

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Editorial:

The Fourth Congress of the
R.I.L.U.

Mr. Citrine . . . and the
Police

V. DEMAR

Socialism in Soviet Villages

A. ZAITSEV

A "Programme of Action"
for Germany

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C O N T E N T S

THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PROFINTERN (R.I.L.U.) Editorial 78	CONTRIBUTIONS TO A PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR GERMANY (Continued) H. Brandler 88
SOCIALISM IN THE SOVIET VILLAGES A. Zaitsev 81	
MR. CITRINE, DEMOCRACY IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, AND THE POLICE V. Demar 86	REPLY TO BRANDLER Politbureau of C.C. of the C.P. of Germany 97

Fourth Congress of the Profintern (R.I.L.U.)

THE opening of the Fourth Congress is fixed for March 15th, 1928, three years and eight months after the Third Congress. The period between these two congresses is one of extreme significance in the history of the international working class movement. During these few years all the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation have been manifested; in certain countries (Germany) capitalist rationalisation has been carried to its extreme limits; the fusion of the capitalist State and political and trade union organised reformism (the Second and Amsterdam Internationals and their sections) has been revealed in an absolutely clear and concrete form; gigantic economic and political conflicts have broken out with elemental force (general strike and miners' lock-out in Britain, etc.); a rise in the activity of the working class has begun, finding expression in severe social conflicts; the participation of the Amsterdam and the Second Internationals in the suppression not only of the political but also of the economic activity of the working class has been revealed as definitely as possible; while at the same time the united front between the Amsterdammers and the employers' organisations grows the closer as the leftward movement of the masses accelerates its tempo.

TREMENDOUS movements have occurred in the world working class movement during this period. It is sufficient to note that between the Third and Fourth Congress has come the advance of the Chinese proletariat on to the historical stage, with their victories and defeats and their transformation under the conditions of revolution. It is also necessary to note the growing activity of the workers' movement all around the Pacific coast—in Japan, India, the Philippines, Indo-China, Australia, etc. And finally, these last few years have seen the swift move to the left of the workers' movement in Latin America, the workers of which are raising the banner of revolt against American imperialism and its pan-American Federation of Labour. These few years are so crammed with such events, that a simple calculation of results would justify a close attention on the part of all the international revolutionary trade union movement to the forthcoming

Profintern Congress. But it is not merely a question of results, but of prospects also.

FIRST of all to draw some general conclusions. How should the international working class movement approach this congress? That is the question which every Communist Party and every revolutionary trade union should ask itself. For us Communists a congress is a very serious matter. Unlike the Amsterdammers, we do not regard a congress as a picnic, an opportunity for taking our wives with us, for organising various excursions and occupying ourselves a little between-whiles with revolution. Nor do we regard a congress as a place where we can advance our personal ambitions, where squabbles and struggles go on for the soft jobs. That kind of thing is the Amsterdammers' speciality. At their last Paris Conference they proved that in this regard they are surpassed by no one.

For us Communists a congress is first and foremost a basis for serious self-criticism. There is no point in our concealing and smothering our weaknesses and inadequacies. We shall never move forward if we come to regard reciprocal self-criticism at congresses from the point of view of national honour, personal insult and such-like. Those are not the morals of the Comintern, those are not the morals of the revolutionary workers' movement. The Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions must come to this congress with a clear answer to the question—what have they done during these years, how have they carried out the decisions of the Comintern and the Profintern in the sphere of trade union work, and if they have put into operation only an insignificant percentage of the resolutions carried why is that so? We should not be Communists, but bourgeois if we were afraid of openly admitting our weaknesses. And we have many weaknesses, while our mistakes have been still more. And this at a time when the objective situation is extremely favourable to the political and organisational growth of our influence.

THE first and main question which both before the congress and at the congress itself demands an answer, is: what are the causes of the disproportion between the political influence of the Communist Party

Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress—continued

in the trade unions and the organisational consolidation of this influence? That such a disproportion exists we all know. It is sufficient merely to take Germany, Britain, or any country, and it is to be seen at once. But it is not sufficient merely to take cognisance of the fact. That will not get us any further. At this congress we must indicate the methods of closing the gap between the blades of these scissors, for these scissors are dangerous to the highest degree. A growth of political influence simultaneously with an organisational marking time must automatically lead to a decline in the political influence of the Communist Party. For all the Comintern it is very important to know the reasons why our organisational work lags behind agitational and propagandist activity, and to know what has been done to close these scissors. The very worst decision of all would be to pass by this question with a few meaningless formulas. The Communist Party must exert all its influence in the revolutionary trade union movement in order to feel where is the root of the danger which has to be overcome.

IF one attempts to formulate the reasons for the "scissors" in a few words, one may expound them as follows: The agitational and propagandist activity of our Communist Parties and of the revolutionary unions and minorities does not have organisational work as its natural continuation. There exists some kind of breach between agitational and propaganda work and the practical, concrete, every-day organisational consolidation of our correct political slogans and instructions. One often gains the impression that our agitational and propaganda work is in a compartment to itself, and organisational work also in a compartment to itself. Meantime, this breach between our political and our every-day humdrum organisational work leads to the result that the scissors are not only not closing, but frequently open still more. At the bottom of this breach lies the insufficiently intelligent work of the fractions in the trade unions—work which very often does not have a sufficiently practical trade union character, which cannot but render difficult the consolidation of our political influence. Fractions are still wholly and entirely being built from the top downwards. If a careful examination is made of what each member of the Party is doing in the trade union movement, it appears that, in the first place, not every member of the Party is yet a member of a trade union, and secondly—what is of chief importance—only an insignificant percentage of members of the Party actively work in the lower sections of the trade union organisations.

OUR weaknesses are demonstrated with especial vividness when seen against the background of the growing strike wave. A brilliant example of this is found in the last conflict in the iron-working industry of Germany. It in the first place, the decision to bring the question before a compulsory arbitration board caused perplexity even among certain groups of Communists. Echoes of the social-democratic attitude found place in the ranks of the Communist Party. Once arbitration was enforced, there was nothing else to do! On the other hand, we see an utter inability to analyse

the situation, dissensions, and the absence of a single line of action. In the "Rote Fahne" certain slogans, in the "Kampf," others. The Ruhr regional Party committee proclaimed its own line. The Communist Party, which on one and the same question has three separate lines, has no line of action whatever.

But the workers' movement is not always being shaken with such gigantic conflicts as the British strike and lock-out or the struggle in the iron-working industry of Germany and so on. The every-day strikes also demand the closest attention. Not a day passes without a clash between workers and employers occurring on some section of the movement, and here, too, our deficiencies, our inability to manœuvre, our inability to link up the sectional slogans with the general purpose, and deviations, either of exclusively political slogans or primitive economic ones, are being manifested. In certain cases a fear of strikes is being displayed (in Czecho-Slovakia, before the conflict in the textile industry). One even hears the more than strange reasoning: "But how can the workers strike, if they haven't sufficient funds?" And how will the workers make a revolution? Here the many years of reformist influence are showing their effect. For long years the reformists educated the workers in the view that first money had to be collected, then they could strike. Every strike had to have its solid backing. But when the reformists had gathered large sums of money the theory began to develop that the unions must not risk all their possessions, which had been gathered with such difficulty. And now they have established a complete new anti-strike or strike-breaker theory; to strike is senseless, for the employers are strongly organised, and so we must set all our hopes on compulsory State arbitration.

LEAST of all, of course, can a Communist declare himself against large strike funds, but he is no Communist who makes the advance of the workers dependent on the size of the strike fund. The larger the strike, the bigger the attack, the thinner the strike fund becomes; and victory can be obtained not with financial resources, but with a revolutionary strike strategy, a revolutionary strike tactic. There are no general rules for winning a strike. It is not possible to write a text book on how to win a strike and to give a hundred per cent. guarantee of victory. But already, on the basis of a very rich experience, badly and poorly studied unfortunately, we can deduce a whole series of very important conclusions in the sense of establishing strike strategy under the conditions of the present-day frenzied concentration and trustification, both in countries with an independent revolutionary trade union movement, and in countries where we are working inside the reformist trade unions. But in order that these conclusions should be reached at the congress it is necessary that all the organisations, both the independent trade unions and the minorities attached to the Profintern, should each for its own country calculate the results of what they have done in this sphere; it is necessary that they themselves, on the basis of the experience of the last few years, should endeavour to elucidate the causes of a number of defeats and to determine how the struggle must be waged in the future so as to reduce defeats to a minimum and to ensure victory.

Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress—continued

THE Communist Parties must not look on from outside at the forthcoming congress of the Profintern. They must not wait for someone somewhere to calculate the results of trade union activity in every country without their initiative and their assistance. Such an attitude to the congress would be purely bureaucratic and would be highly dangerous for all the international working class movement. Every Communist Party must take part in the preparations for the congress. Preparation for the congress connotes the preliminary consideration of all the questions on the agenda, the calculation of the results of the trade union work in the given country, a discussion on the most important questions connected with the agenda of the Profintern congress in the Party press, the organising of a series of conferences and meetings, in the nuclei and the areas, for the purpose of checking the trade union work and the consideration of all the most important problems of the international trade union movement. Only such preparation for the congress can ensure the maximum results before, during and after the congress. Here also the Communists must take a position diametrically opposite to that of the Amsterdammers. What are the preparations for an Amsterdam congress? The agenda is printed; then several resolutions are printed; immediately before the congress a dozen or so trade union officials gather for the purpose of selecting the delegation. And that's the lot. Such a social-democratic "preparation" neither has nor can have anything in common with our understanding and conception of an international congress. We need every revolutionary worker taking part in the trade union movement to know what are the questions before the congress of the Profintern; what has been done in his or her own country in the direction of putting into operation the previous decisions; what the revolutionary wing of the workers' movement of the given country is contributing to the given congress; what proposals it is putting forward; what is their conduct and so on. And that will be a genuine, and not the shoddy Amsterdam preparation for the congress.

IN this article we shall not set ourselves the task of surveying all the items on the Agenda. The agenda is printed and is known to all Communist Parties. Quite a large part of the Party press has not even printed the congress agenda yet, and this witnesses to the failure of many leading elements of our Communist movement to comprehend all the significance of the Profintern and its forthcoming Fourth Congress. While a few years ago the Amsterdam International, basing itself on its dozens of million members, was formally right in taking up a haughty attitude to the Profintern, the position has now been radically changed. According to the latest figures the Amsterdam International has less than thirteen million members, while the Soviet and Chinese trade unions alone have together as many members as the whole Amsterdam International. If to this be added the innumerable independent unions which are attached to the Profintern (France, Czecho-Slovakia, Japan, Colombia, etc.), and the revolutionary minorities inside the Amsterdam trade unions, the correlation of forces is seen clearly to be unfavourable to the Amsterdam International. Meantime many

Communists openly exaggerate the forces of Amsterdam and do not adequately evaluate the forces of the Profintern. While it is dangerous to over-estimate one's own forces, it is no less dangerous to underestimate them. Of course, in organisational relationships the Amsterdam is the better ordered organisation, for it unites only independent (organisationally, but not politically independent) unions, while in addition to its independent organisations the Profintern also federates the minorities. But if the correlation of forces on the international scale be taken, we can now say that the Amsterdam International, despite the fact that the majority of the trade unions of Germany and Britain stand behind it, continues to travel down a declining while the Profintern is travelling an ascending road. If to the revolutionary wing of the trade union movement be added the Pacific Ocean Secretariat of Trade Unions and the developing Latin-American Secretariat, and to the Amsterdammers be added the Pan-American Federation of Labour, then the utmost that can be said is that the forces of international reformism and of international Communism are approximately equal in the trade union movement, while everybody knows that formally our forces are, albeit slowly, yet continuously growing, while the forces of international reformism are continuously declining.

THIS correlation of forces which exists at the beginning of 1928 cannot in the least satisfy the Comintern and the revolutionary trade union movement. Still less can it reassure itself with what has been done in this sphere. The Profintern has a large number of weaknesses and deficiencies, which demand open consideration and elucidation. But it must not be forgotten that the weaknesses of the Profintern are our own weaknesses. This question must be given the attention of every Communist Party. The Comintern has more than once passed resolutions to the effect that it is necessary to strengthen the Profintern. But what is meant by strengthening the Profintern? First and foremost, the extension and development of work in all countries, the organisational consolidation of our position, both in the independent organisations and inside the reformist unions, and then the development of the work of the Profintern as an international organisation. The fundamental weakness of the Profintern (it is also a weak feature of the Comintern) consists in the fact that it is not yet in the condition directly to supervise the economic struggle of the proletarian masses. The Profintern cannot yet direct, and it cannot do so mainly because the internationalisation of our tactic, the organisation of simultaneous attacks in various countries abroad and the direct connection between the Profintern and its adherents in all countries has not reached the stage which is indispensable to the central supervision of all the strikes and conflicts occurring over the wide-flung international front of the class struggle. But the tasks before the trade union International consist in moving towards the goal, whatever obstacles the capitalist States may put in our way. It will be possible to realise that end only in the event of there being carried on a continuous, active policy in every event for putting into operation the Profintern and Comintern lines of policy in the trade union movement, on the basis of the growing activity of the masses and the daily increas-

Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress—continued

ing connection between local organisations and their international trade union centre.

THE Profintern congress will take place in one month's time. Already very little time is left, and meantime the Communist Parties have not yet set about preparation for this congress, despite the fact that direct instructions on this matter have already been given to all Communist Parties. If this continues it will once more confirm the fact that for certain parties their own slogans of "the utmost attention to trade union work" and "75 per cent. trade union work" are empty phrases imposing no obligation whatever. Attention to trade union work connotes first and foremost the calculation of the results of what has been done in this sphere during the last few years; of what is our positive and what our negative experience in the sphere of the operation of the united front and unity; whether any corrections need to be made in this sphere, and if so, what; what the revolutionary trade unions and

Communist Parties can offer the congress from their own experience in the struggle with capitalistic rationalisation, in the direction of the mass movement, in the organised consolidation of their political influence and so on. That is what is meant by preparation for the congress, that is what is meant by the putting into force of the Comintern's decisions to strengthen the Profintern in the centre and in the localities.

