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Comrade Bordiga's Report on Fascism

I will deal with the question raised by Comrade Radek yesterday as to the attitude of the Communist Party towards fascism.

Our comrade criticized the attitude of our Party on the question of Fascism, which is the dominant political question in Italy. He criticized our point of view—our alleged point of view—which is supposed to consist of a desire to have a small party and to limit the consideration of all questions solely to the aspect of Party organization and their immediate importance, without going any farther into the larger questions at issue.

I will try to be brief, on account of the time limit, with these few remarks I will start my report.

The Origin of the Fascist Movement.

The origin of the Fascist movement may be traced back to the years 1914—1915, to the period which preceded the intervention of Italy in the world war, when the foundation for this movement was laid down by the groups which supported intervention. From a political point of view, these groups were made up of several tendencies. There was a group of the right, led by Salandra and the big industrialists, which were interested in the war and which had even supported the war against the Entente before the decision to fight on the side of the Entente. On the other hand, there are also the tendencies of the left wing of the bourgeoisie, the Italian radicals, i. e., the democrats of the left, the republicans who had been by tradition in favour of liberating Trieste and Trento. Finally, the interventionist movement included also certain elements of the proletarian movement: revolutionary syndicalists and anarchists. From a point of view of personalities, it is worth mentioning that the movement was joined by the leader of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party, Mussolini—the manager of "Avanti".

It may be stated approximately, that the Centre groups did not participate in the formation of the fascist movement, but returned to their traditional bourgeois political parties. The only groups which remained were those of the extreme Right and those of the extreme Left, i. e., the ex-anarchists, the ex-syndicalists and former revolutionary syndicalists.

These political groups which in May 1915 scored a big victory in forcing Italy into the war, against the will of the majority of the country and even of parliament lost their influence when the war was brought to a close. Already during the war one could foresee the inevitable waning of the influence of the interventionists.

They had represented the war as a very easy enterprise, and when the war became prolonged, they lost their popularity. Indeed, one might doubt whether they were ever popular.

In the period that followed immediately after the war, we saw the influence of these groups reduced to a minimum.

From the end of 1918 to the first half of 1920, the period of demobilization and slump, this political tendency was completely defeated owing to discontent caused by the consequences of the war.

Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of political organization we may connect the origin of the movement which seemed so insignificant at first with the formidable movement which we see to-day.

The "fasci di combattimento", did not disband. Mussolini remained the leader of the fascist movement, and their paper "Il Popolo d'Italia", continued to be published.

At the elections in Milan in October 1919, the Fascisti were completely defeated, in spite of having their daily newspaper and their political chief. They obtained a ridiculously low number of votes; nevertheless, they continued their activities.

The proletarian revolutionary and socialist movement which was considerably strengthened by the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses after the war, did not make full use of the favourable situation, for reasons I need not go into now.

The revolutionary tendencies lacked the backing of a revolutionary organization and of a party that would lend them permanence and stability, and thus the favourable psychological and objective circumstances were not utilized. I do not assert—as Comrade Zinoviev accused me of saying—that the Socialist Party could bring about the revolution in Italy, but at least it ought to have been capable of solidly organizing the revolutionary forces of the working masses. It proved unequal to the task.

We have seen how the anti-war Socialist tendency has lost the popularity which it enjoyed in Italy.

To the extent that the Socialist movement failed to take advantage of the situation and the crisis in social life in Italy, the opposite movement of fascism began to grow.

Fascism benefited above all by the crisis which ensued in the economic situation and the influence of which was begun to be felt in the labor organizations.

Thus the fascist movement at a most trying period found support in the D'Annunzio expedition to Fiume. The Fiume expedition in a sense gave to fascism its moral support, and even the backing of its organization and its armed forces, although the D'Annunzio movement and the fascist movement were not the same thing.

We have spoken of the attitude of the proletarian socialist movement; the International has repeatedly criticized its mistakes. The consequence of these mistakes was a complete change in the state of mind of the bourgeoisie and the other classes. The proletariat became disorganized and demoralized. In view of the failure to win the victory that was within its grasp, the state of mind of the working class changed considerably. One might say that in 1919 and in the first half of 1920 the Italian bourgeoisie to a certain extent became resigned to the idea of having to see the triumph of the revolution. The middle class and the petty bourgeoisie were ready to play a passive part, not in the wake of the big bourgeoisie, but in the wake of the proletariat which was to march on to victory.

This state of mind has undergone a complete change. Instead of submitting to a victory of the proletariat, we see on the contrary how the bourgeoisie is organized for defence.

The middle class became discontented when it saw that the Socialist Party was unable to organize in such a manner as to gain the upper hand; and losing confidence in the proletarian movement, it turned to the opposite side.

It was then that the capitalist offensive of the bourgeoisie started. This offensive was to a certain extent the result of capable exploitation of the state of mind of the middle class. Fascism by reason of its heterogeneous character offered a solution of the problem, and for this reason it was chosen to lead this offensive of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism.

The Italian example is a classical one for the capitalist offensive. It represents, as Comrade Radek told us yesterday from this platform, a complex phenomenon which should be considered not only from the standpoint of reduced wages and longer hours, but also from the general standpoint of political and military action of the bourgeoisie against the working class.

In Italy during the period of the development of Fascism we saw all the manifestations of the capitalist offensive.

Our Communist Party from the moment of its inception, consistently criticised the situation and pointed out the necessity of united defence against the bourgeois offensive. It advocated a united proletarian plan of defence against this offensive.

To get a full view of the capitalist offensive, we must examine the situation in its various aspects, in the industrial as well as in the agrarian field.

In the industrial field the capitalist offensive in the first place exploits the direct effects of the economic crisis. The economic crisis caused the shutting down of a number of factories, and the employers had the opportunity of discharging the more extreme elements of the organized workers. The industrial crisis furnished the employers with a good pretext for cutting down wages and taking back the disciplinary and moral concessions which they had been forced to make to the factory workers.

At the beginning of this crisis we saw in Italy the formation of a General Confederation of Industry, an association of the employing class which took the lead in this fight against the workers and submitted every individual employer to their discipline. In the large cities it is impossible to start the fight against the working class by the immediate use of violence. The workers of the cities are generally organized in groups; they can easily gather in a large mass and put up a serious resistance. The employers therefore started by provoking the proletariat into actions that were bound to end unfavourably for them, because the economic struggle in the industrial field was to transport the activity of the movement from the trade unions to the revolutionary domain, under the dictates of a political party which was really communist; but the Socialist Party was nothing of the sort.

At the decisive moment of the situation the Socialist Party proved incapable of giving a revolutionary lead to the action of the Italian proletariat. The period of the great success of the Italian labor organization in the fight for the amelioration of the workers' conditions gave place to the new period in which the strikes became defensive strikes on the part of the working class, and defeats became the order of the day.

At the same time the revolutionary movement of the agrarian classes and what is so great importance, the agricultural labourers and other peasant elements which are not completely proletarian, compelled the ruling classes to seek a way, a means of combatting the influence acquired by the Red organizations in the rural districts.

In a great part of Italy, the most important agricultural districts of the Po valley, a state of affairs prevailed which closely resembled a local dictatorship of the proletariat or of the groups of agricultural labourers. The communes, captured by the Socialist Party at the close of 1920 carried on a policy of imposing local taxes on the agrarian bourgeoisie and the middle class. The trade unions flourished, very important co-operative organizations and numerous sections of the Socialist Party grew up. Even in those places where the movement was in the hands of men who were reformists, by instinct; the working class movement in the rural districts took a definite revolutionary trend. The employers were even forced to deposit sums of money to guarantee the carrying out of the agreements imposed by the trade union struggle.

A situation was reached where the agricultural bourgeoisie could no longer live on their estates and had to seek refuge in the cities.

Certain errors were committed by the Italian socialists, especially on the question of occupying the vacated lands and the tendency of the small farmers who after the war began to buy up land in order to become big proprietors.

The reformist organizations compelled these small farmers to remain somewhat the slaves of the movement of the agri-

cultural laborers, and in this situation the fascist movement managed to find important support.

In the domain of agriculture there was no crisis of such dimensions that would enable the landed proprietors to wage a successful counter-offensive on the basis of the simple economic struggles of the laborers. It was here that the Fascists began to introduce their methods of physical violence, of armed brutal force, finding support in the rural proprietor class and exploiting the discontent created among the agricultural middle classes by the blunders of the Socialist Party and the reformists. Fascism benefited also by the general situation which daily increased the discontent among all these groups of petty-bourgeois and petty-merchants, of petty proprietors and returned soldiers, of ex-officers disappointed in their lot after the glories of war.

All these elements were exploited and organized, and this was the beginning of this movement of destruction of the Red organizations in the rural districts of Italy.

The method employed by Fascism is rather peculiar. Having got together all the demobilised elements which could find no place for themselves in post-war society, it made full use of their military experience. Fascism began to form its military organizations, not in the big industrial cities, but in those which may be considered as the capitals of Italian agricultural regions, like Bologna and Florence, thanks to support of the State authorities of whom we will yet speak later on. The Fascists possessed arms, means of transportation, assured immunity of the law, and they took advantage of these favourable conditions while they were still less numerous than their revolutionary adversaries.

The mode of action is somewhat as follows. They invade a little country place, they destroy the headquarters of the proletarian organizations, they force the municipal council to resign at the point of the bayonet, they would assault or murder those who opposed them or, at best, force them to quit the district. The local workers were powerless to resist such a concentration of armed forces backed by the police. The local fascist groups which could not previously fight by themselves against the proletarian forces have now become the masters of the situation, because the local workers and peasants have been terrorized and were afraid of taking any action for fear that the Fascist expedition might return with even greater forces at their command.

Fascism thus proceeded to the conquest of a dominant position in Italian politics in a sort of territorial campaign, which might be traced on a map.

The Fascist campaign started out from Bologna, where in September—October 1922 a socialist administration was the occasion for a great mobilisation of the red forces.

Several incidents took place: the meeting of the municipal council was broken up by provocation from without. Shots were fired at the benches occupied by the bourgeois minority, probably by some agents-provocateurs.

That was the first grand attack made by the Fascists. From now on militant reaction overran the country, putting the torch to proletarian clubs and maltreating their leaders. In their dastardly work they enjoyed the full backing of the police and the authorities. The terror started at Bologna on the historic date of November 21, 1920, when the Municipal Council of Bologna was prevented by violence from assuming its powers.

From Bologna Fascism moved along a route which we cannot outline here in detail, but we may say that it went in two chief geographical directions, on the one hand towards the industrial triangle of the Nord-West, viz. Milan, Turin and Genoa, and on the other hand towards Toscana and the Centre of Italy, in order to encircle and lay siege to the Capital. It was clear from the outset that the South of Italy could not give birth to a Fascist movement any more than to a great socialist movement.

Fascism is so little of a movement of the backward part of the bourgeoisie that it could not make its first appearance in Southern Italy, but rather in those districts where the proletarian movement was more developed and the class struggle was more in evidence.

Having just described the prime elements of Fascism, how are we to interpret the Fascist movement? Is it purely an agrarian movement. That we would not say, although the movement originated in the rural districts. Fascism could not be considered as the independent movement of a single group of the bourgeoisie, as the organization of the agrarian interests in opposition to the industrial capitalists. Besides, Fascism has formed its political as well as military organization also in the large cities, even in those provinces where it had to confine its violent actions to the rural districts.

We have seen it in the Italian parliament, where the Fascists formed a parliamentary faction after having precipitated the parliamentary elections of 1921, which did not prevent the formation of an agrarian party independently of the Fascists.

During recent events we have seen that the industrial employers have supported the Fascisti. A deciding factor in the new situation was furnished by a recent declaration of the General Confederation of Industry in favour of entrusting to Mussolini the formation of a new Cabinet.

But a more striking phenomenon in this respect is the appearance of Fascist Syndicalism.

The Fascists have taken advantage of the fact, which we already mentioned, that the socialists never had an agrarian policy and that the interests of certain elements of the countryside which are not purely proletarian are in opposition to those of the socialists.

Fascism was an armed movement which employed all methods of the most brutal violence. It also knew how to employ the most callous methods of demogogy. The Fascisti endeavoured to form class organizations among the peasants and even among the agricultural labourers. In a certain sense it even opposed the landlords; we have examples of the syndicalist struggle, led by Fascisti, which resembled greatly the old methods of Red organization.

We cannot consider this Fascist syndicalism, which works through the use of force and terror, as an anti-capitalist struggle, but neither can we on the other hand draw the conclusion that Fascism, in an immediate sense is a movement of the agricultural employers. The fact is that Fascism is a great united movement of the dominant class, which is capable of using for its final aims any and all means, martial interests, and the local interests of certain groups of employers, agricultural and industrial.

The proletariat has not properly understood the necessity of forming a united single organization for the common struggle, by sacrificing the immediate interests of small groups. It has not yet succeeded in solving this problem. The ruling class created an organization which should defend its power; this organization was completely in its hands and it followed the plan of the capitalist anti-proletarian offensive.

Fascism participated in unionism. Why? In order to take part in the class struggle? Never! The Fascisti took part in the union movement, saying all economic interests have the right to organize; one can form associations of workers, peasants, business men, capitalists, land owners, etc. They can organize on the same principle. But all organizations should, in their activities be subordinate to the national interest, national production, national prestige, etc.

This is nothing but a class truce, and not a class struggle. All interests are directed towards a certain national unity. This national unity—is nothing more than the counter revolutionary conservation of the bourgeois state and its institutions. In the make-up of Fascism, I believe that we can count three principal factors: the state, the capitalist class, and the middle class. The State is the principal constituent of Fascism.

The news of the successive government crises in Italy have led one to believe that the Italian capitalist class possessed a State apparatus which was so unstable that it could be made to fall at one blow.

This is not at all the case. Just at the period when its State apparatus was consolidated, the Italian bourgeoisie formed the Fascist organization.

In the period immediately following the war, the Italian State underwent a crisis. Demobilization was the obvious reason for this crisis. Numbers of those who had taken part in the war were suddenly thrown into the Labor market, and at this critical period, the State machine, which had previously been organized to its highest pitch to resist the foreign enemy, now had suddenly to transform itself into the defensive machinery guarding capitalist interests against internal revolution. This is a formidable task for the bourgeoisie. They could not solve this problem of the struggle against the proletariat in a military or technical manner; it had to be done by political means.

Therefore we see the radical government of the post-war period; that of Nitti and that of Giolitti.

It was just the policy of these two politicians which rendered the subsequent victory of Fascism inevitable. They started by making concessions to the working class in the period when the State mechanism had to be consolidated. Fascism came afterwards; the Fascist criticism of this government, which they accuse of cowardice in the face of the revolutionaries, is merely demagogic rhetoric.

As a matter of fact, the Fascist victory has been possible precisely because of the first cabinets of the pre-war period.

Nitti and Giolitti made certain concessions to the working class. They acceded to certain demands of the Socialist Party: demobilization, a democratic regime and amnesty for deserters. They made these concessions in order to gain time to re-establish their State on a solid basis. It was Nitti who organized the "Royal Guard" an organization not purely of the police type, but of the new type, the militarists. One of the great errors of the

reformist socialists was in not having considered a fundamental problem the question which they could even have presented on constitutional grounds, the fact that the State was forming an auxiliary army. This point was not grasped by the socialists who regarded Nitti as the man with whom they could very well collaborate in a Left Government. This is one more proof of the fundamental incapacity of this Party to understand the development of Italian politics.

Giolitti completed the labors of Nitti. It was Bonomi, Minister of War in the Giolitti cabinet, who fostered the beginning of Fascism; he placed at the disposal of this young movement demobilised officers who, although re-entered into civil life, were still in receipt of a large portion of their army salaries.

He placed at the disposal of the Fascisti the State machine in as large a measure as possible. He gave them every possible facility for organizing their fighting forces.

The government realized that it would be a formidable error to engage in a real struggle in the period when the armed proletariat occupied the factories and the agricultural proletariat showed signs of being about to seize the Crown lands.

This government which had done the preliminary organization work of that reactionary force with which they desired one day to destroy the proletarian movement, was aided in its strategy by the treacherous leaders of the General Federation of Labor, who were then members of the Socialist Party. By conceding the law of Workers' Control, which has never been applied or even voted, the government was able to reestablish the stability of the bourgeois State.

The proletariat was seizing the workshops and the landed estates. The Socialist Party once more, failed to bring about united action of the industrial proletariat and peasants. And it is precisely this inability to secure united action which enabled the master class to achieve counter-revolutionary unity and so defeat the industrial workers on the one hand, and the agricultural workers on the other.

