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VII. Meeting of the Enlarged E. C. C. I.

Fourteenth to Sixteenth Session.

Full Report.

Fourteenth Session.

Discussion of the Report on the Lessons of the English Strike.

Moscow, December 3, 1926.

Comrade REMMELE (Chairman):

The 14th Session of the Enlarged Executive is opened. The first speaker in the discussion on the British Question will be Comrade Lozovsky.

Comrade LOZOVSKY:

What took place in England this year at the beginning of the month of May is not only of very great significance to the future destiny of the British labour movement, but is also of great importance for the working class of all countries; it is the task of the Communist International and all its affiliated Sections, to study the lessons of the British events with greatest attention and to look into all details of the clashes that have taken place.

The international significance of these British events is determined, first of all, by the role that British imperialism plays in world politics and world economy. It is readily understandable that everything which weakens this imperialist power is of greatest importance for us, the most consistent foes of imperialism. These events are, furthermore, also of importance because thanks to them a new ratio of class power has arisen in England itself, and also outside of England. The importance of the British events consists in that a weakened British imperialism has emerged from them.

The first question which obviously arises is that of how it could come about that these gigantic convulsions could set in in Great Britain so long a time after the war. England, which in comparison with the other European powers, got off easiest

from the war, and which has been able, as a result of the war, to harness the proletariat and its organisations to the cart of the bourgeoisie, that this same England, eight years after the end of the war, should enter upon a phase of social shocks so serious that British capitalism is facing an absolutely new epoch.

The matter becomes explicable in that, as a result of its own policy and the liquidation of the consequences and burdens of the war in other countries, it becomes further removed from year to year from the position it occupied prior to the war. From world hegemony prior to and also after the imperialist war, England took second place, behind the United States. This fact led to an increasing extent to a sharpening of social conflicts in Great Britain itself, which in the immediate future will unquestionably take on a much more serious character.

Due to the narrowing down of the market and the ebb of its economic influence, the British bourgeoisie is no longer in a position to offer working conditions equal to those enjoyed by the British workers prior to the war. In order to be able to compete on the world market, in order to recapture old positions or even approach them, the British bourgeoisie is forced to eliminate the weightiest obstacle to the reduction of the production costs of its commodities, which will give it greater competitive power. And this obstacle is the standard of living of the British proletariat, which in comparison with the situation of the workers throughout Europa, is a high one.

The struggle which took place in England was in itself a serious political conflict. The determination of the British bourgeoisie in this struggle is to be explained in that it recognised, better than did the leaders of the British trade union movement, that a defeat in this political test of strength would signify a

defeat not only on internal but also on foreign policy, that defeat in this struggle would find expression in the further decline of the British bourgeoisie.

The outcome of the struggle in Great Britain means a **new phase in the development of the class struggle there**. The blow against the vanguard of the British trade union movement, against the miners, is the first clash which is to be followed by other blows against other sections of the labour movement. The defeat of the seven month's coal strike, in consequence of the efforts, not only of the bourgeoisie but also of the leaders of the political and economic movement of Great Britain, confronts the British working class with questions and problems hitherto unknown to it.

The time has passed when the British worker was an aristocrat in comparison with the workers of other countries, that time is over when the British bourgeoisie was able to grant a small portion of the riches stolen from the colonies to the upper strata of the working class, and in this manner corrupt certain strata of the British proletariat. The British proletariat, which had won a certain standard of living, sees all this coming to an end, and realises that the blow against the miners means not only the general reduction of the standard of living, but also the creation of a new juridical and political status of the British proletariat.

The English bourgeoisie has launched not only an economic offensive. Only the narrow-visioned trade unionists like Pugh, Thomas and their friends, the so-called "Left", can look upon the events in England as a purely economic struggle, or present them as such. The British bourgeoisie knows what this "economic" conflict means, and already in the course of the struggle and all its serious episodes, in which the British bourgeoisie manoeuvred with exceptional cleverness, it was able to prepare sufficient forces to wage a political battle.

This combination of the economic offensive with the political, these blows which the British bourgeoisie delivered along the whole line, create a **new situation in British social struggles**. They create a **new regrouping of class forces, a new basis for the actual revolutionisation of the masses**, and for the realisation of those tasks and aims which the Communist International has set itself.

If we ask ourselves what are the grounds for such an unheard of defeat of the miners after their heroic struggle, we must say that they consist primarily in that the British bourgeoisie was much better organised than was the British proletariat, that it had at its disposal far more far-sighted leaders, that it knows what it wants, and that it is able to carry this into effect. One cannot say the same of either the leaders of the British labour movement, nor of the leaders of the economic organisations, nor even of the leaders of such an important proletarian political organisation as the Labour Party. One must admit that the tactics of the British bourgeoisie were supreme. And to the same extent that the tactics of the British bourgeoisie were supreme, the tactics of the leaders of the Labour Party and the tactics of the General Council were not. The united front against the working class — and in this consists the power of the bourgeoisie — penetrated even into the workers organisations. The united front created by the British bourgeoisie was a very extensive one. It included not only a large number of leaders, but also a certain portion of the workers.

The defeat of the working class in England results simultaneously from the **strength of the bourgeoisie** as well as the **political weakness of the working class**. This great lesson cannot remain without effect, and for this very reason we are justified in concluding that the British Labour movement is entering upon a new phase. We have a new situation: a regrouping is taking place within the classes, and it includes also the working class.

At the moment of defeat the shift in the relationship of forces apparently took place in favour of the bourgeoisie. Yet, comrades, the relationship of class forces is measured not only from the standpoint of the immediate present. The relationship of forces in Great Britain has not changed to the advantage of the bourgeoisie, despite the defeat. Why? Because for the first time in the history of England we saw that despite the will of the leaders, class stood arrayed against class. For the first time in history the prize exhibit of British democracy,

the British Constitution was actually exposed; for the first time in the history of British class struggles it was to be noted that the working class, even its most backward sections, was filled with hatred against the bourgeoisie. We see this regrouping not only in the strengthening of the Left tendencies, not only in the strengthening of the Left organisations.

The struggle is now soon at an end, but it has raised a number of new questions before the working class, it has compelled millions of workers to recognise for the first time the boundary lines of their own class. This promises much. Between the bourgeoisie and the working class gaps have opened which formerly did not exist. This crystallisation of the dividing line in the working class is also of tremendous advantage to it. The result, finally, of all these points is that the relationship of forces between the bourgeoisie and the working class has changed to the benefit of the working class, notwithstanding its defeat.

The growth of the influence of the Communist Party, the Minority Movement, etc., is only one side of the process, and at that not the most characteristic side, among the toiling masses. There have been dozens of cases in Great Britain in which the workers cast their votes in the elections for representatives of the Labour Party. Of course it might be asked: what is the use for the workers to continue voting for the Right leaders of the Labour Party? Yet, comrades, one must take the British working class as it is. Whereas in the past millions of workers voted for the Conservatives, for the Liberals, now these workers vote for the Right elements of the Labour Party. The swing consists in that a certain portion of the proletariat has come over to the Right Labour Party, and that the elements which formerly followed the Right section of the Labour Party have moved towards the Left. This is the result of a seven month's struggle, it is of greatest importance for the class struggle in Great Britain itself, as well as in other countries.

The British events were not only a test of strength between the proletariat and bourgeoisie there, they were also a test of strength between the II. and III. Internationals, between the Communist Parties and revolutionary trade unions on the one hand, and the Social Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions on the other.

If we consider the events in Great Britain from this point of view, then we shall be able to note a large number of new events that are exceptionally important to the international labour movement.

A characteristic feature must be pointed out — that the Amsterdam International organised an international loan for the British trade unions, in the course of which the English had to conduct rather long drawn out negotiations with the Germans over how high the rate of interest should be. After a long controversy the rate of 4½% was fixed. And against the accusations which the Communists raised on this occasion an official declaration was issued which states literally the following: "In the German banks we can get much more than 4,5%, and if we charge the British workers only 4,5% we are losing on the deal." We must direct attention however, to the fact that our Communist Parties did not sufficiently exploit this attitude for the exposure of the Amsterdammers.

It is worse that the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. were not able to come to the aid of the British miners by means of an international strike. We were not strong enough to meet the strike-breaking of Amsterdam; we were too weak to draw the workers into support, into actual, real solidarity. We were not strong enough even in those countries in which the ratio of strength between our organisations and the reformist is in our favour, for far less power is necessary to break off a strike than to organise one.

Yet, comrades, this recognition of our weakness by no means signifies — as the Amsterdam Social Democrats allege in their press — that the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. on the one hand, and the Amsterdammers and II. International on the other, have alike done equally little during this strike. No, that is not true. We were not strong enough to prevent the strike-breaking of the Amsterdammers, yet in many countries we did succeed in putting through acts of solidarity, and in supporting the strikers to the best of our ability. To be sure, more should have been done, because support in a struggle must be mea-

sured by the outcome of the struggle, yet it is certainly not permissible to compare the Amsterdammers with the revolutionary trade unions and Communist Parties here. But lessons must nevertheless be drawn. We must draw the lesson of how future campaigns are to be launched and carried out, how, in the future, the workers must be organised against the national (viz. their own) strikebreakers, as well as against the international strikebreakers.

I should like to enter upon two questions which I consider exceptionally important for the whole Communist International. First, as to the status in which the British workers at present find themselves, and second, as to our tasks which as Communists we must fulfil in England itself in connection with the new problems and the newly arisen relationship of forces.

We must first observe that the whole trade union movement of Great Britain is in a severe crisis. This is connected with the fact that a shifting is in process there within the working class, within the trade unions, and this not only towards the Left but also towards the Right. The crisis is a consequence of the British trade union movement, in its innermost essence, showing itself not only Conservative, reactionary, but also of an undisguised strike-breaker character. The trade unions were not strong enough to hold the workers back from the action, but they did have a sufficient power to encompass the downfall of the workers once they were in motion. We can observe an ideological and political disintegration of the whole leadership, the whole bureaucracy of the British trade union movement. And this ideological and political crisis will be further sharpened by the bourgeois offensive.

This offensive of the bourgeoisie is expressed not only in a worsening of the juridical status of the workers. It shows itself also in that the bourgeoisie steals one position after another within the working class. What is the meaning of the attempt to found co-operative unions, to create industrial leagues, what is the meaning of the expressions of Pugh, Thomas, MacDonald, etc., in the bourgeois press with regard to industrial peace, the creation of an institute of industrial harmony, etc. What is the meaning of all this? It means an attempt to Americanise the British trade union movement and to establish strongholds within the British trade unions.

The trade union leaders were not strong enough to prevent the struggle. They were forced by mass pressure to enter this struggle, which they did not want, and out of this arose the crisis. The whole British trade union bureaucracy, built up in the course of many decades, is accustomed to a peaceful settlement of conflicts. But we now live in another epoch — a peaceful settlement of conflicts has become impossible even with such complacent peace-loving leaders as Pugh and the rest.

This entirely new phase demands entirely new methods and forms of struggle, and everything that the British trade union movement has historically created, so far as traditions, trade union leadership, Labour Party apparatus, organisational forms of the trade union movement are concerned, has become only a drag upon the development of events.

This crisis in the British Labour movement has resulted in a part of the leading heads shifting towards the Right, and a widening of the chasm between the leaders and the masses. These leaders are ready for anything in order to avoid the necessity of heading the growing movement and of settling the mounting conflicts. But the objective situation forces the masses to fight, and after one, two or three, or I know not how many defeats, we shall certainly achieve victory. From out of these contradictions there springs the present crisis in the British Labour movement.

On this very basis of the regroupings within the class, upon the basis of the shift within the British trade union movement, a Leftward trend is taking place, and upon this basis the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Minority Movement, can grow and develop.

The Communist Party of Great Britain entered the struggle with 6,000 members, and returned with double that number. Of course this is but little. But in what consists the strength of the British Communist Party? It consists in that it is the only organisation which, during the whole course of this struggle occupied a correct position. Despite a number of

mistakes, the British Communist Party had a correct policy during the struggle, and the British proletarian masses must admit, and do admit, that the British Communists and the members of the **Minority Movement** were actually to be found in the front of the fight. In this manner the Communist Party has honourably withstood its first historical test.

Yet this recognition does not spare us the necessity, yes, it even makes it our duty to point out the tremendous dangers which confront the British Communist Party. The English bourgeoisie is concentrating its fire against the Left sector of the British labour movement, and it will not only strike with all its might against the Communists, but with the aid of its agents, it will also proceed against the whole labour movement. The **General Council**, the trade union bureaucracy, the **Labour Party** — all of them will carry out the advice of the British bourgeoisie, to exclude the Communists from the toiling masses, to separate the most active section of workers from the **Minority Movement**. The first blow that falls after the miners' strike will be directed against the Communist Party and against the **Minority Movement**.

We must of course ask ourselves whether the British Communist Party is strong enough in order, in the visible future, to be able to offer resistance to the blows directed against it. I answer this question in the affirmative. It is **strong enough**. While the British Communist Party numbers only 11,000 members, its influence extends over a million workers.

The tremendous political influence of the British Communist Party, notwithstanding its small organisational structure, on the one hand, is the Party's greatest credit; and on the other hand, constitutes its greatest menace in the immediate future. Unless in the immediate future we make the greatest effort to build up the Party in an **organisational** sense, in order to take in new tens of thousands of new workers, then there is a danger that the repressions of the bourgeoisie, the suppressive methods of the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy, will be able to tear loose a part of the elements that now are to be found in the **Minority Movement** and in the following of the Communist Party.

Another important task is the **organisational consolidation of the Minority Movement**. The very weakness of the **Minority Movement** consists in that the **political** influence is not sufficiently consolidated **organisationally**. There, were there are undefended borders, there where there is but soft-spoken sympathy which has not been welded together, there vacillation, deviation and separation is possible. I therefore repeat that one of the most important tasks of the Communist Party of Great Britain is the organisational consolidation of the **Minority Movement**.

Already at the opening of my report I pointed out that the British events must be studied with extraordinary care by all Communist Parties. The united front between Social Democrats and Amsterdam Leaders, on the one hand, and the capitalists on the other, is constantly being entrenched. Their amalgamation is becoming more and more complete and for this reason the Communist Parties, the vanguard of the working class, in the visible future will be confronted with more and more difficult tasks. And only if we give a careful and detailed study to the strong sides of our work in England, if we see how the fight went there, what strategy was applied by the bourgeoisie, what "strategy" was resorted to by the General Council, what strike-breaker role one or the other organisation played during the struggle, either in England itself or outside of the country, only then will we be in the position to draw actual lessons from it.

The lessons of the struggle that we waged in 1905 were studied by us in the course of 12 years, up to the February revolution, and Lenin taught us: "Especially from defeats you must learn, you must study especially the mass movement, you must turn your attention particularly to what took place during this movement". And only if you, I am speaking about the Comintern, and the Communist Parties, — will devote years of study to the British events, only then will we be able to draw a valuable and useful lesson from it, not only for the British, but for the **International** labour movement.

Comrade PEPPER:

Comrades, when we speak about the greatest event in the international labour movement of recent years, about the British miners' strike, it is our first task, I believe, to characterise this strike in all its special features.

What are the most important basic characteristics of this tremendous mass strike?

First, the circumstance that the miners' strike was fought out on the battle field of the declining British empire, that is, in an environment in which the British bourgeoisie was not in a position to make important concessions to the proletariat, and in which, therefore, the great economic battle inevitably had to transform itself into a political struggle.

