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THESES and RESOLUTIONS of the First International Conference for the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Held at Geneva, July 29, 30 and 31, 1936

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for the Fourth International

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NOTE

This is the second edition of the theses and resolutions adopted by the first international Conference for the 4th International. It became necessary because the first edition issued by the Workers Party of Canada had been completely sold out in America and many comrades have as yet had no opportunity to read them.

INTRODUCTION

On July 29, 30, and 31, 1936 the first International Conference for the Fourth International was held in Geneva on the initiative of the International Secretariat of the International Communist League (Bolshevik-Leninists). Represented there were the organizations of the following countries: France by four delegates (2 for the Internationalist Workers Party, 2 for the Revolutionary Socialist Youth, affiliated with the IWP); Belgium by four delegates (2 for the Revolutionary Socialist Action and 2 for the Internationalist Communist League (Trotskyists) which are about to fuse into one); Holland by one from the Revolutionary Socialist Workers Party - RSAP; England by two delegates and two observers; Switzerland by one delegate from the Zurich Marxist Action; Germany by two delegates from the Internationalist Communists of Germany (IKD); Italy by one delegate. In addition, there were present a representative of the Bolshevik-Leninists of the USSR, a representative of the International Secretariat of the ICL(B-L), the international Youth Secretary of the ICL(B-L) as well as observers from North America. Invited, but unable to come for material reasons, were: The Bolshevik-Leninists of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Greece, Poland, Basel (Switzerland), another English group, as well as the Leninist Young Guard of Holland (youth of the RSAP) for special reasons. The relatively brief time for preparations, the particularly great difficulties arising out of the distances and the need of limiting the conference for reasons of legality to a minimum of delegates, did not permit the invitation and the representation of other organizations of the 4th International throughout the world. The Bolshevik-Leninists of the following countries are especially meant: Bulgaria, Denmark, Spain, Lithuania, Mexico, China, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, Argentine, Chile, Cuba, Peru, Bolivia, Porto Rico, Indo-China. Commissioned by the conference, the new International Secretariat addresses to all these sections of the Fourth International, to all its sympathizing organizations, as well as to individual comrades in countries not listed, the expression of our warm solidarity in their common struggle - the desire that the work of this first conference also expresses their opinion and their will, and that it will be a useful contribution to their work and development - the request that they pronounce themselves as soon as possible on the results of the conference and to draw still closer their international contact - in the hope that after a broader preparation, a first constituent congress of the Fourth International will soon meet for common work.

It was the aim of this first conference to gather together the international forces of the Fourth International in a new, cohesive organization, to provide them with a solid ideological armament and to create a new international center, broader and abler to work. It signifies either the direct affiliation to the movement for the Fourth International of organizations which up to now were not formally adherents of the ICL(B-L), or an important step towards the unification of the forces of the Fourth International in the countries where, up to now, several groups, separated by tactical differences, existed. The International Communist League (B-L) ceases to exist as such and is integrated into the new movement.

Below we publish all the theses, resolutions and appeals adopted by the conference, as well as the documents presented by the conference for study. Leading them is the "Thesis on the New Revolutionary Upsurge and the Tasks of the Fourth International", the conference having considered it as its main task to draw the greatest attention of the international organization and of the world proletariat to the revolutionary situation in Spain, in France and in Belgium, which is of decisive importance for all of them. All the theses, resolutions and studies are submitted here to the national organizations represented at the conference or not, to the comrades sympathizing with our movement and to all the labor organizations throughout the world for discussion, for the purpose of taking a position and of confirming them.

According to the "Rules" adopted by the conference, published below, the latter named, in addition to a General Council for the Fourth International, a Bureau and an International Secretariat for the Fourth International.

The conference designated a commission to elaborate a draft program in three months, following which an international discussion lasting for four months will take place, after which the first congress of the 4th International will adopt a final editing of the program as the foundation document of the Fourth International.

After the conference for the 4th International, a short international pre-conference of the youth of various countries took place on August 1, representing France, Belgium, England and Switzerland, attended by other delegates from the main conference, by a delegation from the latter, and by the international Youth Secretary of the LCI(B-L). After hearing national reports from France, Belgium, England, Switzerland and other countries, the assembly expressed its agreement with all the theses, resolutions and appeals of the adult conference and adopted the theses on the youth published below which, like all the other documents, is submitted to the study and approval of the international youth organizations for the 4th International and the new Youth International 1.

The assembly charged a commission with the work of preparing within three months the draft of a program for the new revolutionary Youth International.

The youth assembly had only a provisional character and it was unanimously decided to convene an international conference for the new revolutionary Youth International, which the youth organizations and groups of Holland, Poland, Denmark, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Chile, Spain and Greece, among others, will attend. For the transitional period, a Commission for the New Youth International, composed of nine members (seven with voting rights), who are the leading representatives of the youth in five countries, as well as an executive bureau of four members, were elected, with their seat in the same locality as the International Secretariat for the Fourth International.

THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT
for the Fourth International.

* see NB. on the front page.

THE NEW REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE AND
THE TASKS OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

1. The June strikes open a new period in the internal development of France and Belgium. They will without doubt call forth not only a further sharpening of the class struggle in these countries, but also, in due course, mass movements over a considerable part of Europe, including Great Britain, possibly even outside Europe. Thus the Spanish Revolution ceases to be isolated.

2. The June strikes have shown how much indignation and readiness for struggle have accumulated, under the deceptively passive exterior, in the proletarian masses of the towns and countryside during the years of crisis and reaction. They have disclosed the sympathy of the broad masses of the urban petty-bourgeois and of the peasantry with the struggles of the workers. Finally, they have shown the extreme instability of the whole regime, the lack of self-confidence of the ruling classes, their vacillations between Leon Blum and De La Rocque. These three conditions: the readiness for struggle of the whole of the proletariat, the acute dissatisfaction of the lower strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, the confusion in the camp of finance capital, provide the basic prerequisites for the proletarian revolution.

3. The militant offensive of the masses has assumed, this time also, the character of a general strike. Partial, trade-unionist demands, important in themselves, were, for the workers, the necessary means by which, after the long period of immobility, the broadest possible masses could be aroused and untied against the bourgeoisie and its state. A general strike, opening a period of revolutionary struggles, cannot but unite trade-unionist and partial demands with the general, though as yet unclearly formulated tasks of the whole class. In this union lies the strength of the general strike, the guarantee of unity between the advance-guard and the broad masses of the class.

4. Our French section during recent years has placed the general strike in the centre of its propaganda. In distinction from all other parties and groups speaking in the name of the working class, the French Bolshevik-Leninists appraised the situation in time as a pre-revolutionary one, correctly understood the symptomatic significance of the strike outbursts at Brest and Toulon and despite the ceaseless attacks of the opportunists and social-patriots (SFIO, CP, CCF) and the opposition of the centrists (Marceau Pivert, etc.) prepared by their agitation for a general strike. On fertile soil a handful of seed gives a big yield. Thus, under the conditions of social crisis and of the indignation of the masses, a small organization, poor in material resources, but armed with correct slogans, has exercised an undoubted influence upon the course of revolutionary events. The furious persecution of the Bolshevik-Leninists by the whole capitalist, social-democratic, Stalinist and trade unionist press together with the repressions of the police and judges of Leon Blum, serve as an external confirmation of this truth.

5. Not one of the official workers' organizations, either in France or in Belgium, desired the struggle. The strikes arose against the wishes of the trade unions and of both parties. Only confronted with an accomplished fact did the official leaders "recognize" the strike, in order all the more readily to strangle it.

But so far there has only been the question of a comparatively "peaceful" movement, under slogans of partial demands. Can it be doubted even for a moment that during the period of open struggle for power the apparatus of the Second and Third Internationals will be, as was the case with parties of the Russian Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in 1917, fully at the disposal of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat? The necessity for a new international, as a world party of the proletarian revolution is once more irrefutably proved by the events in France and Belgium.

6. Nevertheless the direct and immediate result of the great June strike-wave is the exceptionally rapid growth of the old organizations. This fact is historically fully understandable. Thus the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries grew feverishly after the February Revolution of 1917 which they, as social-patriots, had not wanted during the war, and German Social Democracy expanded rapidly after the November Revolution of 1918 which took place against its will. Before exposing their bankruptcy before the whole class the opportunist parties become for a short time the refuge of the very widest masses. The rapid growth of the Socialist, and especially of the "Communist" Party in France is a sure symptom of a revolutionary crisis in the country and prepares at the same time the death crisis of the parties of the Second and Third Internationals.

No less significant is the unprecedentedly rapid growth of the trades unions in France. While apparently increasing the weight and importance of the united reformist-Stalinist trade union general staff (Jouhaux, Racmond, etc.) the influx of millions of new workers and employees in actual fact undermines the very basis of the conservative trade union apparatus.

7. Great mass movements are the best tests of theories and programmes. The June strikes show how false are the ultra-left, sectarian theories that the trade unions have "outlived" their time and must be replaced by other organizations or that it is necessary to build new, "genuine" trade unions alongside the old conservative ones. In actual fact during a revolutionary epoch the struggle for economic demands and for social legislation does not cease but, on the contrary expands to an unheard-of extent. The hundreds of thousands and millions of workers who have swarmed into the trade unions, destroy routine, shake loose the conservative apparatus, allow the revolutionary party to build its fractions in the unions, to gain influence and successfully to struggle for the leading role in the trade union movement. A revolutionary party which is incapable of carrying on systematic and successful work in the trade union organizations will be yet more incapable of creating its own trade unions. All such attempts are doomed to failure.

8. Contrary to the assertions of the leaders of the Second and Third Internationals, present day capitalism is already incapable of either giving work to all workers or of raising the standard of living of the workers. Finance capital passes the costs of social reform on to the shoulders of the workers themselves and of the petty-bourgeoisie by means of raising prices, open or concealed inflation, taxes, etc. The essence of the present "Statism", of state interference - both in "democratic" and Fascist countries - consists in saving rotting capitalism at the price of lowering the living and cultural standards of the people. No other method is possible upon

the basis of private property. The programmes of the People's Fronts of France and Spain and that of the Belgian Coalition are a deliberate mirage and deception, the preparation of a new disillusioning of the working masses.

9. The complete hopelessness of the position of the petty-bourgeoisie under the conditions of rotting capitalism means, despite the shameful theories of "social harmony" of Leon Blum, Vandervelde, Dimitrov, Cachan & Co., that total reforms in favour of the proletariat, unstable and deceitful in themselves, accelerate the ruin of the small proprietors of the towns and countryside and push them into the arms of Fascism. A serious, profound and lasting union of the proletariat with the petty-bourgeois masses as opposed to parliamentary combinations with the Radical exploiters of the petty-bourgeoisie, is possible only on the basis of a revolutionary programme, i.e. the seizure of power by the proletariat and a revolution in property relations in the interests of all the toilers. The "People's Front", as a coalition with the bourgeoisie, is a brake on the revolution and a safety valve for imperialism.

10. The first step to an alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie is the breaking up of the block with the bourgeois-Radicals in France and Spain, the block with the Catholics and Liberals in Belgium, etc. It is necessary to explain this truth, on the basis of experience, to every Socialist and Communist worker. Such is the central task of the moment. The struggle against reformism and Stalinism is at the present stage a struggle above all against a block with the bourgeoisie. For the honest unity of the workers, against dishonest unity with the exploiters! Out with the bourgeoisie from the People's Front! Down with the capitalist ministers!

