

DISCUSSION FOR 7th **WORLD CONGRESS**

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE



October 20th, 1934

VOLUME XI

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL No 20

THREEPENCE
CONTENTS
OVERLEAF

CONTENTS

Number 20

Published fortnightly in Russian, German,
French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

- | | Page |
|---|------|
| 1. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International postponed to 1935. | 763 |

EDITORIALS.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 2. From the First to the Third International. | 763 |
| 3. The Revolutionary Upsurge in America. | 770 |

DISCUSSION FOR THE 7th CONGRESS OF THE C.I.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 4. Problems of the Standard of Living of the Working Class, by Sinani. | 775 |
| 5. The Question of the Middle Strata of the Town Population, by P. Reimann. | 785 |

A CHRONICLE OF EVENTS.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 6. Some Notes on the United Front in Britain, by Pat Devine. | 794 |
|--|-----|

BOOK REVIEWS.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 7. G. D. H. Cole's "Plan for Britain," reviewed by Mary Smith. | 799 |
|--|-----|
-
-

FROM THE FIRST TO THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

THE formation of the First International on September 28th, 1864, at an international gathering in St. Martin's Hall, in London, BECAME A TURNING-POINT IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN MOVEMENT. It was precisely the First International, led by Karl Marx, the great teacher and leader of the working class, which

"LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE PROLETARIAT INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF THE WORKERS FOR THEIR PREPARATION FOR THEIR REVOLUTIONARY ATTACK AGAINST CAPITAL, that laid the foundation for that EDIFICE OF THE WORLD SOCIALIST REPUBLIC WHICH WE NOW HAVE THE HAPPINESS TO BUILD" (Lenin).

The First International occupied this honourable place in the history of the workers' movement because it was the FIRST INDEPENDENT PARTY OF THE PROLETARIAT, and an international party at that, which placed itself against all the parties of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois democracy, a proletarian party which was faithful to the working class due to the leading rôle of Marx in it, who based the Party on the principles of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the principles of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism.

Of course, these principles of the consistent class struggle against the bourgeoisie, carried to the extent of the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat, were alien and hostile even to the views of many of those who participated in the historic meeting in St. Martin's Hall, and who later became members of the International, and even of its general council (the leaders of the British trade unions, the French Proudhonists, etc.), and against whom Marx carried on a stubborn struggle in the International. Nevertheless, the International Workingmen's Association was the political-organisational form in which the principles of the *Communist Manifesto* were expressed

as early as 1848, FOR THE FIRST TIME THERE WAS GATHERED TOGETHER AN INTERNATIONAL MASS MOVEMENT OF THE WORKING CLASS WHICH, FOR THOSE TIMES, WAS A BROAD MOVEMENT.

In the '60s of last century the formation of an independent political party of the proletariat was the CHIEF LINK without which all the subsequent successes of the Labour movement, in particular the Paris Commune itself—this first discovery and

achievement by the proletariat of the form of the dictatorship — would have been impossible. At the same time it was precisely the absence of a real proletarian party in France, guided in its actions by Marxist teachings, which was the subjective reason leading the Paris Commune to defeat.

In reality, the years of struggle of the First International (1864-1872) lay at the DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN TWO EPOCHS. The International arose at the very end of the first of them, which had begun with the great bourgeois revolution in France in 1789 and which ended with the Franco-

Prussian War in 1870. This was the

"epoch of the prosperity of the bourgeoisie, of their complete victory. This was the rising curve of the bourgeoisie, the epoch of the bourgeois-democratic movements in general, of bourgeois-national movements in particular, the epoch in which the absolutist feudal institutions which had outlived their time were rapidly destroyed" (Lenin).

But at the same time, chronologically, the First International also extended into the first years of the second epoch which was opened by the heroic rising of the Paris Communards and ended with the great October victory of the socialist soviet revolution in Russia in 1917. This was on the one hand the epoch of the rule and decline of the bourgeoisie, of the transition from the progressive bourgeoisie to reactionary and ultra-reactionary finance capital, the growth of capitalism into im-

THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL POSTPONED TO 1935.

The Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, after examining the proposals of several Sections, has decided to postpone the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International till 1935.

1. The date of the convention of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International is postponed from the second half of 1934 to the first half of 1935.

2. The periodical, the "Communist International," and the Communist press of the various Sections must at once commence to examine the questions forming the agenda of the Seventh World Congress.

3. The Sections of the Communist International must take up in their Party organisations the discussion of the questions on the agenda of the Seventh Congress, taking into account the lessons and experiences of their struggle and work since the Sixth World Congress.

perialism and the domination of the latter, and on the other hand it was the epoch in which the proletariat began slowly to gather its forces and later to victoriously begin the world proletarian revolution.

In the first epoch, in so far as its content was basically determined by the bourgeois-national movements, the bourgeoisie were progressive and sometimes even revolutionary. At the end of this period, when the activity of the International developed, the bourgeoisie in the greater part, were forming blocs with the feudal powers against the proletariat that was rising to an independent political struggle.

In the second epoch it is true that the bourgeoisie were still advancing the development of productive forces, but the relations of bourgeois ownership were more and more becoming fetters for these forces. Capitalism was growing rapidly, spreading its rule to all parts of the globe. But the bourgeoisie, if we exclude the colonial East which was on the eve of its bourgeois-democratic movements, had already become reactionary. They gathered around themselves all the forces of the old semi-feudal society for the struggle against the working class. The growth of capitalism into imperialism created the economic prerequisites for the splitting of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie bribed the upper ranks of the proletariat, found support in its corrupted and privileged part as its main social bulwark.

The MAIN CLASS which developed along a rising curve was the PROLETARIAT. It gathered its forces. It utilised the era of bourgeois democracy in order to create its class organisations. It began to rally around itself the toiling masses and the oppressed peoples of the East, who had been ruined by finance-capital. Finally, in the years when the contradictions of the imperialist system began to grow, in the years of the first round of revolutions, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie for power, it came forward and, under the leadership of the Leninist Party, the Bolsheviks, it secured its world historic victory on one-sixth of the globe. At the dawn of this epoch arose the First International, founded by Marx and Engels, as the FIRST INDEPENDENT PARTY OF THE PROLETARIAT and

"for ten years the International directed one side of European history, namely, the side in which all the future is embodied." (Engels.)

* * *

The First International stood at the head of the process which became very apparent at the beginning of the '70's, the process of revolutionisation among the masses of the proletariat, the strivings of the workers towards international unity, towards international solidarity, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The enlivenment of the democratic

movement at the end of the '50's and the beginning of the '60's (the war for the national unity in Italy, the Polish uprising etc.) weakened the political reaction which had set in after the defeat of the revolution of 1848. The comparatively rapid and broad spreading of industrial capital, extending to a number of new countries in Europe, and also the devastating economic crises of 1857 and 1866, created the foundation for a wider and keener struggle of the working class throughout Europe. This rise of the workers' movement took place on the eve of the forming of the First International and developed in the years when the FIRST International already existed, and they formed the MAIN CONTENT OF ITS ACTIVITY. Such events as the struggle of the trade unions for the reform of electoral rights and for the legalisation of trade unions in Great Britain, the general strike of the bronze workers in Paris (1866), the strike of the tailors and basket weavers in London, the stubborn building strike in Geneva (1868), and later the sharp strike in Basle (1869), the blood-bath in Charleroi in Belgium (1868) and the repetition of the still more monstrous mass slaughter of Belgian workers in Seren and Borinage (1869), the formation of trade unions and political organisations of the proletariat on the continent (in Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Spain, etc.), under the influence and direct leadership of the International, and, finally, the Paris Commune, which arose from a war conflict (1871) in which Marx could see the first steps of the future world proletarian revolution—such is a far from complete list of the biggest activities of the European working class in the epoch of the First International.

In face of these events in which the First International took a most active part . . .

"all the governments of continental Europe were horrified" at the activity of the First International . . .

"the Pope and his Bishops damned the International, the French Parliament of Agrarians outlawed it. Bismarck, at the meet of the imperialists of Austria and Germany at Salzburg, threatened it with the crusade of the Holy Alliance, while the white Czar handed it over to the care of his frightful 'third section'" (Marx).

The bourgeoisie and their governments tended to exaggerate the power of the International. With the exception of the historic actions of the workers of Paris, who shattered the old apparatus of the state power of the bourgeoisie and built a new one in its place—the Paris Commune—in most other cases they were but the first steps of a mighty class which had awakened to the independent class struggle. This class was striving towards the organisation and towards the uniting of its forces, towards the bringing about of international solidarity in its economic and political struggle against the bourgeoisie.

One of the greatest hindrances along the path of the organisation of the proletariat into an independent political party during the '60's of the nineteenth century consisted of the numerous factions and sects of pre-Marxian socialism. These sects, historically obsolete, were then carrying on a stubborn struggle against Marxism and were already at the given level of the labour movement playing a reactionary part. Lasalle in Germany, having founded the General German Workers' Union, led the workers' movement along the path of agreement with the Junker "social" monarchy of Bismarck. In France, PROUDHONISM opposed the strikes of the workers, opposed the organisation of the trade unions, and fettered the activity of the workers to petty-bourgeois recipes for salvation full of flowery and conceited phrases. In Great Britain, trade unionism which had consolidated itself on the basis of the defeat of chartism, restricted the workers' movement with narrow craft limits in the struggle for trifles and converted it into an appendage of the liberal bourgeoisie. The history of the First International took place in the STRUGGLE OF MARXISM FOR HEGEMONY IN THE WORKERS' MOVEMENT, for the isolation of all sectarianism, of Proudhonite petty-bourgeois socialism and later of Bakuninite anarchism. As the result of this struggle, at the end of the first period of which we have spoken "pre-Marxian socialism DIED" (Lenin), despite the collapse of the First International, the teachings of Marx SECURED THE VICTORY in the next decade, compelling their enemies to DISGUISE THEMSELVES AS MARXISTS.

* * *

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

"UNITING THE LABOUR MOVEMENT OF THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES; STRIVING TO DIRECT INTO THE CHANNEL OF UNITED ACTIVITIES THE VARIOUS FORMS OF THE NON-PROLETARIAN, PRE-MARXIAN SOCIALISM (MAZZINI, PROUDHON, BAKUNIN, LIBERAL TRADE UNIONISM IN ENGLAND, LASALLEAN RIGHT VACILLATIONS IN GERMANY, ETC.); FIGHTING AGAINST THE THEORIES OF ALL THESE SECTS AND SCHOOLS, MARX HAMMERED OUT THE COMMON TACTICS OF THE PROLETARIAN STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS—ONE AND THE SAME IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES." (Lenin.)

These "united tactics of the proletarian struggle" were expressed in numerous documents of enormous historic importance, in the "Inaugural Address," in the "Temporary Rules of the Association," in the decisions and resolutions of the Congresses of the First International and in the brilliant manifesto of the general council of the International, written by Marx regarding the Paris Commune, in "The Civil War In France," and these tactics became the iron backbone of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. These "united tactics of the proletarian struggle" were always before the eyes of Lenin and Stalin, the great leaders of the world proletariat, the brilliant

disciples of Marx, in their working out and developing of the tactics and the strategy of the proletariat under the new conditions in the epoch of imperialism and of the world proletarian revolution.

In the "Inaugural Address," Marx shows how while using the PARTIAL DEMANDS OF THE WORKERS, which have arisen on the basis of the sharpening needs of the proletariat (at least three-quarters of this fundamental PROGRAMMATIC document of the First International is devoted to the analysis of the economic position of the workers), how to lead the workers towards making GENERAL CONCLUSIONS, towards forming their class-consciousness which is irreconcilably hostile to the bourgeoisie, it showed how to lead the workers towards the programme of struggle, right up to the slogan of the struggle for power.

"Neither the modernising of machines," Marx formulates his conclusions, "nor the application of science to manufacture, nor inventions in the sphere of communications, nor new colonies nor emigration, nor new markets, nor free trade, nor all these things together can remove the poverty of the toiling masses. Any new development of the productive forces of labour on the vicious present-day basis must deepen the social contradictions and sharpen social antagonisms."

Marx further shows an example of polemics against the mistaken views that were imposed on some workers by the various tendencies and sects of pre-Marxian socialism, a polemic which fundamentally explained questions of principle and which is at the same time quiet in form, making it possible for all workers, even those who were roped in by this ideology, to participate in the united struggle under the leadership of the International.

Thus, when elaborating the successes in the struggle for legislative restrictions upon the working time (it is well known that the English trade unionists looked on this as almost the only aim for the participation of the workers in the political struggle) and especially the Co-operative Movement (as a panacea which was claimed to bring freedom to the workers without a political struggle and without revolution, a method preached by the Proudhonites), and while stating that

"the significance of these great experiments cannot be overestimated,"

the "Inaugural Address," at the same time, patiently explains to the workers who are infected with the prejudices of Proudhon that

"however excellent co-operative labour may be in principle and however useful in practice, it will never be in a position to hold back the growth of monopoly which increases in geometrical progression, or to liberate the masses" . . .

In order that the Co-operative organisations could play their liberating rôle, it is necessary to destroy the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords, and the

proletariat must win the power. This task therefore became the "great obligation of the working class."

In the "Inaugural Address," in the documents of the Geneva Congress (1866), Karl Marx teaches us how it is necessary on the basis of the platform of the class struggle, formulated "sharply in essence, but moderate in form" (Marx), to unite the broad masses of the still backward workers, to try to direct the most varied elements along the channel of common activity (concretely, the leaders of British trade unionism, the French Proudhonites, etc.).

The memorable statement of Marx laying at the basis of the Geneva decision on trade unions, on co-operation, on the struggle for the eight-hour day, on women's labour, etc., was written by him and was deliberately restricted only to

"THOSE POINTS WHICH ALLOW OF IMMEDIATE AGREEMENT AND CONCERTED ACTION BY THE WORKERS AND GIVE DIRECT NOURISHMENT AND IMPETUS TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE WORKERS INTO A CLASS."

Although conciliatory in form, that is consenting to make practical compromises in so far as, at this embryonic stage of the workers' mass movements, they helped to unleash the struggle and raise the level of the movement, nevertheless, Marx at the same time showed IRRECONCILABILITY IN THE DEFENCE OF THE PRINCIPLE QUESTIONS OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

Any concessions on these questions would have inevitably led to Marxism losing the hegemony in the movement and to draw the working class away from the path of the proletarian class struggle against the bourgeoisie and their state.

When Bakunin tried to build up his sectarian anarchist organisation inside of the International, taking the path of struggle against the discipline of the International and of its organisational principles (democratic centralism), at the same time preaching the repudiation of the political struggle and "the equality of classes," Marx and Engels did not hesitate to split. They preferred to put an end to the activity of the International in its old form rather than have an unprincipled unity with the Bakuninites.

On this question Engels wrote at the time:

"Now the sectarian squabblers are preaching conciliation and shouting about us that we are people who cannot be got on with, are dictators! And if we had acted in a conciliatory manner at the Hague, if we had smoothed over the split which had matured, what would have been the result? The sectarians, i.e., the Bakuninites, would have had one more year at their disposal to carry out still greater foolishness and vileness in the name of the International. The workers of the most highly developed countries would have turned away in disgust. The bubble would not have broken, it would have slowly contracted, harmed by pin-pricks, and the approaching Congress would have turned into the most despicable and scandalous squabble, because the PRINCIPLES would already have

been sacrificed at the Hague. Then the International would really have perished, would have perished from 'unity'."

* * *

There is no doubt that a great work performed by the First International was its participation in the struggle for the Paris Commune, which in the words of Engels, was its "spiritual child."

On the evening of March 18, Marx, who had worked out the science of armed insurrection, warned the French workers against an armed rising, under the unfavourable conditions of the siege of Paris by the Prussian army. But immediately after the insurrection took place on March 18, the First International and Marx himself personally came to the help of the Parisian Communists with all the means at their disposal. The First International sent its representative, Saraille, to Paris. Marx gave various advice to the insurgents, including advice on military tactics. When in face of the counter-revolutionary government of Thiers, the alternative arose for the Communards

"either to accept the challenge to struggle or to surrender without a struggle,"

Marx expressed himself in favour of the most determined action, not hesitating at the most extreme and violent measures of struggle against the Versailles troops.

"The demoralisation of the working class (i.e., in case of surrender without a fight—Ed.) would have been a much greater misfortune than the death of any number of 'leaders.' The struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and the state which represents its interests, passed, thanks to the Commune, into a new phase. No matter how it directly might end on this occasion, the new starting point of world historic importance has, nevertheless, been won."

Not a single fraction of the French socialists who were at the head of the Paris Commune realised what it was doing, and only Marx discovered the secret of the Commune, that it was "in reality the GOVERNMENT OF THE WORKING CLASS" . . .

"at last, it was discovered, the form in which the economic emancipation of labour could take place—the DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT."

On the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx developed his teachings on the state, making the formulation that

"the working class cannot simply take possession of the ready-made state machine and put it into operation for its own aims,"

that it must "DESTROY this machine," and put in its place a new type of power, the dictatorship of the proletariat. He studied this first new type of a state, which made its aim the destruction of classes—the Paris Commune—which

"would have to be not parliamentary but a working corporation at one and the same time both a legislative and executive organ."

Marx formulated the basic principles of the

policy of the dictatorship of the proletariat — THE ALLIANCE WITH THE PEASANTS. He wrote "the Commune had the full right to say to the peasants 'our victory is your hope'."

"Either the peasants will begin to hinder and will lead to the destruction of any workers' revolution," he said later in a polemic with Bakunin, ". . . or else the proletariat . . . as the government must take steps owing to which the situation of the peasants will directly improve, and which will thus lead it to the side of the revolution. At the same time the proletariat must adopt 'measures' which in the embryo make it easier to pass from private property in land to collective ownership, so that the peasants themselves will arrive at this by the economic path" . . .

The Paris Commune was the culminating point of the activity of the First International. Its defeat and the attack which was then made on the leaders of the International by the anarchists, Bakuninists and liberal leaders of British trade unionism, who did not wish to compromise their reputation in the eyes of the British bourgeoisie by participating in an International which welcomed the Paris Commune as its child, was one of the causes that led the International Workingmen's Association to disintegration.

The Paris Commune opened a new epoch of world history. The First International "belonged" to the period of the second empire (Engels). The organisation of a new one presupposed "labour parties organised . . . on a national scale" (Marx) and the organisation of them in Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, U.S.A., etc., preparing a new international association of proletarian parties, and meant that

"instead of dying away, the international had only passed from the first period of birth to a higher one, in which its original strivings had already to some extent become reality." (Marx.)

* * *

"Between Marx and Engels, on the one hand, and Lenin on the other, lies a whole period of the domination of the opportunists in the Second International,"

the opportunism which was able to take charge of the International after the death of Engels

"in the period of comparatively peaceful development of capitalism, in the so-called pre-war period, when the catastrophic contradictions of imperialism had not yet had time to become evident with complete plainness . . . when the parties of the Second International had become fat and lazy and did not want to think seriously about revolution, about the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the revolutionary education of the masses. (Stalin.)

Instead of the tactics of Marx and the First International, the tactics of raising the level of the revolutionary consciousness and of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, social democracy adopted the tactics of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of the open or concealed support of the bourgeois dictatorship.

Instead of the strategy and tactics of the First International and of the founders of Marxism, the tactics of leading the masses up to the struggle for

power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, social democracy adopted the tactics of giving over to the fascist bourgeoisie all the social gains of the proletariat—the last relics of the democratic rights of the workers.

Instead of the teachings of Marx and Engels, the teachings of the First International on the dictatorship of the proletariat as the path to Communism, social democracy created teachings about democracy as the path of the peaceful overgrowing of capitalism into socialism.