In conclusion we underline the absolute and pressing necessity for all the Party and trade union press to set aside adequate space devoted to the forthcoming congress, and for all Communist Parties to charge those of their members who are elected from the area or national conferences as delegates to the Profintern congress to contribute their share of positive experience to the further work of the world revolutionary trade union movement. Only sober self-criticism, a diligent study of our weak and strong sides will afford us the possibility of correctly indicating the further prospects opening up before the work of the Comintern and the Profintern for the further winning over of the working masses.

Socialism in the Soviet Villages

A. Zaitsev

THE experience gained in the work of the C.P.S.U. in the village unquestionably presents a picture which is instructive in all particulars, not only directly for the C.P.S.U. itself, but also for Communist Parties abroad. The practice of our Party's struggle in the village provides a model of how Communists may remain Communists in a country with an enormous preponderance of peasant population, not only not betraying their principles, but on the contrary, drawing the peasant masses into the positive work carried on by the working class. This latter problem is altogether the most difficult question arising out of the construction of socialism, and albeit with great difficulties, it is being resolved with entire success in our country.

On this long road of struggle, with its consequential succession of varying slogans and differing practical tasks, the decisions of the Fifteenth Congress form beyond all doubt a definite milestone. Its decisions indicate to us the task of raising the productive powers of the village, of a radical change in the method of resolving the problem of "heightening production" (Lenin) on the basis of the policy of squeezing the capitalistic tendencies and encouraging in every way the processes, already evident and being formulated in practice, which lead to the socialist transformation of the village, and to the development of large-scale socialised agriculture.

Long and thorny was the road which prior to the opening of the Fifteenth Congress had led us to these tasks as being absolutely practical, actual problems of our policy in the village. Much strength and many resources were expended, much energy was applied and great experience was acquired before the Fifteenth Congress of the Party could obtain the opportunity of pointing to the possibility and the necessity of resolving

the task of increasing production on the basis of wholehearted support of the socialist elements in the village on the one hand, and an extraordinarily serious delimitation of the capitalist elements in it on the other.

The general line of the great work of transformation, which the proletariat must carry through in the village with the utmost participation on the part of the non-proletarian toiling masses themselves, was indicated to us by Engels. In his brochure: "The Peasant Problem in France and Germany," Engels asks:

"But what is our attitude to the small peasantry? And how are we to deal with him, when the State power is in our hands?" and he answers:

"We foresee in advance the inevitable elimination of the small peasant, but under no circumstances are we called upon to hasten his elimination by any kind of intervention on our part. . . . Our task in relation to the small peasants consists first and foremost in transferring their private production and private property into associated production and property, yet not by methods of compulsion, but by force of example and the offering of social assistance to this end. . . . We stand absolutely by the small peasant; we shall do all that is possible to facilitate his transfer to association, whenever he has decided on this course; but in the event of his not being in a condition to take that decision, we shall endeavour to allow him as much time as possible to think about it on his own little plot."

In essentials all our practical work in the village has had the above-quoted words and guiding principles of Engels as its governing idea. In particular, it is well known that at the very height of War Communism, at the Eighth Congress of our Party, which took place in 1919, Lenin referred to Engels' words in justification of our policy in regard to the middle peasantry.

Socialism in Soviet Villages—continued

It is well known also that the ignoring of Engels' principles relating to "example and the offering of social assistance," which did occur in our village activity, the attempt to socialise the peasant economy directly (without the intervening links preparing the peasant for acknowledging the advantages of applying the elements of socialised agriculture) gave either negative or very little positive results.

These negative results were explained to a large extent by the fact that it was difficult to carry on any really serious work on the socialist rearrangement of the petty-peasant farmsteads on the basis of the ruin, the mass impoverishment and the enfeeblement of the peasant economies which resulted from the interventions and the civil war. For one pre-requisite of the socialistic transformation of millions of peasant economies cannot but be a certain degree of their restoration and material level, a certain degree of satisfaction of elemental needs, which once reached, obstinately faces the peasant with the question of what he is to do next. But according to Engels, as indispensable a pre-requisite is determined practical work to establish examples, models, a practical demonstration if only of certain advantages of the social method of cultivation. This latter task we have carried out by our work for drawing the peasantry into co-operation. Even co-operation which merely links together the disposal of peasants' produce and their supply with the produce of industry, afforded the possibility, in the conditions of proletarian dictatorship, of showing the peasantry the essential advantages of association in co-operation of the mass of toiling peasantry which does not exploit others' labour.

Raising Production

To speak of the chief pre-requisite for bringing to bear the economic influence of socialism on the petty bourgeois village—the development of socialistic industry and of other strategic points of the victorious proletariat—is superfluous, since they compose the A.B.C. of Marxism.

The period between the beginning of the new economic policy, when we made our first serious attack on the resolution of our economic tasks, and the Fifteenth Congress was absolutely crammed with determined and systematic activity to ensure the development, the strengthening, and sometimes even the creation of the above indicated pre-requisites for raising the socialist tasks directly in the village. The close of the civil war left us with an extraordinarily severe form of the problem of "heightening production," and during the early days we had to resolve it by measures which found their generalisation in the formula: "The increase of production at all costs." In this direction the new economic policy gave undoubted results, which had expression in such elementary facts, easily verifiable, as for example the hardly credible decrease in the village mortality rate by comparison with the pre-war period, and further, in the unquestionable improvement in the standard of nourishment among the peasant population by comparison with that same period. These are very impressive results, and there could be no better witness to the undeniable rise in the productive forces of the village.

Parallel with this process, and overtaking it in tempo, went on a development of the socialist strategic points, without which it is impossible even to begin any serious attempts to introduce the socialist elements into the huge mass of petty bourgeois farmsteads.

We must give special attention to the latter years of our work in the village, beginning from the Fourteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U., which was held in the spring of 1925. The decisions of this conference, later confirmed by the Fourteenth Party Congress, arose directly out of the necessity of establishing favourable conditions for the strengthening of such a pre-requisite of the direct socialist tasks (large-scale socialised agriculture) as raising the standard of the mass of peasant farmsteads, the consolidation of the union between the proletariat and the basic mass of peasantry (with the middle peasant) wresting the middle peasantry from the influence of the exploiting section of the village, and the consolidating of an agricultural basis for the development of the socialist industry of the proletariat.

Our Past Achievements

The decisions of this conference had, by the time of the Fifteenth Party Congress, given us on a general balance a large positive result.

In the first place, we have an actual mass rise in the productive forces of the peasant economy, a serious beginning to the process of the technical reconstruction of village economy (mass transfer to improved crop-rotation, the extension of technical crop production, an intensified supply of agricultural machinery, etc.).

Secondly, we have achieved an almost unbelievable extension of the elements of co-operation of the simplest disposal and supply spheres of peasant economy. One can say without any exaggeration that our co-operative movement has no equal, if the scale of its activities be compared to the movement of any west-European country whatever. Literally millions of peasant economies have been drawn into the movement. There is no necessity to add that such an extension of co-operation presents a basis of the highest importance for the penetration of socialist influence into peasant economies.

Thirdly, on the basis of our rising agriculture we have an enormous rise in our industry, transport and credit system. Our industry reveals a record tempo of development by comparison with the industry of other countries. The socialist organisation of industry allows us to raise and reconstruct our industry even without foreign loans. The reduction of unproductive expenditures, and the liquidation of private property in industry provide large reserves for the already mentioned record development. Of course, the needs which industry exists to satisfy are still very far from being satisfied. And indeed it has to be remarked generally that the socialist organisation of production, the Soviet Government's activity for the raising of the material and cultural standards of the workers leads to the establishment of the fact that the incredibly growing demands surpass and will continue to surpass the existing possibilities of satisfying them, despite the record tempo of growth in the material strength of the Soviet State. But that cannot alter the fact that in the form of our industry and other strategic points we have achieved the possibility of a more intensified and accelerated influence on the processes taking place in the village.

Socialism in Soviet Villages—continued

Hence, despite the great inadequacy of industrial production, we have none the less established fundamental economic reciprocal relationships with the village of such a kind as cannot be characterised otherwise than as an undoubted intensification of socialist influence on the economy of the peasantry.

Socialist Trading

Turning to statistics approximately characterising the degree of our organisation of the two operations of disposal and supply, it has to be said that the supply of industrial goods to the peasantry is at the present time being carried on to the extent of more than fifty per cent. directly by organs of State trade and co-operation. This is the position if one has in mind not only the supply of goods from large-scale industry, but also the inclusion of the production of the petty handicraft and artisan industry, which reaches the peasantry chiefly through private hands. And in regard to the most important goods of large-scale industry (textiles, sugar, salt, matches), the percentage of supply by the State and co-operative organs has now risen to 75 per cent. and even to 100 per cent. (agricultural machines). As for the realisation of agricultural production in the towns, it is socialised to the extent of three-quarters of its amount. For the more important produce of agricultural production (for example, sugar beets, cotton, flax, grain and a number of other goods) the figure rises considerably higher.

In practice our construction has resulted in the working out of a number of other forms of influencing the many-millioned peasant economies besides those above-mentioned, all of which are already yielding positive results. For example, there is the influence brought to bear by means of developing agricultural industry. It is possible even to say that the success we have already recorded in the direction of socialising the realisation of such produce of agricultural labour as cotton, beets and flax, is explained by the existence of quite a strong agricultural industry for working up agricultural raw materials: e.g., the textile and beet-sugar industries. But these industries do not exhaust the number of spheres of industry which influence the village in an absolutely analogical fashion. There are already in existence, and also there are being established for the first time, such industries, albeit comparatively weakly developed, as those of slaughtering, cheese-making, starch and syrup, and bacon. The practice of bringing influence to bear on the village along these roads is now adequately studied, and the basic conclusion we come to is that, in the existence of agricultural industry, we have an actual lever to hand for our work in the socialist transformation of the small-marketing peasant farmsteads.

Of particular interest is the form called "contracting," i.e., the conclusion of special agreements between the organs of co-operation and the peasantry for supplying State or co-operative industry with agricultural raw materials of a specified quality and condition, in which contracts our organs offer the peasants also a certain material support in the facilitation and the execution of the contracts, since those contracts customarily stipulate certain conditions for the actual production of the

given raw material (sowing with selected seed, certain methods of cultivating the crop, and so on).

Socialism Winning

Without stopping to consider other leading strings from socialist industry to the disintegrated peasant economy, or such cases of socialist production in agriculture as the State Soviet farms and the universal collective farms, we assert categorically that the results of our previous labour permit of our giving absolutely definite answers to the question of the struggle between capitalism and socialism in our village.

It is, of course, unnecessary to explain that in the economy of our country the peasant farm is the basic source from which springs any tendency towards capitalism on a serious scale. Nor can this be otherwise. The village will only cease to be such a source when the socialist nature of our agriculture is established finally and irrevocably, when large-scale socialised agriculture has become the fundamental development of the productive forces of the Soviet village; i.e., only when we really achieve the right to speak of socialism as of an unconditionally dominating feature of agriculture, yielding a preponderating share of agricultural production. So long as these conditions do not exist, we shall need somehow or other to react to the growth of capitalism, which inevitably develops on the basis of a petty goods-marketing economy.

Relative Decline of Capitalists

The capitalist elements in the village (we are now speaking only of the village) have undoubtedly grown in their absolute dimensions during the years of N.E.P., especially since the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference, which allowed the possibility of renting land and hiring agricultural labourers to peasant farmers (measures planned to ensure the wresting away of the middle peasantry from the political and economic influence of the exploiting rich elements of the village). But the issue is not settled by reference to the absolute growth of capitalist elements. The crux of the situation consists in the relative development, in other words, in the question which can the more swiftly develop its powers: capitalism, arising preponderantly from the village (the kulak class), or socialist industry, uniting with the many-millioned mass of farms belonging to the poor peasants and to the non-labour-exploiting middle peasants. The whole problem consists in whether the Soviet State will be successful in its attempts to face the village in a direction distinct from the fate of small production in the circumstances of a bourgeois State and the hegemony of capitalist relationships. In essence the whole meaning of the new economic policy consists in allowing capitalist market relationships to a certain degree and within certain limits, and to exploit them in such a manner that the socialist elements of our economic system should grow more swiftly than the capitalist elements.

In this fundamental sense the decisions of the Fourteenth Conference, which undoubtedly have been exploited by the kulak peasantry, add absolutely nothing to the new economic policy. The fundamental question of N.E.P. (who is to beat whom?—we the capitalists, or the capitalists us?) has not been changed by one iota and has not ceased to be the chief problem of

Socialism in Soviet Villages—continued

our international construction work as the result of the above-mentioned decisions being taken by the Fourteenth Conference.

And to this fundamental question the construction work of recent years gives an absolutely definite answer. The results above cited in the sphere of the socialisation of the realisation of peasant production and the supply of industrial goods to the peasantry show that in the most difficult field, where it is more difficult for socialism to struggle against capitalism than anywhere else, and it is easier for capitalism to struggle with socialism than in any other section of our economic system, we have emerged victorious over capitalism. If the elementary truth that the conquest of the village's market turnover is one of the chief signs of control over the village, is taken into consideration, it is quite evident that despite a certain amount of permission to capitalist elements to develop, it is chiefly ourselves who have exploited that permission, by developing our own industry on the basis of an increased turnover, as well as by controlling other forces acting on the village. It is the proletariat who is the more quickly mastering the turnover of the village, mastering it against the inclination of the capitalist elements of the village: that is the chief result of our work in the village at the moment of holding the Fifteenth Congress of the Party.

