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What is Bolshevism?*)

Apart from the history of Bolshevism in its earliest stages — the oldest of Lenin's works („The Task of Russian Social Democracy“) some of Plechanov's works, the old „Iskra“, and especially the struggle carried on by these against economism — it may be said that Bolshevism as a broad political current was born almost on the eve of the Revolution of 1905.

The 2nd Party Congress, held in the Summer of 1903, merged in a mighty storm of revolutionary strike movements, which spread with ever-increasing violence over the whole of Russia. Bolshevism received its first baptism of blood during the first revolution in the year 1905.

But an even more decisive trial followed. The Revolution of 1905 was suppressed, the working class thrown back. The Tempo of political life slowed down. A stillness as of the graveyard reigned. Faint-heartedness and apostasy became every day occurrences. Even the ranks of the workers were infected with the canker of bourgeois ideology.

The question as to whether Bolshevism would stand this trial, if it would withstand the fire of counter-revolution, was approximately decided during the five years between 1906 and 1912.

What new contribution was made by Bolshevism in the sphere of political ideology? What fresh paths were opened up by Bolshevism for international Socialism? Of what does comrade Lenin's discovery consist?

If we had to furnish an answer to these questions in a few words, we should reply as follows:

1. Bolshevism, for the first time in the history of international class warfare, has taken the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat seriously, and has done this by leading into practical paths that which Marx and Engels had merely established theoretically.

2. It is precisely because Bolshevism has opened up the question of the proletarian dictatorship as a practical question

*) From the Preface to the first volume of comrade Zinoviev's work: „From the history of Bolshevism“, published by the Russian state press.

3. And here lies the highest merit of Bolshevism — it found of the day, that, for the first time in the history of International Socialism, it has sought an ally for the Proletariat. This ally in the Peasantry.

4. In this sense it may be said, that Bolshevism „discovered“ the rôle of the peasantry, for it recognized that the peasantry represents that power, the winning of which alone renders it possible for the proletariat to play its great part of emancipator in the world revolution.

Anyone who has followed the most important moments in the history of Bolshevism — from the first important actual political platform of Bolshevism in the year 1904/5 (comrade Lenin's pamphlet on „Two kinds of Tactics“ dealing lucidly with the question of the „revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry“, to the idea of the „Smütschka“, the alliance between workers and peasants, an idea which plays such a leading rôle at the present time, — anyone who has followed all this will have arrived at the conviction that Bolshevism has spoken its decisive word precisely in this sphere.

With regard to the question of the reciprocal relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, the contributions of Marx and Engels have only been of the most general nature, and they were not in a position to give more. It has been the task of Bolshevism to impart living flesh and blood to these general formulas furnished by Marx and Engels. The development of the political tactics of the proletariat in such a way as to create the possibility — along with the highest possible formal measures of „equal rights“ between proletariat and peasantry — of rendering the peasantry in actuality the followers of the proletariat, and at the same time „impelling“ the peasantry to play the part of „raw material“ for the proletariat engaged in fulfilling its great historical mission — this has been the great question which Bolshevism has been able to answer successfully. And to day it is perfectly clear in all essentials that the most important problems of the proletarian revolution on an international scale tend to follow the same lines — with certain variations — as those which confronted Russia during the last two decisive decades. The tactics pursued by Bolshevism in this particular question of the recipro-

cal relations between proletariat and peasantry, constitute a factor especially calculated to enhance the international and universal character of Bolshevik tactics.

The relations of the proletariat to the peasantry — this is the most vital thing in Bolshevism. Those who are desirous of comprehending Bolshevism, and those who sincerely wish to become adherents of Bolshevism, must study this side of Bolshevism above all others, must grasp the fact that this is the factor determining the essential character of Bolshevism.

This is by no means asserting that Bolshevism has created, all at once, a complete and finished tactical formula on the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry. Two decades of profound political significance passed between the issue of the slogan of the „dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry“, formulated for the first time by Lenin in the year 1904/5, and the issue of the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, realized in Russia, and now proclaimed for the whole Communist International by International Communism. But even at the very beginning of its political existence, Bolshevism represented a real approach to the solution of this problem — the problem which dominates all others. The first sign of life in Bolshevism may be said to have been expressed by this fact.

Bolshevism has developed in the highest organic manner in regard to the question of the estimate of the part played by the peasantry. In the year 1905, Bolshevism regarded the peasantry solely as a possible „temporary ally“ for the proletariat in the bourgeois democratic revolution. The peasantry was anxious to aid the proletariat in making a clean sweep of Czarist despotism, and in solving the agrarian question in a „plebian fashion“. It was anxious to release the productive forces of Russia from their restraining fetters, and to lead the country through free class struggle to a democratic republic, which was again to serve as the arena in which the proletariat was to fight for Socialism. By the year 1917, Bolshevism was already according a much more important rôle to the peasantry, a rôle corresponding to the fact that social development as a whole had in the interim attained a much higher stage, and that the main class — the proletariat — was already at work on the immediate socialist revolution.

But if this be the case — many of our readers may retort — were not the adherents of the „permanent revolution“ theory right with regard to the Bolsheviks in the year 1905?

By no means.

The theory of „permanent revolution“ ignored the peasantry. It failed to observe the enormous significance — in many respects the decisive significance — of the peasantry in a country like Russia, and not only in Russia.

Yes, in the year 1905 the view held by Bolshevism was that the impending revolution would only be a bourgeois democratic revolution. Even as late as 1916 Bolshevism still held to this viewpoint to a great extent (see the well known theses issued by the central organ of our Party, published in the collection „Against the Stream“), and in the year 1917, after the February revolution, Bolshevism took an abrupt turn towards the idea of immediate socialist revolution. The difficulties of the transition were exceedingly great. These difficulties caused the committal of many errors, and especially of errors made by the author of these lines in the autumn of 1917. But it is only phrasemongers and superficial observers who can maintain that this change took place „suddenly“, and that it supplies a proof that Bolshevism was wrong in 1905. Those who so judge forget one thing; that 1905 and 1917 are divided by an epoch-making decade of decisive significance for the whole politics of the international proletariat — and forget that the two following „small“ events took place during these twelve years, first: the first imperialist world war, which lasted four years, shook not only Russia, but the whole of Europe, to its foundations, demanded the sacrifice of 10 million human lives, and rushed the world bourgeoisie into historical downfall with the rapidity of an express train; secondly: February 1917 saw the overthrow of that Czarism which had been for so many decades the main obstacle in the way of any kind of movement for freedom, not only in Russia, but all over the world. Czarism fell. And the February revolution, closely bound up with the great war, called upon the scene such mighty forces from among the people (above all from among the peasantry, as the army was a peasant army) that the proletariat of the towns was enabled to undertake tasks of a far wider extent.