There is not a link in the teachings of Marx and Engels which has not been revised or openly repudiated by the social democrats from the point of view of their political class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The German Social-Democrats, who for a long time deceived the workers with the pretence that they were preserving the traditions of Marxism, spoke in particular of the tactics of Marx and Engels in the Franco-Prussian War, which, as we know, was looked upon by the great leaders of the First International (in its first period, before Sedan) as a defensive war for Germany. On this basis social democracy in the first world imperialist war, tried to justify its monstrous treachery on August 4, 1914, its policy of the support of its bourgeois fatherland. Lenin has long since exposed this manoeuvre of the social democrats. The tactics of Marx and Engels in the Franco-Prussian War were the only correct tactics in that epoch, that is, the only ones which corresponded to the interests of the proletariat. They arose from a concrete estimate of the character of the epoch as an epoch of still incomplete national bourgeois movements and wars in Europe. But even in this epoch, Marx and Engels approved of the refusal of Bebel and Liebknecht to vote for the war credits in the Reichstag and exposed the dynastic interests of the German government. The repetition of these tactics by social democracy, under the fundamentally different conditions in the epoch of imperialism, was treachery to the cause of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. While remaining unhesitatingly loyal to the principles of Marxism, and developing these principles further, LENIN WAS THE FIRST TO WORK OUT THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE PROLETARIAT FOR THE EPOCH OF IMPERIALIST WARS AND OF PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS. Under the conditions of THIS NEW EPOCH, the old tactics of Marx and Engels should have been replaced by NEW TACTICS — the tactics of CONVERTING THE IMPERIALIST WAR INTO A CIVIL WAR, the tactics of the DEFEAT OF "their own" bourgeois governments. It is known that when following out these tactics, the only true tactics, the Russian Bolsheviks organised the great victory of the socialist soviet revolution in Russia. At the same time international social democracy, includ-

ing German social democracy, began its path of development to fascism.

* * *

With the necessity of an iron law, August 4, 1914, put the Second International and the majority of its sections on the other side of the barricade in the first round of the proletarian revolutions, of which the October Socialist Revolution in Russia was the first.

Together with the Tsarist and Entente generals, the Russian Mensheviks shot down, or connived at, the shooting of the workers and toiling peasants in the counter-revolutionary wars which they conducted against the country of the Soviets. The German and Austrian social-democratic parties in turn were the vanguard of the mid-European bourgeoisie in the struggle against the proletarian revolution, against the Soviets, in their own countries. The name of the bloody hound Noske will stink in the nostrils of the German workers for centuries. Without Noske, without Ebert, without Wels, the present sufferings of the German workers would not have been. There would have been no Hitler. Where the Swastika is now carrying on its bloody orgies, the victorious red banner of the German Soviets would have been unfurled.

IN THESE YEARS OF THE FIRST ROUND OF WARS AND REVOLUTIONS, THE GREAT DIVERGENCE BETWEEN OPPORTUNISM AND COMMUNISM, THE BEGINNING OF WHICH HAD BEEN LAID BY THE BOLSHEVIKS, HEADED BY LENIN, AT THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY,* ENDED IN THE CIVIL WAR BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS AND THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL DEMOCRATS.

In these stormy years, Lenin formed the THIRD COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL from those revolutionary elements of the Second International who, during the war, rallied around the Bolshevik Party. This International had full reason to consider itself the ONLY HISTORIC HEIR AND CONTINUATION OF THE WORK OF THE "COMMUNIST LEAGUE" AND THE "INTERNATIONAL WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATION."

The split with opportunism, that later grew into social patriotism and social fascism, which was announced and carried through by Lenin and the Bolsheviks at first in Czarist Russia and then throughout the world, was not caused by the "quarrelsomeness" or "sectarianism" of the Bolsheviks, as the social-democratic leaders tried to represent. It became a historic necessity in the epoch of imperialism, owing to the splitting of the labour movement by social-democracy, the basis of which was now the privileged aristocracy of the working class, bribed by the bourgeoisie from their monopolist super-profits.

With the exception of England, this systematic

bribery of the aristocracy of the working class by the bourgeoisie had not existed at the time of the struggle of the First International. There had also not yet been formed definite parties as agents of the bourgeoisie in the working class (there were merely petty-bourgeois sects and trends). But why could Marx, while uniting the movements of various countries, try to direct the various forms of pre-Marxian socialism along the channel of joint activity INSIDE the organisation of the First International, calculating that the revolutionary mass of the proletariat in combination with the irreconcilable struggle of principles against the theory of all of these sects inside of the International would lead to the triumph of Marxism, of its revolutionary strategy and tactics, its organisational principles, of the construction of the fighting independent party of the proletariat. The defeat of the Paris Commune and the subsequent strengthening of the disintegrating actions of the anarchist sect, headed by the "Social Democratic Alliance" of Bakunin, under the growing reactionary conditions, insistentlly required the CLEANSING of the International from petty bourgeois and lumpen-proletarian elements. This was done by Marx and Engels at the Hague congress of the First International, when they EXPELLED the Bakunin organisation from the International Workingmen's Association.

At the period of the Second International, several years later, when openly opportunist wings began to be formed in the social democratic parties, the founders of Marxism foresaw the inevitability and the necessity of a split with the opportunists.

This split became a HISTORIC NECESSITY in the epoch of imperialism, when social-democracy had enchained the proletariat with its political class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The great services of Lenin and the Bolsheviks are that they understood what was NEW both in this epoch of capitalism (the overgrowing of capitalism into imperialism) and in the workers' movement (the bribery of the privileged upper ranks of the workers by the bourgeoisie, so that they can become the basis of the social-democratic party) and consistently drew ALL THE PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS therefrom.

The split with opportunism and the formation of a party of a NEW TYPE, differing completely from the parties of the Second International which were adapted to peaceful parliamentary work, to politics and to the tactics of conciliation and compromise with the bourgeoisie, i.e., the formation of genuine COMMUNIST PARTIES capable of struggling for the complete destruction of the bourgeoisie and the winning of the dictatorship of the proletariat, was historically the FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE RESTORATION OF THE FIGHTING UNITY OF THE PROLETARIAT IN

* 1902.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE. Without this step there would not have been the great victories of the socialist revolution, there would not have been the U.S.S.R., the bulwark of the world-proletarian revolution.

Communists must patiently explain this lesson of the Russian Bolsheviks to the social-democratic workers, especially those who are infected by the usual slogans of the social-democratic leaders regarding the struggle for "organic unity," under which they understand the liquidation of the Communist Party, and its absorption in the social-democratic organisations.

THE COMMUNISTS ARE FOR THE FIGHTING UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS. But this unity can and will be forged out only in the STRUGGLE AGAINST THE THEORY AND TACTICS OF CLASS COLLABORATION WITH THE BOURGEOISIE, which is the ESSENCE of the policy of all social-democratic parties. COMMUNISTS ARE FOR THE UNITY OF ALL THE WORKERS IN A SINGLE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAN PARTY, the programme and tactics of which have as their aim a struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for soviets, not in words, but in deeds, i.e., the PROGRAMME AND TACTICS OF THE COMINTERN.

But the Communists are against unprincipled "organic" unity, as preached by social-democracy, because the uniting of the Communist Party, whose policy is the policy of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the social-democratic party, the essence of whose policy, despite all its "left" phrases, amounts to some form of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, can only strengthen the bourgeoisie and weaken the proletariat.

The proletarian masses in the capitalist countries are feeling a powerful striving towards unity at present. They still have a hazy idea as to how this can be brought about. But one thing they know well—THEY NEED THIS UNITY FOR THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM, FOR THE STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITAL, AND NOT FOR CONCILIATION WITH THEM. Many pro-

letarians who have thoroughly learned this, particularly by the lessons of Germany and Austria, still consider themselves to be social-democrats and are even members of the social-democratic organisations. In reality, they are already leaving social-democracy, though they have not yet reached the shore of Communism.

The speed at which these social-democratic workers are transferred from the side of the social-democratic policy of class-collaboration into the channel of the mass struggle against it, i.e., the time of the preparation of the proletariat for the decisive struggles for power depends more than ever before on the Communists, ON THE BOLD DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED FRONT BY THEM IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM AND WAR. THE MOST PROFOUND MARXIST-LENINIST PURITY OF PRINCIPLES, HOSTILE TO ALL SECTARIAN DOCTRINES, COMBINED WITH THEIR WIDE MASS SCOPE, WITH THE ABILITY TO SPEAK NOT ONLY TO THOUSANDS, NOT ONLY TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS, BUT TO MILLIONS OF WORKERS, in language which inflames them and mobilises them for the struggle, alien to all tailing behind*—in this lies the guarantee of success in conducting the tactics of the united front. Marx and Engels, on the experience of the First International, taught the revolutionary vanguard this purity of principles and such a mass scope. The great Lenin, when preparing to storm the stronghold of the bourgeoisie in October, 1917, taught this to the proletarian party—this is being taught by the beloved leader of the world proletariat, Comrade Stalin. The class-conscious proletariat and the toiling masses of the whole world, encouraged by the great example of the country of the Soviets, are rallying around Comrade Stalin and are organising the last decisive struggle against the bourgeoisie under their own decisive slogan: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

* The author uses the Russian expression "Kvostism" from "Kvost"—Tail—hence, dragging at the tail. In this case, of the workers' movement.

LEAFLETS.

Leaflets advertising the "Communist International" and containing a Subscription Form may be obtained free of charge on application to:—

Workers' Bookshop, 38 Clerkenwell Green, E.C.2.

THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE IN AMERICA

THE tremendous class battles shaking the United States in recent months have great significance for the revolutionary proletariat of the entire world. We are witnessing a continually rising wave of mass strike struggles which have penetrated almost every section of the country, not only the industrial North, but the former slave-holding South and the far West. It involves almost all the basic industries of the country, including important centres of coal, iron and copper mining, large automobile plants (also rubber) and some metal and aviation plants, transportation, marine, aluminium, oil and textile. In auto and steel the workers have voted for general strikes, but the A.F.L. leadership were able so far to stave off this strike movement. In the textile industry the strike assumed the character of a general strike, the largest in the history of the country. The entire Pacific Coast and many southern ports of the marine industry were involved in strike struggles, and a marine strike on the Atlantic Coast was averted only at the last moment by the arbitration manoeuvres of the reformist leaders. The general strikes in San Francisco and Hazleton, Pa., were solidarity strikes. In Toledo, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Seattle, Portland and Butte the workers had already decided in favour of general strikes, but the leadership of the A.F.L. were able to stop them. In the strikes beginning with the Roosevelt N.R.A. policy nearly 3,000,000 workers participated — a figure that is approaching the largest strike wave in the history of the U.S.—that of 1919. But in so far as the heroic determination of the workers to struggle is concerned, such examples of unity of action are almost unparalleled in the history of the United States.

These social struggles in the main centre of world capitalism reveal the deep-going changes taking place in the ranks of the working class, and they are the sharpest reflection of the growing difficulties of the bourgeoisie in their attempts to bring about "recovery," to find a way out of the crisis at the expense of the toiling masses. These difficulties are making it increasingly necessary for the bourgeoisie to resort to the use of fascist-like methods of repression against the workers. At the same time they are engaging in a whole series of demagogic manoeuvres, in order to not yet completely drop the mask of "democracy" which covers up the continually tightening grip of monopoly capital as embodied in the Roosevelt programme.

The American events of 1934 recall that only five years ago, on the eve of the outbreak of the economic crisis, the American representative of

the Right opportunist line, Lovestone, expounded the theory of "American exceptionalism"; he denied the break-up of capitalist stabilisation in the U.S., and joined with the international Right Wing in conducting a struggle against the line of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, which declared that the capitalist world was passing to a period of revolutionary upsurge. The Trotskyites, too, joined this opportunist chorus to the tune of the struggle against the estimate of the third period by the Sixth World Congress. This renegades' chorus has long been answered by the events of the past few years, since the outbreak of the world economic crisis. It has been drowned by the roar of cannon during the armed struggle of the Austrian proletariat, by the sound of rifle fire in the streets of Paris, by the general strike in France, by the events in Germany, the victories of Soviet China, the general strike and armed uprising in Spain, etc. And now, the rising tide of struggle in America, climaxed by the general strike in San Francisco and the textile general strike, once more confirm that only by the most relentless struggle against the theory of "exceptionalism," only by the complete defeat of the opportunists of both Right and "Left," who have now gone over to the camp of counter-revolution, was it possible to ideologically arm the Communist Parties and prepare them for the great class battles which followed each other in rapid succession.

From Hoover to Roosevelt.

In America, the Hoover period which was supposed to usher in a "new epoch" of permanent prosperity, miraculously escaping all the contradictions of the capitalist world, rapidly gave way under the impact of the crisis to mass unemployment, sweeping wage-cuts and intensification of exploitation, and wholesale impoverishment of the small and middle farmers, which gave rise to the BEGINNING of big struggles of the employed and unemployed, and movements of the discontented petty-bourgeoisie (veterans, farmers, etc.). The N.R.A. was inaugurated at a time when the masses of workers began to express a desire for struggle, when big strikes in auto, mining, etc., were developing, in some of which the Communist Party and revolutionary unions played an important rôle. At the time of the lowest point in the crisis, when the outlook seemed the gloomiest, the American bourgeoisie gave its support to Roosevelt, hoping that "new methods" might succeed in extricating the bourgeoisie from its difficult position.

The Roosevelt "New Deal" was hailed loudly as

a means of overcoming the crisis through planning under capitalism and guaranteeing the rights of the workers to organise. In reality the "Roosevelt Revolution" aimed at the organisation to a still greater extent than before of State support to the capitalist monopolies through subsidies and regulated inflation, in both instances at the expense of the workers; it also aimed to disguise the process of fascisation and imperialist war preparations under cover of a barrage of social-demagogy about the "forgotten man." But this did not prevent social-democracy and the trade union bureaucrats in America and Europe from joining the chorus of capitalist economists who spoke about the "bloodless revolution" in Washington, a new brand of the theory of "exceptionalism." The reformists and the renegades helped sow the illusions in the Roosevelt programme, to a greater or lesser degree, by acclaiming the N.R.A. as a step forward for American labour; Norman Thomas even declared it to be a "step toward Socialism" and declared, "Now is not the time to strike." Thomas and Hillquit journeyed to Washington to tell the President of their support. Other Socialists, like Upton Sinclair and Paul Blanchard, not satisfied with even this qualified support tempered by mild criticism, left the Socialist Party and became ardent Roosevelt supporters.

But the "honeymoon period" of the Roosevelt régime passed very quickly, and the forecast made by the Communist Party a year ago, in analysing the New Deal, has been tested and found correct. After a brief spurt, production again declined, although not to the old low level; unemployment was only slightly reduced; the rise in nominal wages was more than offset by increased prices. All the hopes of the bourgeoisie to find a return to "prosperity," even though the bourgeoisie cashed in huge profits, proved illusory.

"... can we deny the *contrast* between the classes, the propertied class, the class of capitalists and the class of toilers, the class of proletarians... How can one reconcile such opposite interests and strivings? In so far as I know, Roosevelt did not succeed in finding a way to reconcile these interests. Yes, and this is impossible, as is shown by experience." (Stalin, in interview with Wells.)

Under the enormous executive powers placed in the hands of Roosevelt the big trusts were able to realise their fondest dreams. They proceeded to the consolidation of their power, the swallowing up of their smaller competitors, and the squeezing out of the petty-bourgeoisie. Profits increased 600 per cent. according to official figures (1932-34); wages were pared down to a minimum level, and further reduced by the shortening of hours. This, at a time when prices rose rapidly due to inflationary measures, the government crop-destruction programme, and accentuation by the drought.

Eight billion dollars in subsidies have been pumped into the veins of nearly bankrupt railroads, banks, etc.; unemployment relief has been drastically reduced; forced labour camps have been established for half a million youth, and concentration camps for the homeless unemployed; "economy" prompted the government to reduce the salaries of government employees and veterans' compensation; the "public works" programme consists of a huge aviation and naval building programme to match that of the British and Japanese imperialists; arbitration boards are established whose aim it is to prevent and outlaw all strikes of the workers who are resisting the capitalist offensive and link the unions more closely with the State apparatus; finally, the strengthening of company unions on the one hand, and on the other the strengthening of the hand of the reformist trade union leaders to carry out the policy of the employers and the government against the revolutionary unions and the revolutionary leadership of strike struggles. These are the high points of the Roosevelt "New Deal," which the Communist Party at the outset accurately described as a programme of hunger for the toilers, fascisation and war.

The Failure of N.R.A.

It did not take long before the illusions created by the demagogy of Roosevelt and his supporters among the A.F. of L. and Socialist leaders received a rude shock in the strike wave that was unloosed after the adoption of the N.R.A. The workers who were trapped and deceived into supporting the Roosevelt programme found that the N.R.A. codes did not raise their living standards, but lowered them, that strikes for the "right to organise" were met by armed forces of the employers and the government. While the first strikes took place under the slogan of "Help Roosevelt enforce the N.R.A.," they were very soon transformed into STRUGGLES AGAINST THE N.R.A. CODES, AND BEGAN TO ASSUME A MORE MILITANT AND STUBBORN CHARACTER; over one million workers were involved in strikes in 1933. The A.F. of L. and socialist leaders were forced to change their tone, when they sensed the moods of the masses, and came out with public "criticism" of the N.R.A. They adapted their tactics so as to maintain their leadership of the workers and put brakes on the growing strike movement. Nevertheless, in spite of the most desperate manoeuvres of the Roosevelt government and the A.F. of L. leaders, the first nine months of 1934 has witnessed a stormy advance in the strike movement not only as to numbers (close to two million workers on strike this year and nearly three million since the N.R.A.), but in the POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THESE STRIKES.

Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Alabama,

Pacific Coast, and the general textile strike are historic milestones in the transformation of economic struggles for the most elementary demands into struggles of a political character, and a consequent maturing of a higher level of class-consciousness and political understanding of the masses as to the character of the capitalist state.

The industrial centres of America have become huge battlegrounds where WORKERS HAVE ENGAGED IN PITCHED BATTLES AGAINST THE BAYONETS AND MACHINE-GUNS OF THE TROOPS USED AGAINST THEM. The smallest struggles for economic demands, for the right to organise, and against the company unions, have called forth the most violent measures of repression, with a constantly rising toll of casualties in dead, wounded, and injured, but this has only served to arouse the masses to an unexampled fighting spirit, leading to SOLIDARITY ACTIONS, SYMPATHY STRIKES AND GENERAL STRIKES AGAINST THE TERROR. The unemployed workers and the unorganised workers fully participate in the struggle in support of the strikers. In a whole series of cities throughout the country a movement for local general strikes develops over the heads of the reformist leaders, who are able only with the greatest difficulty to prevent them, and in some cases are unable to stop them from breaking out, as in San Francisco and Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Movements for general strikes of an entire industry were temporarily throttled (auto, steel and textile), but in the textile industry the workers finally overrode their leaders who had sidetracked the struggle in June, and forced the calling of the strike in September. Even when the workers are tricked into arbitration, the reformist leaders are not always able to completely knife the struggle, as could be seen in Minneapolis, where the truck drivers went on strike again after returning to work and seeing how they had been deceived, and CONTINUED A LONG AND STUBBORN STRUGGLE IN THE FACE OF MARTIAL LAW AND MILITARY CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

The Stormy Growth of Trade Unionism.