More "Middle" Peasants

The composition of the village population, which,

as is well-known, reflects the struggle of capitalism with socialism slowly, is already giving a certain reflection of the same results at the present time. We have the work of an authoritative commission of the supreme organs of the U.S.S.R. devoted to this very question. Its results can be formulated thus: in 1924-25 there were approximately 6.9 per cent. of farmsteads hiring labour for definite periods (i.e., with a more or less regular employment); two years later the figure was a little larger: approximately 7.9 per cent. The section of middle peasantry shows a certain increase: from 64.7 per cent. to 66.4 per cent., i.e., a tendency diametrically opposite to that observable in capitalist countries, where the bourgeois development of the village leads to the middle peasantry diminishing in numbers, segregating, on the one hand, the capitalist upper rank, and on the other hand increasing the mass of proletarianised poor peasantry. As for the lower sections of the peasantry, the following process is noticeable: there is a diminution in the number of village poor, as thanks to the economic aid and the social policy of the Soviet State part of them are being raised into the ranks of the middle peasantry, while the other part, incomparably smaller in numbers, is being proletarianised. The figures exemplifying this process are as follows: while in 1924-25 the group of poor peasants numbered approximately 24 per cent., and the village proletariat 4.4 per cent., two years later the corresponding figures are 20.4 per cent. and 5.3 per cent., i.e., quite a large diminution of the village poor and a certain, insignificant increase in the agricultural proletariat. It is well known

'Where Ignorance is Bliss . . .'

The old tag applies most truly to a recent much-advertised book entitled *Communism*, written by Professor Laski, a notorious Fabian. Evidently the learned Professor thought it 'folly to be wise' when dealing with the Communist movement. Militant workers will think otherwise. They will read the masterly and convincing study written by Ralph Fox as 'a Reply to H. J. Laski.' Bound in a striking coloured cover, 1/- (postage 1½d.)



A DEFENCE OF COMMUNISM



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Socialism in Soviet Villages—continued

that not in a single capitalist country is such a tendency in the change of composition of the peasant population possible.

Such in general terms are the results of the processes taking place in the village down to the Fifteenth Congress of the Party.

But the same period of the new economic policy provides us with certain indications confirming the A.B.C. of Marxism, and witnessing to the fact that in the more or less distant future the small peasantry will inevitably come up against a dead wall, if it is not previously transferred to the lines of another, more productive form of production. That dead wall will be a crisis for small farmsteads. Certain indications of this inevitable crisis are already to be found in such facts as the lowering of the goods surplus of agriculture by comparison with pre-war days. There are only two ways out of this crisis for the petty-peasant economy; the bourgeois or the socialist way, the latter presuming the limitation of capitalism and the prospect of its complete exclusion. Down to the present all our preceding practice has established the pre-requisites for the second way out, has established pre-requisites which make the transfer of the petty-peasant economy to the system of large-scale socialised agriculture not only indispensable, but actual and possible.

Co-operating Farms

The resolution passed by the Fifteenth Congress which deals with work in the village formulates a whole series of measures directed on the one hand towards effecting the extensive contraction and limitation of capitalism in agriculture (restrictions in the application of the rental right, stern conditions in regard to the hiring of labour, the restriction of the power of the kulak to purchase agricultural machinery, the restriction of the kulak's rights even in the settlement of land questions) and on the other hand directed to effecting all forms of influencing the development of large-scale socialised agriculture.

The basis for realising this last, truly enormous task is, in the first place, the existence of a very extensive number of peasant farmsteads, where the process of socialisation has gone sufficiently far. I refer to the million co-operative farms producing sugar beet, to the three-quarters of a million peasant farms producing cotton, the approximately 150 thousand farms producing flax, the approximately 150 thousand farms growing sunflowers, all on the lines of concentration, and then the million or so farms drawn through co-operation into the working up of agricultural produce (mainly slaughter-houses and cheese factories), about a million workers organised in the collective farms, and finally, about a million farmsteads united in the simplest forms of producing co-operatives. From this short summary it is clear that the process of socialising the peasant economy had very adequate preparation made for it. In this connection it is to the point to mention that the market production of the Soviet farms and the collective farms this year forms ten per cent. of all the marketed production of agriculture.

Peasant Attitude Changes

Secondly, here should be mentioned the definite change in the attitude of the peasantry to large-scale socialised agriculture. We already have by no means isolated cases of peasants addressing themselves to the organs of the Soviet State with the request that it should take their land, their live stock and implements, should organise a large estate, should transfer these same peasants to the status of workers and place the whole business on the basis of organisation prevailing on the Soviet farms or on the large-scale universal collective farms.

Thirdly, there has been a great development in the ability of the socialised industry belonging to the Soviet State to supply the peasantry with complicated implements, which are a big factor in the work of socialising various sides of agricultural production. In 1919 Lenin said at the Eighth Congress of the Party: "If we could supply one hundred thousand tractors to-morrow, providing them with petrol, providing them with drivers, . . . the middle peasant would say: 'I am in favour of the commune, i.e., of Communism.'" We can now say that this idea of Lenin, which he then called "fantastic," in the sense that its realisation demands a long period of time, is not very far from realisation. In any case, hardly anyone will doubt the possibility of realising this idea in a comparatively short space of time. This possibility is afforded us by the development of the proletarian strategic points, which undoubtedly will in the future also continue to develop at a record tempo, if only we are not disturbed by intervention on the part of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

A Practical Task

In conclusion it is necessary to add that the slogan raised by the Fifteenth Congress for the transformation of the call to large-scale socialised agriculture into a practical, actual call that can be put into operation, the slogan of the Fifteenth Congress denoting a more intensive struggle with the capitalistic tendencies by the aid of measures mentioned in detail in the same resolution, cannot evoke the reproach of being unreal and fantastic from any quarter. The very possibility of formulating that slogan witnesses to the enormous growth of the political authority of the Soviet State among the toiling peasantry and the growth in the economic power of the proletariat, which now enables us to set ourselves direct practical socialist tasks even in the sphere of the village.

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Mr. Citrine, Democracy in the Trade Union Movement, and the Police

Victor Demar

MR. Walter Citrine, secretary of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, has begun a big "investigation" of the problem of democracy in the British trade union movement. In the December number of the "Labour Magazine," the organ of the Labour Party, has appeared his first big article under the title: "Democracy or Disruption." At the end of this series of articles, Mr. Citrine will evidently draw definite conclusions. He argues that the Communists are destroying the democratic basis of the British trade unions and that in consequence they are worthy of all censure.

The method of investigation is extremely simple. Citrine quotes various passages from declarations made by the Minority Movement and says that although the Minority Movement declares itself in favour of the unity of the trade union movement, in reality the leaders of that Movement think otherwise. Citrine argues that the Communists, and the radical elements generally, are alien to the British trade union movement. They are a kind of foreign body. Mr. Citrine has great experience. He has associated with the Russian Bolsheviks and has come away with the impression that an alliance with the trade unions of the U.S.S.R. is dangerous. He is quite satisfied with the decision of the Edinburgh Congress which broke off that alliance. Mr. Citrine comes to confession. The Continental reformists warned the British leaders more than once to display less liberality in regard to Communists. Mr. Citrine has to acknowledge that the Continental reformists have proved to be right. He confesses his errors, but he cannot refrain from boasting that it was the British trade unions which provided the world with a picture of maximum tolerance in regard to the revolutionary elements of the working class. Mr. Citrine does not wish to be tolerant any longer. In the following articles he will say—just exactly what he does want.

A Splendid Example

However, events often overtake articles. We know already what Mr. Citrine wants. We know already what his desires will look like in practice. We have a splendid example before us. Some months ago under the pressure of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party (and of Mr. Citrine himself, evidently), the Trades Council at Glasgow decided to exclude all Communists, and all active workers who in any degree support Communists. However, the election of delegates to that Council resulted in a number of local branches of the trade unions sending Communists and left wing persons as their delegates. Three months the Council continued without a session, and finally, a week ago, assembled again.

As they arrived the delegates were met at the doors by the officials of the Council surrounded by a police inspector and four constables. The police had been invited by the leaders of the Council for the object of co-

operation in checking delegates' mandates (vide "Daily Herald," for 15th December). At the doors of the hall a process of selection of delegates took place, which consisted of all who were known for their left wing tendencies being refused admission to the meeting by the police. But none the less one got past and spoke at the meeting. The news of this anti-democratic act of a left wing delegate was immediately communicated to the police inspector, who with the assistance of the force of police on duty removed the dangerous oppositionist to the police station. Against this delegate was preferred a charge of breaking the peace. Seemingly such constitutional action on the part of the leaders of the Council in close co-operation with the police did not please even those delegates who were allowed past the police control. They demanded the withdrawal of the police and the application of the usual control of mandates. This proposal was accepted by the meeting. Then the chairman closed it. Without the police he could not bring himself to hold the meeting.

There you have the whole story! After this, is it necessary to await the "scientific investigations" of Mr. Citrine on democracy in the British trade union movement? It is not necessary! Not without reason did Mr. Citrine's article meet with the warm support of the editorial article in the same number of the "Labour Magazine." In that editorial we find: "The questions touched upon pass far beyond the limits of problems of social philosophy or the economic doctrines propagated by the Communists; this problem takes on enormous practical interest, for it is not a simple polemic, but a policy affecting the future interests of the political parties, the mutual relationships existing between States, and the organisation and policy of trade unions."

From Joynson-Hicks to Citrine

We entirely agree that it is impossible to call the police operations in the Glasgow Trades Council a simple polemic on questions of social and economic points of view. It is a real policy. It is the policy of MacDonald, Thomas, Snowden, and Citrine. It is the policy of Joynson Hicks, Purcell, and others who are entirely responsible for the latest course of the General Council of the T.U.C.

After the facts cited by us it is hardly worth while to enter into a polemic with Mr. Citrine over the essence of his reflections. It is hardly worth while to prove that he is incorrect in attempting to characterise present-day Communists as disrupters of a movement which has nothing whatever in common with the revolutionary movement of pre-war years. Mr. Citrine is ready to admit the service of pre-war syndicalism, and of the left elements of the pre-war trade union movement on the Continent in general, but he means to say that the present-day Communists are not the heirs of the revolutionary traditions of former years. Of course, these observations could be parried by showing who exactly

Mr. Citrine and the Police—continued

has carried the banner of former revolutionaries down to the present day of immense struggles with capital. But that gets one nowhere. Once Mr. Citrine summons the police to a meeting of trade unions it becomes clear to everybody that all possible "historical and philosophical arguments" play only an auxiliary role to these police enterprises.

It is characteristic that the attack on the left wingers is now being felt not only by the real left wing, i.e., the Communists and the Minority Movement. MacDonald recently wrote an article on the inadequacy of the discipline in the Labour Party. He frankly demanded that the so-called left wingers (Maxton, Brockway, Buchanan, etc.), should be forbidden the propaganda of a special point of view, in opposition to the official line of the Labour Party. MacDonald demands discipline, and on this point his assistants are working out a scheme of centralisation and strengthening of the apparatus of the Labour Party. Thus the blow is also directed against the false left wing.

The I.L.P.'ers set up a howl. They are protesting against MacDonald's attempt on the freedom of opinion inside the Labour Party. But that is why Maxton and his friends are a false left wing, in getting angry and protesting but doing nothing. It is characteristic that this reactionary move of the Labour Party is being carried out under a "left wing" chairman. Old George Lansbury was put into the chair in order to throw dust in the eyes of the workers, who think that Lansbury personifies a left wing course. A clearer example of how the reactionary leaders of the Labour Party avail themselves of a left wing environment to cover their

policy has never been known. But now they wish to close the mouths of even these left wingers.

What conclusions are to be drawn from the situation which has arisen?

Undoubtedly the Communists will organise the maximum of opposition to the attack of MacDonald, Snowden and Citrine. They will put up this opposition inside the trade unions and inside the Labour Party. They are mobilising the working masses against the bureaucracy of the Labour Party, who appeal to the police for aid against the left wing, who with the assistance of the police drive out the elected delegates of the workers. The fact that even with the aid of the police these persons are unable to control the Trades Council in Glasgow witnesses to the fact that the Communists are able to win the sympathy of the general masses to their side. To this witnesses also the voting of the Scottish miners, who recently turned down Robert Smillie in his own district of Lanarkshire. Yes, the struggle with the MacDonalds, Thomases, Snowdens and Citrines and their like is not a simple polemic. It has passed far beyond those bounds. The socialist imperialists of the Labour Party realise that, the Communists also realise it, and with the help of the Communists the masses of members of the Labour Party and trade unions will also realise it.

As for the so-called left wingers of the I.L.P., they have passed into a critical period of their existence. Either they will put up opposition, and then they will have to stop their war with the left wing of the British workers' movement, i.e., with the Communists and the workers following them, or they will surrender, and then the last illusion of the workers following them will be shattered.

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Contributions to a Programme of Action for Germany (continued)

Heinrich Brandler

STABILISATION AND THE GENERAL NATURE OF OUR DEMANDS

THE period of stabilisation does not remove the revolution from the actual order of the day (see also Bukharin's speech at the last Party Congress in Leningrad).

That imperialism can only be succeeded by socialism has become the axiom of a revolutionary Marxism as the theoretical sequence of the analysis of imperialism (an axiom which Hilferding also formulated in "Finance Capital"). This signified a necessary advance on the Erfurt Programme, which was a programme of reforms within the bourgeois State and the capitalist system, calculated to ensure positions of vantage for the workers for the subsequent struggle with the bourgeoisie and to train them, in the class struggle for reforms, for the far-distant day of reckoning. It is well-known that Hilferding drew no practical conclusions from his theoretical deductions. The Left Radicals and above all Rosa Luxemburg were those who formulated the new demands of the hour in a practical manner.

