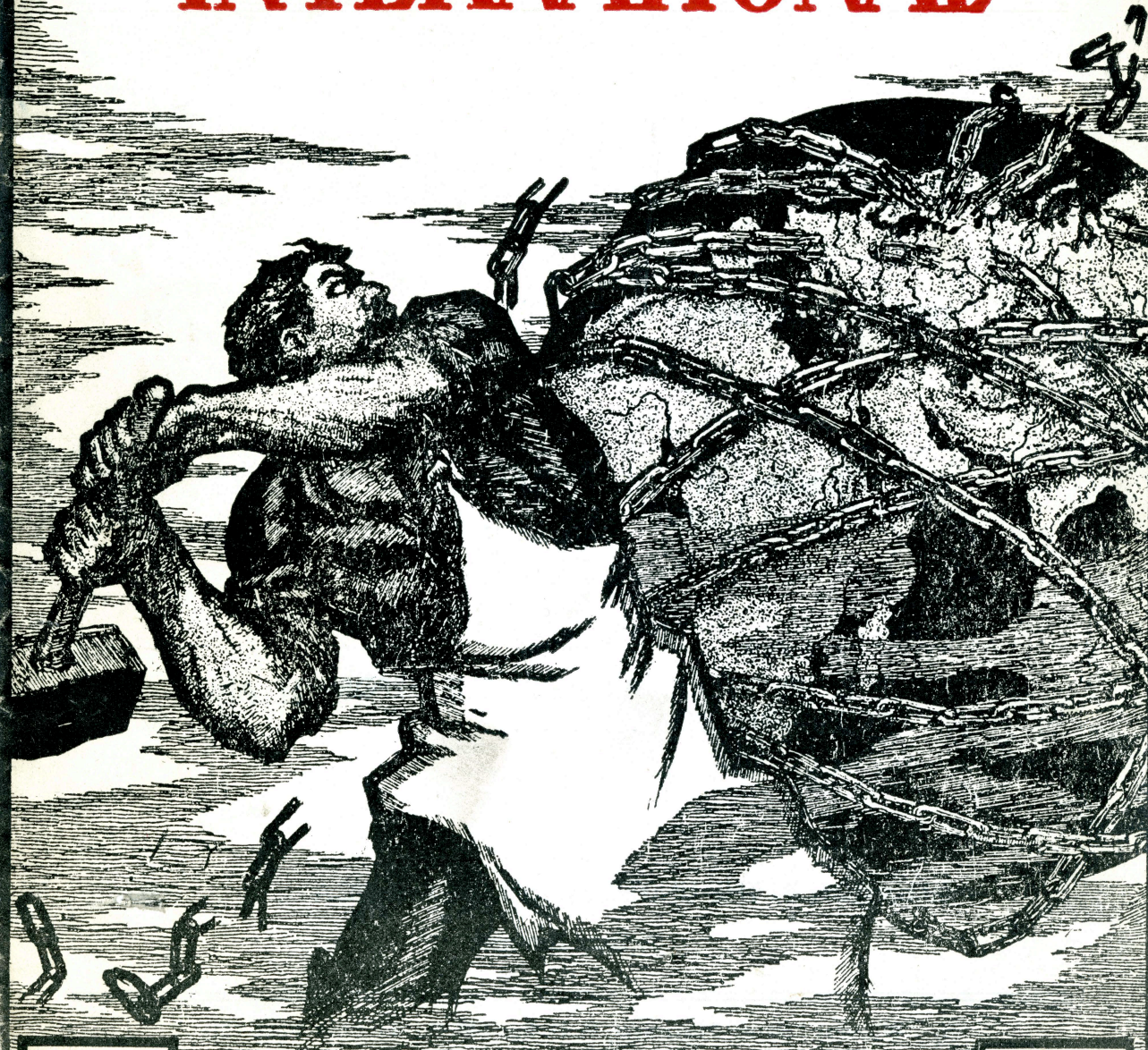


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THE CONGRESS OF VICTORS, THE CONGRESS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF CLASSLESS SOCIETY

THE Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. will go down in history as the *congress of victors*. The speech made at this Congress by the great leader of the world proletariat, Comrade Stalin, will be an unforgettable historic monument. By means of a profound Marxist-Leninist analysis he showed the magnitude of the victory and the way in which the Bolsheviks won their great victories in the environment of dying capitalism, and outlined the tasks to be carried out in future battles. Lenin put forward the theory of the possibility of the victory of socialism in a single country, taken individually, and set the Bolsheviks the task of carrying the theory into life. This caused scornful ridicule on the part of the international bourgeoisie and its social-democratic agents. In the U.S.S.R., the Trotskyists rose in arms against it, the Right opportunists attempted to bring it to naught by their policy of capitulation, but the Party of the Bolsheviks, headed by Comrade Stalin, Lenin's best disciple, who continues his work, made this idea its goal; and thanks to the brilliant leadership of Comrade Stalin this idea was elaborated still further and made a reality in a very short historical period. Ten years after the death of Lenin, Comrade Molotov had all grounds for saying at the Seventeenth Congress:

"The success of the First Five-Year Plan was a practical demonstration to the broad masses of toilers that the building of socialism is possible in one country alone. Socialism in the U.S.S.R. has triumphed, and no matter how great the internal difficulties in the fight for its final triumph, they cannot be greater than the truly gigantic difficulties we have already overcome. That is the fundamental significance of the victory of the First Five-Year Plan."

We can only note in the briefest manner the achievements of the first five-year period reported by Comrade Stalin.

"While industry in the principal capitalist countries shows on the average a *reduction* of 25 per cent and more in the volume of production at the end of 1933 compared with the level of 1929, the industry of the U.S.S.R. during this period *grew* more than twice its size, *i.e.*, increased more than 100 per cent. . . . As you see, the industry of England and Germany has not yet reached the pre-war level, while that of the United States and France has exceeded it by several per cent and the U.S.S.R. has increased its industrial production during this period by 290 per cent compared with the pre-war level.

"This progress has not been merely a simple quantitative accumulation of strength. This progress is remarkable for the fact that it has introduced fundamental changes in the structure of the U.S.S.R. and has radically changed the face of the country.

"How was it possible for these colossal changes to have taken place in a matter of three or four years in the territory of an enormous state with a backward technique and a backward culture? Was it not a miracle? It would have been a miracle had this development proceeded on the basis of capitalism and individual small economy. But it cannot be described as a miracle if we bear in mind that this development proceeded on the basis of expanding socialist construction."

When the N.E.P. was introduced, Lenin said that in the Soviet Union there were the elements of five social-economic systems. Now there are only two of these systems left; moreover, the system of small commodity production has been forced into the background and "the socialist system now has unchallenged predominance and is the sole commanding force in the whole of national economy. Such is the summary." Speaking of the rapid growth of industry during this period, Comrade Stalin stressed the fact that

". . . of all the successes achieved by industry in the period under review, the most important is the fact that it has succeeded in this period in training and forging thousands of new men and women, of new leaders of industry, of a whole stratum of new engineers and technicians, of hundreds and thousands of young skilled workers who have mastered the new technique and who have advanced our socialist industry."

