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TEN CENTS

INTERVENTION AGAINST MANCHURIA AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE GREAT ANTI-SOVIET WAR

THE XI. E.C.C.I. Plenum established the fact that the danger of military intervention against the Soviet Union as a result of the victorious building up of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and in connection with the deepening of the economic crisis in capitalist countries has become a *direct* menace to the entire world proletariat.

Many sections of the Communist International under-estimated the reality of this danger. Even when Japanese guns were roaring in the direct neighbourhood of the Soviet Union, many comrades failed to understand the close connection between the Japanese invasion upon Manchuria and preparation for the great anti-Soviet war. This makes it once more incumbent upon us to fix the attention of all Communist Parties and the whole world proletariat on this burning question.

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After the civil war in the U.S.S.R. and the introduction of the New Economic Policy, the international bourgeoisie did not drop the idea of intervention but, on the other hand, made no haste to hurry on the event, but reckoned upon the peaceful transition of the Soviet Government to capitalism. When their hopes were shattered the imperialist Powers steered towards intervention, counting upon the consequent activation of counter-revolutionary elements inside the Soviet Union. The Industrial Party trial, the Kondratiev kulak group, the Union Menshevik Bureau and various other facts were proof of the efforts being made by the imperialist Powers, primarily France, to smash Socialist construction from within, to organise wrecking of industry and uprisings in the Soviet Union and to bring about intervention with the help of the comparatively small forces of neighbouring countries, financed, equipped and led by the great imperialist Powers, primarily by France.

A little war in the form of intervention on the part of the Western Border States would have been cheaper, less risky and fraught with far fewer difficulties for the imperialist Powers, than intervention on a broad scale which would require the creation of a broad anti-Soviet coalition of imperialist Powers. However, the successes which attended the work of economic construction and which, as regards the relation of forces inside the country, decided once and for all the question of "who-whom," the victory of Socialism, the complete routing of the wrecking organisations, the increased revolutionary activity among the masses in capitalist countries and

the colonies, made the achievement of this plan absolutely impossible. The imperialists were compelled to admit that there was no possibility of restoring capitalism in the U.S.S.R. with the help of internal counter-revolutionary forces and intervention on the old scale. They were forced to postpone intervention, which they had fixed for 1930-1931, and to begin universal preparations for intervention on a more extensive front.

There were many who under-estimated this fact. Many failed to understand that the deepening of the world economic crisis and the danger of financial bankruptcy in several countries in spite of the sharpening of imperialist contradictions called forth by it, does not hold back the process of preparing for a great anti-Soviet war and the coalition of imperialist Powers. The capitalist States endeavoured to bring about the transition from the old interventionist plans to preparations for the world imperialist war against the countries building up Socialism, behind the smoke-screen of pacifism. France, while preparing for war on the one hand, entered into negotiations with the Soviet Union, on the question of a non-aggression pact and the renewal of trade negotiations on the other. French imperialism had to do this in order to hide from the broad masses the fact that she was organising the anti-Soviet war on a broader basis. It was impossible for France to make preparations for intervention alone, or for her to lead this extensive anti-Soviet front, as she had led the activities of the border States in the fight against the U.S.S.R. It had been a comparatively easy task for France to create a hostile ring around the Soviet Union from among her vassal States, Poland, Rumania and so on. These countries, at the dictation of France, have entered into a military alliance. With the help of loans from France, they have been able to arm themselves at an enormous rate and to build strategical railways and military ports on the Soviet frontier. These States quite openly admitted the anti-Soviet aim of their military activities; they frankly confessed that not only can they not fail to arm themselves, but they consider their military forces insufficient, since the Soviet Union is their neighbour (Rumanian memorandum to the League of Nations). At the dictation of France, the Polish and Rumanian armies were recently placed under the common leadership of Pilsudski, and a council called of all the general headquarter staffs of the armies of those lands bordering upon the U.S.S.R. France has built a military arsenal for the coming anti-Soviet war in Czecho-Slovakia.

It had been a comparatively simple task for France to prepare these lands for intervention, in view of the fact that they are closely connected with France through the predatory Versailles system. The task, however, of extending the anti-Soviet front has confronted France with the more difficult problem of bringing into her imperialist grouping all the vanquished European States; and France wished to achieve this end, at the same time maintaining to the full the advantages of the Versailles Robber Peace, and the Saint-Germain and Trianon Peace Treaties. In order to bring the vanquished countries into the anti-Soviet imperialist grouping, French imperialism works systematically, using to the full the difficult economic and financial position of Germany, Austria and Hungary. Laval and Briand were very skilful in using the financial difficulties of these countries. In reply to the attempts to create an Austro-German tariffs alliance, France brought about the bankruptcy of the Vienna bank "Kreditanstalt," which controls 80 per cent. of Austrian industry, and compelled Austria to give up the alliance with Germany. In order to bring Germany into subjection, French imperialism made use of the obligations of the latter regarding reparations payments, and her need for foreign loans. France knows full well that Germany cannot pay reparations to the extent fixed by the Young Plan, and that Germany can obtain a loan under present conditions of the money market only from Paris.

France used this state of affairs to the utmost. She is now demanding the complete economic and political subjection of Germany, control over her heavy industries and primarily her war industries. French finance capital with the help of her financial might is now achieving everything that she was unable to obtain by the occupation of the Ruhr. By this means the leading financial circles in France wish to create the possibility of bringing Germany into the anti-Soviet bloc; and France's agreement to extend a loan to Germany upon condition that the latter cease crediting Soviet imports is proof enough of France's methods. Certain circles are even prepared for a rapprochement with the Hitler clique in order to hasten the process of bringing Germany into the interventionist bloc, and the Hitler clique, on their part, are ready to sell the last remains of national independence, for which they had demagogically promised to fight, in order to hasten on the fascisation of Germany.

French imperialism is also working in Eastern Europe to extend her influence by the organisation of close collaboration between the vanquished Danube provinces and the sub-vassal lands of the Little Entente. But in her attempt to create a united anti-Soviet bloc in Europe under her own leadership, France cannot give up the Versailles system, which is the basis of her might and power. This circum-

stance, although it helps France to win new positions, nevertheless at the same time complicates matters in the achievement of her aim, in the establishment of absolute French hegemony in Europe.

The complications brought about in Europe by the Versailles Peace are used by Italian and American imperialism in the struggle against the absolute hegemony of France in Europe. Since the spring of this year Italy has occupied a defensive position in regard to French imperialism. She has lost a considerable amount of influence in Hungary, and France has strengthened her position in Vienna at Italy's expense. Italy now fears that the institution of strong connections between Paris and Berlin will drive her into complete isolation. If French imperialism is able to obtain strong positions in Germany, then Italy will also be forced to seek the assistance of the Paris rulers. This would mean nothing short of the loss of Tunis, an end to the Asia Minor demands and influence in the Balkans, i.e., Italy would lose her position as one of the Great Powers. Italy therefore is doing everything in its power to prevent France from obtaining the leadership in European affairs; consequently, since England's position has become unstable, Italy is looking towards America, whose interests on essential questions differ from those of France. This was evident during the discussion of the Hoover Plan and the meeting between Laval and Hoover in Washington. No agreement was arrived at on the most important questions of international politics: the questions of the Versailles Peace, the Trianon Treaty and Disarmament. America, although taking no steps against the Versailles system, since France is her best ally in the preparation of war against the U.S.S.R., is nevertheless trying to strengthen her influence in the vanquished countries, which is possible only by weakening France's position. Very serious disagreements were manifested in Washington around the question of reparations and inter-allied debts. These contradictions are becoming more developed as a result of the efforts made by France to establish control over German industry, in which America has invested very large capital.

The contradictions between the imperialist Powers have become even more acute as a result of the establishment of protective tariffs in England, which has made difficulties in connection with the exports of several countries. The introduction of protective tariffs has already brought about an increase in customs tariffs in several European States and to restricted imports and a more acute struggle for selling markets.

But the sharpening of these contradictions has in no way mitigated the furious campaign of the imperialist robbers against the U.S.S.R. The capitalist countries are seeking a way out of the crisis at the expense of the Soviet Union. After France,

America is the most active participator in the preparations for the great war against the Soviet Union, in the work of extending the anti-Soviet front. The United States have also recognised the fact that the victory of the Five-Year Plan, the consolidation of the fighting capacity of the U.S.S.R. the mighty upsurge of the revolutionary movement in capitalist and colonial lands, have raised the question of intervention in a new light. This has meant more acute hostility on the part of the United States towards the Soviet Union, which clearly expressed itself in the organisation of the Fish Commission, which was the origin of the struggle against "Soviet dumping" so-called. The deepening of the crisis in capitalist countries, the victorious building up of Socialism in the Soviet Union, compels the imperialist Powers, in spite of their acute contradictions, to do their utmost to muster all the old forces against the land which is building up the new world. Besides the activation of America in this respect, the anti-Soviet activities of the League of Nations are proof positive of this. The hostile attitude of the League of Nations towards the U.S.S.R. was clearly shown in the work of the economic commissions, where the acute disagreement between the representatives of the imperialist Powers was entirely forgotten when there was any question of adopting decisions directed against the interests of the Soviet Union. The League of Nations plays no small part in preparing for blockades both economic and in connection with credits, in drawing up measures against Soviet export, in camouflaging the organisation of an extensive anti-Soviet front among the capitalist countries. From the moment when Japan began military intervention against Manchuria, these preparations for the great war against the Soviet Union took on a new, more acute form.

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Even when the imperialists were preparing for a "little war" against the Soviet Union on its western frontier, they were trying at the same time to send out a feeler from the East and estimate the defensive power of the U.S.S.R. The occupation of the Chinese-Eastern Railway in 1929 by Chinese generals was carried out by order of the imperialists, who were counting upon this provocation to draw the Soviet Union into war. This attempt broke down owing to the fact that the Red Army aimed a crushing blow at the invaders and because the Soviet Government, pursuing its firm, consistent policy of peace, immediately withdrew its troops after the blow had been delivered, demanded no compensation for the rapacious attack on the Chinese-Eastern Railway, but limited itself to restoring the equal rights treaties which had been previously concluded with China.

Intervention from the East was thus checked by the Soviet Government just as, a year later, intervention

was kept at bay in the West. But the question of intervention from the East, of launching a great war against the Soviet Union from the East, has again been raised sharply by the imperialists in a new form, owing to the fact that the Five-Year Plan is approaching its complete accomplishment in the U.S.S.R. and to the fact that the Chinese revolution has gained considerable victories. For the third time the Chinese Red Army has victoriously repulsed the advance of Chang Kai-shek, despite the universal support given to the latter by the imperialists; the Soviets in Southern China are strengthening and extending their territory; and the Kuomintang generals have discovered their feebleness in the face of the growing Chinese revolution. All this has clearly proved to the imperialists that the Kuomintang counter-revolution can no longer serve as a useful barrier between the U.S.S.R. and Soviet China, and that in order to throw up a barrier of this kind—the more so for the purpose of a direct advance against the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Soviets—it is essential that Chinese territory bordering upon the U.S.S.R. should no longer remain under the government of feeble Chinese vassals of imperialism, but that it should be occupied by the imperialists themselves, armed to the teeth, and that this should be done as quickly as possible.

This was the situation, side by side with the intensification of the World Economic Crisis, which impelled Japan to proceed to the realisation of its long-cherished hopes of imperialist expansion to take the field in the rôle of the leader in the great war against the U.S.S.R. now in preparation. Precisely because of these circumstances, she undertook, in agreement with other Great Powers, the commencement of her advance against Manchuria with the object of securing control of the Chinese-Eastern Railway in one form or another, and the creation in the Far East of a territorial war base against the U.S.S.R., and the annexation thereafter of the Mongolian People's Republics connected with the Soviet Union, to drive a wedge between the U.S.S.R. and Soviet China, with the objective of intervention against the U.S.S.R., and the partitioning of China.