In the years 1905 and 1917 Bolshevism took the peasantry as it found it. Neither in 1905 nor in 1917 did Bolshevism

ignore the peasantry. And precisely here lay the fundamental power of Bolshevism, imparting it an inexhaustible force. Anyone who dreamed, in the year 1905, of setting before the Russian peasantry those tasks which it was capable of coping with in the year 1917, after the imperialist world war and after the February revolution, would have been a Don Quixote.

Is it possible, for instance, to draw any comparison between even the French peasant of the pre-war period and the French peasant after the war? Even the French peasant changed entirely in many respects during the war years 1914 to 1918. Had the slogan of the „workers' and peasants' government“, for instance, been proclaimed in France in the year 1910, it would have been nothing but an empty phrase. And in the year 1923 it is an earnest revolutionary deed. And yet the transformation undergone by the French peasantry in the period between 1914 and 1918 cannot be compared in the slightest degree with that undergone by the Russian peasant during the same time, for the simple reason that France's agrarian revolution had already taken place several generations before, and the agrarian question could not play such an important rôle in France, during the period from 1914 to 1918, as it did in Russia.

The peasant question has also been the main bone of contention between Bolshevism and the tendencies hostile to it. This question has been the cause of the profoundest differences of opinion. Menshevism adopted the line of the so-called „all-national opposition“. Menshevism considered that the low grade of culture possessed by the peasants rendered them incapable of any historical act whatever. The Menshevik estimate of the peasantry has in actual fact been highly counter-revolutionary and domineering.

The fights of 1905 suppressed the proletariat for a long period. The peasantry continued its uninterrupted slumbers. The conclusion arrived at by the Mensheviks from these facts led them to a profoundly pessimistic view as to the possibility of any renewed revolution whatever; and having thus renounced all revolutionary prospects, Menshevism regarded it as its leading task to adapt itself to the limitations of Stolypin's legality, and to create a real „European“ Social Democratic Party. This counter-revolutionary estimate of the rôle of the peasantry gave rise to all that followed.

If the proletariat had been victorious in the year 1905, the Mensheviks would have been able to join forces with it for a time. The proletariat was defeated. And it is not agreeable to unite one's fate with the defeated. So thought and felt many Menshevik social democratic super-party and non-party groups of the intelligencia.

In the year 1905, at the moment when the success of the revolutionary proletariat had reached its highest point, the whole of these intellectuals — from Minski to Toffi, from the Kuskova to the rich engineers of the „Union of Unions“ attached themselves to the proletariat. But in a trice all these intelligencia and would be revolutionists forsook the proletarian emancipation movement.

The people, „simple Simon“ as it is, has failed to accomplish its revolution, therefore crucify it! But at the same time do not forget to seek a better master in the camp of the bourgeoisie.

The intelligencia began to desert the Party and the revolutionary movement wholesale, to boast of non-partisanship. It became the right thing to find fault with the Party. The idea of a non-partisan „workers' congress“, played off against an illegal revolutionary party, was objectively counter-revolutionary in character.

Disputes began on the fundamentals of the Program and tactics, though at first in the milder form of disagreements on questions of organization. The first contests between Bolshevism and Menshevism, in the year 1903, commenced in mere disputes over organizatory matters.

In the year 1908 the tendency towards liquidation became very evident. The tendency itself began to be felt in Petrograd as early as the beginning of 1908, if not at the end of 1907. But the expression „Liquidation“ — as we clearly remember — first arose in the middle of 1908.

A serious struggle arose within the Bolshevik fraction itself. The epoch of counter-revolution gave rise to „Otsovism“, and to such excrescences as the notorious „God's image“ idea. Hatred of the opportunist tactics pursued by the minority of the Duma fraction at first induced even a number of revolutionary Bolshevik workers to support Otsovism. Therefore the first articles which we issued against Otsovism were of an exceedingly cautious di-

dactic character. It was not until later on, when A. Bogdanov and Co. attempted to utilize the trend of feeling among the Bolshevik workers for the purpose of forming an Otsovist fraction that we adopted a sharper tone. The victory of Otsovism would have signified in reality the destruction of Bolshevism. The cherished hope of the Mensheviks — that Bolshevism would degenerate into a more sect, and cease to be a mass party — would have been best fulfilled by the Otsovist „tactics“. It was not until Bolshevism had carried through an additional campaign against the attempts at liquidation from the „left“, that is, from Otsovism, rightly termed by us „Menshevism reversed“, that Bolshevism was finally steeled and strengthened, and could demonstrate its right to existence.

Why did we devote so much attention, at that time, to fighting against the „conciliation“ tendency? Why did we deal our heaviest blows against the „centre“? All these tendencies were represented by numerically insignificant groups, incapable of exercising serious influence on the labor movement.

Where we differed in opinion from the „centre“, these differences of opinion were naturally of a productive character. We were divided from the Menshevist camp by differences of opinion in matters of principle. But the advocates of „conciliation“, in supporting liquidatory Menshevism, in repeating its arguments, and even lending it cover by granting it an external appearance of allegiance to the Party, were even more dangerous for a time than the liquidators themselves. I recollect that Rosa Luxemburg, when asked why she and her friends devoted so much attention to the fight against the German social democratic „Centre“, instead of simply routing the revisionists, she replied: „If it is still worth while to rout the revisionists at all, it is only the case when the centralists are combatted at the same time.“ In Russia the state of affairs was similar. The openly expressed ideas of the adherents of liquidation, smacked so much of betrayal, that they at once aroused the antagonism of the revolutionary workers. But the treacherously veiled ideas of liquidation, improved by the idea of „unity“, and associated with „party allegiance“, were much more able to lead the workers astray.

