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## Session of the Enlarged E. C. C. I.

**Eleventh to Fourteenth Session.**

*(Detailed Report.)*

**Eleventh Session, 1st March 1926.**

### **Report of Comrade Lozovsky on the Immediate Tasks of the Communists in the Trade Union Movement.**

#### **Tempo and Development of the Labour Movement.**

The post-war labour movement differs from the pre-war labour movement in that all molecular processes of change and development are a hundred times more rapid in it than in the epoch of the organic development of capitalism. That which before the war required many years and even decades to develop and to crystallise, takes place now literally in the course of weeks and months. The tempo and development of events is at present entirely different. A strike in which a hundred thousand workers were involved was, before the war, a world event. It was talked and written about for years. At present, gigantic conflicts in which hundreds of thousands of workers participate, conflicts which take place in the remotest parts of the world have become everyday occurrences. We, ourselves, have somehow become accustomed to this tempo and development. If we are to compare the labour movement of ten years ago with the labour movement now, we can truly say that we are going forward at a terrific rate. It is this tempo and elan of the labour movement which bring with them every year a whole series of new phenomena which we must carefully study in order to be able to determine our further policy.

Only 18 months passed since the V Congress of the Comintern. Nevertheless the world trade union movement has made an enormous stride forward. During this period a whole series of tendencies made their appearance within the trade unions, there was a re-grouping of forces within the working class, and we can therefore speak of new phenomena in the world trade union movement. The new phenomena are as follows: 1. a further restriction of the political rights of the working class; 2. lowering of the standard of living of the toiling masses; 3. new forms of class collaboration; 4. increased influence of

the American Federation of Labour in the reformist trade union movement of Europe; 5. rapid pace of the development of the trade union movement in colonial and semi-colonial countries; 6. crystallisation of a Left Wing in a considerable number of reformist trade unions; 7. growing influence of the trade unions of the U. S. S. R. over the world trade union movement and a strong desire to send workers delegations to the U. S. S. R.; 8. the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee has been given a definite organisational form; 9. growing acuteness of the struggle within the Amsterdam International; 10. growing desire for unity among the workers.

The most characteristic feature of the period through which we are passing is, on the one hand, the desire of the masses for unity, and on the other hand, the new differentiation on this basis within the world trade union movement. The differentiation in the world labour movement is at present following two lines: **The American and the Soviet Line.** The orientation of the masses is towards the U. S. S. R., the orientation of the reformist leaders is towards America. These are the two opposite poles in the world trade union movement, just as the Soviet State and the republic of millionaires are two opposite poles.

The cause of the orientation along these two lines is the role which American capitalism and Soviet Russia have assumed in the world policy. This increasing proportional weight of two opposite and hostile systems which negate each other, reacts in a very definite manner on the toiling masses, on the trade unions and their leading cadres and creates premises for two definite orientations — the American and the Soviet orientation. **The American trade union movement and the Soviet trade union movement are inimical to one another — and cancel each other — (as far as tactics and ideology are concerned) as the full blooded American imperialism and the Soviet Socialist Republics.**

This is precisely the factor which determines the orientation of the masses and of the reformist leaders towards these opposite poles. The Comintern and the Communist Parties could not have adopted a correct policy if we had failed to understand the internal process going on in the world trade union movement in connection with orientation either towards America or towards the U. S. S. R.

### The Growth of Political Reaction.

The last 18 months were characterised by a further pressure on the working class. In nearly all countries the working class during the last 18 months has been on the defensive, and frequently it has even not been able to maintain its old positions and was obliged to retreat. The pressure of the bourgeoisie was above all political: bourgeois democracy is at present not at all inclined to guarantee any liberties to the working class. Even the old and much lauded constitutional Great Britain did not stand the test, and embarked on a policy of defending privileges and attacking liberties when the interests of the ruling classes came into collision with formal liberties. More and more countries are coming under a semi-fascist and reactionary regime. Just recently the ideological and political influence of Italian fascism has extended beyond Italy. The Italian example is having its influence on the bourgeoisie of all countries. Fear of Bolshevism makes the ruling classes study the doctrines of fascism. This is precisely the explanation for the growth of anti-parliamentary tendencies among the French bourgeoisie, and for the growth of fascist organisations in a considerable number of countries.

There is no doubt whatever that the main features of the last 18 months were a restriction of the political rights of the working class, a change for the worse in its political position, the mobilisation of the entire bourgeois State apparatus for the struggle against the "disintegrating" influence of Bolshevism in the labour movement, and finally, the exposure of the class nature of all the "non-class institutions" of the bourgeois State. All of this had not only a negative, but also a positive meaning.

### Lowering of the Standard of Living of the Working Class.

This political pressure on the labour movement was accompanied by strong economic pressure. The aim of the bourgeois offensive was and is to cheapen production by lowering the standard of living of the workers and by worsening their working conditions. The greater the economic difficulties in the capitalist countries, the greater the role the U. S. A. are beginning to play in world economics and the fiercer is the attack of the European bourgeoisie on the working class in its endeavour to lower the cost of production at the expense of the workers.

What form did this attack take? It took several forms. Reduction of the real wage of the workers. It is a well-known fact that the fundamental reason of the extreme tension in social relations in Great Britain is this endeavour to lower wages, and first and foremost the wages paid in the industry. We witness similar offensives in almost all the European countries. The campaign for the reduction of wages goes hand in hand with a very successful attack on the working day. There are already very few countries and very few industries where the 8-hour day is actually applied. This offensive against the working day has produced excellent results for the bourgeoisie. This is particularly noticeable in Germany. The success is so great that the British bourgeoisie is now raising in all seriousness the question of the working day. As the British bourgeoisie is as yet not strong enough to compel the working class of Great Britain to adopt a longer working day, it is taking the initiative in the convocation of an international conference for the standardisation of working hours. If the conference which it is intended to convene will express itself for the status quo, this will be one more argument for the British bourgeoisie against "its" workers. If standardisation does take place, this will be all to the good for the British bourgeoisie.

This is a very peculiar manifestation of the "internationalist" aspirations of the British bourgeoisie, called forth by the stubbornness with which the British proletariat is defending the short working day which was won at the cost of so many efforts. For several years the long working day and the cheap labour in Germany weighed heavily on the entire labour movement in Europe. The Dawes Plan which has the blessing of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, resulted first and foremost in the lengthening of the working day, which was bound — in

boomerang fashion — to lengthen the working day in other countries.

The attack on the working day was accompanied by an attack on social insurance: reducing the cost of social insurance to the employers, reducing the unemployment dole as unemployment increased, etc. Side by side with this the old taxation policy was pursued which aimed at transferring the whole burden of state expenditure and of all the consequences of the war on to the poorest sections of the population. During the last few years, the burden of taxation has considerably increased, not only in the vanquished countries, but also in the victorious countries. It suffices to mention Great Britain, France, etc.

Another form of pressure is the effort to raise the productivity of labour.

If we add to this the increasing house rent, the growing price for gas, electricity, transport, etc., we must come to the indisputable conclusion: the tendency to lower the standard of living of the working class is pursuing its course. If we classify the countries according to the change for the worse in the economic position of the workers we must give first place to Italy, then comes Poland, which is followed by Germany. The standard of living of the German workers is the ideal of the British bourgeoisie, which dreams of Germanising "its own" proletariat. Never before has the correlation of the economic position of the workers of the various countries been so evident as during the last few years. If the majority of British workers have begun an attack on the Dawes Plan, this is due to the fact that they have realised to what extent the Dawes Plan applied in Germany finds its reflex in the position of the workers of Great Britain.

### New Forms of the Economic Enslavement of the Workers.

In this connection it is a question of the efforts made by the bourgeoisie to attach to its enterprises a section of the workers by establishing all sorts of workers welfare institutions, thereby frustrating a successful economic struggle. All this, of course, takes place in the guise of charity and employers' care for the "poor" workers and their families, but the social-political meaning of this kind of institution is more than obvious. The U. S. A. are the country where the system of this kind of institution has reached the highest state of development. Over there in the most important branches of industry, every enterprise or group of enterprises has all sorts of mutual aid funds organised by the employers which ties the workers hand and foot. This kind of reaction on the workers is at present also taking place in Europe, particularly in France. Towards the middle of 1925 there were in France 176 benefit funds embracing 11,200 institutions employing 1,210,000 workers. These benefit funds paid out during the first half of 1925, 160,000,000 francs in various forms of relief. They include a grant for every child, payment at the birth of a child and payments during the nursing period, relief during sickness, etc. etc. These funds embrace only about 10% of the manual and office workers and only a small minority of the contributors to these receive relief. But nevertheless, this kind of institution contributes considerably to the weakening of working class solidarity. These funds attach a section of workers to the enterprise, for all these forms of mutual relief depend entirely on the employer. Aid is given only to good, conscientious and loyal workers, and everyone knows what this means.

This must be taken into consideration in our struggle for the improvement of the position of the working class.

### New Forms of Class Collaboration.

Simultaneously with the pressure of the employers on the working class, with the adoption of new forms of its enslavement and with the discovery of new forms and methods to get a certain section of workers interested in the prosperity of the enterprises, new forms of class collaboration have made their appearance and have taken a concrete form. They surpass everything which has hitherto been done in this direction. These forms of class collaboration hail from America. America is now the promised land for the present collaboration between workers and employers. It is a well-known fact that even the "Gompers" Unions could not exist in the American heavy industry. The employers themselves are forming mixed unions (company unions). The character of these organisations varies. In some enterprises workers elect the committees into which, subsequently, the same number of employers' representatives are included. In other enterprises the two chamber system is adopted: the workers elect the lower chamber and the employers the upper cham-

ber. All these organisations have a well-developed relief system, they also have their own press, the be-all and end-all of which is praise of the generosity of the employers and of their care for their workers, etc.

However, America is just now the arena for a number of new phenomena which are beginning to find their way to Europe. These new phenomena are as follows: agreement between the trade unions and employers, concerning increased productivity of labour, the trade unions making themselves responsible for this. This kind of agreement is known in America under the title of B. & O. Plan (Baltimore and Ohio Plan), after the name of the railway where such an agreement was first made. In this respect the trade unions are drivers, in the literal sense of the word, who get out of the workers as much as can be squeezed out of them.

In order to achieve definite results mixed "industrial conferences" are organised, and in this question the trade unions closely collaborate with the employers with respect to a further increase of the productivity of labour and with respect to a more or less rational — from the point of view of the employers — organisation of labour.

Then there is in America great enthusiasm for labour banks, these banks being labour banks only in name. In a considerable number of these banks the employers have a considerable number of shares and play a very big role on the Managing Boards. These banks own a number of enterprises and it has frequently happened that enterprises belonging to this kind of labour banks employ only unorganised workers, and this is done not only with the consent, but by direct orders of the trade union leaders. One can well imagine what kind of labour banks they are and what kind of labour policy these banks can have.

But this is not all. These banks which are connected with the entire banking system of the U. S. A., are, generally speaking, auxiliary capitalist institutions. Trade union money deposited in these banks is invested in all sorts of shares and bonds, and this is how the "socialisation" of the entire economics of America is achieved.

The only "benefit" derived from these labour banks is — that the trade union upper stratum has been freed from any control on the part of the workers. Trade union members play only the role of depositors. Their business is to deposit their money in the bank. When the trade unions did not have at their disposal this kind of institution, the leading upper stratum was to a certain extent dependent on the rank and file contributors of membership fees. But when trade unions have capital at their disposal, when they participate in speculation and profit by it, leaders have enough money to be able afford to carry on the policy which suits them best. Labour banks and all other financial institutions attached to the trade unions free the bureaucratic upper stratum of any control on the part of the rank and file members of the union, and this is really the whole substance of these banks.

We witness at present in Germany a great inclination to adopt the American forms of class collaboration. The German Reformists are endeavouring to place their new American orientation on a philosophical theoretical foundation. There is just now in Germany a very popular and widespread catchword: "Economic Democracy". There has been already for several years a great deal of talk about this economic democracy, and the more it is talked about the less — as everyone knows — is it making itself felt. Economic democracy is workers' collaboration in the economy of the country, "equality of rights" as between capital and labour, of course with the retention of the entire economic and political power in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Under the title "The Economic Emancipation of the Working class", the organ of the metal workers, published on May 16th, 1925, an article which welcomed enthusiastically the organisation of labour banks, making the following statement on this subject:

"This means freeing ourselves from the chains of the capitalist methods of production."

The same metal workers' organ writes as follows about the Baltimore & Ohio-Plan: "From the purely trade union viewpoint one cannot underestimate the positive results of this system. An ever increasing number of workers attend the meetings of the local trade union branches. Trade union life is gaining an interest and substance and its development is positively magnificent (!). It is self-evident that this wealth of thought, this continuous seeking of new ways for the perfecting of

production is a regular gold mine for the employers. Of course workers also profit by it, for according to the agreement employers must share their profits with them."

Thus the Social Democrats who reproached the Russian unions for participating in production for their share in the improvement of the Soviet economic system, the same Social Democrats who blame the Soviet Union for endeavouring to raise the productivity of Labour and the productivity of the enterprises of the Workers' State, talk enthusiastically about the workers' endeavours to raise productivity of labour in America and demand that this plan should also be applied in Germany.

This entire new ideology is so curious that I will take the liberty to give a couple of quotations from the works of a theorist of the German trade union movement.

In his "Sociology of the Trade Union Movement" (1925) Karl Zwing gives expression to the following remarkable idea: "The equality of the fundamental economic factors — capital and labour — the former of which predominates at present over the latter, must be achieved. The theory and practice of the trade union movement must endeavour in the current epoch to make labour an entity of equal value."

In order to prove that this is the only path to be pursued by the labour movement, the same "Sociologist" of the German trade union movement arrives at the following amazing conclusion: "One must bear in mind that the working class is part of the capitalist system. The downfall of this system will be its downfall. There can be no life and death struggle between two active economic forces."

I do not think that we need enter into a controversy with this "sociologist". These few quotations are quite enough for us to understand that in Germany Gompersism has supplanted Marxism. We can see what this new orientation represents. We have before us an utterly bourgeois philosophy and practice transferred to the toiling masses, a philosophy and practice resting on a section of the working class and separating the latter from its direct, concrete and most important tasks. The struggle against this ideology and practice is one of the most important tasks of all the Communist Parties and of the Comintern.

#### Rapid Development of the Trade Union Movement in the Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries.

A characteristic feature of the last eighteen months is the considerable growth of the workers' trade union organisations in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This was very vividly shown in 1925 by the actions of the Chinese proletariat. As you know, the Chinese revolution began in 1911, but it is only in 1925 that it began to develop and to assume a special character. The explanation for this is — that in 1925 the Chinese proletariat and its trade union organisations appeared in the arena in the role of determinate champions of the labour movement. It is only a few years ago that the Chinese trade unions came into being. They had to work all the time under extremely difficult conditions. Death sentence for leadership of trade unions was a quite usual occurrence in China. Nevertheless the young labour movement was able during the last few years to form its own organisations, it was able to strengthen its unions and to take such energetic action against British and Japanese imperialism, that the correlation of forces underwent a change in favour of the national liberation movement. A strong proletarian character was given to the national liberation movement of China by the gigantic Shanghai, Hongkong and Tientsin strikes. These strikes showed that the Chinese proletariat is the most consistent and the most active enemy of the imperialist powers. These actions were a surprise not only to the enemies of the working class, but — we must admit — also to the friends of the Chinese proletariat and the Chinese revolution. Very few people have an idea how much revolutionary energy and strength is latent in the working class of China.

The action of the Chinese proletariat has given a new development to the national liberation movement of China, and this is the most important point in the recent events. We have in China a bona-fide trade union movement. It is true that it finds itself as yet in a very difficult position. In comparison with its population, China has not a very big proletariat. Moreover, an enormous part of China is still occupied by the forces of the counter-revolutionary generals. But nevertheless there are in most industrial centres well organised trade unions, which, side by side with the struggle against British and Japanese impe-

rialism, carry on a relentless fight for a human existence and for the consolidation and perfecting of their organisations.

The Chinese trade unions, which a few years ago counted their members by tens of thousands, have now a membership of about one million. Moreover, they are growing fast wherever the People's Army is victorious. One example will be sufficient. Only a few months ago the People's Army occupied Tientsin, the industrial centre of China, and now, three to four months later, there are already 50,000 organised workers in Tientsin, a trade union weekly organ is published, etc. The same thing happens also in other centres of China. I must draw your attention to the fact that the Chinese workers, in their struggle against imperialism, are using peculiar methods which are quite new. For instance, when the strike broke out in Hongkong about 100,000 workers were moved from Hongkong to Canton. This dealt a severe and irreparable blow to Hongkong — the Far-Eastern centre of British imperialism.

We have before us a young labour movement which is rapidly developing and is conscious of its strength. It would be the greatest mistake to underestimate the importance of this movement for the world labour movement. We must study this new movement, we must try to understand that the action of the Chinese proletariat is the most important event after the October Revolution. It has dealt imperialism a severe blow. This action means that the army of the world revolution has been reinforced, and therefore it deserves our consideration.

During the last year or two the labour movement in the other colonial and semi-colonial countries has also received an impetus. The gigantic strikes in India are no doubt a new page in the labour movement of this "pearl of the British Crown". Last year we witnessed an acute struggle for the reconstruction of revolutionary unions in Tunis, of the unions which were destroyed by the French Government. In spite of the insurrection, and just when it is at its height, trade unions are being formed in Syria. In Indonesia the workers are carrying on a stubborn struggle for the preservation of their trade union organisations, for their extension and consolidation.

If it were not for the Soviet Press and the Soviet press agencies, the capitalist press would have no doubt organised a conspiracy of silence regarding China, and it would have been an easy matter for British imperialism to strangle the Chinese people. The age-long gagging and censorship of the colonial and semi-colonial people is being raised now by the Soviet press and partly by the Communist press of all countries. But not enough is done in this direction, and we must the attention of all our Communist Parties to this matter.

Of course, this applies particularly to the Communist Parties of countries with colonial possessions.

#### International Reformism and the Chinese Revolution.

Whilst the Comintern and the Profintern, the Communist Parties and revolutionary trade union were doing their utmost to help the Chinese proletariat in its struggle, international reformism revealed itself during these events as the aider and abettor of imperialist powers. When the Shanghai workers began the struggle, they appealed to the Profintern and the Amsterdam International for help. The Profintern did everything it could.

More than that; the Executive Committee of the Comintern and the Executive Bureau of the Profintern approached the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals with the proposal to organise joint aid for the struggling workers of China. No reply was received to this proposal from Amsterdam. A few weeks later we could read in the Bulletin of the Amsterdam International the following enigmatic statement: "For various considerations the proposal of the Comintern and Profintern concerning joint help for the Chinese workers could not be accepted." What these "various considerations" were, the Amsterdam International did not take the trouble to explain. I must say I find it difficult to understand what considerations can prevent giving joint help to struggling workers. There is only one consideration — disinclination to help. Other considerations do not exist. That the refusal rested on disinclination to help is shown by the resolution (end of June 1925) adopted by the Amsterdam International in answer to the appeal of the Chinese trade unions. The resolution contains the statement: "To ask the Chinese trade union organisations known to him (to whom?) for information with respect to the desirability or possibility of giving help and to what extent." This reply is truly unique: the Chinese workers are appealing for help, they send radio tele-

grams, and the Amsterdam International is in doubt if help is needed.

During the strike of the Bombay Textile Workers (end of 1925) the Amsterdam International appealed to its organisations for assistance for the Bombay strikers. The concluding sentences of the appeal of the Amsterdam International offers an explanation for the reason of the sudden sympathy for colonial workers: They are as follows: "We hope that the trade union movement of India will soon reach a stage of development which will enable it to enter the international trade union movement as a full-fledged member."

The distinction made by the Amsterdam International between the trade union movement of China and the trade union movement of India can easily be explained. The Chinese trade union movement has entered upon the path of revolutionary struggle. The case is different in India. These moderate people are at the head of the trade unions. With respect to India one can expect a return for assistance rendered in the shape of the affiliation of the Indian trade unions to the Amsterdam International, which would restore its waning prestige. This is the explanation for the unheard of cynicism of the leaders of the Amsterdam International with respect to China. Wherever it smells of revolution, Amsterdam, in the best case, washes its hands of it.

The events in China and the appeal of the Chinese proletariat for help drew an expression of opinion from a number of organisations affiliated to the Amsterdam International. Perhaps the most remarkable statement is that of the A. D. G. B. (Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, German General Federation of Trade Unions). The reformists at the head of the German trade unions in their manifesto concerning the Chinese events, write, among other things, as follows: "The administration of the A. D. G. B. express the desire that the sanguinary events will stir the conscience of the representatives of European civilisation in China, and will indicate to them their moral duty to put an end, in agreement with the Chinese proletariat, to conditions of labour which are a disgrace to culture." Is there anything more pathetic than this appeal to the conscience of the representatives of European civilisation, can there be anything more remarkable than this appeal to the imperialists to do their moral duty?

I could give scores of examples when, openly and unashamedly, the leaders of trade unions and of Social Democratic parties speak of the necessity of the "economic modernisation" (colonisation) of China when, instead of attacking the imperialists they indulge in exposing "Bolshevik conspiracies" in China and in discovering a "national-Bolshevik tendency in the Chinese Revolution" (Jouhaux). This is how international reformism responded to the appeal for help on the part of the Chinese proletariat. This is how the Amsterdam International and the Sections affiliated to it responded to the struggle of the Chinese proletariat against imperialism. It will be as well to mention here that the Amsterdam International has no opinion whatever with respect to the war in Morocco and Syria. It is silent as if it were tongue-tied, in spite of the grandiose resolutions against war in general. Why is Amsterdam silent? Ask the Swiss Social Democrats. The newspaper "Berner Tagwacht" gives the answer: Because the first vice-President of the Amsterdam International, Leon Jouhaux, does not want any mention made about the war in Morocco and Syria.

But the Reformists are not always so passive when the colonies are concerned. They do not always confine themselves to resolutions appealing to moral duty. They become very active when it is a question of organising counter-action to the growth of revolutionary ideas in the colonies, when it is necessary to defend the civilisation of their countries against "backward and savage barbarians". With respect to this the Vice-President of the Amsterdam International, Leon Jouhaux, played a very characteristic role in the suppression of the revolutionary trade union movement in Tunis. The Left Confederation of Labour which was formed in Tunis was destroyed after Monsieur Jouhaux's visit. The leaders of this Confederation were sent to prison, were charged with conspiracy and were condemned. Many of them were expelled from their country. Jouhaux's role in this affair was worse than contemptible. The revolutionary movement was destroyed not only with the moral, but even with the material co-operation of the leaders of the reformist trade union movement of France.

Just at present the leaders of the Labour Party of Great Britain are actively engaged in shaping the labour movement

in India. On the initiative of the British Fabian Society has been formed in India. A number of prominent members of the Labour Party have gone to India and are making speeches there against Bolshevism, Communism and every kind of Left movements and tendencies. Thus we see that the Reformists become very active whenever it is a question of sabotaging the revolutionary trade union movement, whenever it is necessary to assist the bourgeoisie. But they are extremely passive when it is a question of helping the workers in the colonies to throw off the yoke of their exploiters. The labour movement of the colonies cannot expect any help except from the Comintern and the Profintern.