Of course, Japan, in invading Manchuria, is not only acting as the plenipotentiary of French, British and American imperialism; not only is she the leader of the preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese Soviets. Japan, above all, is working out her own imperialist purpose which owing to existing relations is in hostile conflict with the interests of the other imperialist plunderers. This can already be seen from the fact that Japanese troops are also penetrating deep into the south of China, into Inner China, they are moving towards Dsindschou, and the mountainous pass Schanghaihuang, towards Tien-tsin and Peiping, thus penetrating the spheres of influence of both England and the United

States. Japanese imperialism has allowed itself to interpret the mandate given it so broadly, in the hope that the deep economic crisis in England and the United States, and internal difficulties connected with it, will force the latter countries to overlook the fact that she has overstepped her powers. But here Japanese imperialism is making a mistake; and in any case there is no doubt about one thing: that the occupation of Manchuria, preparations for the seizure of the Chinese-Eastern Railway and the creating of a strong anti-Soviet military base in the Far East, are all the result of an imperialist pact and a plot against the U.S.S.R.

The behaviour of the League of Nations clearly illustrates the existence of an imperialist plot in which not only Japanese generals are participating but also, and primarily, French finance capital and American interventionists. It is seldom that the rapacious, imperialist character of war has been so clearly expressed as during the invasion of Manchuria by Japanese troops. Only the imperialist robbers and their social-fascist lackeys could interpret Japanese intervention in any other way, for the purpose of foully hiding up this act of provocation. Japanese imperialism attacked Manchuria, bombarded her towns, killed peaceful citizens and occupied foreign territory on a false pretext. The Nanking bands of militarists, who had shot down thousands of Chinese workers and peasants, turned out to be incapable of defending the independence of the land against Japanese intervention. The only way in which Chang Kai-shi showed any "defence" of the independence of China, took the form of an entreating telegram sent to the League of Nations. How did the League of Nations reply to this petition? The "pacifist" League of Nations was "powerless" to settle the conflict. This is the impression the bourgeois and social-fascist newspapers want to create, in trying to hide up the truth of the rôle of the League from the eyes of the toiling masses.

This manoeuvring of the bourgeois and social-fascist press with regard to the attitude of the League is as foul and prejudiced as all the other praises of the peace-making activities of the League. After the Manchurian affair they cannot depict the League in the old light. Consequently, in "criticising" the League's weakness they try to hide the fact from the toiling masses that the League of Nations is most actively supporting the rapacious advance of Japan upon Manchuria. The whole point is not that the League of Nations "did not prevent" Manchurian intervention because it was too "weak," but that this international organisation of imperialist bandits from the very beginning had cynically and frankly supported the occupation of Manchuria in order to create the necessary conditions for the partition of China and the factors required to bring about intervention on a broad scale against the Soviet

Union. Behind the scenes at the League of Nations there has been constant bartering among the imperialist Powers in order to come to some agreement between the European and American bandits concerning the partition of China and anti-Soviet provocation.

The heartiest support to Manchurian occupation was given by France which urged Japan along the road of anti-Soviet provocation. The French Press, which has recently been carrying on a ferocious campaign against the Soviet Union, spreading rumours of the financial crash which threatens the U.S.S.R., demanding the launching of a credit blockade, once more began to express itself in military language. While Briand at the sessions of the League of Nations was trying to guarantee freedom of action for Japan, the French Press published lying information to the effect that the Chinese generals were being armed by the Soviet Union. Not satisfied with this, the Parisian Press began open military agitation. The "Liberté" demanded that the "Siberian steppes be converted into a battlefield for the destruction of Bolshevism."

The social-fascists foully and cynically support this military agitation of the French bourgeois Press; they support it not only in the sense that Vandervelde declares Manchuria to be "no-man's land," that the Japanese Section of the Second International absolutely approves of intervention; but their support is most clearly seen in the article of Renaudel in the "Vie Socialiste": "Asiatic Russia suppressed little Georgia and now dreams of appropriating part of Manchuria." This article clearly shows the sort of insolence of which the social-fascist lackeys of capital are capable, and how they exceed their masters in anti-Soviet provocation. In fulfilling the social orders of the bourgeoisie, these agents try to depict the U.S.S.R., which is pursuing a firm policy of peace, as the guilty party in the coming war.

The anti-Soviet campaign of the social-interventionists became especially ardent when the position of America on the Manchurian question became clear. The imperialist interests of America and Japan are in sharp contradiction in the Pacific Ocean. America is trying to squeeze Japan out of trading with China, although China is Japan's chief selling market. A constant struggle takes place continually between these two Great Powers for the domination of markets along the Pacific Ocean coast. Both States are rapidly preparing for an armed solution of these questions at issue, and are hastily building up their own naval bases. Yet despite these ever-sharpening contradictions, America and France are supporting Japanese intervention, since it is a question of occupying Manchuria. Within these limits America is prepared to support Japanese occupation for several reasons.

First of all America is anxious to provoke Soviet-Japanese armed conflict in connection with the question of the Chinese-Eastern Railway in order to ruin the Five-Year Plan and draw the U.S.S.R. into the great war. This is the main reason.

Secondly, America reckons that in taking no part directly in the *first phase* of the Japanese-Soviet war, she will be able to profit by the conditions of war and supply armaments to Japan, just as she made profits from war orders during the first phase of the imperialist world war; and that this will help her to come successfully out of the economic crisis at the price of the blood of Soviet Red Army soldiers and Japanese troops. The New York "World Telegram" declares quite openly as follows :—

"War is of considerable assistance to trade."
"If Russia is even slightly drawn into war, she will be compelled to drop the Five-Year Plan, which is causing so much anxiety to the United States."

These words are strongly reminiscent of the way in which the New York Stock Exchange reacted in December, 1916, to the rumours of the cessation of the world war. The New York correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" on December 23, 1916, wrote as follows :—

"The rumours of peace which were current during last week caused alarm on the New York Exchange and a sharp fall in the value of bonds. The price of wheat dropped heavily. Everybody is talking about the disasters which will occur on the conclusion of peace" (1).

Thirdly, the United States probably reckons that the Japanese-Soviet war, whatever the outcome for Japan, would weaken the latter and thus make it easier for the United States to get even with her. The fact that the United States is hurriedly transferring her strategical naval bases from the Panama Canal to the north, in particular to Alaska, shows that she is counting upon invading the Far Eastern districts of the U.S.S.R., should a favourable occasion arise, and upon attacking Japan from that angle.

But all this is a question of the distant future, which is being discussed without the consent of the master of the Far Eastern district—the U.S.S.R. Up to now, at any rate, all the large imperialist robbers are primarily and almost exclusively occupied with the thought of converting Japanese intervention into the prelude for the great anti-Soviet war.

This does not exclude the fact that already to-day the contradictions between the United States on the one hand and Japan on the other are increasing rapidly, since in extending the occupation of China, Japan is encroaching upon American spheres of influence. The United States has already reacted to this state of affairs in that she has used the anti-Japanese boycott movement in China to increase her exports to China and to remove Japan from the Chinese markets, which actions on her part have met with considerable success. At the same time, the United States is rapidly pumping gold out of Japan, thus increasing the economic crisis there.

England is also making use of the anti-Japanese boycott movement for her own purposes. But all this does not alter the fact that there is a united anti-Soviet, anti-Chinese front of all the imperialist robbers. All this does not alter the fact that the menace of military intervention on a broad scale under the leadership of a coalition of Great Powers, is becoming more and more actual. The reality of this menace, the tasks which in this connection confront the sections of the Communist International, have not been properly estimated by all the parties. There are individual parties and members of the party who failed to see the anti-Soviet, provocative character of the Manchurian invasion by the Japanese army; and in telling the toiling masses primarily of the contradictions between the various imperialist groups, in connection with the Manchurian war, they left entirely in the shade the main contradiction—between the world of capitalism and the world of Socialism.

The Communist Parties must immediately correct this mistake. They must create a broad united front from below against the extensive anti-Soviet front of the imperialist Powers and against the partition of China. The Communist Parties must bring forward the concrete example of the Manchurian conflict to prove to the masses the imperialist rapacious character of the League of Nations and the foul anti-Soviet provocative rôle which is being played by social-fascism. The toiling masses must be made to understand that preparations for military intervention are going forward on a more extensive front than hitherto and that preliminary anti-Chinese intervention is the method they are using to this end. To this end let all the exploited and oppressed in capitalist countries and colonies, therefore, be on their guard.

THE ARBITRARY ACTION OF THE JAPANESE IMPERIALISTS IN MANCHURIA AND THE VIEWPOINT OF THE HERDSMEN OF THE MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

By S. NATSOV.

THE arbitrary action of Japanese militarism in Manchuria—a direct link in the chain of preparations for a new war between the imperialist plunderers and the U.S.S.R., a continuation of the preparations for an imperialist counter-revolutionary onslaught against the land which is building up Socialism, the U.S.S.R.—could not fail to draw the attention not only of the international proletariat, but also of the oppressed nations of the East. Japan's seizure of Manchuria, which constitutes at the same time a direct menace to the national independence of the Mongolian people, called forth a mighty wave of protest and dissatisfaction among the toiling herdsmen of the Mongolian People's Republic. The toiling "arat" masses (herdsmen), having correctly estimated the affairs in Manchuria, took action accordingly and strengthened the defence of the country, consolidated the ranks of the People's Revolutionary Red Army. The toiling "arat" masses of Mongolia have stigmatised the bourgeois representatives of the Land of the Rising Sun, who by force of arms invaded a foreign land for the purpose of converting it into a colony, in order to mock the peaceful population, to exploit and oppress the people. The toiling "arat" masses of Mongolia openly declared that they have supported and will continue to support the workers and peasants of China who are fighting under the leadership of the Communist Party of China against the foreign imperialists, against the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the Kuomintang, for national liberation, for Soviet power.

The resolutions of the Presidium of the Central Committee and Central Control Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Ulan-Vatorsk Committee of the Party, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Youth League, the party fraction in the Presidium of the "Small Huruldan" (Small Assembly) and the Mongolian People's Government, the Central Council of Mongolian Trade Unions, and the active members of the Ulan-Vatorsk organisations of the Mongolian Revolutionary Party and the Youth League—all state that the "Toiling 'arat' masses of the Mongolian People's Republic declare that they support the Chinese revolution and stigmatise the Japanese imperialists who have seized foreign territory. The toiling 'arat' masses of the Mongolian People's Republic protest against the arbitrary action of Japanese imperialism, which is acting towards a foreign land, like a thief in a strange house. The toiling 'arat' masses declare that they have given

moral political support, and will continue to do so, to the workers and peasants of China, who are fighting under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party against the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the Kuomintang, for the Workers' and Peasants' Government of China, against the foreign imperialism on behalf of Chinese independence."* Resolutions and protests of this kind are being received daily in tens and hundreds from all over the country. It is impossible for the press to publish them all. In the resolutions and protests passed locally, the "arat" masses demand that the People's Revolutionary Party and the Revolutionary Government take emergency measures in defence of the Eastern and South-Eastern frontiers of the Mongolian Revolutionary Republic. In reply to the arbitrary actions of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria, the "arat" masses of Mongolia are mustering together their forces around the national Revolutionary Party and the Revolutionary Government: mass applications are made for entry into the Party, into the Youth League and the Osoaviakhim; the workers are subscribing to the fund for building aeroplanes, the collective farmers and poor herdsmen have offered their counter-plan from below in the carrying out of coming economic-political campaigns (supply of cattle to the State, taxation, collective farming movement). This is the real reply of the toiling "arat" masses of the Mongolian People's Republic to the military arbitration of the Japanese imperialists in Manchuria, which actually meant the declaration of war against the Chinese people, against the national independence and integrity of China.