As we see, the State has played the primary role in the development of the Fascist Movement.

After the Nitti, Giolitti and Bonomi governments, we had the Facta Cabinet. This was a type of government intended to cover up the complete liberty of action of Fascism in its expansion over the whole country. During the strike in August 1922, several conflicts took place between the workers and the Fascisti, which later were openly aided by the government. One can quote the example of Bari. During a whole week of fighting, the Fascisti, in full force, were unable to defeat the Bari workers, who had retired into the working class quarters of the old city and who defended themselves by armed force. The Fascisti were forced to retrace leaving several of their number on the field. But what did the Facta government do? During the night they surrounded the old town with thousands of soldiers and hundreds of carabinieri of the Royal Guard. In the harbour, a torpedo boat trained its guns, armoured cars and cannons. The workers were taken by surprise during their sleep; the proletarian leaders were assaulted; labour headquarters were occupied. This was the case throughout the country. Wherever Fascism had been beaten back by the workers, the power of the State intervened; workers who resisted were shot down; workers, who were guilty of nothing but self-defence, were arrested and sentenced; while the magistrates systematically acquitted the Fascisti who were generally known to have committed innumerable crimes.

Thus, the State is the main factor.

The second factor in the development of Fascism is, as I have already said, the great capitalists of industry, finance and commerce, and also the large landed proprietors, who had an obvious interest in the formation of a combative organization which would support their attack upon the workers.

But a third factor has also had a very important influence on the formation of the forces of Fascism.

In order to form an illegal reactionary organization outside of the State, one is compelled to recruit other elements than those belonging merely to the highest circles of the dominant class. They gained the help of these elements by appealing to those sections of the middle class of which we have spoken, and, in order to draw them into their ranks, endeavoured to express their interests. One must confess that Fascism has well understood how to do this, and has well succeeded in so doing. They gained the assistance of elements belonging to strata only just above the proletariat, and even among those suffering from the effects of the war—all those petty bourgeois, semi-bourgeois, tradesmen, and above all those intellectual elements of the bourgeois youth which, in adhering to Fascism discovered in this struggle against the proletariat, a new energy and the exultation of patriotism and Italian imperialism. They brought to

Fascism a considerable contribution, in supplying it with those human elements necessary for its militaristic organization.

These are the three factors which have permitted our adversaries to confront us with a movement of which we may denounce its ferocity and brutality but in which we must nevertheless recognize an organizational solidarity as well as the political intelligence of its leaders. The Socialist Party never understood the importance of this growing antagonistic movement. The "Avanti" never understood what the bourgeoisie was preparing by profiting from the criminal errors of the working class leaders. They did not wish to denounce Mussolini, fearing that by so doing they would be giving him publicity.

We understand then, that Fascism is not a new political doctrine. It has, however, a strong political and military organization, a considerable press conducted with a good deal of journalistic ability. But there is no semblance of a program; and now that they have arrived at the control of the State, they find themselves confronted by concrete problems and are forced to apply themselves to the organization of social economy. Now that they have to pass from negative to positive activities, despite the strength of their organization they commence to show their weakness.

We have examined the historical and social factors influencing the birth of the Fascist movement. We shall now discuss the Fascist ideology and the program by which this movement, has drawn to it the various adherents following it.

Our criticism leads us to the conclusion that in reality Fascism has added nothing new to the ideology and traditional program of the bourgeois politics. Its superiority and originality consist only in its organization, its discipline and its leadership. Behind this formidable political and militarist apparatus, there looms a problem which it cannot solve, namely the economic crisis which will continually renew the reasons for revolution. It is impossible for Fascism to reorganize the bourgeois economic machine. They do not know how to find the way out from the economic anarchy of the capitalist system. And they endeavour to carry on another fight, which is the struggle against political anarchy, the anarchy of the organization of the master class in political parties. The stratification of the Italian master class has always thrown up certain political groups, which did not base themselves on soundly organized parties, and which have been continually engaged in struggles among themselves. This was above all the political reflex of the private and local interests, competition between professional politicians in the field of parliamentary backstairs and intrigue. The bourgeois counter-revolutionary offensive has dictated to the bourgeois class the necessity of achieving unity of action in the social struggle and the parliamentary field. Fascism is the realization of this. Placing itself above all the traditional bourgeois parties, it is gradually sapping their membership, replacing them in their functions and—thanks to the mistakes of the proletarian movement—is including in its political crusade the human elements of the middle class. But it cannot construct an ideology, nor a concrete program of social reforms, which shall surpass that of the traditional bourgeois policies, which have been bankrupted a thousand times.

The critical part of Fascist doctrine has no great value. It is anti-socialist and also anti-democratic. So far as anti-socialism is concerned, it is obvious that Fascism is the movement of all anti-proletarian forces, and that it must therefore declare itself against all socialistic or semi-socialistic tendencies, without being able to present any new justification of the system of private ownership unless it be the well-used one of the alleged failure of communism in Russia. But their criticism of the democratic regime—that it has not been able to combat revolutionary and anti-national tendencies—and that therefore it should be replaced by the Fascist State, is nothing more than a senseless phrase.

Fascism—is not a tendency of the Right wing bourgeoisie, which, basing itself upon the aristocrats, the clergy, and the high civil and military functionaries, is to replace the democracy of a constitutional monarchy by a monarchic despotism. In reality, Fascism conducts its counter-revolutionary struggle by means of an alliance of all bourgeois elements, and for this reason it is not absolutely necessary for it to destroy democratic institutions. From the Marxian point of view, this fact need by no means be considered paradoxical, as we know well that the democratic system is nothing more than a scaffolding of false guarantees, erected in order to hide the domination of the ruling class over the proletariat.

At the same time, Fascism uses both reactionary violence and those demagogic sophistries by which the liberal bourgeoisie has always deceived the proletariat while assuring the supremacy of capitalist interests.

When the Fascisti turned from their alleged criticism of liberal Democracy to proclaim to us their positive conception,

inspired by patriotic exultation and a conception of the historical mission of their country, they based it upon an historical myth which has no basis in fact, if one considers the gravity of the economic crisis which exists in this Italy, falsely called "the victorious". In their methods of influencing the mob, we see nothing more than an imitation of the classical attitude of bourgeois democracy: the conception that all interests must be subordinated to that of national supremacy, which is nothing more than the collaboration of classes, and is a means of protecting bourgeois institution against the revolutionary attacks of the proletariat.

A new feature which Fascism has revealed, is the organization of the bourgeois governmental machine. Recent Italian Parliamentary development would make us believe that one was in the presence of such a crisis in the evolution of the bourgeois State machine that one more blow would have shattered it. In reality we were only faced by a critical period of change in bourgeois governmental matters, due to the importance of the old political groupings and of the traditional Italian politicians in conducting the counter-revolutionary struggle in a profoundly disturbing situation.

Fascism has constructed the organ capable of fulfilling this rôle, if placed at the head of the state.

But when the Fascisti wish to place, side by side with their negative anti-proletarian campaign, a positive program and concrete proposals for the reorganization of the economic life of the country and the administration of the State, they were only able to repeat the banal platitudes of traditional democracy and even of social-democracy. They have furnished us with no trace of an original and co-ordinated program.

For example, they have always said that the Fascist program advocates a reduction of the State bureaucracy, starting from above, with a reduction in the number of ministers, and extending into all the branches of the administration. Now it is true that Mussolini has withdrawn the special train usually allotted to the Premier, but on the other hand he has augmented the number of cabinet ministers and of the assistant secretaries of the State, in order to give jobs to his legionaries.

Fascism, after having temporarily adopted republicanism finally rallied to the strictest monarchist loyalism; and after having loudly and constantly cried out against parliamentary corruption, it has now completely accepted conventional parliamentary procedure.

They departed so far from the tendencies of pure reaction, that they even made use of syndicalism. In their congress at Rome in 1921, where they made almost ridiculous attempts at formulating their doctrines, they endeavoured to explain Fascist syndicalism theoretically as being the supremacy of the movement of the more intellectual categories among the workers. But even this theory has been fully denied by their practice, which bases their trade union organization upon the use of physical violence and the "closed shop" sanctioned by the employers, with the object of breaking up the revolutionary trade unions. Fascism has not been able to extend its power in those organizations where there is the least amount of technical specialization of labor which facilitates the control of the job. Their methods have had some success among agricultural workers and certain sections of the less skilled city workers, such as for example, the dock workers, without having attained success in the more advanced and intelligent sections of the proletariat. It has not even given a new impulse to the organization of office workers and metal workers. There is no substantial theory of Fascist syndicalism. The Fascist program is a confused mixture of ideas and of bourgeois and petty bourgeois demands; and the systematic use of violence against the proletariat does not prevent them from making use of the opportunist methods of social democracy.

One proof of this is contained in the attitude of the Italian reformists, whose policy, during a certain time, appeared to be dominated by an anti-Fascist principle and by the illusion of forming a bourgeois-proletarian coalition government against the Fascisti, but who at present have rallied to the support of triumphant Fascism. This combination is not paradoxical; it has been produced by a series of events, and there were many early incidents which made it easy to foresee this alliance. One may mention for instance, the d'Annunzio movement, which on the one side is related to Fascism, and on the other, endeavours to attract to itself working class organizations on the basis of the program of Vienna which claimed to have a labor, or even socialistic, basis.

I have still to deal with the recent events in Italy on which the Congress expects to be thoroughly informed.

Recent events. Our delegation left Italy before the last events took place, and up till now has not received proper information about them.

Last night a comrade delegated by the Central Committee, arrived here and gave us the necessary information. I vouch for

the bona fide character of the news which we received, and I will put them before you.

As previously stated the Facta Government enabled the Fascisti to carry out their policy on a very large scale. I will only give one illustration of this: viz—the fact that the popular Italian Catholic Peasant's Party which was strongly represented in the Cabinets that followed each other in rapid succession did not prevent the Fascisti from continuing a struggle against the organizations the members and the institutions of this Party. The existing government was only a sham government which did nothing to prevent the advance of Fascism towards power, an advance which we have defined as purely territorial and geographical.

In fact the government was preparing the ground. However, the situation was developing. Another ministerial crisis arose. Facta's resignation was demanded. The last elections had resulted in a Parliamentary situation which made it impossible to secure a working majority by the old methods of the traditional bourgeois parties. It was always said that the "Giant Liberal Party" was in power in Italy. It was not a Party in the true sense of the word, and it never existed as an actual Party; it had no party organisations and was only a conglomeration of cliques grouped around certain politicians, of the North or of the South, or of cliques of the industrial or agricultural bourgeoisie in the hands of professional politicians. The ensemble of these parliamentarians was in fact the centre of all the parliamentary combinations.

Well, the time had come when Fascism had to choose between putting an end to the situation or experiencing a very serious internal crisis. The question of organization had also to be considered. Means had to be found to provide for the needs of the Fascist movement and to keep it up financially. These means were to a great extent provided by the employing class, and as it seems, also by foreign governments. France has given money to the Mussolini group. At a secret session of the French Chamber a budget was considered which comprised considerable sums of money handed over to Mussolini in 1915. Documents of that kind came to the notice of the Socialist Party, which did not care to take any notice of them at the time, saying that Mussolini was a beaten man.

The Italian Government has facilitated the task of the Fascisti, for instance, by allowing its bands to use the railways free of charge. Nevertheless, the enormous expense in connection with the Fascist movement compelled its leaders to assume power as the real government of the country. They could not wait for new elections in spite of the certainty of success.

The Fascisti have already a strong political organization. They number 300,000, and claim even larger numbers. They could have conquered through "democracy", if they had not been obliged to accelerate the process.

On October 24 th, a National Fascist Council was held in Naples. Everyone knows at present that this event, which was advertised in the entire bourgeois press, was only a manoeuvre to divert the general attention from the "Coup d'Etat". At a given moment the parliamentarians were told: "Cut short your debates, there are more important things to do, every man to his post"! This was the beginning of the Fascist mobilization. It was October 26th, and everything was still quiet in the Capital.

Facta had announced his determination not to resign before at least another meeting of the Chamber, in order not to offend against the traditional procedure. However, in spite of this declaration, he handed in his resignation to the King.

Negotiations were started for the purpose of forming a new Cabinet. The Fascisti were marching on Rome, the centre of their activity. They were especially active in the centre, in Tuscany. They were not interfered with.

Salandra was summoned to form a new Cabinet. In order to countenance Fascism he was expected to refuse to form a Government.

At this time it was quite possible that the Fascist armies would have behaved like brigands and would have pillaged and destroyed everything in the towns as well as in the rural districts even against the will of their chiefs, if satisfaction had not been given them by calling Mussolini to power.

Then there came a period when public opinion was rather perturbed. The Facta Government decided to proclaim Martial Law. Martial law was proclaimed, and a collision between the forces of the State and the Fascist forces was expected to take place. For a whole day, public opinion awaited developments. Our comrades were very sceptical about such a possibility.

The Fascisti did not meet which any serious resistance anywhere, but there was a certain feeling in the army which was inimical to them. The soldiers were ready to fire at the Fascisti while most of the officers were for them.

The King refused to sign the proclamation of martial law, which was tantamount to accepting the conditions of the Fascisti who wrote in the "Popolo D'Italia": "In order to obtain a legal solution it is only necessary to ask Mussolini to form a new Cabinet". If this is not done, we shall march on Rome". A few hours after the declaration of martial law was revoked, it was known that Mussolini was on the way to Rome. The military defences were already prepared, advance forces were concentrated and the town was surrounded with barbed wire entanglements. However, an agreement was arrived at, and on October 31 st the Fascisti entered Rome triumphantly and peacefully.

Mussolini formed the new Cabinet, whose composition you know. The Fascist Party which had only 34 seats in Parliament, had an absolute majority in this Government.

Mussolini reserved for himself the position of President of the Council and the portfolios of the Ministry of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs.

The other important portfolios were divided among the members of the Fascist Party.

In the other Ministries the Fascisti occupied important posts.

However, as the severance from the traditional parties was not complete, the Cabinet comprised also two representatives of the Social Democracy, viz. Left bourgeois elements and also liberals of the Right and one adherent of Giolitti. During the war, we had General Diaz, Admiral Thaon de Revel at the Admiralty, both of them representatives of the monarchy.

The Populist Party which carried great weight in the Chamber, was very clever in its compromise with Mussolini. Under the pretext that the official organs of the Party could not meet in Rome, it deputed to a semi-official assembly of some of the Party's parliamentarians, the responsibility to accept Mussolini's offers.

Some concessions were at least obtained from the latter, and the press of the Populist Party was able to announce that the new Government had not produced many changes in the electoral system and in parliamentary representation.

The compromise was extended to the Social Democrats. At one time it was thought that the reformist socialist Baldazi would join the Cabinet. Mussolini was clever enough to approach him through one of his lieutenants, and after Baldazi had declared that he would be very pleased to occupy such a post, Mussolini represented the whole affair as a personal demarche of one of his friends, for which he would not take any responsibility. This is how it came about that Baldazi did not enter the Cabinet.

If Mussolini had not accepted a representative of the reformist General Federation of Labor, it is principally because the Right elements in the Cabinet are opposed to it. But Mussolini thinks that he must eventually have a representative of this organization in his "great National Coalition" now that he has become independant of all revolutionary political parties.

We can see in those events a compromise between the traditional political cliques and various sections of the ruling class, landed proprietors, financial and industrial capitalists, who are rallying to the new State regime, which has been established by the Fascisti, and assured of the support of the petty bourgeoisie.

We believe that Fascism is, to some extent, a method of ensuring, by every resource at the disposal of the ruling class, their maintenance of power, even by the utilization of the lessons of the first Proletarian revolution,—the Russian Revolution. When there is a crisis in the economic structure, the State is not sufficient to preserve the power of the master class. There must also be a united party, a unit of counter-revolutionary organization. The Fascist Party is, in relation to the bourgeoisie, somewhat like the Russian Communist Party in its relation to the proletariat—an organ of the direction and control of the State machine, solidly organized and disciplined. The Fascist Party in Italy has placed its political agents in every important branch of the State. It is the bourgeois organ for the control of the State during the period of capitalist decadence. This is, from my point of view, a sufficient historical interpretation of Fascism and the recent happenings in Italy.

The first measures for the new government demonstrate that it is not going to change the bases of Italian traditional institutions.