The second feature of the situation is that the mass strike developed at a time when the British mining industry was in a critical situation. The British bourgeoisie was confronted with a dilemma, it had to decide whether it was to get rid either of its "surplus coal" or its "surplus miners". The British coal crisis really cannot be solved either on a British scale, nor, finally, on a capitalist basis, but only upon an international basis and in a Socialist direction.

One of the most essential characteristics of the miners' strike is its closest connection with the first great general strike that ever took place in a West-European country.

An additional peculiarity of the strike is the circumstance that class stood against class. The leading economic organ of the British bourgeoisie, the "Economist", summarised the situation in bold relief; in that it likened the struggle of the miners against the mine barons with the collision of an irresistible force with an immovable object. Without the aid of the whole State apparatus, the church, the press, and the reformist labour leaders, in Great Britain as well as on a world scale, the miners would never have been beaten.

The deep social ferment that was aroused by the miners' struggle, is characterised by nothing better than that the proletariat, like the bourgeoisie, also mobilised for struggle the vast reserve army of public life which in normal times is inactive — the women.

An additional feature of the miners' strike was also the following: the seven months' struggle was waged in the atmosphere of the state of emergency, of the mobilisation of the whole apparatus of force. Klausowitz, the great strategic theoretician, once wrote: "War is incomprehensible unless one realises that it takes place in an atmosphere of danger." The British miners' strike cannot be comprehended unless we realise that this strike was waged for seven months in an atmosphere of the state of emergency.

A further feature is that the miners' struggle — and this if of course no accident — coincided with the general offensive of the British bourgeoisie against the whole trade union movement of Great Britain.

As a last feature I should like to note that the leadership of the strike was no longer in the hands of the Right (Hodges) as in 1921, but in the hands of the "Left" leadership.

On the basis of this characterisation of the British miners' struggle we can note four phases in the development of the fight.

The first period coincides approximately with the general strike phase. The miners' strike at this time was supported by the whole British labour movement, and even the leaders of the General Council were forced apparently to put themselves at the head of the movement. During this period the hitting power of the miner's strike was of course the greatest.

In the second period the miners were already isolated. After the calling off of the General Strike, the Miners' Federation fought alone, but it still constituted a mighty army, and it still had all the objective possibilities for victory. A million organised workers, under unified leadership and uniform slogans, should absolutely have won.

The third period began at the time the leaders of the Miners' Federation (with certain exceptions) gradually went over to the side of the enemy. Their vacillation rapidly mounted into betrayal. By accepting the Bishops' proposals they wanted

to influence the petty-bourgeois public opinion of England. In reality they merely brought about the disorientation of the masses of mineworkers. The first strike-breakers showed their heads simultaneously with the first vacillations of the miners' leaders.

Then came the fourth period. Not only the topmost leaders, but also the subordinates, the delegates of the federation, began to waver; panic-stricken, they began to desert the battlefield. The unified battle-front was broken. The great struggle became splintered into guerilla warfare, and ended in defeat.

Three faces appear in the history of the British coal strike. The first is that of the masses, which for seven months carried on a struggle against the whole world — isolated, starving, persecuted. The second face is that of the reformist leadership. Viewed from this standpoint, the history of the coal strike is the history of the treason of the reformist leadership. The third face is that of the gradually rising new leadership, the growth of the influence of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement.

After this general characterisation of the great struggle I should like to make certain critical remarks concerning the international campaigns which the Communist International conducted on behalf of the miners' strike.

The facts show that the E. C. C. I. correctly conducted the campaigns. Just prior to this Enlarged Executive, I again went over the whole material very carefully. I believe that we can conscientiously say that the E. C. C. I. furnished correct leadership to the proletariat and to the Sections of the C. I. Remember the first manifesto that was issued on April 23rd, that is, one week prior to the outbreak of the General Strike. In it we already had not only a correct analysis of the objective situation, but we also predicted in advance the whole course of the seven months' struggle, as well as all the essential lessons to be drawn out of the situation. The chief problems were already put clearly at that time, that class would fight class, that the famed British "democracy" would change into an open bourgeois dictatorship, that the economic struggle would turn into a political one, that the Right and Left leaders would play their characteristic role. The advice that was given to the proletariat and to the Parties was also correct and practical.

The other side of the picture is not quite so satisfactory. The sections of the Communist International carried out the solidarity campaigns for the miners extremely inadequately.

I shall outline only the most serious shortcomings of these campaigns:

The nine days of the general strike called forth great enthusiasm in all Parties. But the moment that the General Strike was broken off the campaigns of our Parties were also broken off. With the termination of the General Strike, and already prior to that time, most of the Parties very seriously under-estimated the role of the Right leadership in the British labour movement. The capitulator role of the Left leaders was also not immediately understood in the beginning. The political character of the general strike was also not always clearly comprehended, and still less so the political character of the miners' strike.

The Parties carried on the campaigns mechanically, these were very often of a purely **informatory character** and very few of the Parties were able to connect up this great international campaign with their own national campaigns. If we investigate the practical results, we will find that but little money was collected, that we did not succeed in organising the prevention of coal transport, and that even the propaganda for the really splendid campaign of the C. P. S. U., the really great sacrifices of the Soviet trade unions, were not sufficiently exploited as matters of principle.

The perspectives were viewed at too close range. Our Parties have almost always judged the situation of the miners' struggle a little too pessimistically and for this reason they prepared themselves only for a short struggle. The same mood prevailed as in the first period of the World War. In the beginning everyone believed that it would only last a month.

In my opinion this is one of the most important sources of the failure of our campaigns. If you analyse the campaigns you will see that the Parties, for about one week, conducted

quite a good campaign — articles, manifestoes, etc., — but then all at once they forgot the whole thing. For two whole weeks not a line, not a gesture.

In the following I should like to summarise the chief shortcomings of these campaigns, and I believe that we can afford to criticise ourselves since the action of the Communist Parties and of the revolutionary trade unions, when contrasted to the behaviour of the II. International and Amsterdam, express a genuinely revolutionary international solidarity.

1. There was revealed a certain **passivity** in practically all Parties in the carrying out of the solidarity campaign.

2. **Insufficient recognition of the great international significance of the British miners' strike.** There was revealed a certain **provincialism**, especially in our Party press. The community of interest between the British workers and the proletariat of the respective countries was not always worked out with sufficient clarity.

3. The carrying out of the campaigns (with the possible exception of Czecho-Slovakia) was nowhere on a real united front basis. Manifestoes were published, reformist leaders were criticised, but we did not penetrate to the masses in the factories and the trade unions.

4. The lack of influence in the trade unions enjoyed by the Communist Parties was the main weak spot of our campaign. The weakness of our Parties in the trade unions is primarily responsible for the shipment of blackleg coal to England from Germany, Poland, America and Czecho-Slovakia.

5. The campaigns for the General Strike and miners' strike were not sufficiently deepened theoretically. Most Parties neglected to draw theoretical conclusions from the big struggle. Even the most important problems were not raised, such as e. g. the relationship of the economic struggle to the political, the transformation of the most famous bourgeois democracy into an open dictatorship, the question of the General Strike, the question of the mass strike in general as a weapon in the arsenal of the proletariat, comparative studies, as to the Russian general strike movement of 1905 or the Chartist general strike, the affect of the British miners' strike and the general strike upon the problems of capitalist stabilisation. If you go through the literature of our Sections you will find that for the most part only the publications of the Executive raise these fundamental problems.

In my opinion these are the most important conclusions that we can draw from our self-criticism of these campaigns. Now I should like to proceed with the question of the perspectives. Aside from the problems of the British Empire, the present economic situation of England, the trustification process, the sharpening of class antagonisms, the differentiation of the labour movement, aside from all these problems I believe that one question has hitherto not been worked on sufficiently by us: this is the question of **the role of the Left wing in the British Labour Movement.**

If we look at this Left wing movement as it confronts us to-day in its new form we will find that it represents probably the most fundamental and certainly the most important alteration in the political and social life of Great Britain. What was the old, so to say "official" Left wing prior to the General Strike and the miners' strike? It was something hazy, politically and organisationally unclear, it was impossible to put one's finger on this Left wing. It was the expression of a general discontent among the masses, but it was an unclear, hazy expression. And how about its leadership? Every "labour leader" or every Labour Party intellectual who was dissatisfied with MacDonal, who could not stomach Ramsay's running after the king, or who was opposed to vivisection, or who had vegetarian inclinations, or who fought against compulsory vaccination, or who felt morally indignant about prostitution — believed himself called upon to lead the Left wing of the labour movement.

The general strike and the miners' strike have transformed this Left wing. The leadership now looks different, the new leadership is now furnished by the Minority Movement and the Communist Party. This, I believe is the greatest achievement that has come out of the struggles of the last seven months, it is the **weightiest asset** in Great Britain. For this very reason

we cannot say, as the reformists are now writing everywhere, that the battle was in vain, that the fight should have been avoided. This is the old wail of reformists of all countries, — Plekhanov already said after the first Russian Revolution, "We should not have resorted to arms." The reformist lie, it was no mistake for the British working class to resort to the arms of the heroic miner's struggle.

What is it that the international working class and the Comintern must learn from the British coal strike?

1. The coal strike shows us that the efforts of the bourgeoisie to stabilise capitalism must inevitably lead to **tremendous mass struggles**, and that these mass struggles in turn unavoidably menace the stabilisation of capitalism.

2. In the present situation, every important event in the labour movement of **one country**, becomes an event of **international importance.**

3. On the basis of the decline of capitalism, every important **economic struggle** must change into a **political struggle.**

4. The great struggles in England show how through these battles the British proletariat, which Engels rightly characterised as a **bourgeois proletariat**, is slowly beginning to be **proletarianised** not only in its manner of living, but what is far more important, in its ideology and actions.

5. The general strike and coal strike proved that the **workers cannot win any really large-scale battle under the direction of the old reformist leaders.** For Communists this result was always a matter of course, but it is not yet a matter of course for the world proletariat. The working class can learn this truth only through its **own experiences** and the British coal strike was one of the most important experiences of the international proletariat on this field. The British miners' strike will, in the not distant future, recruit thousands upon thousands of new Communists, not only in Great Britain, but also on an international scale.

In this sense the British coal strike was one of the most important Communist events of the last year. (Applause.)

Comrade SMERAL (Czecho-Slovakia):

Comrades! An important part of our task on this point of the agenda is not to **praise**, but to **criticise** and to **learn.** We all realise that towards the British comrades, who come directly out of the struggle, we should, with great seriousness, with tact, friendship, and — if I may use this word — with love — offer our criticism. The purpose of criticism from this Plenum is not to weaken, to chastise, or to discourage the Party that has been in the fight, but to strengthen and to harden it. The second basis of criticism is the following: all Sections must conscientiously study and learn from the course of the latest class struggles in England, its benefits and its defects.

In the **commission** we investigated the extent to which the Party proposed correct slogans and conducted correct campaigns in the various phases, the extent to which it took or failed to take timely measures, the manner in which it recognised the question of blame and responsibility of the Right as well as the Left leaders, and how it raised these questions before the great mass of the workers. Although frank Bolshevik criticism is the first task for us here, we are also fully conscious of the very good work of our British Party and of the results of this work. I believe that in addition to a criticism of the British Party at this time, a self-criticism of all our Sections is also in place. How have the Sections of the Communist International carried on during the British Strike?

We must confess quite frankly and without any fancy colouring that with the sole exception of the C. P. S. U. (b) this strike has shown such great shortcomings in all of our Sections that we must really be appalled if we view it in connection with the possibility of a new capitalist world war. We must immediately mobilise the whole International to get to work to eliminate these defects as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible. The bourgeois counter-revolution has not only succeeded in bringing Europe territorially into a condition of Balkanisation, but it has also succeeded in Balkanising the ideas of the European working class.

In the last six months the bourgeois international counter-revolution can note with satisfaction that its goal-conscious activity did not remain without results. The events of the last six months warn us in the gravest manner that a tremendous amount of work is necessary in order to bring the world's workers far more than heretofore to the consciousness that they must feel themselves, internationally, really as a uniform whole, that they must completely overcome their nationalist narrowness as well as their craft narrowness.

When I say that the working class must overcome the **Balkanisation** of its ideas I mean that the workers in their activity and struggles must not only act according to their immediate personal or territorial interests. They must keep in mind the big relationships, and what is very important, they must be able to make big sacrifices for the major interests of their whole class. Such were the solid ranks displayed by the proletariat of the U. S. S. R. in connection with the British Strike. The workers in other countries have unfortunately not yet come to this point.

I shall begin with our own Party. I was really frightened when to-day in the **Trade Union Commission** I was made conscious, through the speech of Comrade Heis, of how backward we still are in Czecho-Slovakia even there, where we believe that we are already relatively far advanced in the work of Communist enlightenment and training. In Czecho-Slovakia we have a strong Communist Party, which in comparison with other countries, certainly does not take last place in the question of supporting the British miners' strike. The Party and also the **Red trade unions** have really made efforts to initiate practical support.

Comrade Heis spoke about the district of **Kladno**. He was able to tell us that the Kladno miners had collected money for the support of the British strike, that great mass meetings were held in their district in the presence of an English delegate, he described the energetic steps which the leadership of the Party and Red trade unions took in order to get the Kladno miners to work only the same shifts as they had done up to the outbreak of the strike. And in this connection, not without emotion Comrade Heis asked:

"But what could we do? For the last two years in this district the miners have not been working more than three or four days a week. All their families are hungry and in debt, they are without clothing. And when now the question came of working five days a week instead of three days, it was very difficult to get them to refuse this work. We succeeded on only two occasions to get them to refuse to work on Saturdays. But the betrayal of the small minority of reformists (we have 80% of the workers in our organisations there) broke their spirit and the workers thereafter worked six days a week."

The Kladno case shows what a tragic state the workers must come to when they are not able to escape from their local national short-sightedness, and when they cannot think and act as a class. We meet here the root of an international phenomenon in capitalist Europe. This Kladno case is symptomatic of the inadequacy of the **Boishevisation** of those West-European masses of workers who declare themselves to be Communists. We have there a powerful well-organised, concentrated bourgeoisie which has learned from the Russian Revolution, and which now also learns from the British Strike. In order to defeat this bourgeoisie we must do our utmost to lead the decisive sections of the working class to the same heights of class consciousness, of class solidarity, of readiness for sacrifice that the Russian workers possessed during the October days. That this has not yet been accomplished is the chief cause of all our failures since the world war.

Like lone sheep the workers of the various countries went up to the butcher block of the capitalists. When after the World War the first miners' strikes broke out in the Ruhr, Belgium and France, the masses of British miners remained passive. When, later, we had the great strike in Silesia, the **Czecho-Slovakian** miners were glad to be able to work one shift more a week in order to earn a few kronen extra. Then, when the capitalist offensive set in against the miners in Czecho-Slovakia, the miners in the immediate vicinity across the border, in **Polish** and **German Silesia**, in France and in England, went to work.

I realise fully the hard situation of a miners family in e. g.

Kladno, whose breadwinner has been working only three shifts a week for the last two years, that is in debt and without clothing — but nevertheless one must starve, one must make sacrifices. As long as the **Czech worker** in **Kladno** does not comprehend that the raising of his wages has to be fought for not in Kladno, but in **London**, as long as every **British worker** does not comprehend that the fight against the British coal barons must be fought out not in **England**, but in **Canton, India** and **Egypt**, just so long will there be no escape from the blind alley in which the labour movement finds itself. Comrades, it is not enough that you nod with your heads; everyone of us must ask himself: are we really doing everything that lies within our power? No one can demand miracles, but are we really doing everything that can be done in this direction? Let the facts speak for themselves!