These words of Comrade Stalin are the reply which life itself gives to the stupid "wisdom" of the Kautskys, who foretold the inevitable bankruptcy of the Five-Year Plan because, they claimed, the Bolsheviks would never be able to use the "imported" highly developed technique" without first, through the effort of many decades, preparing a sufficient number of skilled workers.

In speaking of the progress in agriculture, Comrade Stalin pointed to the enormous difficulties connected with the reorganization of agriculture, with the uniting of scattered small peasant farms into collective farms and with the creation on almost vacant spaces of a large number of big grain and cattle raising farms. These difficulties were such that "the years in which the reorganization of agriculture was at its height, *viz.*, 1931 and 1932, were the years in

which the yield of grain crops diminished most." Thus:

"The period under review was not so much a period of the rapid rise and powerful upswing of agriculture as a period of creating the prerequisites for this rise and upswing in the near future."

But *this difficult period of the reorganization of agriculture is already over*. Whereas in 1913 the total grain produce amounted to 801,000,000 centners, in 1930, a year of excellent harvest, it rose to 835,000,000 centners, and then, in the period of reorganization, dropped to 694,800,000 centners, in 1933 the total grain produce rose to an unprecedented figure—898,000,000 centners. The produce of industrial crops—cotton, flax, and oil-seeds—showed the same tendency. That means, that

"... 1933, the first year after the completion of the reorganization period, marks a turning point in the development of grain and industrial crops.

"That shows that, from now onwards, grain crops first and then industrial crops will finally and surely advance with giant strides."

These words of Stalin were fully corroborated by the numerous facts and figures cited by almost all the delegates, including the Ukrainian, from those localities where there was a great breach in the plan.

The change, the final change, which has taken place in the total produce of the grain and industrial crops, can be explained only by the fact that the reconstruction of agriculture has been accomplished and the socialist system of agriculture has won the day. Now,

"The Soviet farms and collective farms together cultivate 84.5 per cent of the total grain area in the U.S.S.R.

"If to this we add the fact that in 1933 the collective farms delivered to the state more than 1,000,000,000 poods of grain in various ways, while the individual peasants who fulfilled the plan 100 per cent delivered only 130,000,000 poods, whereas in 1929-30 the individual peasant delivered to the state about 780,000,000 poods while the collective farms delivered not more than 120,000,000 poods—it will become as clear as clear can be that during the period under review the collective farms and individual peasants have exchanged roles. . . ."

Hence it follows that

"... the toiling peasantry, our Soviet peasantry, has completely and irrevocably come under the red flag of socialism."

From this again follows the more general conclusion that,

"... we have already built the foundations of socialist society in the U.S.S.R. and all we have to do now is to erect the edifice—a task which undoubtedly is much easier than building the foundations of socialist society."

These results decisively disprove the opportunist theory of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyists that it is impossible to build socialism in a single country. But these results were not easy to achieve. Their achievement required an enormous exertion of the strength of the Party and of the working class and was possible in such a short period only thanks to the brilliant leadership of Comrade Stalin. Comrade Kirov was perfectly right when he said at the Congress:

"The socialist transformation of petty-bourgeois peasant economy was the hardest and most complex problem facing the proletarian dictatorship in its struggle for a new socialist society. . . . This most important question of the proletarian revolution has now been solved finally and unalterably in favor of socialism.

"This historic victory over the exploiters, says Comrade Stalin, could not but lead to a radical improvement in the material and general conditions of life of the toilers. . . . The income which the exploiters squeezed out of the labor of the people now remains in the hands of the toilers. . . . Unemployment, that scourge of the working class, has disappeared. . . . With the disappearance of kulak bondage, poverty in the rural districts has disappeared. . . . The very appearance of our large towns and industrial centers has changed. . . ."

"The appearance of our villages has changed even more. The old village, with its church in the most prominent place in the village, with the best houses for the policeman, the priest, and the kulak in the foreground and with the semi-dilapidated huts of the peasants in the background, is beginning to disappear. Its place is being taken by the new village with its public buildings, its club, radio, cinema, schools, libraries, creches, with its tractors, combines, threshing machines and automobiles. . . ."

"The antithesis between town and country is disappearing. The peasants are ceasing to regard the town as the center of their exploitation. The ties of the economic and cultural bond between town and country are becoming stronger.

"Such are the main achievements of the toilers in the sphere of improving their material conditions, their everyday life and culture."

We shall not quote the figures given by Comrade Stalin in his report, which speak of the increase in national income, the growth in population, the increase in the number of workers and employees, the increase in the wage fund and the average annual wage, the assistance rendered by the state to the peasants in the form of agricultural machines, credit,

seed and food-loans, partial exemptions from taxation, etc., nor shall we speak of the growth of the cultural development of the Land of the Soviets, the growth of literacy, as well as of the number of the students and schools, of scientific research institutes, clubs, cinemas, theaters, the growth in the circulation of newspapers, etc. Now shall we speak of the very great achievements which have been reached in the matter of the workers' supplies, of the growth of Soviet trade, of the great development of the auxiliary farms, of Workers' Supply Departments, of the great development of the communal feeding system, and so on, all of which were treated in detail at the Congress by Comrade Mikoyan. We shall only point out two parallels. One of them Comrade Stalin drew in his report:

"It would not be amiss to point out that the number of workers among the students in our higher educational establishments represents 51.4 per cent of the total, and that of toiling peasants 16.5 per cent, whereas in Germany, for example, the number of workers among the students in higher educational establishments in 1932-33 was only 3.2 per cent, and that of small peasants only 2.4 per cent."

The other parallel was drawn by Comrade Molotov in his report:

"During the period 1928-32 the national income of Great Britain fell by 16.9 per cent, the national income of Germany fell 38.6 per cent and the national income of the U.S.A. fell by 56.4 per cent. As the table shows, the greatest drop in national income took place in the richest of capitalist countries—the U.S.A. Only in the Soviet Union did the national income rise (82 per cent)."

* * * * *

The world historic victories of the first Five-Year Plan predetermined the great plan of the second Five-Year Plan, on which Comrades Molotov and Kuibyshev reported at the Congress.

The second Five-Year Plan adopted by the Congress, said Comrade Molotov, sets three closely connected principal tasks.

"The first, and at the same time the principal political task," is,

"... the final liquidation of capitalist elements and of classes in general, the complete destruction of the causes which give rise to class distinctions and exploitation, and the destruction of the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the minds of men, the transformation of the whole toiling population into conscious and active builders of classless socialist society." (Seventeenth Party Conference.)

By the end of the second five-year period the socialist form will occupy a monopolist position in all

branches of economy. Of the five social-economic systems of which Lenin spoke at the beginning of the N.E.P. and of the two which still exist at present, only one will remain by the end of the second five-year period—the socialist system, and the national income of the U.S.S.R. will be wholly and entirely at the disposal of the toilers. Thus the U.S.S.R., after carrying out the tasks of the second Five-Year Plan, will become a monolithic Socialist Republic.

