolution. NOW, by GIVING FREEDOM to its sections, the E.C. of the Second International gives ADVANCE SANCTION to the policy of the leaders of those Social-Democratic Parties who will hinder and sabotage the united front of the proletariat on the grounds of the peculiar features of their particular country.

All the "reasons" and "arguments" put forward in reply by the E.C. of the Second International cannot conceal the fact that the SECOND INTERNATIONAL DOES NOT WANT TO ORGANISE THE UNITED FRONT OF STRUGGLE OF THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES AGAINST FASCISM, WAR, AND THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE. WHAT ARE THE REAL REASONS FOR THE REFUSAL OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL TO ADOPT THE UNITED FRONT OF STRUGGLE OF THE WORLD PROLETARIAT?

THE MAIN REASON is that the Second International

is an organisation that PURSUES THE POLICY OF CLASS COLLABORATION WITH THE BOURGEOISIE. This policy was and remains THE MAIN OBSTACLE to the realisation of the united front of struggle of the proletariat.

The last meeting of the Second International is a glaring confirmation of this.

The parties that were in favour of categorically and unconditionally rejecting the proposal made by the Comintern were those that pursue a policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, IN THE SHAPE OF PARTICIPATION IN BOURGEOIS GOVERNMENTS, such as the Social-Democratic Parties of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Czecho-Slovakia, as well as those parties which intend, in the near future, to participate in capitalist governments, such as the British Labour Party, the social-democrats in Holland, and others. It should be emphasised that it is just these parties that constitute the MAJORITY in the E.C. of the Second International.

Long before the meeting of the E.C. of the Second International, a furious campaign against accepting the proposals of the E.C.C.I. on the united front was launched in the columns of the press of these parties. The central organ of the Danish social-democrats, *The Social-Democrat*, wrote outright on October 18:

"One must not expect any positive results from these negotiations (between the Second and Third Internationals. —Ed.), neither do we want them."

The leader of Dutch social-democracy, ALBARDA, published a series of articles in the leading organ of the party, the *Het Volk*, in October, in which he threatened the Second International with a split if the Comintern proposal for the united front were accepted. He foretold two possibilities: The first, that the E.C. would give the parties a free hand on this question; and the second, that the International would split into two parts. The *Nye Tid* (the central organ of Swedish social-democracy) also reported the organisational measures that were taken by the enemies of the united front in connection with the appeal of the Comintern to the Second International:

"During the last few days, a lively exchange of opinions has taken place with the Social-Democratic Parties of DENMARK, HOLLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN. These parties, like Swedish social-democracy, ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO EVEN A MERE MEETING BEING HELD WITH MOSCOW. It is impossible for the Socialist and Labour International to make a decision on this question in defiance of the desires of its STRONGEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL PARTIES."

And a few days later the *Nye Tid* openly threatened a SPLIT:

"We, together with our party comrades in Denmark, Holland and Great Britain, consider that Vandervelde and Adler have taken on themselves an utterly fruitless task. ... One thing is true: if any kind of 'united front' with Moscow is established, it will be done without the Social-Democratic Parties of Sweden, Denmark and Holland, and the International will have to choose between these parties and Moscow."

One of the main forces preventing any agreement on the united front being arrived at between the Internationals is the British Labour Party. Meanwhile, in England itself, the forces of fascism are developing, which can be held back by a militant united front of the proletariat.

True, the leaders of the British Labour Party are trying to conceal their resistance to the united front by references to their sympathy for the U.S.S.R., and declaring that support for the U.S.S.R. in England does not require a united front with the Communists, but votes cast in favour of a Labour government. This attempt to set off the defence of the U.S.S.R., against the struggle against the capitalists of their own country, was one to deceive the workers. The workers, including the English proletarians, who really wish to prevent an onslaught on the U.S.S.R., know that the two preceding Labour governments did not slacken the preparations made by English imperialists for a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. They are being convinced that by developing the struggle of the masses—by strengthening and extending the united front against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive, they are actually defending the U.S.S.R.

The last meeting of the E.C. of the L.S.I. once more revealed that the Labour and Socialist International is passing through a deep ideological and political crisis, and a process of organisational collapse. The depth of the crisis and collapse is proved by the fact that (1) it was compelled to allow the parties a free hand on the question of the united front (true after four days' searching after formulæ for the rejection of the proposals made by the Comintern, and (2) the special declaration made at the E.C. by the representatives of several parties.*

Any intensification of the contradictions between the imperialists has always brought about an intensification of the struggle among the parties of the Second International. During the world imperialist war of 1914-1918, the Second International went bankrupt and broke down organisationally. It is not surprising that to-day again, on the eve of the second round of revolutions and wars, when the contradictions among the imperi-

alists have become extremely intensified, and when "the revolutionary crisis is ripening and will continue to ripen" (Stalin)—

that now, there is a political crisis and a process of organisational collapse going on in the Second International.

The DECISIVE THING precipitating the present crisis in the Second International is THE HISTORIC TURN being made by the working class (and first and foremost by the social-democratic workers) following events in those European countries where social-democracy led the majority of the workers and fascist dictatorship has been set up or the danger of fascism is a direct menace, and the world historic victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R., where the proletariat is guided by the leading section in the Comintern, the C.P.S.U.

Ever vaster masses of the social-democratic workers are being convinced of the correctness of the Communists' line. The Communists have always fought and are still fighting against the social-democratic policy of class-collaboration with the capitalists. They are developing the struggle of the proletariat on the basis of the united front against the bourgeoisie. These social-democratic workers are being convinced that this policy of social-democracy, whether in the shape of a policy of tolerating the fascisation of the state as the "lesser evil," or a policy of "defence only" against fascism (Austrian social-democracy and others), or again participating in a bourgeois government after the fascist dictatorship has been overthrown, (Spanish social-democracy in the first years after the 1931 revolution) will not save the toilers from fascism. It is but helping fascism to muster its forces. It will not stave off fascism. It clears the way to power for fascism. Just this explains why the masses of social-democratic workers, and whole social-democratic organisations, unlike their behaviour in previous years, are now seizing upon the proposal of the Communist Party for the united front. This is why, in countries like France, Austria and Spain, where the Communists have been able to guide this urge of the workers for a united front, and develop the mass struggle against fascism independently, the united front between the Social-Democratic and Communist

* The central organ of the Italian Socialist Party, the *Nuovo Avanti*, of November 21, in THE REPORT on the recent plenum of the E.C. of the Second International, describes very vividly the DIFFICULT POSITION IN WHICH THE E.C. FOUND ITSELF, in connection with the Comintern proposal:

"When the E.C. met again on the night of the 16th, common ground for agreement had still not yet been found; the text of a letter was produced which on the 3rd and 4th had been approved unanimously, but the last part of which again raised the question in all its scope with two diametrically opposed proposals: in one it was emphasised that it was impossible to make the pact a

general one, and in the other, it was proposed to call a conference to discuss the question of the conditions, principle and organisational under which collaboration between the two internationals would be possible.

"The second part of the discussion took place in an EXTREMELY TENSE ATMOSPHERE. It would have been RISKY to take a vote because the E.C. WAS DIVIDED APPROXIMATELY IN TWO EQUAL PARTS, WHILE THOSE WHO WERE AGAINST UNITY OF ACTION WOULD PROBABLY HAVE GOT THE MAJORITY OF SOMETHING LIKE 20 VOTES OUT OF A TOTAL OF 250 VOTES.

"And so Vandervelde proposed—and the E.C. approved—to delete the passage under dispute, which in sporting language is called 'ending in a draw.'"

Parties has been realised. In turn, this explains why the Second International has now been unable to annul the agreement on the united front between the Socialist and Communist Parties in places where it has already been brought about.

Concerning the Special Declaration of the Minority of the E.C. of the L.S.I.

The process of revolutionary development of the social-democratic workers, who are breaking down the barriers in the path to the united front with the Communists—and this is the most characteristic point about the present crisis in the Second International—has produced, indeed, it could not fail to produce, friction and strife inside the E.C. of the Second International itself. At the meeting of the E.C., the representatives of SEVERAL SECTIONS OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL PRESENTED A MINORITY SPECIAL DECLARATION.

The signatories to this special declaration are NOT HOMOGENEOUS. Besides the big parties of the Second International, like the Social-Democratic Parties of France and Spain, which have already entered into agreement with the Communist Parties, the declaration was signed by the representatives of Swiss social-democracy, who have more than once rejected proposals for a united front in Switzerland, and representatives of the Polish Bund who recently broke the agreement with the Communist Party of Poland on the united front. Finally, among the signatories of the special declaration there is Fedor Dan, also a “representative” of a “section” of the Second International. He represents the emigrant remnants of that same Menshevik Party which fought (and is still fighting) against the Soviet government. This Party fought alongside the interventionists during the civil war, supplying ministers for white-guard governments, took part in uprisings (the Georgian Mensheviks organised a counter-revolutionary uprising in Georgia even as late as in 1924; the Georgian Mensheviks in emigration openly speak about the need for preparing for a new uprising now). In recent years, as the trial of the Mensheviks showed in 1931, prominent leaders of this party engaged in wrecking work against socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., and provided secret materials for the General Staffs of the capitalist governments who are preparing a new counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R.

What is the Position of This Minority?

In their special declaration they declare that the E.C. of the Second International “should have renewed the proposal of March, 1933, and have asked the Comintern whether it was prepared, on the basis of complete equality of all parties, to SEEK FOR CONDITIONS for unity of action on an international scale, against war, in defence of democratic rights in those countries where they exist, and for revolutionary

struggle in the countries where fascism has abolished this freedom.”

UNLIKE the majority of the E.C., the minority in its declaration expressed the DESIRE that the Second International should propose to the Comintern that it “should seek for conditions” for joint action on a mass scale. If the declaration is made seriously, and if the parties which have signed it are striving to bring about joint action on an international scale, THEN THEY MUST NOT LIMIT THEMSELVES TO MERELY WISHING THIS. But we must at first examine the basis on which the signatories would desire joint action to be established.

The declaration advocates “revolutionary struggle” only in those countries where fascism has destroyed democratic rights. And in all the other countries, where fascism has not up to now completely destroyed these rights, in the countries of bourgeois democracy where the fascist danger is a direct menace, where bourgeois democracy itself is passing through a process of fascist development, revolutionary struggle is not needed.

As though the experience of events in Germany, Austria and other countries has not sufficiently shown that the defence of even the most elementary rights of the workers is only possible by way of a consistent revolutionary struggle. And if the declaration limits the recognition of revolutionary struggle to countries where fascism has destroyed democratic rights, then what policy must be operated in all the remaining countries? It is absolutely clear that the rejection of a revolutionary policy in countries where bourgeois democracy prevails can mean nothing else than the sanctioning of a policy of class collaboration for the defence of bourgeois democracy. And this is exactly how the parties of the Second International which participate in bourgeois governments or who support bourgeois governments, understand the meaning of the term “defence of democratic rights.” THE DECLARATION COUNTERPOSES THE COUNTRIES OF FASCISM, WHERE THERE IS TO BE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE, TO COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY, AND WHERE “THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS” IS NEEDED. On this most important question the declaration repeats word for word the resolution adopted by the Paris Conference of the Second International in August, 1933, a resolution adopted by all the parties in the Second International, and which endorsed the policy of German social-democracy operated prior to and after the advent of Hitler to power.

But the period since August, 1933, has shown that some Socialist Parties, and primarily the most important section of the Second International, the French Socialist Party, have been compelled under the pressure of the working masses (who are becom-

ing convinced of the fatal path pursued by German and Austrian social-democracy) to form a united front with the Communist Party AS DISTINCT from the policy of German social-democracy, which systematically rejected the united front.

If the parties which have signed a separate declaration REALLY desire to achieve the joint action of the international proletariat, then they must not limit themselves to merely wishing it. If the French socialist workers had waited until the Second International withdrew the ban, the united front would not have been brought about in France to this day. With this as their starting-point, the Spanish Communist Party addressed a proposal to the French Socialist Party that a conference be called together at which the socialists of France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Poland (the Bund) could meet with the Communists so as to bring about unity of action.*

The Communists are developing the struggle for the united front of the international proletariat FOR THE PURPOSE of fighting against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive, in defence of the democratic rights of the workers, and leading the masses to the struggle to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie, and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in the shape of Soviet power.