The great urge for organisation and struggle that is spreading among ever wider masses expresses itself mainly through the channels of the reformist unions. A tardy understanding of this process was responsible for the fact that the Party to a certain extent was caught off its guard, and did not reorientate itself quickly enough to the changing situation. Masses of workers, numbering into hundreds of thousands, flocked into the A.F. of L. unions. These fresh forces, coming mainly from the semi-skilled and unskilled sections of the basic industries, entered the unions because they saw in them the organs through which they could improve their conditions. The lower trade union organisations began to be transformed into militant fighting organs, and many sections of the local

trade union leadership came from among the new elements that displayed this determination to struggle. The A.F. of L. leadership, which had formerly followed a "no-strike" policy in agreement with the Hoover government during the first months of the crisis, were forced to modify their tactics during 1933 and 1934. They proceeded to organise the unorganised workers; they modified their traditional craft policy so as to be able to organise the mass production industries such as auto, rubber, etc., through the Federal locals on an industrial basis; they even organised mass strikes, when they could no longer succeed in preventing or side-tracking them, in order not to lose the leadership of these workers.

As the mass discontent grows, the trade union bureaucracy does not even hesitate to use "socialist" phraseology about "taking over the industries," adapting their demagoguery to the new situation and the moods of the masses; certainly the use of such phrases by the trade union bureaucrats who in the whole historical development of the American labour movement had proceeded along the traditional Gompers path of class collaboration is an indication that some tremendous changes are taking place in the ranks of the American working class. It is unquestionable that under the present-day conditions in the United States the slogan of "taking over the industries" will be utilised and is already being utilised by the reformists in one or another form for the continuation of their old policy of "peace in industry" and class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The discontent and radicalisation of the workers is further indicated in the strong movement for industrial unionism in the ranks of the A.F. of L. workers. It is clear that what we are witnessing is the emergence of an organised working class seeking to develop independent action, groping about as yet for political expression, but nevertheless a movement which in this period can very rapidly attain political consciousness, and which is potentially a powerful revolutionary force. This deep-going transformation of the masses places sharply before the Party the necessity of understanding clearly the changing class relationships and adapting its tactics in such a way as to bind itself to the organised working-class movement and direct this upsurge to the path of revolutionary struggle.

The Party did not see quickly enough the increased utilisation by the bourgeoisie of the social-reformists in order to head off the workers' struggles. In the period when the revolutionary unions grew to some extent, the reformist unions grew by leaps and bounds and played an increasingly important rôle in the strikes and made it necessary for the Party to turn its major attention to building a strong revolutionary opposition inside the A.F. of L. unions.

The Socialist Party also showed certain signs of increased growth and activity in the industrial centres and in the trade union movement. The sharpened class struggle in America, the events in Germany and Austria, etc., brought about a big leftward movement among the Socialist workers which expressed itself in a growing desire for the united front and a growing opposition to the policy of the Socialist leaders. As a result, the Socialist Party leadership was forced to yield to this pressure and make a turn to the "Left," by opening an attack on Roosevelt and the N.R.A. and adopt revolutions about "mass resistance" and "general strike" against war and fascism.

The Party has placed as its major task the penetration of the reformist trade unions in order to imbue them with a militant class programme, and the organisation of the united front with the A.F. of L. and Socialist workers to resist the capitalist offensive. In the majority of the big strikes of the past year, the Party was not yet in a position to play a decisive rôle in the leadership of the struggle, but through its activity it was able to raise slogans which were picked up by the masses and translated into action, such as picketing, protest actions, and general strike. In the case of the great maritime strike on the Pacific Coast, the Party played a decisive rôle in the organisation and leadership of the struggle of the workers in the reformist unions over the heads of their leaders, and influenced the calling of the general strike in San Francisco. It is no accident, therefore, that the government with the help of the A.F. of L. leaders has launched a campaign against the Communists which aims at the eventual suppression of the Party and presages new attacks on the whole working-class movement.

Discord Among the Capitalists.

The present developments in America are characterised by the growing difficulties of the bourgeoisie in their groping about to find a way out of the crisis, and to stem the mounting tide of the workers' struggles. While the trend toward more speedy fascisation strengthened, the growing inner struggle in the Roosevelt camp on the question of the N.R.A. reflects the tremendous disagreements that exist. The economic situation is getting worse, and production has been continuously declining since May, standing at 72 in July compared with 80 in May, and 90 in July of last year (N.Y. Annalist Index of Business Activity). Unemployment increased sharply in June and July. Steel operations in September were running at about 18 per cent. of capacity, almost reaching the low pre-Roosevelt level. The catastrophic drought has reduced this year's grain crops by about 45 per cent., and the possibility of a shortage of foodstuffs, aggravated by the government's cattle destruction

programme, has sent food prices soaring. The rise in prices will sharply curtail the purchasing power of the masses. The unexpectedly large expenditures for drought and unemployment relief has placed a severe strain on the budget, which shows an enormous deficit. More inflationary measures are forecast by the recent silver legislation and the currency war between the dollar and the pound. On an international scale, the struggle against their British and Japanese imperialist rivals is becoming more intense, as reflected in the struggle for markets, the currency war, the conflict on the German debt question, the dispute over the coming Naval Conference, and the movement of the American naval fleet to the Pacific Ocean.

These increasing difficulties, coupled with the rising strike movement amongst the workers, the growing discontent amongst the farmers and city petty-bourgeoisie, as revealed in the Darrow report criticising the "monopolistic practices" of the N.R.A. codes, are creating more and more discord in the circles of the ruling class as to the future course. This brought about THE REORGANISATION OF THE N.R.A., HAVING TWO AIMS—TO STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF THE TRUSTS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ADOPTING DEMAGOGIC MANOEUVRES TO PACIFY THE DISCONTENT OF THE WORKERS AND OF THE PETTY-BOURGEOISIE.

The process of fascisation has not been going fast enough to suit the leading circles of the bourgeoisie. More and more voices are being raised in the most reactionary circles to speed up the process of fascisation. These circles see the dangers of the social demagogy of Roosevelt, and that the forces of struggle unloosed among the masses cannot always be controlled even by the N.R.A. arbitration boards and the A.F. of L. bureaucracy. They demand a "stronger hand" against the "abuse of power" by the trade unions; they want the still greater strengthening of company unions, and direct wage-cuts. They warn against the "left experiments" of the Roosevelt régime. The formation of the American Liberty League consisting of prominent democratic and republican leaders closely associated with Wall Street circles, under the high-sounding slogan "To combat radicalism, preserve the rights of property, and uphold the Constitution," is the latest expression of this tendency.

In order to satisfy the growing appetites of the trusts the reorganisation of the N.R.A. will make the Code Authorities "self-governing" units where the big trusts will have full sway without any restrictions to hamper them. The dictatorship of finance capital is strengthened by the limitation of competitive methods, closer welding together of private banking with the government apparatus, that is being carried on under the slogan of "control and co-ordination of industry."

The policy which Roosevelt is carrying out is accompanied by an increase in his demagoguery, and by the conscious strengthening of the hand of the reformist trade union leaders in order to help the bourgeoisie in its offensive against the working class, and to stifle the mass movement against this offensive. It is on this question that he mainly differs with his opponents, who want to carry through a more open fascist programme without the help of the reformist trade union leaders, but rather rely upon the company unions and a direct offensive in the form of sweeping wage-cuts. These disagreements are an indication of the network of contradictions in which the bourgeoisie finds itself entangled. Roosevelt and some of his co-workers are utilising the most demagogic manoeuvres to placate the aroused workers and the discontented petty-bourgeoisie. He embraces the petty-bourgeois third-party of La Follette in Wisconsin. He comes out in favour of "social security" legislation. He makes new concessions to the A.F. of L. leaders on questions of company unions, and on the reduction of hours.

Resignation of Gen. Johnson.

The resignation of General Johnson, the head of the N.R.A., is very significant. Johnson's removal came at a time when he had already outlived his usefulness in "putting over" the N.R.A. in its earlier stages, and was becoming an obstacle to the further strengthening of the position of monopoly capital through "self-government" in the Code Authorities. At the same time, Roosevelt found it useful to remove him from the scene because he had seriously compromised himself and the N.R.A. in the eyes of the workers by his open strike-breaking outbursts, and this interfered with the demagogic manoeuvres which were designed to bolster up the fast disappearing illusions of the workers in the N.R.A. and to utilise the A.F. of L. trade union leadership to act as a brake on the militant upsurge of the masses. This is borne out by the fact that what the capitalist press described as the "Lefts" in the Roosevelt camp (Richberg, Ickes, Perkins and Hopkins) are placed at the head of the legislative branch of the reorganised N.R.A. to direct its general policies. What the capitalist press hails as "a move to the Left" is actually the attempt of the Roosevelt régime to avoid losing its mass base of support among the workers and petty-bourgeoisie, while actually strengthening the position of trustified capital and the trend towards fascism. Although the Roosevelt régime is having great difficulties, one must not overlook that it has not yet exhausted all the possibilities of manoeuvring in order to maintain its mass base of support, although those possibilities are becoming ever narrower.

The differences, however, in the camp of the

bourgeoisie does not change the fact that the process of fascisation is hastening. One of the major factors which is undermining every effort of the ruling class to solve the crisis in their own way is the powerful revolutionary upsurge.

The American proletariat, which, due to the peculiar social economic development of the U.S., was politically very backward in comparison with the European proletariat, is at present developing mass strike struggles and beginning to come forward as a class, becoming conscious of its class interests, is awakening to independent political life.

For the first time now in many years have we such a big development of the strike movement. It is new for the U.S. that millions of workers entered the struggle against the policy of the government, as expressed in the Roosevelt codes, and by this the economic struggles of the broad masses are assuming a political character.

It is new for the U.S. that workers in such unprecedented numbers should utilise the weapon of solidarity strikes and general strikes and that the strikes are supported by the unemployed, by the petty-bourgeoisie and in some places by the farmers.

Such a large mass urge of unorganised workers towards organisation and struggle against company unions is new for the U.S.

"The rising wave and sharpening character of the social struggles, arising on economic issues from the heroic effort of the masses to defend their standard of living, are developing more and more to a conscious struggle against capitalism." (Resolution, Eighth Convention C.P.U.S.A.)

ALL THIS SHOWS THAT WE ARE FACING IN THE UNITED STATES A REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE.

Great tasks stand before the Communist Party at the present time. This enormous accumulation of revolutionary energy of the working class makes it necessary that the Party shall bind itself still more closely to the great mass movements sweeping the country, shall improve the character of its mass work, shall overcome with all possible speed its weaknesses and shortcomings in penetrating the reformist unions, strengthening the revolutionary trade union movement, building the Party into a mass Party, in order that it can play a decisive rôle in the strike struggles in America, and raise these struggles to a still higher political level. The danger of fascism arising out of the whole objective situation places before the Party the all-important task of organising the united front of the toiling masses, on the economic and political field, for the defence of the democratic rights of the masses and their organisations, primarily the trade unions, and for the struggle against fascism and war. This is the MAIN LINK in the strategy and tactics of the Party at the present time, in the process of winning over the working class and its allies to the path of revolutionary struggle.

DISCUSSION ON QUESTIONS FOR THE VII CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In preparation for the VII Congress of the Communist International the editors will publish discussion articles and materials connected with the questions on the agenda of the Congress.—Editorial Board.

PROBLEMS OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE WORKING CLASS

by SINANI.

THE colossal deterioration of the position of the working class in capitalist countries which occurred during the years of the world economic crisis is not a temporary conjunctural phenomenon. It is not characteristic merely of the period of the deepening of the crisis. The passing over to a depression of a special kind was only possible for the bourgeoisie by further lowering the standard of living of the proletariat, at whose expense the bourgeoisie succeeded in relieving the position of industry somewhat. There is an absence of sufficient economic and political prerequisites for a new rise and increase in production. Downward trends and a growing zig-zag development are inevitable. The situation is uneven in the major countries. There are no prospects of the revival of partial capitalist stabilisation. All this and the preparations of the bourgeoisie for new imperialist and an anti-Soviet war ARE FAR FROM CREATING THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR EVEN A TEMPORARY IMPROVEMENT IN THE POSITION OF THE PROLETARIAT. On the contrary they stimulate the further development of the offensive of the bourgeoisie on the living standards of the proletariat. This offensive is more and more energetically supported by the entire apparatus of state violence.

The general crisis of capitalism is very closely bound up with the growing exploitation of the proletariat.

The considerable worsening of the situation of the proletariat, the NEW, LOWERED STANDARD OF LIVING is CHARACTERISTIC of the further deepening and sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism. These are indications and at the same time one of the most important driving forces in the growing decay of the entire capitalist system.

The lowering of the standard of living of the working class, a maximum liquidation of even those

small achievements won by the working class in the hard fought class battles of the first round of revolutions and wars, became a necessary condition for the revival of the temporary stabilisation of capitalism. The Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in 1926 stated that

“the starting point of the stabilisation policy of the bourgeoisie is the direct attack on the working class, the increase in the working day . . . the lowering of wages, and increase in taxes.” (Thesis on the international situation.)

The VI Congress of the Communist International emphasised that the growth of technique and organisation in capitalist industry, i.e., the growth of the productive forces in the period of partial and relative capitalist stabilisation

“helped in establishing a chronic mass unemployment in the leading capitalist countries,”

which

“is many times larger than the industrial reserve army of the pre-war period and cannot be fully absorbed even in periods of high levels of economic conditions.”

The Congress also emphasised that rationalisation is “connected with maximum intensification of labour, fatal speed-up, terrific exploitation of labour power.”

Proof of the worsening of the position of the working class can be found not only in general facts concerning the growing exhaustion of labour power as a result of capitalist rationalisation. It is also seen not only in the lengthening of the working day and the loss of political rights formerly won by the workers, but also in the statistical data on unemployment and real wages. Unemployment, which in pre-war years was more or less stagnant upon a level of 4-5 per cent. of the working class, though differing in various phases of the capitalist cycle and uneven in all countries, has grown in the years of partial stabilisation to 11-12 per cent. (see, for example, Comrade Zagorsky's article in the symposium “The General

Crisis of Capitalism," Part I, published by the Institute of World Economy and World Politics). With such unemployment even the maintenance of the former level of real wages by the employed workers would signify a considerable impoverishment of the working class as a whole. Real wages, however, actually continued to fall during the years of stabilisation in a number of countries. Thus, for example, in Germany the index of average real wages (which takes unemployment into account) rose somewhat in the first years of stabilisation, but already in 1929 it fell to 2.5 per cent. below the 1913-1914 level (according to data by Kuczynsky). While not portraying the position of the various strata of the proletariat, the average index reflects, in this case, the changes in the working class as a whole. Even more detailed data indicate that the basic mass of workers were receiving wages below the existence minimum, and this is true of the majority of German industries. In Great Britain, even according to the prejudiced data of the Balfour Committee ("Survey of Industrial Relations"), the nominal wages in 1924 compared with 1914 were 4 or 5 per cent. below the rise in the cost of living. The official data on the growth of wages in the last years of stabilisation was challenged by the minority of the commission which recorded the undoubted fall in wages in the coal, engineering, textile and other industries in particular. In the United States according to data of the American Federation of Labour ("Wages in Manufacturing Industries") the real wages in 1927 were 18.2 per cent. above the 1914 level, but as far back as 1925 there began a fall in wages. According to the data of Kuczynsky the average wages in the United States for 1922-1933 were only 7 per cent. above the 1908-1914 level which certainly does not compensate the rapid growth of intensification of labour. Finally, during these years there began the process of decrease in the number of skilled workers whose places were taken by semi-skilled workers, women and juveniles.

Changes During Partial Stabilisation.

But if partial stabilisation was a period of undoubted worsening of the position of the working class as a whole, it was at the same time connected with a certain growth of wages for individual sections of the proletariat, especially in comparison with the years of the war and of the post-war economic crisis. These were the greater part of the labour aristocracy, certain groups of highly skilled workers, individual branches of industry and finally a very considerable section of the workers of individual countries (U.S.A., France).

The stabilisation of the currency meant a certain rise in wages in comparison to the years of inflation (for example, Germany). Unemployment, which grew considerably since the war and became chronic,

was nevertheless reduced somewhat in comparison to the immediate post-war years. This was a result of the development of production chiefly in those countries in which the bourgeoisie gained considerable profits from the war (U.S.A. and France, the latter being even compelled to import labour power for the expansion of its industry). Naturally, the improvement of the position of individual sections and groups of the working class does not impugn the impoverishment of the proletariat as a whole. The unevenness of capitalist development finds its expression in the process of the impoverishment of the working class.

Nevertheless, these peculiarities in the changes occurring in the position of individual groups and sections of the working class, in the transition to partial stabilisation of capitalism, especially during its first years, were undoubtedly of the utmost political significance. Objectively, the intensity of contradictions between labour and capital undoubtedly increased as a result of the growing exploitation of the working class as a whole. At the same time, certain improvements in the material position of considerable groups of the working class in comparison to the years of war and inflation and particularly the high level of "real" wages in the U.S.A. and France created (especially under conditions of a strengthening of the political positions of the bourgeoisie) certain illusions as to the possibility of serious improvements of the workers' conditions under capitalism. This also helped to bring about the temporary strengthening of reformist influence within the working class, and the position of social-democracy.

The development of the contradictions of partial stabilisation inevitably led to the broadening of the pressure of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat, and to the further worsening of the economic and political position of the workers (real wages in Italy in 1927 were 15 per cent. and in 1929 35 per cent. below the pre-war level). This worsening of the position of the workers led to a growth of mass struggles, to a slow weakening of reformist illusions, although very uneven in various countries and among various groups of workers.

The world economic crisis, the end of capitalist stabilisation and the depression of a special kind have led to A NEW TURNING POINT IN THE POSITION OF THE WORKING CLASS, IMPOVERISHMENT UNPRECEDENTED IN THE HISTORY OF CAPITALISM, AND A NEW AND CONSIDERABLY LOWER LEVEL OF EXISTENCE.

Unemployment.

UNEMPLOYMENT in 1932, the year of the sharpest fall in production, involved almost half the working class. In the transition to depression we see no great improvement.

About 22-25 million proletarians are still without work.

World unemployment is 2.5 to 3 times higher than before the crisis. In Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Italy, it is three times higher, in the U.S.A. twice as high, and in France almost forty times higher than at the beginning of the economic crisis. Even according to official government statistics unemployment in Italy has grown, and in France, Poland and Austria has remained almost stable after the transition to the depression. In Germany over one-third of the proletariat remain unemployed.*

The extension of production in the chief capitalist countries is outstripping the reduction in unemployment, which emphasises the chronic structural character of unemployment. In some countries and industries, unemployment is still growing even though the crisis has passed into a mere depression.

Though the number of completely unemployed has dropped by almost eight millions during the last two years, i.e., since the lowest point of the conomic crisis, simultaneously the number of part-time workers, i.e., partly unemployed, has considerably increased. The bourgeoisie take advantage of "part-time work" to reduce the amount of relief given to unemployed and increase the intensity of labour. This is to at least reduce the tenseness of the political situation caused by the existence of the armies of the millions of unemployed somewhat.

Unemployment is falling, but part-time work is spreading to almost the entire working class. Work is becoming a privilege :

In Germany partial unemployment remains invisible, concealed by fascist statistics but appearing in the figures on the reduction of working time. In France, according to the official figures, about 40 per cent. of the workers are working part-time. In Japan, according to the statements of Japanese comrades, the majority of the people working in factories consist of the so-called "temporary workers," i.e., workers taken on for short periods, usually through the intermediary of the foremen.