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The toiling "arat" masses of the Mongolian People's Republic understand that the seizure of Manchuria by the Japanese imperialists not only affects China and Japan, but is also the prelude to a new imperialist war which has been in the course of preparation during the historical period which followed upon the last world war. The toiling "arat" masses of Mongolia understand that the seizure of Manchuria by Japan was not only in the interests of Japanese imperialism, but constituted the direct result of the growing contradictions in the camp of international imperialism, especially the imperialist circles of Japan and America and their united front against the U.S.S.R. Thus, for instance, in the resolution of the active members of the Ara Hangaisk

* *Unen (Pravda)*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, of October 8, 1931. No. 236 (436).

organisation of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and of the Youth League we find the following : "The seizure of Manchuria by the Japanese militarists is the product of the growing contradictions in the camp of international imperialism especially the product of the growing contradictions between Japan and America. The imperialist circles in Japan occupied Manchuria thus trying to settle the quarrel without the participation of the American "chief" of the Chinese peoples. . . . The military occupation of Manchuria by Japan means the increased danger of imperialist invasion on the Eastern frontiers of the U.S.S.R. and the Mongolian People's Republic"* Hence the conclusion is drawn of the need for strengthening fraternal relations with the toiling masses of the U.S.S.R., the need for defending the U.S.S.R. from the counter-revolutionary attacks of the imperialists. Revolutionary Mongolia which recently celebrated its tenth anniversary, has been growing and strengthening with the fraternal support of the U.S.S.R.—the land of the victorious proletariat. The toiling "arat" masses of the Mongolian People's Republic are stubbornly defending their friendly relations with the workers and peasant masses of the U.S.S.R., in order to develop their own country along the lines of Socialism at an ever more rapid rate. The toiling "arat" masses of Mongolia have unfurled the banner of victorious anti-feudal revolution, and are striving for the non-capitalist, Socialist road of development for Mongolia ; they are mustering all their forces around the People's Revolutionary Party and the Revolutionary Government, in order to repel all attempts at counter-revolutionary attacks upon the independence of Mongolia by the imperialist plunderers and their hirelings. The toiling "arat" masses of the Mongolian People's Republic have always fought and are still fighting against the danger of counter-revolutionary imperialist war upon the fatherland of the international proletariat and the oppressed masses of the world—the U.S.S.R. The resolutions of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Central Committee of the Youth League, the Presidium of the "Small Huruldan" and the Government of the Mongolian People's Republic passed in connection with the fourteenth anniversary of the October Revolution, state that : "The U.S.S.R. is the fatherland of the international proletariat and oppressed masses of the world. The U.S.S.R. is the shock brigade of the world revolution ; the U.S.S.R. is the true friend of revolutionary Mongolia. The toiling 'arat' masses of Mongolia will defend the U.S.S.R. against the attacks of the imperialists. The toiling 'arat' masses will strengthen the defence of their land, will increase the might and power of the

Red Army."* This is the response made by "arat" masses, the workers and collective farmers of the Mongolian People's Republic to the seizure of Manchuria by Japanese imperialists, and the growing military danger against the U.S.S.R. and the Mongolian People's Republic.

The national revolutionary movement of the Mongolian "arats" deepened and developed from a movement directed primarily against imperialism and the Chinese bourgeoisie and landlords into the anti-feudal revolution ; at the same time the movement began to lay down the basis for collective forms of economy. The national revolutionary movement of the Mongolian "arats" in taking up the tasks of the anti-feudal revolution, aimed blow after blow at both the foreign enemy (Chinese merchant and money-lending capital) and at the reactionary forces at home (the feudal landlords, counter-revolutionary upper strata of the Buddhist priesthood and bureaucratic officials). The present stage of the Mongolian revolution can be characterised by the fact that the open anti-nationalist reactionary alliance between the plunderers abroad and the robbers inside the land is becoming ever more real and obvious in its efforts to make a counter-attack and to win back the Government and its lost property. The Chinese militarists, the feudal princes of Inner Mongolia, the Russo-Buriat White Guards, led by the Japanese imperialists, are actively organising armed bands for intervention against the Mongolian People's Republic. In order to achieve their evil ends, the Japanese imperialists are using Panchen-Bogdo, the Tibetan refugee, as their agent. Throughout the Eastern and South-Eastern border of the Mongolian People's Republic, armed forces of reactionary elements are concentrated who, led by Japan and their puppet Panchen-Bogdo, are about to carry out the plans of Japanese imperialism—to enslave the Mongolian "arats" and convert the Mongolian People's Republic into a colony of Japanese imperialism.

The attempts at counter-revolutionary rebellion (Ulanom, Bayanzurche, etc.) made during the last two years, and the plot by the princes of the church and the feudal landlords (Manzusheri, Yugodzyr, etc.) prove conclusively to the toiling "arat" masses, that the feudal landlords and reactionary officials at home, unable themselves to overthrow the revolutionary government of the "arat" masses and to restore the old regime of exploitation and slavery by the merchants and moneylenders, consider that their only hope lies in Japanese, Kuomintang and White Guard intervention, to guarantee the success of which they are still making attempts at further plots. The imperialist seizure of Manchuria by Japan simplifies

* *Unen (Pravda)*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, of October 8, 1931, No. 236 (436).

* *The Road to Socialism*, organ of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, No. 26-27 (35-36). Resolution of the Central Committee of the Party on the Fourteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution.

the task of the latter in connection with her rapacious plans with regard to the Mongolian People's Republic, and the danger of war is becoming an actual menace to Mongolia.

In seizing Manchuria, imperialist Japan simultaneously is preparing a counter-revolutionary attack upon revolutionary Mongolia. The toiling "arat" masses understand this menace of war and intervention by the imperialist plunderers. The People's Revolutionary Party and the Revolutionary Youth League of Mongolia, besides further strengthening the army, cleansing it from anti-working class elements, carrying on political and educational work in the army, are paying more and more attention to the extension of military knowledge and training among the members of the party and the Youth League, the poor and middle "arats," especially the

collective farmers and agricultural labourers, by means of territorial troops, physical culture detachments and other new, more flexible forms and methods of work. The imperialist masters of Japan and the Chinese militarists will never be able to catch the toiling "arat" masses unawares, for they have behind them ten years' experience of heroic struggle for national independence, for the destruction of the remains of feudalism, for the non-capitalist, Socialist road of development of the Mongolian People's Republic. The toiling "arat" masses will lead the heroic struggle for national independence. Let all the Japanese imperialists remember this when they organise their bands of Russian-Buriat White Guards and Mongolian feudal landlords for a counter-revolutionary attack upon the Mongolian People's Republic.

SOME MISTAKES IN OUR THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL WORK AND THE WAY TO OVERCOME THEM (Part 1.)

By ERNST THÄLMANN.

TOWARD the end of 1930 and the beginning of 1931, when an extreme intensification of political reaction and of the attacks on the living conditions of the working masses were observed in the economic and political measures taken by the Brüning Government, the Communist Party of Germany branded the Brüning Government before the masses of the German proletariat and all the toilers, as a Government for carrying out the fascist dictatorship.

What was the idea at the back of our policy at that time?

After the Social-Democrats were kicked out of the Government of the Reich in the spring of 1930 and up to the Reichstag elections of December 14th last year they conducted a sham "radical" opposition, and after the Reichstag election openly aligned themselves with Brüning. They supported, made possible and themselves carried out most actively all the reactionary measures inimical to the interests of the people which were introduced by the ruling bourgeoisie. In order to conceal from the masses the fascist character and the class treachery of their policy of toleration towards Brüning, the Social-Democrats invented the theory of the so-called "lesser evil." The Brüning Government, according to the assurances of the Social-Democratic Party leaders, was a lesser evil compared with a Hitler-Hugenberg Government, it was a rampart against fascism and therefore should be supported.

To counteract this S.D.P. deception of the workers, it was our duty to inform the masses with all sharpness of the *real* character of the Brüning Government and of the *actual* forms in which the fascisation of the methods of domination of the German bourgeoisie was being accomplished. As

against the despicable and treacherous betrayal of the S.D.P. to discourage the masses from fighting against their class enemy and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by holding out the menace of a dictatorship which would be set up if a Hitler Government came into power, we must make clear the *class content of the Brüning dictatorship*, the real essence of fascism, the special rôle of the National-Socialists (Nazis) and the relations between the Brüning regime, the S.D.P. and the Hitler movement.

Only when we had succeeded in bringing home to the masses the consciousness that there is no class difference whatsoever between a completely developed, open Fascist dictatorship (by whatever Party it be exercised) and the Brüning Government, which was actually at the helm of State, was it possible to smash these deceptive manœuvres of Social-Democracy. Only then was it possible to utilise the anti-Fascist energies of the broadest masses in the struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its agents, the Brüning-Severing Government.

The Communist Party of Germany tore to shreds the Social-Democratic tissue of lies about the Brüning Government being the "last bulwark of democracy"; it made it clear to the masses that this Brüning Government and the Braun-Severing Government, which was in complete harmony with it, were *themselves* accomplishing the transition to Fascist forms of domination by exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and thereby at the same time stigmatised the policy of toleration of the S.D.P. and of the A.D.G.B. (German Federation of Trade Unions) towards Brüning as support for Fascism.

This political attitude, erroneous formulations of which were quickly corrected when analysed, enabled the Party to launch an offensive against the Brüning regime and its Social-Democratic supporters with some success. The rôle of the National-Socialist movement was correctly characterised in this connection as an additional extra-parliamentary support of the bourgeois dictatorship, which the bourgeoisie utilised for their own purposes alongside the Social-Democrats. The resolutions adopted on this question at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the C.P. of Germany in January were indubitably confirmed as events further developed.

If, however, we subject our entire practical policy and the campaigns of our Party in 1931 to a thorough review, we must state that our resolutions were not always completely carried out. This is true of the resolution of the Plenum of our Central Committee (January-May) and much more so of the resolutions of the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I., which we popularised in our ranks but *did not always carry out* everywhere in our revolutionary work.

Bolshevik self-criticism is the most important means to aid the Party and the masses of the proletariat, for in making more concrete our class line it helps the solution of the tremendous historical tasks that confront the German working-class and its revolutionary leader, the Communist Party. But such Bolshevik self-criticism imposes the duty of revealing ideological deviations, political weaknesses and political errors committed in our revolutionary mass work, which contradict the resolutions of the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and of the Plenum meetings of our Central Committee.

What important errors do we refer to in particular ?

(1) Weaknesses in our struggle against the Social Democrats and in applying the united front policy.

(2) Errors in applying the slogan "*People's revolution.*"

(3) Weaknesses in our struggle against the National-Socialists.

(4) Individual deviations applying also to Communists, and especially to elements around the Party in the question of the *perspectives*, and of *individual terror.*

We do *not* of course suggest that political mistakes were committed by the Party as a whole in regard to any of these four main questions, or that there was a definite political ideology opposed to the resolutions of the Comintern. *Such* deviations from the line of the Comintern are to-day hardly possible in the Communist Party of Germany by reason of its rich revolutionary experience. We are speaking here rather of mistakes, or only weak or obscure spots to be found in individual sections of the Party, deviations which arise often unconsciously, due only to insufficient political schooling of individual comrades and functionaries, by the entire Party, or by reason of an insufficient comprehension of the resolutions

adopted by international and German Party congresses.

But the Party as a whole and the C.C. in the first instance, are fully *responsible* for such things. If they were allowed to pass without being corrected, or without drawing the necessary conclusions from them, the indispensable and dogged untiring work of bolshevising our Party would be renounced. It is certainly our duty to strive to secure for the Party a higher degree of political maturity as our revolutionary tasks grow, to diminish thereby the gap between the objective and the subjective factor in the revolutionary development, to *liquidate* the backwardness of the Party in lagging behind the revolutionary upsurge.