Rosa Luxemburg in her polemic against Kautsky, who rigidly advocated a purely parliamentary struggle for reforms, demanded the preparation of revolutionary and non-parliamentary mass actions of the workers whereby the experiences of the Russian 1905 revolution should be utilised. Kautsky argued that the policy which Rosa Luxemburg advocated for the Prussian election campaign would force the Social Democrats "to come to grips with the Junker regime and either overcome it or be overcome," he recoiled from the practical task of preparing the revolutionary struggle. At that time Rosa Luxemburg put forward the slogan for the republic and the overthrow of the Wilhelm monarchy. At that period when the entire German bourgeoisie clung to the monarchy as the instrument of its imperialist policy, such slogans were equivalent to raising the question of the struggle for power between the workers and the capitalists. In this manner the knowledge was brought home that in the imperialist epoch, the epoch of the dictatorship of capitalist monopoly, armaments and wars, the old methods of struggle for reforms were inadequate, that now the proletarian revolution had become an actual problem and the preparation for it a practical task.

The first world catastrophe brought about by imperialism and the first phase of world revolution have made this fact still clearer. There can, therefore, be no question of Communists interpreting the present stabilisation as a period in which they restrict the activities of the workers to struggles for reforms and slight improvements in their position; that as long as stabilisation lasts the possibility of revolutionary struggle for power is impossible; that Communists at best mention the revolution in their general propaganda and otherwise lock up their programme in their hearts and calmly await the end of stabilisation to get an opportunity for

revolutionary activities, i.e., Communists become a revolutionary propaganda sect or a centrist party which keeps the struggle for daily demands and the revolutionary final aim in air-tight compartments absolutely without any inner connection. Such an interpretation would be merely a new edition of Kautsky's lassitude strategy, doubly false at the present time when capitalism is considerably less stable and far more fraught with contradictions than was the case at the time of the Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg controversy. Such an interpretation is only one step removed from liquidation . . . from Russian Menshevism. The Russian Mensheviks declared after the defeat of the 1905 revolution, after the "stabilisation" of the Tsarist regime by Stolypin, that there were no further prospects of revolution, an opinion against which Lenin and the Bolsheviks carried on a fierce struggle.

It would be a fundamental misinterpretation of the present epoch to assume that when we say "stabilisation" we imply the impossibility of revolutionary mass struggles or deny the possibility of sharp class struggle. Those who imagine that the period of stabilisation must pass before it is possible to organise political struggles for power capitulate before bourgeois stabilisation. To wait until the bourgeoisie is at the end of its tether would be to wait for ever. Lenin pointed out that there is no such thing in the absolute sense of the word, as a hopeless situation for capitalism. Communists say that stabilisation is only temporary, that there must of necessity be an end to this economic and political strengthening of capitalism, but they do not imagine this end to be a purely mechanical one.

Stabilisation will enkindle revolution, because it is a contradictory process, because every advance of this process only helps to increase these contradictions in the final analysis, because its course conjures up mighty crises and drives the bourgeoisie on to make new attacks on the workers and colonial peoples who in their turn retaliate by increased opposition and revolt. Every step on the road to stabilisation raises new questions, new antagonisms and creates the basis for new and tremendous social conflicts. The stabilisation of the currency in Germany put an end to inflation and brought the German capitalist face to face with the task of solving the question of markets; social contradictions arose in a new form and the misery of inflation wages made way for mass unemployment. Rationalisation on the one hand increases the profits of the capitalists, whilst on the other hand technical improvements increase the capacity for production and accentuate the contradiction between production and market possibilities. The re-establishment of international trade and credits intensifies the competition between individual countries and creates new opposing interests. The political strengthening of the bourgeoisie leads to the unlimited dictatorship of trusts and slowly and surely drives democratic illusions, not only out of the heads of the workers, but also out of the heads of the petty bourgeoisie. The

Contributions to a Programme—continued

process of the "stabilisation" of the transitory strengthening of the bourgeoisie with every step accumulates causes for crises and big social conflicts, and at the same time strengthens the premises for victory over the bourgeoisie. Hence it would be a mistake to overlook the new causes of conflict and to fail to see how easily there may arise here the possibility for the struggle for power. An example of such a possibility was provided by the British General Strike and the miners' lock-out. The attempt of the British capitalist to create the possibility for the rationalisation of industry by wage-cuts, whereby England's old position in the world market was to be maintained, led to a tremendous class conflict. The only correct solution was that advocated by the Communists who aimed at a political intensification of the struggle and its transformation into a struggle for power. However, the assumption that stabilisation excludes mass struggles would be equivalent to the approval of the treachery of the British reformists, who called off the General Strike because in their opinion the aims to be pursued were purely trade union and not political.

Only Relative Stability

The relativity of present-day stabilisation is expressed in the formation of new and deep-rooted contradictions. That method must be rejected which does not look ahead, but backwards, which is incapable of recognising the new and is endeavouring to prove that really all causes of crises during the period immediately after the war arise out of stabilisation. Such a method is a direct caricature of Marxism. It is a platitudinous inversion of the bourgeois and social-democratic conception that now an unavoidable recuperation of capitalism is taking place devoid of inconsistencies or contradictions. Uncertainty and nervousness must result from such assumptions. Thus comrade Zinoviev considered the Stinnes smash in 1925 a sign that stabilisation was shaken and that the British strike denoted its end, whereas in reality the Stinnes affair marked the beginning of the so-called cleansing process in German capitalism and the British strike a struggle which decided the methods of stabilisation in England.

Stabilisation will not come to an end overnight. The point of departure may be an economic crisis, a war, an intensification of economic mass struggles. But neither an economic crisis nor a mass struggle, nor even a war can signify the end of stabilisation. The end of stabilisation will be a process of longer or shorter duration, a result of the joint effect of all economic crises and of all social conflicts. In no small measure does this end depend on the revolutionary activity of the workers.

It is unnecessary to point out that the opinion of the ultra-lefts, who deny point-blank the process of stabilisation, is both false and dangerous. Those who fail to see the changes in the economic and political situation lose all possibility of recognising the new modes of struggle of the workers and must needs develop a sectarian policy. This conception leads either to a putsch policy or to rank opportunism, to complete passivity which simply becomes revolutionary in name.

We do not dispute the facts of the situation, we do not fail to recognise the economic and political recuperation of the bourgeoisie. At the moment there is no "immediate revolutionary situation." But on the other hand we do not cast our revolutionary perspectives overboard in order to limit our activities for the period of stabilisation to purely reformist petty activities. The new struggles which must arise from the advance of stabilisation can develop into revolutionary struggles. The revolutionary action of the workers will decide the end of stabilisation.

This does not imply that we refrain from the struggle for reforms. Communists will do their utmost to attain even the smallest reform that will improve the position of the workers. But they must at the same time draw the attention of the workers to the inadequacy of these reforms and point out that as long as the bourgeoisie rules, these reforms will merely serve as the prelude for new measures of exploitation and oppression. The struggle for reforms cannot take the place of the final reckoning with the bourgeoisie. If the struggle for reforms is carried out in this spirit it can serve as the most important premise for the final struggle. It will strengthen and harden the workers for this struggle. If we admit that the tendency to impoverishment favours the revolution by convincing the masses of the necessity of the overthrow of capitalism, then we must admit, too, that the worker will not be victorious who meets impoverishment passively, but rather the worker who fights against it, and who in the struggle against it, and who in the struggle against poverty becomes strengthened both materially and morally, becomes organised and gains weapons and experience in this struggle.

The Need for a Programme

The Communist Party can only fulfil its tasks in this epoch if the masses of the workers are convinced that for the revolutionary party neither the struggle for daily demands or reforms, nor the revolutionary final aim are a phrase; if they are convinced that the Party sees its way, the path to victorious revolution, clearly marked out in its main contours; if they see that the partial demands which the Party puts forward are not merely advocated on account of the mood of the moment, but that they are in close contact with one another.

On the other hand Communists at the present time, if they are to remain real revolutionaries must consider how individual daily struggles are to be developed and their connection with the final aim.

In short, the Party must have a programme of action which links up the individual demands put forward systematically with one another. This programme cannot be a new edition of the Erfurt Programme as Maslov advocated in 1925. For reasons already mentioned we cannot limit our activities to a programme of reforms within the capitalist order and the bourgeois State. On the other hand a programme of action cannot be a mere collection of final slogans. It is the task of a programme of action to link up the daily demands with the final demands, to develop one from the other. The programme of action demands in addition to the daily demands (wages, hours of work, etc.), a number of measures comprehensible to the masses of the wor-

Contributions to a Programme—continued

kers, based on their necessities, the realisation of which, however, denotes a revolutionary encroachment on the imperialist economic system and raises the question of the power of the bourgeoisie. They are transition measures, transition demands, but not in the sense of the Erfurt Programme which was to be realised within the bourgeois State; they are demands which in case of their realisation denote an advance towards the final aim and struggle. Already in 1847, Engels wrote about this kind of demand in the "Deutsche Bruesseler Zeitung":

"All measures for the limitation of competition, the amassing of large sums of money in the hands of individuals, all limitation or abolition of the right of inheritance, all organisation of State employees, etc., are not only possible as revolutionary measures but necessary. They are possible, because the entire mass of the workers in revolt are behind them and maintain them by armed force. They are possible in spite of all the difficulties economists put forward, because these difficulties and drawbacks will force the workers to go still further, to the final abolition of private property so as not to lose again that which they have already gained. They are possible as a preparation, as transition stages for the abolition of private property but nothing else."

We see that to-day the trust bourgeoisie is the decisive force in German domestic and foreign policy. The struggle against the trust bourgeoisie must mark the starting point of our programme of action, the axis around which all demands turn. The nature of our programme of action will be made clear through this fact. It cannot be a reformist programme because trusts and monopolist capital cannot be overcome by a return to free competition, but only through revolutionary measures in the direction of socialism.

OUR DEMANDS IN THE POLITICAL FIELD

1. Workers' and Peasants' Government.

Communists put forward as a general slogan the demand for a Workers' and Peasants' Government; a government which substitutes the class organs of the workers for the bureaucratic machine of the bourgeois State. In their developed form these class organs are the workers' and peasants' councils, though they may develop in various ways such as control committees and the 1923 Hundreds. The Workers' and Peasants' Government is based on the armed workers who undertake to disarm the bourgeoisie.

2. Attitude to Bourgeois Republic.

In our referendum campaign the Party adhered too closely to a purely republican agitation against the princes and failed to devote sufficient attention to the connection between the expropriation of the princes and the current social problems. This shortcoming should now be made good. The development of the trust-

bourgeoisie within the Republic compels us to make clear our basic attitude to the bourgeois republic and to expose the plutocratic nature of this republic. Mere republican phrases as preached by the social-democrats confuse the masses and help to disarm them in the fight against the bourgeoisie. To-day the Republic is ensured and has ceased to be an object of struggle. The watchword, "the Republic is in danger," just as in pre-war France, serves mainly at the present time as a convenient slogan to capture the masses, or as a cloak for struggles for office of cliques within the bourgeois parties and the S.P.G.

This by no means signifies that it is a matter of indifference to us whether we have a monarchy or a republic. Nor does it mean any renunciation of the most energetic struggle against all semblances of reaction from the point of view of the bourgeois republic. Communists will wage an energetic struggle against any encroachment on electoral rights, limitation of the right of assembly and organisation, against the re-introduction of the censorship, in short against any limitation of the democratic liberties of the workers.

However, Communists cannot restrict their activities to the struggle for such bourgeois-democratic demands.

In carrying on propaganda it is essential to draw a parallel between the bourgeois republic where trusts rule and the workers are exploited and the Soviet Republic based on the large masses of the workers.

With the growth of our Party these basic explanations of our final objects become more necessary in view of the young untrained elements who join our ranks. Furthermore, use must also be made of the parliamentary platform for this propaganda.

3. Legal Questions.

The fact that Communists support every struggle for the dismissal of monarchist judges and the abolition of permanent judges does not prevent them from stressing the fact that juridical reforms in a bourgeois-democratic sense are by no means equivalent to the end of class justice. American class-justice, famous for its brutality, is exercised by republican judges who are elected for limited terms of office. In Germany, too, the so-called republican judges have shown that they are just as anti-labour as any others, a fact which has been demonstrated by the democrat, Niedner, and the activities of the "State courts for the protection of the Republic" which has social-democratic juries. The general aim of Communists, which must be continually pointed out in propaganda, is proletarian class justice, a justice exercised by and for the workers, which naturally pre-supposes the hegemony of the working class.

In addition to this at the present time the demand must be made for the abolition of all statutes which in practice show that they are used for the oppression of the workers (law for the protection of the Republic, par. 48, etc.), and full amnesty for all who have been sentenced for political reasons.

4. Military Questions.

In the same manner Communists in contradistinction to social-democrats are not content with demanding a reform of the Reichswehr, i.e., also mercenaries under

Contributions to a Programme—continued

republican leadership; but demand a complete disbanding of this counter-revolutionary armed force.

Side by side with this general demand Communists support every struggle for the abolition of the worst abuses in the Reichswehr; but unlike the social-democrats, who consider it their main duty to agitate for the abolition of monarchist tendencies, Communists defend the interests of the rank and file of the Reichswehr and support them in their struggle against their political disfranchisement, barracks drill, military ill-usage, etc. Such reforms and abolition of abuses cannot be carried out by parliamentary decisions. The only method of dealing with officers is through the establishment of soldiers' councils, from which officers and petty officers are excluded and which take over control of the management generally.

Communists demand the disbanding of all fascist, monarchist and other counter-revolutionary organisations such as "Stahlhelm," "Jungdo," etc. They support the class conscious workers in the "Reichsbanner" in their endeavour to transform it from being a protective force for the bourgeois republic and instrument of the coalition policy into a weapon of the workers, to protect their interests against the entire bourgeoisie. The general aim of the workers must be: the arming of all toilers both in town and country and of the small peasantry.

To attain this object all proletarian class organisations must be developed which aim at the bodily training of the working population.

What of the Army?

The question of the restoration of the military power of Germany becomes acute through the newly-

arrived imperialism of the German bourgeoisie. In the bourgeois camp the demand for the re-introduction of conscription is becoming more pressing. Some advocate conscription in the form of a militia; for example General Seeckt and now the German Democratic Party.