Naturally, I do not say that the present situation is a favourable situation for the proletarian and socialist movement, when I predict that Fascism will be liberal and democratic. Democratic governments have never given the working class anything but proclamations and promises. For example the Mussolini Government has assured us that it will respect the liberty of the press, but it has been careful to add that the press must deserve this liberty. But what does this mean? It means

that, while declaring itself for the liberty of the press, the government will permit the militarist Fascist organization to proceed against the Communist papers, when it is convenient for it to suppress them, as has already been done. One must state that the Fascist government makes some concessions to certain bourgeois liberals; and even if we cannot have much confidence in Mussolini's assurances that he will transform his militarist organization into an athletic association, or something of that sort, we have not heard of dozens of Fascisti being arrested because of their refusal to obey the demobilization order issued by Mussolini.

What has been the effect of these events upon the proletariat? The latter has been recently in such a position that it has not been able to play such an important part in the struggle but has been compelled to remain almost passive.

So far as the Communist Party is concerned, it has always well understood that the victory of Fascism means the defeat of the revolutionary movement. We are now confronted with the question: have the tactics of the Communist Party been such as are capable of realising the maximum results in the defence of the Italian proletariat. For we have never hidden the Party's impotence to assume an actual offensive against Fascist reaction. If, instead of a compromise between the bourgeoisie and the Fascisti, a military conflict or civil war had resulted, the proletariat might have been able to play a certain role, reconstructing a united front for the general strike, and thus it might have been victorious. But in the present situation, the proletariat has hardly participated in the melee. If the importance of recent events is very great, one must at the same time realize that the change in the political scene has been less sudden than one would judge; there having been a daily accumulation of events leading up to the final coup of the Fascisti.

The only example of the struggle against the power of the State and the Fascisti was the battle at Cremona, in which there were six killed. The workers only fought in Rome. The revolutionary working class forces hurled themselves against the Fascisti; many were wounded. The following day the Royal Guard invaded the working class quarters and deprived them of all means of defence, permitting the Fascisti to follow and to shoot down the workers in cold blood. This is a most striking episode of this struggle.

The General Federation of Labor disarmed the Communist Party by proposing a general strike and begging the proletariat not to follow the dangerous path indicated by the revolutionary group. At a moment when our press was prevented from appearing, they even published the news that the Communist Party was on the point of dissolving.

The most striking incident concerning our Party in Rome, was the invasion by the Fascisti of the editorial offices of the "Comunista". On the 31st of October, while the city was occupied by 100,000 Fascisti, the printing plant was entered by a band of Fascisti just when the paper was to come out. With the exception of comrade Togliatti, our editor in chief, all the staff were able to evade the Fascisti by emergency exits. Comrade Togliatti was in his office when the Fascisti entered. Our comrade's attitude was truly heroic. Boldly he declared that he was the chief editor of the "Comunista". He was stood up against the wall to be shot, while the Fascisti were holding back the crowd to proceed with the execution, and our comrade was only able to escape from them because the Fascisti, who were informed that the other editors were escaping over the roofs, started in their pursuit. This did not prevent our comrade from speaking to a meeting in Turin for the anniversary of the Russian Revolution a few days later.

But this example of which I wished to inform you, is quite isolated. The organization of our party is in good condition. If the publication of the "Comunista" is suspended it is not because the printers refuse to publish it. We have published it illegally in another printing plant. The difficulties in publishing it were not of a technical nature, but economic.

They seized the building of the "Ordine Nuovo" in Turin and confiscated the arms which had been kept on the premises for its defence. But we are publishing the paper elsewhere.

In Trieste the police also took possession of the printing plant of our paper, but we are still publishing it illegally. The possibilities of legal work still exist for our Party and our situation is not very tragic. But it is hard to foresee future developments and it is for this reason that I must make certain reservations with regard to the future situation of our party and the progress of our work.

The comrade who has just arrived is a working man in charge of an important local organization of our party, and he expresses the interesting opinion, which is shared by many militants, that one can work better now than previously. I do not regard this as an established fact. But the comrade who has

said this is a militant working among the masses, and his statement has weight.

I have already told you that the opposition press published the false news of the dissolution of our party. We have contradicted this. Our central political organ, our illegal military centre, our trade union centre, are working at full speed, and connections with the country districts have been almost completely reestablished. We shall perhaps suffer an organizational crisis. But our comrades in Italy did not for a single moment lose their heads, and they are now making all necessary arrangements. The "Avanti" was almost destroyed by the Fascisti, and it took several days to secure the republication of the paper. The official headquarters of the Socialist Party in Rome were completely destroyed by fire. With regard to the attitude of the Maximalist Party and with regard to the argument between the Communist Party and the General Federation of Labor, we have no statement to make.

As far as the reformists are concerned, it is obvious, by the language of their publications, that they will ally themselves with the new government.

Regarding the trade union question, comrade Rannosi of our trade union committee thinks that this work will be able to continue.

This is the latest information which has come to us, and which dates up to the 6th of November.

I shall not touch upon the question of the attitude of our party during the whole period of the development of Fascism, while reserving my right to do so at some other stage in the Congress. With regard to the prospects of the future, we believe that Fascism will have to count with the discontent provoked by its governmental policies.

At the same time we realize that, when one has besides the State, the control of a military organization it is easier to triumph over manifestations of discontent and unfavourable economic conditions.

In the case of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the above has been true in a much broader sense, because the historical development is in our favour. The Fascisti are very well organized and have a certain measure of solidarity. Under these circumstances one may conclude that the situation of the Fascisti Government is by no means insecure.

You have noted that I have not exaggerated the conditions under which our Party has been fighting. This is no place to be sentimental.

The Italian Communist Party has committed certain errors which we are entitled to criticise; but I believe that the attitude of our comrades at present is proof that we have really worked towards the organization of a revolutionary party of the proletariat which will form the base of working class revolution in Italy.

Although one may consider certain steps which they have taken as being incorrect, the Italian communists are well entitled to feel that they have done nothing with which to reproach themselves before the revolutionary movement and the Communist International.

Smeral:

(Czecho-Slovakia.)

Comrades, in my opinion, we are now entering in Czecho-Slovakia upon a period which will lead shortly to a form of government akin in character to the International fascist movement. At present we are in Czecho-Slovakia in the midst of an economic and political crisis. This crisis is so acute as to affect the very roots of the bourgeois state, leaving no other way out than an attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to introduce fascist methods into the government apparatus.

I will endeavour to characterize briefly both the political and the economic crisis, and to give an idea of our tactics and policy in this connection.

I. As to the economic crisis, I have already outlined its characteristic features at the session of the Enlarged Executive last summer. The State is over industrialized. It has the industrial machinery, the apparatus and the labor power for the supply of 60 to 70 million consumers. It has only 14 million inhabitants. Owing to the dismemberment of Central and Eastern Europe, the depreciation of the German mark and the political and technical commercial preponderance of the great Allied States, it has no opportunity for export. This is the crux of the economic crisis. Already last summer I stated here in my report that the capitalist offensive which must arise out of this crisis is bound to result in the Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie carrying out its well laid plan to reduce the wages of the workers throughout the States by 50%. Such was the position last summer in connection with the capitalist offensive. Since then four months have elapsed and we now have an entirely new state of things

confronting us. It is no more a question of reducing wages. The Czecho-Slovak capitalists are determined to do away with a large part of the industry. Three months ago we witnessed the phenomenon of a rapid upward movement in the value of the Czecho-Slovakian krone. In Zurich the value of the Czech krone rose from 8—9 to 18—20 centimes. This was due to an artificial manipulation by the Czecho-Slovakian Banks. Now, what was the aim of this artificial rise of the Czecho-Slovakian rate of Exchange? The aim was to make export absolutely impossible. In the conference held by the Czecho-Slovakian Chambers of Commerce and banks it openly stated that the Czecho-Slovakian government was deliberately encouraging the artificial rise of the exchange rate, in order to make it impossible for the entire small and middle industry to carry on their production and export.

All small factories were to be destroyed. They were not only to be closed for the transition period, but were to be definitely excluded from the complex of the Czecho-Slovakian State. This is a similar method to that used by the American planters during the periodical crises in the pre-war period. This method consisted in destroying, during periods of too abundant harvests, a part of the crop (be it coffee or corn), in order to keep up prices. It is a further development of the tactics practiced by the Border states, which are artificially preventing the growth of industry, so as to have no proletariat. We have in Czecho-Slovakia a situation in which the industrialists together with the capitalist political organizations not only shut down temporarily but are positively destroying their well equipped industrial undertakings, in order to gain a breathing spell. This is a very serious economic crisis through which the Czecho-Slovakian State is passing. I wish to draw your attention to the fact that there are symptoms that this reduction of industry may ease the present intolerable situation, but not for long. The factories are destroyed, but the population remains. The workers who were concentrated in the industrial districts will remain even after the factories have disappeared. It can be easily imagined what the temper of these workers will be; this destruction of the industries is being carried out as a plan of restoring the inner equilibrium of the national State. From a nationalist point of view this is equivalent to a lost war resulting in the loss of territory. I venture to say that this is even worse. If Czecho-Slovakia were to lose one third of its territory, it would also lose the population living in this territory. If however, Czecho-Slovakia does not decrease horizontally, but vertically, in its industrial construction, it will lose the factories and with them the possibility of feeding the population, while the population itself will remain. Under such circumstances the government crisis will get beyond solution.

Then, there is the political crisis. The peculiarity of the structure of the Czecho-Slovakian State consists in the fact that a third of the population (the State is composed of Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Poles, Hungarians and Ukrainians) is in opposition to the government on principle. All parliamentary authorities must be based upon the Czecho-Slovak two thirds majority of the population. In this portion of the population, the Communists forming a mass party must be included. Since the inauguration of the Communist Party no political elections have taken place in Czecho-Slovakia. The Communal elections (the first political elections since the establishment of our Party) were to take place this spring according to the law but they were postponed for a year on the strength of a new law which was passed for fear of a Communist victory.

It will be difficult to postpone the elections for another year, and this election will probably furnish statistical proof of the fact that the Czecho-Slovak bourgeois social democratic party no longer exists. The new born bourgeois nationalist State will be in a position in which bourgeois parliamentarism will not be of much use to it. The crisis of bourgeois democracy is so serious that it is putting, just as the industrial crisis does, the very existence of the State in its bourgeois form into jeopardy.

Comrades, there is still another point to be considered in this connection. At the parting of the ways, before the economic and parliamentary crises resolve themselves in the formation of a new type of government, we shall have to pass through a long phase of national strife. The impression is being created among the wide strata of the non-communist population that national independence is in peril. It is quite possible that the irredentist nationalists among the German and Hungarian bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie will want to take advantage of this situation. This probability is making matters more complicated as far as the temper and the consciousness of the masses are concerned. Under Capitalist government the small nations are either hammer or anvil. Such a wave of nationalism may have an influence over the masses which the bourgeois world might

use in the interests of their fascist aims and against the class struggle of the working class. Thus we have three important phenomena before us: an immediate economic crisis, a crisis of parliamentary government which is undermining the foundations of the state owing to the impossibility of a parliamentary solution, and the panicky fear in national circles with regard to national independence. The Communists are blamed for all this. The Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie has already used up its best forces in the government of the country. When Masaryk, Benes, and Sochla are played out, the Czech bourgeoisie will have no one authoritative enough to replace them. There will be no other way out for the government than to throw over the democratic form, and to say that the maintenance of the national State is the paramount necessity. The ideology will in my opinion, lead in the near future to the formation of a government which will not rest on the parliamentary institutions, but on the white guard organizations, the Sokols, the Siberians, Legionnaires and other organizations of this kind which already exist within the working masses and enjoy a great deal of popularity among the non-communist portions of the population.

Comrades, considering that our entire party views the situation in the light which I have just put before you, surely no one will imagine that we are so foolish and so dense as not to take account of the weakening of the class struggle and of the methods of this struggle. Under such circumstances is there anyone who will imagine that a tendency might arise in Czecho-Slovakia which would be inclined to copy blindly the European forms of Communism? Such a thing is not likely to happen, and is not at all true. We are fully aware that in this very complicated situation, the Communist Party must expect to be the object of fierce attacks. Our Young Communist Leagues have already been forced underground. In the New Year the present parliamentary majority will probably want to put on the statute books a Defense of the Republic Act. The bourgeois counter-revolutionary organizations, the Sokols, the legionaries and others are subsidised by the State and systematically encouraged in the Press. The legal centres of the bourgeois counter-revolution are wide awake and are prepared to create a hostile atmosphere against us by means of national watchwords and lies. We must take council here about the ways and means to ward off this peril. I shall not deal here with the recent phases of the struggle. Everyone knows what these phases are: life and death struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. It is a question of what our attitude is to be during the first phase. During that phase our tactics and watchwords must be such as to draw away the masses from the counter-revolution and to bring them over to our side. The greater our influence over the masses, the better we will be able to paralyse the counter-revolutionary attacks. We shall have to choose suitable slogans and watchwords when discussing the question of tactics.

If we advance during the first period, partial watchwords suitable to the development of events, which we ourselves do not look upon as a dogma and as something final, we must nevertheless present them in such a way as to make the masses realise that they are our watchwords, even though they be for us a manoeuvre and a means to bring the masses into motion leading them forward in the process of application. When in March and April of 1917 Lenin came forward with the demand for socialization of banks and of big industrial organizations, of the abolition of commercial secrets and of the organization of the consumers, he did not tell Kerensky and the world that it was a swindle and a lie and only a matter and manoeuvre as far as we were concerned.

On the contrary, he said: "we will fight for these slogans which we hold as being within reach of possibilities at present". Because the watchwords were brought before the masses in this form, they carried them away and led them into the struggle. During the subsequent phases they learned from their own experiences that one must go beyond these watchwords. As to the tactics of the gathering of forces, I venture to say that we must be still more cunning and circumspect about them because our bourgeoisie has carefully studied the Russian Bolshevik tactics before the assumption of power. It knows the dialectical side of our tactics. It knows that the watchword which we considered excellent yesterday, can be totally unsuitable today, and vice versa. For this reason we must know how to manoeuvre. However, in order to be able to manoeuvre, the party must be consolidated from within; confidence, authority, and discipline must reign within it, for without them we will not be able to cope with the bourgeoisie.

We will be reduced to mere dogmatic declamations, and will make the defeat of the bourgeoisie more difficult, if we allow ourselves to be influenced by the fear of being defeated by a comrade in a factional strife. Freedom and elasticity of tactics in the various phases of development of events is ab-

solutely necessary. If the leaders of the Communist party do not have the confidence of the International, the general staff of our revolutionary struggle, we can safely say, that such leaders must be removed. However, if the leaders of the party have the confidence of the International, this party is entitled to manoeuvre, without any interference and mistrust on the part of the International, so as to be able to bring the masses over to our side. My time is too short to deal in greater detail with the tactics of the transition period in Czecho-Slovakia. I want merely to state that the workers government is not a dogma for us during the present stage, and not a definite solution of all evils, but a watchword by means of which we want to mobilize the masses. We want to enlist the sympathies of the nationalist socialist workers who might play a very important role under an Orgesch or Fascist government.

By means of this watchword we wish to draw away as much as possible all the proletarian elements from coalition with the bourgeoisie and from the influence of the Pacifist circles. Moreover, we want to make use of these watchwords for the establishment of independent proletarian class organs, and in order to penetrate into the army. For propaganda in the army alongside of our endeavour to bring the proletarians to our side, is the second barricade which we must erect against the advance of the Fascist movement.

Pullman:

(America)

Comrades. The imperialist war has disturbed the normal equilibrium and the inter-dependence of the national sections, of world capitalist economy. America, the least affected by the war went through similar experience. The Capitalist class of America, powerful and conscious, took advantage of the industrial depression and launched a violent attack upon the workers' organizations which succeeded during the war in strengthening considerably their position. Under the pretext of the restriction of war orders a general curtailment of industry took place. The shutting down of factories created an immense army of unemployed, at one time exceeding six millions. For the purpose of dealing a death blow to organized labor, a manufacturers' association was organized with a capital of over fifteen million dollars. The attack started under the "Open Shop" slogan and the maintenance of the so-called "rights" of the workers unrestrictedly.

Unorganized labor was the first victim. The shops where the unorganized workers were employed were the first to close. When they reopened only a fraction of the formerly employed were taken back and at reduced wages. In some cases the reduction exceeded 60%. The next to feel the shock of the attack were the insufficiently organized crafts, and finally the attack was turned against the strong unions.