The *second task* of the second Five-Year Plan is to *raise the toilers' level of consumption by from 2.5 to 3 times*. This requires, first of all, that the light and food industries should be provided with raw materials and calls for a *doubling*, at the least, of the marketable produce of the agriculture of the country. Secondly, this requires a considerable increase in the capacity of the light and food industries, and a *trebling* of the output of these branches of industry. "*That is the most important part of the program of the second Five-Year Plan*" (Molotov). "But the task of bringing about the rapid progress of agriculture and the expansion of the light and food industries, and also that of a radical improvement in transport, brings us to the question of the technical reconstruction of the national economy."

The completion of the technical reconstruction of the national economy is the third task, which has been set as "the principal and decisive economic task of the second Five-Year plan."

Owing to the completion of the reconstruction of industry, the production of means of production will increase from 23,100,000,000 in 1932 to 45,500,000,000 in 1937, *i.e.*, by 97.2 per cent, while the production of articles of consumption will increase from 20,200,000,000 to 47,200,000,000, *i.e.*, 133.6 per cent. The total output of the entire industry will exceed the pre-war level approximately eight times.

The result of this growth of industry and in the first place of machine building will be a great change in the relative importance of the industry of the U.S.S.R. in world industry. On the eve of the first Five-Year Plan the U.S.S.R. occupied fifth place among the states of the world. On the eve of the second Five-Year Plan it occupied third place in the world and second in Europe. By the end of the second Five-Year Plan the production of the U.S.S.R. will take second place in the world and first in Europe. Thus, the task of "catching up and surpassing" the capitalist countries in the technical-economic respect is being carried into life. "All this is bringing considerable changes into the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world and raises the struggle between the two social systems to a higher level."

During the first Five-Year Plan enormous wealth has been discovered in the bowels of the earth, which in Czarist Russia was left undeveloped.

The second Five-Year Plan sets itself the task of creating new industrialization bases, *particularly in the eastern districts of the Soviet Union*—the Urals, East and West Siberia, Bashkiria, the Far Eastern Region, Kazakstan, Central Asia. *About half of all the capital investment in new heavy industry plants will go to these eastern districts of the Soviet Union.* Thus the difference between the advanced and the backward districts, between the European and the Asiatic parts of the Soviet Union, will diminish more and more. At the same time, as pointed out by Comrade Stalin, the division of regions into industrial and agrarian—consuming and producing, as they are called—will lose in importance, for serious steps will be and are already being taken in order to develop agriculture even in the most northern regions, on the one hand, and industry in agrarian regions, on the other. All this economic policy is the direct opposite of the policy of capitalist countries, which aims at perpetuating the backwardness of the agrarian countries in order to exploit them as colonies.

As is mentioned above, the most important part of the program of the second Five-Year Plan is the raising of the level of consumption of the toilers by from 2.5 to 3 times the present, the radical improvement in the material conditions of the toilers. For this purpose the increase in the production of articles of consumption in the second Five-Year Plan is planned at the rate of 18.5 per cent, which is considerably higher than the rate of increase in the production of means of production (14.5 per cent). This rate is also higher than the rate of increase in the production of articles of general consumption during the period of the first Five-Year Plan—17 per cent. The production of articles of general consumption in the light and food industry will grow by two and half times. "In the level of its technical equipment, the light industry of the Soviet Union will take one of the first places in the world by the end of the second five-year period."

For the same purpose of radically improving the material conditions of the toilers, the second Five-Year Plan sets the aim of largely increasing the yield of agriculture by over 40 per cent in grain crops, by 60 per cent or more in cotton, flax and sugar beets, and by over 50 per cent in oil seed. As for livestock, the number of horses, sheep and goats will be less than in 1916, but that of large horned cattle will be considerably greater and that of pigs more than double the number in 1916. On the basis of all these measures *real wages* are to increase in the course of the five-year period 2.5 times as compared with those of 1932; this will be effected mainly by a drop of 35-40 per cent in prices.

Such are the great perspectives of the second Five-Year Plan, the feasibility of which is based on the strength of the C.P.S.U., on its revolutionary theory

of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, on its Leninist strategy and tactics, on its ability to put its political line into practice, on its irreconcilability towards all opportunist deviations, on its close connections with the millions of workers and toiling peasants who give it their boundless support, on its tried leadership headed by the great strategist, a man of undaunted revolutionary energy, Comrade Stalin. The fact that the Party which drew up this plan had splendidly fulfilled the first Five-Year Plan assures the fulfillment of the second Five-Year Plan.

At the Congress during the debate on the second Five-Year Plan, Comrade Orjonikidze made a proposal with which, as he said, the other members of the Political Bureau had concurred, namely, that the annual increase in the output of industry during the second five-year period should be fixed not at 18.9 per cent, but at 16.5 per cent. Comrade Molotov, in giving the reasons for this slight reduction, pointed out the following three facts: In the first place, this slightly reduced tempo is so great that "no capitalist country can even dream of it", secondly, at the January Plenum of the Central Committee Comrade Stalin advocated a still more cautious annual rate of increase in output—a minimum of 13-14 per cent; thirdly, and this point Comrade Molotov particularly stressed,

"... it is partly a question of matters and conditions over which we have no control. When finally adopting the program of the Second Five-Year Plan, we must take account of both the internal and the external situation. In this connection we must give serious attention to the suggestion made at this Congress to show a certain cautiousness in setting the tasks of the new Five-Year Plan. . . . This is necessary because the tasks we undertake at the Seventeenth Congress of the Party must *under all circumstances be carried out*. That is the main thing. At the Seventeenth Congress of the Party, we must adopt decisions which the Party, the working class, the toilers of the Soviet Union will carry out *irrespective of any complications in the situation*, which we shall carry out fully, as befits Bolsheviks. That is the task."

These words show the full power and great self-confidence of the Party of the Bolsheviks. To allow for possible international complications this Party takes off 2 per cent out of the 18 per cent growth planned! This shows the madness of the imperialist governments who indulge in hopes of disrupting socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. by means of military adventures.

* * * * *

The Seventeenth Congress was a congress of victors. Precisely for this reason it was the Congress at which the monolithic and solid unity of the Party was demonstrated as it had never been before. At

this Congress Comrade Stalin was justified in saying with pride:

"At the Fifteenth Party Congress it was still necessary to prove that the Party line was right, and to wage a struggle against certain anti-Leninist groups; and at the Sixteenth Party Congress the last adherents of these groups had to be despatched. At this Congress, however, there is nothing to prove and perhaps no one to beat. Everyone now sees that the line of the Party has conquered. . . . It must be admitted that the Party today is united as it has never been before."
(*Loud prolonged applause.*)

The great victories of the Bolsheviks not only united the Party more than ever. They also more than ever united the entire working class of the Soviet Union and the millions and millions of collective farm peasantry around the Party and its leader Comrade Stalin, the organizer and living embodiment of the great Bolshevik victories. These victories and this enthusiasm of the people could not but have its effect upon the former leaders of the opposition. All these former leaders spoke at the Congress, one after another, confessing their sins before the Party and trying to atone for them. At the beginning there were Comrades Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, then Comrade Preobrazhensky, towards the end of the Congress Comrades Zinoviev, Kamenev and Radek. After the Congress Sosnovsky. What was the reaction of the Congress to the utterances of the former opposition leaders? It reacted to these speeches in a very quiet and cautious manner.