Left Social Democrats (Gerhardt Seeger in the "Leipziger Volkszeitung" and other pacifists) reply to the demand for the re-introduction of conscription by whining about the militarisation of the people and thereby drive workers into the arms of the fascists. They reject the militia also because it instils the spirit of war into the masses. The introduction of conscription denotes at the same time the strengthening of militarism and of the bourgeoisie. The militia, too, is merely a bourgeois contrivance and in bourgeois States an instrument of power for the bourgeoisie (as in Switzerland and the U.S.A.).

But in military questions our whole concern is with the interests of the class struggle. How are we to get the best conditions for the workers in their fight against bourgeois militarism?

Pacifists, who prefer a mercenary army to conscription, imagine that they can avoid a foreign war by chewing over pacifist phrases and giving the bourgeoisie weapons in the form of a mercenary army, to be used against the workers at home. But bourgeois militarism can only be overcome if the workers themselves take weapons into their hands and use them in such a way that they disintegrate the armed forces, the visible expression of bourgeois State power, and overthrow the bourgeois, feudal cadres.

Conscription?

It is to our interests that the largest possible number of workers secure arms, learn to use them and gain numerical control of the army. For this reason the

The Future of Indian Politics

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An application of Marxist methods to the analysis of India to day. The first section is devoted to the "New Economic Policy of Imperialism"—the policy of alliance between the British exploiters and the Indian industrial capitalists. The second section is "The Politics of Compromise." The third might be said to deal with the question that is stirring now in the minds of all real Nationalists in India—CAN INDIA FOLLOW CHINA?

Contributions to a Programme—continued

mere rejection of conscription is only an empty phrase which is of use only to the bourgeoisie. From the proletarian class point of view conscription is better than a mercenary army, since a conscript army in Germany must in the main consist of workers who through revolutionary propaganda can be rendered useless for bourgeois purposes and can be more readily transformed into a revolutionary fighting force than a mercenary army.

In the interests of the revolutionary struggle Communists must now advocate that form of compulsory military service which gives the workers the best chance of using those weapons which they thus secure against the bourgeoisie. This form is the militia.

Such a procedure by no means implies that we join forces with the bourgeoisie in military propaganda. On the contrary, we must aim at an introduction of the militia on the lines advocated by Engels on a similar occasion, in the words of the Hildebrandt song: "Gifts should be received at the point of the bayonet, point to point." We advocate the militia, because through it we are in the most favourable position to carry on propaganda for soldiers' councils and the election of officers through class-conscious workers. We can most easily transform this instrument of the power of the bourgeoisie into an instrument for our own purposes, and utilise the possibilities of the militia for the arming of the workers and the disarming of the bourgeoisie. Such is and continues to be our aim.

5. Abolition of Independent States.

The demand to abolish these medieval remains in Germany is of especial importance at the present time when the existence of individual States hampers economic development (for example, the development of the electrification of the Hamburg port, etc.), and large sums are wasted in a mutual dog in the manger system of taxation. An example of this may be seen in the propaganda war between Prussia, Hamburg, Lippe-Waldeck and the fact that Germany must pay 2,600 representatives in 22 juridical bodies and 70 ministers. The maintenance of these independent States is in the interests both of the old bourgeoisie, who cling to their cushy jobs, and also of the social-democrats and other parties, who do not want to relinquish the rich harvest provided by 22 State apparatuses, regardless of the fact that these mean new burdens for the masses of the people.

But Communists favour neither the absorption of small States by big ones, nor a bureaucratic centralisation of Germany: they aim at the centralisation of Germany through the abolition of the rotten old bureaucratic machine and the establishment of the widest possible form of self-government. This aim can best be realised through the establishment of a German Soviet Republic, since the proletarian Soviet power pre-supposes complete annihilation of the bourgeois bureaucratic State machine. It is the task of every Workers' and Peasants' Government to proceed with this work which the bourgeois revolution has left undone.

6. Separation of Church and State, Church and School.

In this sphere the cessation of the bureaucratic tutelage of the State over the school should be demanded

so as to protect children from the influence of bourgeois propaganda. The rights of parents' councils should be extended and schools should be entirely under the control of parents' councils and teachers' trade unions; education and all educational requirements should be free. Schools should be re-organised on the plan of the workers' schools.

7. Fight against Coalition Policy.

The most intense struggle should be waged against the social-democratic coalition policy, not merely by exposing the actual coalition policy, but also their purely parliamentary opposition policy; a special struggle should be waged against what is termed "positive work" in parliament and the fallacy of pure parliamentary methods exposed. To-day less than ever can real improvements in the position of the workers be attained without the pressure of the masses outside parliament. The "positive work" of the S.P.G. is based on the notorious policy of the lesser evil and implies deception of the workers in small doses rather than by wholesale measures. Communist activity in parliament must be set against this; its revolutionary methods should not be confined to parliamentary obstruction, but must concentrate on a close connection between parliamentary action and the activity of the masses outside parliament. Obstruction can only be of real service when it is likely to increase the non-parliamentary activity of the masses.

CHIEF DEMANDS IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN POLICY

1. Annulment of the Treaty of Versailles and the Right of Self-Determination for all territories under dispute (Danzig corridor, Polish or German Upper Silesia). Communists reject any forced change in present day conditions by means of imperialist military adventures. The results of the Treaty of Versailles, especially national oppression, cannot be removed by diplomatic jobbery with nations and the much-praised "understanding" advocated by the social-democrats. In such "understandings" the nations usually serve as pawns in the game of forming new imperialist military alliances. The only way to liquidate the results of the Treaty of Versailles, the oppression of nationalities, in order to serve the interests of the masses of the peoples concerned is through the proletarian revolution. Communists urge that the victory of the revolution in Germany and the neighbouring States, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in these countries will serve as a preparation for the peaceful solution of all frontier questions, for the removal of all national oppression by the introduction of complete self-determination for all peoples.

A struggle should be waged against the oppression and neglect of national minorities in Germany (Poles, Danes, etc.).

2. Rejection of all Colonial Policy and the most intense struggle against this and against colonial propaganda and united support for the struggle for liberation of the colonial peoples.

3. Fight against Germany's participation in the League of Nations as an institution of imperialist alliance policy. Generally speaking, a struggle against any imperialist alliance policy on the part of Germany.

Contributions to a Programme—continued

4. **Removal of the Dawes Control** and annulment of Reparation payments. For the present a struggle should be carried on for the transfer of these to the shoulders of the possessing classes.

5. **Alliance with Soviet Russia** and active defence of the Soviet Union.

TASKS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

The struggle against trust capital should be carried on from two standpoints in accordance with the double exploitation resulting from trusts in factories and through high monopoly prices. The latter method of exploitation ensures the struggling workers the support of the urban and rural middle classes who are likewise sufferers.

The first group of demands includes: improvement in working conditions, abolition of all results of rationalisation affecting the workers, increased wages, shorter working day, work for the unemployed or certainty of full support. The second main demand is the reduction of prices which are maintained at a high level through trust monopoly, and the supply of workers with cheap necessities of life.

The Struggle for the Control of Production

In this struggle the comprehensive slogan is the control of production. Only through workers' control of production can the main evil which to-day oppresses the masses be removed effectively; can the unemployed be given work and prices be reduced.

Control of production by the workers implies the removal of capitalists or their representatives from the management of enterprises, and the management of production and the regulation of the exchange of goods by workers' organisations.

The attainment of the control of production signifies a revolutionary encroachment into the domain of capitalist economy, the first step to the expropriation of the expropriators, hence the struggle for power. The struggle for the control of production is, therefore, an eminently political struggle.

Since the realisation of the control of production implies the struggle for power, can this slogan be put forward to-day when there is no immediate revolutionary situation, when the workers do not even unite in the struggle against the onslaught of the bourgeoisie? Should we not limit ourselves to such demands as the immediate situation necessitates? We draw attention here to what we have already said in another place about the general nature of our demands during the period of stabilisation and add the following special points:

Naturally the slogan of control of production cannot be put forward as the slogan of immediate action as it was in 1917, with definite fighting tasks such as the occupation of factories, etc.; but for the present only by way of a propaganda slogan, as a slogan to assemble the masses in a united front struggle.

Methods of Struggle

If the struggles for the immediate daily demands are to be rendered more effective, then we must offer the workers better methods of struggle than those anti-

quoted methods used in the fight against long working hours and mass unemployment, against rationalisation and low wages, against high rents and high prices. It will not suffice to expose the various betrayals of the proletarian struggle by bureaucrats still steeped in pre-war methods. In every individual case we must point out the method of struggle suitable to the given situation. Only by such practical and eminently revolutionary work can the Communist Party realise its leading role. In the period of stabilisation this is the only way to organise the revolution, because only by ousting antiquated methods of struggle and by working out higher methods is it possible to establish the revolutionary united front of struggle which will lead to victory over the bourgeoisie.

During the period of monopoly capitalism, when trusts not only determine the entire economic life, but also domestic and foreign policy, the exposure of this activity is the best key to all control measures employed by the bourgeoisie. The exposure of secret usages, the usurious exploitation by capitalist monopoly forms an essential part of the proletarian class struggle and is the pre-requisite for the organisation and training of the masses in the struggle to oust the capitalist usufructuaries. That this cannot be an economic-democratic idyll, but rather calls for the sharpest proletarian class struggle is demonstrated by the actual capitulation of the armchair socialists in the Reichstag where these gentlemen at the slightest frown of the employers refrained from demanding the data on production costs. This fact signifies the retirement once and for all of the German political economists, who, in pre-war days by their collection of material on home workers, the position of agricultural workers, etc., indirectly supplied weapons to the proletarian class struggle, although they used this material only for the glorification of capitalism. Only the united struggle of the workers can penetrate into the "business secrets" of capitalism and by exposure put a stop to such usages.

Why Control?

The businesses of 12,392 limited companies in Germany with a share capital of 20½ billion, 65 per cent. of which is locked up in enterprises at present, decide the fate of 65 million Germans. This is the ruling force which faces the German worker, which dictates wages and prices, introduces short time or lengthens the working day, closes down factories or enlarges them, throws the masses of the workers on the streets or exploits them by starvation wages. Without workers' control, without exposure of "the business secrets" of this concentrated capital and the bitterest struggle against all kinds of fraud, the struggle for wages and shorter hours by the trade unions, the activity of the co-operatives in supplying the workers with cheap necessities, all housing activity and social political activity constitute nothing but a vicious circle. Uncontrolled trusts and enterprises instead of the masses of the exploited workers decide their profit requirements and accordingly "what the enterprise can afford."

The struggle for control of production is, therefore, no trick, no slogan to be taken up or dropped at will: the struggle for the control of production is the central task which will decide whether the hegemony of the small group of capitalist usufructuaries will decide the

Contributions to a Programme—continued

fate of the workers or vice versa. This is the most pressing question of the day in view of the existence of a permanent army of two million unemployed.

It has been and still continues to be the manner of the ultra-left to put forward as slogans of immediate action slogans which can only serve as propaganda and agitation slogans; such methods can lead to a putsch policy, but they chiefly denote that real educational work amongst the masses is being replaced by high-sounding words which mean nothing to the masses, because they fail to meet their requirements and are devoid of serious meaning.

When we put forward the slogan for the control of production this does not imply that we carry on a campaign for a few months and then switch off to some other slogan. The work of the Party during the period of stabilisation cannot only consist in attracting the attention of the workers through short-lived campaigns of varying tendencies. Stabilisation is a definite period which is marked by the fact that the stormy, changeable course of the class struggle during the period immediately after the war is replaced by a certain entrenchment in the correlation of forces within the bourgeoisie and a certain weakening in the power of the working class. It is our task to make clear to the workers the necessity of the revolutionary solution, for now they have lost interest in the big questions of our time through pre-occupation with daily cares. And this cannot be accomplished by a campaign of two or three months' duration. The slogan of control of production is not intended to be a momentary slogan, for it is the comprehensive slogan for the struggle that arises out of the circumstances of our age, the struggle against trusts.

Economic and Political

The campaign for the control of production is not a substitute for the daily wage and hour struggles. Only an anarchist can imagine that the bourgeoisie can be dislodged by a comprehensive economic struggle, or only a reformist can believe that the socialist order of society can be introduced by means of gradual wage increases. Only those who share these views can limit themselves to the purely economic struggle without setting themselves the task of developing the economic struggle into the political. (Re the general attitude to such "economic" conceptions, see Lenin's classical interpretation in his "What Is to Be Done?"). The manner of this development varies according to the concrete conditions. In Germany the slogan of the control of production fulfils this task under the conditions of the struggle against monopoly capital.

The slogan for the control of production permits workers to prove the necessity for a revolutionary attack on capitalist production in accordance with the necessities of the united working class elements fighting for daily demands. The slogan of the control of production as a main collective slogan unites individual and sectional interests of the workers; having attained a certain stage the struggle for control of production must lead to the formation and combination of class organs, factory councils, cost of living committees and councils of action, from the ranks of which at the decisive moment

the Soviets, the organs of the government of the victorious proletariat, will develop. The struggle for the control of production will co-ordinate the partial and special struggles of the workers in the trade unions, co-operatives, sports and tenants' organisations. This slogan supersedes all non-political and consequently incorrect and confusing slogans such as the attempt in the trade union sphere to conduct struggles for wages and hours as pure economic struggles instead of rendering them political and supplementing the purely economic demands by general class demands, in order to organise mass struggles if the forces involved permit.

The British General Strike

There is no example in history of a successful combination of the forces of the workers based on purely economic and trade union demands. It was possible for the reformists to throttle the British General Strike, because they carried it on as a purely trade union solidarity strike. The Communists who wanted to develop it put forward political demands. Whenever there is the possibility of mass trade union struggles it is the duty of Communists to put forward demands which exceed the bounds of a purely economic struggle. The possibility for this is given in the slogan for the control of production. It is not a question of tacking on political demands to those put forward by the trade unions, but of extending the concrete demands to general class demands. Hence the slogan of control of production is a propaganda slogan, a collective slogan which points the way to the masses in all economic struggles. Propaganda for control of production should not be of an abstract nature, but must be accompanied by examples and evidence of the exploitation and enormous surplus profits accruing from rationalisation. For example take the chemical trust which made a 60 to 80 per cent. profit on the production of nitrogen, attaining a clear profit of 100 million marks on a 250,000 ton transaction.