11. At present it is only possible to guess at the tempo of the coming revolutionary developments. Thanks to exceptional conditions (the defeat in the War, the peasant problem, the Bolshevik Party), the Russian Revolution completed its ascent - from the overthrow of absolutism to the conquest of power by the proletariat - in eight months. But even in this short period it knew the armed April demonstration, the July defeat in Petrograd and the attempt of Kornilov to carry out a counter-revolutionary coup in August. The Spanish Revolution has lasted with ebbs and flows for five years already. During this period the workers and poor peasants of Spain have displayed such magnificent political instinct, have developed so much energy, devotion and heroism that state power would have been in their hands long ago if the leadership had even to a small extent corresponded to the political situation and the militant qualities of the proletariat. The true saviors of Spanish capitalism were not and remain not Zamora, not Azana, not Gil Robles, but the Socialist, Communist and Anarchist leaders of their organizations.

12. The same now applies to France and Belgium. If the party of Leon Blum was really Socialist it might, basing itself upon the general strike, have overthrown the bourgeoisie in June, almost without civil war, with the minimum of disturbance and of sacrifices. But the party of Blum is a bourgeois party, the younger brother of rotten radicalism. If, in its turn, the "Communist" party had anything in common with Communism, it would from the very first day of the strike have corrected its criminal mistake, broken off its fatal block with the Radicals, called the workers to the creation of factory

committees and soviets and thus established in the country a regime of dual power as the shortest and surest bridge to the dictatorship of the proletariat. But in actual fact the apparatus of the Communist Party is merely one of the tools of French Imperialism. The key to the future fate of Spain, France and Belgium is the problem of revolutionary leadership.

13. The same conclusion follows from the lessons of international policy, from the so-called "struggle against war" in particular. The social-patriots and the centrists, especially the French ones, justify their kow-towing to the League of Nations by the passivity of the masses, especially by the unreadiness of the masses to apply a boycott to Italy during her robber attack upon Abyssinia. The same argument is used by pacifists of the Maxton type in order to hide their prostration. In the light of the June events it becomes especially clear that the masses did not react to the international provocations of the imperialists simply because they were deceived, lulled to sleep, held back, paralysed and demoralized by the leaderships of their own organizations. If the Soviet Trade Unions had given timely example by boycotting Italy, the movement would, like a prairie fire, have inevitably embraced the whole of Europe, the whole world and at once become menacing to the imperialists of all countries. But the Soviet bureaucracy forbade and stifled all revolutionary initiative, replacing it by the prostration of the Comintern before Herriot, Leon Blum and the League of Nations. The problem of the international policy of the proletariat, like that of the internal policy, is a problem of revolutionary leadership.

14. Every real mass movement freshens the atmosphere like a storm, and at the same time destroys every kind of political fiction and ambiguity. In the light of the June events the slogan of "uniting" the two internationals, which are already sufficiently united in betraying the interests of the proletariat, and the homeopathic recipes of the London Bureau (the 2½ International) which vacillates between all possible courses of policy and always picks out the worst, appear pitiable and contemptible.

The June events have exposed at the same time the complete bankruptcy of anarchism and of so-called "revolutionary syndicalism". Neither one nor the other, so far as they actually exist upon this earth, forsook the events or helped to prepare them. The propaganda for a general strike, for factory committees, for workers' control, has been exclusively carried on by a political organization, i.e. a Party. It could not be otherwise. The mass organizations of the working class remain powerless, undecided and lost, if they are not inspired and led forward by a firmly welded together vanguard. The necessity for a revolutionary party is shown with new force.

15. Thus, all the tasks of the revolutionary struggle unfailingly lead to one task - the creation of a new really revolutionary leadership, capable of dealing with the tasks and possibilities of our epoch. Direct participation in the movement of the masses, bold class slogans taken to their logical conclusion, an independent banner, irreconcilability towards compromises, mercilessness towards traitors, here lies the road of the Fourth International. It is both amusing and absurd to discuss whether it is yet time to "found" it. An international is not "founded" like a cooperative, but created in struggle. The June days provide an answer to the pedants who discuss its "timeliness". There is no room for further discussion.

16. The bourgeoisie seeks its revenge. A new social conflict which is being deliberately prepared in the general staffs of big capital will undoubtedly assume from the very first the character of a large-scale provocation or series of provocations directed at the workers. At the same time the "dissolved" fascist organizations are making feverish preparations. The collision of the two camps in France, Belgium and Spain is absolutely inevitable. The more the leaders of the People's Front "reconcile" the class antagonisms and dampen the revolutionary struggle, the more explosive and convulsive character will it assume in the immediate future, the more sacrifices it will cause, the more defenseless the proletariat will find itself against fascism.

17. The sections of the Fourth International clearly and distinctly see this danger. They openly warn the proletariat of it. They teach the advance-guard to organize itself and to prepare. At the same time they contemptuously reject the policy of washing their hands of responsibility; they identify their fate with the fate of the struggling masses, however severe may be the blows which fall on them in the coming months and years. They participate in every act of struggle in order to bring to it the utmost possible clarity and organization. They tirelessly call for the creation of factory committees and soviets. They unite with the best workers brought to the top by the movement and hand in hand with them build the new revolutionary leadership.

By their example and criticism, they speed the formation of a revolutionary wing in the old parties, drawing it closer in the course of the struggle and impelling it along the road of the Fourth International.

Participation in the living struggle, always in the front line of fire, work in the trade unions, and the building up of the party, all go on at the same time, mutually supplementing each other. All the fighting slogans - workers control, workers militia, the arming of the workers, a government of workers and peasants, the socialization of the means of production - are indissolubly bound up with the creation of workers, peasants and soldiers soviets.

18. The fact that, at the moment of mass struggle, the French Bolshevik-Leninists found themselves at once the centre of the political attention and hatred of the class enemies is no accident; on the contrary, it unmistakably indicates the future. Bolshevism, which appears to be sectarianism to philistines of all descriptions, in actual fact unites ideological irreconcilability with the greatest sensitiveness with regard to movements of the masses. Ideological irreconcilability itself is nothing else than the purging of the consciousness of the advanced workers from routine, inertia, irresoluteness, i.e., the education of the advance-guard in the spirit of the boldest decisions, preparing it to participate in the relentless mass struggle.

19. Not a single revolutionary grouping in world history has yet experienced such terrible pressure as the grouping of the Fourth International. The Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels spoke of the forces of the "pope and the Tsar... French Radicals and German police" united against Communism. From this list only the Tsar is now missing. But the Stalinist bureaucracy is a far more threatening and treacherous obstacle on the road of the world revol-

ution than autocratic Tsar once was. The Comintern covers a policy of social-patriotism and Menshivism with the authority of the October Revolution and the banner of Lenin. The world agency of GPU is already hand in hand with the police of "friendly" imperialist countries, carrying on systematic work against the Fourth International. In the event of the outbreak of war the united forces of Imperialism and Stalinism will inflict upon the revolutionary internationalists immeasurably more furious persecutions than those which the generals of the Hohenzollerns together with the social-democratic butchers, inflicted in their time upon Luxemburg, Liebknecht and their supporters.

20. The sections of the Fourth International are not frightened either by the immensity of the tasks, the furious hatred of their enemies or even by their own smallness in numbers. Even now the struggling masses, without yet being conscious of it, stand much nearer to us than to their official leaders. Under the blows of coming events in the workers' movement there will take place an ever more rapid and far-reaching regroupment. In France the Socialist Party will be squeezed out of the ranks of the proletariat. In the Communist Party a series of splits may surely be expected. In the unions there will be created a powerful left movement susceptible to the slogans of Bolshevism. In another form identical processes will take place in other countries also drawn into the revolutionary crisis. The organizations of the revolutionary advance-guard will cease to be isolated. The slogans of Bolshevism will become the slogans of the masses. The coming epoch will be the epoch of the Fourth International.

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P O S T S C R I P T

"The collision of the two camps in France, Belgium and Spain is absolutely inevitable. The more the leaders of the People's Front "réconcile " the class antagonisms and dampen the revolutionary struggle, the more explosive and convulsive character will it assume in the immediate future, the more sacrifices it will cause, and the more defenseless the proletariat will find itself against Fascism." (see above, paragraph 16.) The events have brought a confirmation of this prediction even before the present theses could be published.

The July days deepen and supplement the lessons of the June days in France with exceptional force. For the second time in five years the coalition of the labor parties with the radical bourgeoisie has brought the revolution to the edge of the abyss. Incapable of solving a single one of the tasks posed by the revolution, since all these tasks boil down to one, namely, the crushing of the bourgeoisie, the People's Front renders the existence of the bourgeois regime impossible and thereby provokes the Fascist coup d'Etat. By lulling the workers and peasants with parliamentary illusions, by paralyzing their will to struggle, the People's Front creates the favorable conditions for the victory of Fascism. The policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be paid for by the proletariat with years of new torments and sacrifice, if not by decades of Fascist terror.

The People's Front government reveals its total inadequacy precisely at the most critical moment; one ministerial crisis follows the other because the bourgeois Radicals fear the armed workers more than they do the Fascists. The civil war takes on a lingering character. Whatever the immediate outcome of the civil war in Spain may

be, it strikes a death blow at the People's Front in France and other countries. It must henceforth become clear to every French worker that the bloc with the Radicals signifies the legal preparation of a military coup D'Etat by the French General Staff under cover of the Minister of War Daladier.

The administrative dissolution of the Fascist Leagues while the bourgeois state apparatus is maintained, is, as the Spanish example shows, a lie and a deception. Only the armed workers can resist Fascism. The conquest of power by the proletariat is possible only on the road of armed insurrection against the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie. The smashing of this apparatus and its replacement by worker, soldier and peasant councils is the necessary condition for the fulfilment of the socialist program. Without the carrying out of these tasks, the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie have no way out of misery and need or of being saved from the new war.

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The International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity
("London Bureau") and the Fourth International

The re-armament of Germany and the Italian invasion of Abyssinia mark the end of the post-war epoch and the official beginning of a new pre-war epoch. With the strike movement in France and Belgium in June 1936 a new revolutionary wave set in. All opportunist, social-patriotic and centrist-pacifist parties and groups are now caught in a wedge between the approaching war and the approaching revolution. The first result will be the crushing of the splinter-groups which are federated in the so-called London Bureau.

The events of the past two years have fully established the Marxian evaluation of the parties and the groups of the London Bureau as conservative-centrist organizations which are utterly incapable of resisting the pressure of reaction and chauvinism. The mere enumeration of the facts removes every shadow of doubt on this point.

The S.A.P., the driving force of the London federation, incited a split in the Dutch R.S.A.P. for the sole purpose of dragging this party into a road of centrism; it entered into the People's Front of the German emigration, the most lifeless, miserable and deceptive of all the People's Fronts; it undertook the hypocritical defense of the Stalinist bureaucracy against the Bolshevik-Leninists and in reality waged a struggle exclusively against the Fourth International.

The I.L.P. attempted in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict to take a correct principled position. However, the pacifist-parliamentary clique of Maxton & Co. which regards the party merely as a handy tool, forced it by means of a rude and brutal ultimatum back into pacifist prostration, and at the same time the party adopted special measures against the "factions", i.e. in effect against the revolutionary Marxian wing. In connection with the problem of the USSR the I.L.P. fails to distinguish between the October Revolution and the Bonapartist bureaucracy, keeps silent about the crimes of the bureaucracy and in particular heralds the servile compilation of the Webbs which is calculated solely to lead the workers astray as to the real ways and methods of the proletarian revolution.