* * * * *

The Seventeenth Congress was not only a congress of victors, not only a congress which demonstrated the unprecedented unity of the Party, but also *a congress of the most decided self-criticism*, which armed the Party for the new battles which lie before it.

Already in the first part of his report, which gave a characterization of the international situation, Comrade Stalin gave examples of a sober revolutionary estimate of the situation based on the application of profound Marxist-Leninist dialectics.

Speaking of a certain economic revival which set in in 1933, the fifth year of the economic crisis, Comrade Stalin went on to say:

"Some people are inclined to ascribe this phenomenon to the influence of exclusively artificial factors, such as a war-inflation boom. There cannot be any doubt that the war-inflation boom plays a not unimportant role here. It is particularly true in regard to Japan. . . . But it would be a crude mistake to attempt to explain everything by the war-inflation boom. . . . Apparently, side by side with the war-inflation boom the operation of the

internal economic forces of capital also has effect here.

"Capitalism has succeeded in somewhat easing the position of industry *at the expense of the workers . . . at the expense of the farmers . . . at the expense of the peasants in the colonies and in the economically weak countries.* . . . Does this mean that we are witnessing a transition from a crisis to ordinary depression which brings in its train a new boom and flourishing industry? No, it does not mean that. At all events at the present time there are no data, direct or indirect, that indicate the approach of an industrial boom in capitalist countries. More than that, judging by all things, there cannot be such data, at least in the near future. . . . I have in mind the continuing *general* crisis of capitalism in the midst of which the *economic* crisis is proceeding, the chronic working of the enterprises under capacity, the chronic mass unemployment, the interweaving of the industrial crisis with the agricultural crisis, the absence of tendencies towards any serious renewal of a boom, etc., etc.

"Apparently, what we are witnessing is the transition from the lowest point of decline of industry, from the lowest depth of the industrial crisis, to a depression, not an ordinary depression, but to a depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline."

This brilliant Marxist-Leninist analysis of the present phase of the economic crisis is of the greatest importance. While confirming that capitalism is in a state of decline, that the *general* crisis of capitalism is continuing and deepening, that a revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature, Comrade Stalin's analysis at the same time warns the Party not to adopt the fatalist view that the revolutionary crisis will grow automatically out of the further deepening of the *economic* crisis. The great significance of Comrade Stalin's formulation has already found confirmation in events which took place after the Congress, namely, the revolutionary mass movement and the general strike in France, precisely in the country where the economic crisis set in later than in Germany, the U.S.A., and other countries, and did not reach such a depth as in these countries; and where the revival of 1933 was obviously not of an inflationist nature.

If our French comrades had fallen into the crude error of which Comrade Stalin warned them, if they had cherished the conviction that the economic crisis in France must fatalistically deepen *more and more*, before it will lead to a revolutionary crisis, the present events would have taken them entirely unawares. Some comrades did think so, but they very quickly altered their opinion, and thus our Party in the main took up a correct position in France and

proved to be among the front ranks of the proletarian masses who were fighting in the streets.

In speaking of the sharpening of the political situation in the capitalist countries in consequence of the prolonged economic crisis, and in particular of the maturing in the minds of the masses of the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism, Comrade Stalin gave a significant formulation which can and must rouse a number of our comrades to self-criticism. He said:

"In this connection the victory of fascism in Germany must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and as a result of the betrayal of the working class by social-democracy, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom of the fact that the bourgeoisie is already unable to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy."

It has often been said among us that the growth of fascism in Germany is a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, which seeks salvation from the maturing revolutionary crisis in terrorist methods and in a war policy. That the victory of fascism in Germany resulted from the betrayal of the working class by social-democracy has also been said more than once, but Comrade Stalin pointed out one more cause of the victory of fascism in Germany, namely, "the weakness of the working class". Now what was the expression of this weakness? It was the split in the ranks of the working class owing to the treachery of social-democracy. However, it was not only that. The weakness also expressed itself in the fact that our Party, the vanguard of the working class, was behindhand. The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. spoke about this backwardness of our Party which consisted in its inability to establish close connections with the broad masses by working in the enterprises and in the reformist unions and by organizing partial struggles so that in the main the influence of treacherous social-democracy should have been destroyed even before the fascists took the decisive offensive. Thus the critical remark of Comrade Stalin mobilizes our Parties for the realization of their most important immediate task—the fight for the winning of the masses.

* * * * *

The Seventeenth Congress did not rest content with the great victories of the Party and developed extensive self-criticism with perfectly concrete practical conclusions, in order to ensure new victories in the future. Comrade Stalin raised the question of self-criticism to a great height of principle, by connecting it with the problems of *ideological-political leadership*. Comrade Stalin pointed out that:

"... the weak ideological work of the Party organs and the fact that our Party workers are overburdened with purely practical work, which deprives them of the opportunity of augmenting their theoretical knowledge," which leads to "the confusion on a number of problems of Leninism that exists in the minds of individual members of the Party, which not infrequently penetrates our press, and which helps to revive the survivals of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups."

In connection with this, at the end of the report, after the first conclusion ("we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by the successes achieved, and must not get swell-headed") Comrade Stalin drew the second conclusion: "*to remain loyal to the end to the great banner of Marx, Engels and Lenin.*" In their speeches all the delegates to the Congress added to these mighty three a fourth—"Stalin!" The Seventeenth Congress took place under the slogan "to remain loyal to the end to the great banner of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin!"

In his report Comrade Stalin pointed out a number of mistakes committed by some comrades in problems of Leninism, which, as usual, are of great practical significance and which show that, although the anti-Leninist groupings have now been defeated and that now there is "perhaps no one to beat", "remnants of their ideologies still live in the minds of individual members of the Party, and not infrequently they find expression," and that the existence of the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the minds of men "cannot but create a favorable soil for the revival of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups in the minds of individual members of our Party".

For instance, Comrade Stalin pointed out that certain comrades have, from the fact that the Party sets itself the task of building classless socialist society during the second five-year period, drawn the entirely anti-Leninist conclusion that we can even now weaken the class struggle, relax the dictatorship of the proletariat and generally do away with the state, which in any case will wither away shortly; they fail to understand that the building of classless society presupposes as an indispensable prerequisite the strengthening of the organs of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the sharpening of the class struggle. We may note, incidentally, that this anti-Leninist theory at one time found a reflection, among some members of the Party, in the "leftist" theory that in connection with the victory of complete collectivization the soviets already become superfluous in the countryside, and all the functions of the soviets in the countryside can be transferred to the collective farms.