The Party and the workers generally must utilise every means to secure this information. Workers in factories and enterprises must act jointly with clerical workers in order to obtain an insight into the workings of trusts. As a first step in this direction the demand must be made for the abolition of business secrets and the introduction of public auditing.

When workers become aware of the extent of their exploitation and the vastness of their employers' profits they must needs begin to think. The very fact of attempting to delve into the employers' trade secrets and to penetrate into the sacred precincts of capital, not in the service of the employers, but in order to prepare the struggle in itself constitutes a struggle. The thoroughness of this propaganda is dependent on the volume of the masses involved therein and by the existence of large masses engaged in this struggle the transition to actual realisation of the control of production, i.e., management of enterprises, must ensue.

A Struggle against Rationalisation

The struggle for control of production will not render the fight for better wages and working conditions superfluous, on the contrary these struggles will gain vigour and new energy when the workers recognise the extent of their exploitation; manual and brain workers in large trusts will be brought more closely together and

Contributions to a Programme—continued

the workers as a whole will see more clearly the great class aim pursued in all petty struggles.

The slogan of control of production comprises the struggle against the disastrous effects of rationalisation for the workers. Therefore, when we declare our basic attitude to rationalisation we must first and foremost emphasise the fact that this catchword, boosted by the capitalists and the social-democrats to mislead the workers, is nothing but a series of by no means new methods to increase capitalist profits. A thorough examination of these methods will make our attitude clear. It will become clear that we do not oppose technical improvements, but that we must agitate against any prolongation of the working day and all schemes used to increase exploitation.

For the first time a concrete basis for an alliance of all toilers, an alliance of workers, peasants and urban middle classes under the leadership of the proletariat is created by the struggle against the policy of trusts, under the slogan of the control of production. Hitherto agitation among these various sections was on more general lines or carried on rather disconnectedly as occasion arose; we were unable to get into contact with the main body. To-day the economic and political development makes it possible for the proletariat to bring the great mass of the urban and rural middle class under its influence in the struggle against monopoly, since they, too, are exploited by the prevailing price policy. Of special importance is the slogan for control of production by workers on the land. In a country like Germany with a highly developed capitalist system land hunger does not play a decisive role as is the case in eastern agrarian countries. But the other agricultural means of production gain in importance for him. He is hard hit by the monopolisation of the manufacture of these means of production (artificial manure, agricultural machinery, coal, etc.). In this connection it must be made clear to the small peasantry that they cannot fight against exploitation arising from monopoly by protective tariffs, which are imposed on the interests of the big farmers and landowners and to their detriment; that the fact that workers do not work enough is not the cause of high prices, but rather the monopoly profits of trusts; that they should carry on a joint struggle with the workers against the trust bourgeoisie and that their only chance of help is to be found in a direct exchange between peasant co-operatives and industry under the control of the workers. Other slogans against the policy of trusts, mainly advocated by the social-democrats, are either in the interests of the opponent, or utterly inadequate.

“Industrial Democracy”

Industrial democracy is a perversion of the revolutionary slogan for the control of production. It is either a mere phrase or denotes preferential treatment for a small section of the workers at the expense of the large masses of the workers, by interesting them in the higher profits of the enterprise in question and thus assisting in the greater exploitation of all other proletarians.

The anti-trust law in America was not capable of preventing trustification. It simply forced the trust magnates to seek new ways and means of combination. In Germany thus far all combine legislation has been

of direct service to trusts and industrial amalgamations. Thus it is clear that measures of control employed in bourgeois States are ineffective. But this does not signify that we should not utilise State control of trusts to help to expose the business tactics of trusts to the masses. We should make it our business to serve on all such committees in order to help the struggle of the masses there.

In a similar manner in special cases we can demand the nationalisation of enterprises as a method of retaliation for stoppage of work, etc., without, however, putting forward the slogan of the nationalisation of trusts and without cherishing any illusions about the nationalisation of factories, etc., by the bourgeois State. As long as the State remains a bourgeois State the nationalisation of trusts makes no fundamental change in the nature of these enterprises. The State factories in Germany serve as a good illustration of this. Nationalisation or a change in the present correlation of forces of the classes would only bring about the strongest concentration of capitalist power.

An I.L.P. Theory

A struggle must be waged not only against the false or inadequate slogans, but also against the widespread and apparently plausible conceptions circulated by the trade union bureaucracy. The most widely advocated measure by the trade unions as a solution of all present evils is the appeal to the understanding of the employers that wages should be increased. This is intended to satisfy all concerned; the employer by increased markets and the unemployed because the increased demand provides work. All crises are rendered impossible. Despite the plausibility of this argument it is absolutely false. It displays a thorough failure to understand the entire mechanism of capitalist economy, it ignores the decisive factors of markets in the capitalist system. Marx says:

“It is purely a tautology to say that crises are caused by the scarcity of solvent consumers, or of a paying consumption. The capitalist system does not know any other mode of consumption but a paying one, except that of the pauper or the “thief.” If any commodities are unsaleable it means that no solvent purchasers have been found for them, in other words, consumers (whether commodities are bought in the last instance for productive or individual consumption). But if one were to attempt to clothe this tautology with a semblance of a profounder justification by saying that the working class receive too small a portion of their own product and the evil would be remedied by giving them a larger share of it, or raising their wages, we should reply that crises are precisely always preceded by a period in which wages rise generally and the working class actually get a larger share of the annual product intended for consumption. From the point of view of the advocates of “simple” (!) common sense such a period should rather remove a crisis. It seems then that capitalist production comprises certain conditions which are independent of good or bad will and permit the working class to enjoy that relative prosperity only momentarily, and at that always as a harbinger of a coming crisis.”
—(Karl Marx: Capital, vol. II.)

Contributions to a Programme—continued

Rosa Luxemburg also ridiculed this view which Sombart supported:

“ . . . Employers in case prices cannot be raised should increase production to meet wage increases. Employers do this of themselves whenever possible without the advice of Herr Sombart. It is true that periods of increased production provide the best opportunities for wage demands. With this difference that the increase of production is not a method to be applied at will to force wage increases, but on the contrary it is a premise making wage increases possible and which in its turn is bound up with the position of the markets, i.e., the realisation of the interests of capital! Or employers should cover wage increases by technical improvements. Oh, professor! your ‘lucky bride’ will believe that! Technical improvements have been used by employers since time immemorial in order to defeat the workers who agitate for wage increases and not to satisfy them!”

The fact that trade union bureaucrats to-day point to the example of America in order to prove this point of view is only an exposure of their profound lack of knowledge of American economic conditions. The American worker does not constitute the basis of the home market in America, but rather the farmer who carries on his enterprise independently. The farmer is the chief buyer of Ford cars, tractors and other articles of mass production. The mass of the farmers constitute the basis for standardised American industrial production.

Just as is the case with wage increases a shortening of the working day can give no permanent solution to present day mass unemployment. If working hours should be reduced so as to absorb all unemployed under the capitalist system this would result in a general introduction of short time or permanent over-production.

Despite the necessity of the struggle for wage increases and the shorter working day in which Communists must take the lead, still these measures at the present time do not suffice to bring about a permanent improvement in the position of the workers. If they are to attack the evil at the roots they must of necessity develop into the struggle for the control of production.

Further Demands in the Economic Field

1. **The Question of Taxation:** Abolition of all taxes which are a burden on the masses. (wage taxation, indirect taxes), tax exemption for all small peasants up to a certain standard, but progressive income tax and property taxation for the possessing class.

2. **Compensation:** By maintenance of the principle of the clause in the Spartakusbund programme, which demanded the annulment of all war debts. small investors, who have lost their savings through inflation, should receive compensation at the expense of the possessing class.

3. **Customs:** Rejection of protective tariffs, criticism of the illusion of free trade whilst indicating that the national and international rule of cartels which now determines trade policy can only be obviated through the establishment of socialism.

4. **The Agrarian Question:** Agitation against the monopoly price policy is bound up with the general struggle for the control of production. In the land question, the question of property, which in a revolutionary situation must come into the foreground, we must take into consideration the fact that an agrarian revolution for the largest part of south and west Germany must begin with the second act of the Russian agrarian revolution. This was what was termed the “dekulakisation,” i.e., increasing the quantity of land held by the poorer peasants at the expense of the big peasantry, the “kulaks”; in Russia this second act followed upon the first which consisted in dividing up the large estates amongst the peasantry as a whole. It was necessary in order to strengthen the poor peasantry, who are most closely allied to the urban proletariat and at the same time to break the opposition of the “kulaks” who constitute a reserve force of the counter-revolution. The small peasantry in South Germany cannot be won over by a promise of a division of large estates.

In this instance, a more liberal allotment of land to the small peasantry must take place at the expense of the capitalist elements amongst the peasantry. To this category belong the middle peasants in addition to the big peasantry in Germany. But the German middle peasant must not be confused with the Russian who corresponds with the small peasant in Germany. (See Engels, 1894, “On the Peasant Question in France and Germany.”) In Lenin’s theses for the Second Congress the group which he terms middle peasants, whose neutralisation is demanded, does not comprise all those elements that are included in Germany under the term, but only the lower grade, i.e., those for whom labour plays a secondary role. (Statistics give the average size farm for a middle peasant at 5 to 10 hectares, but generally speaking the average is considered to be 5 to 20 hectares.*)

To Share the Land?

The capitalist elements among the peasantry have shown from 1918 onwards that they represent the kernel of German counter-revolution. (Southern Bavaria, Hanover, etc.). Only when they see some immediate advantage for themselves will the small peasantry help the workers to break the opposition of these elements. We do not demand complete expropriation of all capitalist peasants, but merely an equalisation of peasant property. Fritz Baade, the best expert on German agrarian conditions among the social-democrats, writes in his article “Agrarian Ideas of the Post-War Period”:

“The peasant in south and west Germany would exert all his energy to secure even one ideal possession in his own neighbourhood: he would sell his soul to the devil or at worst his vote to the social-democrats to attain this end. But the promise of thirty such ideals in Pomerania, Mecklenburg or East Prussia leaves him cold and his instinctive solidarity of interests with the possessing class will hardly suffer therefrom.”

* During the war Lenin demanded in his draft theses on “The Tasks of the Zimmerwald Left” of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party, that in Switzerland . . . where rural conditions are similar to those in northern Bavaria . . . all landed property over 15 hectares should be confiscated.

Contributions to a Programme—continued

Baade deduces therefrom that the "settlement policy" which the social-democrats, support, i.e., creation of small farms which are bought off the estate owners, will not bring about any immediate agrarian movement or meet with the support of the peasantry. And having made this statement, Baade, social-democrat that he is, rests on his oars. We, however, must put forward a different demand. By raising the land question in south and west Germany we can unfetter considerable revolutionary forces amongst the peasantry; the social-democrat who gives the peasant nothing will not get even the peasant's vote, but the revolution which will give him the land will secure his support.

The same demands apply to large-scale agricultural enterprises as to industrial undertakings; to-day as first step towards expropriation propaganda should be carried on for the control of production by agricultural

workers. In addition we demand that, at the expense of the large estates, all small peasants and a definite section of agricultural workers, who have land or desire to have some, should receive sufficient land to support them.

Our immediate demands are: Exemption from taxation for small peasants whose income is below a given minimum, cheap long term credits from State funds for the small peasantry.

However, our agitation amongst the peasantry must not be carried on regardless of the general struggle of the workers; we must formulate our demands in such a manner that we avoid the quagmire of the ideology of peasant self-aid. We must stress the fact that the toiling peasantry cannot help themselves nor make any progress without the assistance of the workers. If we fail to adopt such a policy we merely get to know the peasantry and their organisations, but we form no fighting alliance between the workers and the toiling peasantry.

Comrade Brandler's "Programme of Action"

Reply of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the C.P. of Germany

Conclusion

3. THE SLOGAN OF CONTROL OF PRODUCTION

THE manner in which comrade Brandler treats the slogan of control of production is extremely unclear. This arises partly because comrade Brandler confounds the programme of action and the general programme, and partly because he gives certain explanations of the control of production which contradict one another. Comrade Brandler says that: "The attainment of the control of production signifies a revolutionary encroachment into the domain of capitalist economy, the first step to the expropriation of the expropriators," that as a concrete task it only arises in acute revolutionary situations. Hence comrade Brandler deduces quite correctly in this connection that at the moment the control of production can only be put forward as a propaganda slogan. A little further on in his article comrade Brandler declares the slogan of control of production to be the main task of the workers and an actual question of the moment. Comrade Brandler is able to make this statement because he interprets the control of production at the present stage of the workers' fight for freedom in a different manner from the control of production in an acute revolutionary situation. He writes:

"During the period of monopoly capitalism, when trusts not only determine the entire economic life but also domestic and foreign policy, the exposure of this activity is the best key to all measures employed by the bourgeoisie. The exposure of secret usages, the usurious exploitation by capitalist monopoly forms an essential part of the class struggle, and is the prerequisite

for the organisation and training of the masses in the struggle to out the capitalist usufructuaries."

Thus we gather that the control of production at the present moment denotes, in comrade Brandler's opinion, more than the collection of material on the practices of monopoly capitalism by the factory councils and the trade unions.*

* The clearest exposition of the conception of the control of production as the collection of material was made in the proposal which comrades Walcher, Melscher, etc., submitted to the Essen Party Congress. Here it is stated:

"The comprehensive slogan for the daily struggles against the policy of monopoly and trusts must be the slogan, Control of production by the workers.

"The reformists are endeavouring to break the back of the growing discontent of the workers and of the petty bourgeois sections by advocating the slogan of industrial democracy (State control of cartels and trusts, League of Nations control over international cartels and trusts). The slogan of industrial democracy is the consequent continuation of class collaboration.