As a result of the capitalist offensive, the working class to-day finds its economic basis shattered and its ranks disrupted. During this period there was a considerable decrease in the number of organized workers. The American Federation of Labor alone has lost over one million. The working day has been lengthened, wages reduced, shop conditions made much worse, seniority and promotion rights taken away.

In the metal trades the number of organized workers has been reduced from 800,000 to 275,000. Wages have been cut from 25% to 40% and the working day increased from 8 hours to 9 and 10 hours.

In the steel industry, which at the time of the last strike had over 350,000 organized workers is now practically without any organization. Here wages have been reduced from 22% to 40%; the steel barons persisted in maintaining the 12-hour day, and a 24 hour day during the change of shifts.

In the packing industry, not over 10,000 remained of the 200,000 formerly organized. Here wages were reduced from 25% to 35% and the 8 hour work day was increased to 10 hours.

In the needle trades industry the number of organized workers decreased about 80,000. Wages were reduced from 15% to 25%.

In the oil fields and metal mining industry there is practically no organization, and white terror reigns supreme.

In the automobile industrie the labour force has been reduced in proportion to the increased efficiency of the remaining workers. For instance, the Willis Overland Company previously employed 14,000 men producing 550 cars per day, later the force had been reduced to 7,000 men who produced 500 cars. This year over 650,000 miners were on strike for a period of five months. A temporary agreement reached with the operators

provides for the continuation of all conditions till March 1923. Thus the sacrifices and heroism of the workers accomplished no tangible results although they partially succeeded in checking the capitalist offensive.

The railroad strike was also defeated due to the interference of the government as well as the treachery of union bureaucracy. The railroad men were forced to accept wage reductions of over 15%. In the beginning of the strike the government remained passive, and apparently neutral but as the workers' resistance grew stronger, the government openly came to the support of the railroad magnates. As a rule in all industrial conflicts the Government rushes to the assistance of the capitalists by throwing on their side the entire force of the judiciary and military machine. This was especially exemplified in the Coronado decision of the Supreme Court, announcing that the unions were responsible for damages caused by strikes. The most striking instance of Government interference was provided in West Virginia where government troops quelled the strike. In Herrin, Ill, the persecution was financed and instigated by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.

In the railroad strike the attorney general Dougherty obtained an injunction against the unions which practically paralysed and made illegal all strike activities. When obtaining the injunction Dougherty openly stated that the Government would support the drive for the "Open Shop".

Then, following on the heels of the capitalist offensive came the raids on the Communist Party and the Left Wing movement in the trade unions. The arrests and deportations of the active members of trade unions became an everyday occurrence, on a par with lynching, tar-and-feathering, and torture of political prisoners. Constitutional rights are denied even to the yellow socialists. The labor boards and compulsory industrial arbitration courts are used to crush the workers. In many states a state constabulary has been established which assist the railroad, steel and mining magnates to maintain the white terror.

About the Fascisti organisation in America: We have the American Legion which was organised by a group of officers and drew into its ranks a large number of war veterans under the pretext of gaining a few economic demands such as pensions, bonuses and medical treatment for wounded soldiers. The capitalists maintain also a large army of private detective agencies, and factory guards. A secret organisation in America known as the Ku-Klux-Klan plays an important role in the capitalist offensive. It is especially active in the South, but it extends its activities also in the North. It terrorizes the Negroes, compelling them to do compulsory work at reduced wages and under legal guise assists plantation owners in maintaining a practical system of espionage. At the time of the elections the polls are heavily guarded and Negroes prevented from exercising their formal rights.

Though the capitalist offensive assured an ever increasing impetus, the union bureaucracy did not put up any active resistance but, on the contrary, became passive and treacherous to the workers interests. The many improvements gained by the workers during the war have been sacrificed by the union bureaucrats practically without a struggle. Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, at the present time is active in establishing cordial relations and joint committees with the American Legion while, on the other hand, Gompers fought against the Communists and Left Wing elements in the trade unions.

In the miners' union the bureaucrats have betrayed the miners at a time when the strike was all but won.

During the railway strike, E. F. Grable the head of the International Brotherhood, of maintenance-of-way employees and railroad shop labourers, held back his organisation of 400,000 men, notwithstanding the fact that an overwhelming majority of them had voted to join the strike. It is due to this treachery that the defeat of the railroad union may be largely attributed.

In the political field, the union bureaucrats while serving as tools in the ruling capitalist parties, oppose the political actions of the workers and the formation of a bonafide Labor Party. Great handicap lies in the defective form of labor organizations which permits the capitalists to lead their attack against the workers and prevent their consolidation.

The Party has reacted against the capitalist offensive and tried to do its best notwithstanding the fact that within the Communist Party during the last year internal friction existed. It made a number of attempts to rally the workers against the capitalist offensive. Several efforts have been made to organize the unemployed; due to this fact however, that at that time the

party did not have connections with the trade unions our efforts were not successful as objective conditions warranted. The Party concentrated its attention on the penetration of the trade unions and took an active part in the formation of the Left Wing movement. Under the guidance of the Party, a Left Wing movement has been organized in the trade unions which has gained a strong influence. For the purpose of establishing close contact with the workers and developing a strong mass organization a legal political party was organized and whenever the workers were engaged in a struggle the party attempted to apply the United Front tactic.

American capitalism having reached the highest state of its development and having created the most efficient system of production has been forced to find an outlet in two directions:—first, the emigration of finance—capital to the industrial backward countries, and secondly, the expansion of foreign markets. American capitalism has thus become involved in a desperate competitive struggle with European capitalism. American capitalism will thus bring to bear an additional pressure upon the working class of America. However, in future, the struggle of workers particularly in the metal trade struggle and the mining

industry, will change its isolated character. The achievement of coordinated and joint action of American and European miners and metal workers will enable the workers to take the offensive. The present moment finds the workers deeply dissatisfied. Never before has the government so clearly exposed its class character to the workers. And we may expect the industrial conflict that will break out in the immediate future will assume a more revolutionary and political character.

The party must be ready for this struggle, it must develop its membership, it must win the confidence of the masses by consolidating and developing the strength of the workers in their struggle for their immediate demands.

The Party must intensify the activity of its members in the trade unions and take an active part in the daily struggles, in their fight against the union bureaucracy and prepare them for political action. The party should establish its nucleus in every plant, mine and workshop and by attracting into its ranks all militant elements gain the leadership of the revolutionary struggles.

These we believe are the most important tasks facing the Communist Party in America.

The Tasks of the Communists in the Trade Unions

(By Comrade Lozovsky)

The Communist International, having determined to wage a decisive and bitter struggle against all shades of reformism, could not from the very beginning of the struggle but come into conflict with the most important bulwark of reformism, — the Modern Trade Unions. Hence in its first declarations the Communist International defined its attitude towards the reformist unions and to the International Labor movement. The Second Congress of the Comintern outlined the policy of the Communists in the Trade Union movement, repudiating the „split and smash the unions“ theory which was bred by impatience and misconception of the fundamental tasks of the Communist policy.

The Third Congress again dealt with the Trade Union question. This is not surprising, for the Trade Unions had become the last refuge of the world bourgeoisie and the chief foundation upon which capitalist rule is resting. In its exhaustive theses the Third Congress of the Comintern discussed the most vital questions of the world's Trade Union movement and especially emphasized the necessity of making the most of the struggle against the reformists, conducted for the purpose of capturing the Trade Unions. Finally, the last meeting of the enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern found it necessary to sharply condemn the tendency prevailing in some Communist circles to liquidate the Profintern. It was quite clear that this liquidation tendency, though often based on very high motives, was in reality a result of weakness and inability to rally the forces for the struggle against reformism.

The Fourth Congress must make a further step forward. The general principles for carrying on Communist work in the Labor Unions have been formulated. The next task is to develop the problems in a concrete form and emphasize once more the questions which have been brought to the front by the practical International class-struggle. In order to present these questions in their proper light, we must first of all study the circumstances under which the struggle of the Communists for the revolutionizing of the Labor Unions is proceeding at the present time.

A cursory glance at the International Trade Union movement will show that it is experiencing a severe crisis. The crisis is caused, on the one hand, by the powerful capitalist offensive, and, on the other, by the bankruptcy of the theory and practice of the leading elements of the world Trade Union movement. The activities of the capitalists in their offensive took definite shape towards the end of 1920, and assumed a well-planned and organized character, as a campaign directed towards reducing the cost of production under any circumstances, by cheapening the Labor power. The bourgeoisie hoped to solve its post-war difficulties by exerting pressure on the working class. The sharper

the crisis developed, the more ferociously did the bourgeoisie conduct its aggressive campaign. The bourgeoisie was determined to continue to obtain by all possible means the monstrous profits to which it had become accustomed during the war. The forms of the offensive varied, assuming a different aspect in countries having a high currency to that in countries with a low currency. Taken as a whole, however, the attack was centered on the eight-hour day; the scale of wages was systematically reduced; and a campaign was started against the very existence of the Unions. (The „open shop campaign“ in America.) In addition to the purely economic offensive, the bourgeoisie during the last two years has been setting up special organizations for the destruction of the labor unions. A classical illustration of the new bourgeois tactics is furnished by Italy where recently a crushing blow was dealt to the entire communist movement. Italy has now the deplorable honor of taking the lead of all „civilized“ countries as far as the smashing up and destruction of Labor organizations is concerned. The entire Fascist movement and analogous movements in other countries are neither more nor less than preventative counter-revolution. The Italian workers are forced to endure all the disadvantages and hardships of counter-revolution without reaping the benefits of revolution. This universal capitalist offensive encountered an extremely weak resistance on the world Labor Union movement. The Amsterdamers, who never missed an opportunity for boasting of their great victories over the capitalists, and of the great benefits which the International Labor Bureau of the League of Nations will bestow upon humanity, assumed from the first moment of the offensive the policy of watchful waiting. Not once during this period did they have the courage to take the initiative in a serious struggle, at best making a few steps forward only under the lash of the indignation of the working masses. A typical case in point was the recent lockout in England, the miners' strike in America, the metal workers' strike in France and a series of strikes in Germany and Italy. Everywhere the Amsterdamers played a passive rôle, they always strove to bring the conflict to a speedy end and merely hampered the struggle of the working class by disorganizing and demoralizing its ranks. The failure on the part of the Trade Unions to offer effective resistance, of the leaders to lead the masses of the workers to battle, caused deep disappointment among the broad masses of workers with the resulting withdrawal of entire groups of workers from the unions. The growth of the trade union movement during 1921—1922 was not only checked, but the membership was even rapidly declining. Hundreds of thousands of workers are leaving the unions which, due to this shrinking, become weak and unable to resist the capitalist offensive. The General Confederation of

Labor of France, at the beginning of 1920 numbering above two million members, has now together with the United Confederation only 600,000 members. In Italy the membership of the Trade Unions decreased from 2,000,000 to 700,000. In England the trade unions lost one million three hundred thousand members and in the United States the unions lost nearly a million and a half members. A similar downward trend is observed in Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Denmark, etc. Only in Germany and Austria has the membership of the unions remained approximately constant. This should not be attributed to the excessive revolutionary spirit of the leaders of the labor union movement of these countries, but to the tragic condition of the Austro-German proletariat and to its greater susceptibility to organization.

Besides the numerical loss entailed by the unions, we observe among them a general instability and lack of self confidence. The Amsterdammers, who during several years were making the world resound with their declarations of the glorious reforms which the International Labor Bureau was about to bestow upon the suffering masses, now remain silent. The glorious days have passed. They have even themselves lost faith in the social creative force of their organizations. They continue to participate in the International Labor Bureau at the League of Nations for no other reason than the fact that they are chained to it like galley-slaves, and they will share the fate of this in-all-respects-remarkable institution. They cannot renounce the co-operation of classes, because all their actions are based upon this principle. Moreover, this co-operation is growing closer every day, because the rupture of class co-operation between the unions and the bourgeoisie would not only sound the death knell of the bourgeoisie, but also of the Amsterdammers.

While the leaders of the Amsterdam International were remarkably modest and extremely inactive in resisting the capitalist offensive, they became extremely insolent, aggressive and energetic whenever the issue was to fight against the revolutionary workers. The period between the III Congress and the IV is marked by an intense struggle of the Amsterdam leaders against the revolutionary wing of the labor movement. The Amsterdammers are determined never to be in the minority: they prefer rather to split the organizations than to turn into the hands of the Communists the leadership of the trade unions. Such is the slogan of the Amsterdam International. This policy is the logical deduction from the Amsterdam position: for any other policy would make it difficult for them to save the capitalist system. In France the Amsterdammers succeeded in splitting the trade union movement and there we now have two Confederations of Labor. No sooner did the Communists begin to threaten the fat jobs of the Czechoslovakian Amsterdammers than the latter repeated the manoeuvre of their French colleagues and split the entire trade union movement of that country. In Spain the reformist General Workers' Union, split its largest miners' organization as soon as the communists and the syndicalists secured a majority in it. In Germany a systematic campaign of persecution against the communists is conducted in the unions of the building trade, of railwaymen and transport workers. The German method consists in the expulsion of communists elected to any union office and the refusal to recognize their elected candidates, thus cutting off the revolutionary leaders from the revolutionary masses. This line of policy is adhered to by the German Amsterdammers most persistently and stubbornly in their untiring efforts to force the best militant elements out of the trade unions.

"The enemy is on the left. The ranks must be purged to keep strong" — such is the cynical declaration of the central organ of the General Federation of Trade Unions in Germany, the „Korrespondenz Blatt“, in an article entitled „The Enemy is on the Left“. „Get out of the unions“ — such is the slogan of the Amsterdammers who draw from it practical deductions. And the stronger the communist menace, the clearer the revolutionary consciousness of the masses, the clearer become the efforts of the Amsterdammers to split the unions. Revolutionary unions are of no use to them. They prefer catholic and yellow unions to the revolutionary unions. There is more than sufficient evidence to corroborate this fact. Thus the reformist Miners' Union of Germany gladly concludes an agreement with the Catholic Union and the nationalist Polish Union, emphatically refusing to have any dealings with the Union of Hand and Brain Workers, on the pretext that its members are unorganized. This latter union is a revolutionary organization under the leadership of communists. The honorable gentlemen of the Miners' Union, however, prefer Catholics to Communists.

The Amsterdam attack upon the trade unions is not limited to national boundaries. The Amsterdam International at its last Congress in Rome, at a conference held jointly with the representatives of the International Industrial Secretariats again adop-

ted a resolution to the effect that the revolutionary unions must have no place in the international secretariats. This resolution is carried out with the rigidity they always display in fighting the revolutionary unions. During the last year the Russian unions were either expelled or refused admission to the International Industrial Organizations of the following industries: Metal workers, Miners, Woodworkers, Builders, Textile workers, Agricultural workers, Post and Telegraph employees, Leather workers, Transport workers, etc. The formal motive for expulsion was that these unions are connected with the Profintern through the All-Russian Central Council of Labor Unions. The real reason is, however, that they brought about a revolution, that they are connected with the Soviet Government, that they are permeated with the spirit of communism and constitute the basis of the Soviet State and of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The International Secretariats affiliated with the Amsterdam International would gladly admit counter-revolutionary unions, but for revolutionary unions the doors are shut, for their admission may spoil the peaceful life and the digestion of the gentlemen of the Secretariats.

What does the attack on the revolutionary unions signify. It is essentially nothing else but a reflex of the International capitalist offensive against the working class. It is the reflex of the social battles waged between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The Amsterdam International, standing on the other side of the barricade, is bombarding the International labor movement with all the guns it has at present in its possession. The modern trade union leaders realise quite clearly that the labor movement, while it remains united, is progressing slowly, but surely, to the left, and that, as soon as the communists capture the labor union movement, the fate not only of the bourgeoisie but of reformism as well will be sealed. It is precisely for this reason that they consciously apply the tactic of splitting the unions and expelling the revolutionary elements. Their aim is to strip the working class of all power, to render it incapable of capturing the state power, and to disorganize and demoralize it so that it could not seize the means of production and distribution. The Amsterdam International is employing all conceivable means and methods to save modern „civilization“.