Comrade Stalin further noted the confusion existing in the question of the agricultural *artel* and the agricultural *commune*. The *artel*, he said, as the Party now recognizes, is the only correct form of the

collective farm movement, for it correctly combines the personal everyday interests of the collective farmers with their social public interests and successfully adapts the personal interests to the public interests, facilitating the education of the individual peasants of yesterday in the spirit of collectivism; whereas in the commune the personal interests of the members were not so much *combined* with the public interests as *suppressed* by them in the pursuit of petty bourgeois equalitarianism. This explains why the communes never became widespread. It also explains why the communes were gradually obliged to abandon the system of socialized everyday life, that they are beginning to work on the workday system, etc., that is, they have in fact turned into artels. This does not mean, says Comrade Stalin, that the commune is generally unnecessary, that it is no longer a higher form of the collective farm movement. It only means that the present agricultural commune, which grew up on a basis of poorly developed technique and of a shortage of products and therefore practices equalitarianism is not needed. In the future the commune will be a necessary and living phenomenon, inasmuch as it will grow out of the well-developed, well-to-do artel. This is what some comrades fail to understand, and they allow the idea of the commune to run away with them now, on the grounds that in it there is greater "equality". This comes, says Comrade Stalin, from a failure to understand Leninism, to understand that "equality in the sphere of requirements and personal life is a piece of reactionary petty-bourgeois stupidity worthy of a primitive sect of ascetics, but not of socialist society organized on Marxian lines". "By equality Marxism means, not equality in personal requirements and personal life, but the abolition of classes." Incidentally, these mistakes had a very practical significance. In East Siberia, for example, comrades tried to implant communes even among the nomads, which led, of course, to the extermination of livestock.

Lack of clarity in questions of equality in the minds of some comrades led to the confusion of Stalin's slogan "make every collective farmer well-to-do" with Comrade Bukharin's long rejected opportunist slogan "enrich yourselves." This confusion arose from the failure to understand that the slogan "enrich yourselves" was at its time a slogan which stimulated the growth of kulaks and exploitation, whereas the slogan "make every collective farmer well-to-do", which has been issued now, in the conditions of the abolition of private property in means of production and the liquidation of the kulak as a class, and in connection with the slogan "make all collective farms Bolshevik farms", is, on the contrary, a stimulus to the intensification and consolidation of collectivization. The same confusion gave rise in the minds of some people to the downright stupid idea that Bol-

shevik work is impossible without the existence of the poor, on the ground that the Bolsheviks at one time put forward the slogan of relying on the poor. This stupidity, says Comrade Stalin, arises from the failure to understand that it was possible and necessary to rely on the poor peasants when there were capitalist elements in the village, and that, on the contrary, after the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, the task is not to perpetuate the poor, but to raise them to the level of a well-to-do life.

Of particularly great importance were Comrade Stalin's remarks at the Congress on the national question. Some comrades supposed that of the two deviations—Great Russian nationalism and local nationalism—the first is the principal danger "for all times and conditions". This mistaken idea fostered the development of the deviations towards local nationalism among individual members of our Party in the national republics, and first of all in the Ukraine. These comrades, said Comrade Stalin, do not understand that the source of both deviations is the same.

"This source is *departure* from Leninist internationalism. If you want to keep both these deviations under fire, then aim primarily against this source, against those who depart from internationalism—irrespective of whether the deviation is towards local nationalism, or towards Great Russian nationalism." (*Loud applause.*)

As for the controversy about the question as to which deviation represents the major danger at present,

"... under present conditions this is a formal and therefore a purposeless controversy. The major danger is the deviation against which we have ceased to fight and thereby enabled it to grow into a danger to the state. (*Loud applause.*) . . . The same thing must be said about the *Right* and '*Left*' deviation in the sphere of general policy. Here, too, as in other spheres, there is no little confusion in the minds of certain members of the Party. Sometimes while fighting against the *Right* deviation they take their hands away from the '*Left*' deviation and relax the fight against it on the assumption that it is not dangerous, or only slightly dangerous. This is a very serious and dangerous mistake. This is a concession to the '*Left*' deviation, which is impermissible for a member of the Party. It is all the more impermissible for the reason that recently the '*Lefts*' have completely slipped to the positions of the *Rights*, so that there is no longer any essential difference between them."

What Comrade Stalin said at the Congress on mistakes in the national question is a most important *generalized* conclusion drawn from the stubborn struggle which the Central Committee of the Party

has waged during the past year against nationalist deviations in Ukraine (Skrypnykism) and in other national republics; a struggle which was described in detail at the Congress by Comrades Postyshev, Kosior, Petrovsky and others, and which was a necessary prerequisite for the change in the countryside which the Party effected in 1933. A number of telling facts illustrating this change in the Ukraine were cited at the Congress by Comrades Postyshev and Schlichter.

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Comrade Stalin said at the Congress:

“After the correct political line has been given the organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, *i.e.*, its success or failure.”

In connection with the program of the second five-year period, and in order to assure its victory organizationally, a special report by Comrade Kaganovich on organizational questions was put on the agenda of the Seventeenth Congress, and these were adopted in this report concerning organizational measures in the sphere of Party construction, organizational measures in the sphere of Soviet construction, and organizational measures in the sphere of Party and Soviet control; at the same time a revised version of the rules of the C.P.S.U. was adopted and endorsed. The principles underlying these theses on organizational questions were stated by Comrade Stalin, in his classically clear and concise style, in the report on the work of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. They were elaborated in detail in the well grounded report of Comrade Kaganovich, which was illustrated by a wealth of material from the life of the Party and of the Soviet institutions. The report of Comrade Kaganovich revealed the real Bolshevik organizer who plunges into the very thick of life, lets no detail escape his attention, and at the same time does not get lost in the details and does not for a moment fail to see the wood for the trees. Comrade Kaganovich's report was a most vivid example of real concrete Bolshevik leadership.

Already at the Sixteenth Congress Comrade Stalin pointed out the necessity

“... to organize the reconstruction of all the practical work of the trade union, cooperative, Soviet and all other organizations in accordance with the requirements of the period of reconstruction.”

This reorganization was carried on in sections by the Central Committee between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses. During this period the Central Committee adopted a whole number of measures, each of which formed the answer, as it were, to one shortcoming or another discovered in the work of the Party or of the Soviet institutions.

The Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. summed up the victories achieved by the Party in the sphere of socialist construction and pointed out the shortcomings which must be remedied. The Seventeenth Congress adopted the plan for the second five-year period and outlined the organizational measures necessary for the successful fulfillment of this great plan. All the work of the Seventeenth Congress was centered around the questions of the great socialist construction, the triumphant realization of which has been assured. But the U.S.S.R. is surrounded by hostile capitalist countries, and from the time when the C.P.S.U. began the socialist reconstruction of the whole economy and the broad socialist offensive on the capitalist elements, the danger of an attack on the Soviet Union became direct; it grew greater each year, and now it hangs over the Land of the Soviets. In view of this fact, during the period between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Party Congresses the Central Committee of the Party and its leader Comrade Stalin devoted a great deal of attention in the first place to the strengthening of the defense of the U.S.S.R. Comrade Voroshilov reported to the Congress on the achievements of the Party and the Soviet government in this sphere. He said:

“During the period between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Party Congresses tremendous work has been done to radically reconstruct the Red Army. During this period the army has been completely reborn; it has become, one may say, a fundamentally different army in regard to quality and quantity of arms, organizational structure and the fighting preparedness of its cadres. Today the Red Army can justly pride itself on its armaments and on its technical equipment.”