If we neglected serious self-criticism on every occasion, we would be indulging in that "dizziness from success" which a year-and-a-half ago Comrade Stalin criticised and combated in individual sections of the C.P.S.U.

Of the four main questions in which these weaknesses in our ranks manifested themselves, we will deal with the first three jointly for the sake of convenience. For the misunderstandings, deficiencies and deviations in our work and policy which cropped up in these three questions in our struggle against the Social-Democrats, against National-Socialism and in the application of the slogan of a "people's revolution," are all closely interconnected.

* * *

Reference was made at the beginning of this article to the *correct analysis* the Party made of the rôle of the Brüning Government, at the January Plenum of the C.C., for the reason that this analysis, as was emphasised by the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I., provided the Party with the key for the correct presentation of the problems arising in the intensified struggle against the Social-Democracy, as well as against the Hitler movement, and also in treating the question of the development of Fascism. The position of the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the question of the two social supports of the bourgeoisie is based on the formulations of Comrade Stalin :—

"Social-Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of Fascism. There is no basis for supposing that the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie (Fascism) could achieve decisive successes without the active support of Social-Democracy. There is equally little basis for supposing that Social-Democracy could achieve decisive successes in its struggle or the administration of the country without the active support of the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie. These organisations do not negative, but supplement each other. They are not in opposition but complementary. Fascism is the unformed bloc of these two basic organisations, arising in the situation of the post-war crisis of imperialism and calculated for the struggle against the proletarian revolution.

"The bourgeoisie is incapable of remaining in power without the presence of such a bloc."—

(*J. Stalin, on the International Situation.*)

In his concluding remarks at the XI. Plenum, Comrade Manuilsky said on this point :

"The chief enemy of the working-class always has been, is, and will be the bourgeoisie. We do not need to invent new formulae. In the bourgeois democracies which are growing more and more Fascist in the Fascist States, everywhere, at all stages of the fascisation of the capitalist States, the chief enemy of the working-class is the dictatorship of capital, independently of whether it assumes a democratic or Fascist form. . . . It means that in Germany the chief enemy to-day is the Brüning Government, supported by Social-Democracy, a Government for the carrying through of Fascist dictatorship, embodying to-day the whole yoke of the bourgeois dictatorship in regard to the working-class.

"And depending on which wing the bourgeoisie will rely in the struggle against the proletariat, the Communist Party will also determine the chief direction for its attack."

Comrade Manuilsky here clearly indicated the class significance of the Brüning dictatorship and of its supporters, the S.D.P. and the National-Socialists. He also stressed the point of view which must guide the Communist Party of Germany in investigating the question of against whom it must deliver the main blow in its fight. In replying to this question we must consider two points of view : (1) the concrete investigation of the *prevailing* policies of the bourgeoisie *at any time*, within the framework of the general analysis of the class forces, (2) the revolutionary setting of the tasks of the Communist Party.

What is the position in Germany with reference to the first point? The XI. Plenum indicated the Social-Democrats as the *main social support* of the bourgeoisie and demonstrated the correctness of this formulation as applied especially also to Germany. In actual fact, developments in Germany, as well as in all other countries, since the XI. Plenum, have completely corroborated the correctness of the statements made by the Comintern.

There has been a regrouping of forces in the Brüning Government in the last few weeks. The way to this regrouping was paved by the aggressive policy of the right wing of the *Centre* (von Papen) and of the People's Party (Dingeldey). The basis for this political offensive, which proclaims the necessity of a swing to the right, may be found in the demand the leaders of industry put to Brüning that he intensify his political course with the utmost decision, corresponding to the *wishes of heavy industry*. This "crisis" in the Government, which was solved immediately before the opening of the last Reichstag session, resulted for the present, in the fact that no representative of heavy industry has been admitted

into the Government, for that industry, because of its difficult position, is the main protagonist of inflationist tendencies, but that Warmbold, the trusted representative of the chemical industry, of the I.G. Farbenindustrie (dye trust), the largest and at present the leading capitalist syndicate in Germany, is brought into the Government as Minister of National Economy.

The further orientation to the right of the Brüning Government in its new form expressed itself in the unceremonious dismissal of Wirth, then Minister of the Interior, in the concentration of the Ministries of the Interior and of the Reichswehr (Army) in the hands of Groener, thereby strengthening the relative importance of the Army wing (Groener-Hindenburg) in the Cabinet of the Reich.

In connection with the formation of this Government, negotiations, now well known, were conducted behind the scenes between the Government, or, rather, Hindenburg, and Lt.-General Schleicher (Chief of the Information Bureau of the Ministry of the Reichswehr) on the one hand, and Adolf Hitler, leader of the National-Socialists, on the other. The consequence of these negotiations, which were supplemented by discussions nationally in the Press, namely between the "*Germania*," the "*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*" and the "*Voelkische Beobachter*," was at first that the *Centre*, the leading Government Party of the German bourgeoisie, *again refused* to concede the wishes of the National-Socialists to enter into a coalition. The fact that immediately after, the *Centre* Party in Hessen is apparently preparing to yield to the National-Socialists in regard to a coalition, and the conferences which are taking place between the leaders of the Christian trade unions and the representatives of the Hitler Party, indicate that the attitude of the *Centre* is purely tactical and transitory.

We must now raise the question why the *Centre* permitted these negotiations at all on a Reich scale in the first place. This question can only be answered if we consider the rôle of the *Centre* as the leading Party of the German bourgeoisie, representing the decisive sections of finance capital. When at that time Hugenberg split the German National Party, in order to be able to pursue his policy of driving to the right and of "fascising" the whole camp of the German bourgeoisie, he at the same time tried to create the National-Socialists into a mass basis for his policy. His point of departure was the "canalisation" (as the big bourgeois Press called it), of the Hitler Party, *i.e.*, to divert it into such channels that could be utilised as *suitable instruments* for the big bourgeoisie in exercising the bourgeois dictatorship with Fascist methods. The People's Party had repeatedly attempted itself to assume the function of constantly drilling the Hitler Party in the interests of big capital.

Of late, it is the *Centre* that has been seeking to assume the leading rôle in regard to the National-

Socialists, as it has been doing for a long time in regard to the Social Democrats. That, clearly, has also been the underlying motive in the negotiations between the bourgeoisie and its Brüning Government with the National-Socialists.

If we now investigate why these negotiations came to nought we will find that the question of the *Social-Democrats* is beyond doubt the outstanding question for the controlling sections of finance capital, which are excellently represented by the Centre. The National-Socialists have not yet managed to win the decisive sections of the factory workers. The Social-Democratic Party, although weakened by our advance, still constitutes the main social support of the bourgeoisie and, with its millions of adherents in the Federation of Trade Unions, and other workers' organisations, provides the most important mass basis for ensuring the safety and the carrying through of the capitalist dictatorship. On the other hand, as the National-Socialist movement grows in every respect, Hitler's Party shows more and more signs of supporting the bourgeoisie. Soon, at the latest when the elections in Prussia take place, this process will once again make the question of the Nazis' (National-Socialists') open participation in the Government a question of the day, although this will not in any way lessen the rôle to be played by the S.D.P.

The Centre Party which, by its special social structure, is the only big bourgeois Party able to rely on a comparatively firm mass adherence, is trying to create a broader mass basis by means of such institutions as "economic advisory boards" and "peace in industry"; in doing this it is applying its permanent principle, closely allied to that of the Fascists, of the community of interest of all sections of the people, and is establishing a bond of co-operation stretching from the S.D.P. to the National-Socialists.

The class content of Brüning's policy is therefore, on the one hand, to use the National-Socialists to weaken the S.D.P.—capitalism's main support among the masses—to break it down and thus make it still easier to exploit it (as in Prussia), and on the other hand, vice versa, to keep the National-Socialists in check and to make them, to a greater extent than before, the servants of the dictatorship of finance capital (as in Hessen).

This manifold utilisation of the S.D.P. and the National-Socialists in the interests of the bourgeois dictatorship, the application, to an increasing extent, of Fascist *forms* in the exercise of that dictatorship by the Brüning-Severing Governments, and the rôle of Social-Democracy, now, as formerly, recognised and used to the full by the bourgeoisie as their main social support, are the most important facts that emerge from a concrete examination of the development in Germany since the XI. Plenum. Do not these facts completely confirm the lessons and decisions of that *Plenum*? There can be no doubt about this.

Comrade *Manuilsky*, in his concluding speech at the Plenum, among other things, dealt with the question as to how the backwardness of the Communist Parties in regard to Fascism, as compared with the general revolutionary advance, was manifested. He said :—

"Secondly, our backwardness in the question of Fascism is expressed by the fact that we allow Social-Democracy to manoeuvre on the question of forms of bourgeois dictatorship. *And this is now its chief manoeuvre of a whole historic period.* Social-Democracy endeavours to divert the masses from the main questions of the class struggle, and turn their attention to arguments as to the forms which their exploitation should take—to questions such as, which is the better form of bourgeois dictatorship: parliamentary or extra-parliamentary? The theory of the so-called 'lesser evil' is at the moment the chief channel for the parliamentary illusions of the masses. Social-Democracy will manoeuvre—not only to-day and to-morrow, but during a whole period, during a considerable time—on the question of its seeming struggle with Fascism, blurring by all methods the basic fact that Fascism and Social-Fascism are two aspects of one and the same social bulwark of bourgeois dictatorship. To shatter these illusions of the masses—this it is which will assure the disruption of the mass basis of Social-Democracy inside the working-class." (Ibid., pages 110-111.)

And later on he said :—

"The weakness of the Communist International consists in the fact that we have not made the struggle against the theory of the 'lesser evil' in all its many forms the central key-task, that we have not supervised the propaganda and agitation of the Sections of the Communist International on this question, that we have not collected extensive material on the mistakes let pass by the Sections of the Communist International, and that we have not utilised the Plenum in order concretely to correct these mistakes.

"It will be indispensable to make good this lapse after the Plenum of the E.C.C.I. In this most serious and responsible work there is necessary, least of all general schemes and formulae learnt by heart about Fascism, but rather a concrete approach to the conditions in this country . . ." (Ibid., pages 114-115.)

We have to ask ourselves, have we, in all our work in Germany, paid sufficient attention to these most important principles? We have not, and it would not be difficult to prove this by examples from our general agitation and propaganda. Take any Communist paper in Germany, in all probability the greater part of our publications, leaflets and pamphlets, and we will see that more than once, instead of that concrete examination and analysis of

conditions, of class forces, demanded at the XI. Plenum, we have given stereotyped formulae about Fascism.

We cannot tolerate such weakness. Severing, Wels and Breitscheid, who urge "toleration" towards Brüning, have recently been joined by Trotsky who, in his latest pamphlet, frankly popularises the policy of the German Social-Fascists and appeals to the German workers to support Brüning and Braun. No wonder this counter-revolutionary penny-a-liner of the bourgeoisie has earned the enthusiastic applause of bourgeois journalists of the Mosse and Ullstein newspaper trust.

What is our task? To lead the masses in every field of the struggle against the day-by-day increasing bourgeois offensive, and to point out, in the daily struggle, *the Socialist way out, the proletarian dictatorship as against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. Instead of placing this extremely important historical contrast in the very centre of all our agitation and propaganda, we have engaged in calculating the "degree of Fascism in Germany," we have produced theories of "stages" and suchlike.

What is still worse is the fact that, despite the decisions of the XI. Plenum, despite the masterly analysis of these questions, particularly as given by Comrade Manuilsky in his concluding speech, tendencies towards making *liberal comparisons between Fascism and bourgeois democracy*, between the Hitler Party and Social-Fascism have been revealed in our ranks.