The Amsterdammers do not stand alone in their struggle against the communists; the anarchists are their allies. During the last two years we saw the struggle of the anarchists against communism becoming more and more acute. Ever since 1920 the hostile attitude of the anarchists assumed a virulent character, not differing at all of late from that of the reformists. It is true their arguments are different. In their attack they are carrying different banners, but the political meaning of their attack is the same. The anarchists are doing their utmost to hamper the work of the communists within the trade unions, vilifying this work, and even denying the communists the right to work in the trade union movement. Such attacks were within the last year coming from the American Syndical Workers of the World (I.W.W.), from the Italian Syndicalist Union, from the Anarcho-Syndicalists and from several Syndicalist groups in France. All these campaigns were carried on under the slogan of „The struggle against politics“ putting up the Trade Union International in opposition to the Communist International and the Communist Parties. It is a well-known fact that politics, the party and the State are represented by the anarchists in the shape of an apocalyptic beast, and it is all the same to them what kind of politics, parties and State the question is about. In their transcendental reasoning they lump all things together, having become accustomed to reason in terms of the eternal and absolute. Their attitude is one of blunt and categorical denial of any kind of political action and of any relations whatever between the trade unions and the Communist Parties. Their abstract doctrines go by the name of independence, under which banner, they demonstrated last year against the Comintern and the Profintern. The trade unions all to themselves, and the Party all to itself — such was the meaning of these demonstrations. In a number of anarchist resolutions and manifestos this primitive idea was chewed over and over again, its pure and simple trade union garb failing of course to make it either more clear or more revolutionary.

The anarchists did not rest content with a mere controversial struggle against the communists. A number of things occurred during the last year showing that the anarchists were anxious to emulate Amsterdam. Some of the anarchist organizations have begun to expel those of their members who stand for the Profintern and for the bond between both revolutionary Internationals. Such expulsions took place in the Italian Syndicalist Union. The Dutch syndicalists are also threatening the communists with terrible punishment, and their example is being followed by the anarcho-syndicalist groups of other countries. All these attacks have for their purpose the severing of the trade

union movement from the political movement, the detaching of the revolutionary trade unions from the Profintern and the establishing of a separate transmundane little International. It is in this sense that all the anarchist groups are trying to carry out the instructions of the International Anarchist Conference of December 1921, which decided to establish a new independent autonomous revolutionary-syndicalist International. An attempt to put this into practice was made in June of the present year when the initiators succeeded in bringing together the representatives of a few organizations. To give a proper idea of the nature of this new International, it is sufficient to say that the German localists—those typical Tolstoyans and political vegetarians—are playing a leading part in it. What is the reason for this increased virulence of the struggle against the Profintern on the part of the anarchists? It is important to recall the fact that the anarcho-syndicalist groups even joined the Comintern in the first periods after the October Revolution. The Spanish National Confederation of Labor, the Italian Syndicalist Union etc., adhered to the Comintern. What is the explanation of the withdrawal of these groups not only from the Comintern but even from the Profintern? The attacks of the anarchists against the Comintern, the Profintern and the Russian Revolution in general find their explanation in the general state of the world labor movement, and the anarchist attacks are a reflection of the attacks of International capitalism and of the Amsterdammers. It is a link in the same chain. The anarchists, notwithstanding their revolutionary phraseology, have always been the bearers of petty bourgeois ideas. Consequently, when the whole of bourgeois society gathered its forces for the offensive on communism, when a united front was created of all the resources of the bourgeois State to combat the communist peril, it was only natural that the anarchists should occupy their proper place in this anti-communist front. The anarchists, it is true, frequently explained their attacks upon the Comintern and the Profintern by the attitude of Soviet Russia toward their comrades and by their general opposition to any State and any dictatorship. However, we are not interested in what the anarchists say, but in what they do. And what they do is this: In the most difficult period of the communist movement, when the entire State apparatus and the coercive power of international capitalism are launched against it, when the powerful apparatus of the old trade unions is being directed against communism and the communist movement, the anarchists come forward with their anti-communist program and with their fight for the would-be independence of the trade union movement. An anarcho-reformist front was established which linked up with the bourgeois front. The anti-communist front is crowned by the anarchist petty bourgeois demagoguery. Thus the communist movement is obliged to carry on a struggle, not only against capitalism, but also against reformism and anarchism which have formed a bloc against the communist peril. As usual, anarchism showed itself to be the ally of reformism. This is not at all surprising, as they are the two sides of one and the same petty bourgeois medal.

Anarchists and revolutionary syndicalists are particularly fond of emphasizing the neutrality of the trade unions towards the political parties. This they claim as a special merit and a distinguishing feature of the revolutionary syndicalist movement. At the same time they use the term independence instead of neutrality, but in substance it amounts to the same thing.

What is neutrality? Neutrality is a current within the trade union movement which advocates the slogan of an identical attitude to all the political parties, or of complete and absolute independence of trade unionism from politics. It is a known fact that politics is a „bête noire“ to the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists, while at the same time they confound politics with parliamentarism and political activity, political struggle with parliamentary elections and the game of electioneering. Neutrality is, on the one hand, the cry of the extreme reformists and, on the other, of the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists. One of the most prominent leaders of the American Labor movement, John Mitchell, in his book „Organized Labor“, lays stress with particular clearness on this neutrality and advances the idea that the present social order is made up of three elements: Capital, Labor, and the Public. It is hard to guess what this distinguished leader understood by „Public.“ Apparently it refers to those social-reformers with whom he held counsel at various leagues and associations for the purpose of talking about social legislation and the amelioration of the lot of the working class. The extent of this gentleman's independence and neutrality can be gauged from the fact that after his death he left a legacy of not less than half a million dollars. All this money was earned by him as a leader of the American trade union movement!

This neutrality is the worst form of bourgeois influence over the proletariat and the ideological subordination of proletarian interests to the ruling classes.

At bottom the theory of independence is built on the very same principles.

It is true that the latter professes aims which are in opposition to those of the neutralist politicians. Independence as preached by anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists is a theory of the exclusiveness of the trade union movement and of its hegemony over all other forms of the labor movement, denying to the political parties not only the right of leadership but even the very right of existence.

The ideology of independence was manifested with particular clearness during the past year in the polemics of the anarcho-syndicalists of all shades against the Profintern. The French, Italian, Dutch, Swedish and American syndicalists, whose claims are in inverse ratio to their importance in the labor movement, persistently put themselves in opposition to the Communist Parties, and declare that the trade unions alone will make the revolution and reap the fruits of its victories. To this theory the communists can give the answer: „By all means go ahead and demonstrate by facts the correctness of your theory.“ In this period of serious struggle we have a particular right to demand from the leaders of the Labor movement not only declarations, not only promises to bring about the revolution, but the actual realization of these promises. The best theory is the one that is vindicated by facts. Our Communist theory has been confirmed not only by Russian, but also by the other revolutions. On the other hand the theory of the anarchists and syndicalists has obtained no such confirmation. On the contrary, anarchism, to the extent that it manifested itself in practice during the Russian Revolution, was essentially the expression of petty bourgeois anti-proletarian ideology. The Makhno movement was the militant anarchism, demonstrating that anarchism in action is an elementary anti-proletarian petty bourgeois force.

It is for this reason that we treat the anti-communist theory of independence not only with scepticism and mistrust, but also consider this theory extremely harmful and highly dangerous to the labor movement of the country where it gains power and predominance. The division of politics and economics into two parallel independent parts is tantamount to breaking up the proletarian Labor movement into two. The Labor movement may manifest itself in different forms according to the conditions of time and place and the political environment and co-relation of forces, making certain forms and methods of struggle more acceptable than others. But one thing is perfectly clear. The moment we draw a line between the political and the economic labor movement, especially when we oppose one to the other, we weaken the labor movement, tearing apart that which is organically welded together in the very process of the struggle, and by weakening the proletariat we reduce the very possibility of a successful fight against the splendidly organized and united enemy of our class. The bourgeoisie does not indulge in such theories, it does not separate politics from economics; it knows well how to make use of everything which has been created by the apparatus of the bourgeoisie. The power of State, literature, science, art and the Church, the economic organizations of the employers—all these represent one solid block which is ever in opposition to the proletarian struggle for emancipation from the capitalist yoke. „Politics“—says the program of the Russian Communist Party—“is nothing if not concentrated economics.” I believe that this is the most brilliant and the most exact formula of the relation between politics and economics. By politics, we communists understand the movement of the working class for its emancipation, the opposition of the working class to the entire bourgeois society. The activity which has for its purpose the achievement of the goal, the establishing of regular relations between the masses, is what we call politics. Only people with limited mentality can confuse political struggle with parliamentarism, which is only one of the many varieties of the political activity of the proletariat. In this opposition of politics and economics, in neutrality, in the theory of independence, one can only see a desire of the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists to sow discord between the Communist Party and the Trade-Unions, to wage a fight against communism; because communism is not a fleshless spirit, it cannot exist outside of time and space and a definite organization. It exists to the extent that it has physical embodiment. Of course the working class as a whole is such an embodiment of the Communist ideal, but the working masses, when they have communist instincts, crystallize their communist consciousness around a definite organization, and that is the Communist Party. Therefore, the opposition of trade unions to the Communist Parties, the desire to sow discord between them, under the guise of independence, is directed, not only against the Party as such, but also against communism, against the working class and against the social revolution.

In their fight against „politics“ the Anarcho-Syndicalists place syndicalism against communism. What is syndicalism?

First of all, by syndicalism is presumed the trade union movement as a whole, i. e. the totality of labor unions in any given country. Under such circumstances the opposition of syndicalism to communism loses its meaning, for to the extent that trade unions embrace the organized, they at the same time embrace the Communist section of the workers. Therefore the opposition of the trade unions to the communist party is tantamount to placing the communist workers against themselves.

From this it is evident that syndicalism signifies something else as well. In fact under syndicalism is conceived also a certain, definite, ideological tendency within the labor movement, and within the trade unions. The distinguishing feature of the ideological tendency is the fact that it is pre-eminently based upon the trade unions. What then are the underlying characteristic traits of syndicalism? Syndicalism, in the form in which it has crystallized itself in the course of the last two decades, is the theory of the priority of the trade union movement over the other forms of the labor movement. As we see, at its basis, syndicalism has an anarchist, anti-Party, and anti-political tendency.

Syndicalism asserts that the working class creates its vanguard in the form of trade unions and will realize its aims through the trade unions.

In this connection it is extremely interesting to note the discussions carried on in France between the Syndicalists and the Communists in connection with the resolution adopted at the Marseilles Congress of the Communist Party with reference to the trade union movement. The opinion cautiously expressed by the Marseilles Congress to the effect that the Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat, was sharply opposed by the Syndicalists.

Syndicalism as a tendency within the trade unions strives to elaborate its own program, its own tactics, its own forms and methods of struggle and to weld the working masses together in their class action. This is also the aim of Communism.

Therefore it is evident, that, in the countries where there is a syndicalist movement, we have not the opposition of the trade unions to the party (no matter how often syndicalists of various shades reiterate this) but we have already the opposition of one party to another, and the one party is called Communist—while the other—Syndicalist.

Of course the Syndicalists will be horrified at the very idea that they in fact represent a party, for a party (and in this respect the syndicalists are the successors of the anarchists) is something extremely offensive from their point of view. This negative idea of a party is created in these countries by corrupt parliamentary morals and extreme elasticity of the conscience and backbone not only of the bourgeois leaders in the West European countries but also of so-called Socialist leaders of the movement.

On the basis of this reformist practice and parliamentary idiocy, political action is confounded with electioneering. The trouble of the syndicalists is that they fail to see the roots of their own theory and therefore, for them, syndicalism is something that rises organically out of the mass labor movement, while communism is something foreign originating from "suspicious politicians" obviously dangerous to the working class.

Syndicalism taken as an ideological tendency in its soundest and most realistic form in many respects approaches communism, inasmuch as it not only aims at the same goal of the overthrow of capitalism, etc., but also puts forward the same underlying methods of the dictatorship of the proletariat. What then should be the relations between the syndicalists and communists? First of all, Syndicalism, as I have already stated, does not present a single movement—There are various tendencies in the syndicalist movement. There (in the syndicalist movement) we have first of all anarcho-syndicalists, scarcely differing from the anarchists; then there are revolutionary syndicalists who have already succeeded in drawing a certain line of demarcation between themselves and anarchism, and finally we have syndicalist communists who closely approach to communism. Syndicalism, therefore, does not present itself as something final, as something cast into a definite form but is a combination of a number of ideological tendencies which vacillate between anarchism and communism.

Therefore, the problems of the Communists in those countries where there is a revolutionary-syndicalist trade union movement should be clear.

The first task of the Communists is to take the initiative in uniting the left wing of the labor movement. Syndicalist-Communist are nearest to us. Of all the modern types of syndicalism these have really learned most from the war and the Russian Revolution. They understand the significance of the dictatorship of the proletariat and how necessary and inevitable it is during the transition period. They regard the question, not from the point of view of abstract anarchist theory concerning the problems of

the revolution, but from the point of view of actual experience, from the point of view of men who desire to learn from life itself.

This element is typified by the group known as the "Workers' Life" in France which may be characterized as a group of non-partisan communists. In its very nature this is a communist group. There are very many members of the Communist party in its ranks but its practices extend beyond the party lines. There is however, nothing surprising in that, so far as France is concerned. The Communist Party of France is not an organization that could command political authority for all revolutionary workers of the country. The party is still in process of formation, not yet uniform in its ideology, and not sufficiently united and welded together to be able to master the mass movement of France, notwithstanding the fact that objectively the situation is very favorable for a serious Communist Party.

There is not the slightest doubt that Communism and Syndicalism present two very diverse theories, different methods of approaching the problems of the labor movement, and to the methods of solving the problems confronting the working class.

And, on all points on which there are serious differences with the representatives of syndicalism, the communists should carry on a firm ideological struggle against all anti-communist tendencies of syndicalism. Communists can in no way tolerate any doctrine or practice which leads to the negation of political parties, no matter by whom this theory is promulgated or defended. Hence, the necessity of a systematic and organized campaign against all those anarchistic ideas and tendencies which still appear at the present time in the labor movement. This, however, should not in the least interfere with practical and close cooperation between the Communists and the Syndicalists in their struggle not only against capital which is on the offensive but also against reformism. How can we achieve this result? By revolutionary activity only. Syndicalism is stronger and more aggressive against communism in the measure as the Communist Party is weak and politically helpless.

Wherever the Communist Party takes the lead, in all events in which it takes the initiative at the proper time, wherever it is capable to discern the weakest spots of our class enemies and to strike at them in good time, there the syndicalists, even if they are strong,—are compelled to follow the communists' lead. But whenever there is constant internal strife within the party, and uncertainty as to the quality of their communist convictions, there is hesitation in taking the initiative, and normal relations between syndicalists and communists cannot be established. For the Communists, to justify their own lack of initiative and incapacity to master the labor movement, themselves begin to advance the theory of independence, thus making a virtue of necessity.

For Communists, the problem of the mutual relationships between the trade unions and the political party does not exist. The aim of the communists is to infuse a single communist spirit and a single communist will into all working class organizations. Only when following a definite plan and systematically accomplishing this task can the Communist Party have any meaning. Only such a party is a real Communist Party, which in practice as well as theory works for the conquest of the trade unions. Therefore at the Fourth Congress very little attention need be paid to the theoretical aspects of this question, which has been settled long ago. If, none the less, we have to discuss the question once more, it is not in order to establish any new principles, but in order to see how our good old principles are being applied. And we must frankly say that they are being very badly applied by many communists.

To begin with, the mutual relationships between the parties and the trade unions will necessarily vary from country to country. Although a theoretical unity has been secured by us in this matter, it is perfectly clear that great differences arise in the field of practice. The relations between the party and the trade unions vary with the character of the working class movement, with special circumstances, with the whole political and social environment, with traditions, with the part that the socialist parties play in a given country and so on. If we have correctly set it as our aim to win over all the trade unions to communism, to permeate them with the communist spirit, and to induce them to adopt communist tactics—it does not mean that we can realize our aims all in a moment, and still less that we can do it by using the same methods in different countries.

Consider Britain, for instance. Here we have a country with a gigantic trade union movement, old anti-political and anti-socialist traditions, and with a very small Communist Party numbering a couple of thousand members. As far as Britain is concerned, to speak of relationships between the Party and the trade unions, in the full sense of the word is almost meaningless. The trade unions are hostile to the Party. In such a country, we must speak not of relationships between the Party and the trade unions in general, but of

relationships between the Party and that part of the revolutionary unions, which is growing upon the soil of the developing class war. In this respect in each country the practical problem is a different one. As far as Britain is concerned, we see clearly that it would be disastrous if the Party were content to organise its forces only within its little Party nuclei. The aim here must be to create a more numerous opposition trade union movement. Our aim must be that our Communist groups should act as a point of crystallization round which the opposition elements will concentrate. The aim must be to create, to marshal, to integrate the opposition forces, and the Communist Party will itself grow concurrently with the growth of the opposition. There must be established a relationship between the Party organization and the opposition which by its very nature is heterogenous,—in such a manner that the Communists could not be charged with striving to mechanically dominate the entire opposition movement. This goal, i. e. the goal of winning the working masses for Communism, we must work for under these circumstances with the utmost care, definiteness and staying power.