We shall not dwell here on the technical equipment of the Red Army of which Comrade Voroshilov spoke in his report to the Congress. We shall only quote one section of his report, which characterized the changed face of the Red Army:

“In 1929 the average mechanized horsepower in the Red Army per one Red Army man was 2.6; In 1930—3.07; and in 1933—7.74. This figure is considerably higher than in the French and American armies, higher even than in the British army, which is very highly mechanized. Hence it is clear, comrades, with what mighty mechanization our army has been provided.”

The Red Army scored successes as great in the matter of learning to use its armaments, as Comrade Voroshilov illustrated with telling tables.

Of particular interest is the information Comrade Voroshilov gave of *the change in the social composition* of the Red Army during the period under review:

"On January 1, 1930, the percentage of workers in the Red Army was 31.2, while on January 1, 1934, it was already 45.8.

"In addition to this, the collectivization of agriculture has led to a qualitative change in the type of Red Army peasant. At the present time more than three-quarters of the peasants serving in the Red Army are already collective farmers. . . . Thus the working class and the collective farm peasantry now constitute the overwhelming majority of the personnel of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army."

As for the *Party membership* of the Red Army, it has also grown very considerably during the last three and a half years. The Party and Y.C.L. membership of the Red Army as a whole amounts to almost 50 per cent of the total number of men. Of the ideological level of Party members in the Red Army, Comrade Voroshilov stated the following significant fact:

"The results of the Party purging which has been and is going on in our army are as follows: expelled from the Party—4.3 per cent; transferred to the status of candidates and sympathizers—2.4 per cent; whereas the percentage of those expelled from civil Party organizations was 17 per cent, and of those transferred to the status of candidates and sympathizers—6.3 per cent. The difference, as you see, is considerable."

Comrade Voroshilov concluded his speech with the following words, amid the loud applause of the Congress:

"Having such a mighty Party, such a splendid and well-organized working class as ours, is, having such a wonderful ally as our collective farm peasantry was and has now more than ever become, having such a well-trying, wise and supremely great leader as our Stalin, we can face the future unafraid."

The U.S.S.R., said Comrade Stalin, relying on its growing economic and political might, on the moral support of millions of the working class in every country, on the common sense of those countries which for this or that motive are not interested in disturbing the peace, and, finally, on its glorious Red Army, did and does pursue a policy of preserving the peace. And in this policy, as is well known, the U.S.S.R. has also had great achievements. But peace depends not only on the U.S.S.R., and, as a consequence of the protracted economic crisis, which has caused an unprecedented sharpening of the political situation of all capitalist countries, "things are", as Comrade Stalin said, "quite clearly moving towards a new war". Can a war form a way out of the crisis for the bourgeoisie? Comrade Stalin replies to this question in his report:

"Of course there are no grounds for assuming that the war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it must confuse the situation still more. More than that, it will certainly unleash revolution and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. And if, notwithstanding the experience of the first imperialist war, the bourgeois politicians clutch at war as a drowning man clutches at a straw, it shows that they have become utterly confused, have reached an impasse, and are ready to rush headlong over the precipice."

As for the danger of an attack on the Soviet Union, Comrade Stalin said, briefly and clearly, amid the loud applause of the Congress:

"We stand for peace and champion the cause of peace. But we are not afraid of threats and are prepared to answer blow for blow against the instigators of war. Those who want peace and are striving for business intercourse with us will always receive our support. And those who try to attack our country—will receive a stunning rebuff to teach them not to poke their pig's snout into our Soviet garden again.

"Such is our foreign policy." (*Loud applause.*)

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At the end of his speech Comrade Stalin said:

"The working class of the U.S.S.R. is part of the world proletariat, its vanguard; and our republic is the offspring of the world proletariat. There can be no doubt that if it had not been supported by the working class in the capitalist countries it would not have been able to retain power, it would not have secured for itself the conditions for socialist construction and, hence, it would not have achieved the successes that it did achieve. International ties between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the workers of the capitalist countries, the fraternal alliance between the workers of the U.S.S.R. and the workers of all countries—this is one of the cornerstones of the strength and might of the Republic of Soviets. . . . It means that we must prove worthy of the honorable title of the shock brigade of the proletarians of all countries. . . . Hence, the third conclusion: *to remain loyal to the end to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletarians of all countries.* (*Applause.*) Such are the conclusions."

Comrade Stalin spoke of the great victories of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. as of the victories of the shock brigade of the world proletariat. What estimate did he give of the perspective of the victory of the world proletarian revolution? On this question Comrade Stalin spoke as follows:

"The masses of the people have not yet reached the stage when they are ready to storm the citadel

of capitalism, but the idea of storming it is maturing in the minds of the masses—there can hardly be any doubt about that. This is eloquently testified to by such facts as, say, the Spanish revolution which overthrow the fascist regime, and the expansion of the Soviet regions in China which the united counter-revolution of the Chinese and foreign bourgeoisie is unable to stop.”

Speaking of the war plans of the muddled bourgeois politicians who “are not distinguished either for their brilliance or valor”, he went on to say:

“But if the bourgeoisie chooses the path of war, then the working class in the capitalist countries who have been reduced to despair by four years of crisis and unemployment takes the path of revolution. That means that a revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature. And the more the bourgeoisie becomes entangled in its war combinations, the more frequently it resorts to terrorist methods in the struggle against the working class and the toiling peasantry, the sooner will the revolutionary crisis mature.

“Some comrades think that as soon as a revolutionary crisis occurs the bourgeoisie must drop into a hopeless position, that its end is predetermined, that the victory of the revolution is assured, and that all they have to do is to wait for the bourgeoisie to fall, and to draw up victorious resolutions. This is a profound mistake. The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory.”

These words of Comrade Stalin sounded like a call to the brother Communist Parties of capitalist countries to follow the example of the C.P.S.U. in order to forge themselves into another such mighty weapon of the victorious revolution.

The report on the work of the C.P.S.U. in the E.C.C.I. was made at the Congress by Comrade Manuilsky. This circumstantial report, which was based on the decisions of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., combined revolutionary optimism with Bolshevik self-criticism and synchronized fully with the report made by Comrade Stalin.

Comrade Manuilsky unrolled the picture of the general, though uneven, revolutionary upsurge throughout the capitalist world. He said that

“. . . during the five years of the world economic crisis the capitalist system has gone to pieces to such an extent that the objective prerequisites for a revolutionary crisis are already ripe in the weakest links of the capitalist system, in the colonies and dependent countries; are almost ripe in Central Europe, and are maturing in the capitalist countries occupying the commanding positions.”

He pointed out that “the three and a half years which have passed since the Sixteenth Congress have also been characterized by ferment in the armies, which in some places took the form of open mutiny.” He emphasized particularly the significance of the revolution in China:

“The breaking of the chain in this link shakes the whole world system of imperialism. This breaking began with the formation of Soviet China, whose strength is growing and being consolidated each day. Soviet China is what tomorrow will bring in the colonies and dependent countries crushed by imperialism.”