#### The Formation of a Left Wing in the Reformist Trade Unions.

The most distinguishing feature of the modern world trade union movement, is — the birth of a new opposition. Within the organisations affiliated to the Amsterdam International there had always been a revolutionary opposition headed by the Communist Parties. There is not a single reformist organisation without Communist influence within it. The repeated decisions of the Comintern concerning the obligatory nature of work in reformist trade unions have resulted in the Communist Parties having everywhere a more or less well-organised minority which carries on the policy and tactics of the Communist Party in the trade union movement. But at present, side by side with this organised revolutionary wing, a new opposition has sprung up which occupies a position between the Right and the extreme Left Wing. Ideologically this new opposition is not homogeneous, it is extremely heterogeneous, it has no uniform platform or tactics. But nevertheless it is getting hold of one country after another and has fairly strong bases in all organisations, and its stronghold is Great Britain.

The British Labour Movement is now going through a revolutionising stage. This revolutionising of the British proletariat is entirely due to the economic decline of the British Empire, to the shrinkage of the market for British goods, to the growing competition of the U. S. A., etc. The objective conditions which interfere with the normal development of the British economic system and which consequently increase the pressure on the working class, give rise to serious discontent among the masses, which finds its reflex in the leading upper strata.

Left tendencies, discontent with the policy of the Right Wing have existed already before. It made its appearance for the first time after the occupation of the Ruhr and the inactivity of the Amsterdam International in connection with it. Subsequently it found a reflex even within the leading organs of the Amsterdam International where the British are occupying a Left position.

When the official representatives of the British trade unions came forward with a new policy, this found an echo in all countries. Analogous tendencies began to spring up and these tendencies we generally designate by the term "opposition".

What is the characteristic of the opposition in all the reformist unions, including the leading nucleus of the trade union movement of Great Britain? Its characteristic is: 1. Recognition of the futility of the old policy of the Amsterdam International; 2. desire to form a united front with the Soviet Trade Unions; 3. endeavour to preserve the unity of the trade union movement on a national scale; 4. the slogan of the re-establishment of unity in the world trade union movement; 5. dissatisfaction with coalition with the bourgeoisie; 6. the desire to form a united front to the Left, with the Left Wing of the labour movement; 7. rejection of class collaboration. Such are the characteristics which will be found to a varying degree and in different combinations in every opposition.

In spite of lack of co-ordination and its lack of organisation on an international scale, the opposition represents at the present juncture a factor to be reckoned with: on the one side the majority of the General Council of the British Trade Unions, and on the other side groups which are springing up in a considerable number of countries in sympathy with this policy and going by the name of unity groups. These groups are beginning to publish unity organs, at the head of which are members of the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals. A section of the members of these Internationals rally and organise themselves around these organs. These are already several such organs: "Trade Union Unity" in Great Britain, "L'Unité" in Belgium, "Einheit" in Holland and "Einheit" in Germany. Analogous tendencies and groups exist also in the reformist trade unions of France, Czechoslovakia, Austria

and Sweden, and it goes without saying that there, too, attempts will be made to give an ideological form to the opposition which has sprung up. The very nature of this opposition and the titles of its organs show that the central idea of all these oppositions is unity of the national and international trade union movement.

What must be our attitude to this oppositional movement? There is no doubt whatever that the oppositional movement has not put into proper shape and form. There are still in the actions of many of its leaders relics and traditions of an ideology alien to us. But in spite of the lack of adequate forms, lack of ideological clarity and consistency in these groups, Communists have no occasion to adopt hostile attitude to them or to act against them. On the contrary, we must support their work, we must co-operate with them and must support them to our utmost to increase their influence in order that new sections of workers be enlisted for the idea of the united front and of unity. Every tendency within reformist economic and political organisations which is in opposition to the policy of these organisations must have our wholehearted support. Hitherto, our main failing on this field was, that we frequently made the same demands on these tendencies as on Communists. We must not ask of them what is impossible for them to carry out, we can form a bloc with them by adopting an acceptable concrete and definite programme of action. This programme will not include our slogans (for instance, proletarian dictatorship, the Soviet system, etc.), but this does not mean that we cannot come to an agreement with them and form a bloc with them. They are our allies. If we did not do that all our talk about the united front would be a soap bubble.

This opposition is heterogeneous and varied in its composition and ideology, our attitude to it is as heterogeneous and varied. In some countries our followers are organised separately and endeavour to establish a united front and unity of action with the opposition outside the sphere of our organisational influence. An example of this is Great Britain, where the Minority Movement is organisationally and ideologically under the leadership of followers of the Profintern. Moreover, this Minority Movement keeps in contact with all the opposition elements.

Another form of mutual relations is represented by the Left Wing in Sweden, where Communists, Left Social Democratic and non-Party elements have formed altogether such a bloc. The nature of our mutual relations must depend in every country on the prevailing situation and conditions, and must be based on as close a connection as possible for action with all elements who are for the united front to the left and for unity in the national and international trade union movement.

#### Growing Influence of the Soviet Trade Unions and Growing Desire to Send Workers' Delegations to the U. S. S. R.

A characteristic feature of this new opposition within the reformist trade unions is its struggle for the recognition of the Soviet Trade Unions and its desire to establish fraternal relations with the Soviet proletariat. This show that ever-growing sections of workers are showing more and more interest in the U. S. S. R. This is due on the one hand to the rapid economic development in the U. S. S. R. and on the other hand to the growing deterioration of the economic position of the workers in the capitalist countries.

For the same reason there is a tremendous desire among the workers to send delegations to the U. S. S. R. Workers all over the world are interested in the life and activities of the working class and of the trade unions of Soviet Russia. This desire to know more about Soviet Russia has led to workers' delegations visiting the U. S. S. R. in order to see for themselves the state of affairs there. The characteristic feature of these delegations is that the majority of them are not official (except the British delegation), as the official centres, namely, the Amsterdamers are most decidedly and emphatically sabotaging any rapprochement between the workers of the West and the workers of the U. S. S. R.

Another characteristic feature of these delegations is their eagerness to learn how the Russian proletariat managed to get out of the terrible conditions in which it found itself in the period of the civil war. They are first and foremost interested in our economic system and in the position occupied by the trade unions. Having studied everything on the spot they begin to

understand what proletarian dictatorship is and what is the value of bourgeois democracy. What deserves mention is the sabotaging of these visits of these workers delegations by the Social Democracy and its eagerness for unfavourable reports about the U.S.S.R. It is a well-known fact that the Social Democrats go in for a systematic sabotaging of these trips to Russia, and lately they have been laying down conditions: "We will go to the U.S.S.R. if we are allowed to take with us whom we like as interpreters." And their interpreters they select from among the Russian Mensheviks, wishing thereby to legalise their colleagues in the U.S.S.R. I would like to draw your attention to the recent attack made by the President of the American Federation of Labor, William Green, on the delegations to the U.S.S.R. As soon as committees for the organisation of such delegations began to spring up in the U.S.A., this worthy successor of black hundred Gompers issued a venomous manifesto containing such gems as this:

"The plan to send delegations to Russia is not in the interests of the wage earners of the U.S.A., neither is it in the interests of the people as a whole. It is in the interests of the few Communists eager to retain power in Russia, in order that its influence should spread to the other nations of the world.

Not a single loyal trade union will help or give support to the nefarious plan. No contributions of any kind should be made towards this iniquitous affair."

Is it worth while to enter into polemics with this working class bourgeois who is frightened out of his wits? Certainly not. He surpassed everything which could have been said by the reptile press.

You know that the entire bourgeois and Social Democratic press eagerly picks up the least unfavourable expression used by any of the delegates against the U.S.S.R. Some delegates were promised good pay if on their return they would write their impressions, — of course in the spirit desirable to the client. Well, one of the Social Democratic delegates Gustav Müller-Weimar, on this return to Germany, published in the "Metallarbeiter-Zeitung" a fairly lengthy feuilleton in which, side by side with the fantastic assertion that in the U.S.S.R. "workers freedom of movement has been entirely abolished, that not a single worker has the right (!) to throw up his job when he so wishes and to look for another situation", we also find such a statement as that: "But one thing is certain: the Russian Government is doing its utmost to create something better and moreover, Russian Communists are quite different fellows to the German twaddlers who call themselves Communists." From this article we see how two souls are contending with each other in the breast of every working class Social Democrat. On the one hand — loyalty to Social Democratic ideas about the U.S.S.R., and on the other hand — admiration for the Russian Revolution. To an overwhelming majority of Social Democratic workers the path to the united front in their country leads via Moscow. These workers do not believe their own Communists, especially the ultra-left (in Germany this was the period of the Ruth Fischer policy). Hence the conviction that the path to the united front in Berlin, London and Prague, frequently goes via Moscow. This round about way is frequently the shortest between Social Democratic and Communist workers — such is the influence and the result of the Revolution.

#### Anglo-Soviet Unity Committee.

These new moods among the workers of capitalist countries have found their expression in the formation of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee. The Anglo-Russian Unity Committee undoubtedly signifies a definite step along the path of development of the International Trade Union Movement. It did not spring up all at once, and its very inauguration met with very serious resistance on the part of the reactionary elements within the British Trade Union Movement and particularly on the part of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals.

After the delegation of the British Trade Unions had visited the U.S.S.R. (the end of 1924) the entire International Social Democracy raised an unprecedented hue and cry against the British Delegation and against the Soviet Trade Unions. The preliminary agreement concluded at that time in Moscow was met with bared teeth, for the reformists at once understood what danger this rapprochement between the British and Soviet Trade Unions constituted for their future policy. As a matter of fact the Soviet Trade Unions are the most important organi-

sations and the foundation of the R.I.L.U.: The British Trade Unions are one of the most important organisations of the Amsterdam International. If two organisations of two Internationals can find a platform for agreement, if they can jointly work out a plan of practical activities, why then could not the R.I.L.U. and Amsterdam form a united front for achieving definite concrete tasks? It was just this that provoked the anger of International Social Democracy, which for a period of many months sang a hymn of hate against the British Delegation and the Soviet Trade Unions, predicting that nothing would come out of the Anglo-Russian Committee.

When the first report of the British Delegation appeared, it was no less a person than Friedrich Adler who called it a "dishonest book", while the "Vorwärts" described the declaration of the Anglo-Russian Committee as a "shameful document". This characterisation above all goes to show the degree of panic of the reformists in connection with the agreement that had been arrived at. There was even a time when they hoped that the Congress of British Trade Unions in Scarborough would not ratify the preliminarily concluded agreement, and speculated on the informal and unofficial nature of this committee. But after the British Trade Union Congress at Scarborough ratified it, the opponents had to take up another position and commenced a fierce bombardment of the Anglo-Russian Committee with all available reformist weapons and attempted to drive a wedge between the British and Soviet Trade Unions.

At the same time the inauguration of the Anglo-Russian Committee evoked great enthusiasm amongst the wide masses. A number of organisations (Norway, Finland) gave their adherence to this committee, if not formally, at least in principle. In all countries unity groups began to appear who had the support of the activity of the Anglo-Russian Committee as the main point of their programme. All this signifies that the Anglo-Russian Committee responds to the demand of the epoch, it reflects the demand of the masses for unity, the desire of the conscious workers to find organisational forms for this unity and to turn from words to deeds. It is true the Anglo-Russian Committee unites only a section of the organised workers, but if we bear in mind that the Anglo-Russian Committee now represents about 13 million workers, and that it has the active support of the Comintern and the Profintern, that within all reformist trade unions there are considerable minorities who have already spoken in favour of the Anglo-Russian Committee; then it becomes perfectly clear that the overwhelming majority of the organised International proletariat are now already on the side of this committee.

But here a question arises: Why does it just happen to be the British Trade Union Movement which is the first to have come to an agreement with the Unions of the U.S.S.R.? Why not the German? Is the position of the German proletariat better than the position of the British proletariat? No. This is to be explained by the fact that the reactionary Social Democratic and Trade Union machine is pulling the German labour movement toward America, whereas the bureaucratic machine of the British labour movement is less permeated with Social Democratic practice and has proved to be more sensitive to the aspirations of the masses and closer connected with the masses than the German bureaucracy. Therein lies the reason for the swing round of the majority of the leaders of the proletariat, towards the U.S.S.R. and the swing round of the German Trade Unions bureaucracy, despite the will of the German proletariat, towards America.

#### Struggle of Tendencies within the Amsterdam International.

The formation of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, the stream of workers' delegations to the U.S.S.R., the growth of opposition moods within all unions, the worsening of the position of the working class and the quest for a new way out — all these factors, taken together, have to a considerable degree sharpened the struggle within the Amsterdam International and the organisations affiliated to it. The Amsterdam International is passing through a phase of crises, of internal frictions and discussions, and although this is all covered up by smooth and polite phrases, nevertheless inside Amsterdam all is not calm and tranquil.

In what direction are the growing friction and the growing differentiations developing? At the present time several points of divergence are observable: 1. the attitude to the Soviet Union; 2. the attitude towards the International Labour Office and the League of Nations; 3. United front with the bourgeoisie or with

the Communists; 4. how to struggle against the deterioration of the economic position of the workers and to drive back the offensive of reaction; 5. attitude towards the struggle of the colonial peoples for their liberation. These are the main questions which are having repercussion within the Amsterdam International and its organisations, which are shaking its very foundations and making the most keen-witted people think over things and find a reply. The workers cannot be satisfied by official wellbeing and a policy of waiting for something to turn up. The leaders of the Amsterdam International are placing all their hopes on the International Labour Office, on the League of Nations, and are awaiting some kind of miracle from the conferences of all kinds summoned by governments. Having duly sanctified the Dawes Plan, the Amsterdam International, through its leaders is now singing the praises of Locarno: "The Locarno Pact" — gushes Oudegeest — "is the first stone in the construction of a new peace (what about Versailles?). Locarno is one of the most important steps towards the formation of the United States of Europe. Locarno means the commencement of a new era, for which a labour movement has always fought..." This triumphant poem to Briand and to Chamberlain excellently characterises the mood of the Amsterdam leaders. These latter are looking for consoling phenomena where there are none, if only to embellish the unpleasant truth, if only to shirk the direct tasks which are now facing the working class.

I do not intend giving here an exposition of the various stages of struggles, of the "waiting and seeing", of the discussions, friction, and the statements of various Amsterdam leaders against one another, and so on. I will only point out that the secretary of the Amsterdam International, Oudegeest, threatened the chairman Purcell, that if he continues his policy any further, all relations with him will be broken off! This is a proof of anything except normal relations and well-being.

We do not attach any particularly great significance to all kinds of combinations, disputes, mutual discontent, polemics and the like among the Olympiads. We are more than anything interested in the mood of the masses of rank and file members. And indeed if we come down from these upper heights and look below at what is going on in the ranks of the Amsterdam organisations, we shall see that the majority of workers in every country is undoubtedly in favour of unity, of agreement with the Soviet unions, and if these moods have not been able to find their expression, this is only because the working class masses have been suffocated by the Social Democrat trade union bureaucratic apparatus, which is pulling the working masses away from the U. S. S. R. and unity.

#### Increase of American Federation of Labour Influence on European Trade Union movement.

Together with the weakening of European capitalism, the growth of Left Wing moods among the workers arising therefrom, the attraction of the workers of all countries to the U. S. S. R. and the simultaneous increase of the specific gravity of American imperialism, there has also grown the influence of the American Federation of Labour on European reformism. The correlation between the influence of the trade union organisations in the International and of the respective states in the world consortium of powers is a tradition of reformism. The last few years have brought out the growing power of American capitalism, and because of this the interest of the reformists for the American Trade Union Movement has increased to a considerable degree. The reformist leaders, faced in Europe with a fairly strong Communist movement and the leftward trend of the working masses, have begun to look for support throughout the whole world and cast their eyes on the methods which the leading oligarchy of the American Trade Union Movement applies in the struggle for maintaining its influence and affirming its rule.

There was a time when the American Federation of Labour enjoyed no authority at all in European Social Democratic circles. Those times have past. It is just this that characterises the evolution of International Social Democracy — this fact that it retreated further and further and continues retreating from socialist principles; and in the measure that it forgot Socialist theory and practice it approached nearer to the reactionary American Federation of Labour. Reformism has once more discovered America, and the interest of the leaders of

European reformism for America has increased particularly during the last two years in connection with the Leftward trend that has become apparent in the British Labour Movement. The more the British labour movement went to the Left, thereby weakening the ranks of the Amsterdam International, the more sharply did the reformists reveal their gravitation towards America, whilst the Amsterdam International started a flirtation with the American Federation of Labour and attempts were made to bring America back into Europe. It should be remembered that the A. F. of L. took a fairly active part in European affairs at the time peace was concluded and directly after the war; Samuel Gompers was chairman of the Labour Commission of the League of Nations. He was also one of the founders of the Amsterdam International, from which the A. F. of L. withdrew owing to the Amsterdam International being too "revolutionary and Left". The leaders of the Amsterdam International vainly tried to convince Gompers that they were not revolutionary and not Left, that the Socialism in their resolutions was not Socialism and was by no means of an obligatory nature for all members of the Amsterdam International — and Gompers departed from Europe.

This, of course, did not merely by chance coincide with the departure of the American Government for a short time from European affairs. Now the American trade union bureaucracy is once more beginning to be interested in European affairs, expressing sympathy for the leaders of the Amsterdam International in the disasters and misfortunes which have befallen it. Directly and indirectly the leaders of the Amsterdam International have attempted to bring the A. F. of L. inside its ranks. Special delegations were sent for this purpose, but up to now nothing practical has resulted therefrom, although the sympathy of the American stalwarts is undoubtedly on the side of European reformism.

This hunt for the Americans is also to serve as a basis for refusing to negotiate with the Soviet trade unions. At one of the meetings of the General Council of the Amsterdam International in December 1925, Frank Hodges stated that the affiliation of the A. F. of L. to the Amsterdam International would have tremendous significance in view of the growing influence of America on the economics of the whole world, and that this affiliation would be a much more important event than the recognition of the Amsterdam constitution on the part of the Russians. Other Amsterdam leaders have also frequently spoken on the same lines, promising the Americans full autonomy and all kinds of political privileges and privileges on principle...

These quests for aid from across the herring pond, the attempts to draw the A. F. of L. into the European movement as an arbitrator, at any rate testify to the fact that reformism is already feeling that it is not sufficiently strong in Europe.

#### The Amsterdammers and Fascism.

Another factor that has made itself apparent during the last 18 months is the absolute bankruptcy of reformism in the face of reaction and fascism. There was a time once when the reformists threatened that by their democratic methods they would be able to overcome fascism. They have displayed such flexibility and such capability of becoming adapted to fascism as would have been hard to believe. In this respect what is very instructive is the policy of the leaders of the Italian Federation of Labour, who during the period of rise of the labour movement in 1920 formed the R. I. L. U. together with us and afterwards during the time of the victory of fascism, sank to the level of boot-blacks of Mussolini.

Italian reformism has proved to be so impotent, that it could not offer any resistance whatsoever even to the destruction of its own organisations. In vain did the reformists adapt themselves, in vain did they come down upon the Communists with disciplinary measures in order to please the Fascists. When they had done all their dirty work, fascism declared a monopoly for the fascist corporations and simply closed down all the reformist organisations. At that time three tendencies were in formation amongst the reformist leaders: one was for further adaptation, another for a beautiful death and the third for transferring the centre abroad. Thus there was not a single tendency in Italian reformism which was in favour of a persistent, systematic, ruthless struggle against fascism, even if only to maintain the existence of the trade unions.

A fairly large number of reformists, commencing with **D'Aragona**, became adapted to fascism. Some of them directly entered the services of fascism and assumed the role of commissars of the various unions, while the **secretary of the printers, Bruno**, who went over to the side of the fascists, argued that it was necessary to come to agreement with "highly respected" **Mussolini**, as "it was necessary to save the entire mutual aid system which had been created by the printers throughout a long number of years, and which would have been destroyed if I (Bruno) had not agreed to taking such a step as this". The reformists, by the way, not only adapted themselves, but they displayed firmness and strength of will against — sedition in general and the Communists in particular. At the very height of the breaking up of the trade unions, they themselves liquidated the local labour chambers, which are the centres of initiative and for rallying forces in the localities, and began excluding the Communists. Thus, for the Amsterdamers the main enemy even now is not fascism but Communism, and this at a time when the Communists — even on the acknowledgement of the enemies of Communism — are the most consistent and the most intransigent fighters against the fascist dictatorship.

But at that time we not only witnessed the moral and political bankruptcy of Italian reformism. The bankruptcy of the **Amsterdam International** also was no less manifestly displayed here. Directly after the fascist monopoly had been declared and the reformist organisations began to be broken up, the **R.I.L.U.** appealed to the Amsterdam International with a proposal to organise a joint campaign in defence of the Italian trade unions, which, it will be remembered, are affiliated to the Amsterdam International. Amsterdam did not give any reply to this proposition. It acted independently and this action consisted in the representatives of the Amsterdam International tabling motion at the **International Labour Office** to discuss the question of the situation of the trade union organisations in Italy at the next meeting. For the sake of justice, we are bound to say that they attained a tremendous success. It was decided to put this question on the agenda of the session of the **International Labour Bureau** in 1927!

Besides this, the Amsterdamers passed a resolution in which they reminded the Italian premier that the Versailles Treaty contains a section XIII, which guarantees freedom to the trade union organisations "of the high contracting parties". This reminder that the Versailles treaty, in addition to its direct intention is also a "Magna Charta" for the workers was probably a cause of considerable mirth to the renegade **Mussolini**.

That is how the Amsterdam International fought against fascism, and how the Italian reformists are fighting the destruction of their own organisations. Could one imagine a greater moral and political fall than that? Could there be a bigger capitulation before our enemies than a voluntary forsaking of the struggle for the liberty of trade union organisations, for the liberty of the working class to organise? There could hardly be found anything more shameful in the history of the international labour movement.

#### The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions and Amsterdam.

The mutual relations between the **A.U.C.T.U.** and the Amsterdam International have already a fairly long history. There was a time when international Social Democracy and the leaders of Amsterdam in general denied the existence of trade unions in the **U.S.S.R.** It became a hackneyed phrase amongst the reformists of all countries that in Soviet Russia no trade unions existed, but that there are state institutions bearing the name of trade unions, and therefore, the Amsterdam International "did not recognise" the Soviet trade unions. This coincided — of course, not by chance — with the period of non-recognition of Soviet Russia on the part of the capitalist world. However, as the capitalist countries one by one were compelled to recognise the Soviet Union, as the importance of the **U.S.S.R.** in world politics grew, the question as to mutual relations with the Soviet trade unions confronted the Amsterdam International and its organisations in all its magnitude.

The question was brought up for the first time by the **British** at the **Vienna Congress** of the Amsterdam International in 1924, and since then not a single meeting of the Executive Committee or of the Bureau of the Amsterdam International has taken

place at which this so old and yet ever new question as to the Soviet Unions has not cropped up.