This "depression of a special type" is not leading to a new period of prosperity in industry. At the same time the tremendous intensification of labour is leaving millions of workers, who only recently were needed, outside the industry. In the U.S.A. alone, intensification is taking the place of the work of 1,200,000 workers, who would not be able to find work even in the hypothetical case that industry rose to the same level as it was before the crisis. Millions and tens of millions of workers are becoming "surplus" workers for capitalism, and doomed to all the horrors of many years of permanent unemployment, poverty and hunger.

The inevitable variations and sudden changes in the economic situation will also bring about inevitable sporadic increases in unemployment. Events have shown that during this depression of a special type a certain improvement of industry in some countries will be accompanied by a reduction of out-

put in other countries. (For example, while there was an increase in output in Great Britain in 1934 it took place at a time of tenses situation in the U.S.A. and especially in Germany.)

At the present time there are NO ECONOMIC PRE-REQUISITES FOR ANY CONSIDERABLE ALLEVIATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

The chronic army of the unemployed which has replaced the former reserve army of labour which was almost completely absorbed during boom periods, has increased by 2.5 times in comparison with pre-crisis times, i.e., it forms over one quarter of the total number of industrial workers. The relative over-population which forms "the background on which the law of supply and demand of labour moves" (Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I), i.e., the level of wages, has greatly increased. As the "condition of existence for capitalist industry" (Marx), this relative over-population, this surplus of "free," unwanted, superfluous labour power drags down the level of wages and in proportion to its growth becomes an ever more powerful factor threatening the capitalist system with political disruption.

Wages.

REAL WAGES were lowered during the crisis to such a degree that they could scarcely provide for the most urgent needs of the majority of the employed workers.

In U.S.A. and Japan, they fell by more than one-half, in Poland by 40 per cent., in Germany the average earnings comprised in all 66 per cent. of the official minimum cost of living, etc.

The transition to a depression has not put a stop to the fall of wages. In the years of the crisis wages fell chiefly as the result of the direct reduction of nominal rates, but on passing into the depression, the bourgeoisie made a wider practice of indirect methods. As a rule, a certain growth of nominal wages, in places where it takes place owing to the growing struggle of the proletariat, is nevertheless lagging considerably behind the general rise in the cost of living and especially the increased prices on foodstuffs. This rise in the cost of living which takes place as the result of general economic processes as the crisis passes into a depression, especially in view of the domination of huge capitalist monopolies on the market, strikes all the harder at those groups of workers who have not yet been able to secure an increase in nominal wages.

The competition for greater devaluation which took place between the dollar and the pound in 1933 was above all and fundamentally a struggle between the American and British bourgeoisie as to who could most worsen the situation of "their" working class by means of inflation. Japan took this path of reducing the wages of the workers by means of "cheap money" right at the beginning of the crisis. Inflation together with the rise in the prices of common

* This data, as well as that given below in small type, is based upon the materials of the Institute of World Economy and World Politics and articles and tables published in the journal *World Economic Conditions*, No. 51.

necessities is becoming ever more widespread as a means of attack by the bourgeoisie on the standard of living of the working class.

At the same time the bourgeoisie have no intention of giving up the direct attack on wages, and moreover these attacks have the support of all the power of the capitalist state: in Italy, the recent statement of Mussolini that a 10 per cent. cut was "inevitable;" in Germany, the law of January 10th, 1934, confirmed again the establishment of a compulsory revision and lowering of the wage scales; in France, the economy programme of Doumergue, providing for considerable wage-cuts and the reduction in the salaries of employees, in the U.S.A., the law on industrial reconstruction established a minimum wage in various industries, but this minimum, however, becomes the maximum, etc.

The bourgeoisie are everywhere carrying on a particularly fierce attack on the wages of the nationally oppressed workers (negroes in U.S.A., Koreans in Japan) and on immigrant workers, e.g., Poles and Italians in France. The reduction in the wages of the latter and then the actual deportation of two million Italian workers from France under various pretexts was a means in the hands of the French bourgeoisie to reduce the wages of the French workers, although it was a smaller reduction than in other countries. The U.S.A. used a similar method, deporting over 500,000 Mexican workers into Mexico.

The world economic crisis, which led to a great weakening of world economic ties, intensified the struggle of the imperialist powers and of the capitalist monopolies for markets of export.

In this way the TENDENCY TO EQUALISE THE WAGES IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND INDUSTRIES AT THE LOWEST LEVEL intensified! In the struggle for markets, and extending exports on the basis of dumping prices, the capitalist organisations are trying to reduce the expenditure on wages to a level permitting successful competition. The tendency to equalise wages thus acts with ever increasing force in the direction of equalising them with the lowest existing level. The standard of living of the European and American workers is being reduced more and more to the level of the Chinese coolies or the Japanese textile workers, hardly providing for a life of semi-starvation.

The standard of living of the proletariat in the leading capitalist countries has fallen much lower than the minimum cost of living which had been historically fixed in these countries. The statement of Marx that minimum wages

"being different in the various countries . . . have their own historic movement and will fall lower and lower to the absolute lowest level" (Works of Marx and Engels, Vol. V.)

receives full confirmation.

Intensification of Labour.

THE TREMENDOUS INTENSIFICATION OF LABOUR DURING THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS AND WHEN THIS IS PASSING INTO A DEPRESSION forms the principal feature of capitalist rationalisation. Whereas during stabilisation, rationalisation developed on the basis of the rapid growth of technique and increased capital investments, during the crisis and depression, new technical improvements were reduced to a minimum. The surplus of fixed capital in the main branches of industry almost closed the road to big capital investments for its renewal (apart from the war industry and the recent slight increase in the replacement of worn-out equipment and machines). It was precisely this, along with the absence of an outlook for a real upsurge and the widening of production, which formed the economic basis for the most varied measures on the part of the bourgeoisie to bring about an unparalleled intensification of labour without any considerable increase in the quantity of technical appliances in use.

The intensification of labour is achieved mainly by increasing the speed of the machines and conveyors (or by their introduction) and an increase in the number of machines to be attended by the workers. The speed of the conveyor at Citroen's works in France almost doubled between 1931 and 1933. The number of machines worked on by a weaver in Japan during crisis years increased by 30 per cent. As the result of intensification, the output per worker in a number of countries and branches of industry greatly increased, while the share of wages in the production cost of the article fell accordingly.

Thus, the production per worker increased during the crisis in the U.S.A. (from 1929 to 1933) by 25 per cent., in the coal industry in France by 30 per cent., on the railways in Italy by 40 per cent., among the cotton workers by more than 100 per cent., in rayon production even by 250 per cent. The number of workers in the steel industry in the U.S.A. in 1933 increased by 10 per cent., while the output of steel increased by 28 per cent., etc.

This crisis intensification, leading to the great exhaustion of the workers owing to the enormous expenditure of nervous and muscular energy, is frequently accompanied by a REDUCTION IN WORKING HOURS (length of day or number of working days per week) to ensure that the maximum amount of labour possible will be squeezed out of them.

This reduction in hours thus becomes an indication, not of an improvement, but of a worsening of the position of the workers (either intensification or partial unemployment or both).

Though the increase of unemployment has converted regular work into a privilege, in turn the reduction of wages and the increased exploitation of the workers on the basis of the intensification of labour, has converted the factory into a frightful "sausage machine" which in the course of a few years "consumes" the entire life energy of the worker.

But while reducing the working time of one group of workers for the purpose of increasing their exploita-

tion, the bourgeoisie are lengthening the working day of others for the same reason.

For example, in Poland the 8-hour day has been formally abolished and the "English" week introduced; in Italy, a number of legislative provisos have been made as to cases of violation of the 8-hour day, which is becoming a rule; in France, in addition to the growth of partial unemployment there is a lengthening of the working day in small establishments, especially semi-handicraft factories. In all countries a considerable lengthening of the working day is being carried out for the agricultural workers, etc.

The Agricultural Workers.

The situation of the AGRICULTURAL WORKERS is deteriorating more rapidly and to a greater extent than that of the industrial workers in all countries. Even during the partial stabilisation of capitalism, the world agrarian crisis brought about the progressive ruin of the peasants and a growth of "agrarian over-population," which put pressure on the level of wages of the agricultural workers. The development of the world economic crisis deepened and intensified the agrarian crisis, led to enormous unemployment in agriculture. The wages of farm labourers fell literally to just a crust of bread. It also led to the lengthening of their working day and the intensification of hand labour. At the same time pre-capitalist methods took on an ever-increasing importance in the exploitation of the agricultural workers in proportion as the agrarian crisis became more intense.

Even in the U.S.A. there is an increase in the portion of the wages of farm labourers which is paid in kind, an increase in the personal dependence on the employer. It is being made compulsory to purchase all necessities in the stores of the employer. Dependence as the result of debt is increasing, taking on the nature of peonage (i.e., debt slavery).

In respect to the Negro agricultural workers, particularly in the south of the U.S.A., this extension of pre-capitalist methods of exploitation borders directly and openly on the restoration of slavery.

The enormous army of industrial workers, the continuing ruin of the poor and middle peasants, accelerated by the drought of 1934 and the domination of capitalist monopoly over agriculture which increased during the years of crisis and depression, will continue to weigh down on the level of life of the agricultural workers in the future, driving them to extend and intensify the class struggle.

The Colonial Workers.

THE SITUATION OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE COLONIES AND THE SEMI-COLONIES, who are under the yoke of the double exploitation of imperialism and their own "national" bourgeoisie, fell during the world economic crisis actually below the starvation level of existence. The wages of colonial workers

are only sufficient to allow of a gradual death by starvation and exhaustion. The price of his labour power is so much lower than its real value that it is insufficient even for a starvation existence.

As the imperialist bourgeoisie transferred a considerable portion of the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the toiling masses of the colonies, and as, in view of their domination in the capitalist world, they will continue in the future to do so, the proletariat in the colonies and semi-colonies have no better perspective under present conditions, i.e., under the rule of capitalism, giving them prospects for a real improvement in their situation (which does not of course exclude various fluctuations in the level of wages of various groups of workers).

THE PROGRESSIVE WORSENING OF THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS, the increase in the exploitation of the workers, though unequal in the various countries, in the various branches of industry and among the various categories of workers, is nevertheless WORLD WIDE. Possible improvements in the situation of the various groups of workers as the result of various class battles or owing to various changes in the economic situation cannot be of a prolonged character under the present conditions and cannot hinder the accelerating process of the relative and absolute impoverishment of the proletariat.

* * *

But the deterioration in the situation of the proletariat is by no means limited to a lowering of the material level of the standard of living. With the aim of crushing the resistance of the working class, creating the best conditions for reducing wages, increasing the intensification of labour, and to guarantee their further profits, the bourgeoisie are making every effort to take away the SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS OF THE PROLETARIAT.

An outstanding peculiarity of the offensive of the bourgeoisie which is developing and ever increasing, is the GROWING ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT not only for politically crushing the working class, but also for DIRECTLY LOWERING THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE WORKERS. The bourgeois state is ever more openly and directly subordinating itself to the dictatorship of the big monopolist organisations of finance capital, and in all capitalist countries is more and more becoming the direct organiser of wage-cuts (Germany, U.S.A., Italy, etc.), cutting unemployment relief, worsening labour conditions, etc. The despotism of the employers in the factories (Germany, U.S.A., etc.) is indissolubly connected with depriving the workers of their rights in all bourgeois states.

In all capitalist countries a GREAT REDUCTION OF ALL THE SOCIAL GAINS OF THE PROLETARIAT torn from the bourgeoisie in the course of decades of class struggle is taking place, while in a number of countries they are EVEN BEING COMPLETELY ABOLISHED.

In all countries social insurance is being changed in such a way that the workers' contributions are increased while those of the employers are decreased. The number of persons entitled to relief and pensions is being cut down and the actual relief payments are being diminished (e.g., law of December 7th, 1933, in Germany; January 1st, 1934, in Poland; the Means Test and Economy Act in Great Britain, etc.).

The protection of labour actually exists only on paper, or is interpreted mainly in the interests of the employers. It does not greatly hinder the introduction of any deterioration in the conditions of labour. Still less does it hinder the intensification of labour to the point of the complete exhaustion of the worker.

In a number of countries wage scales are being compulsively revised with a view to reducing them (Germany, Italy, the so-called "codes" in the U.S.A., etc.). The right to the free organisation of trade unions in a number of countries remains in practice only for the reformist unions (Poland, Balkan countries) or is completely abolished, and in place of it the workers are compelled to join fascist unions (Italy, Germany).* In places where revolutionary unions exist, they are always subjected to police raids and persecutions.

The right to strike is being limited ever more frequently (prohibition of strikes of government employees and workers in "public utility enterprises") or is completely abolished (U.S.A., France and other "democratic" countries). It does not prevent the police and armed gangsters of capital organising bloody attacks on the strikers, beating them up and shooting them.

FORCED LABOUR WHICH IS ALMOST UNPAID is becoming ever more widely spread in various forms.

In Germany, universal obligatory labour has been introduced, resulting in the almost colonial cheapness of labour, and is a source of super profits for monopolist capital, giving almost unpaid labour power for war preparations. In the U.S.A. the "public works" on which the unemployed are forcibly engaged, are reviving the system of slave relations. In Japan the dependence of the working women, as a result of indebtedness arising on the basis of the rule of feudalism in agriculture, is passing into a semi-slave position of the entire working class.

The restoration and extension of forced labour, pre-capitalist forms of labour, the transition of colonial methods of exploitation of labour power into the imperialist dominating countries plainly demonstrates the growing decay of the capitalist system.

The revolutionary workers' organisations, above all the Communist Parties, are everywhere subjected to various forms of repression and more frequently completely suppressed.

To crush the GROWING RESISTANCE OF THE PROLETARIAT to the lowering of its standard of living and prevent the extension of the struggle for improved conditions (strikes, unemployed movement, demonstrations, armed uprisings, etc.), the bourgeoisie is increasing reaction and political oppression. It is restricting democratic liberties, and strengthening the government apparatus of violence.

Finally, with the growth of the revolutionisation of the proletariat, there ensues a rapid and extensive conversion of its economic struggle into a political struggle. The revolutionary crisis is maturing and the menace of the proletarian revolution growing. This is occurring at increasing speed, though unevenly, in various countries. Therefore the bourgeoisie are passing to the open fascist suppression of the working class in various forms. This means the direct smashing of all its class organisations, the physical destruction of its vanguard. In the form of fascism the bourgeoisie are more frequently passing from the political suppression of the proletariat, under conditions of more or less extensive "democratic liberties," to the open seizure of the initiative in the civil war against it.

* * *

Changes in the economics and in the structure of capitalism as the general crisis becomes more intense, and the changes in the situation of the working class are leading also to a number of basic changes in the very structure of the proletariat.

Basic Changes in the Proletariat.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE UNEMPLOYED in the process of the development of the general crisis is being more and more CHANGED IN THE DIRECTION OF A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNEMPLOYED. The problem of unemployment is no longer a phenomenon of a cyclical crisis and is becoming a constant and threatening problem of the general crisis of capitalism. Under capitalism, relative overpopulation is growing and leading to sufferings and poverty for ever new millions of workers, while the technical and economic possibilities for a tremendously rapid development of the productive forces are increasing. This is being hindered by capitalism and has long since matured for socialism.

Capitalism, continuously decaying and weakend by the end of partial stabilisation and the world economic crisis, not only stifles and limits the development of productive forces to maintain its own existence, but also requires their partial destruction (and also part of the products produced and accumulated). The continued technical development, the tremendous growth of new productive possibilities foreshadowed by the new scientific discoveries and technical inventions and improvements (in the sphere of chemistry and the chemical

* Polish fascism is taking the same line, trying to carry through a law on the "unification" of the unions, around which a sharp class struggle will undoubtedly be waged.

industry, for instance) can no longer be carried out on a large scale under capitalism. The bourgeoisie are destroying the basic productive force—the working class—on an ever larger scale. The relative over-population, as a condition of the very existence of capitalist society, is also becoming the source of its approaching destruction. From the condition for the creation of ever new cadres of the proletariat, from a “regulator” of the steady lowering of the standard of living of the workers, it is becoming a heavy load attached to the feet of the bourgeoisie. ONLY SOCIALISM, AS ALREADY SHOWN IN PRACTICE BY THE DEVELOPMENT IN THE U.S.S.R. which started out the construction of socialism from an incomparably lower economic and technical level than that already reached by the imperialist countries, not only knows nothing of the problems of over-population, but even at the first stage of its existence *abolished unemployment and reduced the working day to seven hours* (and to 6 hours in heavy and harmful industries). IT DID THIS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY IMPROVING THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE WHOLE PROLETARIAT.

The bourgeoisie are trying to utilise unemployment not only economically to depress wages but also politically to weaken the working class movement. They take advantage of the desperation of the unemployed to increase their influence among some sections of the working class by means of anti-capitalist demagogy. Fascism in Germany has temporarily obtained a certain influence on PART of the working class, especially from among the unemployed. It exploited their discontent in the interests of the big monopolist capitalists and recruited members for the storm detachments from among them.

The colossal chronic unemployment in capitalist countries leads to the unemployed being somewhat split away from the employed workers, and when the work of the Communists is weak, it tends to scatter and disunite their struggles.

But while creating a number of difficulties for the work of the Communist Parties, the hopelessness of many years of unemployment, and the impossibility of making any great alleviation under capitalism, increases the objective contradictions between the working class and the bourgeoisie. It gives greater political significance to the movement of the proletariat, disillusiones the unemployed with fascist demagogy in those places where this was temporarily successful. It urges them into the revolutionary struggle against capitalism and its rule. It re-creates and strengthens the conditions for the fighting revolutionary unity of the whole of the working class, which, however, can only be best utilised by developing the most energetic work of the Communist Party.

The Youth.

THE SHARE OF THE YOUTH AMONG THE WORKING CLASS HAS INCREASED AND WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE IN FUTURE YEARS. It is not only growing as the result of the replacement of the labour of adults by the cheaper labour of youngsters (in Germany the reverse in taking place at the present time—the youth are being squeezed out of industry), but also because the first post-war generation is coming into the labour market precisely at the present time. During the economic crisis, the natural increase among the adult part of the proletariat was comparatively small due to the fact of the reduced birth rate during the imperialist war. This generation reached maturity in 1930-33. Nevertheless, at the present time in particular, in the years of the depression, much more extensive cadres of workers are growing up. The deterioration in the situation of the youth and the growth in their political activity which is observable simultaneously RAISES THEIR ROLE IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT. This applies to both its economic and political struggles.

In the conditions of mass unemployment, increased intensification of labour, and the starvation level of wages, a mass of the youth of to-day are deprived of the opportunity of employment. They become, to a considerable degree, from the beginning of their independent life, so to speak, professionally unemployed.

Having little opportunity of entering a factory, the modern youth do not pass through the whole of that school of the class struggle through which the adult generation did. They therefore do not receive the same first-class steeling in proletarian discipline and solidarity. Hence, IN ADDITION TO A HIGH DEGREE OF POLITICAL INTEREST which arises from the youths' environment, alongside increased dissatisfaction with capitalist “order,” they manifest POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND WAVERINGS. They show a much lower resistance to the nationalist and sham anti-capitalist fascist demagogy than the adult workers. This is the reason why some of the working youth in Germany, in the ranks of the Storm Troops, proved to be among the most important channels of fascist influence into the working class. Some of the youth came into contact with the class struggle chiefly in the ranks of the unemployed. Some, partly also through a distorted mirror, in the ranks of the fascist organisations (Germany, Italy, Poland, etc.) and in the labour service camps.

In some countries (particularly Italy, partly Poland) a new generation of workers is growing up which has never known any order except fascism, which has been trained for years in the spirit of fascism. All this cannot fail to hinder the development of the proletarian class consciousness of the youth.