The Spanish party of "Marxist Unity" put in the forefront of its platform the "democratic-socialist revolution" and thereby abandoned utterly the theory of Marx and Lenin and the lessons of the October Revolution, both of which demonstrate that the proletarian revolution cannot develop within the framework of bourgeois democracy, that the "synthesis" of bourgeois democracy and socialism is nothing else but Social-Democracy, that is to say, the organized betrayal of the historic interests of the proletariat. In full accord with its own platform, the party of "Marxist Unity" found its place in the Spanish People's Front as a tail to the kite of the left bourgeois parties, which include the present president of the Republic, Azana. The subsequent criticism of the People's Front by the leaders of the Party does not in the least degree mitigate their crimes, for revolutionary parties are judged by the way in which they act in moments of crisis and not by what they say about themselves when once the crisis is past. During the fateful years of the Spanish Revolution the party of Maurin-Nin showed itself absolutely incapable of passing from petty-bourgeois talk to proletarian deeds.

In France the bloc with Doriot who has just founded the "French People's Party" now that the Fascist Leagues are dissolved, and Marceau Pivert against the Fourth International quickly manifested its reactionary character. The mayor of Saint-Denis, Doriot, under whose protection the latest conference of the London Bureau took place, very soon thereafter passed over with his organization into the camp of reaction. Marceau Pivert functions today as the special agent of Leon Blum in matters relating to the Left - Leon Blum who through the bourgeois police confiscates the only revolutionary paper in France and countenances the prosecution of the followers of the Fourth International by bourgeois judges.

It is unnecessary to make any special observation with regard to the Swedish party which does not pass beyond the framework of provincial pacifism, not to mention the Italian Maximalists, the groups in Poland, Rumania and Bulgaria, which do not possess the slightest qualitative or quantitative significance.

The Stockholm Youth Bureau affiliated to the London Bureau carries on the politics of the S.A.P., i.e. of equivocation and falsehood which has an especially demoralizing and pernicious effect on the new generation of revolutionaries. The real character of the Stockholm Bureau may be best indicated by the fact that, in order to pursue unmolested its friendly politics towards the worst opportunist and patriotic groupings, it took upon itself to expell from its own ranks the representative of the Bolshevik-Leninists, who was in the minority in the Bureau and sought for himself only the right of free criticism. By this act the leaders of the London and Stockholm Bureaus have shown even to the politically blind that there neither is nor can be a place in these organizations for revolutionaries.

The international conferences of both these Bureaus represent half diplomatic, half parliamentary institutions and assemblages after the image of the Second International but on a much smaller scale, which serve no other purpose than to furnish right-centrist organizations a decorative international cover; behind which they may pursue their national-opportunist politics. The declarations and the so-called decisions of the international conferences which are in themselves thoroughly eclectic, exercise no influence on the actual course of the affiliated national organizations.

What the "international Marxian basis" and the "revolutionary homogeneity" propagated by these conferences, really amounts to, is shown in the fact that no agreement exists in this midget International on a single question of principle or of political actuality. In the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, for example, the I.L.P. of England is an opponent of sanctions by the League of Nations and condemns any collaboration of the labor movement with the League of Nations. The Italian Maximalists, on the other hand, implore the League of Nations, whose driving force is England, to accentuate the sanctions against Italy. The Spanish section of the London Bureau, for its part, signs the bourgeois program of the Spanish "People's Front", which calls for a foreign policy in conformity with the principles and methods of the League of Nations. The same confusion prevails in the position of the London Bureau toward the treacherous policy of the People's Front of the Stalinists. While the last session of the Bureau greets the People's Front, while the Spanish section has participated in the Spanish People's Front, and the German and Italian sections participate in the People's Front comedies among the German and Italian emigration, the I.L.P., and obviously also the Socialist Party of Sweden, reject the policy of the People's Front for their own countries (which they recognize internationally!) The I.L.P. even goes so far as to refuse candidates of the Labour party its support against bourgeois candidates, but the London Bureau becomes enthusiastic over the French People's Front which elects bourgeois a la Herriot to parliament with the votes of Socialists and Communists.

It is enough to say that at the last congress of the N.A.P. (Norwegian Labor Party) in May 1935, the only mass organization affiliated to the London Bureau, not a single voice of protest was raised against breaking off relations of this party with the London Bureau. This eloquent fact proves beyond controversy that connection with the London Bureau bears a purely nominal character which imposes not the slightest obligation on anyone, which does not manifest itself in the inner life of the sections and consequently cannot promote the formation even of a trace of a left wing.

The parties of the London Bureau have neither a distinctive theory, nor a distinctive politics. They eke out an existence between the left wing of the Second International, and the Third International in its newest phase, a phase which represents the fraternization with their own bourgeoisie in the ostensible interest of the workers' state, the defense of the democratic "fatherland", the anti-fascist people's front, etc. Thus they constitute a new edition, in miniature, of the Two and a half International. During the past two years the London Bureau did not take a clear revolutionary position on a single question, had no fructifying influence on the labor movement by any of its activity, and not only did not attract the hostile attention of the Second and Third Internationals, but on the contrary approximated them in their baiting of the Fourth International. Today, when the two old Internationals have drawn so near each other, the existence of an intermediate International becomes pure nonsense.

The interests of the Fourth International, i.e. of the proletarian revolution, exclude any compromise in principle and compliance or toleration for parties, groups and individual politicians who constantly misuse the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht for purposes which are in direct contradiction to the ideas and actions of these teachers and warriors.

As the spectre of the new war began to take on flesh and blood, the London Bureau under the leadership of the S.A.P. advanced the meaningless slogan of a "new Zimmerwald" in place of the question of a Marxist programme, a bolshevik policy, and the selection of the revolutionary cadres. All those who are frightened by revolutionary difficulties, hasten to seize upon this apparently Leninist slogan. A few months have past and even the initiators have forgotten their own discovery. The task of building the new international on the granite foundation of principle remains in all its magnitude. Not so lightly shall we find our way through this historical situation.

The leaders of the most important organizations of the London Bureau are not adolescents or novices. All have a long history of opportunism, pacifism and centrist shifting behind them. Neither the war, nor the October Revolution, nor the destruction of the German and Austrian proletariat, nor the treacherous turn of the Comintern, nor the approach of a new war, has taught them, but rather has served to demoralize them. There is not the slightest reason to expect their revolutionary re-education. The direct duty of proletarian revolutionists is therefore the systematic and uncompromising exposure of the hesitations, the equivocations and the hypocrisies of the London Bureau as the nearest and most immediate obstacle in the way of the further building of the Fourth International.

DECISION ON THE CASE OF R. MOLINIER

The Commission on Organization, Mandates and Conflicts, having read the appeal of R. Molinier and heard the declaration by him concerning his expulsion, and having heard the statement of Com. P. Frank for the Minority Group in the P.B. of the POI on the expulsion of R. Molinier and the internal situation of the POI - declares:

1. That it endorses fully the expulsion of R. Molinier from the POI on the grounds of the incompatibility of R. Molinier and his methods with membership in any section of the Fourth International;
2. That any political or organizational collaboration with R. Molinier in any political or literary activity he may undertake, is equally incompatible with membership in the POI or any other section of the Fourth International;
3. That the Minority Group in the POI must henceforth conduct itself and all its discussions in a loyal manner, in accordance with the decisions and discipline of the POI and its leading instances, and the discipline of the international organization.

RESOLUTION ON THE ANTI-WAR CONGRESS OF THE LONDON BUREAU

The "World Congress Against War, Fascism and Imperialism" announced for October 1936 by the "International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity" (London Bureau) is, by its very nature as well as by the composition of the organizations which have indicated their intention to attend, doomed in advance to impotence and to an inability to perform the functions for which it has ostensibly been convoked.

The "struggle against war" cannot be conducted as something separate and apart from the class struggle itself, from the intransigent struggle of the proletariat against imperialist capitalism, that is, against that social order which inexorably engenders imperialist war and oppression, which is inconceivable without these twin scourges. Any attempt to conduct a struggle "against war" by means of "special methods", separate from or "above" the class struggle itself is, at best, a cruel illusion and, as a rule, a malicious deception that facilitates the work of the imperialist war mongers. In this respect, the conference called by the London Bureau can only be a caricatured re-edition of the numerous "Amsterdam Congresses" of the Stalinists, all of which have finally ended in the camp of barely concealed social-patriotism.

This conclusion is re-enforced by the examination of the organizational composition of the proposed conference. Its basis is officially stated to be "direct working class resistance to war and the refusal of unity with the capitalist class or capitalist governments in either war preparations or the prosecution of war". The promised attendance at the congress of a number of organizations, most of which are already affiliated to the London Bureau, already belies this basis and converts it into a hollow phrase.

"Unity with the capitalist class or capitalist governments" is condemnable for a proletarian organization not only in "war time" but also in so-called "peace time", that is, in the time between wars which is used by the imperialists to prepare for war. The most widely practised and consequently the most dangerous and disastrous form of such "unity" at the present time is the "People's Front" organized by various parties of the II and III Internationals with the bourgeoisie, in which the latter necessarily and in fact, plays a dominant role. By depriving the proletariat of its class independence and subjecting it to the imperialist bourgeoisie or sections of it, the "workers' parties" in the People's Fronts facilitates the imperialist work of organizing the "nation" for the impending war and constitute a direct obstacle in the road of the proletarian struggle against it. Yet, among the announced adherents of the London Bureau Congress are to be found such proponents of the People's Front as the Italian Socialist Party, the Spanish Workers' Party, the Socialist Workers Party of Germany, and monstrous as it may seem, also the French "Socialist Left", whose leader, Marcel Pivert, is a leading official of the patriotic Blum regime which is now so solicitously "improving" the army of French Imperialism.

The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organizations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie. Yet among the announced adherents of the London Bureau Congress are to be found such notorious supporters of the League of Nations (i.e., Imperialist) "sanctions" as the Italian Socialist Party, which is presumably to organize a common struggle against war with opponents of these "sanctions", such as the British ILP claims to be. A pre-requisite for the proletarian struggle against war is not unity between pro-"sanctionists" and anti-"sanctionists" but the ruthless separation of them.

The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A "neutral" position is tantamount to support of imperialism. Yet, among the announced adherents of the London Bureau Congress are to be found those who advocate leaving in the lurch the courageous Ethiopian warriors against marauding Italian Fascism on grounds of "neutrality", and "Left" Social Zionists who are even at this moment leaning upon British Imperialism in its savage campaign against the legitimate, even if confused, struggle of the Arabian peasantry.

Finally, even if the conference of the London Bureau were to adopt a formally correct resolution on the question of imperialist war, which is unlikely enough, this would not improve matters but only make them worse. The correspondence between words and deeds is a distinguishing mark of a serious revolutionary organization. For it, the resolutions it adopts at its assemblies are not mere formalities, but the recorded result of the experiences it has accumulated in action, and a guide for its action in the future. For the Centrists, a "revolutionary" thesis, adopted on a ceremonial occasion, is meant to serve as a deceptive decoration, as a cover for irreconcilable divergences in their own ranks, as a cloak for their non-revolutionary deeds in the pre-existing period, as well as in the period to come. All the less reason is there for the genuine revolutionary internationalists to lend any assistance to the Centrists in their work of deluding the vanguard forces.

The planned conference, on the very face of it, is thus a gross fraud, which can only paralyze the genuine proletarian struggle against war, Fascism and imperialism. Were this Congress to be composed of mass organizations of the working class, then, regardless of its ostensible program or leadership, it might prove profitable for the revolutionary organizations to attend it for the purpose of exposing the fraud before a working-class tribune and counterposing to it, the program of revolutionary struggle. In the present case, however, attendance at such a Congress could only serve the purpose of fraternizing with these professional confusionists of Centrism or of unmasking the mass-less leaders before themselves. In either case, the movement for the Fourth International refuses to participate in this sham or to lend revolutionary coloring or dignity to it by sending a delegation. It recommends identical action to all the organizations associated with it.