The mutual relations between the **A.U.C.T.U.** and Amsterdam are not at all a purely Russian question. It is a question as to the mutual relations between the Amsterdam International and the revolutionary trade union movement of all countries. If the whole struggle has centered round the mutual relations between the **A.U.C.T.U.** and the Amsterdam International, this is because the Soviet Unions are most clear representatives of the revolutionary Trade Union movement of all countries and because the **R.I.L.U.** and the Comintern, in their endeavours to attain unity, have never clung to formalities: Why should not a section of the **R.I.L.U.** conduct negotiations, if this would only be a small step forward on the path to restoring the unity of the world trade union movement?

The slogan of the **V. Comintern Congress** and the **III. R.I.L.U. Congress**, as will be remembered, was for the merging of both Internationals, an **International Unity Congress**, on the basis of proportional representation, etc.

This slogan however met with fierce resistance on the part of the international social democracy and the leaders of the Amsterdam International. They, all the time, endeavoured to reduce the question of international unity to the mutual relations between the **A.U.G.T.U.** and Amsterdam. To the proposal for merging both Internationals the Amsterdamites replied with a counter-proposal on the entry of the Soviet Unions into the Amsterdam International. The entire international social democratic press, the entire press of the Amsterdam Union, over a period of already almost two years, has been hypocritically and demagogically declaring that the entry of the Soviet Unions into Amsterdam solved the question of unity. There is still fresh in everybody's memory the correspondence between Amsterdam and the **A.U.G.T.U.** and the action of the Anglo-Russian Committee on this question. What did the **A.U.G.T.U.** demand and still demands? A Conference between the representatives of the **A.U.G.T.U.** and Amsterdam, without any preliminary conditions, for discussing the question as to the means and methods of restoring the unity of the international trade union movement.

What do the Amsterdamers reply? "First announce your desire to come into Amsterdam, and then we will begin talking". And the more that the **A.U.C.T.U.**, acting in full agreement with the **R.I.L.U.**, demands of Amsterdam to make it clear as to what is hindering the restoration of unity, the more the Amsterdamers, notwithstanding the proposals of the British, insist on having their own way, not even desiring to enter into pour-parlers with the representatives of the Soviet Unions on the question of unity. At the same time, they make every concession to the **American Federation of Labour**, are ready to go out to meet it, to afford it every possible privileges as to principle or otherwise, if only to be able to arrive at some kind of agreement.

International Social Democracy and the Amsterdamers are all the time attempting to evade the question of unity presented by the Comintern and the **R.I.L.U.** And in order to confuse matters they concocted their counter-proposals, and in order to dupe the workers all the more successfully, the Amsterdam press commenced spreading all kinds of legends as to the motives which inspired the **A.U.G.T.U.** to demand a conference with the Amsterdam International without preliminary conditions. The most widespread of these legends are the following: 1. the Soviet Unions desire to leave the **R.I.L.U.**; 2. the Soviet Unions want to sever the ties connecting them with the revolutionary trade unions of other countries; 3. the Soviet Unions wish to become free from the influence of the **C.P.** of the **U.S.S.R.**; 4. the Soviet Unions have a new orientation: they are beginning to become "Europeanised", etc., etc. The Mensheviks of all countries have been writing on this theme for 18 months and not one serious person who has the slightest notion of what the Soviet Unions really are, can take this scribble seriously. The initiative in forming the **R.I.L.U.** for consolidating all revolutionary elements, belongs to the Soviet Trade Unions. At all their congresses they continuously reiterated that they recognise the ideological leadership of the **C.P.** of the **U.S.S.R.**; and the **XIV. Party Congress**, which in the opinion of the shortsighted politicians of the Amsterdam International signifies the commencement of the liberation of the Soviet Trade Unions from the influence of the Communist Party, strengthened still more the ideological and political leadership of the **C.P.** of the **U.S.S.R.** over the Soviet Trade Union movement.

Do the reformists themselves really believe what they are writing? among our opponents who endeavour to explain in this manner the desire of the A. U. C. T. U. to conduct negotiations with the Amsterdam International, there are **two groups**: one of them asserts this out of genuine belief whilst the other, without any belief whatever. On the one hand, it is ignorance and on the other hand, a strategic manoeuvre. In order to evade replying straightforwardly to the question on an international Congress of unity and the methods of restoring a real united fighting International, they raise an outcry over the Soviet Unions, distort every gesture of the A. U. C. T. U., dictate to the A. U. C. T. U. what it should do and what it should not do and then become hypocritically astonished when the A. U. C. T. U. does not act according to their counsels. But the game is too obvious to be taken seriously. We must fully realise that the Soviet Unions are an organic part of the R. I. L. U. They are trying to remove all obstacles standing in the way of the formation of a united, all-embracing international. And if the A. U. C. T. U. is ready to conduct negotiations with the Amsterdam International instead of the R. I. L. U., this is because none of us wants to hinder the rapprochement among the workers of various countries because of formal considerations, because of a question of precedence. **But the Soviet Trade Unions have never conducted, are not conducting and never will conduct any other policy than the policy of the R. I. L. U. and of the Comintern.** Both the friends and the opponents of the Comintern should understand this. As to the systematic refusal of the Right Wing of the Amsterdam International to negotiate, this is explained by their preference for a United Front with the bourgeoisie, rather than a United Front with the revolutionary proletariat.

#### Amsterdam and the R. I. L. U.

The Leaders of the Amsterdam International endeavour in all their speeches to assure us that the Amsterdam International is the only world organisation of trade unions. But their own reports refute this. There are 22 organisations affiliated to the Amsterdam international of which only three, (Palestine, Canada and South Africa) are outside Europe. Outside the bounds of Europe, only about 150 thousand workers adhere to the Amsterdam International.

But the Amsterdam International has no right to call itself even an all-European Federation of Trade Unions, as the Trade Unions of the U. S. S. R. in their entirety, one fourth of the trade union organised workers of Czechoslovakia and one half of the trade union movement of France belong to the R. I. L. U. The trade union movement of Roumania, Jugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece do not belong to the R. I. L. U. in their overwhelming majority solely because of the police terror. The trade unions of Norway and Finland stand outside of both Internationals, while both of these federations are in favour of the Anglo-Russian Committee and of supporting the unity policy put forward by the R. I. L. U. Besides this, there are very considerable revolutionary minorities within all the Amsterdam organisations who, if not in an organised form, at any rate ideologically and politically, support the R. I. L. U. It is quite well known that it is the representatives of the German Trade Union Federation who are at present determining the political line and particularly the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist policy of the Amsterdam International. The German Trade Union movement is united. The representatives of Germany always speak very proudly on behalf of 5 million organised workers; But do all the 5 million workers support the viewpoint of Amsterdam? Do we not know that about one quarter of the organised workers follow the Communist Party?

A conference recently took place in Sweden which represented about one third of the organised workers. It pronounced itself in favour of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee, for the class struggle, etc. Social Democracy and the leaders of the Swedish Trade Union Federation sharply attacked this conference, but the minority in disagreement with the Amsterdam International did not cease to exist on account of this. If we take the Amsterdam organisations one by one, we will see that in each one of them there are revolutionary minorities which entirely take up the standpoint of the R. I. L. U. Can we wipe off the political account of this section of the proletariat organised in the Amsterdam Unions, which is following us? If we were

to do this then the whole of our policy for winning the trade unions would be nonsense. The winning of the trade unions is expressed in the growth of our influence within the reformist trade unions. It is a result of our policy, of our work within the reformist trade unions. In determining the correlations of forces therefore we must bear in mind this section of the workers. Take for instance Czechoslovakia. There are 200,000 workers organised in the Red Unions, while at the last elections the Communists received nearly one million votes. Surely it is clear that hundreds of thousands of workers organised in the reformist unions are following the Communist Party, following our slogans...

I do not intend dealing here with each country one by one. There are present here representatives of the Communist Parties of all countries, and each of you knows the limits of influence of your Party and of your country. At any rate one thing is clear, and that is that the Amsterdam International not only cannot be called an international federation, but not even an All-European body. What kind of All-European Federation is it in which the U. S. S. R. and a number of other countries previously mentioned do not figure?

But when we turn from the European Continent we find that the position of the Amsterdam International is truly catastrophic. In May 1925 the whole Chinese trade union movement at its second congress unanimously affiliated to the R. I. L. U. The Conference of Japanese Left Trade Unions, if not formally — here the police regime should be borne in mind — at any rate in principle supports the R. I. L. U. policy. The trade unions of Indonesia, Persia and of quite a number of other Colonial countries all belong to the R. I. L. U. And we may ask: with such a situation can one take seriously the high-sounding statements of the Amsterdam leaders that they are the only "world organisation" and so forth? This is absolutely ridiculous. It can only be explained by European arrogance. For a Dutch reformist the workers of Indonesia are not much more than human dross, but for us, they are proletarians with equal rights class brothers. For the European reformists China does not play any role whatsoever, whilst for us the awakening of China and the activity of the Chinese proletariat is a new page in the history of the International Labour Movement and of all humanity. It in the R. I. L. U. there were only the trade union movement of the U. S. S. R. and China, and if everything in the Amsterdam International was running smoothly with no internal frictions, and without two oppositions, a Left and an extreme Left, then the Amsterdam International, if it were headed by people who even knew a little about the dynamics of historical events, would have to reckon that the R. I. L. U. represents a great rising force. But as the Amsterdam International is headed by inveterate reformists, people with a narrow point of view who look down on the workers of the Colonial and semi-Colonial countries in a condescending manner, people for whom Europe is the centre of the universe and for whom capitalism is an eternal immutable system — so they will never be able to appreciate what the young labour movement is bringing to humanity, and what great perspectives are opening up in front of the revolutionary trade union movement and to whom belongs the future. In two or three years time even the blind will become convinced that the Amsterdam International is taking a downward and the R. I. L. U. an upward line. As for myself, I am as convinced of that as I am convinced that Moscow is the capital of the U. S. S. R.

#### The Fight for a Single International.

The centre of attention of all Parties should be the question of forming a single trade union organisation in each country and a single international embracing the trade unions of all countries, all races and all Continents. Every worker and particularly the Communist worker, should understand that the labour movement of whole Continents has now awakened to conscious life, and that an International which does not include the labour movement of China, Japan, Australia and South America cannot be called an all-embracing International. There are a number of symptoms testifying to the increased activity of the workers of the new Continents. For instance, last year the idea arose for summoning a Pan-Asiatic Congress of trade unions. The well-known Japanese reformist Bundji Suzuki wished to take the initiative in this. From various interviews

he has given, it appears that on the one hand he is dreaming of forming a coloured international to counterweigh the Red International, but on the other hand, that he wants to translate into the Asiatic language the International Labour Office of the League of Nations. A few months ago, a representative of Suzuki came to Shanghai where he spoke about the summoning of a Pan-Asiatic Conference at which representatives of the Government, workers and employers' organisations, should be represented. But he got such a reception from the Shanghai workers that he hastened to make himself scarce. We thus see that the Japanese reformists are thinking about gathering together and organising the thin-blooded reformism of Asia. Reformism has more or less taken definite shape in Japan and India, and it is just from these two countries that the project for creating such a coloured International originates, whilst its political colouring would in no way differ from that of Amsterdam. Whether they will succeed in forming such an International or not, time will show, but the very attempt to form such an International goes to show the new needs of the labour movement in Asia.

As far as the Chinese labour movement is concerned, it does not present any claims whatsoever for separating the yellow workers from the white, but on the contrary, it affiliated to the R.I.L.U. knowing very well that the union of white and yellow workers, as Fimmen has justly said, will repaint the whole world red.

Further, the Australian Council of Trade Unions is summoning a Trade Union Congress of the countries of the Pacific for discussing all questions concerning the workers of these countries. It must be said that this idea deserves every attention. The Pacific Ocean countries will, in the near future, be the scene of a war compared with which the world war was mere child's play, and the union of the workers of the Pacific Ocean countries is more than timely.

As is known the Pan-American Federation of Labour has already existed for several years, uniting the trade unions of the U.S.A., Mexico and a few small countries of Central America. This is the embryo of an international for the whole Continent. The Pan-American Federation of Labour at the head of which stand the Gompertites, has "labourised" the Monroe Doctrine: "America for the Americans". If we translate this into a more simple language this will mean: "All Southern and Northern America for the American milliardaires". Nevertheless, this Pan-American Federation of Labour embraces more than 4 million workers. Finally, in March of the present year the All-American Seamen's Conference is to take place in Montevideo (Uruguay) for uniting the Seamen of Northern and Southern America into one organisation.

Add to this the existence of a big labour movement in India, and the Philippines, etc., and you will be compelled to acknowledge that in the present situation of the world trade union movement, the slogan for unity cannot be reduced to mutual relations between Amsterdam and the A.U.G.T.U. It is not a European slogan, it is a world slogan. Therefore, the struggle for a united international means the struggle for uniting the workers of all countries, all races and all continents.

How is this to be done? We propose a very simple means: By arrangement between Amsterdam and the R.I.L.U. summon a World Congress of Trade Unions at which all organisations affiliated to the R.I.L.U., to the Amsterdam International, and also those standing outside both Internationals should be represented. In order that the labour movement of the big countries shall have corresponding influence, we propose proportional representation. We declare in advance that the R.I.L.U. will cease to exist as such and will be merged into the new International. We further state, that if we remain in the Minority we will observe discipline and remain in the single organisation. We also invite the Social Democrats to undertake the same obligation. Both sides will preserve the right of free agitation and propaganda within the united organisation. We ask: What is there unacceptable in such an offer for all those who pose as champions of overcoming the present position of scission? Is it possible to think of anything more democratic? Up to now we have not yet received an articulate answer from the Amsterdam International on this, because not one of the Social Democrats could oppose such a democratically summoned congress. It is difficult to dispute the justice, democratic form and absolute ho-

nesty of such a proposal. That is why the Social Democrats are trying to obscure the issue, to create confusion, instead of working for the unity of the world trade union movement, they push forward their semi-European international, call it the "only" organisation and all in order to scotch the desire of the masses to form a really united and really universal International of trade unions.

But this does not mean that we should allow the Amsterdamers the possibility of confusing a question that is quite clear. The Comintern and all the Sections affiliated to it, should conduct a fierce struggle for a World Unity Congress, for an International which must embrace the workers of all countries, all races and all Continents.

#### Strengthen the R. I. L. U. at the Centre and in the Localities.

What are the tasks of the Communist Parties so long as the united International does not exist, so long as unity does not prevail in every single country? They must work at increasing their influence, strengthen their activity among the masses, organisationally consolidate our political influence, strengthen our independent organisations (France, Czechoslovakia), increase pressure wherever our forces exist within the reformist unions, support and strengthen in every way the R.I.L.U., which, it will be remembered, does not merely embrace Communist workers. The R.I.L.U. includes, Communists, syndicalists and non-Party workers. We must not forget this.

Whereas the Comintern embraces approximately 2 million members, the number of supporters of the R.I.L.U. is six times as great. This fact alone should make the Communist Parties pay greater attention to the R.I.L.U., to its policy, to all proposals it makes, which are always co-ordinated with the Communist International.

During the first two years following the inauguration of the R.I.L.U. there were tendencies in its ranks which struggled against its close relations with the Comintern. But this anarchistic tendency has been outlived. Every revolutionary worker knows very well that the collaboration between the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. has arisen from necessity, and that it is in the interests of the working class. One may often hear anarchistic demagoguery from Social Democratic quarters about the R.I.L.U. being not an independent organisation, but subjected to the Comintern, etc. The Social Democrats want to assure the workers that the Amsterdam International is an "independent" organisation. It is true, that the Bureau of the Amsterdam International very frequently holds joint meetings with the Bureau of the Second International; they summon all kinds of conferences, congresses and jointly draw up resolutions; it is true, the leaders of the Amsterdam International sit in the Labour Office of the League of Nations, and take upon themselves obligations arising from decisions made by the representatives of bourgeois countries and of the employers' organisations, support imperialist treaties and agreements (Dawes Plan, Locarno) but all this is called "independence". When, however, the R.I.L.U. together with the Comintern organises campaigns and activities, this is called subjection, etc. This of course is nothing but sheer demagoguery. Every worker, whether Communist, Social Democrat or non-Party, should, with the aid of our press, understand what distinguishes the R.I.L.U. from the Amsterdam International, why there exists such a close collaboration between the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. and what demands we in general present to an International of trade unions. It should be remembered that we will only be able to achieve unity in the event of our untiringly continuing our policy and strengthening our ideological and political organisational influence. The stronger the Communist Parties, Comintern and R.I.L.U. become, the sooner will we achieve the aim of Unity.

#### Our Strong Points in the Application of United Front Tactics.

In turning to the problem of the united front and unity. I want to draw attention to our strong points, in order that I may afterwards more freely refer to the extremely delicate question of our errors. At the present time we may register a number of very considerable successes. These successes are to be explained by the fact that the Comintern has all the time corrected the errors of each Party, has endeavoured to straighten out the deviating lines, to give the necessary indications and thus assist the Party to overcome their weaknesses.

Our strong points in the struggle for unity lie in that an ever increasing number of our parties are beginning to approach correctly the non-party and social democratic workers, for therein lies the centre of gravity of the united front and unity tactics. Everything that brings the Communist workers nearer to the workers of other tendencies in the struggle, all methods tending to remove obstacles in the path to unity of action of the workers of various tendencies, everything that breaks down the barrier that has risen up between the Social Democrat and the Communist workers, all these things are leading us forward onto the path of conducting the united front policy and increasing our influence over the masses.

This tactic has been applied most successfully of all by our **British Communist Party**. It must be remembered that the Communist Party of Great Britain has only 6,500 members, but that its ideological-political influence extends over hundreds of thousands of workers. One can confidently say that in Great Britain one Communist influences at least 100 workers. How do we explain such a wide zone of influence for such a small Party? It is explained by the fact that it has been able to establish correct mutual relations between the Party and the directly sympathetic revolutionary, but not Communist workers and all kinds of left and progressive elements. Therein is the secret of success. It stands to reason that this ratio of one to a 100 contains a whole number of dangers. The Party is too small in order, in the event of serious social upheavals and inevitable fluctuations of the working class, to be able to retain behind it all the masses which are now under its political influence. The solution to this problem lies in the way of increasing the ranks of the **Communist Party**, but the fact that it has been able to create such a correlation, that a small party has influence on such large masses of workers proves that our British Communist Party is proceeding along correct paths. That is an example of what is real Bolshevism, not in words but in deeds.

An example of the successful application of the tactics of united front and of the unity of workers of various tendencies may also be seen in the recently ended conference of left workers in Sweden. There they succeeded in uniting about one third of the workers on the platform of the class struggle, and the Communists, Social Democrats and non-Party workers found a common language for defining immediate tasks facing the working class.

Attention should also be called to the exceptional flexibility and capacity for manoeuvring of the **Italian Communist Party** which has to operate under extremely difficult conditions, under the blows of fascism and reformism. The Party has succeeded in drawing into joint activity the workers of all tendencies and is becoming the soul of the anti-fascist movement. This is the very essence of live, always active, elastic and flexible Bolshevism.

As a general rule we may establish the following: the more we draw the social democratic and non-Party workers into joint activity with the Communist workers against the bourgeoisie, the more successfully are we applying the united front tactics and the more successfully are we Bolshevising our tactics. To be able to determine the moment, to calculate the correlation of forces, to sense the momentary needs of the working masses, to put forward the most vital practical slogans, to link up these slogans with the entire struggle of the working class, to move the working masses into the struggle for these slogans and to lead the masses behind us not formally but in deeds by our example of energy, persistence and whole-hearted devotion, — all this is Leninism in action. We are all learning a little, but by no means have all Parties learned the art of winning the masses. Is that not so, comrades?

#### Our Weak Points in the Struggle for Unity and in the Application of United Front Tactics.

What are our weak points? First of all and above all that we approach this question in a formal manner. A careful study of everything done on this field by our Parties and our organisations during the last 18 months will show that our errors are to be attributed mainly to the following.

1. **Overestimation of our forces and underestimation of the forces of our opponents:** A typical example of overestimation of our forces is the report of the **French Communist Party** on the Labour Congress of the Paris district. The "Humanite" published a statement that 1,200,000 workers were represented at the

congress. I was startled, when I read this statement. By such "statistics" we are not going to frighten our opponents, but we might discredit ourselves. Moreover the actual number of workers represented at this congress was imposing enough, and there was no necessity whatever to have resource to such "statistics".

This same figure bears witness to an underestimation of the forces of the Socialist Party and of the reformist trade unions, who in France still exercise considerable influence. It is true, in the Paris district, they are in a minority among the workers as compared to us, but if we take the number of adult proletariat in the Paris district and the number of the votes polled by us at all the elections, we will see that hundreds of thousands of workers are still voting for Socialists, radicals, etc., etc.

2. **Overestimation of the forces of the opponent:** There are comrades who consider the Amsterdam International an all-powerful organisation. They give way to the hypnotic influence of the Amsterdam leaders and mistake a semi-European organisation for a real world International. It seems to them to be well nigh invincible. The only answer to this is: one must not consider Amsterdam from the view point of the speeches and writings of its leaders; one must, on the contrary, study the masses, the fluctuation of forces, the internal struggle, one must take into consideration the new phenomenon in the world labour movement, and one must be able to see the direction of the new orientation of the masses.

3. **Lack of faith in the forces of the working class.** At one of the debates on unity, comrade Christescu, member of the C. C. of the Roumanian Communist Party and member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, made the following statement: "If the working class were class-conscious, it would bring about unity over the heads of the leaders. But owing to its cowardice and its slave spirit, the majority of the proletariat stands aside...." The least that can be said of this monstrous statement is that it is not the statement of a Communist but of a typical Social Democrat. People with this frame of mind must undergo a cure instead of occupying themselves with questions concerning the unity of the trade union movement.

4. **Putting forward as a platform for joint actions, demands unacceptable for social democratic workers.** There are many such examples in all the countries. There was a plethora of them in Germany, during the period when Ruth Fischer and Maslow were at the head of the C. C. There the united front was proposed only to get rid of the obligations undertaken with relation to the Comintern. At the same time, the authors of the proposal were all the time afraid that it would be accepted. In order to guard against such a "misfortune", the proposal was purposely formulated in such a manner as to render its acceptance impossible. The united front can only be established in a definite, concrete programme of action. Not all Parties took this into consideration.

5. **United front proposals by the upper stratum without drawing in the masses.** This is nothing more than a method of mere exchange of letters, not in order to achieve the united front, but to be rid of it. This kind of tactics was noticeable in Czecho-Slovakia on the part of the revolutionary trade unions. Something similar was also to be seen for a little while in France, etc. I must say that the proposal for a united front which reaches the masses only in the form of a literary document, which has not gone through the entire organisation, a proposal which has not been discussed in the primary nuclei of the Party and in the local trade unions, which has not reached the people, — such a proposal has only a literary and not a political importance.