The years 1909 to 1911 witnessed a rapprochement between the main core of the Bolsheviks and G. M. Plechanov. The old revisionist reawakened in Plechanov during these years. He could not reconcile himself to the idea of liquidation.

„Martov proposes that we drop the designation of „Party“ — thus wrote Plechanov to us — „and Martov ought to be hanged for making this proposal“.

At the same time the orthodox Bolsheviks approached nearer to Plechanov in the course of their struggle against the philosophical revisionism of Bogdanov and Co. Our first attempts at the establishment of a legal Marxist press in Russia (the periodical *Misl* in Moscow, the newspaper *Swiesda* in Petrograd, etc.) met with appreciable support from Plechanov. It is much to be regretted that Plechanov took up with Menshevism again later, when a fresh revival in the labor movement took place, and the most important problems of revolution reappeared. And when the war began in 1914, Plechanov went over into the camp of social chauvinism. The main core of the Bolsheviks, headed by comrade Lenin, gathered around it the whole elite of the Russian workers and piloted the Party safely past all rocks and shoals.

GERMANY

The Great Coalition in Saxony.

by Paul Böttcher.

Dresden, January 4th.

On January 4th in Saxony the Social Democrats entered upon the great coalition with the bourgeoisie. The former „royal“ minister and Social Democrat Heldt was elected premier, receiving 25 Social democratic votes as well as all the votes of the Democratic and People's parties. Fifteen of the Left Social Democratic deputies issued a declaration against the candidate of their party, Heldt, and left the chamber before the vote was taken. Dittman, Wels, and Ebert, with the help of their tools in Saxony, have carried out the coup d'état against the workers within their own party. At the command of the Ebert clique, the struggle for the maintenance of the Social Democrat-Communist coalition was hindered by the United Social Democratic Party of Germany. The same clique organized the betrayal of the Fellisch cabinet. Now they have delivered their

third blow and have brought about the great coalition against „the half dozen young journalists and school teachers“ in Saxony. Thus Social Democracy has obediently fulfilled the orders of the military dictatorship and set the keystone to its treason in October.

The ruling class greets the treason of the Social Democrats as „a political act“. The Fascist „Leipziger Neuesten Nachrichten“ is already celebrating the civil peace and praises the statesmanlike wisdom of the leading clique of Social Democrats in high terms:

„From the Social Democratic declaration of Wirth and Heldt there resounded once more after a long time the note of national fraternity; there was nothing about class hatred, class struggle and the other phrases which have directly led our people so deep into misery. The speeches of the Democratic and the People's Party deputies were also in the conciliatory tone which is demanded by the present hour.“

Even before the government declaration has been patched up into some sort of a compromise, Herr Heldt lets the bourgeois parties know that he will be a true slave of the coalition and civil peace.

The Social Democracy has sought to justify its open alliance with the Fascist class enemy with the necessity of „maintaining and protecting the Republic“. Without any reserve, the Social Democratic Fascists confess their faith in the social content of the Ebert Republic. The policy of the state of siege and the special Powers Act is officially accepted by the Saxon „Opposition“ of the United Social Democratic Party of Germany. The clique of Right leaders carried out the parliamentary coup d'état in two days before the Saxon Social Democratic convention, which was to decide over the tactics of the party. The majority of the Social Democratic fraction of the Saxon Landtag formally and politically disregarded the decisions of the members of their party. It is those very leaders who present themselves to the workers in their constituencies in Saxony as the „opposition“ to the policy of the Reichstag fraction. A clique of leaders for whom the decisions of their own party members have no value, naturally does not care a straw for the interests of the proletariat as a whole... The formation of the great coalition in Saxony clearly expresses the fact that the Social Democratic leaders cannot be counted as belonging to the proletariat. The „Proletarian majority“ in the Saxon Landtag had to submit to the general and the great coalition. Why? Because this proletarian majority is only a fiction. The Social Democratic majority of this proletarian majority was unfortunately elected by the proletariat, but politically they are in the camp of the counter-revolution... For this reason the proletarian majority can not assert itself. A proletarian majority in parliament only becomes proletarian when it acts in a determined revolutionary manner, that is, when it solves the crisis of capitalism with revolutionary methods, and substitutes the dictatorship of the proletariat and its organs the political workers' councils for bourgeois parliamentarism.

In the Saxon Landtag the Communists have declared that after new elections they will not support a minority government of the Social Democrats. This declaration is the only correct answer to the destruction of the proletarian united front below, by the Social Democratic leaders above. The Communists in Saxony have supported the minority government of the Social Democrats since 1920. The Social Democratic workers agreed when the Communists got rid of the set of Right leaders by the overthrow of the Buck-Lipinski Cabinet in the spring of 1923. In place of the leaders who had been recognised as enemies of the proletariat, the Social Democratic workers placed new „Left“ leaders. In the past year these Left leaders have given themselves away. The trust of their supporters was abused and disappointed by the wobbling policy of half measures and desertion into the camp of the counter-revolutionaries. The answer to the political question: revolutionary or reformist solution of the crisis, was shirked by the Left in a cowardly manner. They did not differ from the Right in that they wanted to destroy the power of the ruling class, but in that they wished to maintain the rule of the capitalist power in a different way to that which was favoured by the Right leaders. The Left hoped to be able to save the bourgeoisie by means of new elections with the help of the Communists. The Communists have destroyed this hope by the clear attitude that they have adopted. After the victory of the Fascist dictatorship and the breakdown

of bourgeois democracy and parliamentary government, a labour government on a democratic basis is no longer possible. Even the smallest social reform, be it in regard to hours of labour, factory regulations, unemployment, wages, reduction of official staffs, or the taxation system, will immediately raise the question of power. However, the question of power must be fought out today on the ground of the bourgeois dictatorship. The Social Democrats who declare that they wish to fight out the question of power on „legal grounds“ against the military dictatorship are only veiling their passivity and cowardice behind this question. At the present moment the proletariat is standing in the class struggle outside of every „law“. Only by conscious destruction of the usurped bourgeois rule can the proletariat seize its rights. That is to be achieved by the proletariat opposing its own dictatorship to that of the bourgeoisie.