The conference for the Fourth International takes cognizance of the resolution of the last congress of the Revolutionary Socialist Workers' Party of Holland with regard to possible attendance at congresses convoked by the London Bureau. The conference is not in a position to assume responsibility for this decision of its Dutch sister party, nor does it desire to do so. However, should the Central Committee of the RSWP, pursuant to the decision of its party congress, find it necessary to send a delegation to the London Bureau Congress, the Geneva Conference for the Fourth International assumes that the Dutch delegation will conduct itself there in the spirit of the present resolution.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE SOVIET UNION

The New Constitution:

a New Stage in the Degeneration of the Workers' State.

1. The decision of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, according to which socialism in the Soviet Union has "finally and irrevocably" triumphed- regardless of the low level of labor productivity as compared with the advanced capitalist countries and independent of the course of development of all the rest of the world:- is a crude and dangerous lie. The reference to the fact that the Soviet Union covers "one-sixth of the earth's surface" is all the less decisive in this question by virtue of the fact that only 8.5% of humanity has settled upon this area. It continues to be a question of the struggle between two irreconcilable systems- socialism and capitalism. This struggle has not been decided and cannot be decided within the boundaries of the USSR. It will be possible to decide the question "finally and irrevocably" only on the world arena.

2. The principal mass of the means of production of the industry of the Soviet Union has grown tremendously and remains in the hands of the state; in the field of agriculture- in the hands of the Kolkhozes, which stand between state and private property. But not even state property is as yet socialist property, for the latter has as its premise the dying away of the state as the guardian of property, the mitigation of inequality and the gradual dissolution of the property concept even in the morals and customs of society. The real development in the Soviet Union in the recent years has followed a directly opposite road. Inequality grows, and, together with it, state coercion. Given favorable domestic and international conditions, the transition is possible from the present state property to socialism; given unfavorable conditions, however, a reversion to capitalism is also possible.

3. Every workers' state, in the first period, will, in the interests of raising the productive forces, retain the system of work-wages, or as Marx puts it, "the bourgeois norms of distribution". The question is, however, decided by the general direction of the development. Were the advanced countries to be drawn into the revolution, and were the social wealth to grow rapidly, then inequality would have to diminish rapidly and the state would ^{soon} have nothing more to "guard". Given the isolation and the backwardness of the Soviet land, the bourgeois norms of distribution took on a crude and meretricious character (enormous differentiation of work-wages, bonuses, titles, orders and more of the same) and engendered retrograde tendencies which imperil the very system of state property.

4. Low productivity, with high capital investments, with tremendous military expenditures and the enormous wastefulness of the uncontrolled apparatus; signifies the continuous salient lack of the most important objects of personal consumption for the masses of the population. The economic successes which are much too modest for a significant material and cultural elevation of the whole people, are already proving adequate for the emergence of a broad, privileged stratum. The social antagonisms have not been mitigated in the course of the second Five-Year Plan, but enormously accentuated. Inequality is growing with seven league boots. The hymns of praise to the "happy life" are sung only by the summits, while the lower strata continue in enforced silence.

5. Playing upon the manifold social antagonisms (town and country, mental and physical labor, individual farms, kolkhozes and private tiny farms of the kolkhozes members, Stakonov people and the rest of the working masses), the Soviet bureaucracy has acquired an actual independence from the toilers. Like every bureaucracy it regulates the antagonisms in the interests of the stronger, of the better provided, of the privileged. Like every bureaucracy, it levies, towards the end, a significant portion of the national income for itself and thereby becomes the most privileged of all the privileged strata.

6. By its conditions of personal existence, Soviet society already now presents an enormous hierarchy: from a Bezprizorny (vagabond children), a prostitute, a slum proletarian- to the ruling "ten thousand" who lead the life of western European magnates of capital. In contradiction to the contentions of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, Socialism has not yet triumphed; neither in the objective economic conditions of the USSR (the criterion of the productivity of labor) nor in the consciousness of the producing masses (the criterion of personal consumption).

7. It remains a fact of decisive significance, however, that all the social relationships of the USSR, the privileges of the Soviet aristocracy included, base themselves in the long run on state and kolkhoz property, acquired by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie which, in distinction from capitalist property, opens up the possibility of the growth of industry and culture. The historical gulf dug up by the October Revolution still continues to separate the Soviet state planned economy from capitalist "state-ism", which signifies state intervention for the purpose of saving private property and which "regulates" the obsolete economic system by putting the brakes on the development of the productive forces and by lowering the standard of living of the people. The identification of Soviet economy with the Fascist (Italy, Germany), which occurs so frequently among the liberal economists, is a fruit of ignorance or of unscrupulousness. The victory of the Bonapartist bureaucracy of the USSR over the proletarian vanguard is by no means equivalent to the victory of the ^{capitalist} counter-revolution although the former blazes the trail for the latter.

8. To assert(like the anarchists and all sorts of ultra-leftists), that the Soviet Union deserves, on the part of the revolutionary proletariat, the same attitude as do the imperialist states, is to assert that it is a matter of indifference to the working class whether the state industry and the collective agriculture in the Soviet Union is to be preserved and further developed, or economy is to be flung back into the conditions of decomposition and, by means of a civil war, to Fascist capitalism. Such an attitude is worthy of the disappointed idealistic "friends" of the Soviet Union, that is, of the dilettantes and political windbags of the liberal and anarchist type, but by no means of Marxian revolutionists who never leave out of consideration the basic factor of history: the development of production.

9. As has been said, the social stratification of Soviet society is developing mainly in the field of distribution and only partially, above all in agriculture, in the field of production. But distribution is not separated by an impenetrable wall from production. By deliberately stimulating the appetite of individuals and groups and enhancing it to the point where it becomes unbridled, the bureaucracy directly discredits the idea of social property. The growth of economic privileges engenders among the masses a justified doubt as to whom, in the long run, the whole system will actually serve. The "bourgeois norms of distribution" which have already far exceeded the

permissible limit, threaten ultimately to explode the social discipline of planned economy and consequently state and kolkhoz property with it.

10. The possible paths of the bourgeois restoration appear with special clearness in the question of the family. Not succeeding in the tasks of the food supply and social education which is the result of the insufficient material and cultural level of the country and also the result of the stifling of the independent activity of the masses, the bureaucracy has undertaken the restoration and idealization of the petty-bourgeois family with its hut-in economy, the basis of all forms of social idiocy. But the family poses with sharpness the question of the right of inheritance. The bureaucracy itself which is attempting to rely for political support on the conservative family, feels its own domination incomplete, unfinished without the possibility of bequeathing its material privileges to posterity. The question of the right of inheritance leads to the question of the further extension of the bounds of private property. Such is one of the possible channels of the bourgeois restoration. In all the domain of social life the bureaucracy strikes at everything which is progressive in the Soviet system. Instead of the guardian of "Socialist property", it becomes its grave-digger.

11. The political significance of the new constitution of the USSR is in direct contradiction to its official interpretation. The "Stalinist constitution" is no step forward" from socialism to the communist society", as the official authorities brazenly assert, but it is on the contrary a step backwards from the dictatorship of the proletariat to the bourgeois political regime.

The development of the socialist society should find, in the political field, its expression in the dying away of the state. The degree of its dying away is the surest measure of the successes of the socialist development. The beginning of the dying away of the state should be the complete liquidation of the bureaucracy lifting itself above society. In actual fact, however, the new constitution raises exactly the opposite process of development to a law. Nor can it be otherwise. The growth of privileges requires a gendarme for their supervision.

12. State coercion is not attenuated, according to the new constitution, but on the contrary it acquires an exceptionally concentrated, open and cynical nature. The Soviets are destroyed. The local and central, that is, the "municipal" and "parliamentary" institutions, built up on the basis of the plebiscitary system, have nothing in common with the Soviets as the fighting organizations of the toiling masses.. Besides they have been deprived in advance of all genuine significance. The new constitution officially and publicly unites the power and the control over all fields of economic and cultural life in the hands of the Stalinist "party", which is independent both of the people and of its own members and which represents a political machine of the ruling caste.

13. In passing, the constitution liquidates de jure the ruling position of the proletariat in the state, a position which, de facto, has long ago been liquidated. Henceforth, it is declared, the dictatorship is "classless" and "popular", which, from the Marxist standpoint, is pure nonsense. The dictatorship of the "people" over itself should have signified the dissolution of the state into society, that is, the death of the state. In reality, the new constitution

seals the dictatorship of the privileged strata of Soviet society over the producing masses, thereby making the peaceful dying away of the state an impossibility and opens up for the bureaucracy "legal" roads for the economic counter-revolution, that is, the restoration of capitalism by means of a "soft stroke", a possibility which the bureaucracy directly prepares by its deception of the "victory of socialism". It is our task to call upon the working class to oppose its own force to the pressure of the bureaucracy - for the defense of the great conquests of October.

14. In direct contradiction to the official line, the new constitution not only does not extend Soviet "democracy" but on the contrary confirms its total strangulation. By every one of its paragraphs it proclaims that the present masters of the situation will not voluntarily relinquish their positions to the people. The aristocratic and absolutist character of the new constitution is most clearly expressed in the new crusade announced on the day of its publication - crusade for the "extermination of the enemies of the people, the Trotskyist spawn and monsters" (Pravda, June 5, 1956). The bureaucracy is very clearly aware of whence the mortal danger threatens it and it directs the Bonapartist terror against the representatives of the proletarian vanguard.

15. The working class of the USSR has been robbed of the last possibility of a legal reformation of the state. The struggle against the bureaucracy necessarily becomes a revolutionary struggle. True to the traditions of Marxism, the Fourth International decisively rejects individual terror, as it does all other means of political adventurism. The bureaucracy can be smashed only by means of the goal conscious movement of the masses against the usurpers, parasites and oppressors. If a social counter-revolution, i.e., the overthrow of state ownership of the means of production and of the land as well as the reestablishment of private property, is necessary for the return of the USSR to capitalism, then for the further development of socialism a political revolution has become inevitable, i.e., the violent overthrow of the political rule of the degenerated bureaucracy while maintaining the property relations established by the October revolution. The proletarian vanguard of the USSR, basing itself upon the toiling masses of the whole country and upon the revolutionary movement of the whole world, will have to batter down the bureaucracy by force, restore Soviet democracy, eliminate the enormous privileges and assure a genuine advance to socialist equality.

16. In the question of war, as in all other questions, the parties of the Fourth International do not permit themselves to be guided by formalistic and idealistic considerations and sympathies, but only by the Marxist criterion. If, for example, they support Abyssinia, despite the slavery that still prevails there and despite the barbaric political regime, it is, in the first place, because an independent national state represents a progressive historical stage for a pre-capitalist country and, secondly, because the defeat of Italy would signify the beginning of the collapse of the adolescent capitalist society.

The proletarian vanguard of the entire world will support the USSR in war, in spite of the parasitic bureaucracy and of the uncrowned Regus in the Kremlin, because the social regime of the USSR, despite all its deformations and ulcers represents an enormous historical step forward in comparison with putrified capitalism. The defeat of an imperialist land in the new war will lead

net only to the collapse of its state form but also of its capitalist foundation, and consequently will also replace private by state property. The defeat of the Soviet Union would not only signify the collapse of the Soviet bureaucracy but also the replacement of the state and collective property by capitalist chaos. The choice of the political line under these conditions is ineluctable.