6. **Unity at all cost, even to the extent of relinquishing one's views and principles.** This was noticeable last year in Jugoslavia when several leaders of the independent trade unions were hatching a conspiracy together with the Social Democrats against the Communist Party and the majority of the revolutionary workers, and sought to justify this on the plea that this was necessary for the re-establishment of unity. This kind of thing is also to be found in Roumania where some Party members make speeches which have nothing in common with Communism. In Roumania, the trade union movement was split, after the Social Democrats in 1923 with the aid of the police, had thrown out from the Trade Union Congress the majority of the Congress which consisted of Communists. During the unity negotiations the Communist Party and the Unitarian trade unions brought forward the following demands: 1) Establishment of workers

democracy; 2) admission to the trade unions of any workers regardless of their political opinions; 3) convocation of an All-Roumanian trade union congress to decide on the basis for uniting the trade unions. The reformists replied by the following counter-proposal: 1) trade unions must join Amsterdam; 2) leadership of the trade union movement in the country to be handed over to the reformists; 3) every Communist trade union official, and also every trade union member who carries on Communist propaganda is to be expelled from the trade union. And in spite of this highly provocative reply, the same Communist Christescu proposed to accept the ultimatum of the Roumanian Social Democrats, using the following argument in favour of his proposal: "It think that we can imitate Lenin's attitude at the Brest Litovsk negotiations when, to guarantee the future success of the revolution, he deemed it necessary to accept some (!) rather unacceptable conditions of the German imperialists."

This is no longer liquidationism, it is something much worse. Particularly absurd is the reference to Brest Litovsk. Can one really compare the Amsterdam trade unions with the armed to the teeth German imperialism? Christescu's appeal to Lenin is vain. He has nothing to do with this. These are the results of the formula "unity at all costs"!

7. **Passive attitude to the expulsion of Communists from trade unions out of regard to a mistaken idea of unity.** The most brilliant — if such a thing can be called brilliant — example are the tactics of the Belgian Communist Party. At the last trade union Congress, the Belgian Social Democrats passed a resolution concerning the expulsion of Communists from the trade unions. In connection with this, the following incident took place in Brussels. At the general meeting of the **Bronze workers union**, it was proposed to expel the leader of this union, the Communist **Lutens**, for his adherence to the Communist Party. The Communist Party and the unity group asked all their members and sympathisers to abstain from voting, with the following results: 294 abstained, 6 voted for the expulsion, and the Communist Lutens was expelled by 6 votes out of 300. The explanation for this remarkable strategy (the abstention proposal was brought forward at the general meeting by Lutens himself) we find in Paragraph 6 of the resolution of the C. C. of the Belgian Communist Party. This paragraph is as follows: "When expulsion measures are applied by reformist leaders, our fundamental policy must be based on the idea that it is better to sacrifice for the time being one or several comrades than to form a new organisation severed from the reformist trade unions."

The example of the bronze workers union has shown us the result of such tactics. This is more like **primitive Christian Communism** than Bolshevism, and I think that comrades **Jacquemotte** and **Overstraeten** will admit that themselves. If such a policy is adopted there will be unity, but there will be no Communists in the labour movement, and this would hardly suit our Belgian comrades. A little less Christian Communism, comrades!

8. **Not enough social democrats and non-party workers are drawn into the united front and unity organs.** I think that we could find many examples of such an erroneous method in our struggle for the united front. If we take the trouble to look for them we will find them in all countries. Let everyone present here recall to his mind the tactics of his Party and he will admit that this kind of mistakes has certainly taken place. And yet correct methods with respect to this question frequently mean so much. How are we to get into touch with the Social Democratic and non-Party masses if we are unable to make their representatives active participants in the organs which have been formed?

9. **Hostility between communist and social democratic workers.** This is one of the sore points in countries with a labour movement divided by Party allegiance. This kind of thing assumed very dangerous forms in Germany, where free fights took place between Social Democratic and Communist workers in the factories, where Communists broke up the meetings of Social Democratic workers, etc. These tactics are tactics for **frightening away** and not of capturing the masses. They must be severely condemned. People who do not understand that such tactics represent the nicest present which we could make to the bourgeoisie are not Communists, for they can only perpetuate the split in the labour movement and can make us despair of the possibility to permeate the masses with the ideas of Communism.

10. **Passivity and delay in the realisation of the united front and unity decisions.** This is a very serious evil in our work.

It is only now that unity tactics are beginning to be applied in Czechoslovakia. Much precious time has been wasted. In France neither the Party nor the Unitarian Confederation of Labour have found time to organise regular work within the reformist Confederation of Labour. This led to the weakening of the opposition which was so evident in August 1925, and to its being split up. In Germany only the first steps have been taken towards the formation of a **Left Wing**, in spite of the fact that the objective situation is very favourable for it, etc.

11. **United front with oneself.** Such a formula may appear strange, but unfortunately such cases exist. This is the result of tactics of self-isolation of the Communist Party. As the gulf separating Social Democratic and Communist workers is not growing narrower, but is rather becoming wider, there is the temptation to follow the line of least resistance: instead of establishing a united front with the workers of other tendencies and other organisations, a united front is established among Communists in the various organisations. This is not quite the same thing. Or to be more exact — it is not at all the same thing.

12. **Over eagerness for unity.** A few examples: In Germany the very correct course has been adopted of small independent unions joining the big reformist unions. This amalgamation has taken the form of the dissolution of the independent unions, regardless of the conditions made by the corresponding trade union bureaucrats. This had, for instance, the following result: In East Prussia of 60 groups of the independent agricultural labourers union only two went over to the reformist union, the other 58 groups simply disappeared. The same thing happened with the union of the expelled builders. The Social Democratic builders' union is making provocative conditions for the re-admission of the expelled members. And Communists form only one quarter of the Union. Under such conditions the slogan of unity at all costs and dissolution of one's own unions, must inevitably lead to a split within one's own ranks. Moreover, are the German comrades so sure that there will not be more exclusions in the very near future? As soon as you will become stronger the Social Democrats will again begin to throw whole local organisations out of the unions. How can non-Party and Social Democratic workers, who were expelled together with the Communists and because of the Communists, have confidence in the Party if we liquidate by such methods what was created in the struggle against expulsions. I think that in this case an excess of zeal was detrimental to the cause.

13. **One-sided fixation of period within which unity is to be established, regardless of the wishes of those with whom it is necessary to unite.** It has happened, that our comrades have fixed a certain date for the amalgamation, declaring beforehand that if by that date the reformist union has not decided for amalgamation the revolutionary union will be dissolved, and its members will have to join individually the reformist union. Such tactics are to say the least naive. What reformist union is going to discuss seriously the question of amalgamation if it knows that the workers will come into it anyhow. Such tactics do not stand criticism, they are worthless.

14. **Inadequate connection between united front proposals and concrete demands agitating the masses.** Did we have such unsuccessful actions? Yes, we had. Is it necessary to give examples? I think it will be better if I abstain from doing so, in order not to displease the company present, for I could find heaps and heaps of such examples in the activity of our Communist Parties.

15. **Substitution of the question as to the entry of the A. U. C. T. U. into the Amsterdam International for the slogan of fusion of the Proletariat and Amsterdam by means of an International Unity Congress.** Such a narrowing down of the question did take place in several countries. Thus the resolution of the Enlarged Central Committee of the British Communist Party twice mentions entry of the A. U. C. T. U. into Amsterdam. There was not enough clarity on this question in a section of the Communist press. This did harm to our propaganda and agitation for the relation between the A. U. C. T. U. and Amsterdam is only part of the difficult international problem of one militant trade union international. Let us hope that after the informative letter of the C. C. of the A. U. C. P. (B.) and after the decisions of this Plenum of the E. C. C. I., everything will be clear with respect to this question.

16. Issuing the slogan of recruiting new members for the reformist trade unions when at the same time there exists a national centre of revolutionary trade unions. Such ridiculous proposals were made by some comrades in Czechoslovakia. They did not spread very much, but nevertheless it is necessary to mention this frame of mind among Communists if only in order to be able to eradicate it once and for all.

17. A liquidatory frame of mind with respect to organisations adhering to the Profintern and even with respect to the Profintern itself. In Czechoslovakia there were for instance press statements to the following effect: "The sooner the Federation of National Trade Union Sections is liquidated the better." Immediately after the V Congress of the Comintern a liquidatory tendency made its appearance in France, without, however, taking a definite form. This tendency issued the slogan of the dissolution of the Unitarian Confederation of Labour and of the entry of Unitarian trade unions into the reformist trade unions. Fortunately for the French Communist Party and for the entire French labour movement, these moods were nipped in the bud by the Comintern.

Similar moods were noticeable among comrades with respect to the Profintern, which, they considered, should liquidate itself in the name of unity. Such liquidatory tendencies have made their appearance from time to time, but they disappeared as soon as the Comintern turned its attention to them. I am convinced that moods of this kind will not interfere with the growth and development of the Profintern.

18. Under-estimation of difficulties in the struggle for unity and after the first failures, disillusionment and lack of faith in the possibility to achieve unity. This was particularly noticeable in France just before the inter-Federal Congress in August of the current year. Many comrades entirely forgot that this Congress was convened only by us, that the reformists had not only refused to participate in it, but even did not want to hear anything about it. Nevertheless, not only in the case of rank and file workers, but even in the case of some leaders, reaction set in after the failure to hold the congress, and the opinion was expressed that the cause of unity was a hopeless cause in France. To be swayed too much by sentiment is a very dangerous thing in the struggle for unity.

19. The unsystematic and sporadic character of the work for the united front and unity. We notice that in many countries the struggle for unity is sporadic. The impression is that the united front is talked about only on holidays when acute questions spring up, on week days one forgets all about them. One must realise once and for all that the welding together of the workers on the basis of the everyday struggle is the most important and urgent task. This must be our everyday work and occupy our holidays as well.

20. A not sympathetic enough attitude to the opposition springing up in the reformist trade unions. In some countries not sufficient attention and help is given to this opposition (France). In other countries no sooner is this opposition taking shape and form, than demands are made on it which frighten away some of the Left inclined elements and the opposition falls to pieces before it has had time to become properly established. To help the opposition, to support it is one thing, and to prematurely force on it its political self-determination is quite another thing.

21. Application of the same forms of polemics and methods of struggle against reformists before the establishment of the united front and during the negotiations about the united front and joint actions, etc. I think, comrades, that you will relieve me of the necessity to give examples. Let the representatives of the Parties here remember the examples of the united front in their respective countries, and let them from the viewpoint of all the errors pointed out here by me verify if everything was as it should be before and especially during the practice of the united front. I maintain that all the Parties must not only study most carefully what should be done but especially what should not be done if the united front and our struggle for unity are to be successful.

22. Inability during strikes to establish the united front, to unite the more active progressive elements among the strikers, and to show to the workers in practice that the party is urging a fight to a finish and is doing everything to achieve victory. In connection with this, I should like to give a negative example: I mean the recent three-months strike of 158,000 miners in the anthracite mines of America. What was the task before our American Party? To mobilise all the Party forces which had

any relation to the miners, to consider together with the committee of the progressive miners a plan of action, to concentrate agitation and propaganda around the miners' demands, to organise the most determined and consistent elements among the strikers around the slogan to fight to a finish, to send to the strike area people popular among the miners and experienced in the leadership of big economic conflicts. Well, comrades, just the opposite of all this was done: the Party came forward in the strike area with its own slogans, it began a struggle for the right of the Communist Party to organise meetings under the Communist banner, popular Communist miners were not sent there; as representative of the Party, Comrade Gitlow, member of the Politbureau, was sent there. He is a tailor by profession who must have found it rather difficult to deal with the complicated situation there. To cap this, Comrade Gitlow, when the strike was at its height, published in the Party press an article containing amongst other things the following statement: "The anthracite strike is the result of an agreement between the trade union officials and the mineowners. It will only benefit the latter. The strike does not give anything to the miners, it will only cause untold suffering to the workers of the Eastern States, who depend on anthracite coal. The anthracite strike is the logical outcome of class collaboration." I am not going to analyse this monstrous and irresponsible statement which was made in the midst of the strike, I leave it to you to put the right estimate on this remarkable strategy. I will only tell you about the result of the strike. After a 3-months strike the workers were defeated and the Party became isolated from the miners.

Such are, on the whole, the failures to be seen in our work. Of such failures there were as you see 22. Let us look upon them as 22 examples of how not to apply tactics of the united front and of unity.

One might form for oneself a very dark picture from the incidents enumerated by me. I mentioned so many failures that our enemies might make use of them and say that the tactics of the united front were nothing but a chain of errors. But this would be the usual demagogical utilisation of our self-criticism. They will not succeed in frightening us with their reformist demagogy. In the interests of revolution, we have exposed, are exposing and will expose our own errors, we know how to remedy them in order to pursue our path of the capture of the masses.

#### Struggle against the expulsion of revolutionary workers, against split and the persecution of the revolutionary trade union movement.

It behoves all Communist Parties to carry on a relentless struggle against the expulsion of Communists and against splits in the trade union movement which are being worked up in a considerable number of countries. There are already a series of facts which attest that the reformists are pursuing their split policy. This policy is pursued with extraordinary energy in Finland, for with their own forces the reformists of Finland are not able to capture the trade unions. They therefore set their hopes, in addition to the sympathy and assistance from the Amsterdam International, on the real help of the Finnish police.

In connection with this question, the Finnish Social Democrats tread the path already trodden by their Balkan colleagues: the Yugoslavian, Bulgarian and Roumanian Social Democracy. It is a well known fact, that in the Balkans 90% of the organised workers were behind the Profintern, and that only after the brutal persecutions of the White Terror, mass arrests and the handing over of the clubs and premises into the hands of the Social Democrats by the police, did the latter succeed in forming their own organisations which are of course affiliated to the Amsterdam International. Our Communist press does not give sufficient information about the monstrous persecution of the workers in the Balkans. Only few people know what a close fraternal union exists between the police and Social Democracy and the leaders of the Amsterdam Unions in Yugoslavia, Roumania and Bulgaria. At present, after the military coup d'Etat in Greece, matters there are proceeding on the same lines. The Finnish Social Democrats become jealous and they want to Balkanise the labour movement of Finland. We have not the least doubt that the Finnish proletariat will know how to resist this Social Democratic split policy. However, it is the duty of all the Communist Parties and for the entire revolutionary labour movement, and also of all honest workers, regardless of political convictions, to raise their voice in protest against the

expulsion of Communists from the trade unions, against the splitting of trade union organisations, against the persecution of the revolutionary movement, police and reformist raids, etc. The cause of these workers who have to carry on their struggle under the terrible conditions of oppression and white terror is the cause of the entire International. Comrades, a little more attention on your part to these countries! A little more attention to the courageous proletariat of these small countries which has to carry on a very hard struggle against its own bourgeoisie and Social Democracy.

#### Trade Unions — to the Masses!

Comrades, after six years have passed since the establishment of the Communist International, it seems rather strange to speak of the necessity of work in the trade unions. But one has to speak about it, for the figures given by the Parties in their reports concerning their members' participation in trade union work show that things are in a parlous state with respect to this. Such terms as "75% trade union work", "90% trade union work" are very much in vogue with us at present, but nevertheless you will not find a single Party except the British where even a 20% effort has been made with respect to trade union activity.

Study for yourselves in all the Parties the distribution of forces and means, verify the number of Party members in the trade unions, and especially the number of Party members active in the trade unions, and you will realise that with respect to work in the trade unions it is rather a question of words and not deeds. An excellent rule exists in the French Communist Party that no one can be a member of the Party unless he be a member of a trade union, and that no one can be admitted to the Party without being able to produce his trade union membership card. One can welcome such a decision. But if you take the trouble to verify what Party members do in the trade unions, how they work, you will soon learn that at the very least 90% of Party members are passive members of trade unions. The same is probably the case in other countries. The German Communist Party made an attempt to find out in the districts what percentage of Party members is to be found in trade unions and what percentage takes an active part in the trade union movement. It transpired that in the industrial Rhenish-Westphalian district only 50% of the Party membership are in trade unions. Some districts say that only 5-6% are active in the trade union movement. According to the data of the last congress of the American Communist Party, 32% of the Party membership are members of trade unions. What about the remaining 68%? Of these 26% cannot be members of trade unions, of course, not because they are millionaires, but because there are no trade unions for housewives. The remaining 42% who could join trade unions evidently think it beneath their Communist dignity to be members of trade unions. They prefer "high" politics to the rough everyday work. This communist aristocratism, or to put it more plainly communist lack of common sense must be most decidedly combated in all the Parties. The Communist International cannot allow the decisions of all its congresses to be systematically infringed. But what does the fact that 42% of the membership of the American Communist Party do not wish to belong to trade unions and to work actively in them really mean? What term are we to apply to this sabotaging of the decisions of the Communist International?

I consider that the discussion which has taken place in the American Party, which set agitation and propaganda in the trade unions against the struggle for control, for organisational leadership in the trade unions extremely dangerous. I consider setting one against the other pure metaphysics. We carry on agitation and propaganda, we organise the masses and this must find its organisational expression, otherwise our entire work will be ineffective. The slogan of the capture of the trade unions means struggle for leadership of the trade unions. One thing is quite clear: All our Parties must again take up very seriously work in the trade unions and must compel all communists under the threat of expulsion not only to join trade unions, but also to work actively in them.

#### The Programme of Action.

##### Conclusion.

The programme of action placed before you is far from complete and all-embracing. It does not contain many points, first of all, in order not to make it too formidable. On the other hand a whole series of points have been advisedly omitted. For instance, struggle against the Dawes Plan, against Locarno, etc. Why were they omitted? Because this programme of action must serve as a platform for the mobilisation of broad masses. With respect to this platform there can be agreement with us and the Social Democratic workers, whilst such questions as the Dawes Plan, Locarno, or for instance, fraternisation amongst soldiers in the present colonial wars, cannot serve as a basis for joint actions. It was very little heeded among us that in Alsace Lorraine the united front between the Unitarian trade unions and the trade unions adhering to the reformist Confederation of labour fell to pieces because we introduced into the programme of the Congress which was being convened, the slogan of the self-determination of Alsace-Lorraine including separation. As a Communist slogan or a slogan of the revolutionary trade unions it was quite right, but such a slogan cannot unite the workers of different tendencies, and therefore it should have been eliminated from that programme of action which was meant for joint actions of workers of different tendencies. I was guided by these considerations when I was drawing up the model draft programme of action. One should certainly bear in mind that it is essential to have in every country a practical programme of action not only of a general national character, but also for every district, industry, etc. It is in this sense and with these reservations that I recommend the Enlarged Plenum of the Comintern Executive to adopt the programme of action, showing thereby in practice that we are not placing unacceptable demands before the Social Democratic workers for our joint actions.

I must say in conclusion that we have quite a large number of theses and excellent resolutions, but that our practical work is not always in keeping with the decisions which we have made. I should like to conclude my report by expressing the conviction that all the Communist Parties will do full justice to the obligations which they have taken upon themselves now with regard to the trade union movement, and that we will take in hand in good earnest and in a Bolshevik Leninist manner our work for the capture of the trade unions, for the capture of the majority of the working class, which means that we will do our utmost to prepare the workers for the social revolution.

(Twelfth Session, 2nd March 1926.)

## Discussion on the Trade Union Question.

Comrade Smeral in the chair.

The discussion on the trade union question was opened by Comrade Tomsky\*) who was received with applause.

### Comrade Tomsky:

The fight for unity is, at the present time, assuming a serious character. Negotiations between the Russian trade unions and Amsterdam are not to be expected in the immediate future, as events hitherto have shown that Amsterdam intends to drag the question on until the next Trade Union Congress in 1927. At the same time the attention of our English comrades is being distracted from international questions by the great struggle of the coal-miners. The situation is such that Amsterdam will not take another step forwards, whilst the R.I.L.U. cannot make any more concessions.

We have already formally yielded on the point of the negotiations taking place between the Internationals; the Russian trade unions are now negotiating with Amsterdam. This, of course, is taking place with the full consent of the R.I.L.U. and is only a compromise in order to reach the goal more quickly. The English comrades of the Unity Committee made another compromise in an accommodating way by refraining from acerbity in their dealings with Amsterdam. At the last Conference of the Anglo-Russian Committee, we showed impatience and said that if Amsterdam continued to sabotage the affair, we should change our tone; the English comrades, however, begged us to wait a little longer. The last resolution of the Anglo-Russian Committee declares that we can no longer ignore the attacks which Amsterdam launches against us in spite of our correct behaviour.

Further concessions are impossible, we cannot regard unity as a one-sided kow-towing to Amsterdam; it would be treachery were we to drop the old International without creating a new one.

This situation of things being dragged on is a partial success for Amsterdam, for any standstill is dangerous because it carries with it a threat of disappointments and scepticism. For this reason, the position demands special tenacity on the part of the Communist parties and the mobilisation of all the forces for unity. We must admit of no demoralisation, we must make it clear to all workers that, if Amsterdam does not wish for unity, we must force unity on it.

This demands the fulfilment of various tasks. The chief task is to become clear as to the character of the fight for unity, which is not a manoeuvre in the bad sense, not a pitfall for unmasking the truth, but our object is to unite all the forces of the working class against the bourgeoisie, in the true sense of the word, and, looked at in this way, the fight for unity is indeed a class manoeuvre of the proletariat against its class enemy.

Although postponement is a characteristic feature of this struggle, we must not change the great tasks of the fight for unity into small coin and abandon the great aim for the sake of small local success. The fight for unity is a fight for the lead of the international proletariat. The fight for unity does not imply abandoning the fight against Reformism, it is on the contrary a continuation of the fight with more appropriate methods.

Our task is further to develop the large independent trade union organisations by recruiting the unorganised workers on a larger scale than hitherto.

The fight for unity does not mean dissolving the independent organisations. As long as the R.I.L.U. exists, they must grow stronger. The stronger we are, the more easily can we force unity on the enemies of unity.

Our next task is the mobilisation of all those in favour of unity round our slogan; first of the communists, then of the

\*) As the detailed report of Comrade Tomsky's speech is not yet to hand we can only publish the shortened, telegraphic report of this speech. The detailed report will follow later. Ed.

best Left Social Democratic elements and finally of the non-party masses. We must make use of concrete events to demonstrate the importance of international unity. The conflict of the English miners, for instance, would not be so dangerous if the English workers were backed by an honest, strong and united International; in that case the workers' demands might be very different. Such examples occur daily, and the workers are beginning to understand the idea of unity. This is also proved by the influx of workers' delegations to the Soviet Union. If properly supported by the Communist parties, the workers' delegations may be of great value. In mobilising the non-party masses, we must not, at first, make use of too extreme slogans, but must issue slogans which can be directly grasped by the working masses, so as to develop gradually the consciousness of the masses.

Our comrades do not yet realise universally that the winning over of the non-party masses is not merely a question of agitation and propaganda, but a question of detail work in the trade unions and in the other non-party Labour organisations. We cannot win over the trade unions by fine speeches about the Dawes plan and Locarno. The workers must see that when the Communists demand something, they can and will carry it through. The fictitious policy of bidding is only injurious. The transformation of the trade unions into fighting organisations for Communism is only possible through participation in the monotony of every-day work. The Bolsheviki themselves learnt this by personal experience after the London Conference in 1907.