The convention of the United Social Democratic Party of Germany in Saxony on January 6th will bring no solution of the crisis. In their declaration on the occasion of the election of the premier, the members of the Left who abstained from voting said that they wished to await the decision of the convention on January 6th. In the meantime they have initiated a referendum for the dissolution of the Landtag. The permanent Saxon crisis will neither be decided by a „purification“ of the leaders nor by a parliamentary manoeuvre. Proletarian Saxony is a model historical example of the impossibility of two things: first, to carry out far-reaching reforms within bourgeois society with the help of parliamentary means, and secondly to carry out an active proletarian class policy for the overthrow of bourgeois society jointly with the Social Democrats.

The whole of the working class, and before all the Social Democratic workers, must accept the consequences of these lessons for their practical politics. The March convention of the Saxon section of the United Social Democratic Party of Germany had to decide the question of coalition government or workers' government. On that occasion the masses decided for the workers' government. The leaders betrayed the masses at the moment when it was necessary to take up the struggle for the workers' government by means of mass actions. The December convention sanctioned this betrayal. The January convention of the Saxon section of the Socialist Party of Germany finds the above question liquidated by history... The Social Democratic workers who again decide for a united front with the Communists must decide for a dictatorship of the proletariat. In this convention the Left Social Democrats are not face to face with the question of a coalition or a workers' government, but they have to decide between bourgeois or proletarian dictatorship. If this question is discussed and decided at the convention, that practically amounts to the split of the Social Democratic Party*). Only if the Social Democratic workers find the courage to take this path has the convention any significance for the history of the Saxon proletariat... If the courage for this decision is lacking then nothing will come out of it except a comedy of a squabble between the leaders.

The Heldt coalition cabinet is not yet finally settled in its composition. It has been made possible by the greatest concessions by the Social Democrats to the bourgeois parties. The German Nationalists are not participating in the cabinet because they demand a bourgeois cabinet. The working of the great coalition in connection with the military dictatorship will be a double burden upon the Saxon proletariat. It is the task of the workers of Saxony to see to it that this coalition cabinet is only an episode. The time that this episode lasts depends upon the speed with which the majority of the working class of Saxony gather themselves together under Communist leadership for resistance against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The municipal elections will be an indication of the speed at which this is taking place. In their significance these elections equal the elections for the Landtag. The political value of the result of these elections will be increased by the fact that these are the first elections under the state of siege, and moreover, the first elections since the prohibition of the Communist Party. After the Saxon municipal elections there will be the Landtag elections in Thuringia and Mecklenburg in February. The Saxon proletariat is conducting the opening battle for all these elections. The coalition treachery of the Saxon Social Democracy shows the workers that it is necessary to break finally with this party,

*) According to the latest reports, the convention was broken up, after the vote on the question of the great coalition, by the supporters of the coalition who were in the minority.

to destroy this party, and to unite the working class under the red flag of Communism. If this takes place then the knell of bourgeois society has really sounded, and the dictatorship of the proletariat will become a reality.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL

The Situation in the Communist Party of Germany.

In No. 1. of the Inprecorr. of the 4th January last we published the Theses of the Central Group within the CP. of Germany. We print below the respective Theses issued by the two remaining groups. Ed.

Theses on the October Defeat and on the Present Situation.

By A. Thalheimer and H. Brandler.

I. On the October Defeat.

1. The October retreat was unavoidable and justified.
2. The fundamental causes of the October defeat are of an objective nature and are not due to essential tactical mistakes on the part of the CP. of Germany. The decisive cause is the influence of the Social Democratic Party still being too strong and hampering. The majority of the working class was no longer ready to fight for the November Democracy, from which it no longer derived any material advantage, and was not yet ready to fight for the Soviet Dictatorship and for Socialism.

Or in other words: the majority of the working class was not yet won over for Communism.

3. The mistake, common to the EC. of the CI. as well to the Central Committee of the CP. of Germany, was the false estimation of the proportion of forces within the working class between the SP. and CP. of Germany.

The CP. of Germany adopted a critical attitude in this respect towards the E.C.C.I. but not energetic enough. The E.C.C.I. has not attached sufficient importance to this criticism.

4. The consequences of this false estimation of the proportion of forces were:

- a) The fixing of a too early date for the final struggle.
- b) Neglect of the partial struggles and of the political preparation.
- c) As a result of the lack of connection between the political and technical preparations, the military-technical preparations also suffered.

5. Defects of a second and third category were:

- a) In Saxony and Thuringia insufficient exploitation of the given positions in regard to disintegration of the Social Democratic Party, attracting SP. workers into the CP. as well as to organizing military defence.
- b) Clumsiness in the organisatory adaptation of the party for the task of civil war.

6. All these mistakes and defects do not essentially alter the fundamental relationship of forces between the bourgeoisie and the working class.

II. On the Present Situation.

1. The military dictatorship of Seeckt bases itself socially on heavy industry and the great agrarians. It tries to subordinate the independent movement of the middle classes (petty bourgeois Fascism), partly by concessions and partly by repressions. It attempts to retain and to deepen the division of the working class into fractions, on the one hand by maintaining the appearance of bourgeois democracy and thereby winning over the SP. as defence troops, and on the other hand by repressions against the CP. of Germany.

2. The duration of the military dictatorship depends upon:

- a) The possibility to re-establish a temporary economic equilibrium by increased exploitation of the working class and of the middle classes, by reduction of expenditure and by requisite payment of taxes by the possessing classes. The first two measures are possible owing to the present conditions of power, the latter one is problematical and will be decisive.

- b) The pace of winning over the majority of the workers for Communism and of disintegrating and neutralizing the middle classes.

3. The pace of the renewed objective aggravation of the situation cannot yet be estimated. At all events a general sharpening of the class antagonisms and struggles must be expected.

4. The rate of winning over of the majority of the workers for Communism depends upon the Communist Party of Germany. All forces are to be concentrated on the political and organizational liquidation of the Socialist Party of Germany.

5. The political platform of this liquidation is:

Negative: destruction of the democratic and social reformist illusions.

Positive: winning over of the workers for the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship and for socialism.

6. With this work of propagation of principles and criticism there must be combined political, economic and military partial struggles. The decisive struggle is the culmination and the resultant of these partial struggles.

7. The next task: obtaining liberty of movement (in the streets etc.) by revolutionary mass action (at first by peaceful and armed demonstrations strikes armed and protected meetings etc.).

8. Transference of the organizational centre of gravity into the shop nuclei.

9. Increasing the activity and discipline in the Party. Elimination of passive elements from the Party, at the same time closer connections with the broad masses.