The resolute and intrepid support of the USSR by the world proletarian vanguard in a war does not, however, signify that the proletariat should become the ally of the imperialist allies of the USSR. "The proletariat of a capitalist country which is allied with the USSR, fully and entirely retains its implacable hostility toward the imperialist government of its own country." ("The Fourth International and War", Theses of the International Secretariat of the International Communist League, Bolshevik-Leninists, point 44). The implacable proletarian opposition to the imperialist ally of the USSR must develop on the terrain of a class policy at home, on the one side, and on the other, of the imperialist aims of a given government, of the perfidious character of its alliance", of its speculations on a bourgeois stroke of state in the USSR, etc. The policy of the proletarian party in an imperialist country 'allied' as well as foe, must consequently aim at the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the seizure of power. It is only on this road that a genuine alliance can be made with the USSR and the first workers' state be saved from going under." (Ibid., point 45).

17. The fears of the "ultra-Leftists" that the victory of the USSR may lead to the further consolidation of the positions of the Bonapartist bureaucracy, arise out of a false conception of the international relationships as well as the internal development of the USSR. The imperialists of all the camps will not reconcile themselves with the Soviet Union until private property in the means of production has been re-established. Whatever the grouping of states may be at the beginning of the war, the imperialists will, in the course of the war, know how to come to an understanding and to a regrouping among themselves always at the expense of the USSR. The USSR will be able to emerge from a war without a defeat only under one condition, and that is, if it is assisted by the revolution in the West or in the East. But the international revolution, the only way of saving the USSR, will at the same time signify the death-blow for the Soviet bureaucracy.

18. Is the USSR a workers' state? The USSR is a state which bases itself upon the property relationships created by the proletarian revolution and which is administered by a labor bureaucracy in the interests of new privileged strata. The Soviet Union can be called a workers' state approximately the same sense - despite the vast difference in scale - in which a trade union, led and betrayed by opportunists, that is, by agents of capital, can be called a workers' organization. Just as revolutionists defend every trade union, even the most thoroughly reformist, from the class enemy, combatting intransigently the treacherous leaders at the same time, so the parties of the Fourth International defend the USSR against the blows of imperialism without for a single moment giving up the struggle against the reactionary Stalinist apparatus. In war as in peace, they guard their full freedom of criticism of the ruling Soviet caste and the full freedom of struggle against their agreements with the imperialists at the expense of the interests of the USSR and of the international revolution.

THE YOUTH AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

(Theses adopted by the Pre-Conference of the Youth, August 1st, 1936)

The epoch of the decline of capitalism can offer nothing to the great mass of the proletarian youth but permanent unemployment, hunger and misery, and as the final end the destruction of millions of young proletarian lives in a new imperialist mass murder. Within the framework of capitalism there is no salvation for this generation; the proletarian revolution which by a political and economic transformation of society, is alone capable of letting the youth satisfy its right to life to the utmost, is for it, therefore, not a matter of a distant aim, but an immediate issue of life or death.

The path of the proletarian revolution, the way to socialism is however blocked by the opportunist and treacherous policies of the Second and Third Internationals, which lead the proletariat from defeat to defeat, and by the lack of revolutionary leadership with its roots in the masses. This is the basic reason why the tremendous revolutionary possibilities of recent years have remained unutilized, and why the revolutionary energies of the masses have repeatedly burst forth only to be thwarted. These demoralizing defeats have furthermore had this result, that today sections of the proletarian youth have become alienated from their own class, lost faith in the revolution, and stand to one side or even furnish material for the storm troops of fascism, the deadly enemy of the proletariat.

The policies of the SYI, the youth section of the Second International are no less fatal than those of the Second International itself. The SYI bureaucracy continues to proclaim its faith in the League of (capitalist) Nations, whose pitiful role has now become manifest to the most backward petty bourgeoisie. The SYI is not ashamed of calling upon this prostituted League of Nations to organize a peace which is impossible in a capitalist regime and to advocate the deceitful slogan of disarmament, at the moment when re-armament proceeds at a feverish pace in all countries--including those where the 2nd International is represented in the government. The SYI bureaucracy demands the abandonment of the use of force in the class struggle (and even of the class struggle itself) at the very moment, when the bourgeoisie everywhere is releasing its fascist terrorist troops against the labor movement.

A most pernicious role is played under these circumstances by the so-called "left" SYI leaders (Godefroid, Chochoy, etc.) who today under the pressure of the tremendous mass movement in the western European countries adopt a revolutionary phrasology, but in reality completely support the counter-revolutionary policies of the reformist parties of their countries. In words, these "left" SYI leaders are for the revolution, armed insurrection, the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war, etc. but at the same time by their daily policies, they drive or ask the young proletarians to give their confidence to the minister-socialists, who--as with Vandervolde---proceed with tear gas against striking workers, or--as with Leon Blum---use the bourgeois police apparatus for the prosecution of proletarian revolutionists. That the differences between "right" and "left" SYI leaders bear no irreconcilable character but are mere skirmishes between opportunists of different national color, is indicated also in the ridiculous plan of Godefroid and Co. (today more or less abandoned!) which would divide the SYI into "political" and "cultural" sections and thus settle the differences in a purely bureaucratic and administrative manner. For the proletarian youth it is not a question of "political" or "cultural" work, but of social-betrayal versus social revolution, an issue, which permits of no compromise solution. This however Godefroid and Chochoy cannot admit, because they refuse to break with the social nationalist and social traitors, ~~and~~

at all costs, with the social patriots and social traitors, Vandervelde and de Man, Blum and Salengro. The task of the young proletarian revolutionists is to show the true role of the "left" leaders of the SYI who employ revolutionary phrases but who, in the last analysis, cover with their "revolutionary" authority the social patriotism of the Blums and the Vanderveldes, the counter-revolutionary policy of the Second International. The Communist Youth International (CYI), whose opportunism has revealed a point where it permits even the "leftists" of the SYI to claim Lenin and Luxemburg with impunity, unquestionably exercises today a most pernicious and demoralizing influence on the new generation. The Stalinist bureaucracy has succeeded in completely throttling the revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm which animated the CYI in its first years. The last world congress of the CYI, which was held in connection with the 7th World Congress of the C.I. (August 1935) laid upon all sections the task to "depoliticalize" themselves and to build broad mass organizations standing above the parties and above the classes. The CYI, in other words, received the charge to bring the proletarian youth in the countries allied with the Soviet Union (and those countries whose foreign politics in one way or another directed against Japan or Germany) into friendly relations with the bourgeois youth of these countries and so to guarantee the national unity in the coming war. In France where, at this time, on account of the extraordinary sharpening of the class antagonisms all political developments assume the clearest form, the CYI has carried its shamelessness to the point of holding out the hand of reconciliation to the Fascist youth organizations and denouncing the civil war as the worst of all evils. The Stalinist betrayal reaches its climax in the organization of the "world movement of the youth for peace, freedom and progress". Here the Stalinists combine with nationalist and religious youth organizations for the purpose of holding parade-congresses "for Peace" (Brussels, Geneva) under the protection of reactionary clerics and bankrupt imperialist politicians, such as Lord Cecil and others. The aim and the result of these Stalinist peace congresses are not the organization of peace among the peoples (which within the framework of capitalism is simply a reactionary utopia), but on the contrary the organization of the holy alliance between the classes of the imperialist nations whereby the imperialist war is made possible. The Communist Youth International which came into being in the struggle against the social-imperialism (socialism in word and imperialism in deed) of the 2nd International during the last world war, today prepares to lead the new proletarian generation to the imperialist slaughter. In its own ranks the proletarian youth movement has today no worse enemy than Stalinism. Of no particular practical importance is the "International Bureau of Revolutionary Youth Organizations" the youth section of the so-called London Bureau, this replica in miniature of the 2^{1/2} International (SAP, ILP, etc.). This Youth Bureau conceives its task to be to act as a handy-man for Stalinism. In a joint "manifesto to the German worker youth" the German sections of this Youth Bureau (the Youth of the SAP) certify, that the Stalinists (who truly did more for Hitler's triumph than Hitler himself) have correctly enlightened the German proletariat with regard to "the form, essence and task of Fascism". For the rest, the youth sections of the London Bureau participate - so far as their limited means permit - in the Stalinist class-peace congresses for the preparation of the imperialist war.

The youth section of the Fourth International can only be built in the sharpest struggle against the above outlined tendencies and conceptions in the camp of the proletarian youth movement, which, in the long run, can only doom the new generation, bound hand and foot, into the hands of international capitalism, of Fascism and war. Only through an intransigent revolutionary policy which condemns every concession to the concepts of social-imperialism and social-pacifism in the sharpest manner, and which pursues the aim of the proletarian revolution with audacity and determination, will it succeed in rallying the masses of the proletarian youth again under the red banner of the social revolution. Only the organizations of the Fourth International, re-assembling the revolutionists around themselves, can and will follow this path and only they will succeed in freeing the working class from the swamp of opportunism, betrayal and defeat-strategy of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals.

The degeneration of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals has resulted in the exhaustion to a considerable extent of the political energies of the older proletarian generation. The building of the Fourth International is indissolubly bound up with the political awakening of the new proletarian strata and above all of the young proletarian generation. It is therefore of tremendous importance, that the cadres of the Fourth International within the proletarian youth movement should move steadily forward. In France and Holland there already exist independent youth organizations which are for the Fourth International. In Belgium the truly revolutionary wing, which groups itself about the journal "Action Socialiste Revolutionnaire" has been expelled from the Young Socialist Guard at the initiative of Vandervelde and Co. and with the direct assistance of Godfroid who thereby proved that he preferred unity with the socialists of the holy union and is on the point of establishing itself as an independent league. Within the Spanish United Youth League (the merger of the socialist and Stalinist youth leagues), within the English Labor League of Youth, the Polish organization "Zukunft", the Young Peoples Socialist League (Yipsels) of the U.S.A., in Switzerland, in Austria, in Canada, and in a number of other countries, factions, groups and tendencies for the Fourth International exist. All these elements of the proletarian youth movement basing themselves on the Fourth International, will without neglecting the special conditions of their respective countries and their work, find ways and means to exchange and share their experiences, to learn from each other, and unitedly to march forward to new victories. Forward to the building of the Youth section of the Fourth International!

T H E E V O L U T I O N O F T H E C O M I N T E R N

From the Party of World Revolution to the Instrument of Imperialism

(A Study)

1. The imperialist world war of 1914-1918 was the clearest indication that the capitalist mode of production had become shackles on the productive forces, and that conditions had become ripe for the victory of the proletarian revolution. However, the Second International, whose bureaucracy had adapted itself to bourgeois society during a long period of capitalist expansion, betrayed the interests of the proletariat in the decisive moment of the outbreak of war, and occupied the position of defender of the fatherland, i.e., of the frontiers of the bourgeois national state, which -- together with the system of private property -- had become a brake on the further development of productive forces.

2. Only a very small number of revolutionary Marxists drew from the shameful treachery and miserable collapse of the Second International the conclusion that a Third International was necessary. It is true, in most of the countries an opposition formed itself against the chauvinist standpoint of the social-democratic parties, but such opposition had in the beginning mainly a pacifist-centrist character. At the international conferences of the opponents of imperialist slaughter at Zimmerwald (1915) and Kienthal (1916) the supporters of the building of a Third International remained in the minority and were termed by all centrists and social-imperialists as fanatics, utopians and sectarians.

3. The victory of the Russian revolution in October, 1917 was the victory of the revolutionary principle of struggling against the enemy at home and of turning imperialist war into civil war, which since 1914 had been counterposed by the handful of revolutionary Marxists and especially the leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks against the principle of defending the fatherland. The Bolsheviks -- after overcoming analogous tendencies in their own ranks -- broke with the ambiguous centrist majority of Zimmerwald and set up the banner of the Third International.

4. At the foundation congress of the Third International (March, 1919) only the representatives of a few and comparatively weak parties and groups met side by side with the victorious Bolshevik party. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who would have deserved a place of honor at this gathering, had been murdered by the soldiery of the German Social-Democrat, Noske.