"Communists oppose the slogan of industrial democracy by that of control of production by the workers. The struggle against the policy of trusts conducted under the slogan of the control of production, creates a firm basis for an alliance of all toilers, an alliance of the workers, peasant and urban middle class under the leadership of the proletariat; of especial importance is the slogan of control of production for the agricultural workers and the small peasantry. The monopoly of agricultural means of production (artificial manures, agricultural machinery, etc.) by trusts is a great burden on the small peasantry, and causes their impoverishment. The price policy of monopoly and trusts has the most disastrous effect on the mode of living of the workers and petty bourgeois sections.

"The slogan of control of production involves the struggle against the bad effects of rationalisation on labour.

"The attainment of control of production signifies a revolutionary encroachment on capitalist economy, signifies the first step towards the expropriation of the capitalists, the introduction of the struggle for power. Hence the struggle for the control of production is an eminently political struggle.

"The slogan of control of production at present when there is no acute revolutionary situation has a different significance from that which it possessed in 1918 to 1923. At that time capitalist economy was in a state of progressive decline. On this account it was then necessary to mobilise factory councils and workers' organ-

Brandler's Programme—continued

But it is nonsense to make a propaganda slogan the central slogan of a programme of action. On the other hand, it would be incorrect, and only lead to confusion of all economic and political conceptions if the collection of material and economic disclosures were to be termed control of production.

Of course as historical materialists and Marxist dialecticians we must not overlook the actual connection between the various demands and slogans, action and propaganda slogans in revolutionary struggles. The discovery and exposure of the usurious and exploiting methods of the trust magnates is undoubtedly a most important constituent part of the class struggle. But how can this exposure be compared with the most exact control of the economic and political activity of the trusts? As long as capitalism exists, especially in its monopolist form, the workers and their party will only be able from time to time to discover and expose certain frauds and extortions. But is it possible for the oppressed class to exercise exact control over the entire activity of the ruling class? That is impossible. For industry can only serve one of two aims, that of profit for the capitalists or the supply of necessities for the proletariat. It is impossible to organise the control of industry in the interests of the workers without the abolition of private property. And for this reason the question of workers' control must be put as a question of power.

But what does comrade Brandler write?

"Only the united struggle of the workers can penetrate into the 'business secrets' of capitalism and by exposure put a stop to such usages."

It is a new interpretation that the "united struggle of the workers" has nothing better to do than penetrate into business secrets, and still more astonishing that this penetration should put an end to the business methods of the bourgeoisie. Up till now we were of opinion that only through the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship was it possible to accomplish this object. Still, one cannot assume that comrade Brandler, in spite of Marx, thinks that the weapon of criticism can replace the criticism of weapons, that the exposure of business usages can abolish this!

isations in order to show up the bankruptcy of the capitalist system and secure greater influence in the management of factories so as to take them over in the course of the struggle.

"To-day, however, the most important task of the control of production consists in a systematic, organised collection of materials which will expose rationalisation methods and results as well as the price policy of monopoly, cartels, trusts and the big banks. Hand-in-hand with this collection of material it must be pointed out to the workers, the middle class and the small peasantry how they are exploited and robbed, and how necessary their struggle is to bring about a change in the economic system on socialist lines.

"Control of production in this sense shows the workers and all toiling sections the necessity of a revolutionary attack on production in a manner which should be in keeping with the needs of the struggle for daily demands. The workers' struggles in the trade unions, co-operatives, tenants' organisations and also in municipal affairs become co-ordinated through the struggle for the control of production. It provides simultaneously the possibility of giving these struggles a political aim and their development into the struggle for power. At a given stage the struggle for the control of production must lead to the formation and amalgamation of class organisations, factory councils, price control committees and councils of action, from which at the decisive stage in the struggle the Soviets, the ruling organs of the victorious proletariat, will develop."

Comrade Brandler fails to make a close analysis of the slogan of the control of production as developed by history in 1917 in Russia and in 1918 in Germany. Comrade Lenin was correct in understanding "control of production" a system in which political and economic demands complement one another, an interpretation which he elucidates when putting forward and justifying the slogan of control of production in September, 1917, in his pamphlet: "The Pending Catastrophe and How to Fight It." Lenin mentions the following as the most important measures:

1. The combination of all banks into one and State control over its operations, or the nationalisation of banks.
2. The nationalisation of cartels and syndicates, i.e., the biggest monopoly combines of the capitalists.
3. The abolition of trade secrets.
4. Compulsory combination of industrialists, tradespeople and property owners generally.
5. Compulsory union of the population in consumers' co-operatives or the demand for such union and control over same.

Demand for Dictatorship

These demands were bound up by Lenin most closely with the demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat. When opponents of the Bolsheviks reproached Lenin with falling a victim to syndicalism through his demand for workers' control he replied in his pamphlet, "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?" (end of September, 1917) that it is through control of production that the political element is given prominence, and that it is inseparable from the conquest of political power by the workers:

"When we say 'workers' control' we place this slogan next that of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and always *immediately* after it, and make it perfectly clear about which state we are speaking. The State is the ruling organ of a class. . . . When it signifies the rule of the workers, when the State in question is the proletarian State, hence the dictatorship of the proletariat, then workers' control *can* become a general, comprehensive, omnipresent, exact and most conscientious control over production and the distribution of products. . . . Without Soviets this task, at least for Russia, would be impossible. The Soviets denote that organised instrument of the proletariat by which this task of world historical importance can be solved."

In exactly the same manner the question of control of production was dealt with at the First Factory Council Conference held in Petrograd on June 12th, 1917. After a speech by Lenin the Bolshevik resolution was adopted, in which it was said:

"The only way to ward off catastrophe is by the creation of real workers' control over production and the distribution of products. To establish such control it is necessary: (1) That in all central organs in control the majority of the workers' organisations, the trade unions, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies and the Factory

Brandler's Programme—continued

Council Committees be ensured at least two-thirds of all votes, and that those *entrepreneurs*, who are willing to co-operate, and the technically-trained personnel be included; (2) that the Factory Councils and also the trade unions receive the right to participate in the control of all enterprises, and that all business and bank books be submitted to them and all data made known.

"Workers' control should also extend in a similar manner over all financial and bank operations.

"The quick and systematic introduction of all these measures is possible when the entire State power is transferred to the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies."

These explanations of Lenin make it quite clear that the control of production cannot be separated from the political revolutionary measures of the workers. Control of production without Soviets is nonsense. Control of production without armed workers is nonsense. Control of production without the immediate struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is nonsense; control of production, in other words, is a comprehensive conception for the economic measures for which the workers struggle in acute revolutionary situations, and which can only be realised by the conquest of political power. In addition to the political prerequisites of the workers' revolutionary struggle, control of production also comprises nationalisation, and is at all events inseparable from this second measure of the proletarian dictatorship.

Leaving Out the Politics

If we start with Leninist interpretation of the control of production then we find the closest connection between control of production, nationalisation and Soviet power. Comrade Brandler says that control of production must be the comprehensive slogan in the era of trusts. Trusts are, however, monopoly concerns of private capital, and their economic and political influence can only be broken when they come into the hands of the proletarian State, that is, become a State monopoly under the control of the workers. Comrade Brandler discusses at great length the connection between economic and political demands, and at the same time he himself commits the decisive error of stripping control of production of the political element. At a given stage in development in the collection of material comrade Brandler sees control of production as a "revolutionary encroachment" of the workers, "an encroachment" devoid of any political-organisational measures. For this reason comrade Brandler can write pages and pages about the control of production without once mentioning the arming of the workers, the revolutionary workers' councils and nationalisation.

Comrade Brandler will reply that also in his opinion the control of production includes these political demands and prerequisites as far as the slogan of the control of production as a propaganda slogan is in question. But how is it possible to use the slogan of the workers' control of production without speaking about its political

content? Comrade Brandler wants to give the slogan of control of production already now a definite content, although he maintains that it is not only of significance as a propaganda slogan. This content is to consist in the exposure of the secret usages and the usurious exploitation resulting from capitalist monopoly. Nobody has any intention of avoiding these tasks. In the Essen theses it is stated:

Against Profiteering

"The Party must expose the exploitation and usurious policy of trusts and cartels, and rally the Factory Councils for the extension of their rights and authority by means of the irreconcilable class struggle against the employers."

In the special directions of the Party Central Committee these demands have often been specifically pointed out and made concrete. Therefore there is no question of whether these demands are put forward or not, but whether they are to be considered as the preliminaries or the first step to the control of production, and whether they are expected to perform miracles as comrade Brandler anticipates when he writes:

"Without workers' control, without exposure of the 'business secrets' of this concentrated capital and the bitterest struggle against all kinds of fraud, the struggle for wages and shorter hours by the trade unions, the activity of the co-operatives in supplying the workers with cheap necessities, all housing activity and social political activity, constitute nothing but a vicious circle."

Is that intended to mean that if the workers do not take over the management of industry all successes in daily struggles are useless? If so then this is an ultra-left exaggeration. If it means that the successes gained in the struggle for daily demands can become permanent attainments without the seizure of power by the workers by the exposure of "business secrets," then this is nothing but crass opportunism. To hope to abolish the extortion of cartels in the capitalist system by exposure is to cherish the petty bourgeois illusion of the supporters of the anti-trust legislation.

Brandler's Confusion

In the same line we meet the extraordinary statement:

"The slogan for the control of production permits the workers to prove the necessity for a revolutionary attack on capitalist production in accordance with the necessities of the united working-class elements fighting for daily demands."

This sentence gives proof of comrade Brandler's confusion in respect of the question of the control of production. Is the question here at issue that of the Leninist propaganda slogan of workers' control in a revolutionary situation? Apparently not! The sentence seems to aim at confusing the special nature of different situations, and to provide as it were the proof that the control of production can be simultaneously both a propaganda and an agitation slogan. If, however, the sentence refers to the actual situation, where is the revolutionary encroachment on capitalist production possible? It is downright opportunism to designate

Brandler's Programme—continued

the exposure of business secrets as a revolutionary encroachment. What is possible at the present time in the way of revolutionary encroachments? In revolutionary situations the armed workers will show the employers in the factories and the bourgeois State apparatus what revolutionary encroachments really are. But despite the Brandler formula about control of production, the workers will not be able to make any revolutionary encroachments on capitalist production without armed and revolutionary Soviets.

Logical Connection

The slogan of control of production, comrade Brandler teaches us, should combine and give political content to all struggles; for in the words of comrade Brandler to give political content does not mean simply "to tack on" political demands to trade union demands (viz., 15 pfenning wage increase and workers' and peasants' government or nationalisation). There is naturally no question of "tacking on" but of a logical connection which must arise out of the given situation. Why is it impossible to combine wage and hour demands with government demands if the situation is sufficiently acute? A 15-pfenning wage increase and control of production does not sound any better than the slogan which Brandler despises, and what is more, is opportunist and nonsensical if not taken together with the definite political slogan of the workers' and peasants' government. When the workers are engaged on a big struggle against wage-cuts and longer hours, as was the case during the miners' lock-out, is it perhaps incorrect to combine the slogan "Not a minute on the day, not a penny off the pay" with the slogan "Down with the Conservative Government, which leads the capitalist attack; up the Workers' Government which nationalises the mines, subjects them to the control of the workers and introduces humane working conditions"?

The slogan of control of production is opportunist if it is to substitute the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government. We must, as Lenin always said, put this slogan next or immediately after the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat. If control of production is intended to mean the organisation of economic exposures, and if this kind of control of production becomes a main slogan, then, in spite of all talk about giving a political aim to economic struggles, this is downright "economism"* for in the struggle against economism Lenin said:

"It is thus clear that Social-Democrats cannot limit themselves to the economic struggle, and that they must not allow the organisation of economic exposures to become the main plank in their activity."—(Lenin: "On Trade Unions," an extract from the work "What Is To Be Done?").

It is true that comrade Brandler speaks of the struggle for the control of production being a struggle for power, but the concrete steps which he contemplates for this end are by no means suited to lead the workers on to the path of the political struggle for power. Utilisation of all the institutions of the bourgeois State to secure material about the practices of monopoly or-

ganisation, combined action of manual and clerical workers in trusts in order to secure an insight into the business methods of trusts, the demand for the abolition of business secrets and for the introduction of public auditing—these are the steps which are to lead to action which will result in the immediate establishment of control of production, i.e., the management of factories. This argument gives the impression as though it were possible within the framework of the bourgeois order, at a time of relative stabilisation, to abolish capitalist trade secrets and to organise public auditing, and as though only after this the workers would realise how they are exploited, and would proceed to take action which would bring the factories under their own management.

Lenin spoke of the abolition of business secrets and public auditing and control, but in an acute revolutionary situation, when the struggle for Soviet power was the order of the day, and in connection with the nationalisation of banks and trusts and the transition of socialism. (See the work, "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?")

Apparently comrade Brandler thinks that the control of production is of especial importance because in the phase of imperialist capitalism we must make our main attack on private capitalist monopoly, and hence lay chief stress on the special and independent activity of the workers. Comrade Brandler thinks that control of production is the best counter-slogan to the S.P.G. demand for "industrial democracy." Comrade Brandler overlooks the fact that the social-democrats combine, as far as possible, their demand for industrial democracy with their demand for political democracy. In order to avoid the demand for the expropriation of the capitalists, the social-democrats content themselves with the demand for the division of both industrial and political power between workers and entrepreneurs. Therefore if we are to put up an effective offensive against this social-democratic conception we must stress the fact that neither the division of the management of production nor control measures in individual factories are adequate if we are to remove the domination of the employer in the economic field. Communists do not want any collaboration with the employers, but their exclusion through nationalisation under workers' control. It is precisely our duty to stress the conception of the socialisation of the means of production through the demand for nationalisation and the expropriation of the capitalists.