Session of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International, followed by a Special Conference of the Communist Party of Germany.

Outline of Theses on the Political Situation and on the Situation of the Party*).

Laid down by the Political Bureau of the District Committee Berlin-Brandenburg.

1. By the increased acuteness of the reparations crisis in January 1923, the economic chaos in Germany as well as the political collapse were furthered enormously.

2. This increasing economic and political pressure transformed the movement of the working-class, which up to that moment had been retrogressing, into a rising proletarian movement of an offensive revolutionary character.

3. The first signs of the new revolutionary wave were the Ruhr struggles in May, the struggles in Upper-Silesia, the Metalworkers Strike in Berlin, the wage struggles in the Saxon Erzgebirge. These movements reached their culmination in the Cuno strike.

4. The significance of the Cuno Strike lay in the following: The workers started with economic demands (note printers strike, inflation crisis), and in the movement itself the strike assumed a sharpened political character (Berlin shop councils refused to fight for economic demands and opened up the question of the government!). The Cuno Strike revived and stimulated the forces of the proletariat and frightened and disintegrated the bourgeoisie. After the Cuno Strike the bourgeoisie stood in fear of the „second revolution“, the strata of the rural and of the urban petty bourgeoisie began frankly sympathizing with the working class and with the CP. of Germany. The objective conditions of Germany between the August strike and the October events had become ripe for the seizing of power by the proletariat.

5. Thus the E. C. of the C. I. was perfectly right, when in October 1923 it ordered the CP. of Germany to prepare for the final struggle.

This fight could have eventually been introduced by a series of partial struggles, but it was the duty of the Party to enter the struggle in this historical situation with all its forces and to bring on a decisive battle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The chances for a victory of the CP. of Germany in October were very great. But the CPG. ought to have ventured on this struggle even with the risk of a defeat, which would have created good revolutionary traditions among the proletariat in favor of the Communists and thus prepared for the victory. The best proof for the truth of this statement is the Hamburg struggle, which has been of very good service in enhancing the reputation of the CP. of Germany among the Hamburg workers.

*) This outline is only intended to serve as a basis for discussion; the detailed theses will be published later.

6. The retreat of the CP. of Germany without any struggle in October, rendered easy the victory of heavy industry, demoralized and depressed huge portions of the proletariat. Confusion was also carried into the ranks of the Party itself, which up to the present has not been eliminated (the CPG. had promised to prevent Fascism from being victorious etc. etc.).

7. The causes of the October collapse of the CP. Germany are as follows:

a) The C. C. of the Party refused right up till October to prepare the Party members for the final struggle and did so only after having been compelled by the E. C. of the C. I. (Prospects of a Government of Left wing Social Democrats, consisting purely of Trade Unionists in August!). This preparation could therefore be done only very superficially and without real practical effect in the press, propaganda, organization and general policy of the Party.

b) The limitation of the preparation to a purely military and technical one, without preparing the party politically and by propaganda for the slogans of the final struggle, in addition to which there had been practically no military technical preparations since the March action; this neglect could not be remedied in the short period from the October Conference at Moscow to the decisive events.

c) The revisionist united front tactics and the alliance with the left wing of the Social Democratic Party, which was exhibited in its extreme form in Saxony and Thuringia. The Party had, by its tactics, rendered the left wing SP. of Germany more popular among the working class than ever. The Party had, by its years of united front tactics, created among the Communists themselves the sentiment of weakness and the prejudice that struggles, especially decisive ones, could only be risked in an alliance with the SP. of Germany. (Theory of bringing over the SPG. from the left wing of the bourgeoisie to the right wing of the working-class!).

d) Particularly, by its constant propaganda of the transition slogans within the frames of democracy and of the constitution (seizure of real values, Workers' Government!), the Party had neglected to keep alive the Communist program among the large masses. The most serious thing is, that the Party did not correct this mistake even after the May struggles in the Ruhr district, not even after the Cuno strike, and in fact not even after the October defeat, and that, right up to the October Conference at Moscow, it obstinately clung to the theory and practice of gradualism.

From the theory and practice of the transition demands there resulted the concentration of the work of the Party majority on certain districts, where it was possible to proceed along with the left SPG. (Saxony and Thuringia!) and the neglect of other important fighting positions of the German proletariat, especially of the Ruhr district and of the Ruhr problem. (The Leipzig Party Congress did not deal in a special manner with the Ruhr occupation!).

e) From the theory of the transitory demands, from the practice of proceeding along with the SPG., there arises the bitter struggle of the Party majority against the left wing of the Party, the organizational and personal effects of which have contributed to the inner weakening of the Party.

8. The Enlarged C. C. (Zentralausschuss) which held its conference after the October events, neglected to deal with all the problems pending in the Party. Since then, the crisis in the working-class and in the Party has increased. The German working class has surrendered the eight hour day to the employers without any fight, largely owing to the fault of the CP. of Germany. The Ruhr district is in a process of separation from Germany, the Micum negotiations will be followed in the next few weeks by official negotiations between the Governments. The dictatorship of the white generals brings hundreds of proletarians under preventative arrest and into prison without the workers defending themselves with sufficient energy. After a period of rising revolutionary tendencies within the proletariat, before and after the Cuno strike, we have arrived now at a period of dejection and depression.

9. The international crisis and the crisis of German capital will bring a series of new acute aggravations in the next months.*) The CP. of Germany must not meet with a second „German October“ if it is not to lose all its prestige as a revolutionary party among the masses. A clear pronouncement

*) Regarding this point detailed theses will follow.

on the mistakes committed, a final settlement with the revisionists within its own ranks, rupture with the theoreticians and practisers of gradualism and the quickest knitting together of all forces of the Party for illegal work must be carried out at once. Every week of further delay in this process of clarification renders the situation of the Party still worse and hinders its fighting capacity.