During these very days we are experiencing a great social uprising in Java. Perhaps at this very moment in the Javanese districts where the counter-revolution has triumphed, the execution of hundreds is in process. We adopted a declaration here at the Plenum concerning the Java uprising, and that is proof that we are fully conscious of the seriousness of the situation. But during these days we see that our own Section, our **Dutch comrades**, were by far not conscious of their duty towards this great revolution in Java — which considered on an Eastern scale, is no less important than, on a Western scale, was the **Paris Commune** or the coal strike in England.

I believe that it is our duty on this occasion not only to correct the attitude of our Dutch Party towards the Javanese uprising, but to criticise it so sharply that the repetition of such a disgrace in the future will be made impossible not only in Holland, but everywhere. I have seen from extracts from the Dutch press that the Communist paper, instead of advocating for the Javanese insurgents the Leninist principle of national self-determination to the point of separation and the establishment of an independent State, have proposed and supported, jointly with the **Social Democrats**, a plan for a mixed investigation committee to be sent to Java! This is to be found in the press of our Party, during days in which blood flows in Java! At such a time the Party demands that the Government grant Java a "self-administration" such as Great Britain has condescended to grant India. We are informed that the Party even tolerates in its midst such a trend of thought, as implies that the great mass uprising in Java was the work of **provocateurs!** Comrades, you know with what rage **Lenin** attacked **Plekhanov** when the latter had the cowardice after the armed uprising in Moscow in 1905, to talk about provocation.

I will not present the facts in a one-sided manner. I will state immediately that the Dutch Party has already corrected this viewpoint on its own initiative, but, comrades, if such things are at all possible it is a symptom which signals very serious dangers. Here are great **Right dangers** of world historical importance. It must be the task of the C. I. to concentrate very serious attention upon them.

Of course, the Plenum has full right, in connection with the British events, to look also into the activity of the **Comintern leadership**. Our delegation has instructed me to express their view that throughout all Europe the general campaign for the General Strike and the miners' strike should have been launched earlier, more concretely and more sharply than was actually done.

What is the significance of the British miners' strike from the viewpoint of the further development of the social world revolution? I am of the opinion that effective lessons for the labouring masses of **England** will remain as a lasting heritage of this struggle. The Britain workers were long a great pillar of the international counter-revolution. Because of their privileged social position, as long as they were able to receive colonial profit crumbs from the table of their masters, they were conservatively inclined. Even more than the reformist workers in other capitalist countries were they caught by the democratic illusions, which were so specially strong in England. Hence, the reaction counted on them as an unquestioned prop.

Now the British workers have seen with their own eyes, and felt on their own backs, the State as an instrument of class oppression. They have experienced the impotence of Labour Party influence in Parliament. They can no longer think egocentrically, but must become conscious that they are de-

pendent upon the workers of other European countries and to a large extent upon the workers of the U. S. S. R., that the destiny of their liberty and of their country is also vitally bound up with the enslaved millions who suffer under the yoke in the **British colonies**. After the Paris Commune, Marx stated that the centre of gravity of the labour movement was transferred to **Germany**. To-day we see that this centre has been transferred to England. The general strike events are the main step in the forward development of this centre, not in the direction of reformism, but in that of the Social Revolution.

Despite the intervention of America, the first World War was essentially a **European world war**. The next world war, unless it is made impossible in time by the prior success of the Social Revolution, will be a **world war in the real sense of the word**. A similar process to that which prior to the first world war was cald forth in Europe by the slowly ripening disintegration of Austria-Hungary, is now beginning on a much higher point of the spiral, on a much larger scale, through the decline of the **British Empire** throughout the whole world.

After the General Strike, all the existing antagonisms have become still sharper. The **colonial peoples** have taken new courage, the lot of the **European workers** is being further worsened.

In Czecho-Slovakia the bourgeoisie maintains the wavering stabilisation only with the greatest effort. It is now confronted with a situation in which almost a half million Czecho-Slovakian workers are to be expelled from France as emigrants. They are coming home, where they find no chance of entering production, of getting work. To this must be added — and this applies not only to Czecho-Slovakia, but also to **Germany** and other countries — that now after the strike **British competition** will again revive. In Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, **Germany** and Austria, the capitalists are putting into effect renewed discharges of workers.

The radicalisation of the masses in Europe will grow. Simultaneously a great struggle is in process in the colonies. At the same time there begins an ideological resurrection also of the non-Communist masses of the working class. Not only the **Communists** draw lessons from the British General Strike, but even every Social Democratic worker, every patriarchal British petty-bourgeois worker must feel that the **Amsterdammers** and the **II. International** are not in a position to wage even a defensive struggle. These strata of workers also who do not possess sufficient knowledge, courage and self-sacrifice in order to join the **Communists** in their fight, in the civil war for the final goal, will recognise and feel that even in the struggle for a bit of daily bread there is no other leader of the proletariat than the **Communist International**.

In this situation we must count upon it that the rage of the bourgeoisie, who see their mastery actually threatened, will mount to the point of insanity. We must reckon with the intensification of international world reaction, with the further spread and sharpening of the **White Terror**, with large-scale preparations against the U. S. S. R. We must prepare for a rela-

tively long, exceedingly grim match between two world giants: between the international counter-revolution led by the British capitalists and paid by the American capitalists on the one hand, and the revolutionary forces of the international proletariat, among which is to be counted also the great State of the proletarian dictatorship.

The British strike, and practically everything that we are going through, is a part of this terrific struggle. There are also connections between the White Terror and the Balkans, the Pilsudski insurrection in Poland, the going over of the German bourgeois nationalists in Czecho-Slovakia, the Magyarists in Roumania and Raditch in Yugo-Slavia from a national revolutionary policy to one of compromise with the bourgeoisie of the ruling nation. There are close connections between all these European events and the efforts of the imperialists to destroy the Kuomintang Party in China. In all these phenomena there is a system, in all of them we see the same hand, that of **England**, and with England the whole concentrated, well organised world bourgeoisie, the international of capitalism and counter-revolution which senses its approaching decline and which has learned very well from the experiences of the Russian Revolution and of the British miners' strike.

Our only reply to our foes' desperate offensive can be the struggle for power on an international scale. With each of us the question of revolution is a great conscientious question. Perhaps, also, some of our generation have become weary. After all, what is involved here is a generation which has passed through four years of world war, three years of civil war in Russia, and seven years of martyr activity in the Communist Parties of capitalist countries. This generation will of course weigh the question of revolution with great seriousness. But there is no way out.

The capitalist world is in a blind alley, and if we cannot break through this blind alley with a decisive victory, if we ourselves remain cooped up in this blind alley, the next world war will come and destroy us all, destroy millions upon millions of people, destroy all Europe. And because this great inescapable necessity confronts us, because on the other shore there is a world of unlimited possibilities as is proven by the Soviet Union, guarded by the bayonets of the Red Army and based upon the proletarian dictatorship, is beginning the building of Socialism — our generation must wager everything, must make any sacrifice, so as to cut the Gordian Knot in order to escape from the blind alley to a firm broad highway.

Every worker in **Kladno** must realise that he cannot even fight for his bit of bread if he does not fight and make sacrifices for the **British miners**. Every **British miner** must become conscious of the fact that he will not be able to win even his bit of bread unless he helps the enslaved colonial peoples to a victory over his own bourgeoisie. All workers must realise that for them there is no other way to victory than the way behind the banner of Lenin, behind the banner of the **Communist International**.

The Session was thereupon adjourned.

Fifteenth Session.

Moscow, Dec. 4, 1926.

The session was opened at 8,0 p. m. Before proceeding with the discussion on the British question, Comrade Thälmann made the following announcement on behalf of the Presidium:

Comrade THÄLMANN (Chairman):

Yesterday a German Commission was appointed for the specific purpose of deciding, not only the matters raised by the memorandum of the Wedding Opposition, which is before us, but also the political questions and inner-Party affairs raised in this Plenum. In addition a communication has been received during the course of our Plenum from the five who are now outside of the Party and Comintern — Ruth Fischer, Maslow, Schwan, Scholem and Urbahns — a communication along the same line heretofore employed in documents by these persons while they were still in the Party. They appealed to the Plenum. Every expelled member of the Comintern under our statutes has the right to turn to the highest organ, to the World Congress.

The presidium has acted upon the matter and has decided to address the following telegram to the five signatories of this communication:

“Urgent —

Comparty Berlin:

Deliver to each of the following individually, by courier, stop to Maslow, Ruth Fischer, Urbahns Scholem, Schwan stop. Presidium of Plenum received your communication November eleventh in which you appeal to Enlarged Executive against your expulsion stop This communication in full conformity with your practical political attitude during recent months contains most vindictive anti-Communist attacks against Comintern and its German Section stop Nevertheless Presidium of Enlarged Executive on motion of German delegation has decided to grant you statutory opportunity to appear before VII. Enlarged Executive for personal defense of your appeal stop The five signers of the communication of November eleventh are, according to this decision, hereby invited to come before Executive in Moscow at once without any delay or expenses stop If you lay any weight upon your appeal your departure is absolutely necessary within twenty-four hours (at most within forty-eight hours) since otherwise Plenum will be forced to deal with and decide the question in your absence stop Presidium of Enlarged Executive stop December second nineteen twenty-six stop.”

I should like to add that the Presidium made this decision on the motion of the German Delegation, in order, according to our statutes, to give those now outside of the Party and Comintern their last chance to express their views on the grounds of their appeal.

(The telegram is thereupon unanimously ratified.)

Comrade RIESE (Germany — Wedding Opposition). (On Order of Business.)

Comrades, I hereby propose to the Presidium that the comrades of the Russian Opposition be admitted to this Plenum. This proposal should be formulated as follows: That Comrade Zinoviev be called upon, by the Presidium through the C. C. of the C. P. S. U., to declare his position, personally, on the questions under dispute. I know that the Russian comrades (Zinoviev, etc.) hold divergent views on the British as well as the Russian questions, and pure objectivity moves me to make this proposal. Since according to the “Declaration of Oct. 16th”, signed by these comrades, their appearance here without an official decision and invitation might very well be interpreted as a new breach of discipline, I require, in my motion, that these comrades be called upon through the C. C. of the C. P. S. U., to come here and defend their divergent views.

My motion reads as follows:

The undersigned submit the following motion:

That the Enlarged Executive decides to call upon the Comrades of the Russian Opposition to take the floor during the discussion of the British and Russian questions, for the purpose of presenting their viewpoint, and requests the delegation of the C. P. S. U. to the E. C. C. I. to undertake the necessary steps in the C. C. of the C. P. S. U.

The reasons for this motion are the following:

1. The Comintern is a world Party and for this reason it is necessary that any differences of opinion which may exist in its Sections be brought to expression at international meetings, so that decisions may be better adopted. This is all the more necessary politically if the leading section of the Comintern is involved.

2. This has hitherto also been the tradition of the Comintern. Not only were representatives of existing oppositions in West European Sections able to defend their views at the sessions of the C. I., but the differences of opinion within the C. P. S. U. were also always clarified at international sessions. At the V. Congress representatives of the Trotsky group were invited to defend their viewpoint.

3. The invitation of the representatives of the Opposition in the C. P. S. U. for the presentation of their viewpoints on the questions mentioned above is now all the more urgent since this opposition is headed by one of the founders and thus far the chairman of the Comintern, Comrade Zinoviev.

4. The real clarification of all disputed questions, which can only contribute to the strengthening of the Comintern, therefore makes it necessary that especially Comrade Zinoviev be heard.

Dec. 2, 1926.

(Signed) Riese, Doering.

Comrade THÄLMANN: (Chairman.)

Comrade Riese has made a motion, in regular form, that the Enlarged Executive call upon the members of the Russian opposition to participate in the discussion on the British and Russian questions, and that the Russian delegation of the E. C. C. I. be requested to take the necessary steps with the C. C. of the C. P. S. U. In view of Comrade Riese's motion it is necessary to present clearly the fact that comrades Zinoviev and Trotsky, as members of the Executive, have the right and the opportunity at every time and every hour to appear here, and if they wish, also to take the floor.

(Interjection by Riese: “If this is not interpreted as a breach of discipline.”)

As in all other questions in which there are differences of opinion, on which there is opposition, those involved can take the floor without any special invitation, so I believe I can say that the Plenum of the Enlarged Executive does not consider itself called to issue a special invitation to the Russian Opposition.

As far as the questions of discipline and special invitation are concerned, I believe that it is the affair of the Russian Party to decide this and that we have no occasion to mix into affairs that are already sufficiently well known.

The following material has been distributed to all delegates:

1. The whole material on the Russian discussion and the attitude of the opposition.

2. Special material concerning the various differences of opinion on the construction of socialism, international contradictions, etc., that came to light at the Russian Conference.

In this material, the standpoint of the Russian opposition is properly and politically presented and every delegate is in a position to study the existing differences. I move that we now proceed with the order of the day.

Comrade RIESE:

I want to speak against the motion to proceed with the order of the day, for the following reasons: if Comrade Thälmann bases his motion on the statement that the Russian com-

rades can take the floor here at any time, then I have already established, in motivating my proposal, that on the basis of the "Declaration of Oct. 16" we may presume that their appearance here, without invitation through the Russian C. C., might be interpreted as a new breach of discipline. For this reason, I believe, these comrades will not take the floor here unless they are officially requested to do so by the C. C. I would like to point out that at the V. World Congress, Comrade Trotsky was likewise called upon to defend his divergent opinion. Objectivity itself demands that my motion be carried into effect because I want to convince myself right here on the ground, of the correctness or incorrectness of Comrade Zinoviev's views on this question. I urge that my motion be adopted.

Comrade Thälmann (Chairman): The next speaker is Comrade Ercoli.

Comrade ERCOLI:

I believe that this question is entirely clear and that we should vote for Comrade Thälmann's motion to proceed with the order of the day, and not adopt the Riese motion. The most prominent members of the Russian Opposition are members of the leading organs of the Communist International. They have never forfeited their rights as members of these leading organs. Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev are members, and Comrades Trotzky and Sokolnikov candidates on the Executive. In this capacity they have the right to participate in all our debates. Comrade Riese said that by their "Declaration of Oct. 16" they have denounced all factional activity, that if the comrades now came here in order to defend their standpoint it might be looked upon as a breach of this declaration. This argument of Comrade Riese is utterly invalid. Subsequently to the "Declaration of October 16" the members of the Russian Delegation defended their viewpoint at the Party Conference, and nobody interpreted this defence as a breach of the "Declaration of October 16". On the contrary, nobody dreams of saying that they could not speak in the highest Party organ, in the Party Conference. Exactly the same is the case here. Notwithstanding the "Declaration of October 16" the comrades also have the right to appear here and defend their viewpoint.

But, comrades, we cannot give these members greater rights than other members of the International. We cannot send them a special invitation because that would imply that in this question we were divided into two camps in the International and in the Russian Party. We cannot tolerate this. They are members of the Executive, they can defend their viewpoint here, but for this we need adopt no special decision.

Comrade THÄLMANN:

We come to a vote. All those in favour of my proposal to proceed with the order of the day, will please hold up their delegate cards.

The proposal of Comrade Thälmann is adopted unanimously.

Comrade Dengel desires to make a declaration.