The first congress took a very definite stand against the reactionary effort to rebuild the Second International in its pre-war form (conference in Berne of the social-democratic and independent parties of February, 1919), and stood for gathering the vanguard in a homogeneous revolutionary international. The manifestoes of the congress pitilessly exposed the treacherous pacifism of the American President Wilson and the illusion of a capitalist League of Nations,

which was supported by the Second International. One of the most important results achieved by the congress was the restoration of the Marxist teaching on the State as an instrument of class rule and the exposure of parliamentary democracy as the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. Lenin's theses on "Democracy and Dictatorship," which were adopted by the congress, explain the counter-revolutionary, bourgeois character of the abstract slogans and principles of "pure," formal democracy ("liberty," "equality," etc.). It showed by the example of the Russian experiences the necessity of the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship on the foundation of the Soviets (workers' councils).

5. In 1919, also, the experience of the Hungarian revolution was made. There, owing to the complete deterioration and confusion of the bourgeoisie, power had fallen into the lap of the Communists and Left Social Democrats. But from the start the Hungarian revolution had no real leadership. The Communist Party assimilated itself in the Social-Democratic Party and thereby showed that it was itself not a communist party. The Hungarian revolution failed not only in consequence of the unfavorable international situation, but also owing to the complete incapability of Bela Kun & Co.'s leadership (in regard to the agrarian question, apart from the question of party organization). The Communist International, only just recently formed, was not yet firm enough in an organizational sense to give a different direction to the Hungarian revolution.

6. The disastrous results of the war led to a powerful awakening of proletarian class-consciousness in the masses. They began to an ever-increasing extent to see clearly through the treacherous role played by the social-democratic parties. Under pressure of their parties' rank-and-file some of the old reformist and social-pacifist leaders (of the German Independent Socialist Party, the Italian Socialist Party, the French Socialist Party, the British I.L.P., etc.) sought affiliation to the Comintern, without however revising their centrist positions. This danger of the introduction of opportunist tendencies into the ranks of the Comintern was counteracted by the Second Congress (1920) which adopted the 21 points conditioning membership of the Communist International. These conditions declared unqualified struggle against the ambiguity, the hesitating attitude and the sterile social-pacifism of the centrists, and demanded a complete break with all pacifist ideas and illusions (such as disarmament, League of Nations, international arbitration, etc.). To the principle governing the Second International of maintaining loose contacts between parties nationally independent (and acting directly in opposition to each other), was counterposed the principle of the world party built on the foundation of common theory and practice, and the aim of realizing a common international leadership on the principles of democratic centralism.

7. These centrist and (toward the Second International) conciliatory politicians, who had been hindered by the Second Congress from joining the Comintern, tried to form a two-and-a-half International (beginning of 1921), a go-between affair half-way from open social-treachery and revolution (the Austro-Marxists, the German "Independents," the French "Languetists," the I.L.P., etc.). The two-and-a-half International proclaimed afresh -- as Karl Liebknecht put it -- "the unity of fire and water," the unity in one

international of revolutionists and social traitors. But history has no place for such a half-hearted solution. The two-and-a-half International was crushed in the struggle between the Second and Third Internationals. Its revolutionary elements turned to the Third International. Its bureaucratic tops re-united in 1923 (at the Hamburg Congress) with the Second International.

8. Opportunist Centrism, which did not lead the masses but wanted to be led by them, found its complement in ultra-radicalism which instead of winning the masses from within by co-operation in their organizations, their struggles and experiences, put an ultimatum to them from outside. These ultra-lefts declared themselves against participation in parliamentary elections, for leaving the mass trade unions and the formation of "pure" revolutionary unions, and for isolated action of the vanguard. These tendencies led in Germany to the formation of the K. A. P. (Communist Workers' Party) in 1920. But even the official Communist Party of Germany had not been able to rid itself of adventurous tendencies. This was shown, above all, in the course of the March events (1921) when the party instead of confining itself to defensive tactics against the provocative challenge of the Social-Democrats in the government, led the isolated vanguard to an armed offensive and suffered shipwreck. But the greatest danger was that now a whole school of theorists established itself in the party who transformed the tactics of March into a principle (Thalheimer, Frölich, Maslow, Koenen, etc.). The Third Congress condemned ultra-left adventures and issued the slogan: "To the masses," recognizing that the first great post-war wave (1917-1920) was now flowing back, and that a breathing space had occurred which it was necessary to utilize by better and more thorough preparation for the coming struggles. The strategy and tactics of the Communist Parties were drafted in resolutions which are even today still exemplary. The Congress adopted "Guiding Principles for the Organizational Development of the Communist Parties, the Methods and the Content of their Work," which, in spite of their being too mechanical, "too Russian" (Lenin, at the Fourth Congress), give many valuable suggestions, particularly regarding the connection between legal and illegal work, the necessity of a quick switch-over from one to the other method of work, the organization of the press, the creation of factory cells, etc.

9. The Fourth Congress (1922) re-affirmed the lessons of the Third Congress, dealt with them more thoroughly and concretely. The N. E. P. policy of the Soviet Union, following on "War Communism" which had had to be introduced under the pitiless pressure of circumstances, supplied the immensely important experience of necessary tactical retreats even after the winning of power, an experience which most probably will have its validity not only for backward Russia, but also for more advanced countries.

The Fourth World Congress could look back on tremendous organizational results. In the course of three years, in all continents and in practically all countries, sections had been created, and apart from this the Red International of Trade Unions and the Young Communist International had been built up. The Communist parties in a number of countries were at that time leading mighty revolutionary mass actions.

The defeat of the Italian proletariat in 1922 was not a defeat of the strategical and tactical methods of the Leninist Comintern,

but of those of Italian Maximalism (Serrati), against which the Comintern since the Second World Congress had been carrying on a continuous hard struggle, without however being able to avert the catastrophe.

10. One of the greatest achievements of the Comintern of those years was the publicity given by it to the historical importance of national movements of liberation in the colonies and semi-colonial territories; and the support given to the struggle of enslaved nations against imperialist oppression, a task which the Second International had always neglected and, by its attitude in the World War, had absolutely betrayed.

Lenin's "Guiding Principles on the National and Colonial Question" at the Second Congress were directed definitely against any attempt to fasten a communist label on revolutionary movements of liberation which were not in reality communistic. A temporary alliance with the national revolutionary movement was considered in these theses as necessary, but it was pointed out that the task of the Communists was not to amalgamate with these nationalist parties, but under all circumstances unconditionally to uphold the independent character of the proletarian movement.

11. The year 1923 represents a decisive turning point in the history of the Comintern. Owing to the development of new layers of exploiting elements in the Soviet Union as a consequence of the N.E.P. policy, and owing to the general exhaustion of the working class after the tremendous efforts and the fervour of the years of revolution and civil war, the bureaucracy of the party and state apparatus, which had meantime become very strong, was allowed to raise itself at an ever-increasing rate as an independent social force, as an arbiter over the classes. However, the bureaucracy could only gain political power by a struggle against the proletarian vanguard, against proletarian democracy inside the party and the Soviets. This is the content of the struggle commencing in 1923 between Stalinism and Trotskyism. The ascent of the bureaucracy coincides with the severe illness and forced political inactivity of Lenin who, however, in his last writings (especially in the article "Better Less, but Better" and in the so-called Testament) had clearly recognized and called for a struggle against the danger of bureaucratization and Stalin as its main representative.

12. In Germany, in 1923, a revolutionary crisis broke out afresh. The consequences of the War, which had not by any means been overcome, the economic crisis interrupted only by slight boomlets, the occupation of the Ruhr territory by the French army, the organization and the collapse of "passive resistance" of the German bourgeoisie against this occupation, the limitless inflation of the German currency -- all these causes led to an extraordinary sharpening of the class contradictions. Huge mass strikes took place. The shop stewards movement became a gathering point for the revolutionary masses. The workers organized themselves in "Hundert-schaften" (bodies of 100) and commenced to arm themselves. In a number of mass trade unions the communists even obtained a majority. Social-Democracy was in confusion, the bourgeoisie was split. The mass movement reached the critical point when decisiveness and practical initiative of the highest degree are required of the revolutionary leadership to push this movement further ahead to victory. But the leadership of the Communist Party (Brandler, Thalheimer, Walcher, Frölich, etc.) showed itself incapable of fulfilling its historical tasks and thereby proved that it was only a

social-democratic leadership covered with a coat of communist varnish. It stuck to the united front with the social-democracy, without being able to grasp that the idea of the united front is to "step back in order thus to leap all the better," without being able to grasp that, from a certain time onward, the fight for winning the masses can only be carried out by a direct struggle for power. The leadership of the Comintern, which already showed signs of bureaucratic degeneration, proved also incapable of leading the C.P.G. on the correct road. Then at last the German bourgeoisie gathered its forces, proclaimed a state of siege and proceeded to take the offensive, the C. P. G. capitulated without a struggle. The consequence was a severe defeat of the German, and with it the European, proletariat, giving thereby to European capitalism the possibility of relatively stabilizing itself anew.

13. The defeat of 1923 led to a serious internal crisis in the C.P.G. which gave itself a new "left" leadership (R. Fischer-Maslow). This leadership, however, did not recognize that the October defeat had a decisive character. Instead of ordering a retreat, it proceeded along the path of adventurism and thereby increased the extent of the defeat.

In Bulgaria, the Comintern section of that country (leadership: Kolarov-Dimitrov) also let slip in 1923 a highly favorable revolutionary situation and endeavored to make good by putchist adventures in September 1923, thereby causing a fatal defeat of the Bulgarian proletariat.

After the German defeat the Comintern accepted a policy of adventurism and transferred this course to the entire International, the consequence being a further defeat in Esthonia (rising in Rival, December, 1924.)

14. To the same extent as the German defeat weakened the positions of the international proletariat and of its vanguard, it strengthened the tendencies of the Soviet bureaucracy to become an independent force. This accounts for the fact that the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern (1924) signifies above all the subduing of the Comintern under the yoke of the Russian Bureaucracy. The Comintern itself became bureaucratized and was brought into complete dependence on the bureaucratic center in Moscow.

15. The theory of "socialism in a single country," brought forward by Stalin, the head of the bureaucracy, in the autumn of 1924 in glaring contradiction to the entire theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, became for the newly formed social layers (bureaucracy, kulaks, "spets" (specialists), etc.) the ideological expression of their nationally confined interests. Not the international proletariat, but the bureaucracy proclaimed itself as the bearer of socialism. The Comintern, created to be an instrument of world revolution, became now the tool for the national interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. This fundamental contradiction pressed its imprint on the future policy of the Comintern, which from that point became centrist -- zigzagging unprincipled adaptation to the reformist bureaucracy and bourgeois democracy on the one hand, and putchist adventurism on the other, uniting all these traits in its policy. The social basis of this type of centrism -- the stable point in a world movement -- is the Soviet bureaucracy.

16. The two methods adopted by the Comintern for the handling of the masses -- on the one hand, unprincipled adaptation to exist-

ing circumstances and the bourgeois-democratic and petty-bourgeois reformist parties, on the other, the sudden, unprepared appeal to the revolutionary instincts of the masses -- have their root in the social position of the Soviet bureaucracy (the Comintern bureaucracy being its obedient appendix). Owing to its entire social character, the Soviet bureaucracy inclines toward adaptation to the privileged and exploiting sections of Soviet society (Kulaks, intellectual strata, labor aristocracy). However, as soon as the development has reached a critical point, where these strata have become so powerful socially that they threaten to smash the bureaucracy's position of political privilege, the latter saves itself by an appeal to the masses. In reality, it only stirs the proletarian masses (or more correctly merely small parts of these masses) by applying rigidly the whole force of state power (in particular, the G.P.U.). On the international field, the Soviet and Comintern bureaucracy feel themselves attracted by petty-bourgeois democracy. But whenever, for national reasons or by the logic of events, the Soviet bureaucracy finds itself in opposition to petty-bourgeois democracy, it endeavors all of a sudden to drive the masses to revolutionary action. But as the Comintern is lacking the state forces required to carry through its ultimatums the masses remain passive.