Conclusions To Be Drawn.

WE MUST ORGANISE, STRENGTHEN AND EXTEND THE UNITED PROLETARIAN FRONT OF STRUGGLE WITH STILL GREATER ENERGY THAN BEFORE. The menace of a new war has increased. The offensive of capital and fascism is increasing. The bourgeoisie is concentrating its forces upon preventing the ripening of the revolutionary crisis. It is necessary now more than ever before to set the UNITED FRONT OF STRUGGLE of the international proletariat against the front of the reactionary fascist bourgeoisie. IN MAKING THE PROPOSAL TO THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL FOR A UNITED FRONT OF STRUGGLE IN DEFENCE OF THE SPANISH WORKERS, THE COMINTERN TOOK AS ITS STARTING-POINT THE FACT THAT IT HAS ALREADY BEEN POSSIBLE, IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES, TO ESTABLISH THE UNITED FRONT BETWEEN COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST PARTIES, DESPITE ALL THE DIFFERENCES THAT EXIST ON ALL QUESTIONS OF PROGRAMME, STRATEGY AND TACTICS, AND ALL THE DIFFERENCE OF AIMS THAT ARISE IN ESTABLISHING A UNITED FRONT BETWEEN THE PARTIES OF THE SECOND AND THIRD INTERNATIONALS.

* This article was already prepared for press when a reply was received from the Socialist Party of France to this proposal. Without stating any reason the S.P. of France turned this proposal down, merely indicating its agreement to arrange one or several meetings jointly with the Communists throughout France. This shows that the Socialist Party of France HAS NO DESIRE TO REALLY do anything to bring about joint action on an INTERNATIONAL SCALE.

Despite the refusal of the Second International, the Communist Parties WILL DEEPEN AND EXTEND THE UNITED FRONT OF STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT with revolutionary determination.

In those countries where the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties are against agreement on the united front, the Communists will appeal again and again—ON THE LINES OF THE COMINTERN APPEAL OF OCTOBER 11TH, 1934—to the leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties, to their local organisations and to the social-democratic workers with practical proposals for joint united front action in connection with concrete attacks of capital and fascism. And what is most important—the Communists will, without waiting for a reply, immediately and independently develop the struggle of the workers against concrete forms of the bourgeois offensive. The Communists will not let themselves be driven off their course by any refusals on the part of the social-democratic leaders.

The social-democratic proletarians who are sincerely striving after a united proletarian front with the Communists have become convinced that it must be brought about MORE BOLDLY than hitherto. They have become convinced that the E.C. of the Second International withdrew this ban after the united front had been brought about in certain countries, in spite of the prohibition of the Second International. Now it will be more difficult to hold the social-democratic workers back from the united front by referring to discipline and the ban laid down by the leadership. The social-democratic workers will reply to the opponents of the united front that discipline IS NOT NECESSARY TO FETTER THE WORKERS AND KEEP THEM BACK FROM THE STRUGGLE, but in order to fight MORE SUCCESSFULLY against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and war. Practical experience has shown that the numerous barriers that have been set up against the united front inside the Second International could not prevent the SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC WORKERS AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATIONS IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES FROM BRINGING ABOUT THE UNITED FRONT WITH THE COMMUNISTS.

NO POWER EXISTS CAPABLE OF PREVENTING THE COMMUNISTS from making contacts with the social-democratic workers, and their local organisations, from establishing a united front with them in workshop, factory and in the localities, districts and provinces, and thus, together with them, laying down the road to a united front throughout the whole country and on an international scale.

In countries where IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT ON THE UNITED FRONT between the Communist and Socialist Parties, the Communists will strive TO STRENGTHEN, DEEPEN AND EXTEND THE UNITED FRONT. In just the same way, the Communists will strive in other countries to

organise united front committees in factories, workshops, and depots—local, district, village, united front committees of the toilers in town and village, and to organise anti-fascist self-defence on the basis of the united front. The Communists will strive to EXTEND THE AGREEMENT concerning the tasks and forms of struggle, and achieve the transition to higher forms of struggle (economic and political strikes).

The Communists will not restrict themselves to the framework of the agreement already arrived at, but will prepare and develop the STRUGGLE of the masses independently, thus convincing the workers IN ACTUAL PRACTICE of the fact that the Communist Party is able to organise and lead their struggle.

The Communists will, on the one hand, unmask those who oppose the united front, by analysing the concrete excuses they make for rejecting it, and declaring them to be blacklegs in the proletarian cause; on the other, they will criticise in a comradely and businesslike manner the hesitation and indetermination of those who participate in united front agreements but hinder the transition to more mature, higher, forms of struggle.

The instructions given by Lenin in connection with the conference of the three Internationals in 1922 are extremely real in connection with our struggle for the united front to-day. The Comintern delegation (Radek, Bukharin and others) made a concession to the representatives of the Second and Two-and-a-half Internationals (Vanderfelde, Adler and others), in agreeing to allow representatives of these two Internationals to be present at the trial of the socialist revolutionaries, and promising that the Soviet Government would not bring in the death sentence against the S.R. terrorists. Lenin called this concession a concession to the REACTIONARY BOURGEOISIE, and stigmatised the rôle of the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-half Internationals as "the rôle of extorters of political concessions." At the conclusion of his article, Lenin wrote:

"The representatives of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals need a united front, for they hope to weaken us by excessive concessions on our part; they hope to penetrate into our Communist premises free of charge; they hope through the united front tactics to convince the workers of the correctness of reformist, and the incorrectness of revolutionary, tactics. We need the united front, because we hope to convince the workers of the opposite. We will throw the blame for the mistakes of our Communist representatives on them and on the parties that make these mistakes, trying to learn from the experience of these mistakes and striving to prevent their repetition in the future. But on no account shall we throw the burden of the mistakes of our Communists upon the proletariat, which throughout the world is faced with the offensive of capital. For the sake of helping these masses to fight against capital, of helping them to understand the cunning mechanism of two fronts in the whole of international economics and the whole of international politics, for the sake of this we have adopted the united front tactics and will pursue them to the end."

Throughout the whole of the struggle for the united front, the Communists are carrying out the instructions left by Lenin in practice, and in spite of all the barriers and obstacles set up by the opponents of the united front from the Second International, they are bringing this struggle to its culmination. The Communists will not allow themselves to be driven from this course by any attempts to replace the united front of struggle, and immediate joint action, by discussions about unity (organisational, political) of the working class in general. The Communists will not allow themselves to be driven from this course by the opportunists in their own ranks who hide mistakes made by the Communists from the workers, but will fight mercilessly both against "Left" sectarianism and against the opportunist DANGER WHICH IS THE MAIN DANGER AT THE PRESENT STAGE. In the course of the struggle in a united proletarian front, the Communists will convince the proletarian masses of the correctness of the whole policy of the Communist International, and, standing at the head of the majority of the working class, will lead the millions of the toiling masses forward to the victorious struggle for Soviet power throughout the world.

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THE NEW "EMERGENCY LAW" IN THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

IN an inconspicuous place in the columns of the Brussels paper, the *Peuple*, the organ of the chairman of the Second International, an official communiqué was published on November 20th regarding the last session of the Executive Committee of the Second International. This was the very session at which for four days 18 speakers "energetically" discussed the question of the united front which had been put point-blank before them, and as a result gave the sections of this international the "unanimous" advice: "We give you our fatherly counsel to do as you like." In this report there is a small paragraph which deserves some attention. This paragraph says:

"The Executive Committee unanimously confirm the report made by de Brouckere on behalf of the Commission of Three, appointed by the Executive Committee to study the ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTIES WORKING IN ILLEGAL CONDITIONS. On the basis of this report it was decided to REDUCE THE REPRESENTATION OF THESE PARTIES AT THE CONGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST AND LABOUR INTERNATIONAL AND ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE."

Thus the only decision made by the Executive Committee of the Second International on the "organisational problems of illegal parties" was to drive some of their representatives out of its ranks. At the very moment when the fascist government of Spain, stained with the blood of tens of thousands of workers, including socialists—is handing victims over to a field court-martial, including among others Largo Caballero, a member of the Executive Committee of the Second International, and is driving the Spanish Socialist Party into illegality, this Executive Committee cannot find a more urgent task than to reduce the illegal parties to the position of "second-rate citizens"!

And this is quite logical. It is not so very long ago since the Chairman of the Second International, in characterising the make-up of his Executive Committee, emphasised that it consisted almost entirely of past, present and future ministers.

The Second International bases itself IN PRINCIPLE ON BOURGEOIS LEGALITY. In the name of this principle, the governments in which the social-democrats have participated, or which they have supported, have, in Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia, Latvia, and even in Spain itself, thrown tens of thousands of Communist workers into prison, and driven the Communist Party underground. In the name of this principle of bourgeois legality, the social-democratic leaders in almost all countries where fascism is advancing have paralysed the struggle of the workers, cleared

the path for the fascist dictatorship, hoping that as a mark of gratitude this dictatorship would spare them, tolerate them, and permit them to enjoy a legal existence for a more successful struggle against the Communists.

Ex-Ministers Ten-a-Penny.

But matters turned out differently. Triumphant fascism, vested with the full confidence of big capital, and with no desire to share either its power or influence with the bankrupt social-democratic lackeys of the bourgeoisie, suppressed the social-democratic parties also in a number of countries. A number of members of the Executive Committee, including (alas!) ex-ministers, have turned out to be emigrants and seek the right of asylum in the capacity of poor relations in countries where the government includes social-democratic ministers.

They might have put up with this. Hitherto, in the Executive Committee of the Second International there have been a good number of other emigrants—Russian-Mensheviks, socialist revolutionaries, Georgian and Ukrainian social-democrats, and Armenian nationalists—sitting as representatives of their "illegal parties," and this did not in the least shock their dignified colleagues. No one proposed to cut down the number of their representatives, although everyone knew perfectly well that the "parties" they "represented" were fictitious. On the contrary, it was precisely because these people were out-and-out counter-revolutionaries, sworn enemies of the Soviet Union and Communism, representing only themselves, and absolutely independent of the real sentiments and wishes of the workers, that the big moguls of the Second International considered it useful to drag them from their middens and clothe them with all kinds of "rights." On such a basis Welses and Bauers could be tolerated in any quantity.

But they were not the people who mattered. In those Western European countries where the Social-Democratic Parties have been suppressed by fascism, a process of radicalisation that cannot be restrained is taking place among the social-democratic workers who are trying to restore their organisations in underground conditions.

The wall built by their ex-leaders for tens of years to isolate the social-democratic workers from the Communist workers is breaking down.

The striving of the workers towards a joint struggle, towards the fighting united front, is growing. The emigrant leaders, whose rôle in

paving the path to the fascist dictatorship is becoming ever clearer, are using the last vestiges of their influence, and the "mandates" are becoming very plainly fictitious.

And the dignitaries who constitute the Executive Committee of the Second International can already see the danger of the fine day when they will find themselves face to face not with the Welshes and Bauers but with genuine representatives of those sections of the social-democratic workers who are carrying on a REAL struggle hand

in hand with the Communists against the fascists.

This is why the Executive Committee of the Second International has made haste to decree its emergency law against the illegal parties as a line of defence against the inroads of the "undesirable" elements.

Our comrades who are working in the countries against which this emergency law is directed must make it widely known among the social-democratic workers, and explain its meaning and significance.

CITIZEN VANDERVELDE'S REPLY

By A. MARTYNOV.

ON the 10th of October of the present year, the Executive Committee of the Communist International approached the Second International with the proposal to organise joint action in aid of the revolutionary proletariat of Spain. Citizen Vandervelde gave a preliminary reply to this proposal in his article, "The Labour and Socialist International and the Communist International," printed in the "People" and the "Populaire." We now have the official reply of the E.C. of the Second International to the proposal made by the Comintern. None the less it is worth while dealing with the preliminary reply made by Citizen Vandervelde, for he is the personification of the Second International, and his article is a clear example of the tactics of the Second International.

The 10th of October was a date when the struggle which the heroic Spanish proletariat was carrying on in most difficult conditions was at its height. The duty of proletarian solidarity demanded that everything should be set going to render assistance to these fighters, and to divert the executioner's axe from the necks of the workers. The Executive Committee of the Comintern which takes as its rule that "in the beginning was the deed" approached the Second International at this responsible moment with a series of concrete, practical proposals:

(1) Joint demonstrations and meetings to be arranged under the slogans of "Down with the Leroux Government!" "All to the Aid of the Spanish workers and peasants fighting against reaction!"