Thus, the new features which have arisen in the

situation of the working youth since the end of partial stabilisation, while creating the conditions for their rapid political activation, also hinder the fighting unity of the working class and its movement. They do this by placing broad strata of the youth in the form of permanently unemployed against the adult majority of employed workers.

The extreme disillusionment of the youth in the policy of class collaboration conducted by social-democracy, and the complete bankruptcy of social-democracy in the struggle against fascism, are leading to the intensification of the crisis of the Socialist Youth International. There is an increase of the confusion in the ranks of the Socialist Youth Leagues.

The problem of winning over the youth, who are more actively seeking a way out of the unbearably difficult situation in the direction of the revolutionary class struggle thus assumes enormous importance and completely new specific features.

The Women.

THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF WOMEN AMONG EMPLOYED WORKERS accrued during partial stabilisation mainly on the basis of technical improvements. These made it possible to replace skilled labour by less skilled and cheaper labour. Despite the absence of great technical innovations during the years of the economic crisis, this process of increasing the number of women nevertheless continued. It was based on a reduction in production and the weeding out of the more skilled workers.

Thus the percentage of women among the employed proletariat in the United States was 26.1 per cent. in 1923; it was 28.5 per cent. in 1929; it was 30.4 per cent. in 1933. In Germany the proportion in 1929 was 23.6 per cent., but in 1932 it was already 26.9 per cent.

Though this process did not stop when the crisis became a depression, it should be noted that the lowering of the standard of living of the proletariat creates conditions in which the reverse may take place—the replacement of cheap labour of women by the equally cheap, but more efficient, labour of men. This is all the more likely because the increasing intensification of labour requires ever greater endurance and ability to make short but very intense efforts from the workers. This tendency has become clearly marked in Germany.

Where the proportion of men among the employed workers in 1934 increased along with an absolute growth in the number of men and women; where over 150,000 youth in what was alleged to be a voluntary manner were compelled to "surrender" their places to older workers and where about 200,000 unmarried women were given "marriage grants," after which they were dismissed from the factories. In the given case fascism, by its measures of government compulsion, hastened the development of the process which had already become noticeable economically.

The economic basis of this tendency is the cheapening of men's labour compared with that of women.

Thus, while the average weekly wages of women in the

U.S.A. in 1929 were 57.7 per cent. of average men's wages, in 1933 they had already risen to 66.1 per cent.

The appearance of this tendency still does not gainsay the fact that on the basis of partial stabilisation and the economic crisis, the share of women increased to about one-third of all employed workers. In some branches of industry, as in the textile industry, they increased to 60 per cent. or more. By widely drawing women into the war industry, the capitalists are now forming workers' cadres for war time.

It is well known that the lower degree of trade union and political organisation of women, their lesser schooling and traditions of the class struggle and the fact that they are more closely bound up with the family and especially with the bringing up of children, is systematically and regularly utilised by the capitalists to depress not only the women's situation but that of the whole working class.

For this very reason the question of women's labour and the organisation of the working women has long since ceased to be a specific "woman's question." It has become one of the chief questions of the entire workers' movement. The proportion of women among the employed proletariat, having grown during the years of the economic crisis has increased the significance of this problem.

The fact that women were being absorbed into industry on an ever-increasing scale during recent years made it more difficult for the proletariat to resist the offensive of the bourgeoisie. But there was an undoubted growth in the fighting powers of the female proletariat during the years of the crisis (e.g., the strike movement of the textile workers in Bulgaria). The increase in their political activity creates new factors for the wider and deeper unity of the working class in the struggle against the economic and political offensive of capital.

In almost all the big countries there has been a considerable increase in the numbers of workers engaged on transport, distribution (trade), domestic service, etc. THIS DROP IN THE SHARE OF THE WORKERS DIRECTLY ENGAGED IN INDUSTRY is one of the outstanding indications of the increasing parasitism and decay of the capitalist system.

The Aristocracy of Labour.

Finally, and this is of first-rate political importance, the lowering in the standard of living of the proletariat and the changes in capitalist economics also lead to the CONTRACTION OF THE STRATA OF HIGHLY PAID SKILLED WORKERS. THEY LEAD TO A DETERIORATION IN THE POSITION OF THE ARISTOCRACY OF LABOUR AND THE REDUCTION OF ITS SIZE. Before the beginning of the general crisis of capitalism the inequality of the absolute impoverishment of the proletariat was expressed, among other things, in the fact that the position of the highly skilled workers deteriorated at a lower rate than that of the less skilled. The

position of the small privileged strata of the aristocracy of labour, this "bourgeoisified" part of the working class, even improved to some extent. In the years of relative capitalist stabilisation, in view of the introduction of the conveyor system and automatic machines, there was a certain change in this process. In the place of skilled labour, semi-skilled workers were employed, which caused firstly an increase in unemployment among the skilled workers and, secondly, an inevitable reduction in the level of their wages. But the general extension of capitalist production in the years of stabilisation, by increasing the demand for skilled labour, even though its relative share in industry fell, hindered the deterioration of the situation of the skilled worker. At the same time there was a continuation of the pampering and bribing of a narrow strata of the aristocracy of labour, at the expense of colonial super-profits provided by the imperialists, as the basis of social-democracy, though this was done on a smaller scale than in pre-war times.

The world economic crisis, leading to a reduction in the total income and particularly in the super-profits flowing in from the colonies of the imperialist bourgeoisie, stimulated them to make an offensive against the ENTIRE working class. They tried to reduce the wages of ALL strata of the proletariat, including not only highly skilled workers, but even the aristocracy of labour.

There was a considerable increase in the tendency to bring the wages of skilled and unskilled workers to the same level, to reduce the difference between them.

There was a fall in the wages of the skilled workers to a level below that of the pre-crisis wages of unskilled workers.

This resulted in a reduction in the economic bribing of the aristocracy of labour, in the extension of the burdens of the economic crisis on to them also. It meant a worsening in their position and the transfer of a large section into the ranks of the exploited proletariat.

In the U.S.A. at the lowest point of the crisis unemployment affected one-third of the members of the yellow A.F. of L. unions and half of the metal workers. At the end of the first quarter of 1934 the proportion had fallen to one-quarter of the A.F. of L. and one-third of the metal workers. The operation of the codes in various industries, even on the admissions of the bourgeoisie and yellow press, brings down the wages of the skilled workers most of all, particularly in the steel industry, the electrical industry and the textile industry. At the end of 1932 the average wages of skilled workers (20.5 dollars) were lower than the wages of unskilled workers in 1930 (21.9 dollars), and the gap between the weekly wages of skilled and unskilled workers had fallen in absolute figures by one-half. In 1933 the average wages of skilled workers were \$11.10 lower than the wages of women and Negro workers in 1929 (respectively \$16.50 and \$17.60).* Such was the situation

in the United States, in the country of gigantic profits, powerful capital trusts and the extensive social bribery of the upper ranks of the proletariat. A similar process is also taking place in other countries. In Germany the proportional significance of the skilled workers in the metal industry between 1925 and 1931 fell from 70 per cent. to 50 per cent.; the gap between the wages of skilled and auxiliary workers fell from 38 per cent. to 16 per cent.; the drop in average wages for all industry during the crisis amounted to one-half for the skilled workers, but only one-third for the unskilled. In Italy, when the new collective agreements are made, skilled workers are transferred in masses to lower paid categories. In Great Britain the worst economic position is found in the "old" export branches of industry, which has led to a deterioration of the standard of living of the old aristocracy of labour (while it has simultaneously increased in the new branches—chemistry and aviation—and also in the war industries).

This fall in the wages of the skilled workers is accompanied by the growing intensification in their labour, by such a tremendous draining of their labour power that it cannot be replaced by the smaller amount of the benefits of life they receive. The price of skilled labour power is steadily decreasing, the exploitation of the skilled workers is steadily growing. Unemployment is increasing among them at the same time. Simultaneously, ever wider strata of the best situated "bourgeoisified" parts of the working class (the aristocracy of labour) are again being proletarianised. They are, therefore, economically interested in the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie. They are beginning to waver politically. The attempts of the bourgeoisie, of fascism in particular, to form new strata of privileged workers, e.g., the privileged position of the fascist workers in the factories in Germany, cannot compensate for the reduction in the strata of the aristocracy of labour.

The sharp worsening in position of the skilled workers, which is now no longer a phenomenon connected with the state of the market but structural, creates the economic basis for the weakening of the influence of the social-democracy. It provides for reducing its mass basis, hastens the revolutionising of the social-democratic workers, and makes it easier for the Communist Parties' influence to grow amongst these workers.

At the same time the reduction of the aristocracy of labour and the worsening of its position will lead to a further intensification of the crisis of social-democracy as this forms one of its economic foundations. The readiness of ever wider masses of the social-democratic workers to enter into the struggle against the capitalist offensive, which finds expression in their mass strivings towards unity of action with the Communists, cannot help influencing the political feelings of a considerable section of the aristocracy of labour also who have lost their guaranteed privileged positions.

In view of the intensified decay of imperialist capitalism, the monopolist bourgeoisie are economic-

* See article by Amo in the symposium, *The Crisis and Impoverishment of the Working Class*, 1934.

ally not only more and more undermining the conditions for their mass influence over the ruined petty-bourgeois masses, but also the social pillars of social-democracy. It is precisely as the result of this that the bourgeoisies, while not by any means giving up the use of the aristocracy of labour as their social support in the ranks of the working class, are more and more trying to strengthen their political rule, particularly through fascism. They do this by widening their influence among the ruined petty-bourgeois masses, the declassed portions of the working class, the chronically unemployed, the youth who have never yet worked in industry and among the backward agricultural workers.

* * *

While dooming the ENTIRE proletariat to a deep lowering of their standard of living, leading to the above-mentioned structural changes in the composition of the working class, the growing decay of imperialism is increasing the prerequisites for the revolutionary disruption of the entire capitalist system to an enormous degree.

The basis for the influence of the capitalists in the ranks of the working class is diminishing. Communists can and must take advantage of this to win away from social-democracy, the reformists and anarchists, the working masses who have been deceived by them, so as to create the fighting unity of the working class against the economic and political offensive of the bourgeoisie, against war and fascism.

The necessity for this wide united front is beginning to be felt more keenly and realised by the most varied strata of the proletariat in all the capitalist countries. Not only because of the lowering of their standard of life, but also as a consequence of the FACT THAT THE WORKING CLASS IS DEPRIVED OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS by the master-class. It is, of course, obvious that the conditions giving rise to the strivings of the working masses towards unity of action do not yet mean that unity will automatically arise of itself. It is obvious that there must be insistent, energetic and flexible tactics by the Communist Parties in the struggle for unity. THE PROBLEM OF THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT AS

the path to the establishment of the unity of the proletarian vanguard with the masses of the working class and their transition to the side of the revolution ASSUMES EXCEPTIONAL IMPORTANCE. This question is beyond the limits of the present article.

The menace of fascism is increasing. It is general in the capitalist countries. The class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is more openly relying on violence. The lack of political rights of the working class reaches its limit under fascism. The slave-nature of spurious "free" hired labour under capitalism attains its highest expression. Over-ripe monopolist capitalism is no longer able to maintain its rule without resorting to the most genuine medieval barbarism.

But alongside the complete deprivation of the political rights of the proletariat in countries of the fascist dictatorship, and the steady diminution of them in the bourgeois democratic countries that are becoming fascist, the Communist Parties are successfully forging out the wide fighting unity of the working class.

THE EXTENSION OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT AGAINST THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OFFENSIVE OF THE BOURGEOISIE, FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR POSITION, THE LEADING OF THE WIDEST MASSES OF THE WORKING CLASS UP TO THE POINT OF TAKING UP THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE, IS BECOMING EVER MORE NECESSARY, URGENT AND INEVITABLE.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ECONOMIC DEMANDS OF THE WORKERS IS BECOMING AN EVER MORE IMPORTANT METHOD OF REVOLUTIONISING THE PROLETARIAT.

The task of widening the struggle of the proletariat, the organisation and development of their counter-attack, and the task of organising the wide united front, are becoming ever more important tasks of the Communist Parties.

The economic and political offensive of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat, while hindering its struggle, nevertheless, leads finally to the creation of favourable conditions for the Communist Parties to forge out its revolutionary class unity. It enables it to increase its revolutionary activity, and develop decisive struggles in the second round of revolutions, for the maturing of the necessary prerequisites for the victorious proletarian revolution.

THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE STRATA OF THE TOWN POPULATION

P. REIMANN.

THE establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany and other countries, the development of the fascist mass movement in a number of non-fascist countries, and the beginning of the crisis of fascism in Germany, raise the question of the struggle to win over or neutralise the middle strata of the urban population very sharply. In the majority of fascist countries the middle strata constitute the widest social basis of fascism, which has been able by means of unparalleled national and social demagoguery to distract these middle strata and set them in opposition to the proletariat. Therefore, when carrying on a struggle for the unity of the working class, the Communist Party must also endeavour to win over the middle strata, because this is one of the decisive questions of the anti-fascist struggle.

The idea (which has again cropped up recently) that fascism is the dictatorship of the petty-bourgeoisie, is based on confusion of the social MASS BASIS of fascist power with its CLASS NATURE. The danger of this formulation lies not only in its distortion of the question of the class character and the class aims of the fascist dictatorship. To put the question in such a way leads at the same time to an incorrect estimate of the petty-bourgeoisie. If it were correct that fascism is the dictatorship of the petty-bourgeoisie, this would also mean that the petty-bourgeoisie are a hostile mass opposed to the proletariat, and that the proletariat should now carry on a struggle, not against monopolist capital, but against the petty-bourgeoisie.

The error in placing the question in such a manner lies in attributing to the petty-bourgeoisie the ability to take an independent political part. We shall show later, in the conclusions drawn, that the entire social and political position of the petty-bourgeoisie does not allow this. The right opportunist theory about the independent rôle of the petty-bourgeoisie has already done much harm. For example, it showed itself in the incorrect tactics adopted by the C.P. of Poland during the Pilsudski coup, which the Party regarded as an independent movement of the petty-bourgeoisie against the dictatorship of finance-capital. The same harmful theory also led to the incorrect position taken up by the C.P. of Czechoslovakia in respect to Masaryk. He was regarded for many years as the representative of a petty-bourgeois policy independent of classes, and con-

trasted to the right wing of the Czechish bourgeoisie.

* * *

Immediately after the war large sections of the urban petty-bourgeoisie in Germany and other countries to which the revolutionary struggle spread swung over to the side of the proletariat. The tremendous growth of the power of the revolutionary proletarian movement created a profound impression on the petty-bourgeois masses. They inclined to the view that socialism alone could bring their liberation—a view developed to no small extent under the direct impression of the world imperialist war. The big successes achieved by the social-democratic party at the Parliamentary elections during the first few years after the war are explained primarily by the fact that the spontaneous movement of the petty-bourgeois masses began to direct itself towards socialism. But as the result of the absence or the weakness of the newly-formed Communist Parties, only a small section of these masses found their way to the revolutionary proletariat. The decisive strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, however, regarded social-democracy as the standard-bearer and leader of the struggle for socialism.

The treacherous policy of social-democracy, and, above all, the split which it brought into the ranks of the working class destroyed the first beginnings of an alliance between the proletariat and the toilers of the middle classes. In Germany social-democracy also supported the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in 1923, at the time when the latter entered the path of ruining hundreds of thousands of members of the middle class, of expropriating the small rentiers, the small handicraft men, etc., by means of inflation. The social-democrats supported capitalist rationalisation, while at the same time the progressive concentration of capital in these very years of the relative stabilisation of capital accelerated the expropriation of the petty-bourgeois masses. And after the beginning of the world economic crisis, in the course of which the pace at which the middle strata became pauperised and transformed into proletarians increased at an abnormally rapid rate, social-democracy continued to act as the main buttress of the existing capitalist order and the existing forms of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Had it not been for this policy pursued by social-democracy the national and

social demagoguery uttered by the fascists would have been impossible, nor could it have produced the profound effect it did on the middle strata. The policy pursued by social-democracy discredited Marxism and socialism in the eyes of these middle class elements, inasmuch as they did not understand that in reality such a policy has nothing in common with socialism and Marxism, but is actually hostile to them. As for the Communist Parties, they were still not strong enough to explain to the petty-bourgeois masses the fundamental contradiction in principle between the "Marxism" of social-democracy and real revolutionary Marxism.

Social-democracy is trying to put a foundation under this policy which drove a wedge between the revolutionary proletariat and the broad strata of the middle classes. It does so in a way which is slanderous even from the point of view of the middle classes themselves. In this respect the theories recently developed by Fritz Marbach, one of the leaders of the Swiss reformist trade unions, in his book, *The Trade Union, the Middle Class and the Fronts*, are particularly subtle and characteristic. He takes as his starting point the process of the proletarianisation of the middle classes. He specially emphasises that a stratum like the office workers are proletarians according to their economic situation. But he immediately explains that they cannot be counted as proletarians because their ideology is a different one!

"The proletarianisation of the office workers takes place under entirely different ideological accompanying circumstances than the dogmatic commentators of the philosophy of impoverishment imagined. These politicians have always considered that the proletarianisation of the middle masses of the population will result in widening the sphere of influence of the ideology of the industrial proletariat. Reality, however, has now shown that tens of thousands of people are undoubtedly becoming proletarians in material respects, but that the majority of these actual proletarians very stubbornly refuse to accept the militant ideology of the proletariat. However, these unfortunate twofold people could be won over to the struggle for social justice in the spirit of social-democracy (the democratic national community of all the toilers). Therefore, the industrial workers are also interested in the office workers not having an ideology forced on them which they have not been able to understand throughout their lives (e.g., employees of non-proletarian origin) or which it was their aim to avoid from the time when they first thought in general about their aim in life." Marbach, pp. 36-37—retranslated.—Ed.).

From this basic theses Marbach draws the following conclusions:

"The working class is perfectly just in demanding that the office workers should acquaint themselves with its material postulates and should support them (e.g., in the community of labour), but it does well to make concessions in the ideological sphere."

Such is the fundamental line of thought followed by Marbach. His ideas amount approximately to the following: It is impossible to win over the

middle classes to the proletarian class struggle because they take a negative and hostile attitude towards "proletarian ideology" (Marxism). As far as Marbach is concerned, Marxism is not the only scientifically based doctrine of the liberation of the proletariat and the struggle for socialism, but the "ideology of the industrial proletariat," which hinders the winning over of the middle strata. In Marbach's opinion a rapprochement between the proletariat and the middle classes is only possible on the basis of surrender of Marxian principles. That is the abandonment of the hegemony of the proletariat and the revolutionary class struggle. It is true that Marbach babbles about winning over the middle strata. He does not want to win them to bring about the overthrow of capitalism, however, but to preserve it. His "ideological concessions" even lie in the direction of mastering fascist terminology (e.g., the idea of the "democratic national community of all the toilers").

The second point of importance in the theory of the middle strata which is developed by the social-fascist Marbach is his criticism of the Marxist doctrine regarding the concentration of capital:

"Despite the classic teachings regarding concentration, many small and medium undertakings stand out with astonishing success against the big factories, because they are less burdened with the basic costs (Fixkosten) and therefore are more flexible in all respects. This is precisely how matters stand during crisis, when the burden of basic costs kills the big factories."

Making this assertion his starting-point, Marbach applies the theory of Otto Bauer regarding the peasants to the middle strata of the urban population. In his book on the agrarian question, Otto Bauer makes the statement that even under socialism the peasants will not cease to exist as an independent class. In exactly the same way Marbach proves that under a socialist régime the middle strata will also remain the middle strata.