He treated in detail the revolutionary perspective in Germany:

“With the transition to fascist dictatorship the crisis of the power of the bourgeoisie does not disappear; it becomes intensified. . . . The bourgeois dictatorship, by dismissing social-democracy, is narrowing its mass base and rolling further into the precipice, like Russian Czarism when it rejected the support of the Liberals and Constitutional-Democrats. . . . The German fascists wanted to kill by bloodletting the desire of the German proletariat for revolutionary violence, but they have undermined the social-democratic workers’ democratic illusions and the prestige of bourgeois lawfulness, and are making the German proletariat a supporter of armed uprising against bourgeois dictatorship.”

Comrade Manuilsky pointed out that “in almost all capitalist countries a national crisis of the upper circles is to be observed in one form or another,” that in some cases this has so far led to the establishment of fascist dictatorship, which “forms the halfway stop in the further maturing of the revolutionary crisis,” that in a number of capitalist countries “the internal fight in the camp of the bourgeoisie, accompanied by the bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy, is growing into a general national crisis, i.e., into a crisis in which the accumulated discontent of the masses does not follow the channel of fascism, but turns against the very system of capitalism.” Comrade Manuilsky pointed out that: “by driving the discontent of the masses under the surface by terrorist measures, the bourgeoisie creates the conditions for explosion of great force, which can accelerate every minute the tempo of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis. “This ‘unexpectedness’ and ‘suddenness’ of revolutionary explosions is a particularly characteristic feature of the present situation.” Comrade Manuilsky’s words were brilliantly confirmed by the first big battle which the French proletariat gave to the attacking fascists in France and by the heroic armed struggle of the Austrian proletariat, which recalled the struggle of the Paris Communards.

Comrade Manuilsky showed with concrete examples how the Second International became "the chief support of world reaction." He showed with extraordinary clarity how many chances and opportunities the German Social-Democracy had for repelling without particular difficulty the attack of fascism, for it had at its disposal the police of Prussia and millions of the Reichsbanner, and that it "did not and could not adopt this road, because it stood on the same ground as fascism—the preservation of capitalism—because it knew that the fight which the working class had begun against fascism would go over its head and take the form of a revolution directed against the domination of the capitalists."

Comrade Manuilsky treated in detail the weaknesses in the work of the Communist Parties, owing to which they have not yet "completely defeated Social-Democracy," although "the crisis of Social-Democracy is first of all the result of the struggle which the Comintern and its Sections have for many years been waging against the Second International." He pointed out that "in a number of cases the Communist organizations resembled an ambulance which rushes to the place where the proletariat needs assistance." When the rush is over the influence gained in the course of the movement is not clinched organizationally.

He pointed out the shortcomings in our work. However, in spite of these shortcomings, Comrade Manuilsky said, our Communist Parties are growing everywhere. "The Comintern now comprises 860,000 Communists in capitalist countries but the point is not only the numerical growth of the Communist Parties, but also the growth of their influence." Comrade Manuilsky showed concretely how our Communist Parties, under conditions of an unprecedented growth of fascist terror, are going through the school of Bolshevism necessary for the victory of the revolution. "Is not the behavior and work of the Communist Party of Germany under conditions of fascist terror the surest test of its Bolshevik training?" Speaking of the successes achieved by the Communist Parties, Comrade Manuilsky mentioned among the others those of the Communist Party of Japan, and particularly those of the C.P. of China: "The first place in these achievements after the C.P.S.U. undoubtedly belongs to the Chinese Communist Party, whose militant activity plays a very big part in the maturing of the revolutionary crisis."

At the conclusion of his report, Comrade Manuilsky spoke of the enormous international importance of the great victories of the C.P.S.U.

"At the present moment, when the bourgeoisie is driving the world into imperialist wars, when

it is hitting the disarmed working class of the capitalist countries, it is particularly clear what the theory of the building of socialism in a single country means for the revolutionary movement of the world. It has been and is the theory of the great proletarian solidarity, of the great internationalism of the C.P.S.U. Armed with this theory, the proletariat unceasingly prepared, and continues to prepare, for the victory of the proletarian revolution throughout the world. Lenin led the toilers to the October Revolution in Russia. Stalin will lead them on Lenin's path to victory the world over."

In connection with Comrade Manuilsky's report, Comrade Kaganovich spoke of the necessity for strengthening the internationalist education of Communists, of the necessity of carrying on this education in the U.S.S.R., not only by means of campaigns, but systematically. The Seventeenth Congress greeted with loud applause passing into an ovation the report of the delegation of the C.P.S.U. in the E.C.C.I., the speech of the Chinese Comrade, Wan Ming, who reported on the splendid victories of the Chinese Soviets and Red Army; the speech of Comrade Okano, who reported on the heroic work of the Japanese Communists, and on the fight against war; the speech of Comrade Heckert, who reported on the heroic self-defense of the German Communist Party, and the speech of Comrade Dolores who described in glowing colors the course of the revolution in Spain. This demonstrated once again the strength of the spirit of internationalism in the victorious C.P.S.U., which the scoundrelly counter-revolutionary Trotskyists "who are now hanging around the backyards of the bourgeois parties abroad" (Stalin) dare to accuse of "nationalist limitations."

The Congress of victors almost coincided with big revolutionary events in France and revolutionary events of the greatest importance in Austria. All this shows how rapidly the revolutionary crisis is maturing throughout the world. Under these conditions all the Sections of the Comintern in the capitalist countries must popularize as widely as possible among the masses the great victories of the C.P.S.U. reported at the Seventeenth Congress, in order that the proletarians of the world, in whose minds "the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing" and who are already beginning to storm it, may see in reality the great goal of their struggle. At the same time the Communist Parties of capitalist countries must study, and learn from the lessons of the C.P.S.U., the shock brigade of the world proletariat," how the banner of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin can and should be held high, how the broad masses can and should be infected with enthusiasm and mobilized for struggle, how Leninist-Stalinist strategy and tactics can and should be car-

ried out, how the "level of organizational leadership can and should be raised to the level of political leadership."

Particularly well must our Communist Parties remember Comrade Stalin's words:

"A revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature. . . . But the victory of the revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory."

THE REVOLUTIONARY BATTLES IN CUBA

By D. R. D.

BIG events are developing once more in Cuba. In the middle of January, the C.P. Cuba and the revolutionary Confederation of Labor (C.N.O.C.) called on the workers to prepare for a general strike against the new Mendieta government which has come to power with the direct support of American imperialism and which had united all the basic groups of Cuban counter-revolution with the aim of launching a decisive attack on the revolutionary movement and the gains of the working class. The world bourgeois press which, echoing American imperialism, enthusiastically welcomed the coming to power of a government "with no tendencies to the extreme left" (*Times*, Jan. 19) announced to the world the complete collapse of the general strike in Cuba. The bourgeois press was somewhat too hasty. The very first day of the existence of the new reactionary government was marked by a wave of strikes in Havana and other towns which paralyzed the railroads and street cars and left the towns without light. On January 24, the *New York Times* stated that the strike movement was spreading to the provinces, to the sugar refineries and plantations, (the so-called Centrales). On February 1, according to *L'Humanite*, about 100,000 workers were already on strike in Cuba, among them 26,000 women in the province of Pinar del Rio and in Havana. On February 5, Tass cabled from New York that the strike movement was spreading throughout the country and paralyzing the basic branches of Cuban industry—sugar and tobacco—as well as transport, electric power, etc., and that 150,000 workers took part in the movement. Finally, according to the latest information of Tass dated February 7 from New York, 5,000 harbor workers and chauffeurs and 8,000 miners had joined the strike. In various parts of Cuba, the strikes and mass demonstrations were already accompanied by armed clashes between the demonstrators and the troops.