The task in the United States is of much the same character. Here we have a small Communist Party and a fairly large opposition trade union movement, its forces being organized in the Trade Union Educational League. What is the task of the communists in the States? They must work within the trade union movement upon the platform of the Trade Union Educational League. What is the League's program? Simply the program of the R.I.L.U. Of course it is less rounded up, less clear than the program of the Communist International. The program of the Trade Union Educational League of America is of course less clear, less definite, less specific than the program of the Communist Party of America. But it cannot have this precise character, inasmuch as it aims at uniting all the opposition elements. Our task in America is to assemble the forces of the entire anti-Compers opposition. The Party must show the greatest persistence in aiding in the work of the League, seeing that within a very brief period the League has been able to develop tremendous energy in its organisational work. Our task in America is to help the League to rally its forces to induce sympathisers with communism to give their active support to the League, to strive by all available means to assist it in the struggle against Compersism, which is corrupting the American labour movement. Of course the Party has to consider the question of method in extending its influence. But influence in the working class movement is secured neither by resolutions nor by certain successful decisions of the Central Executive Committee, but by the work done by communists in their respective labour organisations. We must, therefore, speak less or, if you will, not at all about control of the activities of the League, for such talk leads only to a mechanical control, or rather to an attempt at mechanical interference in work which by its very nature, the party can neither carry on nor accomplish.

The problem of communist influence in the trade unions is first of all an organizational matter of the Party. We must first of all create a strongly welded and a serious political party. We must attract to the ranks of our organisation the largest possible number of workers from the various branches of the labour movement, we must weld our own membership together by inner discipline, then our influence in the trade unions will grow, without stop. The influence of the Party in the trade unions is directly proportional to its work among the masses, to its political resonance. The aim then, must be to make that political influence solid by organisational means. We have to point out that our organisational work in the trade unions is always lagging behind our political work.

Germany offers a good example of this. In Germany there is a very large communist movement, and in round figures the Communist Party exercises influence upon approximately one third of the membership of the Amsterdam trade unions. But, if you try to stimulate our forces there in point of organization, you will at once find that this huge mass is very badly welded together, that there is no proper cohesion between all these masses marching behind our banner and that the work of crystallising our political successes into a proper organisation is lagging behind. This contrast between the rapid growth of our political influence and the extremely slow process of making the spreading revolutionary ideas solid in an adequate organisation is a very dangerous feature of the German working class movement. The result may be that at a given moment of fierce political struggle the Party may be lacking sufficient organisational centres to concentrate the whole revolutionary energy and to lead it with the utmost efficiency.

Of course, in Germany, the problem of the relationships between the Party and the trade unions has assumed and assumes different forms from those of Britain and the United States. In Germany the most acute phase of the problem concerns more especially the relationships between the Party and the Union of

Hand and Brain Workers. It is well known that this union was originally founded through the initiative of the Spartacus organisation. The Communist Party has subsequently changed its tactics towards the trade unions. This union with a membership of 150,000 workers is regarded all the time by many of the trade union communists of Germany as an obstacle to the communist movement. There seems to be a certain abstract approach to the practical question and a misunderstanding of our slogan of the conquest of the trade unions. "If our tactics are those of not splitting but conquering the unions, then it follows that the Union of Hand and Brain Workers has no right to exist—that is the way some communists are reasoning. But this reasoning is purely metaphysical. The Union does in fact exist, and in the concrete circumstances now prevailing in Germany, it will continue to exist for some years to come. In as much as it exists, it naturally endeavours to increase its membership. No organisation can exist without continuing to enroll new members. Otherwise the Union may lose all of its members to the last man, due to their natural death.

The Party must compel its members to pursue a communist policy. The entire controversy anent this question, the whole dispute of the last few months, should have been conducted on just this level. But instead of insisting on the principle that the members of the Communist Party must pursue a communist policy, the question was propounded as to the relationship of the Party to the Union, and thereby the matter grew more complicated, and involved. Fortunately, at the last congress the problem of the Union of Hand and Brain Workers was more or less settled. The wrong approach to the subject is due to the tendency to work exclusively, within the old unions and to the desire to do away with all kinds of independent organizations under any circumstances.

In Italy the Trade Union movement and the political Parties are closely allied. The example of the Syndicalist Union proves nothing, as this organisation has no influence upon the labour movement. The General Confederation of Labour and the Communist Party represent the strongest force in the labour movement. In reference to Italy every discussion on the inter-relationship between the Party and Trade Unions is unnecessary and purposeless.

Of a peculiar character is the problem of the relationships between the Party and the Trade Unions in France. Here we have an old syndicalist union and a young Communist Party itself is just as keen in defending the autonomy and interest of the Trade Union movement, as are the syndicalists themselves. It is known that the French syndicalists have attacked with particular vehemence the resolution adopted at the First Congress of the R.I.L.U. when an alliance was formed between the two Internationals (the Comintern and the R.I.L.U.) and a resolution was adopted that in every country the revolutionary unions and the Communist Parties should work together in all attacks and defensive acts. The most remarkable fact is that the resolution was opposed not only from the ranks of the syndicalists, but also from those of the Communist Party. Members of the C.P. insisted with particular emphasis on the need for independence and autonomy, referring particularly to the traditions of the French working class movement. If we are to talk about traditions, we must say that this tradition is a very bad one. It flourished upon the opportunist soil of the French Socialist Party, and it was natural and reasonable during that period. When the Socialist Party was a reformist Party the independence from the Socialist Party meant independence from opportunism and reformism. Every communist must fight for independence of such a kind. But where we have to do with a Communist Party, which ought to be free from the ailments of its socialist predecessors, this theory loses its significance. We have here nothing at all to do with historical tradition.

The Amiens Charter was appropriate in 1906 when it was necessary to resist the opportunist party inflicted by Parliamentary cretinism. Then it was in accordance with the demands of the time. But when one attempts now to apply the Amiens program to all countries, when one attempts to make of it an international program, ignoring the tremendous change wrought by the Russian Revolution and the Communist International, then one inevitably congeals in formulae, one does not see life and one runs the risk of spending one's life in these formulae. In this respect France is a country of wonders on independence from their party and, jointly with syndicalists, they get the Administrative Commission of the United Confederation of Labour to adopt resolutions to the effect that the expulsion from the party of a leader of a labour union will be regarded as an unfriendly act towards the United Confederation of Labour.

In France we have really two Parties—not two Communist Parties—the Party of the Left and the Party of the Centre, but two Parties of which one is the French Communist Section of the

Comintern while the other is called the Syndicalist Party. We should not conceal the real state of affairs: the Syndicalists represent a party, which does not call itself a party. In the French Communist Party we find approximately four different tendencies; in the Syndicalist Party there are four or five such tendencies.

When we tell the Anarcho-Syndicalists that they are a Party they become fiercely enraged and express the utmost surprise. We, a Party? We should say not; we are only workers. According to the notion of the syndicalists a political party consists of elements outside the working class, whereas their party has grown organically within the organised labour body.

What distinguishes the French Communist Party and in particular its attitude towards the Trade Union movement? For illustration we shall cite a few instances.

But first of all what is it that characterises the Communist Party in general? It is the fact that every one of its members recognises the necessity to work within the proletariat, recognises the necessity for an organic connection of the party with the working class and recognises the fact that the party represents the vanguard of the labour movement. Let the syndicalists think about it whatever they please, but to be in the party means precisely to strive for this purpose and no other.

On the eve of the Paris Congress of the French Communist Party a very interesting debate arose on the theses presented by Comrade Rosmer.

Against these theses a bloc was effected between some of our friends affiliated to the Communist International and the Anarcho-Syndicalists who were also opposed to these theses. Whenever a bloc is effected between communists and people standing outside the communist party, this must be recognised as a symptom of a disease which must be cured at all costs. Some comrades, members of the French Communist Party, were so frightened by these theses that when they were rejected by the central committee of the Party, the "Internationale" wrote: "The Central Committee saved the party, for the theses contained some very dangerous things".

After the Congress the "Bulletin Communist" published an article by Comrade Sutiff, administrative secretary of the Party, who relates the history of these theses in words which deserve to be reproduced here:

"The Left presented to the Central Committee a resolution which offers an entirely unacceptable Trade Union policy. This resolution states that the Communist Party holds that the party expresses more exactly the aspirations of the working class and is the most capable of achieving its emancipation".

A communist, who is the administrative secretary of the French Communist Party, is protesting against a resolution affirming that the Communist Party expresses best the aspirations of the working class. Syndicalists may protest it as their right. We may argue with them, but we are entirely at a loss to comprehend the protest of the Communist Party, and still more, of its secretary. If the party does not express the aspirations of the working class then what are its purposes? Is it to be engaged in parliamentarism and in writing newspaper articles? The Comintern understands the tasks of the party quite differently.

Every member of the Party should be deeply convinced that his party expresses better than any other the aspirations of the working class. Without this conviction we shall never be able to do anything and will be all the time compelled to remain passive. A party which is lacking such a deep conviction is not a Communist Party. And when even the secretary of the party is scared by such an idea, it shows clearly that the party is afflicted with disease.

Sutiff writes further: "Especially important is the fact that the theses propose to organise within the United General Confederation of Labour something in the nature of a Communist General Confederation of Labour". This is untrue. This resolution states that the Communists should unite not only on the territorial basis, i. e. by sections and districts, but also by federations, etc.

There are such members of the French Communist Party who, as soon as they begin to work in the trade unions, leave their membership cards outside the hall. When they join a trade union, they forget that they are communists. Being communists at party meetings, they reserve the right to do anything they please outside the party meetings and often they figure as the most zealous exponents of the independence and autonomy of the trade union movement.

The Comintern does not desire to subordinate the trade unions. A Communist Party, which would declare that it would

like to submit to itself the trade unions, would show that it is lacking an elementary understanding of the tactics of the Comintern. But the Communist Party must see to it that every communist who is a member of the Party should remain a communist everywhere. We must strive to have the trade union movement permeated by communist spirit and insist that the members of the Party who are at the same time members of trade unions should continue to remain members of the Party at all times. The Communist Party is not created through mobilisation. Nobody joins the Party by a decree, and, therefore, if you join the Party voluntarily, you take upon yourself voluntary, but at the same time strict obligations. It is altogether inadmissible that members of the Party should say: We are entirely independent in our trade union tactics.

Let us cite one more example. The last number of the "La Lutte des Classes" contains an article or, more correctly, a declaration signed by Comrades Monat, Schenbellion, Orleange, Charbit, etc. Of these six comrades, only Monat is not a member of the Communist Party. In this declaration we read: "Among us some are members of the Party and some are not, but we are all revolutionary syndicalists, i. e. we attribute to the trade union the basic role in the revolutionary struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat and assign to the Party only an auxiliary and not a leading part."

We must ask why these revolutionary syndicalists are members of the Party. We are entirely unable to understand why a member of the Party, who knows the reasons of his belonging to the Party and cannot be suspected of endeavouring to become a deputy in Parliament, remains in the Party if he ascribes to it only a secondary importance. This question can be explained historically. The Communist Party of France is not homogenous in its makeup. It is constituted of different ideological elements. The old ideology of every component part entered along with it into the Party and took root in it.

The theses presented to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern contain a paragraph stating: If, in a country where a really revolutionary syndicalist movement exists, there is a Communist Party which is lacking sufficient strength and influence in the trade union movement, there it is evident that the inter-relationship between the parties and the trade unions should be determined according to the relative strength of the organisations. Such an inter-relationship must be established because, without the co-operation of the Red Trade Union International and the Communist International, the revolutionary labour movement will be crushed by the onslaught of capitalism.

However, we have in France on the one hand a Communist Party, which itself is in favor of autonomy and independence of trade union movement, and, on the other, the labour unions which are insisting still more on autonomy and independence of trade union movement. The Communist International is, of course, certain that the assurances of the Anarcho-Syndicalists that the trade unions alone will achieve the social revolution have no serious foundation. We also doubt the feasibility of the slogan "All power to the trade unions." But every country has such relationships between the political party and the trade unions as its own Communist Party deserves. The realities of the struggle, the growing contradictions in France, the fierce offensive of the bourgeoisie, all this will force the French workers—the communists no less than the syndicalists—to change their views with regard to mutual relationship between the Party and the trade unions. Let them "autonomously" establish their mutual relations as best they may, and as they wish. Life will teach them its lessons showing that the victory is not to those who preach "the autonomy" and "the independence of the trade union movement", but to those who endeavour to secure that every form of the working class movement is permeated with a single communist spirit and with a single communist will.

The more acute the struggle between the revolutionary workers and the bourgeoisie, the more conspicuous is the alliance and unity between the reformists and contemporary bourgeois society.

It was pointed out above that the attack of the Amsterdamers on the revolutionary unions has grown fiercer concurrently with the development of the capitalist offensive. This alliance is especially conspicuous in relation to the unity of the trade union movement, a matter which interests not us alone who know that the trade union movement must, surely though slowly, come to understand the necessity of struggle with the rule of capital, and that the capitalist offensive can only have a successful issue when the trade unions have either been completely destroyed, or else broken up into warring groups. The salvation of the bourgeoisie is in the disorganization of

the working class movement, in its disintegration, in the breaking up of the organizations created by the workers in the course of the struggle. Thus the unity of the trade union movement is a menace to the rule of capitalism, for the pressure of capital forces these huge reformist organizations to move to the left, and in proportion as they move to the left, the working class has a better chance of victory. Perfectly natural, therefore, is the desire of the bourgeoisie to split the trade unions, to break them up into fragments, and then crush the warring factions one after another. It must be noted that in this matter the Amsterdamers do what they are told by their masters. During the last year the expulsions of the revolutionary unions were especially numerous. It is known for example, that the split in the French General Confederation of Labour was developing under the open "ideological" influence of the French bourgeoisie and its agents. It is a no less familiar fact that the disruptive activities of the Czecho-Slovakian Amsterdamers coincided with a severe economic depression and with a capitalist offensive against the working class. The worse the position of the workers in Germany, the more loudly do the Amsterdamers vociferate that the danger is from the left and it is plainly proposed to free themselves from this danger by ridding the ranks of their revolutionary elements.

Unfortunately this question of a split in the world's trade union movement is now put on the order of the day. That does not depend on us. It was not we communists who caused the split. During the recent years we were striving to carry on a struggle within the trade unions, to switch the movement on to new tracks, the labour organizations, but we are all the time systematically defending our slogan of conquest of the trade unions, not their destruction. It is not owing to us that a split became the issue. What ought we to do? What is our task? What must the communist do in view of this greatest menace to all the gains of the working class? The communists must redouble their efforts and mobilize all means at their disposal to offer resistance to a split. The communists' slogan must be "We will not permit a split!" No split! Because it will weaken the labour movement in each country. There must be no split, for a split would throw back the working class by many years, would weaken its powers of resistance, would give the employers a new weapon against the working class, a new possibility of strengthening their rule. We will not permit a split! But this must be something more than a mere slogan. It must be our starting point in all our practical activities. Every step taken by the communists in the trade unions must have in view the establishment and strengthening of unity in our organizations. Where a split has already occurred, where, despite our efforts and against our will, parallel organizations have already been created, there the communists must carry on an earnest and systematic struggle to reunite the separate parts. The struggle has to be waged on two fronts. It has to be waged against the reformists, the agents of the bourgeoisie, who wish by all means in their power to split the workers' movement in order to weaken it, and it must also be waged with equal zeal against those so-called left wing elements which seek salvation for the working class in the splitting of the trade unions. This leftism has nothing in common with our revolutionary Marxist viewpoint. There are leftists of this type in France who willingly walk into the traps of the reformists' provocations. They are anxious to be left all to themselves as soon as possible. We have such leftists in Czecho-Slovakia who imagine that the best thing for the workers' organizations is to isolate themselves from the other workers' organizations. Such is the viewpoint of the leaders of the Union of Agricultural Workers who only a year ago did everything in their power to remain outside the general trade union movement of Czecho-Slovakia. "A united trade union movement", this is our slogan, and that is why the communists must not withdraw their members from the reformist trade unions. If they do so and these communists are transferred to the revolutionary unions, we shall not be in a position to expect the necessary influence on the reformist organizations and to induce these to unite with the revolutionary organizations.