"Theoretically nothing will happen to the middle classes under the aegis of socialism. They will practically not be touched by imprudent actions. What is taking place in Russia is not socialist action, but entirely communist. Many years ago, when nothing had yet been heard about fronts, and the world was divided according to a somewhat different point of view than now, I repeatedly pointed out in my books and articles that trades and handicrafts are not historic 'phenomena of the era,' but that they will always exist because they are always necessary. A trade, if the incomes of broad masses are defended, will possibly not be a gold mine, but will undoubtedly always be a silver mine to a sufficient degree. It is my opinion that if Marx is read properly, this view in embryo can be found in his writings."

Here the social-fascist Marbach also slanders revolutionary Marxism as the fascists slander it. He tries to incite the middle strata, being ruined by capitalism, against the revolutionary proletariat, when he asserts that these strata are being ruined as a result of "communist activity" in the Soviet Union. At the same time he tries to influence

them to believe that the maintenance of capitalism "under the socialist aegis" is able to ensure the continued existence of the middle strata, and even the well-being of the urban middle-class population.

The development of this question by Marbach touches on one of the central questions to which we Communists must give a clear reply—what are the prospects which the middle strata of the population may expect in the future? Here we must prove first of all that capitalism destroys these strata, that capitalism is the real root of the evil and the cause of their present misfortunes. Small enterprises have historically outlived themselves already. The possibilities for them developing are being restricted more and more by the development of large-scale industry and wholesale trade. Merciless capitalist exploitation by the banks and the State is hastening the ruin of the small enterprises. All claims that handicrafts and petty trade can still be a silver mine are deceit and trickery.

But what will happen after the proletariat come to power? The revolutionary proletariat do not dream of expropriating the small handicraft workers, the small tradesmen and other representatives of the toiling middle strata. The programme of the Communist International stresses with great insistence that large-scale industry, the big banks and the big trading enterprises have to be expropriated. There is no doubt that under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is a transition period on the way to Communism, the advantage of the big enterprise over the small one will also become evident. But when the proletariat are in power they have numerous possibilities for bringing about the transition of the middle strata to socialist forms of production, without resorting to methods of expropriation. These possibilities include the voluntary co-operation of the handicraft men, the employment of small traders as employees and qualified specialists in the apparatus of trading co-operative societies with full guarantee that the standard of living of these strata will be maintained. There cannot be any talk of the degradation and pauperisation of the non-exploiting strata of the petty-bourgeoisie. On the contrary, the dictatorship of the proletariat will put an end to the impoverishment and pauperisation of the non-proletarian toiling masses, and will open up the path towards a cultural and prosperous life for them on the basis of the growth of socialist forms of economy.

The Social Structure of the Middle Strata of the Towns.

In the social structure of the middle strata of the towns, great changes have taken place during the last few decades, and especially since the imperialist war. The general crisis of capitalism not

only leads to the acceleration of the process of the proletarianisation of the petty-bourgeois middle strata. It not only intensifies the class-differentiation inside the so-called middle class, but also leads to a profound structural change in the social composition of the middle strata.

The influence of the concentration of capital, which brings about the process of the progressive proletarianisation of the majority of these strata, is a tendency inherent in the whole of capitalist development. It leads to the fact that ever-broader strata of the so-called independent middle strata are disappearing, and their specific relative importance in economics is falling. The tendency of capitalist development is directed to the destruction of the middle strata as an INDEPENDENT SOCIAL FORCE through their expropriation and proletarianisation. But this does not mean that the petty-bourgeoisie simply disappears. As far back as in the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels pointed out that in capitalism counter-tendencies are also at work which lead to a new development of definite strata of the petty-bourgeoisie.

"In the countries where modern civilisation flourishes, a new petty-bourgeoisie has come into being. This class hovers between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and is PERPETUALLY BEING RECONSTITUTED AS A SUPPLEMENTARY COMPONENT OF BOURGEOIS SOCIETY. Thanks to the working of competition the members of this intermediate stratum are ever and anon precipitated into the ranks of the proletariat. Indeed, with the evolution of large-scale industry, the day approaches when the petty-bourgeoisie will cease to exist as an INDEPENDENT SECTION OF MODERN SOCIETY. Alike in commerce and industry and in agriculture, its members will be replaced by *overseers and underlings* (my italics—P.R.). See *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, by Marx and Engels.

It is well known that those in the Second International who vulgarise Marxism have simplified Marxism down to the claim that it teaches that the petty-bourgeoisie would disappear entirely, owing to the concentration of capital. Since they take this incorrect interpretation of Marxism as their starting-point, it is, of course, easy for them to prove that Marx made a mistake, because the middle strata numerically still play a very considerable rôle. In reality, however, Marx, in the *Communist Manifesto* foretold the tendencies which also lead to a new development of certain strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, to the rise of a "new petty-bourgeoisie."

During the last few decades the process of the formation of certain strata of the so-called "new petty-bourgeoisie" have been tremendously accelerated. There are various causes for this. First of all, in connection with the transition to monopolist capitalism, with its gigantic concentration and centralisation of capital, a whole army of administrative officials has become necessary in industry. Supervisors are required who play an important

rôle, especially since capitalist rationalisation took place. The terrific development of the parasitic features of the capitalistic State apparatus increases the army of officials in exactly the same way as a whole army of modern bank employees arises, owing to the concentration of capital. In particular during the last ten years there has been a speeding-up process in the concentration of capital in commerce as well. Trading firms, chain stores, large trusts, branch departments, are penetrating into small retail trade in place of the small trader, and require an increasing army of employees. In this way a new petty-bourgeoisie arises, but the essence lies in the fact that it is not an INDEPENDENT part of modern society, but wavers between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

If the previous petty-bourgeoisie might have been described as a stratum arising from a past era of pre-capitalist production relations, which, although undermined by capitalism, are nevertheless not completely destroyed by it, the new petty-bourgeoisie, on the contrary, are a child of the very capitalist social order.

A few statistics will show us the part played by the development of these strata in recent years:

"The number of industrial workers (not counting miners) in Germany increased by 12 per cent. between 1907 and 1925, while the number of office workers increased by 111 per cent. In the U.S.A., the increase in the number of workers between 1909 and 1919 amounted to 38 per cent., while the increase of the office workers was 83 per cent. In Great Britain the increase in the number of workers between 1907 and 1924 was 7 per cent., whereas the increase in the number of employees was 56 per cent. (Lederer, *Differentiation of the Proletariat*, p. 150.)

Some of these figures show very clearly why the problem of the petty-bourgeois strata is being raised in the post-war period in quite a different way from what it was before. It is the employee and official who begins to predominate more and more and not the small handicraft man and the small trader. But the differentiation of the petty-bourgeoisie is not restricted merely to accelerating the development of these new strata. The significance of the old petty-bourgeoisie is changing. It also is more and more ceasing, even formally, to be an independent stratum in society, and is at the same time becoming declassed.

Here are a few examples from Czecho-Slovakia. Before the war the small shoemakers were still an independent element there. But a huge shoe manufacturing industry grew up, monopolised by the well-known "boot king," Bata. The small shoemaker could not compete with large-scale industry, and has become converted into a shoemaker engaged only on repair work or in selling footwear received from the factories. The fact that in recent years Bata has laid his hands on the sale of boots and repair work is resulting in the small

shoemakers being economically squeezed out of their last positions.

Take another example—the sausage makers of Prague, who prepared sausages themselves before the war. During recent years, however, this sphere of production has been monopolised by a few large-scale producers. The small sausage makers, it is true, still carry on to some extent, but they have been converted from independent producers into shopkeepers who are increasingly dependent on the big producers. The position of the "independent" small trader in this sphere differs very little from that of the commercial employee. Only the outward appearance of independence remains.

In the big industrial centres, where in recent years bread has begun to be baked in factories for the purpose, the bakers are in many cases ceasing to bake bread independently, and have to a great extent become mere sellers of bread which they buy from the mechanised bakery.

Such examples could be continued and multiplied endlessly. What do they prove? A considerable number of the so-called independent producers are being proletarianised, but those of them who formally maintain their independence become more and more dependent on monopolist capital which exploits them in various ways.

Thus, on the one hand, there is a process of the expropriation and proletarianisation of the old petty-bourgeoisie taking place. On the other hand, there is a process of subordinating them economically, which is abolishing the last remnants of the independent rôle of the petty-bourgeoisie. Here are some characteristic figures showing the position of handicraft men and domestic craftsmen in Germany. In Grunberg's book entitled *The Middle Estate in Capitalist Society* it is pointed out that 37.4 per cent. of all industrial undertakings belong to handicraft men, but that these 37.4 per cent. only employ 12.2 per cent. of the workers engaged in industry, and that only 7.85 per cent. of the total internal commerce belongs to them. The progressive degradation of the handicraft industry is shown with special vividness in the development of capital investment. In 1924-28 the sum of 39,300 billion marks was invested in German economy. Out of this sum only 1,300 billions, or 3.3 per cent., was invested in handicraft industry, and a large part of this increase in capital investment is spent not on acquiring new equipment, but on increasing reserves. These figures, in turn, prove that even with a more or less stable numerical magnitude, the economic rôle of the small handicraft men is nevertheless falling. For the vast majority of them this means terrible pauperisation. For example, Grunberg gives statistics of the Wiesbaden handicraft chamber. According to these statistics, in 1928, in this district, 44 per cent.

of the handicraft men had an income of less than 1,500 marks a year. In the district of Harburg-Wilhelmsburg (also according to the report of the Chamber of Handicraft) the income of 45-48 per cent. of the handicraft men was less than 1,500 marks, while 82.2 per cent. received less than 3,000 marks. In many cases this income proves to be smaller than the wages of a skilled worker.

Thus on the basis of the data we have quoted so far we can sum up our investigation and draw the conclusion that during the last few decades the development of a new petty-bourgeoisie and the economic degradation, impoverishment and the accelerated proletarianisation of the old petty-bourgeoisie constitute fundamental characteristic tendencies of development.

Of course it must be emphasised that this process is taking place within the framework of the growing class differentiation among the middle layers themselves. Among the office workers we see the rise of a small strata to positions which link them up directly with the bourgeoisie. The upper layer of the office workers also belong to the bourgeoisie, while certain sections of the lower strata of the office workers approach the position of proletarians.*

It may be said of the new, just as of the old, petty-bourgeoisie that a process of sharp differentiation is taking place among them. Along with the proletarianisation and "declassing" of a considerable majority of these strata, a small section of them rise to the ranks of the bourgeoisie. Hence it follows that it is incorrect to regard the middle strata as a single entity. From the proletarian and semi-proletarian strata of office workers, through the ruined and pauperised strata of the petty-bourgeoisie to the medium and big bourgeoisie there lies a whole stairway of social layers whose interests differ ever more sharply from each other, and who enter into irreconcilable contradictions.

What is the effect of the modern crisis of capitalism on the middle strata? It hastens and sharpens the process of class differentiation, and hastens the process of the proletarianisation of the lower ranks. In the big imperialist countries before the war tendencies existed which opposed the proletarianisation of the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie. Not only the aristocracy of labour, but also more or less large sections of the petty-

bourgeoisie received various crumbs from the super-profits made. The possibility of emigration to the colonies and countries beyond the seas made it possible for a "natural" outflow of the petty-bourgeoisie to take place. This becomes particularly clear if we remember that in the only big capitalist State which did not possess colonies, namely, Italy (Tripoli was only conquered in 1911), the so-called overproduction of the intelligentsia was to be observed even before the war. In view of such a peculiar situation, fascism in Italy was able, among other things, to make use of the argument that the Italians, taken as a whole, are a "nation of proletarians." But in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, a situation arose when even for the upper ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie the restricted possibilities for them rising in the social scale and participating in capitalist super-profits which had existed before the war, became still narrower. This was displayed with special clarity in Germany, which not only lost its colonies, but was subjected to intensive economic plunder in the shape of reparations. In Germany and also in the majority of the economically backward capitalist countries, the process of pauperisation and the proletarianisation of the middle classes stands out with particular clearness. But in the post-war period the same process appears in essence not only in Germany, where the social possibilities for the rise of the petty-bourgeois strata have mostly been undermined, but also in the other big imperialist countries as well. The purchasing power of the toiling masses has fallen steadily, while in view of this the possibilities for the small traders, the small handicraftsmen and the peasants selling their goods have also dropped. On the other hand, the taxation which these strata have to pay has increased, and increasing indebtedness compels them to pay an ever-increasing tribute to finance capital. All these points which worsen the conditions of the petty-bourgeoisie masses are interlinked to such an extent with the consequences of the concentration of capital and of the economic crisis that the vast majority of the petty-bourgeois masses who are oppressed by finance capital are almost in a hopeless position. These petty-bourgeois masses are not only smitten down to the starvation standard of living of the proletariat, but they are also losing all prospects of an improvement, all possibilities of tearing themselves out of this situation at some time in the future.

Formerly, the declassed and expropriated sections of the petty-bourgeoisie could pass into the ranks of the proletariat. This is taking place to some extent at the present time. But a large majority of the petty-bourgeois find this path closed to them as well by structural unemployment, by the reduction in the demand for new labour power, especially

* It is incorrect to class these strata with the proletariat simply in view of the fact that they work for wages and draw a salary. But we can speak of them approaching the position of proletarians in places where, for example, the office workers have already been driven into big enterprises, and their conditions in the enterprise differ but slightly from the conditions of the proletariat (the lower railway and postal clerks, the lower employees in department stores, banks, etc.).

as a result of the world economic crisis. Large sections of the petty-bourgeois masses, ruined by finance capital become declassed and pauperised without perspectives or possibility for finding a way out. This hopelessness makes their position particularly hard.

The Question of the Intellectuals.

The intellectuals, the majority of whom are petty-bourgeois, play a special rôle. The importance of this stratum is that in modern society it wields a large ideological influence, and therefore the winning of the skilled strata of the intellectuals assumes special importance within the limits of the struggle to win over the petty-bourgeois strata. The general crisis of capitalism manifests itself in respect to the intelligentsia in special forms. The problem of the crisis of the intellectuals arose together with the period of the general crisis of capitalism. An important point in this crisis is the overproduction of the intelligentsia. In his work on the crisis of the intelligentsia, Comrade Fogarasi points out that in Germany there were about 370,000 "surplus" persons with university education, of whom 200,000 were unemployed. In Japan there were 12,163 students who had graduated from universities, but only 4,881 of them could find work. In America the number of working architects fell from 9,000 to 3,800 in the period between 1928 and 1932, etc.

In a little country like Czecho-Slovakia, according to bourgeois statistics, there are 20,000 unemployed who have had a university education. This figure is rather below than above the actual figure. But not only does direct unemployment strike at the intellectuals. Those of them who have posts are not only paid on an extremely low scale, but are at the same time becoming increasingly disqualified. For example, a certain Czecho-Slovakian student journal writes as follows regarding the "starting" salaries of those who have graduated in various spheres from the colleges and universities:

"The teacher at first receives a monthly salary of 700 kron.* It has become an ordinary thing for a barrister's assistant to receive 500-600 kron a month during the first period of his employment, and sometimes he even works free of charge in order to obtain the necessary practice. The average wage of a beginner as a bank employee is 450 kronas a month which, of course, is received after six months' work as an apprentice without wages."

The situation is made worse by the fact that in proportion as rationalisation develops the mechanisation of mental labour takes place. It frequently happens that after long years of study in a university a person is used on work which only requires low qualifications and is carried out mechanically, thus rendering it impossible for him to make real use of the knowledge he has obtained.

"For five years on end the chemist is instructed in the secrets of the retort and the beaker so that, later on, he can perform one and the same analysis according to ready-made recipes in the factory laboratory of some firm, and at the beginning is even given the job of office boy. For four years the engineer masters the secrets of machines so that later in the draughtsman's office he can turn out drawings to order, and for the same small detail year after year. And for four years the economist studies burning economic problems from Adam Smith to Sombart, so that later he can occupy himself on registration work in some company or work out the tax balances in some firm."

This is what the fascist theoretician, Ferdinand Fried, writes in his book, *The End of Capitalism*, which sets itself the task of utilising the discontent of the intellectuals in the interests of fascism by appealing to their individualist traditions. Fascist demagoguery is cleverly able to seize on the most burning problems.

And in actual fact the value of education is falling more and more. This is made worse by the decadent state of capitalist ideology and science, which is openly admitted by such reactionary ideologists of the fascist bourgeoisie as Spengler. Coupled with general impoverishment, this profound crisis of bourgeois culture and science increases the discontent of the intellectuals with the existing order. To preserve their social basis in the ranks of the intellectuals, the bourgeoisie resort to measures which, however, in the long run still further worsen the conditions of the intellectuals.

In Germany the fascist dictatorship has restricted admissions to the universities. In 1931 the number of students accepted into German universities was 30,800, in 1932 it was 25,400, which was 55 per cent. of the total number who had finished the secondary schools. According to a fascist law, in 1933 only 15,500 men and 1,500 women were permitted to enter the universities, although 40,000 had finished the secondary schools. However, the fascists declare that in future this figure will be reduced to 10,000. Along with measures taken to restrict the number of students (numerus clausus—a percentage quota), decisions have now been taken in many capitalist states which involve the limitation of the approach to certain academic professions. For example, such are the lines taken by legislation regarding Jews in fascist Germany, which by demanding adherence to a definite race made it possible to narrow down certain professions. The majority of the intellectuals are sacrificed to the fascist "selection of the elite." Similar results have been brought about by other measures adopted in various capitalist countries. The law regarding language which in reality only provided facilities for State employment to representatives of the dominant nationality (Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, etc.), shows what rôle the national

* Ten kron equals about 22 cents or 1 shilling.

question in particular countries is playing in these countries.

In view of all this a situation is developing in which a certain small strata of the intellectuals is ensured the possibility of a secure existence, but at the expense of a larger section who are deprived of every possibility of rising socially. In order to bring about such a reactionary solution of the question of the intellectuals the fascist bourgeoisie make particularly strong use of national demagoguery and race hatred. But it is precisely such a bourgeois fascist method of solving the question that worsens the conditions of the toiling intellectuals. The bourgeoisie are unable to do away with unemployment and the crisis among the intellectuals. The bourgeoisie limit themselves merely to splitting the intellectuals into a privileged section, and another section which is denied all possibility of rising socially.

The Position of the Middle Strata in the Class Struggle and Fascism.

The basic interests of the majority of the petty-bourgeoisie conform to the interests of the working class. This applies, above all, to the masses of the lower and middle employees and officials. This also applies to the vast majority of the unemployed or exploited toiling intellectuals, and to those strata of the small handicraftsmen and traders who do not exploit the labour of others. But since the conditions of the lower strata of employees, and the section of the petty-bourgeoisie who are occupied in wage-labour, are already directly those of the proletariat, or at any rate very closely approach those of the proletariat, these strata may be regarded as the direct and nearest allies of the proletariat. They may be regarded as the nearest section of the petty-bourgeoisie, and the task of winning them must be advanced to the forefront of the proletarian struggle. As for the intellectuals, then apart from their bourgeois section, we must distinguish between the layer which works for wages, and those who still carry on an independent petty-bourgeois existence (the liberal professions).

Both these strata of the intellectuals may, along with the poorer students, be regarded as the toiling intellectuals, and the task of winning them is of great importance owing to the part they play in social life.

"The proletariat, while ruthlessly suppressing every counter-revolutionary action on the part of hostile layers of the intelligentsia, must at the same time give consideration to the necessity of utilising this skilled social force for the work of socialist construction, it must give every encouragement to the groups that are neutral, and especially those that are friendly towards the proletarian revolution." (Programme of the Communist International.)