Joint Management Impossible

In opposition to this reformist propaganda of industrial democracy our comrades must clearly and firmly declare a joint management of production by workers and capitalists to be impossible, that only either capitalists or workers can manage and control production, that this management and control presuppose the possession of both economic and political power. If we avoid putting the question in this clear revolutionary manner and fall back on some mystical control of production which leaves it a mooted question whether it is feasible before the conquest of power (by collecting material and the abolition of business secrets), then we assist the industrial democracy swindle. "Workers' control" in the bourgeois State can be nothing else but

* NOTE i.e., confining oneself to purely "industrial" action (as opposed to "political" action).

Brandler's Programme—continued

“industrial democracy” collaboration with the employers in the interest of the employers.

Hence the control of production alone cannot constitute the main slogan. Generally speaking, it is a sign of a non-dialectical conception to want to determine already to-day what slogan will constitute the main slogan in an acute revolutionary situation. The Bolsheviks, for example, were able to increase their influence amongst the workers and the poor peasantry in 1917 by the slogan “Peace and land.” And only relatively later on was the slogan workers’ control of production and of the State raised. It would be equally erroneous to want to single out a slogan for the whole period of relative stabilisation right up to the conquest of power, a slogan which should serve as the main slogan both for the time of relative stabilisation and for the acute revolutionary struggle.

Coalition their Aim

Neither is comrade Brandler’s estimation of the concrete situation in Germany correct. At the moment the struggle against the bourgeois bloc is in the forefront of the workers’ struggle. For this reason the German social-democrats are not so stupid as to restrict their semblance of opposition to the bourgeois bloc to the demand for industrial democracy. Industrial democracy does not play the role of a main slogan for the S.P.G., the central slogan is “Forward to the State! More Power!” i.e., coalition policy. Anyone who imagines that it is possible to liven up the fighting force of the toiling masses in Germany by abnegation or repression of our slogan of the overthrow of the bourgeois bloc, and the substitution of this slogan by the demand for the control of production has not the faintest idea of the political life of Germany. It is equally false to maintain that our economic and trade union struggles would be strengthened and extended by being conducted under the comprehensive slogan of the control of production. If the comrades who raised the slogan of the control of production at Essen, and subsequently as a main slogan of action, are not clear as to the significance of this slogan, and bring forward the most varied arguments for its justification, one may well expect that the masses to-day will be still less capable of utilising it. Here the Party has the task of explaining quite clearly what the control of production is, what measures are to be understood thereby, in other words, determined and extensive propaganda work must be carried on in this direction. Then, when again an acute revolutionary situation arises will it be possible to utilise this slogan as a slogan of action. When the workers, at least some of them, are armed, when revolutionary Soviets have been formed, then we will be able to lead the large masses in the struggle for political power with this slogan, which now is but a propaganda slogan, then nationalisation under workers’ control will constitute the immediate task in the struggle of the proletariat.

There is a flavour of a belief in miracles in comrade Brandler’s assumption that the slogan of control of production, which according to his own interpretation consists at present chiefly in the collection of material on the usurious methods of monopoly, should invigorate all

economic struggles and supply for the first time a concrete basis for an alliance of all toilers. The campaign for the expropriation of the ex-ruling houses secured the support of 12 million toilers. The Workers’ Congress in the same year, 1926, against the results of rationalisation assembled in its turn millions of toilers. The struggle against the bourgeois bloc will in the course of its development combine millions, and the C.P.G. with the advancement of this struggle, will also find the organisational forms suitable to this struggle. A review of the history of the workers’ movement generally shows that only in the struggle for quite concrete demands which arise from the immediate situation are the million masses to be united and led against the bourgeoisie. To expect to do this through a propaganda slogan is to fail completely to recognise the live forces within the workers’ movement. Should comrade Brandler wish to stress the significance of the control of production as a propaganda slogan then his endeavours would not call for any argument. The theses of the Essen Party conference say :

Socialist Rationalisation

“The Party must meet the rationalisation of exploiting and decaying capitalism, which is paid for with the misery of the masses and the destruction of social productive forces, with the slogan of proletarian dictatorship, socialist economic organisation and socialist rationalisation. . . . It must expose the exploitation and usurious practices of trusts and cartels, and organise factory councils for the extension of their rights through the irreconcilable class struggle against the employers. It must organise in a far more energetic and consequent manner the struggle of the workers against every deterioration in their position, and for the improvement of their mode of life, and understand how to utilise every form of struggle in the daily petty war in the factory and the biggest mass actions against trust capital and its State power. . . .

In the course of the intensified struggles an immediate revolutionary situation must arise, i.e., a situation in which the ruling class is most seriously disorganised and the proletarian masses are in a state of the greatest revolutionary excitement, a situation in which the middle classes come over to the side of the workers. In accordance with the approach of such a situation the Communist Party must direct all mass actions more sharply towards the slogans of workers’ control over the entire production and distribution as a transition slogan to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the arming of the workers and the formation of political workers’ councils.”

Some comrades at the Essen Congress from Thuringia, Saxony and Pomerania were not content with the slogan of control of production as a propaganda slogan, and demanded that the control of production be a slogan of action. Also comrade Brandler seems to consider the formulation of the Essen Party Congress inadequate, for his article demands that control of production be a comprehensive main slogan in the present situation, whereas the Party has put forward as main

Brandler's Programme—continued

comprehensive slogan of the moment the belligerent bloc of all toilers for the overthrow of the bourgeois bloc.

4. The Questions of the State and the Role of the S.P.G.

Comrade Brandler's lack of clarity about the question of production is apparently connected with a lack of understanding of the question of the State.

Since the Fifth World Congress clearly declared that workers' and peasants' government meant nothing else than proletarian dictatorship, since the opportunist conception that a transition form between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of a "democratic" Labour government was possible it was to be expected from a new formulation by comrade Brandler that no further confusion should exist on this disputed question. In the decisions of the Essen Party Congress, in agreement with the theses of the Fifth World Congress, the Workers' and Peasants' Government, the Soviet Power, and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, are allotted equal importance. If comrade Brandler is in agreement with this then why does he want a new formula which allows of a different interpretation?

According to comrade Brandler, the Workers' and Peasants' Government is a government which substitutes the bourgeois bureaucratic State machine by the class organs of the workers which exercise the State power. Does that imply that a government of this kind can come into existence through constitutional parliamentary methods, and only when it has been formed that it creates the class organs of the workers and takes up the struggle against the bourgeois State? What does the following actually mean?

"In their developed form these class organs are the Workers' and Peasants' Councils, though they may develop in various ways, such as the Control Committee and the 1925 Hundreds."

Role of the Soviets

Does this mean that the Soviets can only develop after the formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, that they are based only on the Control Committees and the Hundreds? Nothing is further from our intention than to dispute the possibility of revolutionary councils of action, based on the armed proletariat and the organs of power of the workers, incorporating the revolutionary power in the early stages before the complete development of the Soviets. But there should be no possibility of doubting whether the Workers' and Peasants' Government coincides with the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, with the destruction of the bourgeois State apparatus, or whether a government of this kind can be formed within the framework of the constitution, and is capable of developing into the Soviet power after a democratic transition stage.

Certain other statements also allow of such possible explanations. For example, when the bourgeois democratic demand for a uniform State is adopted with the following modification:

"They aim [the Communists] at the centralisation of Germany through the abolition of the

rotten old bureaucratic machine and the establishment of the widest (!) possible form of self-government through the establishment of a German Soviet republic."

So it is possible through a different form of State from that of the Soviet State to smash the bureaucratic machine of bourgeois Germany? In our opinion "inexactitudes" in such questions are impermissible.

Comrade Brandler by advocating that the C.P.G. should support general military service in the form of a militia also develops a false point of view. Our Party demands with perfect justification a militia of the workers. It is a class demand which is clearly directed against the bourgeois State. Militia and conscription are demands for a broad "united front" which will comprise the majority of the Germany bourgeoisie. For beyond doubt the attainment of this demand in bourgeois Germany, despite the improved possibilities for agitation in the ranks of the armed forces, will signify a strengthening of German imperialism, an increase in the danger of imperialist war, especially a war of intervention against the Soviet Union.

Brandler's "Foreign Policy"

Even when we take into consideration the fact that comrade Brandler wrote long before the tension in Anglo-Russian relations which ended in the breach, still we must state that the entire foreign policy conception in comrade Brandler's article is erroneous.

Already in December of last year it was quite clear that Anglo-Russian antagonism constituted the decisive antagonism of the present time, that also German imperialist policy must adopt a western orientation in this antagonism. It is impossible to place the annulment of the Treaty of Versailles at the head of foreign policy demands as comrade Brandler does. Such a policy would inevitably lead at the present moment to the complete obliteration of the Party attitude against German imperialism. The most important Party slogan in foreign policy at the present time around which all others must be grouped is the defence of the Russian revolution. Comrade Brandler's slogan for the Party of a free socialist Germany in alliance with the Soviet Union gives the appearance as though the Germany of the bourgeois bloc were capable of an alliance with the Soviet Union and must therefore be rejected.

A criticism of all the deviations from the Party attitude in comrade Brandler's article would involve too much. Though it is absolutely unavoidable to deal with the question of the estimate of the S.P.G., and especially centrism.

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Brandler's Programme—continued

It must be pointed out that comrade Brandler does not differentiate between centrism and workers' opposition, and that his differentiation between left and right is absolutely incorrect.

Where Centrism Leads

In comrade Brandler's opinion the centrist-left programme denotes a more or less express rejection of coalition policy and a pure parliamentary opposition, devoid of any mass action. This is not the programme of centrism either in theory or practice. Far from rejecting coalition, the Austrian Party programme, drafted by Otto Bauer, which is praised by the majority of German centrists as the acme of Marxist wisdom, declares that coalition is essential (termed co-operation of classes) in those situations in which "democracy," the "republic," is in danger, i.e., in a revolutionary crisis when the decisive question of the hour is that of bourgeois or proletarian dictatorship. Neither do the left social-democrats contemplate restricting their activities in the bourgeois State to parliamentary opposition, their ideal is a socialist government within the framework of bourgeois democracy.

From lack of clarity on the nature of centrism arises confusion as to its historic role. It is true that Brandler correctly says that a centrist party is no revolutionary instrument, but rather an obstruction thereto. If the revolution conquers and will maintain its victory, then the centrist parties must also go under. But he adds that in certain moments centrist ideology may constitute a stage for the workers on their path from reformism to Communism.

This statement gives us the "dialectical" contradiction that the centrist party has a reactionary effect, but that centrist ideology can exercise a progressive influence. As a logical deduction from this, then, reformist workers should be brought on to the path of Communism by means of centrist argument. In reality, however, centrist ideology can play no other role than that of centrist organisation, that is, to hold the workers who develop to Communism in the reformist ranks. The essence of centrism is not the rejection of the coalition policy but the covert tolerance and support of the coalition policy, a coalition policy couched in revolutionary phrases. Centrism is not a stage, a bridge which leads

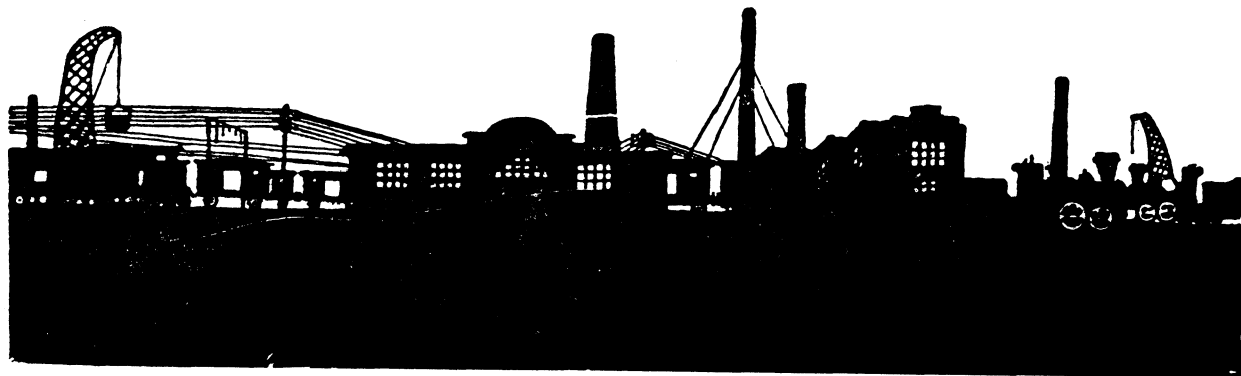
from reformism to Communism, but a barrier intended to block the way for class-conscious workers from reformism to Communism. The strengthening of centrism denotes intensified efforts by the reformists to hold back those workers from Communism who rebel against reformism. Lack of clarity and vacillations in the question of the attitude to centrists, whom Lenin repeatedly designated as the most dangerous enemy of the proletariat, have already done enough damage to the C.P.G. There is no necessity now to try new experiments.

A Miracle

The policy advocated by comrade Brandler in respect to the Reichsbanner shows to what impossible deductions a false theoretical interpretation of the S.P.G. can lead in practice. He says: "They [Communists] support the class-conscious workers in the Reichsbanner in their endeavour to transform it from being a protective force for the bourgeois republic, and an instrument of the coalition policy into a weapon of the workers, to protect their interests against the entire bourgeoisie." This "transformation" would be in reality a still greater miracle than the notorious transfer of the S.P.G. from the left wing of the bourgeoisie to the right wing of the proletariat. There is hardly any necessity to declare that an organisation based on the coalition of bourgeois parties, and which, according to its programme, advocates the defence of the republic, i.e., the bourgeois republic, cannot be transformed into a proletarian organisation. Our policy consists in the expulsion of the bourgeois elements from the Reichsbanner and the amalgamation of the proletarian opposition with the Rote Frontkämpferbund; this policy can on no condition be substituted by the opportunism of comrade Brandler.

* * * *

The Party is prepared to discuss in a comradely manner with every comrade any differences of opinion from Party decisions which are within the bounds of the principles and discipline of the Party. Comrades like comrade Brandler who develop their false conceptions into a platform and are represented as a group within the Party must be fought against as an opportunist group. The Party nopes in the course of further development to overcome all deviating opinions and to concentrate all forces on the Party policy.



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