In these circumstances the communists must pay serious attention to applying in full the tactics of United Front. It is quite obvious that, without an agreement between parallel unions, it will be impossible to beat down the capitalist onslaught upon the most elementary conquest of the working class. The communists must make clear to the masses the need for agreement among the unions, the need for a joint struggle to keep up wages, to raise the standard of life, etc. In such cases we must compel the leaders of the parallel unions to enter into agreements for joint action. This must become the program of practical action for the Communist Party itself. In such cases no attention should be paid to the attacks of the reformists, of unreasonably

zealous anarcho-syndicalists, nor even of Communists. With great persistence and exertion we must systematically carry out this policy which in action, if applied in practice will lead, to reunion of the parallel and rival organizations.

The struggle for unity of the trade union movement is the most important task of the Communist Parties of all countries. We know why the reformists want to split the trade union movement. Not only do they wish to rid themselves of continuous criticism and of the revolutionary ferment, but they want by means of a split to make the social revolution itself impossible. Having made up their minds never to remain in a minority the Amsterdamers had to arrive logically at the conclusion to split the world-wide trade union movement. This is all the more necessary for them since the confidence of the workers to their reformist promises is steadily vanishing day by day. Every day the capitalist offensive drives new nails into the coffin of international reformism, for the strength of reformism lay in the concessions of the bourgeoisie. It is true that the bourgeoisie made concessions only because it was afraid of the revolutionary movement; but in any case immediately after the war the reformists, in their role of intermediaries, could show the workers that the reformist tactics were having a certain measure of success. The rank and file worker failed to see that the reforms were not the outcome of reformist tactics but were granted in spite of such tactics, he failed to notice that the zeal of the bourgeoisie for reform ran parallel with the growth of revolutionary discontent and revolutionary uprisings. When the revolutionary wave subsided, the bourgeois tactics changed from defence to attack. At present it is plain to every rank and file worker that reformism is bankrupt; reformism proved helpless to retain what it claims to have secured during the first years after the war. The International Labour Bureau, the League of Nations, all the loudly proclaimed promises of the Versailles Treaty—all this is exposed now in its nakedness and true colours. Reformism, on its last legs, scenting its imminent death, endeavours by any means in its power, to disorganise the ranks of the working class, so that the proletariat may be rendered unable to replace the tumbling bourgeoisie. In answer to the systematic splitting of the trade union movement, we communists must declare all together and each Communist Party separately, that, cost what it may, we will prevent the split.

To prevent a split becomes every day more and more difficult. The Amsterdamers, having decided to rid themselves of the revolutionary workers, take steps accordingly. The expulsion of Communists has become a normal incident of current life. The Communist International as well as the separate Communist Parties are confronted with the problem of struggling against these expulsions. What do the Amsterdamers hope to gain by them? They want to isolate the communist leaders from the sympathisers with communism among the masses of the workers. They want to detach the most advanced revolutionary elements from the working masses in order to continue their own influence upon the members of the trade unions in point of organization and ideal. It is evident that the Communist International cannot tolerate these tactics of isolating communists from the working class movement. The communists are in favor of unity, but they cannot sacrifice communism to this unity. The task of the immediate future is to carefully estimate the practical value of a series of measures to counteract this epidemic of expulsions. It is known that the expulsions affect, first of all, the leaders. In Germany there has been introduced a system of expelling elected communists. In Czecho-Slovakia it is done in a simpler manner. There the Executive decided to expel the Union of Chemical Workers and the Union of Woodworkers 110,000 workers in all.

Every country has its special method of dealing with the communists. This is why the Communist Party in each country must also have its own methods of fighting against the destruction of trade unions by reformists. Still there are certain general questions which apply to all countries. First of all it is necessary to point out that Communist Parties are not making sufficient use of the possibilities for fighting against the expulsions, according to the rules contained in the constitutions of the various unions. The constitutions of all the unions provide that members may be expelled for specific offenses. But, as far as I know, the rules do not provide for the expulsion of communists simply because they are communists. None the less, there have been numerous expulsions, and refusals to recognise the validity of elections, simply on this ground. Is it possible to carry on the fight upon the battleground afforded by the trade union rules and regulations? I think this could be done in a great many countries. The trade union rules afford ample opportunities for such a fight. If we merely insist on our formal rights, this will make no impression on the Amsterdamers. It would be extremely naive of us to entertain any doubt upon this even for a moment. It is not with such a thought in our minds that we

suggest the utilization of all the statutory rights assured to every member of the trade union. It is necessary to make extensive agitation and propaganda among the members of the trade unions; it is essential that we should raise the question of the expulsions at every general meeting, in every delegates' assembly and indeed wherever workers of the industry are affected by expulsions. In some countries our comrades have merely published one or two articles in the newspapers, and that has been the end of the matter. Instead the expulsion of only one communist from a trade union ought to be made the occasion for persistent political agitation among the members of the union, and the reinstatement of the expelled members should be insisted on. There should be an extensive campaign against the expulsions carried on in mills and factories. The question of expulsions can be raised at any time. Especially just now, in this hour of the capitalist offensive, which is extremely critical for the working class, every worker understands that the expulsions are nothing short of treason. To expose the hidden reasons for the expulsions, to make their real causes clear to every worker—this must be the task of communist agitation and propaganda. Such facts should not be allowed to pass with impunity for the trade union bureaucrats. Only when they know that every incident of the kind will serve as material for their exposure for years to come and not merely for a day or two, will they think twice and then think again before they dare to expel or drive communists from the trade unions. Furthermore, some local union elects its own officials. The Central Executive refuses to ratify the election. Such cases have occurred in Germany. The question arises—what is there to do? Have new elections? They are sure to give the same political result as regards the complexion of the local Executive. Usually the refusal to ratify the election has been accompanied by the expulsion of the elected persons. What is to be done? Should we content ourselves in such cases with mere agitation, or should we take further steps? It would obviously be wrong to rest content with a mere protest. Since local unions have elected communists, and have done so with due observance of the rules, the expulsion or the refusal to ratify the elected persons is a shameless violation of the most elementary democratic rights of the members of the unions. If the bond between the members of the unions and the comrades they have elected is something more than a casual one, if the rank and file have deliberately elected communists because they are communists, then the local organisations, for the sake of saving the union and for the sake of preserving the integrity of the working class movement, should refuse to obey the orders of the Central Executive.

Something must be done to put an end to the stubbornness and the usurped power of the Amsterdammers. Of course, a serious conflict is possible. The representatives of the Central Executive could expel the entire local organization for insubordination. But no local organization need comply with the demands of the Central Executive when these are an infringement of the rules. We do not want a split, but this by no means signifies that we can allow the reformists to do exactly what they like about the unions.

However much we fight against a split, we shall all the time have to face aggressive acts of the reformists against ourselves. Hence the chief task of the communists is to allow the elements expelled from the trade unions to remain scattered for a single moment. The question how to unite the expelled is one of extreme importance. Among the communists there are some comrades who make such a fetish of unity that they think the mere assembling and uniting of the expelled involves an attack on the unity of the trade union movement. This is utterly untrue, and is an extremely dangerous viewpoint. Whoever brings the expelled together, whoever assembles the elements that have been dispersed by the reformist policy, is in fact working for the re-establishment of the lost unity; he is creating the prerequisites for the re-uniting of the split and scattered parts. According to the conditions of the struggle, according to the special features of a union a variety of organisations are possible. In Germany for example, in some cases, certain elements can unite to form unions of the expelled; others join the Union of Manual and Intellectual Workers. There is no single form or method for the struggle against the policy of splitting the unions. It is necessary to estimate every practical step separately and according to circumstances, adopt the one practical measure or the other. We must bear in mind that in certain definite conditions it may be possible and permissible to withhold the payment of dues to the central executive. If the Central Executive has expelled the elected executive of a local organisation, then pending the decision of the matter, the local organisation is justified and in some cases obliged to refuse payment of dues to the centre. This does not mean that it is necessary to preach non-payment of dues to the local union itself. By no means. Every member of the union continues to pay his dues. These sums remain in the local

treasury, and on the books an account is to be kept of the amounts payable to headquarters in accordance with the rules, but these amounts are not handed over until the dispute is settled. Is this a universal method of struggle? Of course not. In special circumstances, under definite conditions, it may become one of the methods and means of the struggle. In and by itself, this struggle can only give definite results if it assumes a mass character. Of course every communist must individually do all in his power to prevent such expulsion. But in this matter it is essential to involve in the campaign of protest all sympathising organisations, whether local or national. What should be the forms the protest movement of those sympathising with the expelled should assume? Here again it is extremely difficult to determine the forms of the protest. There can, however, be absolutely no doubt that such a protest is necessary, that united action is absolutely indispensable to put an end to the orgy of expulsions. Whether these organisations will adopt the organisational form of protest, the financial or any other form—is again a concrete question. Undoubtedly each country will find, in accordance with local conditions, hundreds of means of protest against the expulsions. The important point is that the Parties should not limit themselves to resolutions, that they should realise that, unless they succeed in checking this flood of expulsions, unless they can beat down the Amsterdammers' onslaught, the International labour movement will be rent asunder, and the hour of the victory over the bourgeoisie will be put off.

Let us remember that the epidemic of expulsions increased after the Second and the Two and a Half Internationals united and that it has affected not only single countries but also the international organisations of various industries. Thus, during the past year, quite a number of revolutionary unions have been expelled or refused admission by the international secretariats of their respective industries. A number of Russian trade unions were refused admission, such as the metal workers, leather workers, textile workers, communal service employees, wood workers, transport workers, postal telegraph employees etc. The only Russian trade union accepted by the international federation was that of the provision workers and they too were accepted only conditionally. In all countries the revolutionary unions are confronted with the question how the revolutionary unions are to be brought together. Hitherto we have had international industrial propaganda committees. These systematic expulsions of entire unions from the international federations may compel the revolutionary unions to pass beyond propaganda committees and to found a bureau for the organisation of new internationals. This is not a problem of the distant future, it is a matter of the present moment. What ought the communists to do in this field? We have to call the attention to the fact that even those few communists who participate in the international industrial committees show too little concern a the expulsion of their revolutionary comrades. This shows first of all that not all those who call themselves communists are really communists. Within the near future the revolutionary unions of all countries will be compelled to unite by industries in order to struggle by their combined force for the creation of a single international in each industry. Here, too, the communists must render all possible assistance to those organisations which are doing on an international scale the work which the revolutionary workers are carrying on in each country.

However difficult may be the struggle of the communists in the trade union movement and no matter how the reformist may be provoking us to a split, we nevertheless shall continue to battle for the slogan which was already adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International "The Conquest of the Trade Unions, not their Destruction." The two years that have elapsed since then have shown the soundness of these tactics. The theory that the trade unions must be destroyed had its birth in the impatience of many of the communists, and frequently also in the lack of strength necessary for the struggle against the reformist bureaucracy. What would have happened by now to the Communist International had it advocated such a view? It would not have been able to do a tenth part of the work which it has done within the trade unions of all lands.

The communists must set vigorously to work, where the masses assemble, and in the very strongholds of the reformists. Let the reformists persecute us to curry favour with the bourgeoisie. Let them try to eradicate the communist virus. Let them endeavour, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, to destroy the constantly growing opposition. Vain will be their efforts. Communism is not a chance doctrine, it is not something artificially implanted, it is an organic growth from the living substance of the working masses. It is the embodiment of something which ferments and ripens among the workers by a natural process. The Communist International is a conscious expression of the unconscious historical process. It would, therefore, be folly to hold aloof from unceasing, steadfast, and systematic work within the unions. It

would be folly to adopt the watchword: Let us cut loose from the mass organisations and found little unions of our own. No! Let others work for the destruction of the unions. The bourgeoisie is destroying them; the reformist tactics destroy and weaken the trade union organisations of the working class. It is not for the communists to participate in any such endeavour. Very few people remain now who have not been taught by the experience of the last few years. Nevertheless, there still remain a few eccentrics of this way of thinking—in the United States, in Germany, and in certain syndicalist quarters. It seems to them that the working class movement would grow if only the communist saints could be carefully segregated from the reformist sinners, if only the communist working class found nice, neat, pure little unions of their own. In reality, the working class movement as a whole would infallibly suffer if any such course were adopted. It would suffer because the communist ferment, the communist consciousness, the communist energy and the communist initiative would be withdrawn from their natural sphere of action. There would be an artificial withdrawal of the motive force of the revolution, and a terrible blow would be dealt to the working class and to communism. That is why the communist slogan must be the conquest of the trade unions.

Now what do we mean by the conquest of the trade unions? Here we trench upon the weak side of our communist work in many lands. In certain countries the conquest of the trade unions is understood to mean the conquest of the leading positions in the unions. When the secretaryships and the chairmanships of the unions are in the hands of the communists, many Communist Parties rest upon their laurels until the first shake up, the first conflict comes. Only when a serious struggle begins do they suddenly realise that the masses have not yet been won over, and that to win the leading posts is not yet equivalent to the conquest of the trade unions. That has been the experience of the communists in Czecho-Slovakia, in Germany, and in many other countries. What do such tactics betoken? They betoken that our Communist Parties have not thought it necessary to convert communist sentiment into communist consciousness. It means that the communists have not yet founded adequate communist nuclei, bound by strong communist discipline within the framework of the unions. It means that they allow the fate of the mass organisations to remain subject to chance sentiments, to the humour of this or that leader. Unfortunately there is still lacking in many countries a widespread system of communist educational work, education which shall teach that the conquest of the unions means the conquest of the masses, that it means the communist enlightenment of the masses, that it means the communist organization of the most forward elements, so that the union as a whole may be infused from top to bottom with a communist spirit and a communist consciousness. Only when the communists themselves have united their forces and know what they want, are they capable of taking the initiative in consolidating the whole opposition. They must not limit their efforts to the unification of their own ranks. The Trade union movement embraces now tens of millions of persons. A union is specifically an organization of masses. Therefore the question of the relationship of the Party to its nuclei, and of the relationship of these nuclei to the opposition as a whole is the most important problem of our communist tactics in the trade union movement. Our communist nuclei, our communist groups, constitute an instrument for transmission, a connecting link between the Communist Party and the trade unions. When are these relationships to be established? How is the work to be distributed between these parts—an answer to these questions must be contained in the practical program of action of every country. During the first period of communist work in the trade unions, our agitation assumed a purely abstract character. It was a proclamation of communist slogans, of the necessity for the social revolution, of the struggle with the bourgeoisie; but this agitation was not always deducted from the real and concrete needs of the given country. Very often the setting up of Moscow and Amsterdam against each other has likewise assumed an abstract character. That is why we have made such a slow progress, why it is taking so long for us to extend our tentacles into the mass organisations. The task of the Communists is no render their propaganda more concrete, more practical, to better fit it to the conditions of the moment. And in any case, from these concrete needs of the workers of a given country or of a given industry, they must draw general conclusions, from the practical struggle they must advance to the general task of the working class, and upon the basis of this practical struggle they must raise the class consciousness of the masses. Only such work can give us the necessary results, and by working in such a manner we are most likely to succeed in the conquest of the trade unions, to conquer the trade unions means to induce them—even when their leaders are against it—to realise our practical program and to put our proposals in force.

That is the only way in which the conquest of the trade unions can be achieved. Of course to apply these tactics, to penetrate into all the workers' organizations with our influence to centre the attention of the workers on our slogans we need not only energetic, methodical, organisational work, but also a proper press. Unfortunately the Communist Parties pay little attention to our trade union organs. The trade union movement occupies a disproportionately small place in the general Party press. Special trade union organs are not published by all the Parties, and financial considerations often hit first of all the trade union organ. It appears to many communists that trade union matters are of minor importance; and when financial stringency arises the trade union organs issued by the communists are the first to be curtailed. Without the conquest of the trade unions, the social revolution is impossible. And to conquer the trade unions it will be necessary in the near future to pay special attention to our trade union press. We must develop it, must make it much more practical. We must broaden the scope of our printed agitation and propaganda. We must discuss in our press not only questions of a general political and international character (these latter questions are of great importance, and it is essential that they should be discussed), but also questions of concrete, practical struggle, questions of wages, organization, social insurance, etc. In a word, all the questions which interest and stir the working masses must always find space in our press. Our entire Party press must remember that without the conquest of this stronghold of the reformists, we cannot take a single step forward. But it would, of course, be a mistake were we to limit ourselves to agitation and propaganda. The strengthening of our political work in point of organization must be the first concern of every Communist Party. Otherwise the difference between the political development of the masses and its crystallisation in a proper organization will lead to a series of disasters. The conquest of the unions means a drawn out persistent systematic and concrete organisational work. It cannot promise immediate results, but it will ensure a strong proletarian foundation for the great communist edifice. The aims formulated by the Second Congress of the Communist International will be fulfilled all the sooner the more we steer clear of abstractions and the more practical sense we show in putting the questions of trade union activity in the approach to the conquest of the masses and of the trade unions.