Comrade DENGEL (Germany):

On behalf of the German Delegation I make the following declaration: The German Delegation, which stands solidly behind the decisions of the XIV. Party Congress, the C. C. Plenum, and the XV. Party Conference of our Russian Party — which are supported by 99% of the membership of our Russian brother Party — repudiates indignantly the motion of Comrade Riese. It views this motion as unheard of provocation. Comrade Ercoli has already stated that the members of the Russian Opposition, as members or candidates of the Executive, can at any time take part in the discussion. This opportunity will be given them also in the following points on the agenda.

We believe that the motion made here by Comrade Riese was not the product of his own volition, but that other forces are behind it. We believe with certainty that his advance is a carefully prepared political demonstration. We are convinced that if the members of the Opposition in the C. P. S. U. appear here they will be politically defeated and destroyed in exactly the same manner. We are convinced that the Enlarged Executive will unanimously repudiate the political views of the Russian opposition.

Continuation of the Discussion of the Report on the Lessons of the English Strike.

Comrade MONMOUSSEAU (France):

Comrades, in our opinion the campaign carried on in various countries for solidarity with the British miners during their strike, has not been emphasised sufficiently here.

Certainly it was above all things necessary to establish connection between the Russian proletariat and the British workers. And certainly the Russian proletariat under these conditions stood the first of all. But it is likewise necessary that the British workers do not consider international solidarity exclusively from the viewpoint of the direct and powerful daily help rendered by the Russian proletariat at the head of the Communist International and of the revolutionary proletariat as a whole. And we believe that, in the reports made on this subject, the efforts made in each country were dealt with too generally. There are documents in which each of the countries is dismissed with just a few lines. As far as France is concerned we see that they restrict themselves to saying that our miners' strike had no great practical results, that it did not become a big manifestation of the will of the masses.

Comrades, I think that this is insufficient, not only for us but also for the British miners. What did we do in France during the strike? Comrades, we must first of all admit honestly that the outbreak of the General Strike in England came as a surprise to many comrades. Why did it astonish so many comrades? Because numerous compromises had already been made between the Right leaders and the British bourgeoisie, in every case just before the outbreak of the conflict, in the course of the development of the whole crisis, and the General Strike, the reply of the miners, was rather a surprise to our membership and to the proletariat.

But our organisation reacted immediately, we at once took measures to try to intervene on behalf of solidarity for the British miners' strike. I must say that the fact itself of the outbreak of the General Strike aroused great excitement in our cadres, which in the course of a few days spread to the masses, so that this strikes, because of its mass character as well as its object, made a powerful impression. This was also due, finally, to the political consequences which it must necessarily have on the further development of the labour movement and on the capitalist crisis.

I believe that one should emphasise that the community of interests and the solidarity which exists between the British proletariat and that of Germany, France and Belgium, — these four countries which are the pillars of Western capitalism, — and we must unquestionably direct the attention of the British workers to the efforts that we made, and to the systematic sabotage carried on by the reformist Amsterdam leaders with whom the British miners are still affiliated.

From the very first day of the strike, our bugle call rang out for rally, we called together the unions involved, the secretaries of the Railwaymen, Dockers, Miners, and our districts Nord and Pas-de-Calais. We immediately decided upon an agitation with placards, leaflets, and meetings in the mining centres, in order to raise sentiment and create a favourable milieu for the united front proposals which we submitted to the reformists a day or two later. We sent united front proposals to all the reformist leaders of the C. G. T., the Railway unions, Dockers, Miners, the reformist unions in the departments Nord, Pas-de-Calais and Lower-Saine, and we formed a committee of action. Comrades, the reformist leaders replied that they had adequate instructions from Amsterdam, and that they needed

neither the help of the Unitarians nor a push from Moscow in order to come to the aid of the British workers.

Furthermore, the sabotage was not only carried on by the reformists, but also by the Anarcho-Syndicalists. The dockers in Havre are still organised in an independent union led by anarcho-syndicalists. This independent union of Havre, through its anarchist leaders, systematically refused to form a united front with us.

Our agitation slogan was: "Not a kilo of coal for England!" We cannot say that we had any great practical success with it. But why is this? We met with sabotage, fully and systematically organised by the reformist leaders, among the railwaymen, miners and dockers.

The British workers must know this exactly.

In the course of the General Strike the big paper "Daily Mail" was printed in Paris. For a time it was thought that we had done nothing to prevent the publication of this paper which, through its false reports spread poison against the masses of strikers. The British workers must know that we worked against the reformists, against the technical specialists from England, who would have nothing to do with a general movement unless they were directly ordered by the British trade unions. You know that the French printshops are technically so organised that no single trade union has real control over the whole of the workers in the plant. The Unitarian and the Reformist trade unions are divided up in a printing plant into various technical groups. For instance the linotypers are organised by the Unitarians, and the hand compositors by the Reformists, with the effect that a strike is very hard to carry through unless a united front is established.

We conducted urgent negotiations every day in order to get the Reformists to help us to stop the publication of the British paper. Every time they answered: "Look, the British specialists are working, do you want us to be more ready for a strike than the British workers?" We wrote to England that a strike order should be sent. It did not come.

Despite these difficulties we were able to drive the paper to another printing plant, and there also we continued our propaganda work against it. Finally we said that it was absolutely necessary for the workers to know who was sabotaging the strike in France and after we had exhausted all means whereby to convince the Reformists, the Unitarians declared a strike of their own. But the Reformists and the British specialists kept right on working. The British workers should know this and nobody should tell us that we did nothing.

There was also a strike in Dunkirk. This was a strike that began on a purely local platform, to be sure, but the opportunity was favourable for the refusal to load coal for Great Britain. This strike lasted fully four months. It is a manifestation that we must not underestimate. The strike broke out and was carried on against the will of the Reformist leaders.

The Unitarian dockers' union of Boulogne-sur-mer carried on a 24-hour solidarity strike on behalf of the British strike.

And, finally, we also launched the miners' strike. It has been said that it had no great practical results. Obviously, but I believe that it is no exaggeration of this strike to say that it was a manifestation of great importance and that it showed the British workers that the French miners, the only ones to strike, did so thanks to the efforts of the revolutionists and against the sabotage slogan of the Reformist union, which is affiliated to Amsterdam. This should be clearly and emphatically noted.

Certainly we did not save the British strike, but despite the difficulties, which we must emphasise, we made a maximum effort in this direction, whereas the Social Democracy only showed its systematic sabotage.

Now as to financial solidarity. In France the C. G. T. U., exclusive of the W. I. R., collected about 300,000 francs. Of course, this is not much, but, comrades, on the other hand with our absolutely inadequate financial means we had to support strikes in all industries and in all corners of the country. During the English strike we had a metal workers' strike and we had to send several hundred thousand francs there so that the workers could come out victorious. We had a textile strike at Laroques

d'Olmes, and the dockers' strike at Dunkirk. One must take into consideration the opinion of the workers under such circumstances: "Yes" — they will say — "it is all very well to support the British workers, but we must also support our own strikers. We cannot sacrifice our strikers for the British workers". This shows up some of the difficulties under which we had to work. And what must be said, finally, is that the Reformists made no efforts whatever in this direction.

With regard to the perspectives of the British movement, I will not go into detail, but we must nevertheless bear in mind that the way the strike was carried out, its positive result: the treason of the reformist leaders, may have its consequences on trade union unity. For a moment we believed in France that it would launch a great movement of dissatisfaction among the British workers which would menace trade union unity. We had similar signs in the big metal workers' strike of 1918—1919 when the workers, enraged at the treason of their leaders, wanted either to split or to embark upon mass desertions from the trade unions. We feared this also after the British General Strike, and we instructed our comrades to conduct a vigorous struggle to save the unity of the trade unions in England so that the workers would not break the united front and rush out of the unions. I believe that this is a very important point which must be discussed here in order to lay down correct tactics for the British trade union movement.

On the occasion of the British strike we must thoroughly investigate the effect of this strike upon the mood of the workers; we must observe how the workers are trying to orientate themselves, we must find out which means we are to employ so that the workers will not leave the trade unions and succumb to the splitting spirit. We must show how the revolutionists can save trade union unity, capture the leadership of the trade unions from the traitors, and remain in contact with the masses.

Comrade JONES (England):

I propose to mention here some of the immediate aspects of the Party's work and development during this period. It seems to us that it is of the utmost importance to call attention, not merely to the objective changes and their results, but also to the important historical changes in the subjective factors in the remarkable development and growth of our British Communist Party. It would be a mistake, we consider, to merely treat the numerical growth in the membership of the British Party from the point of view of a mere quantitative increase. The fact that the Party has increased its membership during this period from 5 to 11,000 means much more than that, it means that our British Communist Party has now become an important political factor in the political life of Great Britain to which all recent events and evidences bear witness and testimony.

The utilisation of the Emergency Powers Act, the number of arrests of Communists, the suppression of meetings organised to be addressed by Communist speakers, and so on, all these events show us very clearly that the British Government is well aware of the exceedingly important role played by the British Communist Party throughout this struggle. The fact that the Party during this lockout was able, despite its relatively small membership, to play such an exceedingly important role, is due not merely to the reason that the Party was exceedingly energetic — of which there can be no question — but also to the fact that the Party understood correctly, during the whole of this long and exceedingly difficult struggle, to connect up directly the painstaking detailed work — in the strike committees, in the committees of action, in the localities, in the coal fields — with the correct general political line and with the issue of correct general slogans in a truly Leninist manner. We consider it necessary to emphasise the fact of this increase in quantity — which also becomes for the Party a change in quality, for these new elements are among the best elements of the British working class. It is no exaggeration to say that these new elements are among the best trade union and most active labour workers, who will undoubtedly help to drive the roots of the British Party still deeper into the heart of the British masses.

The view has been advanced that the present condition of the general Left movement in Great Britain is almost completely

the outcome of the general strike. Nobody will question the fact that the general strike was a historic event of tremendous significance to the whole of British social and political life. Nobody would, for one moment, deny that the British general strike marked a turning point in the British working class and its organisations. Nevertheless, for us to conclude from this that the result of the British general strike was to bring into existence a Left wing, an organised crystallised Left wing which before the general strike was not in existence, as for instance Comrade Pepper tried to tell us yesterday evening, is incorrect, and a complete misrepresentation of the facts. Any person who examines the actual situation prior to the general strike, can only conclude that the effect of the general strike, in so far as the development of the Left Wing movement is concerned, was to accentuate this development, to increase this development, and consolidate this organisation which was already existing, but certainly was not to bring into existence something which before the general strike was not already there.

We have seen differences between the Scarborough and Bournemouth Trade Union Congresses, and also the Liverpool and Margate Labour Party Conferences. We have seen the role of the Left Wing at Scarborough. We have seen the differences in the policy of these so-called Left Wing leaders after the general strike, we have seen a complete change, and during the general strike their definite support of the Right Wing leaders like Thomas and the rest. A similar situation inside the Labour Party has expressed itself at Margate — all of which brings us to the conclusion that when one speaks about the Left Wing movement developments in England, one must first differentiate carefully between the sham Left Wing leaders, and the real Left Wing movement organised, led and inspired by our British Communist Party which was organised and led along prior to the general strike, and which the general strike only accentuated.

Now with regard to the question of the Youth organisation, we must say that of the remarkable historic changes which have taken place in the British Labour movement, not the least has been the considerable progress made in respect to the organisation of the youth in Great Britain. The Communist Party has been the pioneer in this field, only after the Communists turned their attention to this task and commenced to organise the young workers, the Independent Labour Party with its Guild of Youth and secondly, the Labour Party itself, with its Youth League, recognised the danger which lies before them should they allow the Communists to go ahead with organising the young workers into a Communist League without any attention on their side. This period has marked for us a complete transformation in so far as our Youth organisation in Great Britain is concerned, not merely in the question of membership, in the increase from 900 to 1700, but also in something which means much more. The improvement in the quality of the organisation and the great increase and experience in actual struggle. First, the securing of representation of the young miners (over 100,000 young miners were included in the lockout), the inclusion of young miner representatives in the strike committees, the organisation of young miners' conferences composed of young miners' delegates and elected by the miners' organisations, the preparation of a programme of demands, the organisation of a young miners' supplement in the Young Communist weekly organs — the formulating of the question of the organisation of young miners into a workers' defence corps, etc., all these are of interest in regard to our work in Britain.

All these things, carried out with the help of the Party and the Minority Movement, have been responsible for our increase in membership, and above all the tremendous improvement in the whole spirit and quality and outlook of the Young Communist League.

Now just a remark in regard to the question of militarism and war. This question, in our opinion, has not only the aspect of the increasing danger of war (due to this period of capitalist decline, the increase of capitalist complications etc.), but the increase of British militarism, and more particularly of British navalism, has not merely this aspect, it has very definitely the important aspect of the utilisation of both soldiers and sailors against the workers in the present period of increased and intensified industrial disputes. Our Party and our Young Communist League is in full cognisance of this question. Most

of the comrades here are aware of the work we have carried on, and it does not need to be dealt with in detail in a Plenary session of the E. C. The soldiers and sailors of England, most of whom are of proletarian origin, must be made to realise their solidarity with the workers, with their fathers and brothers who are standing in the battle line of the industrial struggle against the attacks of the mineowners. To us this new period means that we shall have to intensify and reorganise this work, for we know that along with trade union development the use of troops in industrial disputes will be increased, and that from the point of view of the question of power — this great question which is now appearing on the agenda of the British working class — we also must devote special attention to this question, because it will be a question of decisive importance.

One other question — that is the question of the colonies. We must conclude from our analysis of the British situation that the colonial question becomes more and more a practical question for every British worker, that the various questions which constantly arise as a result of imperial relationships, as a result of imperial politics of the British bourgeois government and cabinet, that this question will constantly arise in a more and more acute form, and that we now have a very definite task of applying our general theoretical principles in the colonial question in a direct fashion, by explaining these particular resolutions to the British workers on the basis of practical developments in the colonies. We are of the opinion that this, at the present time, will become one of the most important tasks to which the Party must pay the closest attention.

Comrade EVANS (England).

Comrade Lozovsky was entirely right when he indicated the necessity of studying all features of the British strike. It is particularly important to point out the tasks connected with the workers' cooperative movement, to direct the attention of the comrades to the full importance of these questions, of phenomena in the British cooperative movement and also in the trade union movement, which after the strike became apparent in these movements themselves, as well in the relationship between the workers' cooperatives and the political parties of labour.

The Executive and Presidium of the Comintern has repeatedly pointed out the importance of the work in the cooperatives, as one of the most important and essential forms of mass work. This applies to an increased extent to the importance of this work in the British cooperatives. The British cooperative movement includes at present about five million people who in their overwhelming majority, at least about 90%, are members of the working class. The British cooperatives have a capital of over a milliard roubles, their turnover amounts to about two and half milliard roubles and the number of cooperative societies is 1,500 quite aside from the vast number of cultural societies, clubs, etc. Here is a co-operative movement, with two million members. Of course it must be noted that what is involved here is not individual membership, but a membership somewhat similar to that of the trade unions, of which the majority are affiliated with the Labour Party.

Such a tremendous powerful workers' organisation can have a vast positive importance at times when the struggle sharpens, to the extent that it marches side by side with the working class in the class struggle. On the contrary, however, the working class must be seriously injured if this mighty organisation works against the struggle of the working class, or even if it only stands aside from the class struggle and thereby objectively works against it.