10. Starting from the summing up of the October defeat, the Party must create a program of action. The most important points of the work in the next months are as follows:

a) Adaptation of the Party for the struggle for power, political, organizational, military and technical.

b) Stirring, concrete, immediate propaganda for the dictatorship of the proletariat. (The Party must show, in its daily agitation, how the white dictatorship is settling the problems of the proletariat, and how the red dictatorship is to settle them.)

c) Propaganda of socialization (Program of salvation, engaging propaganda against the big trusts and concerns. There must be started against the thirty or forty heavy industrialists, the same engaging propaganda as against Seeckt, Ludendorff and Hitler, even in a more concentrated manner. We must demonstrate to the largest masses, who is actually retaining the power and how the connection between the Government apparatus and heavy industry is working).

d) Extending the factory council movement into a political one, making use of the factory council movement for preparing the political Workers' Councils. Unwearied propaganda for the proletarian councils as a pre-condition of proletarian dictatorship (control committees).

e) Working amongst the unemployed in connection with the factory councils, creating councils of the unemployed.

f) Provoking struggles for the eight hour day against the Special Courts, under the leadership of the CP. of Germany and of the factory councils.

g) Complete rupture with the right and left wings of the Socialist Party of Germany, in theory as well as in practice, strongest fight against the SPG. and against the Trade Union bureaucrats within and without the Trade Unions.

h) Intensified working for the Communist program amongst the peasants, agricultural laborers, middle classes, officials and intellectuals.

11. For reorganizing the Party there is necessary:

a) reduction of the C. C. to 9 men, reduction of the central apparatus to one tenth, elimination of the right wing from the leadership. Vital connection of the C. C. with the political work of the districts.

b) Liquidation of the fight against the left wing on the part of the Party majority, by a common fight of the Party center and of the Party left wing against the Party right wing. C. I. not later than in January.

c) Convocation of a session of the Enlarged E. C. of the

d) Convocation of a Party Congress not later than in February.

IN THE COLONIES

The New Trend of Indian Nationalism.

By M. N. Roy.

The outstanding feature of the Indian Nationalist movement during the last half year has been a swing to the right. The programme of militant mass-action, inseparably involved in the Non-Cooperation campaign, has been definitely replaced by Constitutionalism. Every tendency of a revolutionary nature has been repudiated. The leadership of the National Congress has passed over into the hands of the upper middle class, whose programme is not to boycott the government, but to make the way clear for negotiations which will eventually lead to a compromise with Imperialism. The object of the Congress, under the new leadership of the Swaraj Party, has been declared frankly to be the realization of Dominion Status within the Empire. The pseudo-parliamentary institutions known as the Reform Councils, heretofore boycotted by the Non-cooperators, have been proclaimed by the new leadership to be the most potential field for nationalist activities.

Last year, when the Congress was still controlled by the followers of Gandhi, the Right Wing, under the leadership of C. R. Das, brought forward the demand for the repudiation of the Council-boycott. In the Gaya Congress of December, 1922, this resolution was defeated. The Right Wing, which refused to abide by the Congress decision, constituted itself into a new party within the Congress, known as the Swaraj Party, and began the agitation for the removal of the ban upon the Councils. The new party was composed of the upper-middle class elements within the Congress, and therefore counted among its ranks some of the ablest and cleverest politicians in the national movement. The orthodox Gandhists, on the other hand, had nothing concrete to offer which could give new impetus to the movement. They could only repeat the worn-out formulas which had been found miserably impotent in the field of practical politics. By roundly repudiating the militant action of the masses, the Gandhists had forfeited the confidence of the latter. The once-powerful Non-Cooperation Movement had become nothing but a dramatic show.

After half a year of bitter recrimination, it was decided to call a Special Session of the National Congress at Delhi. This met in the middle of September, and gave its verdict in favour of the Swaraj Party. The ban on the Councils was raised, and the Congressmen were allowed to contest the coming General Elections. The Special Congress at Delhi marked a turning-point in the entire movement. The petty-bourgeoisie, which did not find its own interests reflected in the new programme, could not agree with the new leaders, neither could it develop a programme of its own which might command a hearing in the Congress. Had the petty-bourgeoisie been bold enough to revive the original Non-Cooperation Programme in the full consciousness of its revolutionary significance, they might have re-captured the leadership of the Congress. That is to say, they could have held their own only if they had had courage enough to fall back upon the masses, in order to fight the Right Wing. But this is too much to expect from the petty-bourgeoisie. It however remains a fact that this element, dissatisfied with the Delhi decision, provides a fertile field for the propaganda of revolutionary nationalism.

The two months following upon the Delhi Congress were marked by the election campaign to the new Reform Councils, — this campaign being the only sign of nationalist activity. In view of the fact that the six million people constituting the Indian electorate out of a population of three hundred and twenty million, belong to the propertied upper classes, rich intellectuals and peasant-proprietors closely related to the landlords, those seeking election could not but commit themselves unequivocally to the defense of the interests of these elements. Therefore, the election campaign has brought out clearly the true nature of the Swaraj Party, which today controls the leadership of the National Congress. Cleared of all the froth and foam of sentimentality with which Mr. C. R. Das originally clothed it, the programme of the Swaraj Party, (and therefore of the Congress) has for its main planks: 1. Dominion Status; 2. Parliamentary Opposition, with a view to force the Government to negotiate with the „representatives“ of the nation; 3. Protection of private property and development of native capitalism; 4. Defense of the landed aristocracy; 5. Protection of the Native States; 6. Decentralized government.

Though the Swaraj Party has failed, in the recent elections, to secure anything like a majority, a number of its candidates have gotten seats at the expense of prominent moderate and loyalist leaders. The men at the head of the Swarajists could not have had any illusions about the results of the elections; they knew quite well that they could not obtain a majority by themselves. Therefore, already before the election campaign was fully begun, they sought coalition with the Left Wing of the Liberal Party, the former leader of the National Congress and representatives of the big bourgeoisie and progressive landlords. Although such a coalition has not been formally accomplished, the parliamentary fraction of the Swaraj Party will be strongly diluted by out and out bourgeois members, who have been given the stamp of the Party during the elections, in spite of the fact that most of these men never took any direct part in the nationalist movement.

This shifting of the Nationalist movement onto purely bourgeois grounds leaves the lower middle class and the masses out in the cold. But unrest is still acute among these elements, and the cause of this unrest cannot be removed short of a complete revolution. With the shattering of all its illusions, one after another, the petty bourgeoisie is in a pitiable condition, but there is a large, unruly element within its ranks, the element which was the first vehicle of revolutionary expression in the first years

of this century. These are the de-classed intellectuals, with absolutely nothing to lose but their prejudices. The collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement and the reversion of the Congress to the old methods of Constitutionalism have thrown these revolutionary elements back on their own resources, which, however, are not very great. They have returned to terrorism, which time and again has proven itself futile. But the idealism and determination of this element are undeniable. Given a well orientated political leadership, they are sure to give a better account of themselves.