Was it not a result of this impermissible attitude that, in the matter of the Red plebiscite against the Prussian Government some, though in only a few isolated cases, of our Party functionaries, manifested scruples which did not, it is true, weaken our work of mobilisation for the Red plebiscite—a result that Braun and Severing would have warmly welcomed—but nevertheless necessitated a good deal of elucidation in the Party cells concerned.

And is not the fact that the Party generally defined its position of hostility to the Prussian Government so sharply only on the occasion of the popular plebiscite and not before, evidence that until that time we had neglected this basic struggle against the strongest support of the Brüning Government, *this battering ram used by the bourgeoisie to put through the Fascist dictatorship*? Such neglect is particularly dangerous in view of the forthcoming Prussian elections. And we must admit, that even among the revolutionary workers sentiments were expressed to the effect that perhaps after all the Braun-Severing Government was a lesser evil than a Hitler-Goebbels Government in Prussia. To say the least, this revealed inadequate class-consciousness, and for this, too, we must take responsibility. This influence exercised over revolutionary workers by the treacherous ideology of the lying Social-Democrats, these relics of Social-

Democratic thought in our ranks, is, we declare, in full agreement with the decisions of the XI. Plenum, *the most serious danger that confronts the Communist Party*.

How great that danger is, is shown at the present time, among other things, by the latest manoeuvres of Social-Fascism. The S.D.P. which, because of the recent election successes of Hitler's Party, and because it knows full well that the negotiations for a coalition between the Centre and the Nazis have not been broken off for ever, is afraid of losing its ministerial position in Prussia, is anxious both to retain the adherence of its rebellious followers and at the same time to demonstrate to the bourgeoisie its indispensability. It is therefore undertaking a new demagogic manoeuvre, it is "threatening" to form "*a united front with the Communist Party*." Breitscheid's speech at Darmstadt during the Hessen elections, and the commentary it received in *Vorwärts*, show that the Social-Democrats are conjuring up the devil of Hitlerite Fascism in order to keep the masses from effective struggle against the dictatorship of finance capital. And this bait, which is another form of the general policy of the lesser evil, is to be made more palatable to the masses by the addition of the sauce of strange and sudden friendship for the Communists ("against the prohibition of the C.P.G.")

We have to ask ourselves the question: has the Communist Party of Germany created the conditions that are necessary to enable us easily to counteract this new treachery, this misleading of the masses?

We cannot answer this question with an unconditional yes. We ourselves have only too often been fascinated into immobility by the problem of Fascism, instead of putting it in its proper place in the framework, as one of the forms of the bourgeois dictatorship among the various other forms which that dictatorship assumes. We have only partially recognised that the theory of the inevitability of Fascist dictatorship under monopoly capitalism is incorrect, or at any rate, we have often failed to contest that theory, and others which take us along the wrong road, with sufficient determination.

We have not conducted our fundamental struggle against Social-Democracy with sufficient sharpness and clarity. Let us take a few examples:

After the Leipzig Congress of the S.D.P. we gave an entirely correct analysis of the internal situation in the Social-Democratic Party and heralded the impending splitting off of the Centrists, and their establishment of a new Party, as the greatest crime against the working-class. But in the resolutions we passed at the time, we failed to repeat explicitly our correct decisions (taken at Essen and Wedding) that Centrism is the most dangerous form of reformism. Despite our correct perspectives, we undoubtedly neglected, in the following months, to intensify our struggle against this treacherous Centrist plan.

Had we done otherwise, had we fought on the correct lines as laid down in those resolutions, promptly and decisively against the plan for a new Party, Seydewitz and his Socialist Labour Party, the Party of the Centrist "bog" which, from the standpoint of the revolution, represents the most dangerous elements, would be playing a far less important rôle to-day.

The fact that, for example, in our revolutionary trade union work, we have worked from above, have made offers of a united front to local leaders of the Federation of Trade Unions, or other representatives of the reformist bureaucracy (as in the Ruhr district), also demonstrates that we are not carrying on our principal struggle against Social-Democracy with sufficient determination, which would make such mistakes impossible.

A similar impermissible case occurred in the formation of an anti-Fascist Committee by a united front from above with Radical-Democratic groups (possessing few adherents among the masses) and other vacillating individuals, instead of concentrating our efforts on strengthening the anti-Fascist front in the factories and among the masses (as was correctly done in Braunschweig).

What follows from all this? Although Comrade Manuisky, in the speech from which I have quoted, demanded that after the Plenum all breaches in the struggle against the theory of the lesser evil be closed up, the Communist Party of Germany, to which, of all parties in the Comintern, this demand most closely applies, in duty bound cannot yet say that it has actually considered and dealt with this question as its central task. But still the struggle in the first place against all democratic illusions, particularly against the one which seeks to make Social-Democracy a "support in the struggle against Fascism," is an indispensable condition for mobilising the masses for the struggle against the Fascist measures of the Brüning-Severing dictatorship, and beyond that, for the overthrow of capitalism.

The decisive conclusion which the German Party should have drawn from the decisions of the Plenum was, as we have seen, to direct our main offensive against Social-Democracy as the principal social support of the bourgeoisie.

After the Party's election victory in Hamburg, a tendency was observed among certain Party functionaries, including certain prominent ones, to minimise the importance of this victory because of the growth in the National-Socialist vote. We shall also have to deal with an opposite tendency in our Party to under-estimate National-Socialism and to neglect the struggle against it. For the moment we shall deal with the Hamburg election results.

Although we won a great victory, there was considerable weakness and many defects in our work there, which were criticised. Still, we succeeded in

making a breach, though not a large one, in the strongest fortress of German Social-Democracy, we won tens of thousands of workers away from their allegiance to the S.D.P. Every Communist who recognises that our chief offensive must be directed against Social-Democracy, must judge the results of the elections as a whole, by the victory we obtained over the Social-Democrats. If it is true that the fight against Fascism is, and must be, primarily, a fight against the S.D.P., then our victory over the Hamburg Social-Democrats signifies at the same time a victory over Fascism.

Nevertheless, there were comrades who did not want to see the Social-Democratic wood for the National-Socialist trees. Because the National Socialists were able to win a big victory in Hamburg, these comrades under-estimated the significance of our struggle against Social-Fascism, the significance of our victory over the S.D.P. This certainly expressed a deviation from the political line, which is to fight hardest against the S.D.P.

As against this incorrect attitude we declare with all emphasis that the Fascists can be defeated only if we make clear to the masses the real nature of the S.D.P., its alliance with Fascism, its work in the service of the class enemy, and thus draw these masses away from the S.D.P. leaders. We cannot attack the principles of the S.D.P. and expose their anti-working-class policy to the workers in factory and trade union, and to the unemployed, by bawling and abuse, as has become the fashion among us recently; we can do this only by developing our revolutionary policy. By carrying out a united front policy in the struggle for their class interests, we are imbuing the Social-Democratic workers and proletarian youth with confidence and trust in our Party as the only leader of the proletariat.

We must go a step further in our methods to establish the Red united front of all workers, from all camps, for the common class struggle. We must convince the S.D.P. workers, by comradely explanation and by pointing out the lessons of their own experience in the common struggle, of the treacherous rôle their leaders are playing and of the fact that we alone, that only the Communist Party is prepared to go through thick and thin for the class interests of the proletariat.

We must propose to the Social-Democratic workers everywhere the most important militant demands as a basis for the establishment of the Red united front against the Brüning-Severing regime, against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its supporters, against the Party of Hitler and the Social-Democratic leadership.

Braunschweig offers the best example of the correct application of the policy of struggle for the S.D.P. workers and of the application of the united front policy as a fighting policy. The result of the

popular plebiscite there was reported by our Party paper in Frankfurt as "Plebiscite turned down in Braunschweig," a striking example of fossilised parliamentary thought on the part of the editor. The Party and the revolutionary workers measure our advance in Braunschweig by another rule. For them, extra-parliamentary factors, such as political mass strikes, revolutionary demonstrations, a militant Red united front, etc., play the decisive rôle.

* * *

This question of delivering the main blow against the S.D.P. is the core of Communist policy in Germany. We have shown in our political analysis why, as a result of the policy of the bourgeoisie, of the Brüning-Severing Government, our fight against the S.D.P. is the central problem of our revolutionary mass work. Now we shall approach this question from another angle, closely connected with the first, but going beyond it and exposing to view the fundamental importance of this problem in its entirety.

This is the problem of the struggle to win our own class. To every Marxist-Leninist it is clear that the first requisite of Communist policy is the struggle to win over our own class, the proletariat. Only when we have won the majority of the proletariat for Communism can we carry out our further tasks of attracting the allies of the proletariat from among the middle classes to the anti-capitalist front, and thus create the basis for the people's revolution, in the sense given to that revolution by Marx and Lenin. Any weakening of that principle, any tendency to ignore the supremacy of the struggle for our own class, is a break with Marxism and Leninism.

How did Lenin present this problem? In the debates on the programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in 1902, Comrade Lenin explained his attitude to this question thoroughly and explicitly. Both in his criticism of the two draft programmes drawn up at that time by Plekhanov, and in his remarks on the draft programme of Martov and the commission set up later to go into the matter, Lenin clearly brought out the Marxist standpoint to the problem of the relation between the proletariat and all toilers. He draws the conclusions for the entire policy of the proletarian Socialist Party, and writes:—

"I am entirely at one with the view held by Comrade V. Zasulich that it is possible to win over a much larger number of the small producers for Social-Democracy, and to do so much earlier (than in the West) . . . that we must do every thing that lies within our power to do that, that we must express this 'wish' in our programme against Martov and his companions. . . ."

"But we must not bend the bow too far, as V. Zasulich does. We must not confuse desire with reality, and what is more with that immanent,

essential reality to which alone our declaration of principle is devoted. It would, of course, be desirable to win over all the small producers. But we know that they form a separate class, bound, it is true, to the proletariat, by a thousand threads and transitional stages, but still a separate class.

"It is, at first, absolutely essential to draw a line of demarcation between ourselves and all others, and to place on one side the proletariat alone, solely and exclusively; only after that can we declare that the proletariat will emancipate everybody, that it calls upon and appeals to everybody.

"I agree with this 'afterwards,' but first of all I want the 'at first.'

"Among us in Russia the great sufferings of the toiling and exploited masses did not give rise to any popular movement so long as the handful of *factory workers* had not yet taken up the struggle, the class struggle; and only that 'handful' can guarantee this struggle, can continue and *extend it*. Precisely in Russia, where the critics (Bulgakov) accuse the Social-Democrats (the Bolsheviks.—E.T.) of hostility to the peasantry, where the social revolutionaries chatter about the necessity of replacing the conception of the class struggle by the conception of the struggle of all those who toil and are exploited (*Vestnik Rycckoe Revolutsii*, No. 2) precisely in Russia must we, as the first step, draw a line of demarcation between ourselves and all others by a clear-cut definition, retaining only the class struggle, only the proletariat—and only then declare that we appeal to everybody, take up everything, do everything, extend our activity to everything. . . ."

"The commission, however, 'extends' and forgets to delimit. And I am accused of narrow-mindedness because I demand that this extension should be preceded by delimitation. But, gentlemen, that is a distortion.

"The inevitable struggle against the united critics and the somewhat more radical gentlemen of the '*Rucckie Vedomosti*' and '*Rucckoe Bogatstvo*' and the social revolutionaries, will demand of us that we draw a line of demarcation between the class struggle of the proletariat and the struggle (is it a struggle?) of the toiling and exploited masses. Talk about these masses is the trump card in the hands of all uncertain waverers, but the commission is playing into their hands. . . ."

These words of Lenin, which sum up one of the most decisive principles of Marxism-Leninism, mean, when applied to the practical tasks of the revolutionary work of the Communist Party of Germany, despite the differences in the respective situations, that for us, too, the foremost and central task is the struggle for our class, the struggle to win over the proletariat, to win over its majority, its decisive sections. What conclusion must be drawn from this?