Our work in the labour unions, being based upon a practical and concrete program of action, must be to gather the whole trade union movement of the world into the fold of the Red International of Labour Unions. It is necessary to point out that during the interval between the Third and Fourth Congresses there were in some parties liquidation tendencies towards the Profintern. Some have reasoned as follows. If we stand for the United Front, for the unification of the trade union movement, for the winning over of the trade unions and not for their destruction, consequently we ought to dissolve the Profintern. Then there will be a real unity in the trade union movement, and the tasks of the communists in winning over the trade union movement will thereby be greatly facilitated. This concept was put forward by Levi and his partisans in Germany. It has also been noticeable amongst some communists in other countries. Many comrades did not at first understand what lay behind this advocacy of the dissolution of the R.I.L.U. To many it seemed that there was not, disagreement on questions of principle but merely upon a question of expediency. These comrades were mistaken. What lay at the root of dissolving the Profintern was the idea of dissolving also the Comintern.

What, indeed, does the dissolution of the Profintern really mean? It means the refusal to perform the task of gathering all the revolutionary trade union forces into an International centre; it means the leaving of the revolutionary element in the worldwide trade union movements scattered and disunited. If it were concerned solely with communist factions, with communist nuclei in the trade unions, the question would be simple enough. A new international is not needed for the communist element in the trade union movement. Quite well indeed did the Communist International fulfill its role leader, of uniting the communist movements in all countries. The task of the Profintern is to unite the revolutionary trade union movement in all its diversity, in all its multifariousness. Under this category come communists and syndicalists of every shade of opinion, including those who are merely revolutionary-minded workers of the left wing—all those who are opposed to the class peace and who desire to carry on the proletarian struggle against capitalism and its agents. This is why the dissolution of the R.I.L.U. means really the narrowing down of the whole basis of International communist activity, and in its turn must logically lead to the dissolution of communist organizations. The Extended Executive of the Comintern has put an end to this "dissolutionist" tendency. No longer does

there exist, even one Communist Party in which the idea of the dissolution of the R.I.L.U. would be seriously considered.

But even though there is no active desire to wind up the affairs of the R.I.L.U., there is a good deal of passive attitude towards the Profintern. It seems to many communists that although the question of the Profintern may be an interesting question it is, after all, only of secondary importance. This error is very dangerous to the communist working class movement. The revolutionary Trade Union movement must have its own centre. Otherwise the connecting link is broken between the Communist International and the revolutionary workers of all shades of opinion. To strengthen the Profintern is simultaneously to strengthen the Comintern. The Communist Parties, when they work for the Profintern, are working for themselves and for the Communist International. Therefore in all their Trade Union work, in their whole policy in this sphere of the Trade Union movement, they must always bear in mind this most important task of the International Communist movement. The R.I.L.U. has already grown to a considerable force during its brief period of existence. In every corner of the world there is a fierce struggle raging concerning the program and tactics of the R.I.L.U. It is being especially attacked on account of its close affiliations with the Communist International. This is why the entire energy of the Communist Parties is needed in order to deepen and broaden the work directed to the conquest of the Trade Unions, and in order to attract them to the world centre of the revolutionary Trade Union movement. This will not split the Trade Unions, but unite them. We do not propose to detach individual groups of workers and unite them to the Profintern.

We propose, and no one can deny our right to propose this, to attract the Trade Unions to the program and tactics of the Profintern. What we want is not to split, not to dismember as organizations, not to destroy the Trade Unions, but to effect the ideological conquest of these proletarian organizations and to unite them around the revolutionary program and revolutionary tactics. I feel absolutely convinced that the serious difficulties confronting the Communist International in relation to the Trade Union movement will be overcome. The day will soon dawn when all the forms of the working class movement will combine into a united whole, and when our glorious communist banner will wave over all the workers' organizations.

Clark:

(England)

Comrades, in speaking on behalf of the British Delegation, I have to say that, as far as the general thesis that has been presented here is concerned, we are in complete agreement with it. Now, I want to say a few words with regard to the Amsterdam leaders and the British Trade Union movement. There seems to be a great misunderstanding regarding the position the British Trade Union movement occupies in relation to the Amsterdam International. We must remember that the whole of the British Trade Union Movement is organized into one British Trade Union Congress, and, by virtue of being members of the Trade Union Congress, each and all of us organized in the Trade Union movement are affiliated to Amsterdam. Therefore, every trade unionist and every member of a Trade Union organization in Britain, by virtue of being a member of that union, is compelled to be organized in the Amsterdam International.

Now there are great tendencies to be observed in Britain that will alter the entire outlook as far as the revolutionary working class is concerned. For the last four or five years there has been a tendency to break down the social and economic differences between the unskilled worker and the skilled industrial artisan in Britain. The gradual reduction of wages as a result of the capitalist offensive has tended more and more to bring us down to one common level as far as the British proletariat is concerned.

I should like also to say a word as regards the Shop-Steward movement and the Workers Councils in Britain. Some 30 years ago in the British Trade Union movement we organized a Shop-Steward movement, and following this period of organization we found that, when the war broke out and the officials of our trade unions refused to allow the machinery of these unions to operate, we had to call into being our Shop Stewards and our Workshop Committees.

There has been a great deal of criticism at this Congress of the inactivity of the Shop Steward movement in Britain at the present time, but, comrades, let me tell you that at the present moment, as a result of the fact that over 35 per cent of those who are normally employed in the great engineering and shipbuilding industries are now unemployed—as a result of that large

margin of unemployment, all those who have hitherto formed the Workers' Committee movement are at present not inside but outside the workshops altogether. It is impossible to have a Workers' Committee when so many members of the working class who understand the meaning and the functions of the workers' Committees are unemployed. But, comrades, we are reorganising the forces. We are endeavouring to get them together not only inside the workshops, but we are taking, for the first time in the history of the British Trade Union movement—we as a revolutionary section of that movement—are taking our propaganda into the unions.

The observation has been passed here that, although there has been a great trade union movement in Britain, we as a Communist Party are few, and that we have practically no control within the unions. That is quite true, but there are many things that could be said in explanation of it. One of the greatest crimes that the revolutionary communist or the old revolutionary democrat has committed in the past has been that he has refused to take the responsibility of helping to build up the proletarian movement in the workshop. Time after time, when the call has been made for the revolutionary communist to help to build within the trade unions in order to strengthen the fighting arm of the proletariat, he has refused to do it. We have at last learned from the tactics of the United Front to go forward right into the trade union movement and endeavour to operate it. As regards the struggle of the officials and the revolutionaries within the British Trade Union movement, that has not taken place to any great extent up to the present moment. The reason that it has not been taken, it may be argued is, that we have no power within the Amsterdam International, that we have not yet become a force of which, the Amsterdam leaders are afraid. I don't want you to have that opinion because within the British trade union movement there are perhaps about 20% that are sympathetic one way or the other towards the Communist forces. But hitherto we have allowed the Amsterdam International to control the whole official machinery and it is only when we commence to challenge them for the official positions that they will treat us as dangerous enemies.

When it comes to the relationship of the political field to the great trade union movement on the industrial field, we find that the great Labor Party which is after all the actual political part of the Great Trade Union movement, has brought under its organization the local Trades and Labor Councils in Britain. It has brought them all under the wing of the political party—the Labor Party the political party of the Trade Union movement. It has laid down the dictum that none of us who are Communists, or members of the Communist Party can act as delegates for trade unions to these trades and local councils, because the Labor Party refused affiliation to the Communist Party at its last National Congress. That is the beginning of the fight. That is where the Amsterdamers are making the first attack on the Communists of Britain. We welcome the attack. It will help to strengthen our forces and compel all those theoreticians that we have been troubled with in the past to argue their propositions around their editorial chairs. It will compel them to clear out and leave the party in Britain a party of action that will respond to the call when the time for action has come.

As regards the present strength of the Red Trade Union International in Britain, at the present moment we cannot argue that there is one large trade union in Britain, that is as yet affiliated as a national organization to the Red Trade Union International. We have within our ranks 140 branches in the industrial belt of Scotland of the various trade unions that have affiliated. We have almost 200 of the branches of the different unions in the London area affiliated to us. In every industrial belt and coal field the forces of the Red Trade Union movement are being slowly organized and they are gaining a power they have never hitherto obtained in the proletarian movement.

Let us take the idea, the general conception of the transformation of the leadership. There has been a great deal of talk to the effect that, if the leaders were transferred, the mere transformation in itself would bring about a revolutionary party in Britain or elsewhere. Yes, as far as the British proletariat is concerned, I say it here that in the face of our own tradition from the historical aspect we have slowly built up our movement within the workshops. For nearly 100 years we have been in a semi-unconscious manner carrying on this struggle, and the working class movement in Britain, though it does not openly declare for the class struggle, is at its very heart, at its very core, an organization for carrying on the class war.

Yes, I say on behalf of the British section that there is great hope in the future for the Red Trade Union International within the British Trade Union movement.

Lansing:

(America)

Comrades, after Comrade Lozovsky has dealt with the labor union question in such a thorough manner, there are only a few points as regards the tasks of the Communists in the trade unions in America, that I want to touch upon, in speaking on behalf of the American Delegation. In America, as you perhaps know, despite the highly developed state of capitalism and the militant traditions of the workers, we have a very reactionary, a very backward labor movement. The leadership of these unions has remained in practically uncontested control for years. The policy of class collaboration has become an ingrained principle with them. The unions have been developed into close corporations, mainly concerned about job control, having little or practically no interest in organizing the unskilled and semi-skilled workers which are distributed mainly in the basic industries.

Of course they have also advanced slogans of neutrality of labor unions in political issues, and advocated that the unions confine themselves to purely trade union aims. Despite their reactionary character these unions have not been spared the capitalist offensive in the United States. On the other hand they became the center of violent attack with the avowed object of their complete destruction. They have suffered both in loss of membership and deterioration of conditions once gained. The organized labor movement has now dwindled to less than four million organized workers out of a total population of 110,000,000 of whom at least 36,000,000 are wage earners.

The unions suffered defeat upon defeat. In the Spring of this year a marked change took place; then, the workers actually began to resist the capitalist offensive, and even forced their reactionary leaders to come out in open resistance.

Much has been demonstrated in the last strikes of miners and railroad men. These struggles furnish extremely valuable lessons for the American Communist Party. The strikes demonstrated very clearly that the masses of workers possessed the will to fight and that their tremendous latent energies can be utilized if given proper leadership. It furthermore demonstrated that the treason of the reactionary bureaucrats in robbing the workers of the fruits of their victory, — they had actually won a strike—can now be taken advantage of by the Communists to help unify the militants in an ideological struggle for better leadership and better forms of organization. It also demonstrated how the capitalists of the United States government are being forced to take an even more active part in even the ordinary industrial conflicts. The government was compelled to cast off its mask of hypocrisy, and today thousands of workers have become disillusioned as to its democratic pretences.

The injunction which was issued against the railroad workers, actually prohibiting participation in any kind of strike activity has tended a great deal to show the workers their class position in society. Many labor unions and central bodies demanded a general strike, which would mean a strike against the government. But this was rejected by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. Also the sentiment for independent political action of the working class is growing within the labor unions. The policy of Gompers of rewarding, your friends and punishing your enemies has been definitely repudiated in many localities.

These rapidly developing objective conditions furnish the basis and possibilities for the creation of a broad left wing movement. It also demonstrates to us the necessity of creating such a movement, and even that such a movement will come into being, regardless of whether we take a leading part or not, regardless of whether it can be controlled by Communists or not.

This control, is in many respects being looked upon by a majority of our membership as a purely mechanical process but, as Comrade Lozovsky pointed out, it should not be so. He says we should not have merely mechanical control, but we should strive for an ideal control. Such an ideal control can be attained by the American Communist Party if it understands the necessity of putting its whole energy into the development of this broad left wing movement. The best way of developing such a left wing movement, or I would rather say, that the absolutely indispensable conditions for such a left wing movement is the conscious development of the open legal party which has been created. It must become a real party. A party that is capable of guiding the masses, that will stand out as a real defender of working class interests. It must become more than just an instrument for certain purposes. We must create a party which will be able to rally to our banner the best elements in the unions.

Thus we must develop these parallel movements, politically and industrially, which in the future will carry on the fight for Communism against the strongest imperialist force on the face of the earth.

The left wing movement is now becoming established in the United States, it is making its influence felt throughout the unions. Of course you can readily understand that in America we have had to adopt slogans of the most elementary nature. These slogans of unification of labor's forces based on better forms of organization and better methods of struggle, this part of the program of the left wing movement has been endorsed today by eleven State federations assembled in convention, and by two international unions, by thousands of local unions, and many central labor bodies. The ideological struggle against Gompers and his reactionary policies is developing rapidly.

Of course we can readily anticipate that as it gains in power and becomes more and more influential, the Gompers crowd will adopt the same policies that have been adopted by the Amsterdam crowd, the policy of expulsions. We must look for it in the future. Communists and militants in general will be expelled for revolutionary activities, but whenever we adopt any counter measures against these expulsions, those measures must correspond with conditions prevailing in each particular country. Before adopting any definite counter measures we should make a very careful survey of these conditions.

In making such survey we find that in America the struggle of the communists against the bureaucrat is in its first stage of development and the methods of expulsions for revolutionary activities have not as yet been adopted as a definite policy. Therefore when communists or militants are expelled for such activities, they should refuse to recognise the validity of these expulsions. They should call upon the militants within the unions to remain there and to carry on the struggle for their reinstatement, and in that fight utilise all the means afforded by the constitution of the union. When members or local unions are expelled they must of course maintain the closest possible contact with the militants within the unions, and they must not, as would be a good tactic in other countries, join independent revolutionary unions. That in itself would prevent carrying on the struggle for reinstatement. As conditions change in America we may have to adopt new methods.

In some European countries the independent revolutionary unions have become a solution in the struggle against expulsion. In America they are yet a problem. The American trade union movement has been cursed with a spirit of secessionism which has brought about a withdrawal of many of the best, most active and most revolutionary forces from the labor unions. They have established themselves on the outside on the principle of creating ideal unions but as experience has taught us, they were not able to rally the masses, not even in the unorganized industries. Today we find an organization like the I.W.W. which in the past, everyone is willing to admit, has inspired the American working class to more militant methods of struggle, has now come under the control of anarcho-syndicalists, assuming the attitude of open hostility to Soviet Russia, and even carrying on propaganda that borders on counter revolution.

We have a number of independent unions more or less revolutionary. It should be one of the most vital problems for the American Communist Party to find a satisfactory combination of all revolutionary forces and make the most effective use of the militants who are now in the independent unions, in organizations where larger masses can be reached. At the first Congress of the Profintern a program was outlined which has been adopted by our party. A program of unification of labor forces to the end that there be only one united union within each industry. This is the program we now have to carry out in actual practice. So far a beginning has been made.

The slogans of unity must be carried to the American unions, including the independent revolutionary unions. They must state publicly that they desire to reenter the mass organization. They should make a strong campaign for reentering. All the militants within the mass unions should carry on the same kind of struggle for the readmission of these unions on the basis of unity of labor's forces. I feel confident that this aim can be attained if we only recognise the necessity for it. The thing is to be done is for the leading spirits in the left wing movement and these independent revolutionary unions who in both instances are communists, to get together and consider all the practical measures to be taken in carrying out this policy.

In concluding I just want to point out that the role of the labor unions in the economic struggle against capitalism seems to be more appreciated by our enemies the capitalists, and

reactionary labor leaders, than by ourselves. We have not yet fully recognised the necessity of communists and militants in general, working within the mass labor organizations. It seems as if we are afraid of becoming contaminated, and of losing our identity as communists, if we become "too much" involved in union activities.

In carrying out this policy which has been definitely laid down by the Comintern, of working within the unions by

establishing our nuclei, we must realise that we are not doing so merely for the purpose of making them a recruiting ground for our party. We are doing it for the purpose of participating with the workers in their daily struggles, and developing these struggles for the economic needs of the masses into a general revolutionary struggle against capitalism, and transforming the present trade unions into revolutionary instruments of the struggle for communism.