(2) The trade union organisations to work out a general plan of action with a view to stopping the transport of troops and munitions for the Leroux Government.

(3) The Socialist and Communist Parliamentary groups to act jointly in all countries and to demand the calling of the Parliaments so as to voice a protest against the barbarous shootings of which the Spanish

people are now the victims. Similar action to be organised by Socialist and Communist municipalities.

(4) Immediate material aid to be rendered to the fighting Spanish proletariat and the victims of repression.

How did the leader of the Second International react to these proposals? He began his reply with a roundabout manoeuvre.

"In 1933, he wrote, when Hitler became dictator, but before March 5, the Labour and Socialist International made an insistent call to the Communist International regarding joint action for defence against fascism, and this call remained fundamentally (*Malgre les apparences*)* without reply, and there has been no reply up to date."

This does not correspond to reality, Citizen Vandervelde. The Bureau of the Second International issued a proclamation on February 18th to the workers of the whole world in which it complained of the "fratricidal war" among the workers, and called on the workers of all lands "to cease mutual attacks," and continued:

"The Labour and Socialist International was already ready to conduct negotiations with the Communist International regarding such unity of struggle, so soon as the latter should declare its readiness in this connection."

"Such unity of struggle" as formulated in the Manifesto of the Bureau of the Second International was linked up with the "cessation of mutual attacks" between Communists and Socialists, but was not linked up with any sort of concrete programme of action against the bourgeoisie. In the first days of March the E.C. of the C.I. issued a manifesto to the workers of all countries in which an absolutely clear reply was given to this indirect and vague proposal. The E.C.C.I. called on all Communist Parties to make an effort to establish the united front on the basis of a concrete programme of action together with the socialist working masses, "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Party," and im-

* Despite appearances.

mediately explained why, in the given circumstances, it preferred this method of agreement with the various parties to negotiations between the two Internationals. Its motives were the following:

(1) The whole policy and activity of the L.S.I. hitherto justifies the Communist International and the Communist Parties in putting no faith in the sincerity of the declaration of the L.S.I. Bureau, which makes its proposal at a moment when in a number of countries, and before all in Germany, the working masses are taking into their own hands the organising of the united front.

(2) Without a concrete programme of action against the bourgeoisie any agreement between the parties would be directed against the interests of the working class.

(3) Owing to the peculiarity of the conditions, as well as the differences in the concrete fighting tasks confronting the working class in the various countries, an agreement between the Communist and social-democratic parties for definite actions against the bourgeoisie can be carried out most successfully within the confines of each individual country.

Was Comintern Correct?

The reply was a clear one. Was the E.C.C.I. correct when it adopted this line? Citizen Vandervelde and the E.C. of the Second International have confirmed the point that the Comintern was fully correct by the whole of their behaviour in connection with the last proposal made by the Comintern. AFTER AGREEMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN REACHED WITH A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT SOCIALIST PARTIES, A POINT FROM WHICH THE E.C. OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL COULD LEARN SOMETHING, the E.C.C.I. proposed to the latter that a number of concrete steps be taken to assist the Spanish workers, action not brooking of delay for a single day. But what happened? Vandervelde washed his hands of it, and raising formal considerations postponed a final reply for a month, till the 14th of November, when the E.C. of the Second International was to come together. But when the E.C. of the Second International met, it rejected the idea of joint action with the Comintern and limited itself to removing the embargo on the united front established by the different Socialist Parties with the Communist Parties, after the former had already violated this embargo and established a united front with us. The E.C. of the Second International has only shown by this gesture that (as hitherto) it wishes to do away with the united front in those places where, under the pressure of the Party membership, the Socialist Parties have already begun to put it into practice, but that it considers itself powerless (powerless at least just now) to do so.

In his preliminary reply (in his article in the "People") and in his negotiations with Comrades Cachin and Thores, Citizen Emile Vandervelde explained his refusal to immediately accept the proposal made by the Comintern, and his refusal to speak at even one meeting alongside with the Communists, by stating that he was not a private individual but was the Chairman of the Second Inter-

national, and that he was aware that a number of parties in the Second International were less prepared now than ever before to come to an agreement with the Communists on the question of the united front. On these grounds, therefore, he would have to wait for the decision of the Executive Committee. Citizen Vandervelde thereby authoritatively confirmed the point that the Second International is the kind of "Labour International" in which allowance is made for the refusal to display the most elementary proletarian solidarity, i.e., to speak in plain working-class language, where strike-breaking is tolerated. But Citizen Vandervelde, the leader of the Second International, not only recognised the existence of such "workers" parties in the Second International; in his preliminary reply he attempted to explain and to cover up, or to speak more exactly, to justify the behaviour of these parties. He explained the "state of mind" of these by stating that in these countries

"the Communist Parties are an almost negligible force, while the social-democratic parties, on the contrary, represent something more than a very important section of the proletariat."

It was absolutely futile for Citizen Vandervelde to attempt to replace politics by arithmetic. With all his diplomatic art, and the elegance of his style, he did not succeed in this connection. In Czechoslovakia our Party can compare with the Social-Democratic Party in point of numbers as well; whereas although the membership of our parties in England and Holland are small, yet they have an influence which is growing from day to day, and they are the only Parties leading the class struggle of the proletariat in these countries. It is not a question of arithmetic but of politics. The fact is that in these countries the Social-Democratic Parties are either participating in the bourgeois governments or they are counting on being in the Government and standing at the head of the bourgeois state to-morrow, and when they are faced with the dilemma of either the united front with the bourgeoisie, or else the united front with the revolutionary proletariat, they do not think for a moment but select the first alternative.

In his article Citizen Vandervelde explained the decision to postpone the final reply till November 14th, when the E.C. was to meet together, by alleging that there was no hurry, and that

"at the time when we received the Manifesto issued by the Comintern, the Catalan Republic had already been conquered in Barcelona, the general strike had already finished in Madrid and the provinces, while the uprising in Asturias had already been drowned in blood."

In brief, "order"—temporarily—"had already been established in Spain," and under such conditions the only question could be that of helping the victims, of bringing pressure to bear on the governments so that they should give the "right of asylum"

to Spaniards, and of stirring public opinion again Leroux, and for this, it was his view, it was possible to wait a month. But Citizen Vandervelde did not tell the truth. The appeal made by the Comintern was dated the 10th of October and the Bureau of the Second International received it on the 11th, whereas the capital of Asturias, Oviedo, was only occupied by troops on the 13th of October, after which the Red Army of the Asturian workers held up the columns of government troops in the mining valleys of Asturias for several weeks. And after the Asturian workers withdrew to the mountains with arms in their hands, the "Bandiera Roja" published by the Communists, wrote the following :

"The beasts of the monarchist clerical fascist reaction have hastened to raise shouts of triumph. They have been too much in a hurry . . . The counter-revolution has won a fight . . . but the fight continues; we are by no means defeated. In the ranks of the revolutionary party new sections of struggle are being set up throughout the whole country."

That this is the state of things now in Spain is confirmed even by the organ of the Spanish monarchists.

Pontius Pilate Vandervelde.

Thus, Citizen Vandervelde washed his hands like Pontius Pilate, in the very heat of the struggle when it was a question not only of assistance to the "victims" of the revolution, but primarily of support to the revolutionary fighters, by adopting a defeatist position. Citizen Vandervelde, ex-Minister of the Belgian Government during the war period, should know what name is given to the behaviour of an individual who, after the first difficult clashes, considers the battle lost by the friendly (friendly is his word!) army, who considers that it has already been smashed up, that what we are faced with is only "tragedy" and that there are no more fighters but only victims. Or perhaps Citizen Vandervelde considers that the "socialists" should display firmness in estimating the prospects of the war when it is being carried on by the bourgeoisie of his own country, but not at all when it is being carried on by the revolutionary proletariat? Apparently this is the case.

In his article, directly after speaking about assistance for the victims of the Spanish revolution, Citizen Vandervelde continues as follows in connection with the Manifesto of the Comintern :

"But this (i.e., assistance to the Spanish workers, A.M.) summarily speaking, is only of second rate and practically of episodic interest in the face of another problem which assumes ever greater practical importance with every day that passes, namely, that of the restoration of relations between the U.S.S.R. and the social-democratic parties; the investigation into the possibilities of and conditions for constant co-operation between the Russian Revolution and the proletariat in the western countries."

Citizen Vandervelde is occupied more than anything else with the question of "constant co-operation

with the Russian Revolution." We know that this question has always occupied his attention and we are also aware of the forms which this "co-operation" with the Russian Revolution has taken. This is clearly to be seen from materials printed in the current number of the journal "Historic Notes." "The co-operation" of Citizen Vandervelde with the Russian Revolution was expressed in the fact that in 1914 he called on the Russian Socialists to cease their struggle against Czarism and that in 1917 he called on the Russian workers and soldiers to carry on the imperialist war to a victorious conclusion, and that he took part in a Belgian government when it officially recognised a monarchist government organised by the counter-revolutionary General Kolchak. "The co-operation" of Vandervelde was further expressed in the fact that he supported and continues to support Georgian counter-revolutionaries and joined his voice to the lying campaign which directed the foul accusation against Lenin that he was allegedly a German agent, that he went to the defence of the Socialist Revolutionaries who made an attempt to assassinate Lenin, and was for a long time opposed to the restoration of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, etc.

Citizen Vandervelde, with the "sincerity" peculiar to him, greets the establishment of "co-operation between the Russian Revolution and the West-European proletariat," and states that a solution of this problem comes up against difficulties, for

"it is difficult to understand how the Communist International fights along with us in France, Spain and other countries in defence of 'democratic liberties' while in the Soviet Union these liberties do not exist, and while they treat socialists who are not Communists there as pariahs with whom no contact must be had."

Corresponding to this he considers it

"appropriate for the Socialist International to discuss with the Communist International the conditions and guarantees for a bona-fide agreement which would be equally applicable to the countries where social-democracy is the dominant power, and to those countries—the U.S.S.R.—where they are outlaws, and where the time is more than ripe for the establishment of an atmosphere in which the non-Communist socialists could breathe."

Citizen Vandervelde speculates on the urge of the working masses towards unity of action, and is trying to confuse them. He wishes to convince them that the conditions in the countries where the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie exists, whether this dictatorship is covered by parliamentarism or whether it is an open fascist dictatorship, are identical with the conditions in the country where the dictatorship of the proletariat exists. He wishes to convince them that the democratic rights for which the Communists fight in the capitalist countries, so as to RENDER IT EASIER TO ORGANISE THE PROLETARIAT AND LEAD IT TO THE DECISIVE BATTLES FOR SOVIET POWER, are identical with the "liberties" which the Men-

sheviks seek to achieve for themselves in the Soviet Union, so as to introduce demoralisation into the régime of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and thus TO PREPARE FOR THE RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM IN THE U.S.S.R. ! Mr. Vandervelde is wasting his efforts ! The Russian workers feel themselves masters in their own country, they know that there is no country in the world where such proletarian democracy exists as in the Soviet Union, and they will decisively repulse anybody who dares in the Soviet Union to demand liberty for counter-revolutionary agitation, liberty for the Mensheviks who fought during the Civil War on the side of the counter-revolution against the Soviet Government. And the workers in the capitalist countries are becoming more and more convinced with every day that passes that what they need democratic liberties for is not to continue to live peacefully together with the bourgeoisie and to collaborate with them, as the Messrs. Vandervelde do, but in order to wipe out all collaboration with the bourgeoisie and to advance to the storming of capitalism.

I conclude. Mr. Vandervelde and the Executive Committee of the Second International have been convinced that they are helpless to use their discipline

to tie down those parties who have entered the path of united front action with the Communists. They have therefore withdrawn the embargo which prevented sections of the Second International from concluding agreements with the Communist Parties. But they hope to spoil the united front of struggle with the Communists by another means : they hope that they will succeed in giving the movement in favour of the united front of struggle another direction, namely, that of conciliating Communism and Social-Democracy, and of diluting Communism in the collaborationist outlook of the Second International under the flag of the "unity of the working class."