The conclusion that inevitably follows is that in order to win over the majority of the proletariat we must direct our main offensive against that Party which still possesses in the proletariat, the decisive mass basis for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. That Party is not the Hitler Party, but the Social-Democratic Party.

Unless we win victory in the struggle against Social-Democracy, we cannot defeat Fascism, that is, we cannot fight successfully against the bourgeois dictatorship which uses Fascist methods. Unless we triumph in the struggle against the S.D.P. we cannot possibly accomplish our task of gaining a footing among the masses who follow the Centre Party and successfully assault and destroy the bourgeois dictatorship's other pillar, the Hitler Party, the basis of whose mass membership is the middle class strata.

These are the obvious conclusions to be drawn from Leninist strategy.

Comrade Stalin, in his introduction to *On the Road to October*, wrote as follows:—

“But in what way did the Party exercise its leadership, what were the measures taken by the Party? It followed the line of isolating the Parties of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, the Parties of compromise, considering these the most dangerous groups during the decisive period of the revolution. . . .

“The struggle was no longer one between Tsarism and people, but between bourgeoisie and proletariat. During this period, the democratic bourgeois Parties of the socialist-revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, were the most dangerous social support of imperialism. Why? Because these Parties were at that time the Parties of compromisers, the Parties of conciliation between imperialism and the toiling masses. Quite naturally it was against them that the Bolsheviks at that time aimed their most formidable blows: for had we not succeeded in isolating the socialist-revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, we could not have been sure that the toiling masses would break away from imperialism; and in default of such a breach, we could not count on a victory for the Soviet Revolution. There were many who failed to grasp the peculiar character of the Bolshevik tactics, who accused the Bolsheviks of harbouring ‘excessive hatred’ against the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks and of ‘disregarding the main issue.’ But the whole period of preparation for October speaks eloquently in favour of the Bolshevik tactics, showing that on such tactics alone depended the triumph of the October Revolution.” (*Leninism, Tactics of the Bolsheviks*, pp. 201-202 and 203.)

All that has been said above with reference to the weaknesses in our struggle against the Social-Democrats as far as the principles of struggle are

concerned, as well as all that might be added concerning the insufficient application of the policy of the united front from below in regard to the Social-Democratic workers (a detailed enumeration of instances on this subject is not necessary here, as this question has already been discussed within the Party elsewhere), prove that we are not yet giving sufficient consideration in our practice to those fundamental rules of Leninist strategy and tactics, as described by Comrade Stalin.

Of course, it is impossible to separate this question of the weaknesses in our struggle against the Social-Democrats as the main social supports of the bourgeoisie, from the question of the struggle *for our own class*, from the question of winning over the majority of the proletariat. For, as we had already stressed at the January Plenum of the C.C., the Social-Democratic workers undoubtedly constitute our *main reservoir*, together with the unorganised workers. The recognition of this fact is of the utmost import for the work of the Party and especially of the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition in the enterprises, in the trade unions, and among the unemployed.

* * *

The question of the struggle for the majority of the working-class is most intimately connected with the question of the application of the slogan of the *People's Revolution*. This slogan was not always fully applied in the way it should be. Even in an official document we find the impermissible formulation of a “*Triple Alliance* between the proletariat, the peasants, the urban middle classes” *without* mentioning the *hegemony* of the proletariat (the Central organ of the Party even gave the resolution the following heading: “*Triple Alliance of the Toiling Masses*”). We have already contrasted this with Lenin's fundamental exposition of the question of the proletariat and the petty-bourgeois strata, the strata of the small producers, At the XI. Plenum, Comrade Manuilsky made the following statements with reference to the concrete German conditions concerning the application of the slogan of the people's revolution:—

“Comrade Thalmann was correct when he pointed out in his speech that the task of winning allies to the side of the proletariat must not be put in opposition to the task of winning the majority of the working-class. These tasks are connected with one another in the closest fashion. The closer the Communist Party approaches to winning the majority of the working-class, the greater will grow its strength and influence over the other non-proletarian strata of the population.

“But does that mean, comrades, that we must already do away in Germany with the slogan of the winning over of the majority of the working-class? By no means. The winning of the majority of the

working-class remains the basic strategical task of the Communist Party of Germany, for we have still not won the majority of the working-class in Germany." (*The Communist Parties and the Crisis of Capitalism*, D. Z. Manuilsky, XI. Plenum, page 117.)

This is true beyond dispute. But it is likewise true that the Communist Party of Germany did not always base its policy on the recognition of this truth. In other words, in applying the slogan of *people's revolution in accordance with working-class policy*, we did not always sufficiently stress the fact that it was synonymous with proletarian, socialist revolution. Mistakes in this direction however, are a *violation of the strategic task*, our main and principal task of winning the majority of the proletariat and developing the fundamental class line of our policy, which constitutes the essence of a Marxist-Leninist Party. This is a violation of the very principles which Lenin so determinedly and so strongly defended in his observations on the programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Party (later Bolsheviks.—E. Th.). Are we making such mistakes? They occur with special frequency in the periodical, *The Propagandist*. In its December issue, 1930, an editorial, entitled *People's Revolution Against Fascism*, discusses the question of what forces "must be mobilised in the struggle against Fascism and to prevent its victory." The article correctly states that only the proletariat, the only class that is revolutionary to the end is capable of overthrowing the capitalist system and of putting a Socialist system in its place. But further on we read as follows:—

"But does this mean that the proletariat can and must consummate its Socialist revolution alone, without allies? Certainly not in those countries where the petty-bourgeoisie constitutes a great portion of the population; and this is the rule in all countries on the European Continent. Here, above all, the most important point to be considered in the question of the strategy and tactics of the proletarian revolution is the *winning over of the petty-bourgeois strata for the proletarian revolution* or at least to make them neutral."

Compare this formula with the inexorable clarity of Lenin. It will then be seen that the revolutionary strategy is here presented upside-down. Lenin clearly emphasises the "at first": the demand that "a line of demarcation be drawn between the proletariat and other classes," "only afterwards" are we to declare that we will call upon all, will accept everyone, will extend in every direction." Instead of this *The Propagandist* writes: "The main issue, above all, is to win over the petty-bourgeois strata to the proletarian revolution, or at least to neutralise them." The question of *extending* to include our allies, a problem which is very important and must not be underestimated by any means, is here elevated to the

central question of revolutionary tactics and strategy, which is, above all. This means that the slogan of a People's Revolution is not being interpreted in the sense in which Marx and Lenin understood it, not in accordance with working class policy, but in the sense of a "popular revolution," which has nothing in common with Marxism and Leninism.

Other formulations in the same article go to prove that this was not a mere slip of the pen, but a deviation "inadvertent" and "unconscious," perhaps, from the Leninist strategy. The article presents the concept of a people's revolution within the framework of the Russian October Revolution, states that this concept is "indispensable in all highly developed capitalist countries, particularly in Germany," and goes on to say:

"For this concept contains the concept of the hegemony of the proletariat, its leadership of all exploited sections of the population, above all, the masses of the working peasantry, in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. If the proletariat really desires to exercise its *hegemony* its rôle as the vanguard of all the exploited, it must organise the people's revolution. This is especially important at the present time, when the petty-bourgeois mass basis of Fascism must be undermined, and when it must be our task to wrench the toilers in town and country away from the National-Socialists and from Fascism in general and make them allies of the proletariat."

It would follow then that the concept of people's revolution contains the concept of the hegemony of the proletariat. A *convenient* method indeed! For if the hegemony of the proletariat is "directly" contained in the concept of people's revolution, if it "lurks" within it, the proletariat and its party has already rid itself of every difficulty in establishing this hegemony of the proletariat. And in actual fact the writer of the article in the *Propagandist* teaches us that in order to realise its hegemony the proletariat need simply "*Organise the people's revolution.*" The modest reader, the ordinary propagandist and party worker, is certainly curious to know how this is to be done. But the editorial writer in the *Propagandist* keeps this knowledge to himself (assuming he has such) and discloses nothing but the meaningless phrase "the proletariat must organise the people's revolution." To cap the climax in this jumble of words, the very next sentence boldly leaps over to the question of the "petty-bourgeois mass basis of Fascism."

The writer does not say a word about how the proletariat becomes the advance guard of all the exploited, or how the hegemony of the proletariat is actually to come into being. We do not expect a concrete or practical answer to this question, because the whole treatment of the problem is entirely too "learned," in the bad sense of the term, because the

writer is dealing with pure abstractions in a schematic way; but the editorial in the *Propagandist* should have cited at least one *theoretical* reference, if the words "hegemony of the proletariat" were not meant to be an empty phrase. This, however, is really the case.

The article simply ignores the fact that the proletariat, under the leadership of the Communist Party, realises its hegemony over all the toilers *only* by carrying out *its* policy, the policy of the working class without compromise, without dilution, only by being revolutionary to the end.

Opposed to this liberal dilution of the slogan of people's revolution we find in the January issue, 1931, of the same periodical, an article from the pen of Comrade J.L. entitled *The Fascist Dictatorship and the Propaganda of the Anti-Fascist Struggle*, a correct and Leninist treatment of the problem of the hegemony of the proletariat over the rest of the toilers.

This article contains certain errors with regard to other questions (revolutionary situation and so forth) which, however, were corrected at the January Plenum of the C.C. It contributes, however, the following to the problem of the hegemony of the proletariat: this hegemony can only become a fact when the *proletarian mass* struggle itself, accompanied by strikes and demonstrations of the unemployed, assumes sharper forms, embraces broader masses and "thereby shows to the intimidated masses of the peasants and petty-bourgeoisie, that there is a force which is more powerful than the capitalist oppressors, the force of the revolutionary proletariat."

This attitude is correct, for the small producers in town and country, the working peasants and needy middle classes, cannot be deemed allies of the revolutionary proletariat *under all circumstances*; their class position is such that they are just as likely to be allies of *reaction*. According to Lenin, they become allies only to the extent that they "renounce" capitalism, to the extent that we succeed in "winning them over" to the side of the proletariat. To forget this fact is tantamount to slurring over the rôle of the proletariat, as the only class revolutionary to the end, even if this rôle is recognised in words.

Insufficient comprehension of these conditions under which the slogan of people's revolution can be applied in the Marxist-Leninist way is found, not only in the above-mentioned article, but in a number of other issues of the *Propagandist*. In an article by Comrade A. E. on *Proletarian Revolution and People's Revolution*, which appeared in the February issue, 1931, the "people's revolution" is presented as the equivalent of the "spontaneous rising of the masses" which only thereafter is to be transformed into the proletarian revolution by the proletariat coming forward in its rôle of organiser and political leader.

This may indicate the tasks for the first part of the *bourgeois revolutions* of the middle of the nineteenth century, but it strikingly indicates the utter confusion that obtains concerning the slogan of people's revolution. The fact that a few correct formulations follow later in the same article by no means serves to eliminate this confusion.

We are dealing here not with casual, or only incidental deviations, but with *real errors*. This is proved by the leading articles in the July issue, 1931, of the *Propagandist*, in which we read the following:

"The masses—the people enter upon the struggle against the bourgeois state, against bourgeois class domination, against the bourgeois system of society."

"The masses—the people want to fight. Already thousands upon thousands of workers who for decades have been organised Social-Democrats, cry: "Rather a terrible end than terror without end."

What a babel of tongues, what garbling and distortion of words from their accepted meaning, is hidden here! First he speaks of the "masses," then of the "people" and then again of the "Social-Democratic workers." No one will deny that such phrasemongering has nothing in common with the task of maintaining Marxist-Leninist clarity and precision in definition and analysis. This is not "Marxist-Leninist propaganda," as the cover of this periodical proclaims, but the *exact* opposite: The confusion of all Marxist-Leninist concepts.