Along with its contemporary, the Non-Cooperation campaign, the Khalifat Movement has also died of inanition. The dangerously reactionary tendencies embedded in this movement gradually paralyzed its superficial political efficacy and since last year, led up to the religious and communal conflicts that have of late assumed such serious proportions in India as to put the nationalist leaders totally at their wits end. Particularly in the northern provinces, where the Moslem population predominates, communal conflicts have become a veritable civil war, which is backed by the reactionary elements of both communities, and deftly encouraged by the Government. This logical development of the extreme fanaticism aroused by the Khilafat movement led to the organization of the All-India Hindu Sabha, in which all the reactionary tendencies of the Hindu community are crystallized. The avowed object of this Hindu organization is the defense of its own community. Many prominent Congress leaders take active part in supporting this reactionary Hindu movement, a fact which has given a handle to the Moslem clergy, landlords and loyalist officials in their attempt to show up to the Moslem masses the „irreconcilable“ hostility of the Hindus. A spirit of fanaticism, fomented by intense agitation for the defense of religion and social traditions, such as the Khalifat movement called forth, can be easily diverted to any direction from which the attack upon religion is alleged to emanate. The Khalifat movement has thus degenerated into a revival of the acute rivalry between the two great Indian communities. The result, so far as the nationalist movement is concerned, has been disastrous.

The leaders of both communities stand dismayed at the turn of events, which anyone with an ounce of foresight might have foreseen. Being unable to find a solution, they evade the issue, while the bitter communal conflict eats into the very vitals of the nationalist movement. The only solution of the present impasse lies in the total abolition of separate communal organizations, such as the Khalifat and Hindu Sabha, and placing the agitation among the masses more on a nationalist than on an extra-nationalist or communal basis,—more upon the economic struggle than upon religious fanaticism. It is only by pointing out the identity of their class interests, as distinguished from sectional or communal ones, that a real and permanent unity can be realized by the Indian masses.

The programme of political independence, placed before the National Congress last year and repudiated by its leaders, has been taken up by a considerable section of the left wing, and a definitely worded resolution brought before the provincial conference of the United Provinces this year, defining the Congress objective as being „complete independence from all foreign rule“, was adopted by a large majority. A study of the nationalist press makes it clear that the ideology of the Indian movement is undergoing great changes towards the left, no less than towards the right. While until recently, the programme of the National Congress was characterized by vague generalities about „Swaraj“, today there is no political party in the country, worthy of the name, whose programme does not contain clauses concerning the social and economic welfare of the masses. In every province, large masses of the petty bourgeoisie are looking for a new leadership. The slogan „Ally with the Workers and Peasants“ is rapidly gaining ground. A prominent Congressman, in moving the resolution on Labour Organization in the Provincial Conference just referred to, came out openly and denounced the National Congress as the organ of the bourgeoisie, and called upon the revolutionary nationalists to throw in their lot with the masses. An ever larger body of opinion in the country holds to the idea that mere political freedom, without a complete social and economic revolution, will be a meaningless and futile phenomenon.

Thus, the struggle against Imperialism is ever widening, and the element of class-conflict is being ever more clearly revealed and developed within the framework of the Indian body politic, as the political ideology becomes clarified and the nationalist movement divides itself into two streams, one „constitutional“

and compromising; the other, by dint of economic pressure, ever more revolutionary and uncompromising in its struggle against a two-fold enemy, Foreign and Native Capitalism, which tend to unite in the end. Upon the future development of this struggle, and its ultimate outcome, hangs the fate of the three hundred millions of the Indian proletariat and peasantry

POLITICS

The Soviet Union and the United States.

Declaration of the Workers' Party of America.

The Workers Party of America has issued a statement charging the Coolidge Administration with having concocted the letter being made use of by Secretary of State Hughes in his campaign against the recognition of the Russian Soviet Republic.

The statement issued by the Workers Party in full is as follows: Ed.

Secretary of State Hughes is seeking to victimize the whole country with a vicious frame-up.

The Secretary of State has had published a letter supposed to have been sent by Gregory Zinoviev, chairman of the Communist International, to the Workers Party of America.

The letter, from the first word to the last, is a falsification. The Workers Party declares that it has never received such a letter. It asserts that no such letter was ever written by the Communist International.

The frame-up of the Secretary of state sets forth that the Communist International instructs the Workers Party to practice shooting and „sapper“ work.

Any one at all acquainted with the position and activities of the Communist International knows that Zinoviev would never send out such foolish and childish instructions. The Communist International knows that there can never be a successful Communist revolution in the United States until the Communists win over the majority of the American working class.

The Communist International proposes, not shooting practice but trade union practice; not „sapper“ work on imaginary drill grounds, but the building of impregnable trenches for the working class on the political field in America.

The only armed shooting groups in this country are the gun-men employed by the employers' private detective agencies and the department of justice to smash the labour and farm organizations. An army of over 6,000 of these highly armed special deputy marshals were mustered by the department of justice to break the last railroad strike.

The Communist International never sent out, and never could send out such stupid instructions. The whole idea was conceived in the brains of mad men. It was spawned by maniacs, who are professional spies living off fake exposures of an alleged „Red Menace“.

We publicly accuse the Department of State and the Department of Justice with having forged this letter to mislead the people of the United States.

We demand an immediate and thorough-going investigation of the origin of this letter, and of those responsible for its circulation.

We assert that the department of justice and the whole Coolidge administration knows that this letter is a downright forgery. The only reason they can have for stooping to such deeds is that they fear the rising tide, among the American people, for the recognition of Soviet Russia.

The Administration knows that the masses of workers and farmers are ever more recognizing that American prosperity depends on the existence of the world market. No sound world market is possible without the complete recognition of the Soviet government.

The Workers Party calls upon every honest worker and farmer, regardless of his political opinions, to help expose this monstrous frame-up. We urge the progressives in Congress not to permit themselves to be stampeded by this reactionary attack.