Let them leave these hopes on one side. The united front of struggle of the Social-Democratic and Communist workers will grow and extend in spite of their opposition, but it will not lead to their land of dreams. It will lead to the majority of the working class in the capitalist countries breaking once and for all with those who collaborate with the capitalists, and entering on the struggle for the power of the proletariat, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and for Soviet Power, under the flag of Communism.

SWEDISH SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

FOR two years the leaders of Swedish social-democracy have been sitting "at the royal table" conducting the governmental affairs of the Swedish capitalists and big landlords. When occasion arises their social-democratic excellencies like to remind one that the financial barons have every reason to be fully satisfied with the Per Albin Hanson government. From time to time some big capitalist newspaper gives the social-democratic ministers the satisfaction of openly recognising that no bourgeois government could have looked after the interests of Swedish capitalism better during the period of crisis than the Hanson social-democratic government.

The social-democratic government helped the bourgeoisie to pass all the burdens of the crisis over to the shoulders of the toiling masses, without any great internal convulsions, when the crisis passed into a depression of a peculiar type. By raising prices and increasing taxes, this government considerably reduced real wages which had already been reduced to the greatest degree during the crisis. At the same time the government, in

close collaboration with the party of the big agrarians, gave enormous subsidies to the landlords. Bennerstrom, formerly a pacifist and now War Minister, is energetically carrying out plans for the armament of Swedish imperialism. The most prominent social-democrats — employees of the War Ministry — are taking rapid courses of military training to be able to master all the details of modern warfare and fulfil the tasks set by the military clique with a proper "knowledge of the business." Inspired by Great Britain, the foreign policy of Sweden, which, despite all the beautiful gestures of Mr. Sandler, is directed against the Soviet Union, should satisfy the most hard-boiled conservatives. It would seem that the Swedish bourgeoisie could not wish anything better.

However, they do want more. They want the form taken by their power in this "classical" country of bourgeois-democracy to correspond to the "signs of the times," so that they can accomplish the fascisation of the State as far as possible along a lawful path.

A Swedish Trade Union Act.

The government of Mr. Per Albin Hanson has been exerting every effort for many months to carry out this task set by its masters as well. It has prepared the law on "anti-State societies," which aims at the suppression of the Communist Party. It has raised the armed fascist detachments, hitherto illegal, to the rank of State reserve police. At present it is taking determined steps along the path of fascism, undertaking an attack on the trade unions, unprecedented in Swedish conditions, with a view to paralysing their fighting powers in future. We have in view the notorious law on the "Rights of the Third Person," which excludes all possibilities of political strikes and sympathetic strikes, giving the protection of the law to the strike-breakers ("the third person"). The boycott of strike-breakers and any action directed against them will be prohibited. The sanction of the central trade union bodies will be necessary before a strike can be declared in the localities. If a strike is declared, trade union officials will be subjected to police surveillance. The bourgeois government previously tried to pass such a law. This attempt broken down in face of the firm resistance of the workers. The social-democratic government has now very willingly taken this task on itself.

This spring a government commission prepared a draft of this compulsory law with the consent of the leaders of the trade union executives, which met the requirements of all the above-mentioned demands of the bourgeoisie. It is true that in view of the widespread protest movements caused by this Bill among the working class the government was forced to resort to a manoeuvre, and at the last moment to soften down the Bill proposed by the commission in a few points. The essence of the first draft, however, was kept in the second draft. It only remains now for the bourgeois majority of the Riksdag to reject these few amendments introduced to decorate the Bill.

The news of the heroic struggle of the Spanish proletariat burst like a bomb in the midst of this idyll of harmony between the bourgeois and social-democratic leaders. Hitherto, Hanson and Co. had been able to explain the revolutionary struggles of the working class in other countries as "Bolshevik machinations," and had assured their masters that social-democracy and its International were not concerned at all with these "crimes," and even frowned on them. But now it was impossible to deny that great masses of SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC workers had also undertaken an armed struggle against fascism and that the Spanish Social-Democratic Party, under the pressure of these masses, had been forced to consent to a united front with the Communists. The Swedish bour-

geois press immediately seized on this fact and demanded that the ruling Social-Democratic Party should sharply repudiate this "unprecedented" action of its Spanish colleagues which "compromised" Swedish social-democracy.

The social-democratic press reacted to this without delay. The chief organ of Mr. Per Albin Hanson, the social-democratic paper *Nye Tid*, published in Göteborg, gave vent to bitter complaints at the Spanish Socialist Party which had "drawn" the social-democratic working masses "along the path of Bolshevism," and read it the following wise admonition:

"The Spanish socialists could, in collaboration with the bourgeois radicals, have brought about the peaceful and fruitful development of the young republic. In this regard they could have based themselves on one of the most democratic constitutions in Europe. But they absolutely threw this chance aside, and as a result, a tragedy ensued both for the country and for its labour movement."

When the telegram of greeting of the Second International to the Spanish Socialist Party became known, their social-democratic excellencies finally gave vent to all their spleen. How could the leaders of the Second International, in spite of their manoeuvres with ministers' portfolios, take so little account of the Swedish social-democrats? The well-known social-democratic leader, Allan Vogt, poured out his feelings in the social-democratic paper, *Arbetet*, published in Malmö:

"Such greetings were out of place and too hasty . . . In addition it is no duty of the International to encourage the parties of separate countries in any way when they are on a path which diverges from that sketched out by the International.

"How can it be that in Zurich they do not finally try to realise what fatal results such actions have in other countries. This telegram breathes the spirit of the pure, naïve barricade fights of last century.

"HERE IN THE NORTH THE IMPRESSION IS GROWING STRONGER AND STRONGER that the International has fallen under the influence of emigrant circles whose position in respect to socialism and the working class movement differs fundamentally from the position of social-democracy in those countries where it is full of strength. We deeply sympathise with the fate of the emigrants, but we are decisively against the LEADERSHIP OF THE INTERNATIONAL ACTING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS IN EUROPE, AS IF THE UNDERSTANDING OF DEMOCRATIC METHODS IN PRINCIPLE HAD BECOME DIFFERENT AND AS IF THERE WERE NOT DEFINITE DECISIONS ADOPTED IN AN ORGANISED MANNER." (My emphasis, M.M.)

No Help For Spanish Communards!

The proposal made to the Second International by the Comintern regarding the organisation of joint activity on the basis of the united front for the support of the fighting workers of Spain, greatly disturbed the leaders of Swedish social-democracy. They sharply condemned the very fact of the negotiations of Vandervelde and Adler with Cachin and Thores.

"The negotiations of Vandervelde and Adler with

Cachin and Thores in Brussels were carried on without the consent of the Bureau of the Socialist and Labour International," shouted the newspaper *Nye Tid*.

At the same time the paper blurted out the information that the Central Committee of the Swedish Social-Democratic Party, along with its fellow-thinkers in certain other countries, intended to organise a fraction in the Second International so as to use the threat of a split to strike a good blow at the "emigrant leadership" and direct the policy of the Second International according to the desires of this fraction.

"ON THIS QUESTION A LIVELY EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS HAS TAKEN PLACE DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS WITH THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES OF DENMARK, HOLLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN. These parties, like Swedish social-democracy, are strongly opposed to even a mere MEETING being held with Moscow. It is impossible for the Socialist and Labour International to make a decision on this question in defiance of the desires of its strongest and most influential parties. . . . The French and Austrians, with their favourable attitude to the 'united front' will probably find themselves alone in the leading circles of the International. At the session of the Bureau of the International, together with its Executive Committee, in Paris in November, the report of Vandervelde and Adler WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE SIMPLY SHELVED. No other decision can be taken without a serious risk for the stability of the Socialist International."

Such was the statement of the newspaper *Nye Tid*, and a few days later, for the sake of clearness, it added:

"Here and there the Swedish bourgeois press has sounded the alarm regarding the negotiations of Vandervelde and Adler with the lackeys of the Comintern (!). We, together with our Party comrades in Denmark, Holland and Great Britain, consider that Vandervelde and Adler have taken on themselves an utterly fruitless task. . . . One thing is true—IF ANY KIND OF 'UNITED FRONT' WITH MOSCOW IS ESTABLISHED, IT WILL BE DONE WITHOUT THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTIES OF SWEDEN, DENMARK AND HOLLAND, AND THE INTERNATIONAL WILL HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THESE PARTIES AND MOSCOW."

This was an open threat of a split.

On October 24th the Executive Committee of the Social-Democratic Party of Sweden officially decided to reject

"any co-operation whatever with the Communist International or with any of its sections."

"The representatives of the Swedish Social-Democratic Party in the Socialist International will most definitely

oppose the proposal for joint actions by the two Internationals, irrespective of whether this is a general agreement or occasional co-operation."

The proposal of the C.C. of the C.P. of Sweden to organise joint action on a national scale in support of the Spanish workers engaged in heavy struggle had been rejected a few days previously.

It is true that the Stockholm *Social-Demokraten* shed crocodile tears about the "unfortunate impossibility" of the unity of action of the working class, but on the whole took up the same position at the Göteborg leading organ of social-democracy which sets the general tone. Nevertheless, in Stockholm, where the Communist Party renegades, Höglund and Ström, have been at the head of the social-democratic organisation since 1924, it was considered advisable, in view of the feelings of the workers, to express the point of view of the social-democratic leaders in a somewhat less cynical form. And they had every ground for doing this.

The basic masses of the members of the Social-Democratic Party are not at all pleased with the policy of their party and the government. Since the last general election, where the vast majority of the workers voted for social-democracy, there have been elections in Göteborg, where, in addition to the weakening of all the bourgeois parties, social-democracy suffered considerable losses, but as against this, the Communist Party gained and trebled its vote.

Hundreds of thousands of trade union members, the majority of whom belonged to the Social-Democratic Party, have already made a sharp protest against the Draft Trade Unions Bill. The Young Socialist League is more insistently demanding that the government introduce socialist measures. Inside the Social-Democratic Party oppositional feelings to the policy of its leaders (who reject unity of action with the Communists, and at the same time work hand-in-hand with reaction) are growing stronger. The speed at which this process develops and the extent to which these feelings can be directed along the correct path depends, in the main, on the work of our Party.

THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

THE year 1934 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of the Young Communist International.

The creation of the Y.C.I. was preceded by a long struggle on the part of Lenin (the Bolsheviks) against the opportunist attitude to the rôle of the youth in the class struggle displayed by the Social-Democratic Parties, and the Second International to which they were affiliated.

The creation of the Y.C.I. was preceded by sagacious, stubborn, prolonged work on the part of Lenin among the revolutionarily inclined sections of the West-European youth. It was preceded by the overcoming of their political immaturity, theoretical confusion and serious political mistakes in the most important questions of the class struggle. For the very reason that the development of the revolutionary youth movement cannot be studied and investigated apart from the working-class movement (apart from the struggle which Lenin (the Bolsheviks) carried on and are still carrying on against opportunism) it is evident that the history of the Y.C.I. cannot be limited to these fifteen years alone. But it is an absolutely indisputable historical fact, however, that the first congress of the Y.C.I. was called on the initiative of the great founder of the international Communist youth movement—Lenin—and that this congress took place in Berlin in 1919.

It is indisputable, moreover, that the chief rôle in fulfilling Lenin's idea—of creating the Y.C.I. and convening its first Congress—was played by the Russian Young Communist League which was fighting under the Comintern banner for unity among the left, socialist youth organisations. In spite of this and other obvious facts, however, Kemrod* has asserted that "the international conference of the socialist youth which took place in Stuttgart in 1907" may be taken as the first congress of the Y.C.I. This has also been suggested by Schüller†, another poor historian, in a more cautious way.

These incorrect viewpoints compel us first and foremost to throw some light upon the rôle and importance of the Stuttgart conference in the international revolutionary youth movement as a whole.

Stuttgart.

A complete and clear idea of the struggle carried on by Bolshevism against reformism and centrism

* Kemrod: Formerly editor of the Russian Y.C.L.'s periodical, *Smena* (The Reserve). Author of several symposiums on the history of the Y.C.I.