These egregious theoretical blunders are continued in the editorial in the November issue, 1931, of the *Propagandist*, where we find *inter alia* statements like the following in the leading article by A.E. :—

"What is the bourgeois revolution? It is a *political* revolution and not a social revolution."

And again elsewhere in the same article :—

"If in November, 1918, only the bourgeois revolution had been on the order of the day, the treachery of the Social-Democracy would not be so outrageous, and 'its' November 'conquests' so enormous."

This is a complete opportunist falsification of the Marxist theory according to which *every* revolution (including a bourgeois revolution) is a *social* revolution. Moreover, this signifies a clean break from the Leninist presentation of the question of the rôle of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution. A.E. virtually seeks to prove that in a bourgeois revolution the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, i.e., reformism, would provide a suitable leadership for the working-class. In so doing he belies all the experiences of the Bolsheviks in their struggle with

Menshevism during the Russian revolution of 1905-1906, and all the statements of the Comintern with regard to the rôle of the Second International and its Parties in the bourgeois democratic revolutions in recent years (China, Spain, etc.). He is but a newly-hatched "theoretician" who is seeking to smuggle the Social-Democratic eggshells from which

he has been unable to liberate himself, into our ranks in the guise of "Leninism."

Naturally our Party must decisively oppose such deviations and mistakes, must overcome these false conceptions and must create clarity as quickly as possible.

(To be continued.)

THE FIGHT AGAINST GROUP SPIRIT AND GROUP PRACTICE IN THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY

By SCHAVAROSCH.

(I)—THE GROUP MALADY AND THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IT.

FOR some months the members of the C.P. of France have been strenuously combating an internal malady of the Party known as the group or clique spirit, the group method or system. With varying acuteness, the administrative organs of almost every grade of the Party have been, and still are—though the cure is now under way—afflicted by this malady: the Central Committee and its Political Bureau—that is the Party Executive machine; the directing forces of the Party's "regions," "rayons," and "sous-rayons"; and even the nucleus committees. Nor did the group malady spare the Y.C.L.

This group-work has not sprung up overnight. There was a period in the development of the C.P.F. when open group-work on a public political (and therefore Leninist) platform was an aspect of political struggle for the stiffening and consolidation of the Party. It was carried out openly according to the tactics and with the support of the Comintern. It called into action all healthy elements in the Party against the various opportunist tendencies, and through this open struggle the political education of the Party was carried on. At this particular period the militants of the Y.C.L. gave enormous assistance to the Party in its fight against the Right-wing opportunists. By means of their well-timed political activity they gained the confidence of the Party and of the Comintern, and it was in consequence natural for many of these Y.C.L. militants to have received responsible posts in the Party leadership. Thus the active forces of Y.C.L. leadership were to have been welded to the best directive sections of the Party—those whose political activity and tactics had been accurate and in conformity with Comintern tactics. Unfortunately, this welding was not satisfactorily carried out. Such Y.C.L. militants as Barbé, Celor, Lozeray, etc., instead of making, from the moment they received responsible positions in Party leadership, every possible effort to become part and parcel of the Party, withdrew into a narrow clique, a small circle of friends, which in relation both to the Party

and the Comintern acted in an intensely conspiratorial fashion. From this moment the sectarian political degeneration of these militants set in, and their group became the prime mover in the propagation of the group malady, an evil which in the last two years has shown itself to be an ever-increasing danger to the development of the C.P.F., and a serious stumbling-block in the way of its political activity. During the last two years the "clique-spirit" has made progressive development, and has finally, in spite of the repeated interventions of the Comintern Executive Committee, become the current practice in the Party's internal life. The regular executive organs of the Party (central, regional, rayons and sous-rayons) ceased to function regularly and normally as collective organs for leadership and achievement. More and more they were being threatened with abolition by this system of small groups of friends which solve and empirically settle all questions and problems and which in effect control Party organisations. This system of cliques of militants who systematically abused their power by arbitrary nominations for leaders and by co-options was increasingly having the result that the decisions both of the Party E.C. and of the Comintern remained unapplied and no regular Party organisation attended to their effective application.

The group led by Barbé was "Left-wing sectarian." But by attempting to turn the Party in the direction of Left-wing sectarian opportunism, by thus severing the Party from the masses, it was preparing the way for the penetration into mass political work—in so far as any was done—of the narrowest empiricism, of Right-wing opportunism.

The group malady is intimately connected with the C.P.F.'s backwardness in relation to the rhythm of events and to the Party's tasks. This backwardness, which has time and again been pointed out to the C.P.F., while being largely a consequence of the group malady in its broadest sense, at the same time offers a favourable soil for the spread of this malady. This mutual interdependence of the backwardness of the Party and the intensification of the group malady

must be stressed because from triumph over this backwardness will also come the complete cure of the Party and of its group malady; and vice versa, the disappearance of the group spirit will create the chief, first condition for conquering the backwardness.

The French Central Committee did react. It realised at last the seriousness of the danger brought about by the group spirit. And it was at that precise moment, when the question of the group malady was forcibly, brutally thrust forward, that the existence was revealed of the Barbé-Celor-Lozeray group, a closed group formed of several members of the Political Bureau and of the Central Committee which was setting itself up above the regular directive organs of the Party. No doubt the group malady from which the C.P.F. is suffering cannot be and is not restricted solely to the B.C.L. group. But because the latter had for many years been leading an organised semi-conspiratorial life, and because it was directed by militants who had received from the Party the most responsible of tasks, the preponderating tasks in Party leadership during the last two years, it is this group which in the eyes of the Party and of the Comintern bears to-day the heaviest responsibility not only for the growth of the group spirit in the Party, but for its general condition and for its backwardness.

It is therefore quite natural and comprehensible for the most pointed criticism and the severest blows in the struggle against the group malady to be specially concentrated at the present time on the B.C.L. group. Natural and comprehensible also is the indignation of Party members, and particularly of the Communist "prolos" of the rank and file, against the handful of militants who form the group and who had done the Party so much harm.

Already the campaign waged against the group malady in the heart of the Party is beginning to show appreciable results. The rank and file of the Party is speaking up. In many districts, and most especially in the Paris district of the Party, discussion of the group malady is more and more turning into self-critical examination of the flaws in Party activity, of the errors and weaknesses of the work of organisation. And more and more there is becoming apparent a comforting sense of the return to normal in the functioning of the different organs and in their inter-relations. The attainment of these primary improvements—due almost entirely to the active co-operation of all militant Party members—is an indication that the group malady will be overcome.

But the group malady is far from being wholly eliminated merely by the exposure and dissolution of the Barbé group. Neither has it completely disappeared—nor can it do so—because the members of the Barbé group have made oral or written declarations in which they admit their mistakes and promise to help the Party to overcome the evil and recreate

its own activity. To defeat the group malady entirely and radically to transform the situation the Party will have to make strenuous efforts for many months yet, because, as has been said above, the group malady is closely bound up with the Party's backwardness, of which it is at one and the same time a cause and a consequence. The Party as a whole must seize upon the salutary lessons of this test it has had to undergo, as made manifest in the part played in the Party by the Barbé group. All possible and necessary clarity of thought must be brought to bear upon it. Open discussion on this line has not yet produced this clarity and has not yet picked out with the precision which is indispensable those most essential political and organisational problems which should be brought to the fore by the struggle against the group evil. The fight against the group malady is an essential part of the campaign for the stiffening and reinforcement of the Party. The fight against the group evil is the fight for the purification of the atmosphere in the heart of the Party, for the return to normal functioning of the regular Party organs, for the establishment of collective work in all such organs, and above all, for the creation and reinforcement of Party public opinion and of the authority, initiative and feeling of responsibility of every Party organ and organisation, from the Central Committee to the smallest of factory nuclei.

(2)—THE IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL PRACTICE OF THE BARBE GROUP.

The Barbé group represents the most concrete, the most highly developed manifestation of the group malady. It was a closed, organised group. It used to discuss and deliberate within itself all political questions, all Party tasks. It made decisions. It paved the way for the interventions which its members were to make within the central organs of the Party. It had its own group discipline, which took precedence over Party or Comintern discipline. It had not yet elaborated in writing a political platform. That is why most of the militants in the group now admit, in their declarations of repentance, that they were merely a group with no real principles. It would, however, be incorrect to consider that in actual fact the group had no platform. There remains its political practice. There remains the articles, pamphlets and documents written by the militants of this group. Upon examination of all this a whole platform, a whole ideology become apparent. It is therefore necessary to examine the principal elements in the group's ideology, the principal moments in its political practice.

In their analysis of the political situation in France and of immediate probabilities, the militants of the group constantly betrayed pronounced *left-wing sectarianism*. They had replaced serious analysis by undialectical clichés. In *Humanité*, in the Com-

munist Fortnightly, and in documents this group's militants kept pointing out that already—at the end of 1930—France was in a state of revolutionary crisis, at the breakdown of the system. This was linked up with the crisis in the ministry at that time, Barbé himself at the Eleventh Plenum of the Comintern Executive Committee, was forced to make the following admission, quoting from his own articles:—

“The comprehension of the situation showed outrageous exaggeration. There were to be met among us men,—some even in highly responsible posts—who in December of last year, and even as late as January of this, were speaking of being at the “height” of an economic and political crisis which was accompanied by ‘a rising tide of revolution.’ (LOSOVSKI : “So power was actually within their grasp !”).”

“It is clear that, faced with such a concept, if one were logical the question of slogans and of our Party's tactics ought to be quite different from the slogans and fighting tactics we are at the moment making use of. Had we that double situation—economic and political crisis in conjunction—then we should be able to set ourselves the problem of power and consequently of the armed struggle of the French workers against the class enemy.” (*The C.P.F. before the International*, p.p 53-54.)

Concerning *Fascism*, the militants of the group held the same mistaken and formularised conceptions. Concrete facts of police and boss repression and of political reaction were taken to mean that Fascism was already triumphant in France. “We must not forget that it (*Fascism*) already exists in actual fact at the present time” proclaimed the pamphlet published by Agitprop. The fascisation of the bourgeois parties and movements and of the Socialist Parties received no concrete analysis ; the group let it be said merely that Tardieu is already bringing Fascist dictatorship into force, that Herriot would bring in a still more rabid Fascism, and Leon Blum the most rabid of all.

Concerning *strikes* and the “*Mass Political Strike*,” we find among the militants of the Barbé group concepts reminiscent, from many angles, of the old Anarcho-Syndicalist concepts. Remember how they made ridiculous the policy of making every strike a political one, throughout the year 1930 ! How did these comrades regard the strike of May Day, 1930 ? As being already a mass political strike, a direct step towards the seizure of power. Or else they flung themselves into propaganda for the opportunist theory that strikes are all-sufficient, writing : “There are not countless modes of conflict ; there is only the widest, the most unified, the most aggressive possible strike, to force capitalism to let go the tit-bit.”

Thus in Anarcho-Syndicalist fashion did they distort not only the mass political strike, but the

significance of strikes for partial concessions, allowing at the same time the spread of the conception that the seizure of power by the proletariat could take place without armed insurrection.

The proletariat's struggle for partial concessions is another field over which the militants of the Barbé group took up erroneous and sectarian positions. For a considerable time they allowed the spread of the idea that the “fight for bread and jam” is out-of-date historically, that the workers will obtain nothing under a capitalist régime.

Thus by under-estimating the need for organisation and for the guidance of strikes for partial concessions, they were bidding fair to detach the Party from the real movements and struggles of the masses and to facilitate the task of the Social-Fascists in their deceptive manoeuvres to set themselves up as defenders of these concessions. The most striking case was offered by the attitude of the militants of the group at the time of the great movement for national insurance and the mass strikes against the workers, contribution. At this period the militants of the group defended the theory that it was not possible to obtain national insurance within the framework of capitalism, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat alone would give true national insurance. To-day Barbé admits his mistake and declares :—

“It is correct that we have the greatest responsibility for doing away with the struggle for immediate concessions particularly in the national insurance movement, over which we persisted in developing in the Party an anarchist theory, viz., that there can be no national insurance under a capitalist régime.” (Barbe's declaration.)