This explains, on the one hand, the pseudo-successes of Stalinist policy in the Soviet Union (impressing the philistines of all shades, from the reactionary English Fabians, Webbs & Co., over the Romain Rollands, to the "London Bureau" of the SAP-ILP), and on the other hand, the catastrophic failures of the Comintern.

17. The adventurous course of the years 1924-25 hereby found its opportunistic complement in bureaucratic combinations, directed entirely against the interests of the proletarian vanguard. The formation of a Peasants' International (Krestintern), the flirting with the Croatian Peasants' Party of Raditch, the American Farmers' Party of LaFollette, were examples of the endeavor by the Stalinist bureaucracy to use, on an international scale, the Kulak tendencies as a counter-balance against the proletarian vanguard. The union with the Chinese Kuomintang, ignoring the class differences, the hope set on the English trade union bureaucrats, all these props of the adventurous course of 1924-25 became the most essential elements of the openly opportunist course of 1925-27.

18. Over the period of 1925 to 1927 the Chinese revolution had its gigantic outbreak. The first occurrences enabled the Chinese bourgeoisie and its party, the Kuomintang, to take the leadership. The Comintern declared its complete solidarity with the Kuomintang and its military leadership (Chiang Kai-shek). The Chinese Communist Party was forced to renounce an independent policy, and to join and submit completely to the Kuomintang. Thus, all lessons of the Second World Congress were disregarded. This entirely Menshevik policy was justified with the formula of the 1905 revolution: "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasants." With Lenin this formula was the elementary expression of the idea of a union of struggle between the proletariat and the poor peasants against the aristocrats and liberal bourgeoisie. It was left to each concrete revolutionary situation to determine the concrete form which this dictatorship of the oppressed against the oppressors should adopt. When, however, in the spring of 1917, opportunist tendencies within the Bolshevik party tried to hide behind this old Bolshevik formula, Lenin in his "Letters on

Tactics" (April, 1917) discarded it as having been rendered obsolete by living developments. However, in the hands of Stalinism, Lenin's slogan, which had been directed against the liberal bourgeoisie, served for the complete suppression of the proletariat under the liberal bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, in spite of the opportunist policy of the Stalin bureaucracy, crawling on its belly before the military bureaucracy and lacking confidence in the revolutionary power of the proletariat, the Chinese proletarian masses and poor peasants turned to Communism, imbued with the desire to carry out in their country the "October Revolution," the partition of the land, the expropriation of the expropriators, the destruction of the bourgeois-militarist state machine and its substitution by Soviets.

The Kuomintang bourgeoisie, allied by finance capital with the interests of the landlord and rich peasant class, opposed with all its might the agrarian revolution. Thus the Chinese Communists, tied by Stalinism to the Kuomintang, were hindered by this method from placing themselves at the head of the agrarian revolution. The peasants remained without revolutionary leadership and the Chinese revolution was deprived of its strongest lever.

In spite of the submissive policy of Stalinism, the Chinese bourgeoisie did not refrain from settling accounts with the potential danger which was created by the rising wave of Communism. The militarist leadership of the Kuomintang made a counter-revolutionary coup d'Etat, and Chiang Kai-shek ordered to be shot thousands of Chinese proletarians, already deprived of power and arms by the Stalinist policy, at a time when in Moscow he was still hailed as the hero of the revolution. After Chiang Kai-shek's "treason" (not against the class interests of the Chinese bourgeoisie, but against Stalinist illusions), the Stalinist bureaucracy supported the alliance with the "left" Kuomintang (Wang Ching-wei) and gathered with him the same bitter experiences as with Chiang Kai-shek. Only when the defeat was thoroughly completed, the bureaucracy appealed to the proletarian masses whose vast majority had just been crushed to the ground. The result was the Canton insurrection which -- although bearing a putchist character and condemned to complete isolation and thus to defeat -- again showed unmistakably in retrospective the class character of the Chinese revolution and the possibility and necessity of forming Soviets and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, and thereby underlined the criminal folly of the whole Stalinist policy.

19. In the other colonial and East-Asiatic countries (British India, Dutch East Indies, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, etc.), Stalinism supported during this period the building of "Peasants' and Workers' parties" (of the Kuomintang type) in direct contrast to Communist parties. This policy disorganized and demoralized completely the proletarian vanguard in those countries and -- in conjunction with the catastrophic defeat of the Chinese revolution -- is the main cause for the fact that in these countries no independent proletarian party has been formed to this day.

20. Parallel with the political alliance with the Kuomintang, a political alliance was made with the English trade union bureaucracy, the so-called "Anglo-Russian Committee" for the purpose of "preventing the war of intervention." Whereas the Leninist united

front tactic has the aim of winning the masses to Communism, the Stalinist bureaucrats here did not come into contact with the English masses at all. The Anglo-Russian Committee confined itself to purely bureaucratic events (conferences, banquets, etc.). The result was a strengthening of the authority of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy and the direct desertion by the Third International of the Minority Movement which at that time was developing favorably within the trade unions. This reactionary character of the Anglo-Russian Committee was exposed clearly during the English general strike of 1926 which was miserably betrayed by the trade union leaders (covered by the authority of Moscow). The relations were broken off, not by the Russian, but by the English bureaucracy, at a moment when this was most favorable for the latter.

21. In 1927, the fight of the bureaucracy against the proletarian vanguard in the Soviet Union had its sharpest clash. Due to the catastrophic results of Stalinist policy, which confirmed in all points the criticism of the Opposition, the bureaucracy -- in direct alliance with the kulaks and the other petty-bourgeois sections -- took the sharpest measures against the Opposition, measures which were a denial of every principle of proletarian democracy. Expulsions from the party, ejections from office, imprisonment, exile, deportation, smuggling agents provocateurs into the ranks of the Opposition, concocted evidence, executions, made the road free for the Bonapartist dictatorship of Stalin.

22. After having used the kulaks and the urban petty-bourgeois strata as a support in its fight against the Opposition, the bureaucracy was faced by the danger of becoming crushed itself by these strata. For reasons of self-preservation it was therefore compelled to turn now against the kulaks. Also on the international field, a continuation of the openly opportunist course had become impossible owing to the attitude of the partners (termination of the relations by the British trade union bureaucracy, counter-revolutionary coup d'Etat of Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Ching-wei). As far as the German and French Social-Democracy was concerned, contradictions existed which were mainly due to national and foreign policy considerations. These were the causes which led to the turn from bureaucratic adaptation to social-democratic, trade union and national-democratic (Kuomintang) bureaucracies, on the one hand, to bureaucratic ultimatism and adventurism, on the other hand (see also Thesis No. 16).

23. The Sixth World Congress (1928), called after an interval of four years, had an ambiguous contradictory character. This Congress was held during the period of transition from the ultra-right to the ultra-left course and served the purpose of preparing for the exclusion of the right wing which had no desire to depart from the opportunist line adopted in 1925 to 1927 (Bucharin, Rykov, Brandler, Thalheimer, Walcher, Frölich, Kilboom, Lovestone, etc.). The program adopted by the Congress is based, from beginning to end, on eclecticism. It canonized the theory of socialism in a single country, thus castrating the Comintern. The program does not take as a premise the present day world situation of capitalism as an interlocked whole, from which must be deduced the necessity of world revolution, but it examines in a pedantically reactionary manner the possibility of each country "realizing socialism," thus opening wide the door for future social-patriotic deterioration of

the Comintern. For the colonies and semi-colonial countries -- with certain limitations, even for such countries as Spain, Portugal, Poland, etc.) -- the program issues the slogan of "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," filling it with the same anti-Leninist content (fraternization of the classes) which had caused the collapse of the Chinese revolution. On the question of strategy and tactics, the program does not go beyond commonplaces. The real experiences gained by the October victory and the tremendous defeats of the proletariat in Germany, Hungary, China, etc., and the role and the importance of the revolutionary party and of its leadership, are not demonstrated.

24. In the subsequent period, the Stalinist bureaucracy operated mainly, but by no means exclusively, by the other method at its disposal, i.e., that of commanding the masses with an ultimatum, without any preparation. In the midst of the comparatively social peace of the still existing boom period of 1924-1929, suddenly a "revolutionary upheaval" was ordered uniformly on the international field (the so-called "Third Period"). The fatal policy of splitting the trade unions (propagation of the Red Trade Unions as independent organizations) was put into practice. Any pact with the social-democracy, even of a merely temporary or practical-technical nature, was discarded. The theory of Social Fascism was established ("Social-Democracy and Fascism are not antipodes, they are twins" -- Stalin) and every difference between parliamentary democracy and fascist dictatorship was denied. Whereas the "ultra-left escapades" -- as Lenin put it -- which occurred in the first post-war years, were at any rate caused by honest revolutionary desire, the Stalinist bureaucrats betrayed in scoundrel's fashion the interests of the proletarian masses.

25. The severe economic crisis originating in America in 1929-1930 shook to the core the existing position, first in Germany, to which was suited the characterization given by Lenin to the Russian capitalism of 1917 as being the "weakest link of the capitalist chain." The policy of the German Social-Democratic Party, adapting itself to declining capitalism (slogan of the "lesser evil") and the bureaucratic degeneration of the German Communist Party hindered a strengthening of the working class movement in the crisis. The petty-bourgeoisie turned to demagogic fascism which preached civil war not against the oppressing bourgeoisie, but against the proletariat, and the aim of which is to continue and intensify capitalist exploitation by the suppression of all democratic liberties. But even the ascent of this dangerous enemy of the proletariat could have worked as a lever for the revolution, if only the Communist Party had understood how to bring into motion against it all proletarian forces. But the Stalinist bureaucracy did not even recognize the danger, to say nothing of being able to fight against it. The absolutely crazy estimation of the Social-Democracy as "Social Fascism" led to the approach to real fascism (program of national and social liberation, support of the fascist referendum against the social-democratic government of Russia in 1931, etc.). This program of adapting oneself to nationalist agitation, and the bureaucratic-cowardly evasion of a military struggle against the fascist opponent found its support in Soviet Russian foreign policy which was solely governed by day-to-day considerations. This foreign policy saw its task in keeping alive German-French antagonism, in order thus to exclude an intervention

from the west. Basically, Soviet Russian foreign policy is, of course, absolutely justified in exploiting for its own ends the differences of interests existing between imperialist powers. But it is an unheard-of crime to sacrifice the interests of the proletarian revolution to day-to-day considerations of foreign policy.

The criminal, blind policy of the German Communist Party (for which the whole Comintern bears complete responsibility) led to the shameful defeat without struggle of the German proletariat. The miserable collapse of the German Communist Party (which was confirmed anew by the melancholy result of the Saar Plebiscite of January, 1935) delivered the final proof that the Comintern had transformed itself from a subjective factor of the world revolution into an objective obstacle to the world revolution. From this fact resulted the absolute necessity of building the Fourth International.

26. The policy of bureaucratic ultimatism found its complement in unprincipled combinations with bankrupt bourgeois politicians, pacifists and novelists (Lord Marley, Barbusse, Romain Rolland, Heinrich Mann, etc.) as well as in the "Peace Congresses" organized by the Stalinists, the League against Imperialism, the Friends of the Soviet Union, etc., a policy which is the exact opposite of the Leninist united front tactic for winning the proletarian masses and which reflects the bureaucratic admiration of "people in high positions," and the bureaucratic scorn of the revolutionary forces of the masses.