† Richard Schüller: Member of the Presidium of the E.C. of the Y.C.I. from 1919 to 1928.

even in the pre-war years, and the social-chauvinists and Kautskyists during the war, on the question of the participation of the youth in the class struggle can be obtained from a conscientious study of the works of Lenin, the documents of the Bolshevik party and the Second International. The consistent and unswerving viewpoint defended by Lenin on the revolutionary education of the youth can be expressed briefly in his own famous words:

"Without work, without struggle, a book knowledge of Communism gained from Communist pamphlets and books is worth nothing.*

"... we must stand unconditionally for organisational independence for the youth league, not only because the opportunists are afraid of independence of this kind, but for the real essence of the problem itself. For without complete independence, the youth cannot either make themselves good socialists or prepare to bring socialism forward."

Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht came close to understanding this Leninist definition of the fundamental tasks of the revolutionary education of the youth.

However, their efforts to create and activate the youth organisations in the class struggle, within the framework of the Second International, were unsuccessful. They were unsuccessful because the Second International and its parties were Marxist in words, in their resolutions, while pursuing a policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie in actual practice which determined their disgraceful bankruptcy during the imperialist war. An opportunist viewpoint reigned in the Second International concerning the organisational independence of the youth and their participation in the class struggle. This was expressed concretely in the fact that the youth were deprived not only of organisational independence, but of the right to any active political life and struggle. The socialist youth organisations which grew up regardless of the will of the Second International leadership were under a guardianship which aimed at converting them into cultural and non-political organisations. The more active elements in the youth movement, however, headed by Karl Liebknecht, could not reconcile themselves to this attitude to the rôle of the youth. In 1907 at the international conference in Stuttgart, they tried to create an international organisation of youth organisations and to define their main political tasks. This attempt to create an international youth organisation and to define its main political tasks within the framework of the Second International was doomed to failure.

The International Youth Bureau formed at the Stuttgart conference was not a leading organ, but a

* See *Lenin and the Youth*. Y.C.L., G.B.

politically inactive organ for information, which together with the Second International ceased to exist during the war. The conference decisions did not arm the youth organisations for struggle against capitalism. The decisions did not coincide with the Leninist doctrine of the rôle of the youth in the class struggle and led the youth organisations towards political passivity. Consequently, the Stuttgart conference constitutes the first attempt of the young socialist organisations to create an international organisation of the youth, and is not the first Y.C.I. congress, which laid the foundations for the new stage in the development of the international revolutionary youth movement.

Berne.

Certain "historians" such as, for example, Munzenberg, try to prove that the Y.C.I. was formed actually neither in 1907 nor 1919, but in 1915, at the Berne conference of young socialist organisations. They want to prove that what took place in Berlin in 1919 was merely the "transformation" of the Youth International founded at Berne, into the Y.C.I. ; or, in other words, what "had already come about politically long ago," had then taken shape.

This is untrue and does not correspond to the historical facts.

What is true is that in 1915, during the war, a conference of left socialist youth organisations took place in Berne. At this conference a new international organisation was formed which defined the main tasks of the youth organisations in the struggle against imperialist war.

However, the fact cannot be deleted from the history of the International youth movement that THE BERNE CONFERENCE CAME OUT AGAINST THE LENINIST PROPOSALS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS concerning the fight against imperialist war, and rejected them.

And so Munzenberg took upon himself a thankless task, quite beyond his strength, when he tried to refute Lenin, who pointed out that the Berne youth conference constituted at best a step "marking time" in the struggle against the social-chauvinist parties which entered the service of the bourgeoisie.

How can we, after that, assert that the Berne conference and those who convened it laid the foundations of the Young Communist International ?

This must not be done especially because of the fact that Lenin tirelessly sought to overcome their theoretical confusion, politically incorrect theories and mistakes, and to bring the youth organisations, whom he highly esteemed in the struggle against imperialist war, closer to Bolshevism. He took up the same attitude against the "International of Youth," a magazine published during the war.

This stage of the development of the youth movement deserves serious study ; but what has been

said is sufficient to make clear how certain "historians" distort the facts.

Berlin.

Lenin is the founder of the Young Communist International. It was on his initiative, with the active support of the Young Communist League of the Soviet Union and under the guidance of the Comintern, that the first congress of the Young Communist International was convened in 1919.

The following were represented at this congress : the Comintern, the Russian Young Communist League, the Communist Youth organisations of the German Volga Republic, Poland and Hungary, the socialist youth organisations of Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Spain and Austria.

The convening of this congress signified the organisational and political unity of the scattered youth organisations on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist programme of the Comintern, which unites all the revolutionary forces of the working class in the struggle against capitalism and for the proletarian dictatorship. The formation of the Y.C.I. opened up a new epoch in the international, revolutionary youth movement.

The creation of the Y.C.I. and its affiliation to the Comintern require enormous reorganisation of the revolutionary youth organisations which had joined the Y.C.I. It was necessary to overcome the confusion that reigned inside them on basic political questions. It was not merely a question of "transforming" and shaping what "had already come about long ago."

During the first Y.C.I. congress, this was still not clear to many congress delegates, including Munzenberg himself, who headed the Berne International.

At the first congress, the representatives of the youth organisations unanimously decided to affiliate ideologically to the Comintern. However, on the question of affiliation to the Comintern, of organisational connections with it and recognising the leadership of the Comintern, many delegates, including Munzenberg, harboured hesitations and doubts which developed into openly advocating NON-AFFILIATION to the Comintern.

At the first congress these hesitations were overcome. After this congress right up to the Second Congress of the Y.C.I., misunderstanding of the Leninist doctrine on the rôle of the youth in the class struggle was reflected again in the work of the E.C. of the Y.C.I.

Under the Banner of the Comintern.

The creation of the Y.C.I., its development and consolidation, is a brilliant page in the struggle of Lenin (the Bolsheviks) against opportunism both in the working class and in the youth movement, in

the struggle to educate the youth in the spirit of Communism.

Fifteen years have passed since the opening of the first inaugural congress of the Y.C.I. It is difficult to-day to name a country where there is no section of the Y.C.I. or any Communist youth organisation. In the country which is victoriously building socialism, the leading section of the Y.C.I. has become a mighty organisation with millions of members who are selflessly fighting under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party to build up a classless socialist society.

In the capitalist countries, the Communist youth, with its heroic struggle for the proletarian dictatorship and the interests of the working class and youth, elicits the bestial hatred of the bourgeoisie and the admiration of the toilers.

In Spain the Young Communists under the leadership of the Communist Party have won for themselves the honoured name of foremost fighters against capitalism, in the barricade fights side by side with the revolutionary workers and miners of Asturias and the whole country.

In China, the Young Communist League is the most loyal supporter of the Communist Party in its struggle against international imperialism and on behalf of the Soviet Government. The dauntless Young Communist regiments and divisions of the Red Army have covered themselves with undying glory in the heroic fight against the mercenary white army of Chang Kai-shek.

In countries of fascist terror and unbridled reaction—Japan, Germany, Poland, Italy, Bulgaria—everywhere, in far-off Cuba and in Indo-China, the Young Communists are bearing high the Leninist banner of the Comintern, the banner of irreconcilable class struggle against capitalism.

The bourgeoisie is striving to physically annihilate the Young Communists who are preparing for the overthrow of capitalism.

Hundreds of our best comrades have perished in the ruthless class struggle.

Thousands more have been thrown into jails,

sentenced to hard labour and concentration camps by the hangmen.

But the terror cannot prevent the growth of Communist influence and the development of the revolutionary youth movement.

The bourgeoisie is powerless to break the youths' spirit or tear them from the class struggle, by establishing a compulsory system of fascisation and militarisation of the youth.

The task of the Young Communist Leagues to-day is not to record November 20th, formally, as the date of the opening of the 1st Y.C.I. congress, but to test the whole road of struggle that has been passed during these fifteen years.

Many Young Communist Leagues are still not mass organisations, and in some places even now the work of these organisations, both as regards character and methods adopted, resembles the work of the inactive socialist youth organisations.

It is for just this reason that it is of especially great importance to-day to explain the rôle which Lenin played in the international youth movement and to arm all young Communists and young workers with the Leninist doctrine of the class struggle.

The most important thing in putting the Leninist doctrine into practice is to gather millions of the youth on the basis of the united front and under the banner of the Comintern to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat and for a Soviet government.

In fighting for all this, even for the smallest economic, political and cultural interests of the youth, we must, with the whole of our energy, mobilise the youth to fight against the danger of an imperialist attack upon the Soviet Union and imperialist war.

Determinedly fighting against nationalism, every young Communist should constantly remember the instructions of Comrade Stalin, who carries forward the work of Lenin, the mighty leader of the working class: "Internationalism is the basic idea which runs throughout the work of the Young Communist League. Therein lies its strength. Therein is its might."

BACK ISSUES.

Volumes 1, 2.

Volume 6.—Nos. 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27.

Volume 7.—No. 10.

Volume 9.—No. 8.

Volume 10.—No. 2.

Volume 11.—No. 6.

URGENTLY REQUIRED.

THE INITIATIVE OF THE LONDON "DAILY WORKER" IN DEALING WITH QUESTIONS OF PARTY STRUCTURE

By E.K.

EVERY member of the Communist Party of Great Britain and many workers saw with satisfaction in the *Daily Worker* of November 22nd that the paper had evidently established a column entitled "Party Life." The editorial board of the *Daily Worker* made its readers wait a very long time for the appearance of such a column. None the less, the appearance in the paper of but the first notes, it is true, on Party structure, can only be welcomed.

Let the more backward Communist papers, and unfortunately there are such, take an example in this respect from the *Daily Worker*, on condition, of course, that the *D.W.* does not lag behind in this matter. And with the correct organisation of the "Party Life" column, with the creation of the necessary contacts with the cells and Party organisations in the localities, the paper has every opportunity of relying upon a network of Party correspondents in this work and enriching the "Party Life" section with interesting and ample material. From this not only will the practical work of Party construction benefit, but so also will the *Daily Worker* itself as a result of the extension of its contacts, the growth of the work of its correspondents and the greater variety of its contents. Not only the members of the Party, but also every class-conscious worker wants to know how the Party lives, grows and works from day to day.

The following are the contents of the first notes from the column entitled "Communist Party Life" in the *Daily Worker*:

Are New Members Welcome?

"Of course they are. But it is quite evident that many workers don't get this impression because of the attitude which the majority of Communist Party members tend to adopt. Here is an extract from a letter received by the Communist Party centre a few days ago from a worker in Tyneside, in which he applies to join the Communist Party. This is what he says:—

"I have done much good militant work alongside of Party members and yet not one of them has ever said, 'Why don't you join the Party?' I do not know if they have sufficient members or not, locally, but I can assure you that if I see a comrade doing the same good work it will not be my fault if I do not get him into the Party as soon as possible."

The centre replied, informing this comrade that they were pleased to receive his application and completely agreeing with him about the need for bringing into our ranks every worker who agrees with the Party policy and is prepared to be an active member.

The Communist Party would welcome letters from other

workers with similar experiences, in order to help to get rid of the negligent attitude which many comrades adopt towards recruiting.

The Party not only wants recruits, but is anxious to help new members who experience any difficulties or meet with problems after they have joined the Party.

Above all, letters are wanted from groups and cells telling how they recruit new members and what obstacles they encounter or arguments they have to counter when they try to win new members for the Party."

The paper has tackled a very vital subject. The problem of the growth of the Party, especially from among the workers in the big factories and the chief branches of industry, the overcoming of the fluctuation of the membership, is a subject which is very vital for the C.P. of Great Britain, where the organisational lagging behind of the Communist Party is especially great. In future this subject should be more widely and fully dealt with. Correspondence from various Party organisations and cells must be collected and printed, as this would throw light upon the subject from various angles.

There are also other and no less vital questions pertaining to the Party structure of the C.P.G.B. We only mention such questions of primary importance as the building up and the consolidation of the lower Party units, especially the factory cells. And then there is the work of the Party committees, the work of the Communist fractions in the trade unions and other mass organisations. The *Daily Worker* should not only throw light upon the practical experiences of the various local Party organisations on questions of Party structure, but it should deal critically with this experience, showing up the reasons that hinder the growth of the Party organisations. It should give advice and quote examples from the best cases of this Party experience. In this connection the *Daily Worker* must not only rely upon Party correspondents from the various localities but also upon direct co-operation from the leading Party workers, from members of the Central Committee down to the members of the District Committees.