If the Reformists say that our trade unions are dependent on the party, we reply that there are no such things as independent trade unions. There are trade unions which are under the influence of priests. The Social Democrats call that being influenced, we call it being led. Another question is, what methods do we use in carrying out the work; not that of commanding but of convincing through the good trade union work of the Communist fractions. This, however, is only possible if the Communists understand trade union work down to the smallest details and can lead even in the least important questions. We must choose the best comrades for the work in the trade unions, according to Lenin those comrades who at any moment clearly recognise the needs of the workers, who do not idealise the workers, nor fear their prejudices, but patiently educate them and win their confidence by proving their comradeship in every question. The party must, of course, take care that the danger of running after the masses is avoided.

It is a much discussed question whether it is necessary to capture the leadership and the apparatus of the trade unions. There is only one answer to this, try if you can to win over the German trade unions as long as the leadership of the trade unions is in the hands of the Reformists. You will meet with sympathy but you will not be the leaders. Apart from detail work, we must not of course neglect propaganda; it is important to link up every-day work with the whole question of the class war. We can only win over the trade unions if we work in this way.

Our immediate tasks then are: more detail work, the development of fractions and less talk. If there is a temporary standstill on one front of trade union unity, we must endeavour to mobilise the masses at another section of the front. And, if Amsterdam will have nothing to do with unity, we shall either force unity on it through the demands of the broad masses or, if we only understand how to do good, patient trade union work, we shall win over the masses to establish international trade union unity even without Amsterdam. (Applause).

### Comrade Hardy (England):

Comrades,

In dealing with the trade union question I want firstly to say that the line of the Comintern has been proved correct in applying it to our general trade union work. However, we do see manifested in some of our Parties a tendency even yet to regard the trade union line of the Comintern as one which will lead to the dilution of our revolutionary policy and the liquidation of the Right wing reactionaries in the trade union movement. I think,

we are safe in saying that there is no danger so far as this is concerned, for the officials of the trade union movement will tion of our revolutionary movement if we get too near to the certainly not commence to make a United Front with the Communist Party or the Left Wing elements in the trade union movement until we have organised the rank and file in the trade union branches into a **Left Wing opposition**. The Comintern policy applied to the British trade union movement has proved to be **fairly successful** in achieving at least a movement towards the Left.

Now the tasks of our movement are not easy. We find in the **British trade union movement** many divergencies. In analysing the position we are bound to measure the forces as they are organised by the capitalist class. For instance, we find the working class movement in Britain is divided into 1135 different trade unions. We find our General Council of the T. U. C. has not got the necessary power to direct and use the masses of workers who are organised under its auspices. The result is we have many clashes between the different Executives of the Unions. All these tendencies are weighing heavily upon the movement. These things the minority movement and our Party took into consideration in moulding a policy for creating a **Left-Wing Trade Union movement**. We have also got to understand what the working class are thinking about. As a matter of fact, it is only by our comrades and our Parties recognising and carrying out the tasks in the trade union movement that we are able to gain influence amongst the masses. It is only by preparing our comrades to accept the smallest Trade Union position that we can ever expect to achieve anything or to bring our Party close enough to the masses to have the necessary influence which we desire to obtain.

Now as to the immediate tasks of the Party in creating a Left Wing Trade Union movement. We have created a psychology within the Party that one is not a good Communist unless one gets into the trade union movement, and therefore our intellectuals, have sought and obtained membership in the trade unions. That should be aimed at as the first preliminary task of our Parties in organising the Left Wing movement. This is absolutely necessary and we believe it will be well for all Communists throughout the world to take this message home and to try to obtain this 100% inside our Parties.

Another point is, we must first find out what the working class is thinking about. It is what the working class is thinking about and not what we as Communists want to have the working class think, that should concern us.

We must work with our comrades to seek and obtain influential positions in the Trade Union Movement. But there is a tendency on the part of some of our comrades when our comrades obtain these positions sometimes to say — now that you are a Communist trade union official you must do as we lay it down and every part of our policy must be put into operation. Comrades, this is an impossible attitude towards trade union officials who are Communists. We must not put the comrades in an impossible position. This attitude will lose influence for the Party. If a comrade's influence as a trade union official is to be of the least practical value he has to be practical. He must deal with the things that the workers want, leading them step by step. We have to be very flexible with our policy. We know that even Communists can learn from the rank and file of the Labour movement when it comes to perfecting programmes which the masses are desirous of. Therefore, we must not issue programmes to the workers until we have at least got the endorsement of Left Wing comrades. The rank and file workers feel they are a part of this movement, and that we, as Communists have absolute confidence in their drafting their own programmes, etc.

Now much depends upon our organisation. We must build an organisation which will allow of defence and retreat, if necessary, at the same time increasing our influence in the process. First of all, we must be able to measure organisationally our individual following; secondly, we must also have the trade union branches, feeling that they have an interest in our movement. Thirdly, we must prepare the basis of an organisation which will allow of building a future organisation along industrial lines.

In the **Minority Movement** we have taken in all those individual members throughout the country who feel that individually they want to be a part of our movement. Those members of the trade unions we welcome, we have made them individual members. Secondly, we find that in many cases we have sufficient

influence in the trade union branches and our comrades, our adherents and sympathisers are anxious to do something for the Left wing and for the **Minority Movement**. What do we say to these comrades? Do we say: "Each individual must join, if you agree with us"? No, we say: "If you have sufficient influence in your branch, if you feel your organisation is ready to be a part and parcel of our movement, then affiliate your organisation at a specified fee, to the **Minority Movement**."

We know very well, although the **Minority Movement** is very small in an organisational way, that the **Right wing reactionaries** are preparing an attack upon us and for this reason we have a three-fold organisation. First, we have our individual membership and second, affiliation of the trade union branches, and third, our minority groups organised around the Communist nuclei in the factories bringing in ever wider groups of workers in order to strengthen ourselves at the very base of industry by building workshop minority groups.

Now let us see another phase. How do we see the capitalist class organising? In the period since the war the capitalist class have been consolidating themselves as a fighting machine against the workers and the concentration of capital that has gone on since then has gone on along two lines — one on the horizontal line — a general federation of capitalists and on the other hand, we find a consolidation of industrial capital into the perpendicular trusts to look after their particular interests and their particular monopolies. Our **Minority Movement** had considered this very carefully. The general side of the **Minority Movement** can be compared with the horizontal combinations of capital especially dealing with the political questions which we have to deal with inside of the trade union movement. Alongside of this we have developed our perpendicular industrial sections to deal with the economic demands of the working class in their everyday fight in the industries themselves.

Now there is another question in regard to carrying our political problems to the Trade Union branches. For instance, the working class of our country is very insular in its outlook. In dealing with questions we have to be very careful not to become doctrinaire in our attitude in the trade union branches. Every question must be coupled with economic conditions the workers are thinking about in their own movements. Our Party was the first to influence the workers and to inform the trade union movement of the significance of the **Shanghai strike**. The **Minority Movement** was the first in Britain to tell the working class movement by a circular what the Shanghai strike meant to them. We didn't merely tell them it was their duty to support the Chinese workers but we told them that in the Chinese factory of the Lever Bros. Sun Light Soap Company workers were producing soap at the wages of 10 pence a day and this was not only interfering with the workers in Port Sunlight but with all the workers in Britain. We told them that the **cotton mill workers**, working at 10 pence and a shilling a day were interfering with the workers in Lancashire. Because of this, the workers realise that the **Chinese question** is not only a Chinese question but actually a **British trade union question** to help the Chinese workers raise their standard of living.

There are still in our movement certain **syndicalist tendencies**. Some comrades still say: "Well, if the Communist Party, if the Comintern policy is a trade union policy, then the industrialists — the syndicalists — have been right in the past in saying that this is where we should organise to make a revolution, — therefore, no need for a Communist Party". In order to win the syndicalists, it is absolutely necessary to point out to them the functions of our Party. We must bring these elements into the Party by convincing them that the Communist Party is a Party that is important to the workers in order to consider the technique of the revolutionary movement which cannot be done inside the trade union movement. With the **revolutionary industrialists** we have much in common, we must point out the absolute necessity for a **Communist Party**.

Now there is another point in combating syndicalism that we must consider. In Britain we find the dominating organisation is the **Federation of British Industries**. There are thousands of syndicalist union members who do not even realise that the capitalist class have their various auxiliary organisations and their various parliamentary industrial groups. The **Federation of British Industries** have their big group working as a fraction in parliament. Yet many workers cannot understand the necessity for a **revolutionary fraction of the working class inside parliament**, to gain influence, to use it as a national rostrum

for working class interests. I believe that if the syndicalists could view the Communist work of a parliamentary character from this point of view, there could be no reason why they should not be influenced towards the Communist Party and the Comintern policies.

Our colonial work in Britain is comparatively easier than it was a few years ago. There are reasons for this. First of all industrialism is developing in the colonies, the imperialist policy is expanding so rapidly that keen competition from India and from China is now a serious permanent factor in the British working class movement. For the first time in the history of Britain we were able to rally the British workers behind the striking textile workers in Bombay because it was realised that there is a constant danger to the position of the workers in Britain if they do not come to the assistance of the workers in India. We believe that we shall be able in the near future to intensify our colonial work in order that we may reach and bring the workers of India closer to the workers of Great Britain.

We have another important phase to our movement — the question of the co-operative movement. We see ourselves confronted with a mobilisation in Britain of all the forces that capitalism can mobilise. We see them creating an organisation known as the O. M. S., an organisation for maintaining essential services. We see in this organisation a huge strikebreaking agency. Coupled with this, the British capitalists have given orders to every council throughout the country to create a special technical apparatus for the purpose of carrying on this special service. The British trade union movement must counter this move on the part of the capitalists, and this is just where the co-operative is very important to us. We are insisting that in the trade union movement of Britain every trade unionist must be a cooperator, must be a member of the Cooperative Society. In order to influence this cooperative movement towards working with the general trade union movement and becoming a representative of it, we call upon all the local, national and central bodies of the working class to struggle for the utilisation of this instrument in the fight against the employers. Already an agitation has commenced in the trade union branches to the effect that the trade union movement must take steps for feeding the working class by making arrangements for credits through the Cooperative movement.

Now to the question of International Trade Union Unity. On the face of it, it seems as if we have entered, as Comrade Tomsky said, a blind alley. It is not, however, quite so black as that, because the enormous amount of agitation that has been carried on through the world for International Trade Union Unity has so influenced the workers who are organised in the Amsterdam Trade Unions, that there is a constant ferment going on. We are here more concerned with the practical work of international Trade Union Unity. We want unity for revolutionary purposes, and that is clear to all our members. But how to do this? We must link it up with the struggle of the workers, and not speak in abstract terms to the workers. You can only make the working class realise the necessity for unity when you come down to the branches, and show to these workers that by not having international trade union unity they are going to suffer defeat by the capitalists who are organised on an international scale.

So we find in Britain that wages today are below the 1900 standard — that is real wages, and we are pointing out that in regard to this international Unity the reason they are below is not entirely a national question, it is an international question. In other words, we must inform the workers that the conditions existing on the continent or in Britain or in the East will have their reflection on the conditions prevailing in the particular country of which we happen to be speaking. We hope in the near future that we shall be able, through the Profintern and through our general agitation, to come forward again with the question of an International Conference. Already in Britain we are agitating for this in order to prepare at least to defend the workers when they are attacked by the employers in Britain. This question of international unity was carried into every branch of the trade union movement in Britain, and we have progressed very far. The Anglo-Russian Advisory Committee did not come out of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress simply because they desired unity. It is because we brought the question of international Trade Union Unity into every local organisation of the British Trade Union Congress. And we

made special demands from the Trade Union General Council itself on this question and the success can be measured by the fact we were able to hold an International Trade Union Unity Conference composed of at least 600 delegates representing over 600,000 workers in Britain.

I want to deal slightly before I close with the achievements of the Minority Movement. First of all, I want to say that our task is not an easy one. In Britain we are confronted with the most astute politicians. I believe, we have more practical diplomats in the reactionary labour movement than we have anywhere else in the world. We have also an apathetic mass of workers who are not politically conscious of anything. We have also very many problems within the trade union movement, all the economic ties of the workers to the trade unions through their various insurance schemes, through their death benefits, and so on. Many workers will believe in the political parliamentary illusion that the workers can obtain through parliament, by peaceful methods, certain concessions and revolution, and even some of the so-called revolutionary workers believe they can obtain a revolution by building up a parliamentary Labour Party. The Minority Movement was an organisation that was able to crystallise and bring into action the feeling which it has been able to create. We have been able to influence large masses of the workers in Britain. We have the best lead, we have agitational qualities of our programme which give us the basis and which will naturally draw the workers closer and closer to us.

Our immediate problem, is to mobilise the feeling we have engendered in the Trade Unions, to give it definite form for action. Our comrades can learn from our experience. In order to gain influence we must first trade unionise our members. This can be done by trade-unionising our press. Long theoretical articles are good in their place. They are a danger when occupying the whole or the major portion of our space. Articles on the worker's life and his Trade Union attract. If is the non-communist workers we are after. Theoretist polemics on Dawes and Locarno interest our members, but not the average Trade Unionist. Bread and butter problems first, high politics later is the method to adopt. It was our Party and the Minority Movement that made the Industrial Alliance possible in Great Britain. Two years ago in Britain there was very little organised form of a Left-Wing character. The Councils of Action were created for a definite purpose. These were created in localities where possible, for the purpose of uniting the working class at the bottom for definite joint action inside the various unions to which they belonged. After the districts began to move, the logical outcome was to extend that Council of Action into a National Alliance and it was only after a considerable period of agitation that the Industrial Alliance was created in Great Britain. This is a very good instrument, and we are careful to point out that this instrument is only a temporary one to be used in a case of emergency. The Trade Union Congress had very little power. It has no power even today to call a strike of any particular organisation, and the Industrial Alliance was a means by which we could bring into operation a larger body of men who must be united if they are to win against the employers. This had a double effect. It has the effect of changing the constitution of the unions, in order to allow them to be brought into action by calling out a strike through the Alliance. We have gone step by step, leading to all power to the General Council. German comrades spoke against this question of giving all power to the General Council and this is a very important point. They said: If you give all power to the reactionaries they will use the working class movement as they choose on behalf of imperialism. We took the attitude that we have got to create a powerful revolutionary body. So we are not afraid of this giving all power to the General Council. And why? Because all power to the General Council has not come from the Trade Union Congress. Giving power to the General Council has been a fight and it has been a fight of years. And in the progress of agitation the working class began to understand the necessity for all power to the Council. Should the General Council use that power wrongly, it only means we have got another additional task before us of forcing them in the right direction, which direction they will ultimately have to take.

The resolution recently decided by the Trade Union Congress pledging to aid the miners means very much to the British trade union movement. It means that there is a moving towards the Left. Our resolution on imperialism passed at the T. U. C. was only possible as a result of intensive agitation and the mobili-

sation of our Party members inside of the Trade Union movement, with definite instructions, and after many months of agitation, that we were able to get this resolution adopted together with resolutions on Dawes, Shop Committees, International Trade Union Unity, etc.

Much work remains to be done in strengthening our fractions in the trade union movement. However, we have a basis for this work in the Resolution on Factory Committees passed at the last Trade Union Congress. We were able to get established, officially and legally, by the trade union congress that the trade union movement in Britain shall be based on workshop committees, factory committees, and this has given us an additional task, which we take very seriously. We must mobilise more and more of our Party members to become the steel framework within the Factory committees already existing in the factories.

I want to conclude by saying that in regard to the coming struggle, we are now in the process of organising another national conference. At the beginning of the Minority Movement, we were able to organise the first national conference. Of course, this was possible because our Party had done much work previously. At this first conference we were able to get to the conference 270 delegates representing 200,000 workers. At our next congress, the International Unity Congress, we had 600 delegates representing over 600,000 workers. At our last national congress we had 683 delegates representing slightly over

700,000 workers, representing the rank and file of the trade union branches.

Our national conference is called for two purposes: First, to bring together the working rank and file from the trade union movement to discuss their immediate problems, and how to overcome the threatened offensive, the second they will discuss is how to overcome capitalist violence, how to defend our trade union rights. Our British comrades, two comrades of the minority movement and 10 others are in prison because of the successes obtained through organising these various conferences. So the answer to these arrests has been to call another national conference, call a conference of the workers for action. These conferences we are organising are a counter-offensive against the government and the capitalist class of Great Britain. We must plan how the Party can best meet the offensive and how the rank and file of the Left Wing movement is going to meet the capitalist offensive. We know well that the subsidy of the coal industry cannot go on for ever. A revolutionary situation is bound to develop. The workers must come together. We are organising ourselves in order to resist the capitalist attack, in order that we can maintain the existing trade union movement.

I will close by saying that I trust that the Communist Parties throughout the world will realise that the British movement will need the assistance of the various Parties and that we shall take steps towards bringing in ever more assistance from the various countries.

**(Thirteenth Session, March 3, 1926.)**

Chairman: Comrade Geschke.

Before I proceed to the actual agenda, I have in the name of the German Delegation to make the following Declaration regarding the Speech of Comrade Clara Zetkin.

"The German Delegation declares regarding the speech of Comrade Clara Zetkin:

1. We do not share the attitude of Comrade Clara Zetkin

to the total complex of the questions of October 1923 and the practical lessons of these events.

2. In the appraisal of the events of October 1923, the German Delegation still stands on the basis of the criticism of the Communist International, as laid down in the decisions of the V World Congress of the C. I.

3. The German Delegation approves the fundamental line of the criticisms of Comrade Clara Zetkin regarding the Maslow-Ruth Fischer Group".

## **Continuation of the Discussion on the Trade Union Question.**

### **Comrade Jaquemotte (Belgium):**

I would like to evade the pitfalls encountered by many comrades in the discussion on Zinoviev's report. Most of them dealt indeed with the question from the national viewpoint, failing to see the problem in its entirety.

However, the Belgian delegation will find it difficult to deal with the general aspect of the question without protesting against the interpretation which Lozovsky gave to the policy which we adopted in the question of the struggle against the expulsions practiced by the reformists.

Comrades, we are attending an Enlarged Executive, but at times one could imagine that we are attending an "Enlarged Confessional". We have had here a number of penitents wearing the white shirt and a cord round the neck presenting their "mea culpa". Many comrades confessed their errors, but we must refute the accusations made by Lozovsky against us, and I think that we cannot ignore this attack on us in spite of the very amicable character of this attack, for it shows a failure to understand the decisions of the V Congress of the C. I. and of the III Congress of the R. I. L. U. He proposes to us a revision of the tactics adopted by the C. I. and by the R. I. L. U. and in this case I do not think that we ought to do penance.

What does Lozovsky? He says that in Germany and Belgium serious errors were committed through the adoption of a policy which had a paralysing effect on the activity of the Communist Party and which subordinated our activity to the sweet will of the Social Democrats. To show that his thesis was well-founded he tells us: "You did not even vote against the expulsions."

Comrades, I think that the passage of our resolution which Lozovsky read to you and in which we point out that during the present historical epoch our policy must be such as to secure contact with the masses, expresses a very earnest application of united front tactics. The united front is not a policy for a temporary period of capitalist stabilisation. The united front is still more necessary in a period when the proletariat is struggling against the bourgeoisie. Thus we can say that Comrade Lozovsky invites us to revise our united front tactics just at the moment when the situation in Belgium is extremely favourable for the development of the Communist Party.

In Belgium the national debt is at present nine times bigger than before the war.

It is obvious that in a country where more than 70% of the expenditure of the general budget is utilised for paying interest and for the preparation of the next imperialist war, it is absolutely impossible to carry on a policy of social reforms.

This situation coincided with the access to power of the Poulet-Vandervelde government, the most democratic government which Belgium has known. And it was this government which had to declare publicly that it was impossible to contemplate a policy of social reforms. This has caused considerable discontent among large sections of workers and provides an opportunity to strengthen the opposition of those sections of workers which are to be found in the trade unions. This opposition, as yet very weak, is growing stronger every day. It is also necessary to point out the growing resistance of the reformist leaders against the activity of the Communists. And just at the moment when they provoke us, when our policy should be to stick to the existing labour organisations and not to

leave the central reformist organisations in order to form others, at the moment when we should do our utmost to retain our positions in these organisations, Lozovsky tells us that we must carry on a straight fight against expulsions and that we must organise other trade unions for the discontented elements. Such tactics will perhaps enable us to form a General Revolutionary Confederation of Labour with 60—70,000 members, such a thing is quite possible (Lozovsky: It is not as simple as all that).

It is quite easy. It is all the more easy as there is already a tendency in favour of the establishment of such a C. G. T.

It is infinitely more difficult to organise a real trade union opposition, because those who lead it must have a very clear conception of the role which they have to play.

We can say that the policy suggested to us by Lozovsky's attack on our tactics is the policy of least effort, which will bring us into a blind alley. Well, we prefer a policy which is much more difficult, but which is a constructive policy enabling us to organise a bonafide opposition within the Belgian Trade Unions.

We must give a still more precise reply to Lozovsky. How does the matter stand?

There is Mertens motion, on the strength of which Communists cannot hold responsible and leading posts in trade union organisations. How was this motion applied? It was applied in a rather rudimentary fashion, because of our policy which is pliable and at the same time very clear.

A Communist was nominated as a candidate of the Party at the provincial elections in November 1925. The reformist C. C. demanded his exclusion. A several months struggle ensued, a struggle particulars of which the R. I. L. U. will find in our press and in the reports which were sent. Once, against the wish of the majority of the Brussels bronzeworkers branch, the C. C. expelled a comrade. Lozovsky tells us: "This is a splendid opportunity for a struggle, for a battle, and agitation platform, etc etc., we must put up a fight." What were the results of such an attitude? The C. C. formed another branch, disavowed the old branch, and succeeded in isolating our elements with the result that in 6 months time nothing is heard of the bronzeworkers branch. And yet you say that if the expulsion of a comrade from a local branch is demanded, this comrade must allow himself to be expelled and must not endeavour to take away with him our Minority which must remain there in order to carry on our work. If that is so, why do not you apply this in every branch? For it is evident that a branch which does not submit would meet with the same fate as the branch which I have just mentioned: it would be expelled.

Comrades, I think that the Commission which is studying this question will have to tell you plainly if we are right or wrong.

You approve of the activity of the British Party and of its work in the Trade Unions, but there is no doubt whatever that these successes are due to a very supple policy.

As far as Belgium is concerned, I think that we adopted a correct policy. I think that it is preferable to sacrifice several comrades than to carry on the struggle to the exclusion of a whole branch, impeding thereby our movement.

In Belgium the trade union problem is more serious than in France, where out of 12 million workers only about 750,000 are

organised. In Belgium out of a proletariat of 1,500,000 industrial workers 600,000 are organised in the Belgian Trade Union Commission and about 200,000 in the Christian Trade Unions. I am convinced that if the Executive approves our tactics we will be able to achieve considerable successes in a very short space of time just as Great Britain.

The reformist leaders realise the correctness of our tactics and I think that it is essential for us to preserve our sangfroid, and I also think that Lozovsky is losing his.