The militants of the Barbé group also demonstrated their sectarian deviation in the matter of the “*united front*” and of “*class against class*.” For some length of time not only were united front tactics not employed at a time of working-class conflict, but the group even omitted to mention them. Nor did it, being at Party headquarters, not react against the Leftist point of view that “Socialist factory workers and Socialist leaders are all Social-Fascists and ravening hounds of the bourgeoisie,” but it continually glossed over and encouraged similar concepts. “Class against class” tactics were interpreted and applied by the group mechanically ; they renounced the “united front” and placed it in opposition to “class against class.”

The policy of the *twofold* struggle against opportunist dangers both right and left was long and stubbornly combated by the militants of the group. In this respect they pleaded the exceptional position of France. How did they put the question ? At the time of the French Commission in May-June, 1930, Comrade Barbé upheld by Celor and Laribere, thus formulated his position :—

"Much has been said concerning certain formulas, for example, that of the 'twofold struggle.' Can this formula help our Party? May not this formula develop into a slogan which will on the contrary give rise to conflict within our Party and even prevent it from combating the chief danger in its ranks? We think that through this 'twofold struggle' formula we are risking a dislocation of our Party, for we must not forget its formation and evolution."

In similar strain was written the leading article of *Cahiers du Bolchevisme* (No. 5, May, 1930):—

"It cannot be said, therefore, that there exist in our Party two battle fronts, as in the Y.C.L. The few Leftist mistakes that may be made by good revolutionary workers must be eliminated, but they cannot be classed with the Leftist chatter of certain braggarts who by this means attempt to conceal their opportunism. There is only one opportunist front, with diverse nuances, as we have stressed above, and the whole Party should struggle vigorously to smash it and attain in full the political tactics and practical tasks fixed upon by the Party, in full accordance with the International."

The group toiled manfully to impose a similar point of view on all the Party. Finally, being defeated, the militants of the group accepted, as did the whole of Party headquarters, the policy of twofold struggle. But in actual practice they maintained their previous positions.

Not only did they not lead the fight against Leftist phraseology and practice, but they gave it further encouragement. It was these very militants who, barely a week or two after the French Commission—at which they had accepted the twofold struggle policy—launched the formula: "National insurance is impossible under capitalism." A few months later these militants suddenly launched the slogan "October revenge" without making the slightest effort to prepare a strike. It was at the end of 1930 that they announced the revolutionary crisis in France and let it be believed that the seizure of power by the proletariat had come to the forefront as a question of immediate struggle. Meanwhile they abandoned the strike movement and the fight against unemployment. They showed themselves to be passively sectarian concerning trade union unity. By giving up the struggle against the manifold serious manifestations of Leftist opportunism, remaining passive and confused about partial concessions, replacing the active life of the organisations by bureaucratic small-group methods, making decisions and taking action quite apart from the masses, the militants of the Barbé group were disarming the Party in the teeth of Right-wing opportunist dangers. And at the same time they

were objectively facilitating the work of the Social-Fascists in deceiving the workers. By vitiating the relations between the Party and the unions of the C.G.T.U. by a declamation about the directive rôle of the Party, the militants of the group were objectively facilitating the disorganizational work of the Opposition Minority Movement within the C.G.T.U. By diminishing the Party's mass work the militants of this group were upsetting the Party's intimate connection with the masses. And when quite recently, at the time of the campaign for and actually during the local elections, we witnessed a whole series of opportunist distortions of the class against class policy, we had the comrades of the Barbé group to thank for it. It must be confessed that they already realised it. At any rate, we have declarations from them in which they all—Barbé, Celor and the other members of the group—admit that they contributed more than anyone else to the strengthening of the Right-wing opportunist danger.

But the Barbé group has already shown specifically Right-wing opportunism in the fight against French militarism and imperialism.

The fight against the war danger, against French imperialism, for the defence of the Soviet Union was invariably under-estimated by these comrades. At best they were content to conduct momentary formal campaigns, and did not succeed in giving them a mass character.

They displayed great passivity at the time of the trials of the Industrial Party and of the Mensheviks—trials which made startlingly clear the rôle of French imperialism and its agents in the war they are preparing against the Soviet Union. They showed themselves passive in relation to the activity displayed by imperialist France in all the frontier countries round the Soviet Union. They did not offer sufficient concrete denunciation of the rôle of that pacifist phrasemongering by means of which feverish preparations for war are concealed from the eyes of the masses.

Above all, they showed an abandoning and slackening of that anti-militarist work which in the past was exemplary in the C.P.F. And it was precisely in this field that the militants of the group, while having Leftist sectarian tendencies, displayed in practice their Right-wing opportunism, remaining content with several superficial general agitation campaigns. Relative to events in Germany and Spain, the same almost contemplative passivity was shown. And similarly in regard to the colonies. Yet if we bear in mind what French imperialism is doing and preparing it might be said that never in the past had a more serious situation existed, and that consequently never had the C.P.F. found itself confronted with such mighty tasks as at the present period, as far as the struggle to be waged against French imperialism

and its preparation for war on the Soviet Union are concerned.

(3)—THE GROUP AND ITS CONCEPTS REGARDING THE PARTY, ITS FRAMEWORK, MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE.

The militants of the group made it clear in practical work and by the way in which they carried the responsible tasks entrusted to them that they had not yet understood what a Communist Party should be. Their object was not to make the C.P.F. a true mass Party, because they had become masters of the concept that the Party gains in quality in direct proportion to a drop in membership "Quality is as good as Quantity" said they. Unprotesting, they allowed to be propagated all around them the theory that the Party should be a Party of "pure Bolsheviks," of the élite.

"A fall in membership? Yes, it is a fact," said close friends of the Barbé group, "but a normal and salutary one, one explicable because we now have a more Bolshevik Party." And they added, "but the elements remaining in our Party are pure; those who have gone were the Social-Democrats." "Fall in membership? Come, come! Nothing more normal!" declared other elements akin to the Barbé group. "It is a result of the application of the class against class policy." Not only did they avoid unmasking and showing up such theories, they helped to maintain them, gloss them over, feed them.

The militants of the group had also their concepts and policy concerning *framework*. In this field they applied the maxim: the group creates "leaders"; the workers and their organisations have merely to follow. The group can nominate and co-opt arbitrarily. It does away with frameworks old or new, comrades old or young, and replaced them by "little leaders" sympathetic to itself. This group already had its concepts concerning the "screen-frameworks." Barbé had on various occasions during 1930 formulated this screen theory in the following way:—

"We still have at the present time all the intermediate frameworks in Party regions forming a screen between Party headquarters and the Party's proletarian basis."

The Y.C.L. and the rôle of the group is another question that needs clearing up. The militants of the group, all former Y.C.L. leaders, like to proclaim themselves Y.C.L.'ers, as an echo from their Y.C.L. past. Sometimes they claim to represent the present generation. In point of fact they were detached both from working-class youth and from the general mass of the working-class. They had taken "vanguardism" from the Y.C.L. and turned it into a political system. At the very moment when the Y.C.L. is making concerted efforts to overcome the last vestiges of vanguardism and sectarianism, this

group takes over these vestiges and create from them a whole doctrine and political theory. Instead of egging on the Y.C.L. to become a widespread mass organisation radiating among every stratum of working-class youth in factory, field and army, the group attempt to infuse into the Y.C.L. their spirit and practice of select cliques with masonic manners.

THE GROUP SPIRIT AND THE C.P.F.'S WEAKNESSES, AND THE POSITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL.

The directive powers of the Comintern had no knowledge until summer of this year of the existence within the C.P.F. of the conspiratorial group Barbé-Celor-Lozeray. Yet at the end of 1929 they had noticed that the C.P.F.'s political practice did not conform to Comintern tactics. No effort was spared to help the Party conquer its faults. The delegate of the C.P.F., because a sincere and earnest collaborator of the directive agencies of the Comintern in their attempts to help the Party in this direction, became the group's bugbear. It began a systematic campaign against him. Meanwhile, there appeared further intensifications of Leftist sectarian dangers in the C.P.F.'s practices. In these conditions the French Commission of May-June, 1930, was convoked. The Commission comprised, over and above the French delegation, representatives from most sections of the Comintern.

In the labours of the Commission it was necessary to analyse point by point every fault, every weakness, every error of the C.P.F., above all, in the field mass work, T.U. work, and particularly concerning the united front, the twofold struggle and practical organisational work. The need for collective work among Party organs, from the C.C. and P.B. down to and including the nuclei, was insisted on. The French comrades said they were convinced and on their own initiative made solemn promises to establish these reforms by the tenth anniversary of the Party. These promises were never carried out. The discussions between the Comintern Executive and Party headquarters still continued. Criticism and advice were constantly addressed to the Party. At the time of the Eleventh Plenum the situation was in no way improved. A fresh discussion with the French delegates. The group malady violently denounced. Leaders promised and vowed to attack it. But the leaders were visibly under the influence of the Barbé group, and did not suspect that the group existed, manœuvred, made use of fetid diplomacy, and double-dealing, and organised sabotage of all decisions and resistance to Party and to Comintern tactics.

The balance sheet of the Barbé group's political and organisational work with the C.P.F. is actually a negative one on all counts. The militants of the group, holding for the most part directive posts in the

Party are before all else and more than all other militants, responsible for the general backwardness of the Party. They are responsible for the fall in Party membership; they bear great responsibility for the fall in C.G.T.U. membership, because they did not wage with sufficient energy the battle against the anarcho-reformist minority movement. They are responsible for the fall in Y.C.L. membership because instead of helping the youth to overcome their sectarian concepts and policy they thrust them further in that direction. They are responsible for strengthening the Right-wing opposition danger within the Party. The balance sheet is negative as far as the anti-militarist struggle and the fight against the danger of war and against French imperialism are concerned.

Such was the group's policy on all fields. What were the results? What is the general judgment? Let Barbé himself put it into words:—

“The balance sheet of the group” said Barbé at the sitting of the Comintern Presidium, “has been here drawn up. It is, unhappily for the Party, correct. Our group balance sheet is not only our political condemnation, but when all the harm done by the group is understood, it is even more serious than that; if it were merely a question of condemning two or three Party comrades, the matter would be unimportant; but as I now understand that in actual fact *the results of our policy have been to delay by at least two years the development of the Party, the results of our policy has been to disarm the Party.*”

The Barbé group, which has just, through the medium of its leader, drawn up the gloomy balance

sheet of all its activity, was therefore a select group having a conspiratorial existence within the Party. It accepted verbally the decisions and instructions of the Comintern, but in practice sabotaged their application. When the group and its existence were unmasked its militants attempted denial, but then admitted the existence of the select circle. They are now swearing to correct their errors. We shall see what is the value of these promises in actual practice. The Party and its C.C. had plenty of reasons for taking strenuous measures to extirpate the group malady and abolish the Barbé group. That is not all. Because the group spirit must be stamped out, every part of the Party's internal life and political activity must be tautened and made healthy.

In order the better to carry out this work it is necessary to have an account of the Barbé group's platform. Though they say they had no political platform and were a group lacking principles, we have seen that they did in fact possess a platform. The short analysis we have just made shows clearly that we are dealing with a whole series of political, tactical and organisational mistakes, which do in fact constitute a system, a policy, a Leftist sectarian platform.

That is why, to carry on a good fight for the consolidation of the Party, for the abolition of the Barbé group and its political, organisational and ideological posterity, for the strengthening of the Party's resources against opportunist dangers, we must also sweep entirely away this sectarian, Leftist, opportunist platform which is a cause of the spread of Left-wing opportunism.