In addition to winning over this strata of the employees and of the toiling intellectuals, there

also arises the task of winning over or neutralising the independent middle strata, the small traders and the small handicraftsmen, who find it difficult to come over to the proletariat as they are small property men. Nevertheless, the fact that there is no possibility within the limits of the capitalist system for these small owners to develop their interests, drives them in the direction of the proletariat. In this connection we must distinguish between that section of the small traders and handicraftsmen who do not employ hired labour, and those who have two or three workers or employees.

The attempts of these strata to win back their former conditions, destroyed by capitalism, on the basis of the preservation of capitalism, create the prerequisites for these elements to be utilised by reaction. We are therefore faced with the task of showing that such a return is not only reactionary but is utopian, and that therefore the petty-bourgeois masses can only save themselves by fighting for what Marx once defined as their future interests. Now that the Soviet Union exists, we have the greatest possibilities of proving to the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie that the widest prospects of advancement open out before them within the framework of the new order, within the framework of socialism. And not only because the Communists oppose any violent expropriation of small property. The socialist reconstruction of economy, the attraction of the toilers into socialist construction, whether they are intellectuals, office workers or small handicraftsmen, will create a new social advancement for the toilers, whose standard of living under capitalism is frequently lower than that of the proletariat, instead of as now the fate of becoming declassed.

Therefore, Comrade Stalin was right when he wrote:

"If formerly it was difficult for a socialist to show himself with open vizzor among the non-proletarian middle strata of the oppressed or oppressing countries, to-day he can openly propagate the idea of socialism among these strata and expect to be listened to and perhaps even followed, for he possesses so cogent an argument as the October Revolution." (Stalin, *The October Revolution and the Question of the Middle Strata.*)

How could it happen that in a number of countries, above all, in Germany, but also in France and other countries, a large section of the middle classes caught the bait flung out by fascism and, even though temporarily, found themselves on the other side of the barricade? This cannot be simply explained by the agitational smartness of the fascists, but only by the peculiarities of the economic conditions of certain strata, who, although connected with the proletariat as far as their basic and permanent interests are concerned, yet conflict with the interests of the proletariat by reason

of separate, temporary and passing interests. The question of competition plays a great part with the petty-bourgeoisie. It is precisely in view of the proletarianisation of the small traders and the small handicraftsmen that the struggle among them sharpens on the basis of competition, but their struggle against their big capitalist competitors grows particularly sharp. The small handicraftsmen and small traders in Germany demand that stern measures be taken against the big department stores, the cheap universal bazaars, etc. The small shoemakers in Czecho-Slovakia demand that Bata's repair shops be closed. In all the capitalist countries at the present time, petty-bourgeois demands of this character are being presented in one form or another, which, although directed against finance capital, are utopian in essence and partly even reactionary. The Nazis were able to let loose their demagogy, in the shape of promises to close the department stores. As representatives of the interest of capital they do not fulfil their demagogic promises. On the other hand, the proletariat, which carries on an unconditional struggle against big commercial capital, will not agree to fulfil such demands because they are directed not only against the capitalists but also against the interests of the employees in the department stores. This reactionary demand leads to a split between these employees and the masses of the petty-traders, whereas they should march hand in hand in the struggle against fascism and capitalism.

Whilst rejecting incorrect methods and slogans of struggle against big finance capital, the Communist Party must advance correct slogans which will help unite the proletariat and the masses of the toiling petty-bourgeoisie against capital (the question of taxes, etc.).

Some sections of the intellectuals think that they will be able to save themselves from destruction if the number of competitors in their sphere is restricted. Therefore, the reactionary students in many capitalist countries demand the introduction of "percentage quotas." For the same reason certain strata of the intellectuals in Germany welcomed the anti-Semitic incitement carried on by fascism, etc. In reality such reactionary measures cannot save the majority of the intellectuals, but can only counterpose a handful of the privileged to the masses of the intellectuals. Only the socialist system can create possibilities for work for the majority of the intellectuals and even an additional demand for mental labour, as the example of the Soviet Union proves. There, despite the rapid increase in the number of intellectuals from among the working class and the toiling masses, the demand for skilled workers in

the sphere of mental labour is nevertheless increasing.

The situation is different for that section of the small handicraftsmen and traders who, though they are growing poorer, nevertheless still employ even a very small number of hired workers. It is precisely these strata who constantly conflict with the interests of the working class, even when they do not succumb to the influence of fascism. A clear example of this is provided by the movement of the small car owners in Greece. Together with their drivers they fought against the monopolisation of motor transport in Greece by big foreign capitalist companies. In this struggle these small owners were under the leadership of the revolutionary working-class movement. But in the course of this joint struggle, in the cause of the united front, a certain contradiction became evident, when the drivers demanded some increase of wages from their small employers. The C.P. of Greece acted correctly when it came out in principle in defence of the workers' demands against the small owners, but at the same time recommended that these demands should not be put in the forefront during the period of the joint struggle against foreign capital.

A similar situation exists in other capitalist countries. The more these property-owning middle strata become impoverished, the more sharply does the tendency develop for them to reduce wages, to bring about the destruction of wage agreements, to put an end to social insurance and other gains of the proletariat. The contradiction of interests which thus arises between the section of the middle classes which employs hired labour and the proletariat, makes it possible for fascism to utilise these strata.

If we take the methods used by fascism to influence the middle strata in Germany as an example, we shall see that the fascists operate in two directions. On the one hand, they pretend to defend the interests of the middle strata against finance capital. Their demagogy against the "greed" of capital, against the "slavery of interest," and against the big department stores, was all an attempt to give their movement the appearance of an anti-capitalist struggle. At the same time, the fascists appealed to the property-owning instincts of the middle classes, by emphasising that their "German," "National" Socialism is not identical with the destruction of private ownership, but on the contrary they, the fascists, want to defend small ownership, etc. The slander which they hurled against Marxism was aimed, at the same time, at utilising the reactionary sentiments of certain strata of the petty-bourgeoisie. The fascists appealed in the same way to the intellectuals who adopted a hostile attitude to the equality alleged

to be inevitable under Socialism, and who wanted to defend their special position in society. They appealed to the small trader and the small property owner who were sighing for the old patriarchal relations with their employees, because a return to the old system would lead to the abolition of all collective agreements, to the reduction of wages and insurance payments. Thus fascist agitation was successful among the middle strata because it was able to utilise certain of the interests of various sections of the middle strata against the proletariat.

The bloody experience of the fascist dictatorship in Germany has already shown that that section of the middle strata who believed that they could provide for their own existence by reactionary measures has already become disillusioned. They have been forced to become disillusioned because the objective situation of capitalism is such that it cannot give anything even temporarily to the majority of the middle strata. It is just the lessons provided by the fascist dictatorship in Germany that are leading the broad strata of the petty-bourgeoisie to the realisation that only revolutionary Socialism, only Marxism, can provide them with a way out of the situation.

In the conditions of the fascist dictatorship, the consciousness is growing that all measures which link up the fate of the petty-bourgeoisie with that of dying capitalism, whether "socialist" or not, are directed in the long run against the basic interests of the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie. Their interests are linked up with those of the proletariat and the victory of Socialism.

If it is true that the petty-bourgeoisie cannot avoid becoming declassed within the bounds of capitalism, this nevertheless does not mean that the necessity for a struggle for their partial demands disappears. On the contrary! The proletariat and the Communist Party can only win over the petty-bourgeois masses by the fact that they carry on a struggle at the present day for a number of the demands that directly concern the petty-bourgeoisie. The struggle of the employees against unemployment and for better conditions of labour; unbearable taxes and the burden of debts do this. The measures of fascist oppression, measures which sometimes strike directly at the petty-bourgeois strata nearer to the proletariat. entering universities; the persecution of petty traders and handicraftsmen for exceeding fixed prices; the militarisation of the student youth in the form of labour service; the swindling collections of contributions, etc.—all this can bring the petty-bourgeoisie strata nearer to the proletariat. The situation requires that a series of concrete demands be drafted for each country and for each

special section on the middle classes which can mobilise these strata for the struggle against capitalism.

In a number of capitalist countries examples already exist of movements of the petty-bourgeois masses which are developed in the closest alliance with the proletariat, not to mention the colonial and semi-colonial countries where the participation of the masses of the petty-bourgeoisie in the anti-imperialist struggle is a well-known thing. How great was the importance, for example, of the fact that not so long ago in the United States the War Veterans organised a march on Washington! What a blow was struck at the prestige of British imperialism by the fact that during the last two or three years a wide anti-fascist, anti-imperialist student movement has grown up in the British Universities embracing thousands of students, and despite a certain pacifist haziness, acting under the slogan of the alliance of the working class and the intellectuals! In France since 1933 there has been a wave of protest demonstrations and active movements by the small traders and the small handicraftsmen against the burden of taxation and against the robbery of finance capital. Reactionary elements tried to take shape inside this movement, but it is impossible to overlook the growing influence of Communism. In 1934 the broad scope of the proletarian mass movement led to the fact that considerable strata of the petty-bourgeoisie joined the anti-fascist movement, and their representatives participated in the anti-fascist congress in Paris. This congress worked out the concrete partial demands for the petty-bourgeoisie for the first time. The best minds among the French intellectuals, poets with a world reputation, noted throughout the world, have expressed their sympathy and solidarity with Communism. During the last few years a special organisation of working intellectuals has grown up in Czechoslovakia called the "left front," which, under the slogan of the alliance of the working intellectuals and the proletariat, has already gathered the mass of the intellectuals into its ranks, and also a considerable number of the most famous and prominent scientists. In a number of strikes the middle strata have shown extremely active solidarity with the proletariat, often in the shape of money donations or closing their stores during proletarian demonstrations (strike in Brux). News is coming ever more frequently of the participation even in Germany of certain petty-bourgeois strata in the collection of money and in various illegal campaigns to help the proletarian class struggle. After the events of July 30th the profound discontent of the petty-bourgeoisie with the fascist régime has been made clear. According to information received from various sources, various sections of

the Storm Troops are already beginning to unite with the workers in their struggle.

It is true that all these movements and actions in almost all countries show that there is still a big gap between the objective possibilities and the actual mass influence of the Communist Parties over the petty-bourgeoisie. This has its objective causes (primarily the splitting of the proletariat by social-democracy). But there is also a subjective cause which is that the Communist Party does not maintain a sufficiently intensive course for the winning of the toiling middle strata. Work on this section of the front lags behind. The struggle

for the middle classes is a struggle to destroy the mass basis of fascism. In this struggle it is necessary to utilise the disillusionment of the middle strata with the fascist dictatorship in Germany, and the proof that has been given of the impossibility of saving these strata by capitalist methods. This must be used to mobilise the middle strata for struggle under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. In this connection a big part has been and is being played by the successes of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., the experience of which should be made especially widely known among the toiling middle strata.

SOME NOTES ON THE UNITED FRONT IN BRITAIN

By PAT DEVINE.

DESPITE an intensification of the anti-Communist reactionary activities of the official Labour leaders, who denounced all attempts to mobilise the anti-fascist forces of the working class, the Communist Party of Great Britain has been able to mobilise tens of thousands of Labour and trade union workers for united front activity against the fascists and the National Government. In this activity the new and wider basis of approach to working-class organisations opened up by the achievement of the united front with the Independent Labour Party in 1933, has been of great importance in strengthening the Party contact with broader sections of the masses. The united front activity since May 1st has been an advance on the activity surrounding the National Hunger March and Unity Congress (February, 1934). The September 9th anti-fascist demonstration, which, despite the opposition of the official Labour Party and trade union leaders, rallied over 100,000 workers in Hyde Park, and delivered a stinging blow against fascism and for unity, was the high point in the united front activity to date. It has opened up a perspective of ever-growing solidarity action by the full force of a united working class.

On the major issues facing the working class the Party reacted immediately, and with the increased activity of the membership was able to place itself clearly in the leadership of the struggle against the Mosley fascists. It is now becoming a serious force in the struggle against the National Government. An especially encouraging feature of the work of the Party was the speed with which it ideologically combatted and answered the various reactionary provocative statements of the Labour leaders, urged and mobilised the carrying of the campaign into the lower Labour and trade

union organisations, and throughout, in all the united front activity, maintained its independent rôle. The initiative shown in making an approach to the Labour Members of Parliament for support of the Litvinov Geneva proposals is worthy of note.

It must be pointed out, however, that the work for unity in the enterprises has not kept pace with the unity drive on the big political issues. Attention to, and the remedying of, this basic weakness points the way to still greater successes for the Party in the future.

The anti-working-class drive of the National Government (new Unemployment Bill, Sedition Bill, Pollitt and Mann arrests, support to anti-Soviet Japanese militarists in the Far East), the intensifying activity of Mosley fascists (Olympia, White City and Hyde Park demonstrations), the ferment in Europe (June 30th events in Germany and the Dollfuss assassination), the movement of approximately 4,000,000 workers for wage increases (Railwaymen, Transport workers, Miners, etc.), as well as the united front developments in France and Austria, have exerted a great influence on the masses of workers and intellectuals. This operates especially inside the trade unions, Labour Parties and among the unemployed and youth. They have added impetus to the united front and sharpened the class struggle on all fronts.

In London, the District Party Committee mobilised its members in all organisations for the organisation of a counter-demonstration to Mosley's Olympia meeting. United front appeals, pointing out the dangers of fascism developing if not opposed by the mass might of the working class were sent to the London Labour Party, Trades Council, Co-operative Party and I.L.P., urging the importance of joint action, as well as the broaden-

ing of a proposed anti-fascist conference (called by the Trades Council for May 24th) to include delegates from all organisations. Despite the refusal of the Trades Council to allow delegates from non-affiliated organisations on the grounds that "the Labour Party and trade unions were the united front," a resolution embodying this viewpoint and urging "election of a Third Labour Government as the best anti-fascist weapon" was sharply challenged by a minority of the delegates. This was only carried through the use of the bloc vote, by 151 to 39 (the Transport and General Workers' Union delegation, one of the largest at the conference, did not vote because of a divided opinion).

Growth of Unity Movement.

Following upon this conference the Council of Civil Liberties (formed on left-wing initiative to protect "civil rights and free speech" at the time of the Hunger March) and the London Trades Council issued a joint call for an all-inclusive conference against the Sedition Bill on June 9th, and suggested the setting aside of June 24th as a National Day of Struggle Against the Bill.

In face of the developing movement for a united front against the fascist tendencies of the National Government, the leadership of the reformist Labour movement maintained its reactionary anti-united front attitude. At about this time it put off a decision regarding an appeal for united action from the Pollitt-Mann Defence Committee by asking for the names of the associated organisations and persons. Finally, on June 21st, it refused to do anything on the grounds that "the question was before the courts and was therefore *sub-judice*," which, of course, ruled out the possibility of any action. Among the rank and file and lower officials, however, there was an ever-growing sympathy to the united front. The National Union of Clerks' Annual Conference passed a resolution in favour of unity in spite of the T.U.C. ban. The Glasgow Trades Council (one of the largest in the country) decided for an "all in" united front against the Unemployment Bill. In spite of the strong pressure of the T.U.C., Bradford Trades Council decided to extend the united front and called upon the T.U.C. to withdraw the ban. Communist Party fractions, strong in these councils, are gaining influence.

When working-class interest was centred on Geneva (and peace), where Litvinov made the Soviet proposals, the Central Committee of the C.P.G.B. issued an appeal to the Labour M.P.s urging them to raise the question of British support for the proposals in Parliament. Although no answer was received from these M.P.s, this call focussed attention on the Soviet peace policy as distinct from the demagogic "words but not deeds"

of the Labour Party and the National Government.

The extent and efficiency of the anti-Sedition Bill agitation expressed itself at the joint London Trades Council and Civil Liberties Council conference on June 9th, when 1,500 delegates, including all shades of opinion from Communist to Liberal, unanimously decided to fight against the Bill and to organise a National Day of Struggle against it for June 24th. On this day (June 24th) the most all-embracing united front seen in years was witnessed in all parts of the country; leading Labourites, Trade Unionists, I.L.P.ers, Communists and Liberals spoke from all platforms. Even A. M. Wall, Secretary of the London Trades Council and one of the foremost anti-Communists, spoke together with Comrade Pollitt on Trafalgar Square. On the crest of this wave of enthusiasm the National Unemployed Workers' Movement was able to get a united front with certain Labour M.P.s and Trades Councils in the fight against the Trenchard ban on labour exchange meetings in London.

Simultaneously with the above-mentioned united front drive against the Sedition Bill, Pollitt-Mann arrests, etc., had gone the preparations for the counter-demonstration against the Mosley fascists at Olympia on June 7th. All united front approaches to the official London Labour and Trade Union Executives had been turned down on the grounds that they, "whilst being against fascism, were for free speech" and that "such a counter-demonstration would merely advertise and not retard fascism." London workers repudiated the treachery of the reformist leaders, turned out in their thousands against fascism and delivered a smashing blow against Mosley. A significant feature of this action was the participation of 22 branches of the Labour League of Youth (youth section of the Labour Party).

C.P.'s Unity Proposals.

The answer of the Labour bureaucracy to the rising militancy and anti-war spirit of the masses was seen in their June 28th statement on war. This repudiated the general strike and said that, under certain conditions, the Labour movement would support the British Government. This statement is a barometer with which to judge the imminence of war. It shows the extent to which the Labour leaders have solidarised themselves with the imperialists. Trade unionists and Labour workers in all sections of the movement vigorously opposed this policy by resolution (the T.U.C. Congress at Weymouth in September endorsed the official war statement by an overwhelming majority, despite opposition from a minority of militant delegates).

That the mighty movement of the workers in united action was securing results was seen from

the fact that Tom Mann and Harry Pollitt were acquitted on the sedition charges. The Sedition Bill, which the Government was so anxious to pass into law before the recess was somewhat altered in committee and finally left over until the next session of Parliament in October. A National United Front Committee against Fascism was elected in London for the purpose of conducting the fight against Mosley, whose proposed national demonstration in White City, London, was abandoned because of the mass protests.

With the united front developments in Austria and the united front pact in France there came a new spirit among the British workers. Surely now that such powerful parties of the Second International had agreed to unity, the British Labour Party would change its attitude? The Central Committee of the C.P.G.B. on July 16th sent a letter to the Labour Party, T.U.C., Co-operative Party and I.L.P., calling attention to French unity and urging that on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the World War a united front should be built. The war policy of the National Government in contradistinction to the Soviet peace policy was indicated; the importance of the struggle against fascism pointed out, and a joint meeting requested to discuss the following points:

"(1) To organise and carry out joint demonstrations on the 20th Anniversary of the outbreak of war on August 5th. At these demonstrations we suggest that the following points should be emphasised by the speakers:

- (a) The seriousness of the war situation and the menace of fascism.
- (b) The interests of the whole working class demand that not a man, not a penny, should be used for the purposes of imperialist war—the money now expended on armaments to be used to provide increases in unemployment, health and old age insurance benefits, and the extension of the school age with allowances for children at school, the reduction of all burdens of taxation on the workers, and the provision of work of social value at trade union rates of pay.
- (b) Not a train, not a ship, must be allowed to leave the depôts and ports which is transporting munitions of war for Japan or fascist Germany.
- (2) To help in the organising of an anti-fascist movement, built up of groups in every locality and factory or other place of work, and to demand the suppression of Mosley's Blackshirts and other fascist bodies.
- (3) To organise workers' opposition and resistance to the New Unemployment Insurance Act and Sedition Bill.
- (4) To take all possible measures to rouse the working class to protect the Socialist Soviet Union and its Socialist construction from the counter-revolutionary war of the imperialists; to protect the revolutionary democratic Chinese Soviet Republic from counter-revolutionary attacks; to protect China from being carved up by the imperialist powers.