The Communist Party of Great Britain began to devote its attention to this question already a year and a half ago. The decisions of the Minority Movement conferences and the decisions and practical work of the C. P. G. B. raised the question before the working class that the mightiest organisation of the working class, the cooperative movement, must be transformed into a real auxiliary instrument of the revolutionary proletarian class movement.

These efforts on the part of the Communist Party and Minority Movement naturally encountered the terrific resistance of the leading elements of the British cooperative movement — this stronghold of the furthest Right section of the British labour movement. In response to all these efforts the Communist

Party and the Minority Movement were met with the reply: "Hands off the Cooperatives". Prior to the strike there were, in the British cooperatives, beginnings of an agreement with the trade unions, but these beginnings were of a purely formal character and contained nothing concrete.

During the strike no agreement whatever existed between the trade unions and the cooperatives, the latter were in no way prepared for the strike and were not only unable to function as the auxiliary organisation of the strikers, but also with regard to their own economic work they were completely impotent. On the one hand the cooperatives did not participate in the struggle and did not render any active aid to the strike, but on the other hand, they did not as a rule employ the strikebreaker organisation of the government. To be sure there were a number of cases in which the cooperative movement did resort to the aid of the governmental organisation, among which there was one case in which the transport workers' union, after negotiations between it and the cooperatives, replied: "Go and employ the strike-breaking apparatus of the government". Such was the miserable showing made by the cooperatives during the whole of the strike. Of course this cannot be said about all the cooperative organisations. Of course in many places, especially in the coal districts and in railway areas, the cooperative movement actively supported the strike. We even have reports from several local organisations that their membership grew, that they have become very popular, that they have consolidated themselves, and that their whole membership has joined the trade unions.

What has the Communist Party done, what tasks has it set itself, with regard to the co-operatives, during the strike? The Communist Party and the Minority Movement developed a large-scale campaign in order to organise financial support of the miners through the co-operatives. But at the Co-operative Congress which was held immediately after the strike, there were raised neither the question of the co-operatives' rôle in the British strike, nor the question of the support of the miners. A motion by the Presidium, together with one by the directors of the central society, was rejected three times by the delegates to the Congress because these motions proposed nothing concrete, until finally a resolution was prepared which promised real aid to the miners. At the Bournemouth Trade Union Congress at least five or six large trade unions raised the question of the necessity of revising the mutual relations between the co-operative and trade union movements, and proposed the establishment of permanent agreements on the basis of which the miners could be assured of support by the co-operatives during strikes, lockouts, etc. Despite the energetic opposition of the delegates to the Congress this question was rejected by the leaders on the pretext that there were as yet no concrete and practical conditions for the making of such an agreement.

Despite the resistance of the co-operative and trade union leaders, the question of the rôle of the co-operatives during the strike, as well as the mutual relations between co-operatives and trade unions, is being taken up in almost all co-operative meetings. On this question we have at present three tendencies in the British co-operative movement. The first, the reactionary trend, holds the opinion, on the basis of the experiences made during the strike, that it is harmful for the trade unions to mix into the questions of provision of food supplies, and that the trade unions must be told: "Hands off the Co-operatives". Another trend, a Left movement in the co-operatives, which is headed by the Communist Party and the Minority Movement, holds the view that the lessons of the strike raise in even sharper form the necessity of a real unity between the co-operative and trade union movements on the basis of transforming the co-operative into an instrument in the class struggles of the British proletariat. The centrist tendency, including the majority of the present co-operative leaders, holds that the question of mutual relations between trade unions and co-operatives, now being pushed by the Communist Party and Minority Movement, and supported by the masses, cannot be disregarded. For this reason they formulate these questions in their own way, confining themselves to generalities without going into the concrete, and simply ignoring everything that applies to the class and the revolution.

We have, furthermore, still another phenomenon: the Labour Party and the I.L.P. are including co-operative work within the sphere of their tasks, and this to a far greater extent than

has hitherto been the case. Thus, e. g., there is at present a special co-operative manifesto regarding the necessity of more intensive work in this movement. There is at present a plan for an agreement between the co-operatives and the Labour Party for a systematic joint procedure. This projected agreement is now up for discussion before all co-operative societies and gives splendid material for Communist agitation on this question, for the putting of the question in a Communist spirit. All these facts indicate that the Labour Party and the Right leaders of the British labour movement are at present striving to make closer contact with the co-operative movement, while on the other hand the co-operative leaders are not hostile either to a rapprochement with the trade union movement, in order to mobilise the Right forces against the Left danger and against the Communists' representation of the question.

We see a consolidation of the Right forces in the British labour movement also in this sector of the front. But we likewise see that the work of the C.P. and Minority Movement has unmistakably weakened after the successes that were attained. On various questions the initiative was taken out of the hands of the Communists, while the Right Wing remodelled these questions in line with their own spirit. It therefore appears to me that the most emphatic attention of the Minority Movement as well as of the C.P. must be once more directed towards this most important form of mass work. The most decisive task in this connection consists in the necessity of a renewed seizure of the initiative, in order to raise the question of mutual relations between co-operatives and trade unions, and co-operatives and political parties. These slogans must positively be permeated with revolutionary class-political content of a concrete nature. It is necessary to put concretely the question of the proper attitude of co-operative organisations during a strike. With this must be bound up the question of changing the leadership. It must come to a point that co-operative work will not be only an incidental activity of the Party, but that it will become one of the most systematic, most important forms of mass work. Co-operative work must become an organic part of the activity of all the most important departments of the C.P.G.B. I believe that a systematic launching of this work, in view of the successes to the credit of the Communist Party of Great Britain, involves no difficulties whatever, and that the Party will attain all those successes, on this field as well as on others, for the achievement of which it possesses all necessary preconditions. (Applause.)

Comrade TIM BUCK (Canada):

With all the rest of the Parties of the Comintern we are naturally extremely proud of the work the British Party did during the general strike. We believe that their line was correct and that Comrade Murphy made a very complete report.

But, while recognising the good work that the Party did we do not believe that it is doing the British Party a favour to hold them solely responsible for the Strike. I do not believe that quite sufficient attention is being paid to the inner transformation that is going on within British industry itself and the dynamic tendency that the transformation holds for the revolutionary movement. The plan of trustification of such an industry, as the cotton industry employing hundreds of thousands of workers, a basic industry in Great Britain, an industry which is today working only 3 or 4 days a week, would mean the concentration of production in most modern plants, elimination of old mills — it would be rationalisation on a scale that we have never seen yet in Great Britain. It would mean the throwing of thousands of workers out of work and it would set an example for all of British industry which they would follow very quickly.

These things face our comrades in Great Britain with the necessity of taking a definite attitude towards the consolidation of the Minority movement, or, if I may say it, to complete the organisation of the Minority Movement so that it shall be one definite organisational form with the entire membership responsible, so that it may play a more definite rôle in future struggles than in the last strike. We have to face the fact that these opposition organs, such as the Minority Movement of Great Britain and the Minority movement in other countries, must go forward or they will degenerate. They must grow, must develop. We must find organisational expression, or de-

generation will set in and the Left wing workers will lose faith in their organs.

It has to be recognised that despite the immensely favourable conditions, our Minority movement was well nigh impotent as far as concrete work was concerned. I do not believe our British comrades will deny or consider it uncomradely to remark that even after the general strike was called off, the safety men should not have been left in the mines. A serious effort was made only in the last days. They should have been withdrawn from the mines in the first days and it should have been the first task of the Minority movement to do it. Had the influence of the Minority movement been transformed into organisational strength, had it found organisational strength within the unions, it could have been done.

Another point which I believe we must learn is the fact that there was little opportunity or little effort to transfer the local trade unions and Labour Councils into the local directing centres of the strike. The Party had the slogans, the correct slogans, but did we have the organisational strength and the definite programme and plans in the centres which would enable our comrades to carry it through? I do not believe that we did.

The task of organisation of the British workers against the forces of the capitalists of Great Britain is going to fall upon the Party and Minority movement, and this makes it essential that the influence of the Minority movement shall find organisational expression, that more organised work shall be carried out, and that the apparatus shall be made more complete. I know they will have a difficult task on their hands, and perhaps before the general strike such a task would have been impossible, but at this time, with the lessons of the strike so recent and the sympathy that has been demonstrated by thousands of workers who have flocked into the Party, and the oncoming offensive of the capitalists so apparent, the efforts of the past should not only be doubled, but tripled in each section of the country. It should be made the immediate task.

There was one important point upon which Comrade Murphy did not touch — this question is the attitude of the British Party towards the status of the dominions. It was exactly the same at the Fifth Congress. We do not believe that it is sufficient for our British comrades merely to draw attention to the centrifugal tendency within the British Empire. We believe that it is essential that our British comrades declare their stand and that the British Party adopts a positive attitude on this question of Dominion independence, and that their position and attitude finds expression in their day to day work and propaganda.

The United States today already owns one third of all Canadian industry, it owns one third of all Canada's producing mines, it owns huge areas of the timber in Canada. The United States owns, besides one third of the bonds issued by the Pro-

vincial Government in Canada, and one third of all the bonds issued by the cities and towns, and it is now developing an increasing interest in governmental finances. And this Comrades, confronts us with the question of whether we want Canada to drift away from Great Britain into the arms of Wall Street. To drift away from Great Britain, to weaken British imperialism merely to strengthen American imperialism, would not strengthen the revolutionary movement of North America, rather it would weaken it.

While this rough outline of the proportions of Canadian investments, industry and mines owned by Wall Street, gives a fairly good reflection of the weight of anti-British influence in Canada, it does not answer the question as to the net result of opinion in Canada. It does not give us a conception of the developing strength of the native bourgeoisie, of the developing strength of the native capital. One example I can give you is the following: During the year 1925 of all of the bonds placed on the market in Canada, Canadian capitalists bought more than 52% more than the United States, Great Britain and the others put together.

The capitalist class of Canada is continually diverging from the capitalists of Great Britain. Under the fear of being driven into British wars, with the consequent burdens of war expenses and dangers, they are agitating for autonomy. I want to read you a statement by Sir Clifford Sifton, a very prominent Liberal and an advocate of national status — (this is the term they use for independence):

"The real difficulty is in connection with peace and war. Great Britain is a world power, militant and imperialistic, which has taken possession of vast and productive regions of the earth and means to hold them — peacefully if she can, forcibly if she must. The self-governing dominions are huge, youthful, peaceful communities, having no sympathy with war, and desiring only to be allowed to proceed with their own development."

There are the sentiments of the developing bourgeoisie in Canada, and the Communist Party of Canada declares that Canada is not intending to drift away from the British Empire merely to fall into the arms of American capitalism. It is possible by utilising the conflicting interests of both the American and British capitalism, to bring to a head the struggle for Canadian independence.

I believe the Communist Party of Great Britain should clearly and directly cooperate with the Communist Party of Canada in the task of developing the independence movement in Canada for the repeal of the North American Act, and the drawing up of a constitution for a Canadian Republic. They should carry on work in cooperation with us and make it the joint task of both the British and Canadian Parties.

(Close of Session.)

Sixteenth Session.

Report on the Work of the Trade Union Commission.

Reporter: Comrade Lozovsky.

Moscow, Dec. 6, 1926.

The principal questions that I want to touch upon in my report have already been dealt with in a general way in the theses distributed to all the delegates: trustification, rationalisation and the tasks of the Communists in the trade unions.

The first question which the Communist International and each Party must decide, is the question of **which new forms, which new methods of the class struggle are now being applied by capitalism against the workers.** We see a series of new phenomena, such as the gigantic trustification within national boundaries, also a series of international trusts, and the rationalisation which is now being carried out in the European countries under various forms and methods. All these new phenomena: concentration within national boundaries, international trusts and combinations, new rationalisation methods — all these are new offensive methods against the working class, and only if we look upon these new phenomena from this viewpoint shall we be able to work out a proper policy and correct tactics. If we take up these various phenomena we will see that the first task of all these new methods of power combination is directed against the workers, and intended to increase the competitive power of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the working class.

It is necessary that we view all these phenomena connectedly. All these various methods and forms have but one purpose, on the one hand to further increase production and bring about monopolisation and higher prices, and on the other hand to depress the standard of living of the working class.

The Social Democratic press reacts upon these new phenomena with tremendous enthusiasm for trustification, etc. When the first reports on the formation of this continental iron trust were received, the Amsterdam International formed a special commission composed of Dissmann, Mertens, and several other bosses, which worked out a policy according to which this new international iron trust was to be combatted. In the programme of this commission it is stated that industrial unions, industrial federations must be formed, that the powers of the factory councils must be enlarged, that a control over the business management of the employers must be introduced, that price limits must be fixed, that the co-operatives must be supported, that all raw materials must be socialised, that the distribution of the most important articles of consumption be organised, the banks socialised, and an international control of trusts introduced — all this through the International Labour Bureau, i. e. through an organ of the bourgeois State. The Social Democracy advocates the view that these new trusts are organs which bring progress to humanity. All these programme demands are of course only formulated for demagogic purposes, they have only the purpose of misleading the working masses and of shifting all questions to a different basis.

It is very interesting to note how the German Social Democratic press discusses these new trusts, its standpoint is always in favour of the trusts. In September of this year a meeting of factory councillors took place in Berlin at which one of the A. D. G. B. leaders, Eggert, made a speech, the basic line of which had nothing to do with the so-called socialisation proposed in the Amsterdam programme. He said literally:

"There is nothing else for the trade unions to do than to help along, to help build up economic development." He said further:

"We must get into harness on this thing, there is nothing to be gained here by class struggle."

We see from these statements that the programme of the Amsterdam International is only a fake programme, for the whole activity of the Amsterdam International now consists in solving all these questions within the limits of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office.

If we go over to the question of rationalisation we see the same enthusiasm in the international Social Democratic circles.

In Leipart's organ "Die Arbeit" there was an article in which it was stated that unemployment was a pre-condition for the cleaning up of international economy. Obviously if one considers it as a pre-condition for an economic sanitation, one cannot apply any sort of measures in order to fight unemployment. The Social Democratic reformist leaders of the A. D. G. B. have also already put through various resolutions on rationalisation. Interesting in this connection is a very lengthy resolution of the Berlin factory councillors. The chief thought in this resolution is that the purpose of rationalisation is to increase the well-being of the whole people. But there are some employers who carry out an entirely different line and policy... The government, the Minister of Labour, the arbitration organs are in the end called upon to crystallise this rationalisation in a deep socio-political sense with the aim of extending the markets — this is one of the weightiest points in Social Democratic theory and philosophy.

Secondly, rationalisation has the purpose of increasing the consuming power of the masses.

The French reformists, and leading elements in the French trade union movement generally, are somewhat more careful. They do the same as is done in Germany, but they talk less. Thus, e. g. two or three weeks ago the central organ of the French reformist trade unions sent a special questionnaire to various prominent political persons. This questionnaire actually asks:

"Do you believe that the principles which Ford has put into effect in America and which have the purpose of raising the consuming power of the workers, can also be initiated in French industry?"

The clever French bourgeois paper "Le Temps" says on this point: "Asking questions is sometimes an attempt to have others say what you are afraid to utter yourself". This paper very ably brought out the chief idea behind the questionnaire. The whole policy of the international Social Democracy and reformists towards rationalisation is only an economic consequence of the new orientation.