In conclusion I would like to call the attention of all the comrades to another question. It is connected with the theses about the development of trade unions in the colonial countries. Lozovsky points out that this development has produced in the Amsterdam International a reactionary activity of considerable magnitude. I think that special emphasis should be laid on one aspect of the problem, and I should like to point out the interest which the Amsterdam and the Second Internationals are showing in connection with activity in the colonial countries.

Only recently Vandervelde, in a speech delivered at Charleroi on the spirit of Locarno to the Socialist ex-Soldiers' organisation, dealt with the question of increased activity among the colonial peoples. This is what he said:

„Of the 1,700 million people inhabiting the surface of the globe there are 550 million whites, to 1150 million coloured people: 500 million yellow, 450 million brown, 150 million black and 40 million red in Amerika.

It would seem that these multitudes, but yesterday passive and docile, are throughout the world animated by the same spirit of unrest and revolt. This is the secret of the revolutions in Mexico, Peru, Equador, of Islamic proselytism in Africa, of the non-cooperation movement in India, of the nationalist urge among the 400 million Chinese. And everywhere — in Morocco, Tunis, Syria, Egypt, India, Mossul, Canton and Mexico, Bolshevik propaganda is spreading against Anglo-Saxon capitalism, against all the colonial powers, against those who are in pursuit of oil, or gold. Soviet Russia claims to be the vanguard and the protector of all these oppressed races.

That these attempts at revolution, at world bolshevisation which are in reality nothing but an exploitation of the racial movements which have nothing to do with Communism, are directed against the great capitalist powers and are a menace to world peace and to what deserves to be saved of our present civilisation, is as clear as daylight.“

For Vandervelde the struggle carried on by the Russian revolution and by Communism in defence of the colonial peoples must inevitably lead to war. Well, comrades, it goes without saying that the Amsterdam and the Second Internationals which identified themselves with his views, will endeavour either to annex the trade union movement of the colonial peoples in order to be its leaders and guides, or to arouse the white workers against the Trade unions of the coloured workers. Both solutions are dangerous and the R. I. L. U. must do its utmost to counter-act these moves directed against the trade union movement in the colonies. It would be as well to supplement what has been said here on this subject by information which we can place before the Commission.

In conclusion we would like to express only one wish, that Lozovsky should realise that he has lost sangfroid. He was probably not aware that our policy is that which the C. I. and the R. I. L. U. have always counselled us. I therefore request the Enlarged Executive to be very precise and very clear, for otherwise tendencies will spring up and develop in Belgium which will lead to a trade union split. I therefore insist on a very clear attitude being adopted on this question.

## Chairman Comrade Geschke:

I have read to the following

### Declaration:

„In the published stenographic report of the speech of Comrade Bukharin at the Plenum of the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern my interjection 'It (the mistakes of the Polish Central Committee) was a definite policy', — was incorrectly reported and given as "with me it was policy". This creates the impression that I abandoned my whole line formulated at the Third Party Conference of the C. P. of Poland. Of course, this is by no means the case. It was only a question of the deviation which found expression in our ultra-left failures and which, for the rest, were partly corrected towards the end of our activity.

L. Domski.“

## Comrade Kohn (Czechoslovakia):

Comrades, in Czechoslovakia an attack of the capitalists on the workers has been going on for several years. This is connected with the deflation policy of the bourgeoisie. In this policy it was a question of a struggle for power between finance and industrial capital which ended with a complete victory for finance capital headed by the Zivno-Bank. Finance capital also proves its power over industrial capital wherever it comes to a wage conflict with the workers, for which industrial capital has no inclination. Thus we had a few months ago in the textile industry of Central and East Bohemia a wage conflict which the interested industrial circles would have gladly avoided, because they just then had big orders on hand. However, they were compelled by finance capital to enter on a conflict, as the latter looks upon all such questions from the viewpoint of the interests of the entire capitalist class. The employers are well organised in the Federation of Czechoslovakian Employers' Organisations, and in their struggle against the standard of living of the workers they naturally aim first of all at reducing wages.

Not only have real wages since the end of the war decreased by 40 to 50%, but according to the statistics of the International Labour Office Czechoslovakia occupies at present 14th place among the most important capitalist States in this respect.

And in spite of the fact that we do not feel in our country the direct effects of the Dawes Plan, wages, thanks to the policy of the Bourgeoisie and of their reformist lackeys, are 20% lower than in defeated Germany. It is only by such wage reductions and by reducing the standard of living of the workers that the bourgeoisie of Czechoslovakia has succeeded in bringing about a temporary and partial economic stabilisation and in raising somewhat the competitive capacity of the Czechoslovakian industry. The other methods to achieve this end were: placing an enormous burden of taxation on the shoulders of the masses, a continuous rise in the cost of living and a continuous increase of the productivity of the factories and undertakings. This productivity is achieved by the Americanisation of labour methods, the installation of improved machinery and greater productivity of labour. The utmost is squeezed out of the workers on the strength of a big reserve force of unemployed, which reservoir can always be drawn upon and which constitutes thereby a goad to the other workers to do their utmost. With the help of the Socialists, the State unemployment dole was abolished by the Czechoslovakian bourgeoisie and was replaced by the Ghent system. This means that the task of supporting the unemployed has now been thrown on to the trade unions, the State only making a grant towards it. Whilst in 1923, when the State was responsible for the unemployment dole, unemployed workers received 400 million crowns from the State and 40 million from the trade unions, the latter continue now to pay about 40 million, to which the State adds another 40 million. This means a saving to the State of nine-tenths of its former expenditure at the cost of the unemployed. We fought most energetically against the introduction of the Ghent system, but the reformists carried it through, in the hope of profiting by it organisationally, in which however they were disappointed. Productivity of labour has so increased that a miner in the Moravian-Ostrau district who previous to the war produced 8½ cwts. of coal and after the war 5 cwts., is producing now 11 cwts. which means that he produces 27% more than in the pre-war period.

This, together with the treacherous activity of the reformists, was mainly due to the splitting up of the trade unions. We have in our country 11 central trade union federations and 450 unions, a considerable number of which is not affiliated to any of these 11 central federations. Four of these federations stand on the basis of class struggle and have organised about 850,000 workers. However, only about one quarter of the workers is amalgamated in these central organisations, and as they do not work together, great harm accrues therefrom to the workers. These four federations are: the Czech, the German Social Democratic trade union federation, the Czech Socialist and the Czech Revolutionary Trade Union Federation (I. A. G.) All our efforts to mobilise the trade unions affiliated to these federations for the united front were at first entirely unsuccessful.

However, a year ago vague Left tendencies became noticeable in the reformist trade unions of Czechoslovakia. We made use of these tendencies for a united front propaganda and the reformists were compelled, under the pressure of their own rank and file, to a manoeuvre which was something new for them and to which I wish to draw your attention as it is of international

interest. The reformists who hitherto had raved against any kind of united front suddenly adopted **methods of provocation**. They pretended to be willing to form a united front with us in order, during the struggle, to attack from behind and consciously to discredit the idea of the united front. This method they applied for the first time in **Moravian Ostrau**, where the workers wanted to carry on a joint struggle for higher wages and where 97% of the factory workers, regardless as to what trade union they belonged, voted for joint struggle. Before the struggle the Executive of the Social Democratic Miners Union and also its central organ, and the Social Democratic press, declared that the reformists will observe solidarity in the struggle. They wrote that Communists can go confidently into the struggle and they will soon see that Social Democrats never betray a workers' struggle.

In fact we succeeded in Moravian Ostrau, where we had 13,000 Party members and 14,000 members of the revolutionary union who were under our leadership, to lead into the struggle not only these 14,000, but also 50,000 workers belonging to various trade union organisations. However, as soon as the struggle commenced, the reformists began a furious agitation against the strike and made use of every kind of terrorist means to break it up. They, thereby, compelled us to end the strike after a week, all the workers returning to their work in the most orderly manner. **During this great Ostrau strike we committed several errors** which I would like to bring to your attention: We underestimated the influence of the enemy in the Ostrau district, where we did not succeed to bring, in addition to the miners, the metal workers of the Witkowitz iron works into the struggle. But owing to the terrorist methods of the Social Democrats there were also, after a few days, desertions from the fighting front among the miners. The cause of this was that although we had taken the vote in the factories we had not done so in the reformist trade union groups owing to **lack of fractions**. This gave an opportunity to the reformist functionaries to excuse their action by pointing to this very fact. We also over-estimated our own forces in other districts, especially in the **Kladno district** where it did not come to a solidarity strike because some leading comrades — also due to our errors — showed too much scepticism with respect to the forces slumbering in the proletariat and placed too much trust in the information received from a man whom they had sent to Moravian Ostrau to report on the strike situation, and who subsequently turned out to be a traitor to the Party. This struggle has taught us to be more cautious in our actions. This does not of course mean that we must evade a struggle if there is prospect of success. But we must weigh our own forces very carefully and must do the same with respect to the forces of those workers whom we are bound to attract to us in spite of all the counter-efforts of the reformists.

In all subsequent economic struggles we endeavoured to **apply the tactics of the united front**. In doing so, during the wage conflicts of the textile workers of Central and East Bohemia, we committed the error of applying these tactics too much from above. Our comrades formed, together with the representatives of the reformist unions, a committee of action which negotiated with the employers. But they omitted to keep all the workers continuously informed concerning the work of this committee of action and thus gave the reformists an opportunity to betray the workers behind closed doors. **During the struggle of the metal workers of North Bohemia** we were able to carry out a successful unity campaign only in some branches of the metal industry. In the other branches the campaign failed so that we did not have the desired result. We were very successful with united front tactics in the **struggle of the textile workers of North Bohemia**. There, too, the reformists tried the method of provocation as in Moravian Ostrau. They promised solidarity with us in the event of struggle and yet they were together with the employers and were greatly interested, in the struggle ending in a defeat as we were on the eve of the parliamentary elections and they were eager to make political capital against us out of this defeat. The employers, who offered ridiculously small wage increase, refused to give a penny more, as such a concession would have jeopardised their contemplated offensive against the wages of the workers. In this struggle we acted very energetically and at the same time very cautiously. We made best possible use of all the working class forces at our disposal, but did not extend the scope of the struggle more than it was necessary. By means of such tactics we not only succeeded in bringing to nought the provocations of the Social Democrats, against whom we were able to prove that in this case they were making common cause with the employers, but we were also to achieve a success which, ex-

pressed in figures, was not so very great and yet represented a breach in the position of the employers.

These tactics of ours have strengthened the feeling of solidarity among the workers of Czechoslovakia who are all of them showing great eagerness to put up a fight for higher wages. They are determined to have a united front in this fight. This pressure on the part of the workers has given rise to another phenomenon among the Social Democrats. Whilst formerly they were against any wage increase they are at present compelled to subscribe to it. This two-faced attitude finds its expression in the New Year's number of their central organ "**Pravo Lidu**" which contained an article by their ex-Minister Srba who speaks of the absolute necessity of a wage increase and also another article of the present Minister of Finance Englis, who opposes any wage increase as inimical to the consolidation of the State.

In his report Comrade **Lozovsky** reproached us quite rightly that it was not until only a few months ago that we commenced a systematic campaign for trade union unity and that we had wasted much valuable time. But this does not mean that at the time when we did not carry on the struggle systematically, we were altogether passive. It meant, that we had to do important preliminary work without which this action would have been impossible. It was a question of overcoming the separatist tradition in the trade unions which was firmly imbedded not only among the workers in the reformist unions, but also among our own adherents in the revolutionary trade unions. Our own comrades, working in the Trade unions, failed for a long time to understand the role of the Party as leader with respect to the trade unions, and the necessity of fraction work in all trade unions without any distinction whatever. They were for a long time opponents of any kind of fraction work, and it goes without saying that without fractions no serious action for the uniting of the trade unions can be carried out. We had to carry on a serious ideological struggle against these comrades and it was only at the recent congress of the International Trade Union Federation that we came to a theoretical agreement with them. But in spite of this, we must admit that some of them are even now in their innermost hearts not convinced of the correctness of this policy.

But even in those times we carried on propaganda for the uniting of the trade unions to an extent sufficient to compel the reformists, under the pressure of the rank and file, to consent to negotiations with us, which can also be considered as a new phenomenon. It goes without saying, that they were not in earnest with these negotiations, that they merely wanted to show to their members that the negotiations, through our fault, did not lead to anything. Thus it came to unity negotiations with respect to metal workers, railwaymen, builders and woodworkers. In all these cases the reformists, just as they do on an international scale, laid down the condition: entry into the Czech reformist central trade union organisation, abandonment of all fraction work. We set up against this: unconditional negotiations and declared our willingness to form at a unity congress a new joint organisation in which the minority will have to submit to the majority. Naturally, the reformists would not hear of it and broke off the negotiations. But the question of trade union unity is becoming more and more popular among the workers.

In connection with this I would like to point out that in our negotiations with the reformists, the great difficulty was that we had not yet achieved the unity of the revolutionary trade unions in Czechoslovakia. This deprived us to a certain extent of the moral authority for an energetic campaign for trade union unity. The main reason for the revolutionary trade unions not yet being united in our country is — that our comrades failed for a long time to understand that we must have Communist fractions also in the revolutionary trade unions. It was only when the Profintern demanded peremptorily that this unification should take place and that we insisted on it being done that it became evident how necessary these fractions were. When the situation became very critical **Tetenka**, the chairman of the revolutionary Builders' Union and **Teska** the chairman of the revolutionary Wood Workers' Union proved to be enemies of our movement and went over openly to the camp of the bourgeoisie. This made it all the more necessary to hasten with the formation of fractions which we succeeded in doing with considerable difficulty. **Tetenka** in the Builders' Union offered opposition with the usual reformist means: by simply throwing out of the union the majority of the union executive and the

entire control commission. However, we succeeded in winning over almost all the members. They are now demanding the convocation of an emergency trade union congress, and it will inevitably come to such a Congress. This was an occasion to show the workers what fraction work means and this has helped us to overcome prejudices concerning it.

The reformists are naturally making their countermoves. Tetenka, for instance, has now formed a joint committee of action with the other builders' unions. This committee is nothing but an organisation of the upper stratum not requiring the amalgamation of organisations according to districts and groups. The meaning of such a committee is that the builders' union is to be not only under the domination of Tetenka, but also under that of the other reformists. And yet Tetenka is loudly asserting that this is the way to unification with which no one must interfere. We have naturally been able to enlighten the workers as to the nature of such a "unity action". Just before our international trade union congress the Czech and German reformist central trade union federations held a conference at which Oudegeest was present. At this conference they decided for unity and they also decided to hold another conference in April to discuss this, and at the same time create a joint committee of action with the preservation of the independence of the central organisations. This is, what these gentry claim to be the way to unity. In reality it is nothing but an attempt to curb the workers' eagerness for trade union unity.

The workers' delegation which visited Russia has done good propaganda work for the idea of trade union unity. Unfortunately, it has as yet not been possible to make an organisational use of this movement to the extent that is necessary. This depends greatly on our positions in the reformist unions. Our positions there are very weak, for most of our adherents have gone over to the revolutionary trade unions. We must strengthen these positions of ours, but of course, without wanting to weaken the I. A. V. On the contrary, the very clear decisions of our Party Congress declare that the indifferent elements should be recruited for the I. A. V. We have now issued a slogan to recruit 50,000 new members for the Party, and we are combining this slogan with the other slogan of leaving these new Party comrades, insofar as they are organised in trade unions, in their reformist trade unions, and to weld them there into strong fractions. Consolidation of the positions in the reformist trade unions does not of course mean that we do not realise the fact that we stand greatly in need of the revolutionary trade unions, of the I. A. V. The I. A. V. was a historical necessity not only at its establishment, but is so even now. Comrade Lozovsky mentioned in his report that there is a tendency among us to recruit indifferent elements for the reformist trade unions instead of for the I. A. V., and even a tendency to liquidate the I. A. V. prematurely (interjection by Lozovsky: This was not meant against the Party).

We take cognisance of the fact that it was not meant against the Party, for I should like to point out that wherever Party comrades held such opinions we opposed them very energetically. But on the other hand, side by side with the consolidation of the I. A. V. we need quite as much the consolidation of our positions in the reformist trade unions and a systematic support of all oppositional elements in these trade unions. It is only with the simultaneous consolidation of the I. A. V. and of the opposition in the reformist trade unions that the campaign for trade union unity in Czechoslovakia can be brought to a successful conclusion. (Applause.)

### Comrade Monmousseau (France):

I think that the essential point in the trade union situation in France is the existence of two C. G. T. s.

The existence of two C. G. T. s. naturally places the question on a very different plane as compared with other countries where there is a united movement.

But it is not only a question of two C. G. T. s.; there is also that of the correlation of forces and tendencies between the two C. G. T. s. which constitutes a supplementary question for the determination of our tasks in the trade unions. On the other hand, this must be reviewed in connection with the development of economic events, the influence of the left bloc, and the crisis of capitalism, for it is certain that all this reflects on the trade union movement in a manner different from that in other countries.

There is a tendency to represent the forces of the two C. G. T. s. as being palpably equal; I would like to make clear one or two matters which will indicate our real importance and which will allow us to have a sound basis for our analysis.

I will take two very important points:

1. The strategic situation in the federations.
2. The situation in the different districts.

The railwaymen's Federation in France has always represented the backbone of the trade union movement. This organisation was always the strongest in numbers. If we compare the numerical strength of the railwaymen's organisations, the unitary and the reformist, we will see that the Unitary Federation actually has more than a hundred thousand members of whom 90,000 pay dues regularly. The reformist federation does not comprise more than 60,000 of whom 40—50,000 are dues paying members.

If we take the great strategic centres as a means of estimation, we can assert that at Paris the unitary organisation is particularly strong, while the reformists are without any influence. At Lyons it is the same thing; we have all the forces in our hands. On the other hand, the reformist unions are strong in the North where they have such important centres as Amiens, Boulogne, Calais, St. Omer, etc. They are also very strong on the Southern line and the secondary companies.

The correlation of forces between the two federations is clearly in our favour. We must also note a different strategic situation according to districts. The Paris district represents a serious basis for estimation, and the numbers of our district union of the Paris region are at the present 130,000 members, whereas the reformists have only 60,000.

We are much stronger in the metal and building industries and amongst the railwaymen. The reformists are only strong in the organisations of employees of the big shops and of commercial institutions. They are also strong amongst the suburban gas workers, as the municipalities are in the hands of the Socialists.

That is, how the matter stands in the Paris District. In the North — the Social Democratic and reformist base — our numbers amount to only one-third of the reformists. In the Pas-de-Calais we have only a quarter of the influence. The whole of this region constitutes a stronghold of the reformists.

In some important centres such as Creusot, for example, there is no trade union basis, neither for the reformists nor for us. These districts are in the hands of the Socialist Municipalities which do not constitute any trade union basis.

If we take this elementary analysis as a basis of estimation, we can say that the correlation of forces is clearly favourable for the C. G. T. U. as against the C. G. T.

During the year 1925, the reformists made progress on certain fields. They found a basis for recruiting amongst the forces of the Left bloc and thus roped in all the officials' organisations whose numbers may be estimated at 90,000 members. It must also be taken into consideration that this movement is crystallising more and more towards the Left.

The existence of two C. G. T. s., therefore makes the problem of unity very complicated. But we must also analyse a quite characteristic feature which has been making its appearance in the trade union movement since 1925. This is the closer and closer liaison between the reformist general staff and the bourgeoisie. This rapprochement has found its clear expression in the participation of Jouhaux at the meeting of the League of Nations. Jouhaux' attitude now places him not on the Right of the Socialists, but on the Left Wing of the bourgeoisie.

A second very characteristic point is the entry of the C. G. T. into the national economic council. The very composition of the National Council, in which there participate on the one hand the representatives of Big Industry, the Large Trusts, Banks, big railway companies, mines, etc., and on the other hand the representatives of the big trade union federations, shows that this intimate collaboration is continually increasing.

The political questions which interest the working class are not discussed in this Council. The plan of the bourgeoisie, just as of the C. G. T., is to extend this apparatus of collaboration right up to the administrative basis of the State. It can, therefore, be foreseen that such a liaison will be established between the organisation of the State and the working class organisations at all points throughout the whole country.

One other important point to note: this is the influence of the bankruptcy of the Left Bloc. The bankruptcy of the Left Bloc began to make itself felt at the commencement of 1925, when the Government commenced to show hesitation. The masses could not see the way out of the situation. At that time a Left began to develop within the reformist ranks. It found its expression in three or four reformist leaders who represent, to a small extent, the old anarcho-syndicalist tendency while on the other hand, they still represent the Social Democratic tendency.

We only began our action for the development of this Left Wing after our return from the Enlarged Executive. We engaged in a wide activity for unity and our slogan was well received. We had to denounce and unmask a great number of reformist manoeuvres, we gained contact with the masses, we made ourselves known, we brought up the question of unity at the bottom and linked it up with immediate demands, we then launched our slogan for the August congress. We accepted the formula of the R. I. L. U. on the national scale, because the situation developed practically on the same plane.

We are told that the inter-Confederal Congress was a fiasco. I am against this formula. We do not really think that this Congress could be a success and that it could realise unity.

But do you think that the reformists, when they saw us start this campaign, left us to ourselves and kept their arms folded? Their apparatus which, moreover, is stronger than ours (a press with several hundred thousand copies circulation, municipalities, prefectural authorities, old trade union cadres, glued to the armchairs in the Labour Exchanges) was put into action, and every time that we went to any place the reformist leaders went there also, provoking new conferences in the trade union councils, and in general, partially destroying the whole work accomplished. Those are the conditions in which we came to the Congress.

How did we do our work? At the opening of the Congress we voted a resolution demanding the dispatch of a delegation to the reformist congress. Jouhaux and his general staff, who did not want to receive our delegation, had to submit this to the vote which was favourable to us.

Then the Congress was called upon to make an announcement on participation in the inter-federal congress. The whole leadership took up a categorical attitude against participation in the inter-federal congress, but three hundred odd unions pronounced against Jouhaux and in favour of participation. This was a second manifestation, a second political victory. But the reformist leaders did not sleep. By means of their threat that all unions who participated in the inter-federal congress would be liable to exclusion, they succeeded in checking the movement and causing the struggle to be abandoned. The masses who had been favourable to unity, came to heel. It is necessary to understand properly and widely utilise this experience.

The third leader of the Minority, Carpentier, who really had behind him a very important movement, came to our unity conference. There was an extreme correlation of forces at this conference: 23 reformist delegates representing 30 trade unions, including that of Carpentier, whereas there were 1000 or 1100 unitary delegates.

In order not to get them excluded from their organisations, in order not to swamp the reformist delegates in a majority of unitary delegates, we decided to transform the inter-confederal congress into a unity conference comprising an equal number of representatives from both C. G. T. s. What was the result of this conference? Its political importance must be emphasised. It was the first time that reformist delegates have dared to break the formal discipline of the C. G. T. Secondly, the reformist delegates agreed with us that we should no longer make the Amiens Charter the basis and starting point for unity negotiations. This is extremely important. The conference took for its basis the immediate demands; on the other hand the programme established, had to include the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

I think that these manifestations of the development of unity are not accidental. The true nature of the scission in France should be well understood; it should be well understood that in 1921 the reformist leaders, submerged by the masses, expelled from their midst whole trade union bodies and made scission inevitable when we had the majority of organised workers in our hands.