Comrades, we are addressing this appeal for united action to you in all earnestness and sincerity, prompted only by the desire to advance the fight of the whole working class in its struggle against fascism and war, etc."

Alongside this appeal the *Daily Worker* urged

all local Labour Parties, trade unions and co-operatives to intensify their energies in support of unity and to demand that the Communist Party deputation be received by the Labour Party Executive. The London, Glasgow and other party districts made similar appeals to the appropriate reformist organisations.

Joint Council's Reply.

The National Joint Council replied on July 27th as follows:

"Dear Comrades,—Your letter of the 16th instant, addressed to the Labour Party Executive Committee, was before a meeting of the National Joint Council held in London yesterday when we had the advantage of a delegation from the Co-operative Party.

"After some discussion the following resolution was unanimously agreed to and has been communicated to the press:—

"The National Joint Council, in consultation with a delegation from the Co-operative Party, having considered the request from the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Great Britain, proposing a consultation upon the organisation of a "united front" is of the opinion that there are no new circumstances which justify the trade unions, political, Parliamentary and Co-operative movement departing from the policy on this question which has already been submitted to and approved by their respective National Conferences and Congresses."

The Communist Party immediately answered by pointing to the Government's new war expenditures, the June 30th events in Germany, Austrian events, and the Olympia anti-fascist meeting, and stated that:

"Your refusal to meet representatives of the Communist Party is in marked contrast to the time your representatives spend in conference with the semi-fascist National Government, a government which has been denounced on every labour platform in the country as the bitterest enemy of the working class."

The reply concluded by reiterating the sincerity of the C.P. for united front and the confidence "that our campaign will meet with a wide response and at last succeed in overcoming all barriers and obstacles that have so far prevented united action."

In Scotland (Glasgow) the Labour Party replied to the united front proposals by stating that "they could not unite with those who are leading to disunity—

that "they have made arrangements for a 'Victory for Socialism' campaign"

and that "there is nothing to prevent anyone from taking his part in such a campaign."

The C.P. replied that the "Victory for Socialism" campaign actually meant waiting for a Third Labour Government instead of an energetic campaign for better conditions now, and points out in connection with the statement about "disunity" that the Communist Party has been in the forefront of all the anti-fascist and anti-National Government struggles, and these struggles could

have been more powerful if the Labour Party had participated.

On the trade union field the Party was also active. During the strike of 4,000 London dockers the D.P.C. unsuccessfully approached the London Trades Council for joint activity in support of the strikers (May 18th). In the Oxford Pressed Steel strike the Communist cell was the leader, and organised a strong strike committee. It won over the Trades Council for support, organised a strong trade union branch and at the successful conclusion of the strike was officially thanked by the union. The U.M.S. (Red Miners' Union in Scotland) sent an appeal to the executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, urging a joint ballot for unity at the pits, 10 per cent. wage increase, etc., but were turned down. A letter was sent from the National (Hunger) March Council to the Trade Union Congress, asking that a united front against the Unemployment Bill be agreed upon; this request was also refused. The Executive Committee of the Scottish Brasmoulders' Union repudiated the T.U.C. refusal of unity and solidarised itself with the Communist proposals.

Among the youth the united front rapidly developed. The I.L.P. Guild of Youth National Conference, despite all the wiles of Maxton and Brockway, decided by 18 votes to 12 (May 20th) for sympathetic affiliation to the Y.C.I. The London Labour League of Youth, immediately following the Labour Party war statement, organised an anti-war and anti-fascist demonstration on July 6th; and at a specially convened conference on July 31st, called against the wishes of the adult body, they repudiated the war statement by 90 votes to 17. The resolution said in part:

"We do not propose to be betrayed as was the youth of this country in 1914. In no circumstances would it be to the interests of the youth of this country for the Labour movement to support war in defence of any capitalist state."

On August 4th and 5th the most powerful youth united front conference for years was held in Sheffield and attended by over 600 delegates, the largest group of which (60) came from the Labour League of Youth. The Young Communist League has made a concrete united front approach to the Labour Youth and the possibilities are unlimited.

September 9th.

The culmination of the united front work since May 1st was seen in the Hyde Park anti-fascist demonstration on September 9th. Every available argument was used by the Labour leaders to prevent the demonstration; they refused the united front. On August 22nd, the Joint Labour Council issued a most provocative statement which says in part:

"... it is clear . . . that what is aimed at is a repetition

on a wider scale of the tactics pursued by the Communist Party in connection with the Olympia demonstration, when organised opposition to the meeting was fomented, the effect of which was to give the British Union of Fascists an excuse for a display of violence that has called forth universal denunciation.

"The attitude of the National Council of Labour was clearly defined in connection with the happenings at the Olympia meeting, when it was emphasised in the clearest and most emphatic terms that the organised labour movement repudiated entirely every form of organised interruption at public meetings . . .

"We request your organisation to refrain from having anything whatever to do with the proposal (i.e., for a counter-demonstration against the fascist thugs—P.D.)"

The Secretariat of the Communist Party immediately denounced this statement as

"one of the most outrageous actions ever committed by the leadership of the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress against the working class movement."

Continuing, the Secretariat said:

"In condemning the Hyde Park demonstration against fascism, the declaration of the reformist labour leaders constitutes a deliberate attempt to disrupt and hold back the working class movement at a most critical juncture . . .

"By its own actions the National Council is helping to split the workers' ranks and is paving the way for fascism in the same fashion as was done by the treacherous Social Democratic leaders in Austria and Germany. It has already declared support for its own capitalist warmongers. Now it comes out with protection for the fascists. This is the policy which the Labour Party and the T.U.C. leaders wish the workers to accept."

A similar reactionary provocative statement was issued jointly by the London Labour Party and Trades Council under the signatures of Mr. Wall and Mr. Morrison, the leader of the Labour majority on the London County Council. The *Daily Herald*, with its two million circulation, on September 8th, the eve of the demonstration, printed a front-page story headed, "Stay Away from Hyde Park," and an editorial headed "Don't Go," in which it said:

"We earnestly hope that all members of the Labour movement will loyally accept the advice of the National Council of Labour to stay away from Hyde Park tomorrow. . . .

"The intention of those organising the counter-demonstration does not bear dispute. THEY WANT A ROW (my emphasis—P.D.) . . .

"It is just as hopeless to try to suppress fascism in this country by violence and intimidation as to try to suppress Socialism in Germany by concentration camp and execution. Ultimately its appeal can be defeated only before the high court of cool reason. And to the effort to expose the pretensions of fascism by reasoned argument and informed criticism all members of the Labour Movement must contribute their share . . ."

Despite the great barrage of opposition from the Labour leaders, the anti-fascist demonstration completely swamped the Mosley fascists in a sea of working-class activity. The attendance is variously estimated at from 100,000 to 150,000 representatives of the masses of Labour, trade union and Communist workers in London.

Immediately following the magnificent Hyde Park display of solidarity and unity by the workers, the Communist Party has again sent a united front call to the National Joint Council which says:

"The response of the London workers to the anti-fascist demonstration in Hyde Park on September 9th has brought out more strikingly than ever before the tremendous desire of the workers for united action against fascism . . .

". . . we now propose a joint meeting between representatives of the Communist Party and your organisations for the purpose of an exchange of opinion and discussion, free from all restrictions, on all questions relating to the united front . . .

"We would remind you of what an important capitalist newspaper, *Manchester Guardian*, wrote in regard to the Hyde Park demonstration as lending point to the necessity of such a discussion as we now propose:

"The point for Sir Oswald Mosley to ponder over is that if this counter-demonstration, which outnumbered his by about twenty to one, could be gathered from such a small party as the Communists, with large numbers of Londoners acting on their own initiative, on what scale would the opposition have been had it the whole force of organised labour behind it?"

"We are convinced that if such a discussion as we propose were to be reported on to the forthcoming Southport Conference of the Labour Party it would meet with overwhelming support."

The above call for unity will gain increasing support among the Labour masses in the trade unions and factories. It is of the utmost importance that the Communist Party shall not relax its activity for one moment, but on the contrary should intensify its work in the factories and unions and maintain a consistent line of struggle.

The importance and necessity of steady, consistent work can be seen from the situation existing in the I.L.P. in relation to the Communists. Following upon the I.L.P. Annual Conference in

April, a joint C.P.-I.L.P. meeting agreed to a united front against fascism, the Sedition Bill and war. The sentiment among the I.L.P. rank and file was one of sympathy to the C.I. In the Merthyr Parliamentary by-election, leading I.L.P.ers supported the C.P. candidate and joined the Communist Party. The Lancashire right wing broke away from the I.L.P. The I.L.P. Youth decided to sympathetically affiliate to the Y.C.I. A delegation from the Affiliation Committee visited Moscow, conversed with leading comrades in the C.I., and on its return to England published the replies of the leaders of the C.I. to the various questions at issue. The C.P. (May 12th) issued a statement supporting the candidature of Brockway in the Upton Parliamentary by-election, despite the fact that his reply to our questionnaire had been extremely unsatisfactory.

From now onwards it is imperative that the united front contacts with the I.L.P. are intensified. The desire for unity, which is so forcefully expressing itself in the ranks of the masses of workers is bound to have a great affect on the attitude of the I.L.P. on the broader questions of party unity. The York I.L.P. Conference showed that a considerable minority was in favour of co-operation with an sympathetic affiliation to the Comintern. With intensive work and a clearly seen desire for uniting all the revolutionary elements in the country, based upon the day-to-day experiences of the struggle against fascism and the National Government, the Communist Party can look forward to the next I.L.P. Conference marking a really decisive step forward in the direction of unity in Britain.

(Continued from page 800.)

level under this system of production for the sake of capitalist profits. Mr. Cole says nothing about this. He says nothing because he remains on the basis of capitalist economy. Along with the other liberal apologists of capitalism he advocates "controlled expansion" and "controlled inflation," i.e., measures which must lead to a further intensification of the capitalist struggles for markets and a fall in real wages.

This, according to Cole, forms the "economic plan." To fool the reader, Cole criticises "*capitalist planning*" and points to socialist planning in the U.S.S.R. But Cole does not know, or does not want to know, that the necessary preliminaries to planned economy are the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They are the expropriation of the exploiters by the Soviet Power (and not buying them out) and the transfer of the means of production of the capitalists to the possession of the proletarian state.

Politically, Cole is aiming at a "*constitutional revolution*." "*Revolutionary action such as we have in mind can be taken within the four walls of the constitution*" (page 39). Cole wants to abolish the House of Lords, but naturally the House of Commons remains, and in particular the bourgeois terrorist law of the "defence of the realm" (DORA) and "emergency powers" will remain fully in force. These two reactionary laws are cunningly used by the British capitalists to fight the revolutionary and strike movements. The Labourite "majority government" also wants to use them to defend its "plan" against the revolutionary workers of Great Britain.

This book of Cole's is a symptomatic phenomenon. On the one hand it tries to fool the workers with the very latest "Left" phrases, speaking about internationalism, alliance with the U.S.S.R., "decisive" measures, etc., while on the other hand, amid the chatter of "Left" phrases, you clearly detect the voice of the cynical and impudent apologists of the bourgeoisie.

G. D. H. COLE'S "PLAN FOR BRITAIN"

G. D. H. Cole, the well-known theoretician of the British Labour Party, publishes one work after another. To-day it is a falsification of Marx ("What Marx Really Meant"), to-morrow it is a "scientific" propaganda of inflation ("What Everybody Wants to Know about Money").

But yesterday, to-day and to-morrow, this is the theoretical defence and propaganda of the economic policy of labourism or more accurately, the economic programme for the future Labour "Majority Government." The Labourites are not asleep. They are making businesslike preparations for the election campaign, after which they will no longer be a government "by will of the King," but a government by the "will of the people," i.e., not an appointed government without a majority in parliament, but a genuine "Majority Government." Then the labourites will show what they are made of!

In expectation of such brilliant prospects, there is also a change in the methods by which the Labourite theoreticians are trying to fool the masses. It is not long ago since Cole, greeting the Second Labour Government of MacDonald, declared his old adherence to "guild socialism" to be what he calls his "Mea Culpa"† because even the reactionary theory of guild socialism is too revolutionary for him. Is it so long since he discoursed on the "reconstruction" of capitalism and the necessity for forming a "new world capitalism," i.e., "capitalism with a world outlook in place of the sectional and conflicting capitalism of to-day."‡ Is it long since he proved that "in view of the recent developments of capitalist organisation, the old idea of socialisation needs to be drastically reconsidered" and replaced by "state control," because as far as concerns "many of the largest most successful capitalist firms," it would be extremely "undesirable in socialising such concerns to break them up."§ And for the other firms which were not successful, it was proposed to subsidise them under the cloak of "control."

Beginning with 1933, Cole and the other Labourite theoretician Laski suddenly began to "swing to the Left," to take an interest in Marx, in the U.S.S.R., to take part in the American symposium "Recovery Through Revolution," etc. The culminating point of the "Leftward swing" of Cole is the "plan" formed by him according to which the Third Labour Government will govern the country.||

"We are hoping and expecting to get, before many years are out, a clear socialist majority in the House of Commons, and we are trying now to work out in advance what we want such a majority to do."

† *The Next Ten Years of British Socialism and Economic Policy*, page 171.

‡ *The Intelligent Man's Guide Through the World Chaos*, page 53.

§ *The Next Ten Years*, etc., p. 426.

|| *A Plan for Britain*—Clarion Text.

The author further states that he is not one of those in the hope of gradually changing "*Capitalism into socialism by slow stages of tranquil evolution.*" . . . No, he wants to "*set out to make our new policy on a quite different set of assumptions.*"

It was but yesterday that Cole was cunningly proving the necessity for a "*gradual conversion of capitalism into socialism,*" but the political situation of Great Britain at the present day is such that the workers cannot be tricked by the old phrases. New phrases have to be sought for, more suitable for the present day. The "new" policy must be based on a "frontal attack" on the basic positions of capitalism or "*those social institutions which are the seats of capitalist economic power*" (page 6).

This "Left attack," however, is immediately explained in the sense that the aim is not to destroy or change these institutions but only to "*use them aright*" and then "*we shall be able to apply socialist control to every part of the economic system.*" Thus the famous "control" is returned back to the scene.

Cole, just as his Austrian colleague Renner, starts out his planning not from production but from exchange. The basic thing for him is still the old labourite panacea—the "socialisation" of the Bank of England and the big joint stock banks (at the congress of the Labour Party in 1932 Bevin was still defending these private banks from "socialisation," but at the 1933 Congress they were nevertheless recognised as mature for nationalisation). On being "socialised" the banks would have to work under the control of "*competent, convinced socialists,*" who would distribute credit according to the "*government's economic plan*" (page 10). But besides the two giants—the semi-official Bank of England and the so-called "big five" (i.e., the five biggest joint stock banks which own approximately 75 per cent. of England's banking capital), there is still a third one which Cole briefly refers to as the "City." The latter, he says, consists mainly of "*the houses which accept and discount trade bills, and those which undertake new issues of capital for home and foreign use.*" And Cole saves from "socialisation" this very City, the stronghold of British capitalism. This is what his manoeuvres lead to. These firms, he explains, depend on the banks and will work under their control.

Thus the emission of capital by private firms, including emission for foreign markets, i.e., the export of capital to the colonies and dependent countries, remains inviolate, while trade bills are still discounted and accepted as before.

Then what changes? The Bank of England changes from a semi-official institution into a fully official state institution, as is the case in many capitalist countries. The biggest banks also become official.

For the City this is not without advantages. In essence, it is under the control of these banks even now. But this is not enough for Cole. The financial magnates, who are in addition backed up by the official power, will not only not be controlled but they themselves will entirely control the markets and the distribution of credit.

Of course, of the City Cole speaks only in passing and even that he does after he has made the reader dizzy with radical phrases.

According to Cole, the "Socialist" government which "socialised" the Banks in this way has three aims :

"(1). Getting a satisfactory level of prices, and prevent irrational price-fluctuations thereafter; (2) ensuring an adequate supply of credit to make possible a full use of the available productive resources, and *the effective use of credit*; (3) securing that the available credit is rightly distributed among the different applicants for it, in accordance with a well-thought-out and balanced economic plan."

The first aim, i.e., the raising of prices, towards which the British capitalists are so earnestly striving, must be brought about with the aid of the Bank of England, which in reality means a policy of inflation.

The third aim will be carried out through the joint stock banks which finance industry, and the second aim through the banks but with the participation of the magnates from the City!

In the matter of the "*reconstruction of industry*," Cole again repeats the famous labour plan of "*socialisation*" of the so-called "*key*" industries—coal mining, automobile and railway transport. The other branches must be reorganised, controlled, etc. "*Socialisation*," according to Cole, means to BUY OUT THE OWNERS. It is true that Mr. Cole makes the shamefaced remark that this purchase must take place at an "*inflated*" price, but only on the basis of payments from certain sums "*for a limited number of years*" (page 18). Mr. Cole, however, does not say that in spite of these restrictions, the buying out of the owners will inevitably mean the robbing of the toiling masses (through taxes, etc.), for the benefit of the capitalists. These capitalists, moreover, will take part in determining the amount of the aforementioned definite sums for the "*limited number of years*."

This exceptionally radical proposal is supplemented further by another one—the "*really drastic limitation of inheritance*" (page 22). Thus it will not be necessary to confiscate anything at all. When the owner dies, the heirs will receive the purchase price and the enterprise will pass into the hands of the labour government. It is difficult to conceive of a better protection for the capitalists. They cannot leave the factories to their heirs, but they can deal with them while they are alive. The good labour people see to this.

Thus, our author "*purchases*" the enterprises from

some of the capitalists after their death. The others comfortably remain, along with the City. Consequently that which Cole calls "*capital*" remains. Therefore one of his basic proposals is the "*socialist control of capital*." These labour mysteries are carried out through the "*National Investment Board*" which will not only deal with the "*income and capital already in the hands of the state*," but will also control "*all private issue of new capital for either home or foreign use*." This must evidently be an expression of the "*socialist*" control by the Labourites over the City, although in reality this only expresses the readiness on their part to finance the City. This is a kind of I.O.U. given by the future "Majority Government" to the City.

All these, of course, if Cole is to be believed, are only temporary but, according to him, absolutely necessary measures. These measures will be particularly useful for the "*small investors*," who entrust their savings to the state (page 23) and who will therefore be assured that these savings will be usefully employed. In short, the small owner will also be satisfied.

The landlords and the capitalist farmers will also not be losers. The landlords will be bought out while the farmers will remain inviolate along with the other small owners. The capitalist farmers will rent land from the "*socialist*" state and cultivate it by hired labour!

But what about unemployment, the chronic British unemployment? It is a very simple matter. According to Cole, employment "*is being damped down by the widespread refusal of the moneyed classes to invest their money in productive industry*" (page 46).

Thus, the blame rests entirely on the evil will of the British rentiers who try to invest their money in gilt-edged government securities and do not want to develop industry. All this leads to a reduction in employment and a fall of prices. In order to remedy this evil, the Labour Government will finance industry and . . . raise prices! The rise in prices and the policy of "*money expansion*" is necessary in order to develop industry and abolish unemployment.

And how does Mr. Cole expect to abolish the FUNDAMENTAL contradictions of the capitalist system which lie at the basis of unemployment, economic crisis, etc.—namely, the contradiction between the socialised character of production and the private character of appropriation. This contradiction at this time includes among others the form of the contradiction between the increased development of the productive forces, which increased (partly during the war and partly during the period of "stabilisation"), and the extremely narrow and still shrinking markets. It also includes the consuming power of the masses which have fallen to an extremely low

(Continued on page 798.)