The reformists are always up to something new. I would like to direct your attention to a couple of very interesting facts, which are characteristic of the new attitude of international reformism. Thus a number of leading periodicals of the German reformists, such as "Die Arbeit", "Das Gewerkschaftsarchiv", raised the colonial question in a very sharp form. The workers can have nothing against the possession of colonies — at least so says one of the writers, Dr. Müller. I could cite a number of other interesting articles here, in which the German trade unionists not only raise the question of the old colonies lost by Germany under the Versailles Treaty, but also the question of the colonies generally and in principle, and they state that the white race is justified in leading the coloured peoples, of course without violence and of course with democratic means! This demand for colonies by the trade union press in the present situation is a very interesting proof of how deeply the Social Democratic leadership is steeped in imperialist ideology. What the German Social Democracy and the leading elements of the German trade unions now write and preach, the bourgeois and radical parties in Germany have always been practising. Thus we see a fully developed bourgeois ideology. It is supported by broad strata of the workers and it is therefore the peculiarity of the development of the trade unions, of the German labour movement, that this whole apparatus, historically crystallised on the foundation of the working class, is completely bourgeois, completely integrated with the bourgeois States. In the countries in which the trade union movement is split we see the evolution of the proletarian and petty-bourgeois programmes still more crassly, which changes also the social content of the Parties.

We have a very interesting testimonial in the organ of the heavy industrialists of France, "Bulletin Quotidienne", which

writes in an article on the French Trade Union Federation, that the reformist trade union federation is undergoing an evolution, that it has already deserted its old positions, that it is entirely opposed to politics, and that its leaders have changed, probably under the influence of advancing years. And if nevertheless they still retain a part of the old ideology, they have nevertheless become much more moderate. One must take into consideration that the reformist trade union federation contains in its ranks from day to day fewer and fewer workers, but more and more State employees, postal workers, teachers, etc. Thus one sees that the social content of this trade union federation is changing. Perhaps the leaders are unaware of it, but we see it quite clearly. The conclusion of this article is that this new development in France is proceeding favourably to the Communists. These political and social changes now taking place in the reformist trade unions explain their attitude towards trustification, rationalisation, etc. The standpoint of the reformists can be taken only in connection with this question, in connection with their political attitude, their programme and their tactics.

What shall be our position, the attitude of the Comintern and of the Communist Parties to these new methods and forms of capitalist combination for its offensive against the working class?

But what concrete practical programme, what programme of action, must be proposed on the trade union field in order to enlighten the toiling masses, in order to mobilise them? What practical means must we apply in order to parry this offensive against the working class?

Efforts are now being made to carry the split of the working class into every single factory, by means of reducing the number of skilled workers and introducing new workers into the process of production. Within each factory efforts are being made to introduce new methods of collaboration, and in a number of German factories this has already happened through the so-called "company unions". Efforts are now being made to split the workers in the factories, to play one section against the other, and thereby weaken the strength of the working class in order to be better able to carry out the new offensive, the so-called sanitation of economy. The task of all Communist Parties must therefore be to establish the united front inside of the factories. The Social Democracy demands, seeks and desires collaboration with the employers, and if the factory councils are drawn into this collaboration, thanks to the demagogy of the Social Democracy, this will mean a terrible demoralisation of the workers in the factory. Our first slogan must therefore be: **No collaboration in the rationalisation process!** Not participation of representatives of factory councils and trade unions in carrying out the rationalisation as is proposed by the Social Democracy! Establishment of the united front in the factories!

The second task which confronts us is the amalgamation of the workers, not only in the factories but also in the industrial unions. We must formulate a programme that strengthens the forces of the working class in order to enable it to fight the new concentrated power of the employers.

Another very concrete slogan is the question of the work-day; this slogan we can raise within national boundaries, and adapt to every industry. In our coming sessions we will find out the extent to which it is possible to formulate this slogan also internationally.

An additional problem that confronts us is the organising of all workers employed in one trust. This must be done on a national as well as an international basis. Here we must find new forms of organisation, new forms of amalgamation. We already have such international bodies as, e. g. the craft internationals, which are under the leadership of Amsterdam, which have thus far done absolutely nothing, so that we must take the initiative in hand. In this connection the question of unemployment maintenance and a number of other concrete questions which we raise in our general theses, is important.

Can it be said that these proposals exhaust all the concrete questions and slogans for the various countries? Of course not. These slogans are only chief slogans for the struggle against the consequences of the rationalisation, they are only directives which enable us later to formulate concrete demands for every country.

I should like to direct attention to a series of new phenomena within the the labour movement. I think that the most important consists in that in a number of countries, e. g. Germany, Great Britain etc., we have a chronic unemployment. Here we may say that in Germany and Great Britain there are 10—15% of superfluous workers. This is not a normal unemployment, it is something new, and our struggle in defence of these unemployed must proceed jointly with the presentation of a programme for the ending of this unemployment, for the readmission of the unemployed in the productive process.

Another very important new phenomenon within the labour movement is the fact that the rationalisation process reduces the number and also the role of the skilled workers in the process of production, and thereby reduces the resistance of the working class in its first stage. Only in the further effect of these new methods do new sentiments arise within the working class, do the masses of workers develop leftward, etc. But this is already the second stage in this process. The first stage — and this is very important — cripples the workers' power of resistance.

A further important fact is the growing rapprochement, in process already a year and a half, between the Social Democratic and reformist leaders and the employers' organisations. The rapprochement between reformist leaders and employers' organisations is paralleled by the discontent, by the new mood among the workers against this fusion.

Furthermore, we have seen during the last year that in all countries there is a growing demand for a united front among the workers, that they insist upon joint actions, etc. This can be seen in Great Britain, France, Germany and also a number of other countries. There is practically not a single country in which this will for unity, and for the concrete carrying into effect of this unity, does not prevail.

In addition, during the last year, we can note a number of phenomena which forced international actions, thus, e. g. the Chinese revolution, the growth of the Japanese working class, the activity of the workers in Indonesia, India, etc.

To sum up we may say that last years' whole development in the labour movement consists in that the movement is travelling from Right to Left. Only in places in which the counter-revolution was victorious, as in Hungary, where it defeated the workers, do we see that the heads of the labour organisations are moving towards the Right and one cannot quite exactly estimate how far the Leftward movement has progressed in these countries.

These various leftward movements now bear an entirely different character than they did a year ago. A year ago we had a situation in which the Left sentiment was still very little differentiated, and it was but very slightly crystallised politically. Now we see that we have a certain political differentiation everywhere in these various Left movements. This political differentiation was the consequence of the crisis in the Anglo-Russian Committee, the clash between the British and Soviet trade unions on the question of the British General and Miners' Strikes. If for a certain period the Anglo-Russian Committee was the crystallisation point for various Left movements, at present a crisis is to be noted. The British representatives on the committee tried to sabotage, tried to do everything possible to blow up the committee, they are doing everything possible in order to change the constitution of the committee. This crisis, which arose out of the attitude of the revolutionary and reformist trade unions towards the practical struggles of the British working class, has not yet been solved, and no one can tell how it is going to be solved.

All revolutionary elements must have a clear and definite attitude on this crisis and must crystallise a clear opinion in the trade union movement as to how the unity movement in general is to be fostered and what concrete tasks this movement shall set itself.

Already at the V. Congress we defined our principal position towards these Left elements, and there cannot be two opinions in the Comintern as to how we should act towards these various elements in the trade unions. We are speaking about Left elements which are outside of the Comintern, e. g. the Minority Movement. We must facilitate the crystallisation of

these Left elements. We support these groups, we do everything possible to help them develop, but of course we must criticise the erroneous attitude to be found in the organs of these groups. I will take an article from the organ "Einheit", of which Fimmen is the responsible editor, an article — "We and the Communists" — in which an absolutely hostile attitude was assumed against the Communists. Of course, we must criticise this. Nor can we remain silent with regard to Fimmen's attitude against the slogan of Indonesian independence. He says that if we raise this slogan and Indonesia liberates itself, other imperialists will gobble it up. This may be true or it may not, but from this analysis he draws the conclusion that the Dutch workers should not raise the question of Indonesian independence. This is a social democratic attitude, which we must combat sharply as a matter of course.

We may state quite frankly here not only that our policy with regard to the United Front proved itself correct, but we can say that we have made big progress. Of course, we must take country by country, we must see how large our progress has been, we must see what are our weaknesses. This tactic must be continued, it must be adapted to the conditions of the workers in each country and in each industry. This concrete political adaptation must be worked out by each Communist Party with the help, of course, of the Comintern and Profintern.

We have made progress, but very many shortcomings are still to be noted. The Communist International was always something peculiar. The Social Democratic press says ironically: Look at the Communists, at every Congress they speak about defects and weaknesses and mistakes, and they call each other names, etc. Of course there are no such things as shortcomings and mistakes among the Social Democrats! At their congresses all is quiet — as in a graveyard. Everybody is satisfied, nobody says anything against anybody else, one just simply adopts a unanimous resolution, drinks a good glass of beer and goes home. And they call this — international. We are not Social Democrats and we are not duty bound always to pay compliments to one another. We are not hunting for weaknesses in order to offend any of the Parties or groups of comrades, but we take up these various weaknesses in order to eliminate them. I should like to state here that the self-criticism which we express here in our Congresses and all meetings of the Executive has had a very great effect upon all our Parties. It would have been impossible for our Parties to have made such political and organisational progress if we had not exercised this constant self-criticism, if we had not exposed all our weaknesses and shortcomings.

The primary shortcoming is that while we have adopted many good resolutions we did not carry them out — not only not by 100%, but on the average not even by 10%.

We have said that 75%, yes, even 99% of all our strength must be expended on trade union work. Comrades, that is very fine. One may say 75% for trade union work — but then one forgets all about it. If e. g. our Party press devotes only a column to trade union work in which, in addition, various notices appear, this certainly does not correspond altogether to the 75% that was to have been devoted to trade union work. Let us take e. g. the Rote Fahne, L'Humanité, etc. — I maintain that they and all the rest of our press do not devote the requisite space to the trade union question, the space they should according to all our decisions.

A further shortcoming consists in that the building of fractions is still in its infancy. The chief question here consists not in where we thus far have no fractions — we already have fractions in all countries — the chief question consists in that they are working badly, they are functioning poorly.

An additional deficiency is the disproportion between political influence and organisational strength, which is still very great. This is one of the most dangerous phenomena which we must combat.

An additional weakness consists in our insufficient experience in the exploitation of campaigns. We are not yet able to exploit 100% the campaigns that we have launched.

In a number of countries we have not yet sufficient concrete trade union slogans. We have decided many times in the past to formulate not only a special programme of action for each country, but also for each important industry, such a pro-

gramme was not only to be worked out, but is, was to be propagated over a period of years, so that it would come to be understood by every worker. Our action programmes are much too long. The main thing is to put five or six striking points and to mobilise the workers behind them. The British comrades have a good practice in this. The other parties should learn from them.

A further defect are the extremely weak cadres. It is necessary to train cadres politically and practically, to create special trade union schools. And this must proceed parallelly, not only must cadres be created, but at the same time we must draw new elements into the schools to be used for our work later on.

The Parties in the capitalist countries still have but very poor connections with the labour movement in the Colonies. Relations with the Colonies are very weak. The British Labour Party has a great influence in India. It has formed a Labour Party there according to the English pattern. This is a democratic method of maintaining the political power of Britain in India. We are doing very little on this field.

A further question that I should like to touch upon is the strengthening of our organisations, our minority movements. Of course, there is no uniform method for the carrying out of our decisions on this question. In Great Britain one must proceed otherwise than in France, and in Germany differently from Czechoslovakia. In general we must say: strengthen the R. I. L. U.; strengthen the minorities in the trade unions; develop our minorities and their organisation; extend our unions, recruit new forces, viz. broaden the basis of our trade union organisations. And that is the only possibility also of strengthening the Profintern.

All Communist Parties are in favour of strengthening the Profintern. This can be done only if in every country trade union work is really carried on and the influence of the Communist Party is extended, if our influence in the organisational amalgamation of the revolutionary unions becomes larger.

One cannot say that the strengthening of the Comintern and of the Profintern are two different things. No, our trade union work is an important work for the Communist Parties, in order to strengthen and broaden them; in order to extend their influence.

One of our most important tasks is to establish a direct connection between the European trade unions and minority movements and the Indian, Indonesian and Chinese trade unions. This has a very great political significance. We are now trying — and I believe that we shall succeed — to call together a Pan-Pacific Conference for May 1st, 1927 in Canton. It is absolutely necessary that we discuss which trade unions, also which European trade unions from the large imperialist states, are to be represented at this conference, in order that an amalgamation be effected between the Pan-Pacific labour movement, the toiling masses of the Far East, and the European labour movement.

The coalescence of the trade unions of China, Australia, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines with those of Europe will play a tremendous political role for the international labour movement. Our comrades in the various countries should look a little further than Europe, they should see what is going on outside of Europe and then we will be able to conduct a correct policy.

A further question is the struggle for a united International. In this respect, our propaganda and agitation is not sufficiently concrete. We have already spoken a good deal about the formation of a unified International. But which International? What should this International do? We always say: united front, and again united front. But which united front, on which basis? Surely only on the basis of the class struggle, for the conduct of international class struggles, etc. We are now in possession of splendid examples, showing what an International should not be. We know the "activity" of the Amsterdam International in the British strike movement. But has this been adequately exploited in our propaganda? No. We must make clear to every social-democratic and non-Party worker, on the basis of these facts, why the Amsterdam International did not do its duty; in order on such a concrete basis to bring into being one International, to put to the foreground and the creation of a unified international upon the basis of the class struggle. We have not

understood this sufficiently. In the immediate future we shall have to fight bitter struggles in a number of countries against the official trade union representatives, against the whole trade union apparatus, against the Social Democracy, against the united front between the Amsterdammers and the employers. Our Parties must prepare themselves well for this. If we want to carry out such struggles with good preparation we must extend and strengthen our work in the factories a hundred fold. Only then when every factory is a vantage point, when we have a solid fraction there, only then can we successfully conduct this severe struggle against the whole official apparatus of the trade union and social democratic bureaucracy. I believe that in the immediate future the Comintern and Profintern must concern themselves specifically with these questions of the economic struggle. Only if the Communist Parties occupy themselves fully with this question can we make progress in this respect, if not we shall remain stationary and the bureaucracy in the trade unions and Social Democracy will sabotage the coming strikes, will more and more depress the standard of living of the working class.

On the whole I believe that the next period will raise

economic problems for every Party. This does not mean that we should not concern ourselves with politics. I only mean that economic problems, such as unemployment, lengthening of the working day, wage cuts as a consequence of rationalisation and trustification, will seriously concern our comrades in the immediate future. All possible material must be gathered and, on the basis of our experiences, our tactics must be worked out. Possibly special socio-economic departments should be formed, etc. Only if we study these new phenomena on the economic field, which have very great importance for our whole policy, will it be possible for us to carry out successfully a good trade union policy and a correct general political line. A splendid trade union work might be done, but if the Party had a wrong policy we would always experience defeat because one depends upon the other.

In conclusion I should like to say that in general we have had a good policy, but this policy was often carried out badly in practice. I only wish that our practice was equal to our good policy. When our practice will correspond to our good policy we will make big progress and the next World Congress will be able to record this progress. (Applause.)

Continuation of the Discussion on the Lessons of the English Strike.

Comrade CLARA ZETKIN (Chairman):

We shall continue with the discussion on the British General Strike. The first speaker will be Comrade Remmele.