These features can help us to judge the perspectives of the Left Wing movement, of the movement for unity, so that we can

trace, in a more exact manner, the road that will lead us to the united front and union unity.

The question of unity with the leaders and with the working masses is presented on quite different planes. In order to lay down an exact tactic, the situation must be properly understood.

What were the results and significance of the August Congress?

The first victory we obtained gave us good results despite certain reverses. First of all there were only 300 votes in favour of unity. Then there was the vote on the resolution on discipline which was adopted against 118 votes. Finally, the fact that 25 delegates only came to our inter-federal congress. These were the three cold douches which we received. What was the situation after the August Congress? Two moods became apparent. The first, which had not the experience of our struggles, always presented the questions under the aspect of unity, unity at all costs, and displayed a very serious attitude. As was seen at the Congress, unity was not realised, they were demoralised and this was absolute defeatism, liquidationism.

The other, on the contrary, who understood our battles and who still live in the realm of the theories of the active minorities, would no longer hear of unity and intended restricting their work in the C. G. T. U.

Such were the moods. We had a positive side: the formation of a Left Wing in the C. G. T., but on the other hand we had scepticism within our own ranks and we had to carry out our work of correction in this respect.

The difficulties must neither be overestimated nor underestimated. We are living in a period of crisis of capitalism, of financial crisis, and we see that the Government is incapable of solving the situation. All this confronts the bosses and the workers with the question of struggle for and against immediate demands. We conducted great campaigns, we set up programmes of immediate demands, we undertook the formation of mixed committees for leading the struggle etc. On the other hand, we saw fascism presenting concrete demands of the working class. All this constituted an ensemble of factors which caused the bosses to realise that they could only get out of the situation by throwing a few crumbs to the working class.

The reformists tried to take the immediate demands out of the hands of the Communists and set to work at this. Wherever we have trade union organisations, wherever the reformists could find three faithful workers, they systematically created trade unions. It was then, that a violent reaction from below was produced in our federation against such a tactic. An absolute spirit of revenge made its appearance. We had to combat this mood and this demanded time.

We must not only observe a response of the reformists to our unity tactics, we must also observe something else. In placing themselves upon the basis of immediate demands, the reformists want to take the leadership of the working class struggle into their own hands. This is a manoeuvre of the bosses who, realising that they must grant certain concessions, do not want to leave the Communists at the head of the movement.

But, Comrade Lozovsky, there is also the example of the great French magnate Coty. This is in regard to the recruiting that the bosses are conducting for the trade union organisations. Thus it was that one saw Coty locking out our workers belonging to the C. G. T. U. and to the Party and recommending them to constitute a reformist trade union. He is thus disposed to deal with those who adhere to the trade union organisation which gives him every guarantee of security. We see the reactionary bosses recruiting for fascist trade unions and the bosses of the Left Bloc recruiting for the C. G. T.

It should also be noted that this struggle is not only directed against us, but also against the reformist trade unions who are inclined towards unity. The bosses are seeking by every means to deprive our organisations of their leaders and there is a systematic repression against our fighters.

If I am telling you of all these facts it is simply to give you an idea of all our difficulties.

Now I only have to state the position, role and importance of the C. G. T. U. in the daily struggle.

I have indicated what was the nature of the scission, which was not of an artificial nature, but really profound, and it must be said in order to understand well and to characterise the C. G. T. U. that it contains all the elements which have acquired

a very strong class-consciousness during the struggle against the leaders since 1914—1921, and that it represents in the eyes of the workers the real banner of the class struggle.

This means to say that we must work in the sphere of the struggle for immediate demands and at the same time in the sphere of the struggle for unity . . . .

How does the question arise in France? There have been many errors committed in our work. It is obvious that much criticism could be made of the C. G. T. U. We have certainly still many negative sides. Have we lost much time? No, because our struggle has been difficult. From the very first, as soon as we had constituted the C. G. T. U. we engaged on a struggle against the anarcho-syndicalists who were in the majority at that time. From 1922 up to the Congress of Bourges, we were not able to present the problem of immediate demands because it was impossible to do this in this anarcho-syndicalist atmosphere. It was only after Bourges that we inaugurated the positive side of our activity, i. e. that we could envisage the problem of immediate demands.

The question of the united front now assumes really great importance, as the united front has already passed the propaganda stage and is entering a period of concrete realisation.

I think that the question of the practical realisation of the united front arises in connection with the development of economic events which influence in a more or less strong manner the various categories of workers. It cannot be pretended that we could always conduct the policy of the united front on a national scale.

No, the united front is realised in accordance with events which confront the masses, and at different epochs according to the necessity of the struggle.

The problem of demands first confronted in a very acute form the various categories of officials and notably the railwaymen. And it is just in this federation where the scission first came about, and where the question of the united front first arose and where this was realised. We can draw certain political conclusions from this fact concerning the development of the Left within the Social Democratic forces.

What did we do when, in December and January last, the problem of immediate demands arose in a very acute fashion? We made an appeal to all organisations to form a united front for drawing up demands and for action.

The Catholic leaders who were influenced by their proletarian followers accepted. But the reformist leaders were too embarrassed and at first they refused; then, when they saw that they were isolated, they decided to come in. We brought up the question of demands in the mixed committee, but at the same time we placed it before the masses. During the negotiations the masses did not remain passive in many centres; they formed

the united front from below. When, at the end of three weeks of negotiations, the reformist leaders withdrew, they created great discontent among the masses and were severely condemned by their own followers who, in the majority of cases, continued their work with us.

The second point I would like to touch on is the strike of October 12th. I would like to say a few words to those who consider that the October 12th strike was a fiasco.

There is no discrimination to make between the Party and the C. G. T. U., but it should be noted that the strike affected all trade union organisations and that the repercussions of this strike had immediate results on these organisations more than on the organisations of the Party. I think that we should claim the strike of October 12th as a great political victory, not only for the French proletariat, not only for the C. G. T. U. alone, but as a great political victory for the whole international movement.

We demonstrated to the working class that the Communist Party and the C. G. T. U. were by no means a continuation of the capitulation of 1914. The war in Morocco is a real war, and we clearly presented the question of the struggle against the war while the war was in full swing.

Another side of the question which must be emphasised was that it had to indicate to the colonial peoples, to all the oppressed peoples, our solidarity in the struggle against imperialism. It also had to demonstrate forcibly that in all Sections of the Communist International there were still battalions capable of supporting the colonial peoples.

The preparation of the strike can, of course, be criticised, but we showed with force that we were an organisation capable of leading the working class to struggle, and we showed the colonial peoples that our proletariat was capable of keeping its promises.

In order to establish the relations between the Party and the trade unions, the work of the Communists in the unions, the contact with the masses and the united front, we must bear in mind that in France there exists a syndicalist tradition dating from 1906 and even before, and that the syndicalist revolutionary minority preceded the constitution of a Communist Party and of the Left which has to be formed in the Socialist Party. This means that the Communist Party was ideologically formed after the formation of the syndicalist revolutionary minority. A third factor to be taken into consideration is that there are two C. G. T. s. in France.

I therefore think comrades, that it is impossible to trace out properly the tasks of organisation and of real work in France if we do not take into consideration these three points, and I am certain that my observations will be maintained.

(Fourteenth Session, March 4, 1926.)

## Continuation of the Discussion on the Trade Union Question.

### Chairman Comrade Geschke:

I have the following telegram to read:

"The publicly active women of Bashkira, Canton Ufa, assembled in Conference, greet the Enlarged Plenum of the E. C. C. I. and express the conviction that the representatives of the Communist Parties will tell the women of the East and of the West of our feelings of solidarity with them. We wish you success in the close cooperative work of your Parties.

On behalf of the Conference,  
The Presidium."

### Comrade Redens (Poland):

Comrades, the attitude toward the trade union question is one of the best means of measuring the maturity of the Communist Party. It is an expression of how well the Communist Party understands the relations between the Party and the working class and the leadership of the labour movement.

We, in Poland, have committed two mistakes, which, however, are not specifically Polish, but have an international character. At the end of 1923 the **opportunist tendency** — that tendency under the domination of which the Party loses its own character for the sake of unity and dissolves into social democracy — brought to us defeat. We heard about that from Comrade Jacquemotte (Belgium).

But after this mistake was realised, we committed **ultra-left mistakes**, to which a great number of Parties succumbed since the Fifth Congress? It consisted mainly in the isolation of the vanguard of the masses of workers from the rest of the working class. This isolation then led to the fact that the trade union movement did not develop, and did not rally round the Communist Party. We have said a lot about the necessity of a mass movement, but in reality the whole thing was nothing but agitation. The fight for international unity was really conducted only by the Soviet Russian and British trade unions. But now that the fight for international unity has assumed a prolonged laborious character, the task confronts the Communist Parties of other countries to participate actively in it, to take up agitational methods for mobilising the masses, to take active part in the fight for partial demands, and to organise the oppositional elements which are more and more coming to the front in the labour movement. The situation for the solution of these tasks is exceedingly favourable.

Poland is the junction where the pathways of the imperialist powers cross. The influence of **American and British capital** in Poland is growing. American trusts have gained control of whole branches of industry in Poland, for instance, the match industry, the tobacco industry, the zinc industry, which is just now the subject of negotiation with the Harriman Trust. The workers of Poland must not only toil for profits of the Polish bourgeoisie, but also for the surplus profits of American capital. In consequence of the limited technical possibilities, as well as the lack of capital, *the capitalist offensive in Poland* is fiercer than in other European countries. Recently it was directed not only against the broad masses of workers, but also against the labour aristocracy. At present the situation is favourable with regard to winning over the middle class and petty bourgeoisie, for the State is at present worsening the conditions of work and the wages of the State employees; among the private employees, unemployment is more strongly noticeable than in the working class. Thus not only is the working class drawn into the current of the revolutionary movement, but the broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie as well. Depression prevails among the masses of workers under the influence of the **tremendous unemployment**, but besides the strong ferment among the unemployed, strong symptoms of an oppositional movement are also noticeable among the employed workers. The plainest symptom, is the fact that in

the stronghold of the reformists, in the Cracow District an opposition crystallised against the coalition government. In a number of other districts similar phenomena were observable. In the most important trade unions — miners, railroad workers, transport workers — **oppositional sentiments** are on the increase. We witness fights between the growing opposition and those who, hand in hand with the P. P. S., are supporting the coalition government and who wish to persuade the masses to give the same support. In one session of the Central Trade Union Commission, representatives of the three most important trade unions — **chemical workers, railway workers and Upper Silesian miners** — spoke in favour of the resolution of the **red fraction**, that is, against the coalition government.

In view of the bankruptcy of the imperialist policy of the Polish bourgeoisie, as well as the collapse of the State economy, the masses of workers are losing their faith in the imperialist policy of the Polish bourgeoisie. A clear proof of this is the **sympathy toward the U. S. S. R.** which is becoming noticeable in the Polish labour movement. Until recently one could hardly mention the idea of a delegation to the U. S. S. R. Now, however, the workers are speaking of nothing else and a great number of reformist trade unions have decided to send delegations to the U. S. S. R.

The **oppositional movement**, however, is not only revealed in the Amsterdam trade unions, but it is also endeavouring to form its own organisations with a syndicalist character, but this syndicalism is not of a European kind. The fact that all these oppositional sentiments are penetrating into the depths of the petty-bourgeois trade unions, gives us the opportunity of developing our work on a broader scale, and to proceed from agitation to the mobilisation of the masses for the unity of the trade union movement. The task, the practical solution of which we have undertaken, is the **unification of all the existing trade unions** into a united strong trade union movement. It is our task not only to unite the class organisations, but also the proletarian masses organised into nationalist unions. In proportion as the leaders of the so-called class unions and the nationalist unions proceed together within the coalition government, the masses of both kinds of unions begin to exercise pressure on their leaders in the fight against capital. In the nationalist unions a lively fight is becoming noticeable of late. In this respect they are often ahead of the class unions, for instance, the railway workers and tramway workers. It is clear that here also we must place ourselves at the head of these masses, since the uniting of the working class is always our most formidable task. The results of our work so far are very small. For the prejudices of the Communists, for whom the workers organised in the nationalist unions are inferior to those in the class unions, are still too strong.

The Communist Party of Poland, during practically the whole of the fight against the bourgeoisie, has put forward the slogan of joint struggle of all trade union organisations, and it succeeded in rallying the masses to the joint struggle. This occurred in the summer of last year during the **metal workers' strike**, which was led by the Communist Party, as well as during the recent tramway workers' strike. This distinct feeling for the necessity not only of the joint fighting campaigns, but also of joint organisations, is penetrating so deeply into the labouring masses that, when our comrades put forward the slogan of unity in a meeting for liquidating the tramway workers' strike, it found eager response among those assembled.

But to mobilise the masses in the name of unity, it is not sufficient to mobilise them in the period of fighting, but we must also convince them of the necessity of **organisational unity** in their day to day activity. Therefore, it is our most important task to carry the fight for unity into the factories. Only in the factories can we lead the masses to the trade unions in order later to bring them together in the trade unions into a Com-

unist Party. Only in the factories can recruiting work be carried on among the masses of workers, only in the factories can the workers grasp the necessity of union in their daily petty struggles — hence the fight must be carried into the factories.

The bourgeoisie, however, does not stand idly by in the face of this growth of the revolutionary movement, and is beginning to form fascist strike-breaker organisations. In Dombrov, one of the most important industrial districts of Poland, the "Narodova Demokratia" (Volkspartei, nationalist) has organised a fascist league with the name of "Polish workers", which now has several thousand members, who are compelled to join by the application of terrorist methods.

A further means with the aid of which the bourgeoisie is trying to combat the fight for unity, is the tactic of the reformists, who interpret the fight for unity as follows; we are also in favour of unity, but the only possibility for bringing unity about, is to join our organisations. Join our organisations, and thus unity will be achieved. That is naturally a manoeuvre, but the Communist Party must furnish an answer to this manoeuvre. For us there is only one answer to develop such power that we can oppose it to the reformists. And our tactic depends on how far we can succeed in accelerating the tempo of the development of the opposition in the Amsterdam trade unions. Perhaps we can succeed by the development and strengthening of the existing parallel organs, perhaps we can achieve it by joining the reformist trade unions — in short, our tactic must be adapted to conditions.

Heretofore it was either the Trade Union Departments of the Communist Party or the Communist trade union functionaries who had to bear the whole burden of the trade union work, — but this was a mistake. Only when the whole Communist Party works in the trade unions will it be possible to accelerate the fight for unity, for the revolutionary trade unions. For the Communist Party itself this work in the trade unions which is obligatory for every Party member, is also of greatest importance. The trade unions are the school of Communism, but they must also be a school of the Communists. Only in constant contact with the masses, only in the daily trade union work, will they be able to learn to know and to estimate correctly the sentiments and strivings of the labouring masses. There they learn how to guide the masses and how to gain their confidence.

The Communist Fractions have so far not been equal to the tasks confronting them. They must really be the nucleus which the working masses regard as the active leader of the trade union movement. They must occupy themselves with the daily work as well as with the fight for partial demands and with the ideological strengthening of the trade unions; they must understand that they are the real leaders of the working masses. Now however, they work only from case to case, from Congress to Congress, and it is quite clear that such unsystematic work cannot lead to the rallying of the broad masses round the Fractions. The work of the Communists in the so-called class trade unions is bearing fruit, but in all the other mass organisations, practically no work is being done by us. We are confronted by important tasks, in all the labour organisations, and above all in the trade unions, we must organise Communist fractions. The fractional activity of the Polish labour movement is in its first beginnings in Upper Silesia; in the rest of the country there are no fractions at all. Yet only with the aid of such fractions can the fight for the unification of the labour movement lead to a strong trade union front. The tasks which confront the Communist Parties in the present stage of development of the fight for international trade union unity, for the winning of the majority of the working class, are extremely difficult, great endurance, great patience is required, and none of the Communist Parties may deceive themselves on this score. In his speech yesterday, Comrade Monmousseau spoke about the difficulties confronting the revolutionary trade union movement, about the tremendous advantage the reformist movement has with its press, its federations and the State apparatus. The difficulties are extraordinarily great. They are still greater in those countries where not only the government and the State apparatus are on the side of the reformists, but where the labour movement is shattered — in Roumania, in Hungary, and in Bulgaria, where the trade unions are destroyed, and where the trade union leaders are languishing in prison. We realise these difficulties very clearly and certainly cannot leave them out of consideration. The tasks confronting

us must be solved if the proletarian revolution is to be victorious. We must take all the difficulties confronting us into account, must carry on the struggle patiently and with tenacious endurance, and can then hope that though the oppositional movement is temporarily vacillating and retreating, its general line depends only on how rapidly the Communist Parties will overcome all their faults and deficiencies in the sphere of the mass trade union movement. On that depends also the tempo of development of the fight against the capitalist offensive, as well as the tempo of development of the fight against imperialism.

## Comrade Schüller:

Comrades, we wish to mention here one particularly important task of the fight for unity of the trade unions in the working class: **the fight for the organisation of the young workers into the trade unions.** The condition of the organisation of the young workers in the trade unions is still very unfavourable. In Germany according to the latest statistics of the A. D. G. B. there were only 267,000 trade union members under 18. In Great Britain, where there are 3 million young workers, only 400,000 to 500,000 of them, according to a general estimate, are organised.

The organisation of the young workers is of such great importance for two reasons:

1. Because the young workers play an important role in industry and in the struggles and because they are being used more and more against the adult workers.

2. Because the organisation of the masses of young workers in the trade unions will give us the opportunity of drawing the broadest masses of the young workers closer to the revolutionary **Minority Movement**, to the Communist Party and to the Young Communists.

Of the first reason — the use of the young workers against the adults — I wish to give the following example.

1. The young workers, because of their lower wages, are used as under-cutters to force down the wages of the adults.

2. The young workers in many places during the present period of unemployment, are ousting the adults out of their jobs.

3. In case of struggles, strikes, or lock-outs, the apprentices are in general, left in the factories, and are compelled to do the work of the adult workers, thus acting as strike-breakers.

Comrades, these forms are to be found everywhere, and that is much more dangerous for the working class than one imagines. Not long ago we had the **great fight of the railway workers in Great Britain.** The award of the arbitration committee stipulates that the wages of those railway workers already employed are not to be changed, but that all the young workers who reach the age of 20 years after February 1, and all those who are taken on after February 1, are to receive lower wages for the same work. That means that in an extraordinarily important country and in an important industry, the youth are used as an explosive not only to force down the position of the working class, but also to bring one of the largest trade unions to the verge of ruin.

We could give examples where young workers and apprentices who, owing to the fact that they had to continue working during a strike, were directly responsible for the defeat of the working class.

Comrades, the second point has heretofore been very little understood, that is, that through trade union work among the young workers they are given their **first training in the class struggle and Communism** and are thus drawn to us. We must understand that we, as the Youth, and as the Comintern, part of which we are, will not have the possibility of bringing the broadest mass of the young workers under our influence if we do not have them in the trade unions, where we can exercise the broadest influence over them as a mass and where they can get their first training in Communism.

There are, however, a number of obstacles in the way of their organisation.

The two most important are — the **general indifference and the reformist craft spirit.**

With regard to the indifference, no detailed explanation is needed. It is believed that the questions of the youth have no

bearing on the adults, and it is not realised that in this way the situation of the working class itself can be worsened. But there is a directly reformist school and attitude. There are many and varied reasons given for keeping the young workers out of the trade unions. In most of the countries many of the trade union statutes either keep the young workers under a certain age entirely out of the trade unions, or grant them such an unequal place that there is very little inducement for the young workers to join.

The most important thing is that the Communist in the trade unions must see to it that the questions of the young workers, their wages questions, their vocational training, apprenticeship, hygienic protection in work, collective agreements, etc. are considered in the trade unions. No less important for us is the **direct fight for abolishing all those out-of-date statutes and regulations** which do not permit the young workers under 16 years of age to join the trade unions, or only as members with very few rights, or in special sections with unequal rights, and similar forms. But it is not enough if our comrades give out our directives only in general. We believe that the moment is favourable for the Parties and youth organisations on a general scale to begin a **really practical and wide-spread campaign for the organisation of the broadest masses of the young workers in the trade unions**. In Great Britain, for instance, a campaign has now been begun by the Youth League, which is being supported by the Party and the Minority Movement, and our Young Communist League there is proposing in the trade unions that the local organisations themselves call conferences of the young trade union members, at which the reasons are to be discussed why the young workers do not enter the trade unions and at which the practical measures for conducting a campaign for winning over the young workers for the trade unions will be discussed. We can state that we have achieved good results in this field. This work is connected with joint work with the revolutionary Minority Movement in the trade unions, which has various forms and various names in the various countries. We wish to emphasise here that it is of very special importance for the various Minority Movements of a revolutionary kind to draw the young workers in the trade unions to them as allies. We must have no illusions about the fact that the reformist trade union bureaucracy, or the reformists in general also have an eye for the young workers. **Close cooperation is absolutely necessary between the Y.C.L. and the Minority Movement.** I don't mean to say an organisational or formal cooperation, but cooperation in practical work. There are individual comrades in the Parties who have not yet understood that the Communist youth play an important and indispensable role in the trade unions. They believe, for instance, that special fractions of the Communist Youth are unnecessary in the trade unions. These comrades have not understood that the Communist youth are a factor which first render it possible for the Minority Movement and the Party to get closer to the young workers in the trade unions, to draw them into our sphere of influence, to make them a really decisive force in the coming struggles, and that without them it is impossible to do anything in the youth question. The work of our Young Communist Leagues in the trade unions is still too weak. No one denies that. But we take up the cry of this Plenum, that the work in the trade unions must be placed in the foreground as the main work among the masses during the present epoch. We intend to deal very thoroughly with the practical details of this work at the Plenum of our Young Communist International, and to formulate methods for it. We understand quite well that we must make our fractions in the trade unions into live working organs, which will form the point of concentration around which the broadest masses of oppositionally inclined young workers in the trade unions will rally.

Now comrades, a word about the coming struggles. All the comrades know that we do not return from this Enlarged Executive to an idyll, but into a world shaken by the greatest trade union struggles. In Great Britain, 600,000 workers in the engineering and shipbuilding trades are threatened with a general lock-out. A crisis in the mining industry is approaching which can effect 900,000 workers. In both cases the youth will play their role. The question will be a real one for the engineering workers. 600,000 workers in 41 trade unions are hit by this fight. We have no detailed statistics about the youth. Only one example — in one of these, in the Amalgamated Engineering

Union (A.E.U.) there are 18,000 apprentices. In accordance with their contract, these apprentices will be taken into work in case a strike breaks out. Thus a great number of the youth will be compelled to act as strike-breakers in the event of a lock-out.

We hope that this Plenum of the Comintern will tell all the Parties clearly and plainly: in the fight for trade union unity there is an important task, that is, to establish unity between the adult and the young workers; that is, practically speaking, to organise the young workers in masses in the trade unions. That means to organise a serious campaign and to undertake various measures to win over the youth to our side, in the coming struggles. Comrade Lozovsky says that he agrees and that is very hopeful for us. But it is a long way from agreement to practical fulfilment. We must do much practical work along this way. We will see to it that this work is done, and hope that we will also get the same support and the same stimulus from the Communist International.