It is not necessary to deal at length with the great benefits which would accrue if "Party Life" was systematically dealt with in the *Daily Worker* with a view to overcoming the organisational weaknesses of the Party and improving Party structure. From the experience of some of the Party organisations, other organisations will be warned against mistakes which can arise in their

work. The experience of the local Party workers will thus be extended and the C.C. and the District Committees will find a good weapon in the *Daily Worker* for the improvement of organisational leadership. This is why the *Daily Worker* should

strengthen and extend its "Party Life" column. All the members of the Communist Party and all the Party organisations must ensure active co-operation with the *D.W.* in the fulfilment of this task.

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.

PREVIOUS ARTICLES WERE :—

PROBLEMS OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE WORKING CLASS	-	-	-	By Sinani.	No. 20
THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE STRATA OF THE TOWN POPULATION	-	-	-	By P. Reimann.	20
THE QUESTION OF FASCISM	-	-	-	By L. Madyar.	21
BASIC LESSONS OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE C.P. OF ITALY.				By K. Roncolli.	22
THE QUESTION OF COMMUNIST CADRES				By Chernomordik.	23

THE NATURE AND THE SOURCES OF SECTARIANISM IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ITALY

By TUNELLI.

IN No. 22 of the *C.I.*, in the "Discussion Section for the 7th Congress," Comrade C. Roncolli published an article entitled "Basic Lessons of the Struggle of the Communist Party of Italy Against Fascism Under the Condition of the Totalised Régime." This article merits serious attention. The author sets himself the task of replying to the question which foreign comrades put to Italian Communists, namely,

"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?"

Touching on the rôle of the Party in this lag-behind of the Italian working-class movement, the

author correctly points to the separation of the C.P. of Italy from the masses, and properly sets forth the

"basic mistakes of the Communist Party of Italy in its mass organisational work."

(1) The leadership of the work in the lower party units has not been carried on mainly by groups of "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

(2) The election and changing of the composition of the leading committees is in the vast majority of cases not made in accordance with the wishes of the rank and file (in forms permitted by conspiracy).

(3) The Party organisation (and the Y.C.L. organisations as well as the General Confederation of Labour and the Red Aid), have lived an isolated life

(4) There has hardly been any real division of labour between the members of the Party

As for the basic work of all the Party members, 90 per

cent., if not all of it, consists in the distribution of literature and the recruitment of new members, which is done ENTIRELY ON THE BASIS OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE. .

(5) The sympathy, the efforts of the non-Party workers and peasants or those belonging to other political trends to approach the Communist Party, and their sympathy towards the U.S.S.R., are not, in most cases, utilised to bring about the united front, to draw these workers not directly into the Party, but into the whole mass of "other organisations, calculated on the public at large, and therefore less defiantly formed and less conspirative organisations for this reason," "organisations with the most varied functions." (Lenin.)

(6) The General Confederation of Labour . . . was regarded as an organisation of the same nature and the same degree of illegality as the Party, and finally became transformed into a mere duplicate of the Party.

One cannot but agree with all this. All these critical remarks are absolutely correct. But at the same time, Comrade Roncolli puts forward a series of propositions which appear mistaken to us.

THE MAIN MISTAKE, in our view, made by Comrade Roncolli is his incorrect reply to the question of the SOURCE and nature of the sectarianism in the Communist Party of Italy. Here we must call attention, firstly, to the big METHODOLOGICAL* MISTAKE which, it should be remarked, is widely current in our Parties. The author writes:

"Sectarianism, 'carbonarism' . . . 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." (Page 859.)

Must Sectarianism Always Be Leftism?

It can be seen from these words that the author IDENTIFIES sectarianism with the "Left" deviation (in the specific case of the C.P. of Italy he identifies it with "carbonarism,"† or, as he says in other places, with "bordigism"), considering sectarianism to be the cause of the Party being locked up in itself ("sectarianism . . . LEADS the Party," etc.). This is a big methodological mistake. Sectarianism is not the CAUSE of the Party being self-secluded, but is the ACTUAL SELF-SECLUSION OF THE PARTY; the source of this sectarianism, of this self-seclusion, may be not only the "Left" deviation, but also the Right deviation, Right opportunism.

To confirm this we may refer to the extremely interesting letter of Karl Marx to F. Bolte, written at the time of the First International on November 23rd, 1871. (See *Letters of Marx and Engels*. Martin Lawrence, Ltd.)

In this letter Marx says:

"The International was founded in order to replace the socialist or semi-socialist sects by a real organisation of the working class for struggle . . . So long as the sects are (historically) justified, the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historic movement."‡ (Page 315.)

* Methodology: The branch of logic dealing with the methods of accurate thinking.

† Carbonari: A secret republican organisation in Italy and France in the early part of the nineteenth century.

‡ Correspondence of Marx and Engels. Martin Lawrence, Ltd.

Thus, Marx characterised the socialist sects as being locked up in themselves, and not being occupied with the "real organisation of the working class for struggle." He described them as being locked up in themselves, standing aside from the "independent historic movement of the working class." It was this and only this which Marx describes as sectarianism in the socialist movement. As for the nature and the sources of sectarianism, they may be, according to Marx, "Left" and/or Right.

In his letter to F. Bolte, Marx enumerated the "dilettante experiments" and the "sects" against which the General Council of the First International carried on a constant struggle, and first and foremost refers to the Proudhonites (Mutualists) in Paris, and the "Lassalian clique" in Germany.

"I myself went on corresponding for two years with the notorious Schweitzer and proved irrefutably to him that Lassalle's organisation is nothing but a sectarian organisation, and as such hostile to the organisation of the genuine workers' movement . . ."* (Page 316.)

Finally, Marx refers to Bakuninism as a sect as well. It is quite obvious that whereas Bakuninism could be called "Left" sectarianism, the Proudhonite sect (Mutualists) on the other hand, who regarded mutual aid as a panacea, as well as the Lassalian sect, which made a compromise with the Junker "social" monarchy of Bismarck, cannot be included among the "Left" sects. They were outright Right-opportunist trends.†

What Marx said in 1871 remains true to-day. Let us, for example, take the Communist Party of Great Britain. Pollitt says, in his article, "The Work of the C.P.G.B. since the 6th Congress of the Comintern":

"By taking the work of the Party as a whole in this period, we can say that in spite of some achievements, in the main the PARTY was DEEPLY sectarian in its methods." ("C.I." No. 19, p. 736.)

In what sense was the work of the C.P.G.B. deeply sectarian since the 6th Congress of the Comintern? Not, of course, in the sense of "Leftism." At the very time when the slogan of "class against class" was put forward in respect to the French and British Communist Parties, and when the leaders of the British Party carried on a struggle against it from the Right, the 6th Congress of the Comintern, when speaking of the sectarianism of the British Communist Party, required it to take steps to bring about

"closer contacts with the masses in the mills and factories, to put an end to a certain narrowness in its ideological and political attitudes."

Thus, in this case, the source of sectarian isola-

* Ibid.

† The reader should consult No. 21, *The Historical Path of the First International* for a concise explanation of these. (Page 811.)

tion from the masses was not "Left" doctrinarism, but a Right opportunist* narrowing down of the tasks facing the Party, a certain narrowness of its ideological and political line.

Thus, we must put an end once and for all to the widely spread prejudice to the effect that sectarianism always has its source in "Leftism" alone. This is often the case. But in a number of cases, sectarianism has Right-opportunist sources.

What was the source of the sectarianism in the C.P. of Italy? Comrade Roncolli writes:

"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." (Page 859.)

In another place he writes:

"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!" (Page 855.)

In these quotations, Comrade Roncolli makes only one methodological mistake, in identifying sectarianism with "Leftism." But Comrade Roncolli is quite right when he states that the C.P. of Italy is suffering simultaneously from "Left" sectarianism and a Right-opportunist worship of spontaneity, and that both these mistakes intensify each other and doom the Party to passivity. This, however, is insufficient. We must determine which of these two mistakes is the main and basic mistake in Italy. To this question Comrade Roncolli replies that the main mistake being committed by the Italian Communist Party is "Left" "Bordiganism."

According to Comrade Roncolli, one of the "basic facts" determining the lag behind of the mass movement of the working class in Italy under the fascist régime is that

"Italian fascism, on coming to power, saw before it a youthful creature (the Italian Communist Party) which was still weak and dangerously sick with 'Bordigan Leftism'." (Page 854.)

In another place the author says:

"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)." (Page 854.)

Cause of Isolation of Italian Party.

There cannot be any doubt that Bordiganism was a typical "Left" sectarian trend. Bordiga's

* "Opportunism means sacrificing to the temporary interests of an insignificant minority of the workers the fundamental interests of the masses." Lenin: *Collapse of the Second International*. Published in *Socialism and War*. Martin Lawrence.

anti-parliamentarism, his advocacy of the boycott of parliament, and, further, his assertion that the tactics of the Party must always be one and the same, without changing according to the changes of the situation, his identification of tactics with strategy, his readiness to passively wait for the point in the revolutionary situation when the Party is able to carry out its revolutionary task of taking power—all these are typical features of "Left" sectarianism. There also cannot be a doubt that there are relics of and returns to Bordiganism in the Communist Party of Italy. But it seems to us to be utterly incorrect for Comrade Roncolli to seek the MAIN reason for the present sectarianism of the Communist Party of Italy, and its separation from the masses, in just these relics of Bordiganism.

In an article, published in the Russian issue of the *C.I.*, Comrade Ercoli shows very convincingly that the fundamental cause of the isolation of the Italian Communist Party from the masses under the present fascist régime is its Right-opportunist worship of spontaneity. After stating that Italian fascism has succeeded in establishing a strong centralised, disciplined and UNITED party—with its own armed forces — that the formation of this "new type" of bourgeois party is not taking place without difficulties, and that this process is a complex one, full of contradictions, clashes and sharp turns, Comrade Ercoli continues as follows:

"I want to mention that very often in the first few years of the fascist dictatorship we judged this process in a one-sided way. We concentrated our attention only on the resistance being offered by the old political formations of the bourgeoisie to the fascist onslaught. It seemed to us that every such act of resistance must immediately lead to an insurmountable 'political crisis,' and at bottom we forgot that the decisive element capable of holding up the march of fascism could only be the anti-fascist struggle of the masses." ("*C.I.*" Russian Edition, No. 26/7.)

In another place, Comrade Ercoli says:

"It is clear from all this how dangerous was the idea that fascism would abolish itself, that it would die of itself, as the result of a sudden outburst of the inner contradictions which undermine the fascist régime. This opinion was widespread in Italy by social-democracy and the old democratic leaders, and penetrated into the ranks of the Communist Party of Italy. This was the source from which there arose the opportunist tendency to 'wait' for the situation to change and only then to get into action. This was also the source from which the first impulse arose which contributed to the process which led to our Party becoming wrapped up in itself, and not understanding its own function and that of the working class of Italy in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, and giving up the everyday mass struggle, thus separating itself from the masses." (Ibid.)

To give a foundation to his incorrect thesis to the effect that the MAIN source of sectarianism in the Communist Party of Italy was in the relics of "Left" Bordiganism (and not in Right-opportunist passivity and worship of spontaneity), Comrade

Roncolli is forced to distort the history of the struggle against deviations in the Communist Party of Italy.

This is what he says:

"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." (Page 855.)