Comrade REMMELE (Germany):

With regard to the political and historical significance of the British events of this summer we have already had an extensive report. I believe that I need go no further into this chapter, but will content myself with more modest questions, chiefly with three questions:

1. The effect of the British events upon other capitalist countries, and in this connection the effect on the II. International;

2. with regard to the British Party, and a criticism of the state of readiness of the Comintern and the various Parties;

3. on the basis of the challenge of Comrade Riese that the Opposition be allowed to speak, also some remarks regarding the position of the opposition comrades on this question.

As to the first question of the effect of the British events on the remaining capitalist countries, on their political and economic phenomena: It was clear that the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries would utilise the big miners' strike to their own advantage. We see, after a few weeks of the coal strike, that in Germany, France, Belgium and Luxemburg the cartel question was put upon the agenda in the whole field of raw material production. We see a rise in iron and steel production in Germany, and in this increase of production in the continental countries, we see the drive toward cartelisation. While this striving was to be observed previously it was brought to a head by the British events. On the basis of these phenomena on the Continent certain comrades in the French Party believed that what was involved here was the possibility of bridging over the antagonisms within capitalism. With the end of the British coal strike we shall be able to observe very quickly that competition will recommence stronger than ever before, and that the contradictions within the capitalist camps will grow very considerably. The extent to which the British coal barons will succeed in regaining the markets they lost during this period will only be seen after the end of the strike. The drive for cartelisation was at the same time accompanied by rationalisation in the capitalist countries especially in Germany. These rationalisation efforts could be carried out only insofar as there was a possibility to increase production, and the rationalisation that is now taking place in Germany received its greatest impetus from the miners' strike.

Only after the end of the strike will rationalisation show its disruptive effect upon the industrial proletariat. This is perfectly obvious. That the termination of the strike will lead to an increase of unemployment in the remaining capitalist countries is clear already today.

All these phenomena are problems with which the Communist Parties, especially on the continent, must concern themselves, since they will be confronted by them in the immediate future.

In this connection I should like to say a few words concerning the functions of the Amsterdam International during the struggle. The Amsterdam International, which should have looked after the interests of the workers in this great struggle, in reality proved itself the most loyal bailiff of its masters. It garnered into the barns of the masters the golden harvest which the increased production on the Continent, in Germany, France, Czecho-Slovakia, made possible. It saw to it that this harvest went into the barns without interference by the workers. It is especially characteristic that nowhere on the Continent during the many months of the British strike were important struggles waged for higher wages or shorter hours. Comrade Smeral has already told us about Czecho-Slovakia. But not only in Czecho-Slovakia but also in France and Germany would it have been possible for the trade unions on the continent to put through considerable improvements in working conditions. But they did the opposite, they made no demands and carried on no struggles. Precisely during this period of the British strike the productivity of labour was markedly increased. The exploitation of the worker increased considerably without the trade unions in any way exploiting the favourable opportunity through demands and struggle against their own capitalists, and thus also bringing about an active support of the British strike.

The A. D. G. B. developed the struggle of the British miners into a most peculiar speciality. And we certainly know plenty of rascality and knavery among the yellow trade union leaders. But I believe that this time the German section of the Amsterdam International certainly reached the absolute limit. For the first time in the history of the international labour movement the A. D. G. B. has actually managed to demand interest on money given for the British strikers, for the workers who were starving in England. This is a phenomenon that cannot be strongly enough emphasised on our part in characterising the whole disgraceful policy and the shameful methods of these so-called labour leaders. We, the German delegation, feel that it is especially necessary to state that our most important task must consist in branding this most depraved tendency within the Amsterdam International before the whole world.

I should now like to take up the **problems in our own movement**. In the criticism exercised in the Commission against the shortcomings and mistakes in our own ranks, I should like to emphasise especially the fact which applies to all of the Communist Parties, that during the many months of the British miners' heroic struggle we did not succeed in initiating any sort of real solidarity actions. The example given by the Russian workers, which should have exercised an enkindling effect upon the whole international proletariat, this example also remained without immediate echo in the broad masses of workers. In this I believe there lies one of the chief shortcomings. Our Parties were not able to serve as the decisive subjective force in the working class. This applies to our Parties in all capitalist countries. Here the causes must be found, they must be investigated and remedied. I believe that the chief cause is to be found in that the Communist Parties did not sufficiently understand how to do trade union work to the extent that will enable them really, adequately to influence the labour movement. This is a decisive point. In France and Czecho-Slovakia, we have Red trade unions side by side with the Amsterdam unions. In Germany we have united trade unions — yet we see everywhere the same picture of the failure of the working class to support effectively the British strike. One of the most important tasks of the Communist Parties is to look into their activity especially on the field of trade union work.

It must also be stated that serious shortcomings prevail not only in the activity of the various Parties, but also in the **cooperation** between these Parties. That in an age of aviation, in which within 24 hours we can gather together from the furthest districts, we held a conference only after weeks, is a sign of poverty for the Communist Parties. It is a sign that on this field also not everything was done that should have been done.

Comrades, a contrast to that in which we failed throughout the continental capitalist countries, is unquestionably given us by the **Russian Proletariat**. The Russian trade unions furnished sufficiently active aid to the British miners to enable them to continue their heroic struggle for so long a time. This example of international solidarity will be one of the strongest points in the revolutionising of England. This support on the part of the Russian proletariat, which unfortunately found no imitation to such a liberal extent in the continental countries, showed what tremendous means and possibilities are at the disposal of the proletariat that possesses political power.

This failure of support from the capitalist countries, in addition to its subjective causes of which I have already spoken, also has very significant objective causes. The proletariat which already decades ago showed tremendous examples of international solidarity in collective campaigns, this time left the British miners utterly alone in their fight. Here those objective causes play a role which we have to observe generally as the effect of the signs of capitalist disintegration. The masses of workers, who have been unemployed for months and years, who have been torn from the productive process and whose standard of living has been depressed, are no longer able to make such great efforts as was the case in former years. To analyse and investigate the extent to which the failure of the proletariat in the capitalist countries is bound up with the economic problems in the period of capitalist disintegration and decline, is likewise an extraordinarily important task in order that therefrom we may be able to gauge and test the strength of the masses, for the purpose of getting an objective appraisal in later judgement of the situation and the possibilities of future revolutionary proletarian struggles. To include these problems into our sphere of investigation, among all those matters which have already been indicated, is an essential task of the Comintern and of the Communist Parties.

Now I should like to proceed to the question that must occupy us most, this is the question of the **subjective forces, the subjective factors in the British movement**, and here I come to speak about our British brother Party. The mistakes and shortcomings that have occurred in the course of this great test of strength to which our British Party was subjected, were discussed in detail in the commission. A justified and likewise, necessary criticism was exercised. Yet I believe in one we must grant our British brother Party, that the appraisal which prevailed prior to the General Strike and coal strike today requires revision to some extent. The British Party which at the time of

the V Congress numbered about 4000 members was looked upon as being so small that it would be impossible for it to win influence over the powerful old trade union movement of Great Britain. At that time one believed that the Minority Movement would be the chief factor, the weightiest factor in the revolutionisation of the British working class.

Today we see that, in the first great trial of strength to which our British Party was subjected, it was, on the whole, the master of the situation and the driving motor of the entire movement. And more than this. We know that the British Minority movement would not exist at all without the British Party. Here are mutual relations to which we must give primary attention! The influence of the Party is the primary motive factor, the driving motor that sets into motion the periphery.

Without the revolutionary Party, the Communist Party of Great Britain, this broad mass movement of the British proletariat could not have assumed these revolutionary forms. For this reason we must also in the future devote the greatest attention to the British Party and support, in every respect, its development and work.

Comrades, in conclusion, since Comrade Riese during the debate regarding the order of business issued a challenge in this respect, I should like to go into the **opinions among the opposition** concerning their appraisal of the Anglo-Russian Committee, as they have already been stated in this hall. This Plenum cannot come to a close without making a decision on the question of the continued existence of the Anglo-Russian Committee. The moment the British strike began the Opposition immediately got busy in Germany. It felt called upon to declare that the Communist Party and the International had completely abdicated in this struggle because they did not take the leadership of the struggle into their own hands. Thus, e. g. the Ruth Fischer group in Germany said: Where is the British Communist Party in this fight? Why did not the British Communist Party itself form the leadership of the struggle? Why is it left to this traitor organisation, the General Council, to lead the fight? I believe that to this perfect nonsense no reply need be given.

I should like to say a few words about the opinion expressed by the **Russian Opposition** — Comrade **Trotsky** advocated the view that in this British movement it was shown that in England the old forms of the labour movement had proven themselves counter-revolutionary, that they constituted a drag upon revolutionary development, and that one must therefore seek after new forms in the labour movement. I believe that one could cite innumerable statements by Lenin and other prominent comrades, even by the members of the Opposition, that show clearly that it is not so easy to create new forms in the labour movement as one might wish, but that one must utilise the forms that have evolved out of the labour movement; that one must utilise and revolutionise them. Our experiences in the C. I. amply show what harmful results are attained if one believes that we must find new forms without exploiting the old. But the decisive thing with the Russian Opposition was the theses that after the General Strike, it was the duty of the Russian trade unions to step out of the Anglo-Russian Committee. For what purpose? On this the Opposition replied: in order to give a signal to the whole international proletariat. A signal for what? What kind of a signal would this have been? It would have been the signal not of success but of bankruptcy.

I believe — and this must be stated by the Plenum — that the Russian trade unions acted correctly when they insisted upon the **maintenance of the Anglo-Russian Committee**. Both of the negotiations in the Anglo-Russian Committee, in Paris and in Berlin, clearly showed that the British participants would have been delighted to be able to dissolve this connection with the Russian trade unions, which, because of the Oppositional mood of the British workers, they were forced to maintain. The Russian trade unions thereby took the road that gives us a chance to continuing exercising considerable influence upon the British proletariat. The Anglo-Russian Committee, according to the opinion of the Opposition itself, was in reality nothing else than a speaking tube through which it was possible for the revolutionary workers of Russia to speak to the British proletariat and thereby show the latter the road to the revolutionisation of their own class. Just because a section of the participants in the Anglo-Russian Committee were traitors to

the British proletariat, to dissolve the Anglo-Russian Committee would have been the biggest blunder. If we want to enlighten the British proletariat concerning the treacherous role of these trade union leaders, then we must doubly advocate the maintenance of the Anglo-Russian Committee. In this respect the C. I. and the British Party took the only correct and possible way.

Despite all weaknesses with which our British Party went into the struggle when it numbered only 6,000 members, it nevertheless developed such an energy that it became a really powerfully influential factor in the British labour movement. We know that our British brother Party will stand up very much stronger in the future struggles of the British proletariat. For this reason we, as German Communists, say to our British brother Party: you have done well, as Communists you have fulfilled the tasks that are expected from revolutionary fighters.

Comrade GALLACHER (Great Britain):

Comrades, I just want to occupy as few minutes as possible in bringing out more clearly a feature of the British situation that we feel has not been taken sufficient note of. In order to do this I will have to go back a bit and say a word or two about the Chartist movement, the first open struggle for power on the part of the British working class. The divine right of kings had given way to the divine right of property, and property was exacting a heavy toll from the workers. With the courage of desperation, these workers marched out, very badly armed but nevertheless a "dark mass of terror" to the bourgeoisie, in a fierce struggle for the franchise, believing as they did that with the franchise they could seize power and put an end to the oppression of the employers. After the suppression of the Chartist rising, each side settled down to the preparation for new struggles. The bourgeoisie through the centralisation of state power, the workers through the development and centralisation of the trade unions.

From this period on we have had a continual series of skirmishes, all of them preparing the way for the general strike. We have to take note of the lessons that history teaches us — that once the bourgeoisie saw the danger as it presented itself through the rising of the Chartists, they were absolutely ruthless in suppressing that rising, in breaking the workers' power. Now, as I say, the general strike is a re-introduction of the open struggle for power on the part of the working class, and we cannot give too much attention to that all-important fact, because now that the struggle for power has come out into the open it can never be obscured again until either the workers are completely crushed, or the bourgeoisie is completely overthrown.

During the discussion that has taken place there has been a tendency to suggest that all the British Party has to do is to go on building up its membership. Now we hope that we will be able to go ahead building up membership and bringing at the soonest possible moment a mass Party into being, certainly all of us will work to our very utmost to achieve that. But we must always have in mind the lessons of history, and the lesson that history teaches us is that we are in for one of the fiercest and most deadly struggles which any revolutionary Party will have to face. The bourgeoisie saw the danger at the time of the Chartist rising, the bourgeoisie saw the danger during the General strike. Thomas and Company might say that this was merely an industrial struggle but Baldwin said, and said truly, that it was a question of two competing governments. A half of the population, the organised workers, absolutely refused to recognise the Baldwin Government and took its orders from the General Council, from the organised trade union movement. The bourgeoisie saw the danger, they are awake to it, and once having seen the danger they are determined that there shall not be a recurrence of it. The bourgeoisie have seen the danger and they are going to leave no stone unturned in order to break the power of the working class.

On the workers' side you have the trade unions, you have the Labour Party — these are the fighting organs of the working class. The trade unions and the Labour Party — but the leaders of the Labour Party and the TUs are over on the side of the bourgeoisie. Where is the leadership of the working class? It is the Communist Party of Great Britain! The Communist Party has got to accept the responsibility of leadership. There is no other possible leadership for the workers.

But what is the picture that presents itself to us? On one side the thoroughly organised bourgeoisie with its labour lackeys, gathered around the reactionary government. On the other side: the workers in the trade unions, in the Labour Party — with the Communist Party standing out as their centralising force. Therefore, you now have a situation where the capitalist government stands confronted by the Communist Party, the revolutionary leadership of the working class, and these two centralised leadership must carry on a struggle until the very end.

We are determined to win through. We know that we can win through, but we know at the same time that we are likely to get very many heavy knocks. But whilst we know that, whilst we are facing that, we know also that the Party has been slowly but surely graduating in the school of Leninism, that the Party has always been striving to become a Bolshevik Party in the real sense. We are going forward to the struggle, a struggle against all the forces of capitalism, with the knowledge that in order to succeed we must get the leadership of the unions and the leadership of the Labour Party. We are encouraging and developing the Left wing moment in the Labour Party, we are doing all that is possible to strengthen and build up the Minority Movement. We recognise that our principal task, whilst there are many tasks lying before us, our principal task must be to get dug deep in the unions, to carry on a fight there, to get the leadership there, and if we can get the leadership in the unions we can get the leadership in the Labour Party. When we have this leadership then we can hope to put an end to the powers of the capitalists and establish the power of the workers.

While going forward to this task it is absolutely necessary that the Comintern be with us and behind us supporting and strengthening us. It will be necessary from time to time to criticise us. It will be necessary from time to time to point out our errors, but above all we are desirous that the Comintern should be absolutely clear on the struggle we have to face and that its whole force should be used to assist us in the difficult days that are ahead. We are going forward satisfied with the power and the influence we are obtaining in the working class movement. With that power, and with the Comintern guiding us, our ultimate victory is secure. The day will soon come when the oppressed and the exploited working class will form a workers' republic in Britain, and will hold out its hand to the workers' republics of the Soviet Union.

Comrade DE VIESER (Holland):

I want to make just one remark on the Dutch question. Since the outbreak of the great struggle of the British coal miners our Party has done everything possible to support this strike and also to prevent the export of Dutch coal as well as the transit of foreign coal.