Chairman: Comrade Geschke.

We must now interrupt the list of speakers and receive

## the Report of the English Commission.

For this purpose Comrade Braun has the floor.

### Comrade Braun (England):

Comrades, the English Commission had to deal especially with five questions.

1. The general situation in England.
2. The revolutionising of the working class in England.
3. The symptoms of this revolutionising.
4. The successes of the Communist Party and the lessons for the Communist International.
5. The tasks of the Communist Party.

Regarding the first point as the most important symptom there was recorded the loss of the hegemony of England to the United States, which is expressed in an unfavourable trade balance, in chronic unemployment, and the falling off in the development of production of the most important industries; further, in a policy towards the colonies which at present consists in granting certain concessions to certain sections of the national bourgeoisie, with a simultaneous increase in the industrialisation of these colonies. In spite of the fact that, as a result of the increasing industrialisation, profits have increased for certain groups of British capitalists, we see, at the same time, a weakening of industrial positions in England itself. These are the two main factors which are bringing about a revolutionising of the working class.

In dealing with the question of the revolutionising of the working class in England, the Commission has recorded the following main points:

1. The attempt of the capitalists to win back their old positions.
2. The influence of the experiences which the working class had with the MacDonald Government.
3. The progress and successes in the building up of Socialism in the Soviet Union, which is exercising a particularly strong attractive power upon the working class of declining capitalist England.

Among the symptoms of this revolutionising process, of this Left development of the entire English working class, the following main factors are to be recorded:

1. The growth of Socialist ideology in general.
2. The development of strong Left tendencies in the trade unions of which we must characterise the Minority Movement as the most ideologically mature and best organised part.
3. The decisions of the Trade Union Congress in Scarborough, which mainly imply a break with the attitude hitherto adopted by the British Trade Union movement and partly with the reformist trade union movement in general.

4. The struggle for **International Trade Union Unity**.
5. The struggle against the decisions of the **Labour Party Conference in Liverpool**.
6. The commencement of the development of a **Left Wing in the Labour Party**.
7. Mass movement of the unemployed.
8. The campaign for the release of the arrested and condemned Communist leaders.
9. **Red Friday**, which is of extraordinary importance for the whole International labour movement, formation of Committees of Action before and during this movement.
10. A movement in the **Independent Labour Party for a united front with the Communists** and a pressure on the part of the members of this Party upon their leaders, which, as is known, has led to that proposal of the I.L.P. to the II International regarding the holding of a joint Conference with the III International.
11. The increasing influence of the **Communist Party**.

In spite of all the unfavourable factors our Party has succeeded in finding the correct policy and achieving successes by means of this policy. Apart from this correct policy, the cause of the successes lies mainly in the fact that since 1924 there have been no fractional struggles in the Party. The Party has developed a united collective work in its leading organs, and has succeeded in drawing the members into active support of this work.

Secondly, the Party has succeeded in conducting trade union work much better than the majority of the other Parties of the Comintern. It has a relatively large percentage of its members firmly entrenched in the **Trade Union Movement**, is capturing positions there, and is guiding the work of these members in such a way that their personal influence in the daily struggles and in the work of the trade unions is increasing.

Thirdly, the Party has understood how to obtain access to the masses. The British Party knows how, both by the **Minority Movement** and by the formation of a **Left Wing in the Labour Party**, as well as in the fraction work in the trade unions, the cooperatives and the Labour Party — by all these methods to set up bridges to the masses.

Fourthly, the tactic of the struggle for acceptance in the **Labour Party** which the Communist Party has conducted since the II World Congress, since Lenin laid down this tactic. The Communist Party in England has firmly adhered to this tactic, and an essential portion of its successes is to be attributed to this.

Further, the Party is conducting a struggle against the expulsion of individual Communist members from the **Labour Party**.

Fifthly, the Party has succeeded in doing that which only in a very few sections has been sufficiently appreciated and understood, i. e. in **closely connecting the struggle of the unemployed with the workers who are employed** and with the trade unions. As a result of the special conditions in England there exists there an organisation of the unemployed, and the Party is conducting a struggle for linking this organisation with the local trade union organisations. It has also succeeded in bringing about the formation of a **joint advisory committee between the unemployed organisations and the Trade Union Congress**.

Sixthly, the Party has succeeded more than the other sections in **drawing its entire membership into active Party work**.

Seventhly, the Party has conducted in an exceedingly skilful and clever manner the **campaign for International Trade Union Unity**. It has carried through this campaign in such a manner that the **work of the Left trade union leaders in England** has been supported in every respect by the broad mass campaigns with the result that to a certain extent the idea of Communism, and with it the Communist Party and the Communist International, has appeared as the upholder of this struggle for unity.

Eighthly, the Party has succeeded in **giving the miners real support** to the widest extent. In the first place owing to the fact that the Party in all phases of the struggle had elaborated the

correct slogans and the programme of the struggle for the miners, as well as for the entire working class.

Ninthly, the Party has succeeded in drawing the attention of the entire working class to the **necessity of influencing the army and the navy**. The Party has succeeded, by Open Letters to the Labour Party, to the General Council of the Trade Union Congress and by work in the trade union organisations, in emphasising the necessity of enlightening the men in the army and navy in connection with the economic struggles which confront the British working class, and in this has achieved considerable success.

With regard to the tasks which now confront the British Party, the Commission has confined itself to those questions which now occupy the central position.

1. To strengthen the **Minority Movement still further**, in order to convert it really into a leading, comprehensive organ of all the active Left forces in the great British Trade Union Movement.

2. The **crystallisation of the Left Wing in the Labour Party** against the imperialism and capitalism of MacDonald, Thomas and others.

3. The **struggle for International Trade Union Unity** and the closest connecting of this struggle with the struggle of the working class for the raising of wages and improvement of working conditions in the colonies.

4. **Work in the colonies themselves**, which will place enormous demands on such a small Party, must be carried out and furthered even more than hitherto.

The Party must in connection with this struggle, at the same time, continue on a larger scale the **campaign against the Dawes Plan and the Locarno Pact**, against the imperialist policy of the British bourgeoisie.

5. As a fifth point there was specially recorded the necessity to link the organisatory basis of the Party more firmly than hitherto with the big factories, to transpose the Party to the factory nuclei, to **complete the reorganisation**.

6. As the sixth point there was put forward the task of **formulating a special agrarian policy for England** and to penetrate into the broad rural masses, which is especially necessary at a time when the Liberal party is aiming at winning back its lost influence by means of democratic agrarian slogans. This is likewise rendered necessary by the advance of the Labour Party into the agricultural districts.

7. The Party must determinedly fight the **great illusions** which still exist among the broad masses of the British working class regarding the utility and the possibilities of the **parliamentary struggle**. The struggle which is now being fought out in England, the new orientation of the working class and of the Labour Movement, which is also finding its expression in the search for new methods of struggle, as for example in the general strike, or at least in a mass strike, must be promoted by the Party with all its forces.

8. As the eighth point there stands before the Party the **task of increasing the number of its members**.

9. As the ninth point are naturally the other remaining tasks which apply to every Party, i. e. before all the **furthering of the work among the women**.

10. As the last point: the **work among the youth**. In this industrial country the young workers are especially hit by unemployment, they can no longer obtain any regular employment. The working youth constitute the great recruiting field for the future great British mass Party, which it is necessary to have as a counterweight to the British bourgeoisie which is carrying on the fight against the revolutionary movement in the whole world. The English proletariat, the enormous masses of millions of English workers, are stronger than the tiny minority which today dominates England and plunders the largest portion of the world, and for us it is therefore the question of creating the revolutionary leadership of the huge masses. And this task confronts our small but energetic and skilfully working Communist Party.

This report was then put to the vote and unanimously agreed to.

# Continuation of the Discussion on the Trade Union Question.

## Comrade Bordiga:

We have on various occasions given different solutions for the fundamental problem of relations between the economic and the political movement of the proletariat on a world scale. At the Second Congress it was suggested that certain Left trade union organisations should be represented, and at the time I opposed this idea. It was only at the Third Congress that the Profintern was established as a world organisation of Red Trade Unions, side by side with the International of the Communist Parties. At the Fifth Congress, after very inadequate preparation, a new and far from satisfactory solution was brought forward, namely, the proposal of one united Trade Union International. Now it is quite evident that this is not at all a question of an agitation slogan, but that it is proposed to bring about an organic fusion between the R.I.L.U. and the Amsterdam Trade Union International. It is maintained that such a policy is perfectly logical, as we are for trade union unity on a national scale even if the central trade union organisations remain in the hands of reformist and opportunist elements.

Why is this argument, which seems so logical, not correct? Because on a national scale this question is quite a different matter from what it is on an international scale. We are working within the reformist trade unions as it is a vital matter for us not to lose contact with the masses. Moreover, we are quite certain that when the situation will develop in a revolutionary sense we will certainly have an opportunity to get hold of the central trade union apparatus. This will come about by means of a Congress, or it does not much matter by what means, as when the time will have come for the decisive struggle the masses will come to the Communists, and the reformist leaders will have no other support but that of the tottering bourgeois power. Then the Communist Party will be able to use the trade unions as revolutionary organs of the utmost importance.

On the international field the perspective is utterly different, as the conquest of power will take place in successive stages and can on no account be simultaneous in the various countries. The international trade union centre will be able to change its seat in order not to submit to the revolution, namely, it will remain under the influence of the bourgeoisie and of the world reaction.

Therefore, we believe that it is essential to adopt as a general solution and as an agitation formula the slogan of the struggle of Moscow against Amsterdam, and of the exposure of Amsterdam as an organisation necessarily attached to the bourgeois League of Nations, and to its Labour Bureau.

One could add other arguments drawn from the exposé of the situation made by the reporter. Generally speaking, we are optimistic just now concerning the perspectives of an extension of the trade union movement. We witness the latter growing in Eastern countries and particularly in China, and coming under the influence of revolutionary Russia. That is why we have every reason to keep up the R.I.L.U. instead of proposing to dissolve it. Moreover, by saying that the centre of world reaction and also of bourgeois influence on the labour movement is shifting at present towards America, there is furnished an argument favourable to those whom I have just exposed with respect to the centre of the Yellow International and the impossibility to touch it.

As to the favourable effect on the masses of the unity proposal, it can be achieved just the same by united front proposals to Amsterdam and to all the organisations adhering to it. As a united front committee, the Anglo-Russian Committee will render the same services as now without having to adopt the formula of organic world trade union unity.

And now a few words on the trade union problems in Italy which formed the subject of a lively discussion at our Party Congress. In Italy Fascism at first contemplated the plan of forming for itself a network of trade union organisations in order to mobilise the working class in its favour, leaving officially other organisation freedom to exist. Subsequently, when Fascism realised that this plan for concentrating the masses had not succeeded, it monopolised the trade unions thereby making it well-nigh impossible for the working class trade unions to exist, and

at the same time depriving the working class of any possibility of action.

In the first period the election of factory commission, in which even non-Fascist trade unions could participate, was legal. Our tactic at that time was to have purely Communist lists of candidates, but lists drawn up on the basis of the Red organisations by the class trade unions, even if the latter was in the hands of the maximalists or the reformists.

Since then the situation has changed and other tactical problems have arisen. Today the only place where work can be done is in the factory, trade unions being unable to re-group the workers in public institutions. In connection with this, two formulae have been proposed in our Party. According to the Central Committee, factory organisations are to be formed under the title of Committees of Action, which, in addition to their task of bringing about trade union unity, are also to rally the unorganised workers, and which have a permanent existence outside the framework of the trade unions.

We, the Left, find that this tactic can lead to a trade union split which would be extremely dangerous, and that it is connected with certain deviations of the group which is now leading the Party and which had always the tendency to attach paramount importance to factory committees, as organs opposed to the trade unions, although this formula is not given prominence now by these comrades.

We propose the formula of the factory trade union section, which is to group the workers in the trade union and to connect them with the official cadres of the trade unions, even if they be under the control of the reformists. It goes without saying that work must also be done among the unorganised workers. But as to the agitation committees, we accept them as organs which are not permanent and which are to be formed whenever there is a conflict between the workers and the employers.

This divergence is of considerable importance, for we foresee a plan of action very unfavourable to the Party, should it be left out of account that even under Fascist oppression, even when what remains of the traditional trade unions is in the hands of the opportunists, the slogan of the Red Trade Unions and of the general Confederation of Labour has great attraction for the masses and should always be kept alive by the Party.

What we apprehend is that, at the moment when it will be possible to extend proletarian activity, we will find ourselves confined to minority organs directly attached to the Party, whilst the opportunists will have the possibility to re-organise the Confederation and the Chamber of Labour, outside the factories, drawing into their ranks a large section of the proletariat. This is a question concerning which we maintain that the Left are the representatives of the true Leninist solution. This is a question on which the International must express its opinion.

## Comrade Dorsy (America):

Comrades, Comrade Lozovsky, in his report, dealt at considerable length with the attempt to Americanise the Trade Unions of Europe, I shall deal to some extent with these tendencies which are classed under the head generally in his Report of the New Americanising — with the manifestation of these tendencies in America.

American Imperialism is now on the upward swing. One of its necessities is a steady, uninterrupted and efficient productivity at home. In order to procure this the employers are developing a series of new movements, with the assistance of the bureaucracy of the Trade Unions. This is taking the form of an intensified and elaborated class collaboration.

There are four principal phases of this:

The first is in the industries. For example, the Company Union Movement. Previously it was the policy of the employers to crush every semblance of organisation among the workers.

That policy is being changed. The employers are coming to the conclusion that some form of organisation is necessary in order to secure a greater degree of control over the workers. These company unions are quite American in character. The employers carry out elections in their plants and build committees out of the various departments. These committees carry into effect the policy of the employers. Statistics are hard to find, but probably two million workers are organised in the Company Unions. Nearly all the big industrial corporations have them. Side by side with this there is also developing among the Trade Union bureaucracy a movement for the B & O Plan of unionism. Briefly, the B & O plan is an expression in principle of the idea of company unionism. It is based on the idea of increasing the efficiency of the workers in the plant. This movement has been supported by the American Federation of Labour and its programme is fast becoming the programme of the American Labour movement as a whole.

The tendency that is developing in America is for the Company Union movement and the B & O plan to merge into a new form of organisation somewhere between the two. The two movements are of course highly detrimental to the trade union movement proper. They check the revolutionary spirit and stand in the way of real struggles in the industries. One of our big problems is now to combat this new movement. As against the B & O plan unions we must fight against the bureaucracy for organisation of the unorganised and for the consolidation of the unions and fill them with a revolutionary spirit. As against the Company Unions, we must penetrate these unions where they have a mass character and utilise the committees in the shops as a means of agitation against the employers.

One of the greatest problems we have in America is the problem of organising the unorganised masses and one means to solve this, is by penetrating the company unions and issuing the slogan of destroying the Company Unions and setting up workers unions in their place. Experience has shown that we can use these company unions in the struggle against the bosses.

The second phase of the new and intensified class collaboration is in the realm of Finance expressed by labour banks and the whole system of trade union capitalism. In America a large number of workers are able to save a portion of their wages. The employers about 15 years ago recognised the importance of these savings and started savings banks and also sold stocks to the workers. Recently the trade union bureaucracy has begun gathering these funds and using them for their own benefit. The result has been the appearance of trade union banks and trade union capitalism in general. In these banks of which there are 40, there are already deposited 200 million dollars. Another feature of these capitalist ventures is the founding of insurance societies, coal mines, etc.

These undertakings are not of a co-operative character. The majority of the stock is in the hands of a clique of bureaucrats at the head of the trade unions. By means of these organisations they become financially independent of and estranged from the control of the rank and file. This trade union capitalism has a very destructive effect on the trade unions. It diverts them from the struggle and kills their militant spirit. In this respect, in addition to our general campaign for the revival of the unions, we must have a special programme to combat this trade union capitalism. We must fight against the establishment of any more of these institutions upon a capitalist basis. We must try to separate them from the trade unions and we must turn these labour banks, etc. into workers' co-operatives. We can go a step further and develop a movement that will direct the American workers into placing their surplus funds in the industries in Soviet Russia.

Now we have a third phase of the new orientation in the inner political situation, particularly with regard to the organisation of a new political party. The policy of Gompers was that of complete surrender of the workers to the capitalist parties. The workers are realising the need for a political organisation of their own and are repudiating Gompers' old doctrine and demanding a political party of their own. The middle group in the trade unions — the so-called progressive section of the bureaucracy — is coming forward to divert the workers from the movement for a new political party into new forms of class collaboration with the old political parties and

the capitalist class by the conversion of this movement for a Labour Party into a petty bourgeois third party and to various modifications of the old Gompers' policy.

We have a fourth manifestation of the new orientation. This is the system of trade union imperialism that is developing in the United States of America. The American labour bureaucracy is committed one hundred percent to the imperialist programme of the American capitalists. One of the principal goals of American imperialism is absolutely to dominate the whole of the American continent; and in this it receives the entire support of the bureaucracy of the A.F. of L. In Latin America, the bureaucracy, by means of the Pan-American Federation of Labour, is working consciously on behalf of American imperialism. The entire programme of imperialism receives the support of the A.F. of L. The bureaucracy displays more hatred against Soviet Russia even than do the American capitalists themselves. Against this militant imperialism of the American labour bureaucracy, our Party has to make a struggle. Against the Pan-American Federation of Labour we have organised an anti-imperialist league and are carrying out a campaign against American imperialism throughout Latin America.

These four phases I have mentioned, constitute developments that must have the first attention of our Party. We cannot consider them as isolated movements, but as one tendency towards intensified class collaboration with the employers. Despite this new orientation there exists the basis of a considerable movement against the employers and the bureaucracy. There seems to be a vague feeling prevalent that the American workers are living in prosperity. But comrades, this is not the real situation. It is true the American workers have a higher real wage than the workers in other countries. But this is not so high as is commonly believed. The average wage is about wages are slowly on the decline. Real wages are 5% lower for unskilled and semi-skilled workers and the tendency is also downward. A recently published book has shown that real wages are slowly on the decline. Real wages are 5% lower for the workers as a whole now than they were 25 years ago. Comrades, this is a very important fact. It must have one result and that is, to create a widespread discontent among the workers. And where there is discontent among the workers there is a basis for the left wing movement.

In addition to this factor we have a series of sectional crises in industries which offer a favourable opportunity for work. The coal industry is being transferred from those sections of the coal fields where the workers are organised in the unions to those where they are not organised. This is producing tremendous unrest through mass unemployment, reduction of wages, etc. This forms a basis for a movement against the bureaucracy and the employers in this industry. We have a somewhat similar situation in the textile industry. The industry is moving from the North to the South. In the clothing industry the work was formerly located in the big cities. The clothing workers became the best organised and most revolutionary of any section in the American movement. The employers are moving this industry from the big cities to the smaller towns to escape union conditions, and the result has been to produce a crisis among the workers and to lay the basis for a strong left wing movement.

In order to take advantage of this situation and of such opportunities as do exist, we must as one of the first tasks of the Party, organise the left wing in the trade unions. We must build the T.U.E.L. In order to do this we must concentrate our struggle round such issues as wage reductions; we must take the lead in the struggle for increase of wages. We must carry out a campaign to organise the unorganised. The importance of this cannot be exaggerated. This is the thing we must concentrate our attention upon in every industry. As part of this campaign we must lay down a programme for utilising the company unions, as starting points for movements against the employers.

Another important plank in our programme is clearing out the corrupt bureaucracy. In this connection we must raise the slogan of the democratisation of the unions. The Labour Party must of course occupy a position in our programme, as well as the slogan of amalgamation. Upon this basis we must build up a broad left wing. We must make united front movements against the Right Wing bureaucracy with those oppositional elements which cannot be united in one organisation with the broad Left Wing.

A few points about some failures in our trade union policy. The greatest danger comes from the ultra-Left tendencies, and it is in that direction that we must turn our efforts to straighten out our policies. One of the ultra-Left weaknesses is the tendency to ignore the whole programme of building up a Left Wing in the trade unions and to use the Party machinery directly. Our principal instrument must be the broad Left Wing organisation in the unions. We failed in the anthracite strike to do this and so injured our work. The Party must realise that the Left Wing in the trade unions is not a rival organisation, but an instrument to do the Party work.

A wrong tendency is to bring the Trade Union Educational League too close to the Party. We must realise that the League has to be a separate organisation and proceed in that sense.

Another weakness, which is also a manifestation of ultra-Leftism, is wrong applications of the united front policy. The most striking example of this was the split at the Farmer Labour Party Convention in 1923 — a split which might have been avoided. And worse than this, we find a justification for this split constantly made throughout the Party. The failure in this case was not analysed and recognised as a mistake, but was justified and it forms the basis of a further mistake of a like character.

Ultra-Leftist tendencies developed in case of the reinstatement of Howat in the United Miners' Union of America. Seventy percent at least of the membership were behind Howat and in favour of his reinstatement and supported our big campaign. Things came to a climax in the Convention of the Miners Union in the winter of 1923. Our Party failed to realise the political significance of the struggle around Howat. At the very critical moment it came forward with a programme of political demands — which were utterly incapable of being adopted or even being considered by the convention — and which would have the effect of diverting the attention of the delegates away from the Howat issue and to sabotage our fight for Howat. The Howat case fight in this convention was a classical example of how not to build up a Left Wing.

Another ultra-Left tendency is the underestimation of the struggle for organisational control of the unions. We had examples of this in the Illinois Miners' Union and in the convention of the Garment Workers of Philadelphia. Some comrades only want to talk to the unions — not to fight for their control. This tendency is being constantly manifested.

Another wrong tendency is that towards dual unions. This we must fight. It is growing in all corners of the Party now. This tendency towards dual unionism is no surface proposition. It has its roots in thirty years of dual unionism in America. We must turn attention to the elimination of this ultra-Leftist tendency.

Another feature of our general weakness in the unions is the tendency to neglect everyday work in the trade unions. This is a bad tendency. It militates directly against our influence among the workers. There is a tendency to look down on the comrades who do practical work for the unions and to concentrate upon simple theorising about broad political problems. Comrades, this must be corrected. It would be a fatal mistake to neglect the basic work in the trade unions of carrying on the everyday activities of these organisations.

In conclusion I want to say, that perhaps the basic manifestation of the ultra-Left tendency in our Party is the general underestimation of trade unions manifested by wholesale refusal to join the unions. Only 32% of our members are in trade unions. Why is not this figure doubled? The excuse put forward by some that there are no unions for them to join will not hold water. In fact comrades have definitely refused to enter the unions. The reason is to be found in ultra-Leftism.

A concluding word. We have before us a decision of the Comintern on the American question. Everybody in the Party looks forward to this decision. The important thing as to the decision is that it must give us a clear political decision. The worst thing that could happen would be a glossing over by this decision of our political issues. The decision must point out the mistakes we have made, especially in trade union work. And the principal mistakes we have made are ultra-Left mistakes.