This assertion is absolutely incorrect. In reality the Comintern and the C.P. of Italy fought longer and much more stubbornly against the "Left" Bordiganism inside the Italian Communist movement than against the Right-opportunism of Taska, and did away with it before it did the Right opportunism of Taska and Co. It is true that the chief struggle which Lenin carried on during the First, Second and Third Congresses of the Comintern was against the Right opportunism of Turati and Treves in Italy, and against the Centristism of Serrati and Ledzari, who would not agree to break with the open opportunists Turati and Treves, who participated in the conference in Reggio Emilia. But this was a struggle against two groups (reformist and centrist) WHICH BELONGED TO THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY and not to the Communist Party (the Centrist group of Serrati joined the Communist Party of Italy much later, in 1924). Moreover, at the time when Communism in Italy was only represented by the Bordiga group, Lenin also criticised Bordiga for his anti-parliamentarism. When the split took place at the Congress of the Italian Socialist Party in Livorno, and the Communist Party of Italy was formed in 1921, led at that time by Bordiga, the Comintern and the supporters of the Comintern in the C.P. of Italy, directed their main fire more and more against Bordiga. In 1921 and 1922, Bordiga reigned supreme in the Italian Communist Party. At the end of 1923 (before the 5th Congress of the Comintern), Gramsci entered the leadership of the Communist Party of Italy, and thereupon a struggle began to develop inside the Party against Bordiganism. At the first conference of the Communist Party of Italy in 1924, the majority of the local organisations still supported Bordiga. In the second half of 1924 and in 1925, Gramsci and his supporters won a majority against Bordiga, who boycotted participation in the C.C. and refused to represent the Party in the E.C.G.I. By the beginning of 1926, at the 3rd Congress of the Communist Party of Italy, over 90 per cent. of the delegates were on the side of the Comintern and against Bordiga. Bordiga would have been expelled from the Party then had he not been arrested and served three years in exile (where he carried on factional

work). As soon as he was released from exile the Plenum of the C.P. of Italy in 1930 expelled him from the Party. Thus, a long, stubborn and successful struggle was carried on in the C.P. of Italy against Bordiga, and Bordiganism. As for the Right group of Taska, the struggle against it began much later than the speech of Comrade Stalin in 1928, and Taska was expelled from the Party almost at the same time as Bordiga, after the 10th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. All this shows that the cleansing of the Communist Party of Italy from the "Left" sectarianism of Bordiga was conducted longer and more thoroughly than that from Right opportunism.

Comrade Roncolli overestimates the relics of "Left" sectarianism in the Communist Party of Italy and underestimates the new Right-opportunist sentiments existing in it. Accordingly, he somewhat exaggerates the successes of the Party in his article, and undertakes much less self-criticism than Comrade Ercoli.

Comrade Roncolli writes:

"The Party was able to give a correct analysis of the characteristic peculiarities of the economic crisis in Italy. . . . 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." (My emphasis—T.) (Page 855.)

Further, he says:

"During the last few years, especially last year and this year (the Party has), under the leadership of the Comintern, corrected its serious mistakes to a considerable extent, has eliminated some of its shortcomings, and can therefore look confidently towards the future." (See page 860.)

Lack of Self-Criticism.

It seems to us that the estimate given in these quotations regarding the condition of the Party is too complacent, too self-satisfied. It corresponds in but a small degree to the sharp self-criticism of the Party which we find in the article referred to by Comrade Ercoli.

Comrade Roncolli even tries to throw the responsibility for the lag behind of the Italian working-class movement from the Party on to the working class.

Comrade Roncolli writes that:

"After the coming of fascism to power, very important changes took place in the very organisational structure of the working class." (Page 855.)

What sort of changes are these? They are that "Considerable sections of the old cadres of the working class in general and of the Communist Party in particular were driven from industry, i.e., were arrested or deported. Some were forced to emigrate or were doomed to chronic unemployment."

There is no doubt that all these facts hindered the work of the Communist Party among the masses and still continue to do so. But to estimate these facts as a "change in the very organisational structure of the working class" is an obvious

exaggeration. Directly before this, in the previous paragraph, Comrade Roncolli writes:

"Seven or eight years of the fascist régime 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 sacrifice from ALL CLASSES,' and that, therefore, during the crisis, all its burdens should be accepted without a murmur." (Page 855.)

After advancing the pessimistic thesis that the working class in Italy agree with the fascists that "the crisis calls for sacrifices from all classes," the author immediately negates himself by the following words, which he puts in brackets:

"(The very widespread formula, 'let war come, and then we shall get arms and shall be able to overthrow fascism,' is only another form of the same conception)."

If, according to the author, the Italian working class is only waiting for war so as to get arms wherewith to smash fascism, how can the author go on to assert that the Italian workers now agree with fascism to the effect that during the crisis they must make sacrifices and "bear all the burdens arising from it without a murmur"?

The fact that Comrade Roncolli incorrectly regards "Left" Bordigism, and not Right opportunism, as the chief source of sectarianism in the Communist Party of Italy, implies not only a mistake in the treatment of the history of the C.P. of Italy. It also indicates a slackening of vigilance in respect to Right opportunism, and this has also found its reflection in the tasks set and the prospects mapped out by the author.

When speaking of the work of the Party in 1929-1931, Comrade Roncolli correctly criticises the Party for

"in this period, still regarding the utilisation of legal possibilities as ONE of the numerous tasks facing the Party and the General Confederation of Labour," and "for not putting this task in the foreground."

But while he correctly states that the utilisation of legal possibilities and work for this purpose among the mass fascist organisations is the main task facing the Party at the present time, and this now is the beginning of all beginnings as far as the Party is concerned, he is carried away by the main immediate task facing the Party at the present day, loses his perspective, stating that

"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." (My emphasis—T.) (Page 856.)

Is this true or not? It is not. It is true that work in the fascist mass organisations must now be the basis of all the mass work of the Party. It is true that the utilisation of legal possibilities is now the first necessary step to be taken for the

development of the struggle of the working class. But this is only the first step, to be followed by the second, namely, the breaking of fascist legality. Therefore the assertion that this work "must determine IN THE LAST ANALYSIS all forms and all kinds of Party work from top to bottom" is completely wrong. IN THE LAST ANALYSIS all forms and all kinds of Party work must be determined not only by work in the mass fascist organisations, and not only by the utilisation of legal possibilities, but by our revolutionary aims.

It is very instructive that an Italian comrade (who is now on the spot in Italy working in the fascist mass organisations, and who has specialised on the utilisation of the legal possibilities in these organisations) comes to the following conclusion, in a letter addressed to the C.C. of the C.P. of Italy, published in the same Russian edition of the *C.I.*:

"Even the modest successes which have been obtained by the workers have helped to restore their faith in themselves, in the strength of their class. . . Therefore, it is natural that not only in our eyes but in the eyes of the entire working class these successes are not the final aim, but are only the first step towards a bigger movement and bigger successes . . . While developing 'legal' work for the first time, we are still more convinced of the necessity for improving and strengthening our ILLEGAL party organisation, as facts show us that it is impossible without it, to carry on serious systematic work in the conditions of the fascist régime, even in the sphere of legality."

That Comrade Roncolli correctly advances to the foreground the task of utilising the legal possibilities in the fascist mass organisations, and at the same time, due to a slackening of vigilance towards the Right-opportunist danger, begins to lose a correct revolutionary outlook, can best of all be seen from the following words:

"The work of the Party and the mass actions connected with it developed in breadth, IN QUALITY, 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)."

From the words quoted in parenthesis, it is plain that Comrade Roncolli is replacing the revolutionary task of breaking through fascist legality by means of mass struggle, a revolutionary task which may become urgent to-morrow in Italy, by the problematic task of exerting such pressure on the fascist régime as will compel it to undertake "manoeuvres on a big scale" such as will give our Party the chance of becoming a legal Party in Italy in the conditions of the fascist régime. In other words, fascism, under pressure from us, is to agree to the legalisation of the Communist Party. This prospect is a very unlikely one, and can only weaken the will of the masses to undertake revolutionary struggle to break through fascist legality, and in the last analysis to overthrow the fascist power.

INDEX OF ARTICLES PRINTED IN THE "COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL" FOR THE YEAR 1934

LEADING ARTICLES.

Issue No. Page

The Maturing of the World Revolutionary Crisis. The Fight for Soviet Power Throughout the World	(See Comintern 13th Plenum)
Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin (10th Anniversary of Death of Lenin) ...	3	83-87					
The 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Struggle Against the War Danger ...	3	87-93					
The Congress of Victors, the Congress of the Construction of Classless Society Vanguard Struggles of the Second Round of Revolutions ...	4	115-125					
The World Proletarian Party of the New Type ...	5	147-153					
The Proletarian Revolutionist — Gregory Dimitrov and the Fight Against German Fascism ...	6	195-204					
The Popularisation and Realisation of the Decisions of the 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. ...	7	247-252					
The Leader of the World Proletarian Revolution (V. Knorin) ...	8	291-302					
May-Day Review of the Revolutionary Forces of the Proletariat ...	9	331-334					
Spring Indices in the U.S.S.R. ...	10	371-376					
The Struggle for Unity of Action. By Bela Kun ...	12	463-468					
June 30th—and What Next? ...	13	511-514					
The Struggle for the United Front in France ...	16	619-627					
The Brandlerites and their Letter to the E.C.C.I. ...	17	655-658					
How the Revolution in Spain can be Victorious ...	18	691-694					
The U.S.S.R. and the League of Nations ...	18	695-701					
From the First to the Third International ...	19	727-732					
The Revolutionary Upsurge in America ...	20	763-769					
Three Lessons of the October Revolution. By Bela Kun ...	20	770-774					
For Soviet Power ...	21	805-810					
The Struggle Against Fascism for Power, and the Workers' and Peasants' Republic in Spain ...	22	839-844					
From Shaken Stabilisation to Second Round of Revolutions and Wars ...	23	899-910					
	24	945-959					

AMERICA.

Review of the "Party Life" Section of the American "Daily Worker," from October 22nd to November 2nd, 1933 ...	1	33-36					
What is the American Workers' Party and who are its Promoters? By L. Platt ...	7	264-271					
The Eighth Convention of the C.P.U.S.A. and Some Conclusions. By B. Sherman ...	14	551-555					
The San Francisco General Strike and Its Lessons ...	17	659-662					
The Revolutionary Movement in the U.S.A. in the Conditions of the "New Deal" of Trustified Capital. By Kutnik ...	18	702-710					
The Growth of Terror Against the Rising Strike Wave in the U.S.A. By B. Sherman ...	18	711-714					
Company Unions in the U.S.A. By B. Sherman ...	19	747-749					
The Revolutionary Upsurge in America ...	20	770-774					

ARMY.

Examples of the Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Army ...	1	28-32					
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army. By Takao ...	14	568-572					
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army—Part II. By Takao ...	15	613-614					

ARMED UPRISING.

Military Tactical Lessons of the Armed Uprising (Austria). By Kurt ...	6	232-243					
The Lessons of the Armed Uprising in Cracow in 1923. By B. Ksaver ...	8	308-320					
Some of the Experiences of the Civil War in Finland in 1918. By T.L. ...	9	355-361					
The Black Sea Revolt. By André Marty ...	11	456-459					
Why we were Victorious in Hungary and Why we Did Not Maintain Power. By Bela Kun ...	13	533-541					

	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Page</i>
AUSTRIA.		
Military Tactical Lessons of the Armed Uprising (Austria). By Kurt ...	6	232-243
Reprint of Leaflets	8	302-304
Some of the Lessons Taught by the Austrian Events. By Oldner ...	8	304-308
On the Road to a Mass Communist Party in Austria. By V. Knorin ...	15	607-613
BELGIUM.		
The De Man Plan is a Fraud on the Workers.—Part I. By E. Varga ...	12	482-491
CADRES.		
Cadres and Methods of Leadership in the Scandinavian Communist Parties. By D.	5	182-186
The Question of Communist Cadres. By Chernomordik	23	927-932
CANADA.		
A Review of the Canadian "Communist Review." By Barnes	18	716-718
CHINA.		
The 6th Kuomintang Offensive and the Victory of the Red Army. By Kan-Sen	1	24-28
The Struggle of the Chinese Red Army. By Czhan-Shi	7	272-283
Some of the Experiences of the Communist Party of China in Organising and Leading the Strike Struggles. By Li Ming	10	408-412
Only the Soviets Can Save China. By D. Mif	11	440-450
The New Upsurge of the Strike Movement in Kuomintang China.	13	545-547
Review of the Underground Party Press in Kuomintang China. By Le Tsin	18	719-723
A Book on Soviet China. Reviewed by L.M.	19	754
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.		
13TH PLENUM.		
Announcement	2	43
Leading Article on	2	43-56
Speech by O. Piatnitsky (Abridged)	2	57-68
Speech by H. Pollitt	2	69-79
The 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Struggle Against the War Danger ...	3	87-93
Speech by V. Knorin (Abridged)	3	99-112
Popularisation and Realisation of the Decisions of the 13th Plenum E.C.C.I. ...	8	291-302
Speech by Comrade Martynov	9	362-368
Speech by A. Lozovsky	10	391-400
Speech by Kirsanova	10	400-407
Fifteen Years of the Communist International (Theses)	5	153-168
Fifteen Years of the Communist International (Leading Article)	6	195-205
Fifteen Years of the Communist International. By O. Piatnitsky (Part I.) ...	6	206-213
Fifteen Years of the Communist International. By O. Piatnitsky (Part II.) ...	7	252-256
The Second Congress of the Communist International	11	450-456
PRESIDIUM OF THE E.C.C.I. held on July 9th and 10th, 1934.		
Speech by Knorin	16	634-640
Speech by Piatnitsky (Part I.)	16	640-645
Speech by Piatnitsky (Part II.)	17	679-683
Speech by Richter	17	672-678
From the First to the Third International	20	763-769
DISCUSSION FOR 7TH CONGRESS.		
Problems of the Standard of Living of the Working Class. By Sinani	20	775-784
The Question of the Middle Strata of the Town Population. By P. Reiman ...	20	785-794
Fascism. By Madyar	21	825-833
Basic Lessons of the Struggle of the Communist Party of Italy Against Fascism under the Conditions of the "Totalised Régime." By Roncolli	22	853-861
The Question of Communist Cadres. By Chernomordik	23	927-932