We call upon the progressive Congressmen and Senators to demand an investigation of this fraudulent letter, and to continue their fight for the recognition of the Russian Soviet Republic.

(signed) C. E. Ruthenberg,

Executive Secretary of the Workers Party of America.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The Russian-English Economic Relations.

By Karl Bittel.

It is impossible for Great Britain's economic system to remain permanently separated from that of Russia. And it is to be expected that in the near future complete trade relations with Russia will be resumed, and that after the Baldwin Government has been got rid of complete political recognition will be accorded to the Soviet Government.

Among those who have worked to establish regulated economic relations, the Co-operative Societies of both countries have already accomplished much. There are already sound combinations in existence, particularly between the „Zentosoyus“, the great all-Russian Co-operative Society, whose foreign section is conducted by Comrade Kissin. This Zentosoyus also has an independent office in London which has already developed considerable import and export activities. The great English Co-operative Societies are likewise a strong factor in Russian relationships and only recently the Secretary of the International Union of Co-operative Societies, Mr. May, has twice visited Russia to advocate the strengthening of these relationships.

It is to be recollected that about eight months ago, when Curzon's ultimatum greatly endangered the mutual relations, the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Societies was being held in Edinburgh, and its authority, which is respected in the widest circles in Great Britain was used in submitting the following unanimous resolution to the Government.

„The Congress is of the opinion that the critical situation which exists between Great Britain and Russia presents a menace to the continuation of economic relationships and, moreover, to the peace of Europe. The Congress demands, therefore, that the Government by resumption of negotiations and other possible means, exert its whole influence towards the maintenance of relations with Russia and their improvement so that peace in Europe shall be maintained.“

Soviet Russia in the same way, thanks to the activity of the co-operative organizations, has achieved a great victory on its economic front. With the help of English capital an Anglo-Russian grain export company has been founded. This international company furnishes evidence of what may be expected on a still larger scale when political connections between England and Russia are strengthened. For then, Soviet Russia will at last obtain the credits of which she is so much in need, not only for her consolidation but also for the development of her schemes for electrification and improvement of her economic organization.

The founding of this company is to be regarded as the first great success in the international co-operative exchange of goods. It is true that the international Union of Co-operative Societies has itself not been successful in establishing an international Co-operative trade exchange, although already in 1921 the manager of the Czechish wholesale Buyers' Company, Lustig (Prague) made a proposal in that direction to the international Union of Co-operative Societies, but negotiations up to the present are still pending.

The following details are given relative to the interesting development of the company.

The Russian partners are the Export-chleb, Ltd. (Grain Exporting Co.), the Arcos, Ltd., and the „Zentosoyus“. The Export-chleb is the economic organization which is mainly responsible for the State foreign trade monopolies. Associated with it are the People's Commissary for Foreign Trade, the State bank, the „Zentosoyus“, the All-Russian Union of agricultural co-operative societies „Selskosoyus“, the all-Russian Co-operative Societies' Bank „Wsekobank“ and the Grain Bank company, Ltd., „Chlevoproduct“.

The Arcos Ltd., is the buying and selling agency of the Commissary for Foreign Trade, which represents the Government department, trusts, and the non-co-operative organizations in London. The „Zentosoyus“ England, Ltd., is the London organization of the „Zentosoyus“ in Moscow.

The English partners are the English Co-operative Wholesale Society (C. W. S.) in Manchester, which includes 1,226 organizations, has a capital of 28 million pounds and in 1920/21 had a turnover of 96 million pounds. In addition, there are concerned the grain firm of Lawrence, Shipton, Anderson and Co., and the Shipowners Furness, Withy and Co.

The capital of the company is 100,000 pounds of which 50,000 are contributed by Russia, 25,000 by the English Co-operative Societies and 25,000 by the English firms. On the directorate are four Russian representatives, among them Comrades Kissin and Wise of the „Zentosoyus“. The English side is represented by two (Golightly and Hawkins) from the C. W. S. and two from the private firms. The chairman of directors is a Russian.

The object of the company is the purchase of grain in Russia and its export to England, France and Southern Europe. The company has a selling monopoly for grain in Italy, France, Belgium, Spain and Portugal, and for certain sorts of grain in other countries. Many leading English banks have already declared themselves willing at any time to provide credit up to one million pounds and the bank of the C. W. S. will also afford financial assistance.

The „Zentosoyus“, by the way, is among the most active pioneers in the successful development of the Russian foreign trade monopoly, in which, along with the State, the whole of the co-operative societies and the great trusts take part. The foreign trade activities of the „Zentosoyus“ which has now its own offices in England, Sweden, Turkey, Czecho-Slovakia, Lettland, Esthonia, North America, Persia, China, etc. show already an active trade balance of about 1 million pounds; in America it has succeeded in securing credits from a number of American firms to the extent of many million dollars, and in addition, American banks have declared themselves ready to finance continually the activities of the „Zentosoyus“ on the raw materials markets in America as well as in the Far East and the Balkan States. It is also said that the „Selskosoyus“, the central union of the all-Russian agricultural co-operative societies, succeeded in entering into credit negotiations during the Washington Agricultural Congress in New-York. The all-Russian Co-operative Societies' Bank, the „Wsekobank“, which now has branches in twenty places in Russia, is working in the same direction. At its last general meeting it was decided to form affiliated banks abroad, and so create better connections with foreign money markets and concentrate the foreign financial operations of the co-operative societies, and at the same time to make mobile foreign capital for the financing of the Russian co-operative movement.

Without doubt, with the founding of the grain export company, the Russian co-operative societies, in combination with the English, have made a decided step in the direction which will bring Soviet Russia to supremacy in the world markets. The co-operative movement can be proud of the fact that it has helped with the pioneer work of opening up the great Russian market to the rest of Europe. The annoyance of the capitalists is naturally great, because this trade agreement is possible „under the knout of the Russian foreign trade monopoly“. For thereby their hopes recede of suppressing Soviet Russia by means of mercantile intervention (with the same object as military intervention) and converting it into a colony, paying tribute to Capital. In any case it has again been shown that Russia's foreign trade monopoly is not an impediment to the international exchange of goods; on the contrary it will show itself able to regulate international trade relationships on quite a new — anticapitalistic — basis when it succeeds further in bringing the great co-operative organizations directly into international trade activities.