27. In 1934, a new turn of the Comintern policy was enforced by the inner-political situation of the Soviet Union as well as the foreign-political situation, altered by the victory of fascism in Germany. If so far the Leninist united front tactic in relation to Social-Democracy had been regarded as "counter-revolutionary," now every opportunity presenting itself anywhere was used to make an alliance not only with Social-Democracy, but also with its masters, the liberal bourgeoisie, and this treacherous capitulation before bourgeois democracy received the pompous name of "Popular Front."

28. Stalin's declaration to the French Premier Laval (May, 1935) that "he understood and approved completely the policy of national defense of France" signalizes the Comintern's walk-over into the camp of imperialism. Soviet diplomacy, which meantime joins the League of Nations, advocates "collective security" (i.e., the security of the imperialist robbers to continue to rob without hindrance), international arbitration, and the like. Thereby, the Comintern makes itself the prop for the oldest and most worn-out illusions with which imperialism deceives the masses and prepares them for the mass slaughter, and this at a moment when Italy's brutal assault on Abyssinia demonstrates clearly the whole emptiness and shallowness of the lying phrases of collective security.

29. The Seventh World Congress, assembling at last in the autumn of 1935, signifies the break with the last remnants of Comintern traditions. "Popular Front" and "National Defense," social betrayal and social chauvinism are all that this Congress -- a hollow stage performance of bureaucratic marionettes -- had to offer to the world working class.

30. The Stalinist demand in all countries, in exchange for

their willingness to defend the Fatherland, only one price, i.e., that the foreign policy of the respective country should not be directed against the Soviet Union. It needed only the Franco-Soviet military agreement in order to transform the French Stalinists into the worst type of chauvinists, preaching national fraternization of all classes and of all political and religious denominations. The British Stalinists have no other aim but to get the British bourgeoisie to become a signatory to the Franco-Soviet agreement. Already today, the American Comintern section endorses a war of the United States against Japan "for the defense of the Soviet Union." Although a war of the U.S.A. against Japan -- given a correct policy on the part of the proletarian party -- would offer tremendous possibilities for the proletarian world revolution, the American Stalinists are preaching already now the renunciation of the revolutionary class struggle and the support of the American bourgeoisie, the mightiest and most dangerous imperialist bourgeoisie of the world. In China, the Stalinists are prepared to deliver the Chinese proletariat and poor peasants again into the hands of the counter-revolutionary Chiang Kai-shek, if the latter only declares himself willing to turn his bayonets against Japan.

In the small European countries, the Stalinists declare themselves already now defenders of "national independence." They forget completely that these countries are links in the imperialist chain, and that they also carry on war with imperialist aims. As far as Czechoslovakia is concerned, a nation which is particularly near to the heart of the Stalinists, this is not a national state at all, but only a conglomeration of nationalities, held together by French imperialism. Poland, Rumania, Belgium, etc. are themselves oppressors of national minorities. Holland, Belgium, Portugal and others have colonies of their own which they exploit with a brutality second to none of that of the great imperialist powers. The Austrian Stalinists declare that they are prepared to defend the "independence of Austria" -- of this artificial creation, incapable of independent existence -- if only the Austrian bourgeoisie (and Franco-English capital) will allow the Stalinists a certain amount of legality for their patriotic loyal propaganda. The German Stalinists in emigration have become inverted social-patriots, have transformed themselves from nationalist champions against the Versailles Peace Treaty to defenders of the status quo created by this very same treaty. It follows from the present position of the German Stalinists that they will immediately transform themselves into real social-patriots as soon as in Germany the fascist dictatorship should be substituted by another type of bourgeois regime.

As against this enormous betrayal of the interests of the proletariat, the organizations of the Fourth International adhere to the internationalist slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war; not the defense of the reactionary national frontiers, which already decades ago became a brake on any kind of progressive development, but their abandonment; the creation of the United Soviet Republics of Europe and of the whole world is our aim.

31. Due to the social-patriotic transformation of Stalinism, for all practical purposes all the differences between the Second International, which owes its artificially prolonged existence only to the degeneration of the Comintern, and the Third International have disappeared. Thus, it is only logical if the problem of

"organic unity" -- the amalgamation of the Second and Third Internationals -- is increasingly coming to the forefront. In those countries where reformism still has the monopoly power over the working-class movement (Britain, Scandinavia) the parties of the Second International oppose organic unity. In Belgium, the recent successes of the Stalinists and the failure of the Labour Party may probably have caused the latter to become more sympathetic to the idea of amalgamation. In France, however, the Communist Party, which is now growing at the expense of the Social-Democracy, is delaying the matter. Nowhere, however, is there any principled, irreconcilable antagonism. What matters only are purely bureaucratic bargaining methods. But no matter whether "organic unity" is realized or not, the advanced worker must have no doubt that Stalinism and Social-Democracy are "not antipodes, but twins," that they both are yellow agencies of rotting capitalism.

32. At present, the Comintern is experiencing a certain growth which is not to be under-estimated, but as a social-treacherous and social-chauvinist, not as a revolutionary party. Faced with tremendous political tension, already signalling everywhere the approach of the new world war, the masses rush to the left and find there the only door known to them, that of the Comintern. Thus, at the last elections the French Communist Party could more than double its votes (the number of deputies being increased seven-fold). Above all, the proletarian districts -- Paris and suburbs -- voted Communist. Also, the Belgian Communist Party, always very weak, could register in this year's elections a success which is not unimportant (an increase of more than 100% of votes against 1932, threefold increase of mandates). Certain successes can be registered by Stalinism also in Spain, in Switzerland, partly also in Czechoslovakia. A growth of other sections (England, Holland, Scandinavia, America, etc.) is, if not certain, not at all improbable. But while the masses hope that the Third International will save them from the danger of a war, the Comintern is preparing itself to become the main political instrument in the coming imperialist war. Thus, the Comintern takes the place of the worn-out Second International in the service of bourgeois democracy and imperialism, but it carries within it tremendous contradictions.

33. These recent successes of the Comintern are confusing above all the petty-bourgeois philistines who have united themselves in the "International Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity" (London Bureau), i.e., the S.A.P. of Germany, the English I.L.P., the Socialist Party of Sweden, the Party of Marxist Unity in Spain (Nin-Maurin), etc. Under the impression of the catastrophic defeat of the German working class movement some of these centrist parties were turning in the direction of the Fourth International. But the Stalinist turn of the autumn of 1934 pulled along with it into the swamp of Popular Front policy the hesitating Walchers, Maurins, Nins, etc., and the complete absorption of the London Bureau by Stalinism is now merely a question of time.

34. A convincing example of the contradictions now connected with the present growth of the Communist parties is the tremendous strike movement and factory occupation during the last weeks in France (drawing into it about two million manual and clerical workers), which started to the utter surprise of the French Communist Party. But whilst this fresh mass movement is commencing on the road of revolution, it finds everywhere obstacles put in its path

by the fossilized apparatus of the Comintern. For instance, instead of placing itself at the head of the strike movement and putting forward revolutionary demands, the French Communist Party worked right from the beginning, together with the government and the bosses, in order to find a means of bringing the strike to an end. It may, therefore, be prophesied with certainty: either the fresh movement of the proletarian masses in France will sweep aside the bureaucratic apparatus of the Stalinist traitors and create a new leadership -- then the proletarian revolution will be victorious -- or the treacherous bureaucrats will become masters of the situation -- then Fascism will triumph.

35. The contradiction between the militant masses who are pushing to the left and the new treacherous part played by the Communist parties is presenting to the organizations of the Fourth International great tasks and possibilities. Some of these organizations have, in the immediate past, joined the socialist parties and have won over the best elements there to revolutionary Marxism. In countries with tremendously accelerated inner-political developments (France, Belgium), this proved to be a short stage. In other countries (Poland, England) this experience is not yet completed. In others again (America) they are still at the beginning. But no matter whether the sections of the Fourth International are working independently or within the Socialist Parties, they must direct their attention to the fact that at present the Third International is attracting the workers from the Second International. Therefore, the most essential struggle against social-imperialism -- Socialism or Communism in words, and imperialism in practice -- is the struggle against the Comintern, against the Stalinist bureaucracy. The most important task is to make clear to the workers the present day character of the Comintern as an agency of imperialism, to make it clear to them that a change-over from the Second to the Third International means jumping from the pan into the fire.

36. The roads and methods of this work will be manifold and various, dependent on the whole development and the peculiarities of each country. It is of decisive importance to utilize every possibility in forcing the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy into open antagonism to its social supporters, the revolutionary working class. It is important everywhere to watch developments with open eyes, to collect material, to follow carefully all contradictory tendencies, in order to be able to act in time and effectively.

37. Of the theory and practice of the first four world congresses there is not a breath left in the Comintern of the present. But the strategical and tactical teachings of the Comintern of Lenin and Trotsky, the Leninist re-affirmation of theoretical Marxism, are not forgotten. These teachings and experiences have been defended since 1923 by the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition against bureaucratic degeneration. They are the foundation of the political and the theoretical work of the Opposition, which from the start fought against the theory of socialism in a single country as the source of social-patriotic degeneration. The Leninist strategical teachings and experiences, applied to the new events and phenomena, and the pitiless criticism of Stalinist mistakes and crimes during 1923 to 1936 have been used by the Opposition to educate new Bolshevik cadres in the whole world. Without a thorough study of the programmatic documents and writings of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition during this period, no proletarian revolutionary -- who wants to deserve the name -- can be qualified for a leading part in the ranks of the proletarian vanguard.

38. By elevating to the place of sole guiding line of its policy the strategical aim of the proletarian world revolution, adopted by the Third International of Lenin and Trotsky, but betrayed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, the Fourth International arms itself with the teachings and experience of almost a century of revolutionary struggles between proletariat and bourgeoisie, and re-affirms thereby the ideas and the life work of the great pioneers of the proletariat, Marx, Engels, Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Lenin.

R U L E S

GOVERNING THE DIRECTING INTERNATIONAL ORGANS

1. The highest instance of the organizations associated on a world scale in the movement for the Fourth International shall be the International Conference, which shall adopt the documents that set forth the position of the movement on all important political questions.

2. Between international conferences, the international direction of the movement shall be confided to a General Council, composed of members belonging to various countries and organizations of the Fourth International, elected by the international conference.

A national section shall have the right to propose the recall of its member or members from the General Council, which shall be accorded by a vote of two-thirds of the membership of the General Council.

The General Council shall meet at least once a year, to review the work of the Bureau for the Fourth International and the International Secretariat.

The General Council shall have the right to regulate conflicts in the Bureau and the Secretariat which prevent the regular functioning of the latter.

3. The daily work of maintaining and extending the relations among the organizations of the Fourth International and of executing the decisions and carrying out the political line of the Fourth International shall be assured by an International Secretariat for the Fourth International, composed of five members, located at the seat of the Secretariat and elected by the International Conference. Three candidates shall be elected at the same time, with consultative votes, which shall become decisive votes upon the replacement of a regular member by a candidate.

The I.S. shall publish a regular International Bulletin in at least the French and German languages in the name of the I.S. for the Fourth International.

The I.S. shall meet at least once a week to decide on the conduct of its daily work.

4. The Bureau for the Fourth International shall be composed of the resident members of the I.S. plus six other representatives, with equal vote, elected by the international conference.

The Bureau shall meet once every two months to review the past work of the I.S. and to outline the political and organizational course to be followed in the current work of the I.S.