But due to the betrayal by the reformist organisations, and also the wavering of Fimmen towards the Right, we did not succeed in this. We did everything possible to win the workers for demonstrations of solidarity with the British strike. We called meetings, we distributed leaflets, etc. But this is not what I rose to speak on.

As to the reproach of Comrade Smeral who dealt with the attitude of the Dutch Party on the uprising in Java in connection with the great significance of the coal strike; Comrade Smeral on this question indulged in a very exaggerated criticism of the Dutch Party. In his own statements he admitted that the Party had corrected its attitude, that which he called an error. He thought that it would be a good thing to criticise the Party severely. But in his statements Comrade Smeral went far beyond the limits of criticism. He presented the matter as if our Party had entirely withdrawn from a correct struggle for the Javanese revolt. That is absolutely incorrect.

How did it happen that the Dutch Party did not immediately take a sharp and correct standpoint? When the first reports concerning the uprising were received the Party was of the opinion that this was another provoked struggle. But as soon as the Party recognised that the Javanese workers had gone over to an armed uprising it did everything in its power to support them. Our daily paper "Tribune" occupied itself extensively with the Javanese struggle everyday. We fought sharply

against the imperialists and advocated the correct line of the Comintern. Comrade Smeral, e. g. in his speech declared that we have not advocated the correct Leninist principle for the separation of Indonesia from Holland, but that we had worked in the direction taken by the British big bourgeoisie in British India: the introduction of home rule. This is a mistake on Comrade Smeral's part. Our Party never did this. It at all times advocated the slogan: Separation of Indonesia from Holland and the right of self-determination for the Indonesian workers. Jointly with the revolutionary trade unions our Party formed a committee which decided, in agreement with the decisions of the Org Bureau and of the Agitprop of the Comintern, to send a mixed commission of workers delegates to Indonesia in order to investigate the conditions there. But in this we in no manner demanded a mixed commission from the bourgeoisie. On the contrary — I can show you the minimum programme which we demanded at that time: 1) The sending of a workers' commission to investigate conditions in Indonesia, to be composed of workers from various proletarian organisations and trade unions. 2) Immediate amnesty for the political prisoners and indemnification for the victims of White Terror.

(Interjection by Smeral: "When was this?")

Just as soon as the reports were received a campaign was carried on by the workers themselves in which these demands were formulated by us.

(Interjection by Smeral: "In such a time a minimum programme of this kind, during the uprising, was hardly in place.")

It was formulated in agreement with the Org Bureau of the Comintern. If Comrade Smeral wants to reproach us with this he will find himself in opposition to the Comintern, because we formulated this programme in agreement with the C. I. I consider it to be an improper criticism if one takes such a stand without first informing oneself. In Holland we also demanded freedom of press, assembly and organisation for Indonesia. We demanded the withdrawal of the military occupation of Indonesia and issued the slogan: Separation of Indonesia from Holland. I agree with Comrade Smeral when he says that the content of the first Manifesto which we issued immediately at the beginning of the uprising was not altogether correct. But we immediately corrected this. If a Party itself at once corrects a mistake then it is clear that the most serious Right deviations, as Comrade Smeral said, cannot be prevalent. I can promise also at this Plenum that as soon as we return to Holland we will continue to fight with all our power for the Indonesian cause.

Comrade REMMELE:

I have to make the following additional announcement.

The former members of the C. P. G. who have appealed against their expulsion have declared themselves ready to come here for hearings. In the telegram it is said that all are ready to come with the exception of Maslow. This decision of these former comrades reveals with what confidence they view Soviet Russia. You know that Maslow is a Russian citizen, the others are German citizens, and from this decision it appears obvious that they have more confidence in the German Embassy than in the Proletarian State, in Soviet Russia.

Furthermore another telegram has been received in which those involved demand that we immediately pay them, before they start, for the round-trip fare, for visas in both directions, and also, in addition, Reichstag salaries for a period of 10 days. The Secretary has informed them that just like every other delegate they will receive the customary allowance given to all who come here on the invitation of the Comintern, regardless of whether they are workers, Reichstag deputies, or Ministers, and that we, as a proletarian organisation, must refuse in any way to respect or observe the customs of bourgeois parliaments. This reply has been sent to them.

Comrade ICHTIAR (Palestine):

Comrade, one cannot discuss the work of the Communist Party of Great Britain without dealing with its activity in the colonies. Yet for some reason or other this question has been completely overlooked in the report itself as well as in the debates. The British events should not only be considered as an example in the sense of the importance of international proletarian solidarity, but they should also serve as an example in the sense of showing the importance of the alliance between the

revolutionary proletariat and the national revolutionary movement. What was the effect of the strike upon the mood of the Nationalists in the British colonies? What did the Communist Party of Great Britain do in order to win over the national-revolutionary elements in the colonies during this strike and to assure itself of their support? These are questions upon which a reply must be given by the Enlarged Executive in discussing the activity of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

It is interesting to note that the British imperialists have a far better understanding of the importance of the colonies during their fight with the European proletariat. Immediately after the outbreak of the strike the British Colonial Minister, Amery, sent a secret circular to all British colonies, in which he proposed that all the higher officers of the colonial troops obtain leave and come to England immediately. The British imperialists mobilised their best and most capable servants from the colonies for the struggle against the proletariat. But what did the Communist Party of Great Britain do to win for itself the sympathies of the colonial peoples?

It must surely be clear to everyone that there can be no talk of any sort of serious revolutionary class struggle in England, if it should be waged isolated from the national revolutionary movement. The failure of the British strike is not only to be laid to the betrayal by the General Council and Amsterdamers, not solely to the weak activity on the part of our Parties, but also to the fact that we have thus far not been able to establish a firm alliance with the national movement in the colonies.

Immediately after the outbreak of the strike, the Communist Party of Palestine addressed a manifesto to the nationalist elements in which it was proposed that the national revolutionary movement exploit this moment so critical to the British bourgeoisie, for a struggle for the national liberation of the Arabian countries. In this manifesto it was stated that at the present time far more could be achieved with relatively small forces and inconsequential losses than at another time by great forces and terrific losses. The British imperialists, we stated further, are already changing their course, the gruff militarist tone of Lord Ploomer has given way to the purring diplomatic tone of his Deputy, Milles. Negotiations are beginning for the creation of a parliament in the country. Under the threat of colonial unrest, the British were forced to grant concessions, since it is clear that they will not be able to fight simultaneously on two fronts.

In my opinion we must add to the lessons to be drawn from the British events also the lesson concerning the necessity of coordinating the class struggle of the proletariat with the national revolutionary struggle of the colonial peoples. As long as the proletariat and the colonial peoples advance separated from one another, as has been the case until (as witness the Egyptian revolution of 1922) such bloody events as those in Mesopotamia, 1921—22, will pass by completely unnoticed by the British proletariat (the uprising in the Sudan, repressions in Cairo, and the October events of 1924 took place under the cloak of the MacDonald Government). Only by the coordination of forces in the colonies and in the Metropolis, only by a united front and a unified leadership can we get anywhere. If we have thus far issued the slogan that in every strike the whole political and economic situation of all individual proletarian groups must be given consideration, we must from now on learn to consider not only the standard of living and situation of the workers in our campaign, but also the situation in the colonies. The strategy of the class struggle consists not only in the application of the scientific rules of military tactics, but also in the ability to assure ourselves of the support of the alliance with the revolutionary movement in the colonies.

Comrade MURPHY (Great Britain):

Comrades, before I conclude the discussion, I want to make a proposal to the Plenum with regard to the incident which has occurred in Tientsin. Those of you who have read the newspapers, or the bulletin which was given out here, will be aware that the British authorities have arrested 14 comrades of the Kuomintang Party in Tientsin, in what is known as special territory under the control of the British. This group of comrades has been functioning openly as a local party of the Kuomintang for quite a long period as a legal party, and

suddenly the British have seized the building, arrested the comrades, handed them over to the agents of the Mukden Army. This incident is very much on a par with what has happened a number of times in the past. I have in mind especially the 26 Baku Communists who were also seized by the British authorities and handed over to the Russian "whites". We know their fate. It is feared that on this occasion the result of the arrest of these 14 Chinese comrades will be of much the same cha-

acter as that which ensued on that terrible occasion previously. I therefore propose that this Plenum issue a manifesto of protest to the world, condemning this action of the British authorities and making an appeal for support for these comrades who have been arrested and handed over to the Mukden Chiefs.

Motion by Comrade Remmele (Chairman). That a commission of three consisting of Murphy, Petrov and Tan-Ping-Shan be appointed to draft this manifesto (Agreed to.)

Speech of Comrade Murphy in Reply to Discussion.

Comrades, the discussion on the English situation has not been very controversial and there are not many points with which I have to deal. So I propose to briefly sum up the various aspects of the situation, and to draw sharply the principal conclusions arising out of the discussion.

Certain essential facts have been definitely established in the material which has appeared in the discussion. First of all it is agreed that the centre of world trade has shifted to the Pacific and that in this movement the disadvantage goes to Britain in her rivalry with Japan and America. That is one essential fact that is definitely established statistically and there is no need to dwell upon it.

The second fact of great importance is that the General Strike and the coal lockout have deepened the general crisis in Britain, have increased the burden of taxation in many ways and have increased the difficulties of trade. We are witness to a growing passive balance. Imports can no longer be paid for by exports but must now be paid for by the results of overseas investments. These, as a result of the lockout and the General Strike of this year, are insufficient to meet the bill. Britain, for the first time in her career, shows a debit balance on its national balance sheet. I do not mean its State Budget but its general profit and loss account as a capitalist nation. These are very important conclusions which we have established.

We have also established that simultaneously with these increasing difficulties Britain has suffered a number of political defeats and set-backs in foreign policies and at the same time has suffered set-backs in her inner imperial politics also. There has been a strengthening of the centrifugal forces in the British Empire. These facts in all establish the British crisis as a central feature of the international situation. This means that we must not simply cite the general strike and the lockout of 1926 as a stirring incident, but as a crisis of a deep rooted character, which now stands at the centre of the international situation.

It therefore becomes a question of the utmost importance that we study the responses of the international forces of the working class to the General Strike and the lockout, for our answer to this situation is of first class importance with regard to the future of the International working class movement and the forces of revolution.

It must be observed that in all the speeches that have been made in the discussion we have to recognise that making all allowances for the good work which has been done, the position is not good. Right gladly we welcome our French comrades' declarations concerning what the French Party has done. We are quite glad to listen to what the Czecho-Slovakians have to tell us as to what they did. We are glad to recognise, when we place it in contrast to the actions of the Amsterdam International and the reformist forces, there is a world of difference between the two. This we recognise. But we have to do more than recognise the contrast between these two forces. As the Communist International, as the vanguard of the forces of revolution, we must submit these experiences to a close examination, and, whilst feeling inspired by what we have done and by what has been accomplished, we have to be frank enough to realise that in relation to the tremendous situation we have not gone far enough in our labours.

On each occasion, after we have heard the report of the good work done, we have always met with the qualification that the Social Democrats were able to sabotage our actions. What does this mean? It means that the Social Democrats had control

of the working class forces and were able to prevent international solidarity action in support of this great event in Great Britain. Side by side with this we must contemplate what would have been the situation if we as an International had been able to stop the eleven million tons of imported blackleg coal from entering Britain during the seven months of the lockout. When we think of this one fact alone we are compelled to sit up and ask — Why? Why is it that our International numbers hundreds of thousands of members, of hard working revolutionaries and still eleven million tons of coal can be brought into Britain during a seven months lockout of a million miners? We have to say frankly that the reason is that we have not secured the control of the trade union forces.

I share Comrade Smeral's alarms with regard to the future course of events. He raised the question of how shall we respond to war if we have not control of these forces? That is a very serious question, but we are still concerned with the first question of our work in regard to the situation of Britain. We must not consider the situation of Britain as an isolated phenomenon. It is now at the centre of the international situation and by its nature is bound to reproduce crisis after crisis and call for still greater action on the part of the international forces of the working class.

What has actually happened in Britain as a result of the General Strike and lockout? We can see clearly that the bourgeoisie are in an exceedingly difficult position on the one hand, and on the other that the working class movement, in fighting the bourgeoisie, has gone through a process of differentiation on a mass scale, and that this process is bound to go on increasing. For observe what is actually being accomplished here. We have witnessed the heavy industries breaking down the so-called sheltered industries. These developments mean the complete breakdown of the labour aristocracy, the breakdown of the labour aristocracy of the sheltered industries also. The breakdown of the labour aristocracy also means the shattering of the basis of reformism. Although we are witness to the consolidation of the trade union bureaucracy against strikes, a consolidation of the Labour Party forces against strikes, a movement of liberal forces from the Liberal Party into the Labour Party, and the Labour Party becoming very bourgeois at the top, yet we can see a great mass movement amongst the working class forces going in a revolutionary direction. It is impossible to escape the fact that this revolutionary process is bound to be intensified in the days which lie immediately before us.

It follows most logically that the situation in Great Britain moves along a revolutionary path. Here permit me to remind you once more of the difference between Great Britain and every other country in the world, especially when considering the crisis of Britain in relation to international capitalism. Where is the outstanding difference of Great Britain to any other country? Britain is over industrialised. Her agriculture is declining and totally incapable of feeding her population. This fact stimulates an increase of imports. But this increase goes on with a decline of exports.

What does this over-industrialisation mean? It means that Britain has no peasantry which can function as a bulwark between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as, say, in Germany. While Germany has a large industrial population it has also a large agricultural population. We all know the outlook of the peasantry, hence German capitalism has an ally in its peasantry and a degree of independence from imports of foodstuffs. In France, a large peasantry balances itself with the proletarian forces, but where is the large peasantry in Britain upon which British capitalism can rely?

The more the industrial foundations are eaten away, the more the economic position of Britain is undermined, the more rapidly the avalanche of its proletarian masses develops, and there is nothing between them and the bourgeoisie. We must therefore view the British situation with the utmost seriousness and not simply think of the General Strike, or the miners' lockout as an epic event wherein men and women have suffered and acted nobly. We have got to recognise this event as part of a deep lying process in British economy which is propelling Britain towards revolution. It may be that we shall get the revolution in Britain before you get it further extended on the Continent.

Do not let us rule this out of our estimation. We must realise it as a tremendous possibility which lies before us. This is the warning which the General Strike and the lockout in Britain emphasises.

Comrades, I think I can say that, from the discussion which we have had, that the outline of analysis of events which I gave in my report and the theses which has been given to the commission cover the situation. I will conclude therefore by emphasising the need for increasing attention to the development of the British Party; increasing attention to the pheno-

mena of British capitalism; but more than all we must concentrate upon winning the trade unions. For whether it be in expectation of the development of revolution in Britain or elsewhere, or the facing of the problems of war, we must take note of the fundamental lesson which comes out of the experiences of the General Strike and the lockout, i. e., **that without the conquest of the unions there can be no victory.** The one thing which the British Party can take credit for by which it has set an example to older parties — is its work in the trade unions. If we had a hundred thousand members working in the trade unions as hard as the twelve thousand now working in the trade unions, I venture to say that we would have the complete control of the British trade union movement. Therefore, when I think of the continental parties and their experiences, and when I think of the size of their membership and the incidents of the last seven months, I feel that this is the central lesson of all — **the concentration upon trade union work, the getting control of the unions,** for this is the way in order to get control of the masses for directing the forces of revolution and the internationalising of the great struggles in the various countries. These constitute the central lessons of the British General Strike and lockout. Internationalise our politics! Win the leadership of the trade unions! (Applause.)

(Close of Session.)