	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Page</i>
The Nature and Sources of Sectarianism in the C.P. of Italy	24	977-981
From Shaken Stabilisation to the Second Round of Revolutions and Wars	24	945-959
C.P.S.U.		
(17th Party Congress.) The Congress of Victors, the Congress of the Construction of Classless Society	4	115-125
The Results of the Plenum of the C.C., C.P.S.U.	16	628-634
In Memory of the late Com. Kirov	24	943-944
CUBA.		
The Revolutionary Battles in Cuba. By D.R.D.	4	139-144
CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.		
Some of the Lessons Taught by the Austrian Events. By Oldner	8	304-308
DE MAN.		
The De Man Plan is a Fraud on the Workers. By E. Varga (Part I.)	12	482-491
The De Man Plan is a Fraud on the Workers. By E. Varga (Part II.)	13	514-524
DIMITROV.		
The Proletarian Revolutionist — Gregory Dimitrov and the Fight Against German Fascism	7	247-252
Dimitrov's Speech in Court	9	335-345
Letter to the Austrian Workers. By G. Dimitrov	10	383-390
FASCISM.		
How Not to Struggle Against Fascism. By R.	7	283-287
Do the Fascists Identify Social-Democracy and Liberalism with Bolshevism? By A. Martynov	12	502-505
See also 13th Plenum E.C.C.I.		
See also Presidium E.C.C.I.		
Resolution of C.C., C.P.G.B. on the United Front Against Fascism and War	17	683-688
The Literary Frankness of the British Fascists. By M. Smith	21	834-836
Fascism. By Madyar	21	825-833
FIRST INTERNATIONAL.		
From the First to the Third International	20	763-769
The First International. By Zorky	21	811-819
Marx and the English Labour Movement in the Epoch of the First International	21	819-824
FRANCE.		
The First Great Battle of the French Proletariat Against Fascism. By Berè	6	213-224
The Black Sea Revolt. By André Marty	11	456-459
The Struggle for the United Front in France	17	655-658
GERMANY.		
The Contemporary Situation in Germany—the Tasks of the C.P.G. By F. Heckert	1	8-17
The Workers in the Kingdom of "Organised National Labour." By F. David	4	134-138
Questions Arising in Communist Parties in Going Over to Illegality. By Richter	5	187-189
How Not to Struggle Against Fascism. By R.	7	283-287
The Situation in Germany. By T. Smolyansky	9	345-354
The Last "New Word" of German Social-Democracy. By A. Martynov	11	426-430
Lessons of the Nuremburg Congress. With a Foreword. By the late Jon Scher	12	471-482
The Foreign Policy of German Imperialism	15	599-606
June 30th—and What Next?	16	619-627
The Lower Functionaries of the C.P.G. By Miller	16	645-650
From Experiences of Illegal Party Work in Germany. By A. Muller	19	750-754
"A Sly, Cowardly, Spineless and Characterless Rat." By Madyar	19	755-759
A Speech not Delivered by Hitler. By Madyar	23	933-940
See also Presidium of the E.C.C.I.		

	Issue No.	Page
GREAT BRITAIN.		
The National Council of the I.L.P. Sabotages the United Front	1	3-8
The Situation in Britain and the Policy of the National Government	(See Comintern 13th Plenum)	
The New Unemployment Bill and the Struggle Against It. By Pat Devine ...	3	94-99
Under the Banner of the Communist International in Britain. By W. Rust ...	5	168-178
The Results of the British Congress of Action and the National Hunger March. By R. McIlhone	6	225-232
Letter from the I.L.P. to the Comintern	7	257-260
Letter from the Political Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. to the I.L.P.	7	260-264
The Labour Party, I.L.P. and the Communist Party. By H. Pollitt	10	377-382
The Latest "Fascist" Movement of the National Government. By D.	10	412
The Developing Strike Wave in England. By D.	11	459-460
The Manoeuvres of the Socialist League in Great Britain. By D.	12	506-508
Structural Changes in the Working Class in England. By P. Poliak	13	525-533
The Position of the British Diehards in the Anti-Soviet Bloc	14	563-568
British Imperialism—Organiser of World War. By R. Palme Dutt	15	575-581
The British Reformists Prepare for War. By J. R. Campbell	15	582-587
British Imperialism Preparing for War—and its Colonial Contradictions. By R. Page Arnott	15	588-592
The I.L.P. and the War Danger. By T. Dexter	15	593-598
Resolution of the C.C., C.P.G.B. on the United Front Against Fascism and War	17	683-688
The Work of the C.P.G.B. since the 6th World Congress. By H. Pollitt	19	733-741
The Trades Union Congress at Weymouth. By A. Lozovsky	19	742-747
Some Notes on the United Front in Britain. By Pat Devine	20	794-798
G. D. H. Cole's "Plan for Britain." Reviewed by Mary Smith	20	799-800
Marx and the English Labour Movement in the Epoch of the First International	21	819-824
The Literary Frankness of the British Fascists	21	834-836
The British Labour Party Conference at Southport. By R. Palme Dutt	22	845-852
"Marxism" in the Service of British Imperialism. By T. Dexter	22	870-874
The United Front in Great Britain. By H. Pollitt.	23	911-917
The Initiative of the London <i>Daily Worker</i> in dealing with questions of Party Structure	24	976-977
HUNGARY.		
15th Anniversary of the Hungarian Soviet Republic	13	533-541
I.L.P.		
The National Council of the I.L.P. Sabotages the United Front	1	3-8
Letter from the I.L.P. to the Comintern	7	257-260
Letter of the Political Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. to the I.L.P.	7	260-264
The Labour Party, I.L.P. and the Communist Party. By H. Pollitt	10	377-382
The I.L.P. and the War Danger. By T. Dexter	15	593-598
ILLEGALITY.		
Questions Arising in Communist Parties in Going Over to Illegality. By Richter	5	187-191
The Lower Functionaries of the C.P.G. By Muller	16	645-650
From Experiences of Illegal Party Work in Germany. By A. Muller	19	750-754
The New "Emergency" Law in the Second International	24	966-967
INDIA.		
The Progress of the Textile Workers' Strike in India	13	542-544
The Congress Socialist Party and the Manoeuvres of the National Congress in India. By G. Safarov	22	861-870
IRELAND.		
The Economic Situation in Ireland and the Tasks of the C.P. of Ireland ...	8	321-327

	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Page</i>
JAPAN.		
Examples of the Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Army	(See "Work in Japanese Army")
How Money is Collected for the "Sekki" Fund	2	80
Japanese Imperialism on a War Footing. By G. Safarov	12	491-502
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army. By Takao	14	568-572
The Work of the C.P. of Japan in the Japanese Army. By Takao (Part II.)	15	613-614
Against Provocateurs—Against Splitters. By Okano	17	668-671
New Provocation by the Japanese Imperialists. By Tanaka	18	715-716
LABOUR COLLEGES, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF.		
See GERMANY. The Last "New Word" of German Social-Democracy.		
See DE MAN.		
See Marxism in the Service of British Imperialism.		
POLAND.		
The Struggle Against Provocation. By V. Bronkovsky	5	178-181
The Lessons of the Armed Uprising in Cracow in 1923. By B. Ksaver	8	308-320
The Turning Point in Poland. By G. Lensky.	11	431-439
The Development of the United Proletarian Front in Poland. By G. Lensky	23	918-926
PROVOCATION.		
The Struggle Against Provocation. By V. Bronkovsky	5	178-181
Against Provocateurs—Against Splitters. By Okano	17	668-671
SCANDINAVIAN PARTIES.		
Cadres and Methods of Leadership in the Scandinavian Communist Parties.		
By D.	5	182-186
SOCIALIST LEAGUE.		
The Manoeuvres of the Socialist League in Great Britain. By D.	12	506-508
SPAIN.		
How the Revolution in Spain can be Victorious	18	695-701
The Struggle Against Fascism for Power, and the Workers' and Peasants' Republic in Spain	23	899-910
STALIN. "Foundations of Leninism."		
The Leader of the World Proletarian Revolution	9	331-334
THAELMANN.		
Defend Comrade Thaelmann	11	415-417
Ernst Thaelmann. By R. Groetz	11	417-425
THEORY.		
The Special Importance of Revolutionary Theory at the Present Stage. By Martynov	9	362-368
TRADE UNIONS.		
Once More About Work in the Reformist Trade Unions. By O. Piatnitsky	4	126-134
Next Tasks of the International Trade Union Movement. By A. Lozovsky	10	391-400
Problems of the International Trade Union Movement. By O. Piatnitsky	22	876-894
UNITED FRONT.		
National Council of I.L.P. and the United Front		(See I.L.P.)
The Struggle for Unity of Action. By Bela Kun	13	511-514
The Struggle for the United Front in France	17	655-658
We are for the United Front. By Chemodanov	17	663-668
Resolution of the C.C. of the C.P.G.B. on the United Front Against Fascism and War	17	683-688
Some Notes on the United Front in Great Britain. By Pat Devine	20	794-798
The United Front in Great Britain. By H. Pollitt	23	911-917
The Development of the United Proletarian Front in Poland. By Lensky	23	918-926

	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Page</i>
For the United Front of the International Proletariat	24	959-965
Citizen Vandervelde's Reply	24	967-970
Swedish Social-Democracy in the Second International	24	970-972
U.S.S.R.		
Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin	3	83-87
The Congress of Victors, the Congress of the Construction of Classless Society	4	115-125
Spring Indices in the U.S.S.R.	12	463-468
How the Bolsheviks Fight the Drought	12	460-470
The Results of the Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U.	16	628-634
The U.S.S.R. and the League of Nations	19	727-732
Comintern Manifesto—17th Anniversary October	21	803-805
Three Lessons of the October Revolution	21	805-810
WAR DANGER.		
The 13th Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Struggle Against the War Danger ...	3	87-93
The Fight for the Pacific Ocean. By Ivanov.	14	556-562
The Position of the British Diehards in the Anti-Soviet Bloc. By Erychimovitch	14	563-568
British Imperialism—Organiser of World War. By R. Palme Dutt	15	575-581
The British Reformists Prepare for War. By J. R. Campbell	15	582-587
British Imperialism Preparing for War and its Colonial Contradictions. By R. Page Arnot	15	588-592
The I.L.P. and the War Danger	15	593-598
The Foreign Policy of German Imperialism	15	599-606
New Provocation by the Japanese Imperialists. By Tanaka	18	715-716
WOMEN.		
Women in the Second Round of Revolutions and Wars. By Kirsanova ...	10	400-407
YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.		
We are for the United Front. By V. Chemodanov	17	663-668
Fifteenth Anniversary of the Y.C.I.	24	973-975
YOUTH.		
The Congress of Militant Youth Unity	1	18-23
We are for the United Front. By V. Chemodanov	17	663-668

WAR

ATTITUDE OF THE PROLETARIAT TO WAR	6d.
THE TOILERS AGAINST WAR. KLARA ZETKIN.	1s.
WAR AGAIN TO-MORROW. NEMO.	1d.
THE PRESENT SITUATION IN GERMANY	3d.
THE FAR EAST ABLAZE	2d.
LENIN ON THE I.L.P.	3d.
THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS	9d.
JAPANESE IMPERIALISM STRIPPED	1d.
THE TWENTY-ONE POINTS OF THE C.I.	1d.

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