Now, what is this Mendieta government against which the present general strike is directed? It is a government which American imperialism and Cuban counter-revolution have put in power after the previ-

ous bourgeois-landlord government of Grau san Martin proved incapable of coping with the growing forces of revolution.

The attitude of American imperialism towards Grau was sufficiently clearly expressed in a private letter of the United States Ambassador to Cuba, Welles (who since then has been replaced by Roosevelt's personal representative, Caffery). The following is a passage from Welles' letter:

"Grau San Martin has not the confidence of anybody. Should he continue to rule, we have no hope that the present depression in foreign and Cuban business interests can be remedied for some time. He has entirely lost control of the requirements in the present situation. His idea of government is to issue decrees or laws, no matter how inapplicable or impossible the carrying out of these decrees might be." (*Daily Worker*, New York, December 15, 1933.)

The attitude of the Cuban ruling classes towards Grau is no better. *Cuba Importadora i Industria*, the organ of the commercial circles, wrote as follows in December, 1933:

"The affairs of our government are in the hands of an 'authentic' revolutionary regime represented by a small and hastily improvised group. Without any public support and relying only on violence this group is leading the country to disaster which is tantamount to social and economic catastrophe. . . . From the very moment when this group took over control of government affairs by means of violence we have witnessed feverish thoughts, absence of any preparatory work and the obvious ineptitude of the members of this group coupled with passionate egoism that has become characteristic of every act of the new government."

Even the correspondent of the *American Nation*, who on the whole was sympathetic to the Grau government, admits that "the present Grau Government is a romantic, nationalistic enterprise without a definite program." (*Nation*, January 17, 1934).

These quotations show that although the Grau Government defended the interests of the bour-

geoisie and landlords as well as their dictatorship against the developing revolution of the people it did not enjoy the support of either the ruling classes or the imperialists. Grau was put into the President's chair by the petty-bourgeoisie, mainly by the students, by the workers who were under petty-bourgeois influence and by the army which got rid of its old officers who were in the service of Dictator Machado. The army, however, was not in the hands of Grau, but in the hands of Sergeant Batista who became commander-in-chief and temporarily supported Grau. Grau made desperate attempts to extend his petty-bourgeois support by means of petty concessions and anti-imperialist demagoguery. Thus he issued a decree reducing gas and electric rates by 45 per cent and when the American electric company refused to comply he established government control over it.

He even refused to make payments to American banks in respect to certain loans made by Machado. He tried to win over the unemployed by his so-called "50 per cent law" according to which, 50 per cent of all jobs must be put at the disposal of native Cubans. Finally, in the very last days of his rule, Grau even issued a decree according to which the land belonging to the government was to be distributed among the peasants, each peasant household receiving 33 and one-third acres; by this decree he hoped to win the support of the peasantry.

However, the majority of these decrees together with many others issued by him remained on paper and failed to improve the situation of the petty-bourgeoisie, thus resulting in the growth of discontent among the petty-bourgeoisie. The chief force in Cuba in this period was not the petty-bourgeoisie, but the proletariat. The period of the Grau government coincided with the rapid development of strike struggles of the workers against the capitalists. Throughout the whole of Cuba the workers, among whom there are about half a million unemployed (according to *Wirtschaftsdienst*, June 16, 1933) took the offensive against the employers in an attempt to utilize the favorable situation created after the fall of Machado, first of all in order to improve their economic situation. It is precisely this powerful strike movement of the proletariat which gave such breadth and force to the August revolution, transforming it into a real mass revolution. The workers achieved important successes in their economic struggles: in several industries the capitalists were compelled to raise wages and introduce the eight-hour day. Of special importance is the success of the strike struggles of the sugar plantation workers which were accompanied by seizure of plantations and in certain cases even by the establishment of Soviets, which however lasted only a few days. The movement of the sugar plantation workers struck a

blow against the chief interests of American capital in Cuba.

Simultaneously with the development of the strike struggles of the workers and in connection with these struggles the revolutionary trade unions as well as the influence of the Communist Party among the working masses gained strength. The Communist Party of Cuba succeeded in winning over from the reformists a number of trade unions among which there was the mass union of tobacco workers. The Party considerably extended its influence in and increased the membership of the revolutionary sugar plantation workers' union, which was first organized in the beginning of 1933. On January 12, 1934, the fourth congress of the revolutionary Confederation of Labor was opened in Havana in the presence of 10,000 workers. Over 2,000 delegates were present at this congress and if our information is correct, these two thousand delegates represent 300,000 organized workers, which means that the Communist Party has come very near to winning over the majority of the Cuban proletariat.

The ruling classes of Cuba and American imperialism could not help noticing that the rapid revolutionization of the masses and particularly the growth of the influence and force of the Communist Party represented a threat to the very foundations of the bourgeois landlord regime and imperialist rule in Cuba. They requested the Grau Government to take decisive measures against the revolutionary movement. Grau tried to satisfy these demands; he shot down workers' demonstrations; he raided trade unions; he sent troops to the "Centrales" (sugar refineries attached to the plantations); he arrested Communists. But he was powerless to crush the movement, and under the pressure of the masses he was forced on several occasions to retreat. Very characteristic of this helpless wavering policy is the raid on the headquarters of the Revolutionary Confederation of Labor. This raid was conducted under the personal supervision of one of Grau's ministers. Besides the headquarters of the Confederation the house of the secretary, Comrade Sasara Villar, was also raided, and Comrade Villar, together with several others, was arrested. On the following day protests from working class organizations began to pour in. Grau denied all responsibility in connection with the raid and put all the blame on some unknown sergeant. The leaders of the Confederation were at once released with apologies and compensation for damages was offered to the Confederation.

American imperialism, which is the main factor in the counter-revolutionary camp, twice attempted to bring about the overthrow of Grau, first with the help of the reactionary terrorist A.B.C. organization. The revolt of the counter-revolutionary officers

and students led by the A.B.C. and the United States Ambassador to Cuba took place on November 7-8, but found no response among the masses and was crushed by Battista without any great difficulty. The second time American imperialism undoubtedly placed its stake on Battista himself, as a would-be military dictator. In the letter quoted above, Ambassador Welles wrote:

"There is a solution to the situation, if Colonel Battista is ready to act. Decidedly he is opposed to Communism, and were he determined to maintain order, he would receive the support of the business and banking groups with a view to replacing the present regime by a government in which they could have more confidence."

However, this attempt failed. First the petty officers refused to support Battista against Grau. Later, on the eve of Mendieta's coming to power, when Battista was still attempting to establish his own dictatorship, the strike of the municipal workers and civil servants compelled him to give up his attempt. Finally, American imperialism was all the same successful in uniting the Cuban counter-revolutionary forces and in persuading Grau to resign. This was due first of all to the fact that Grau had completely lost the confidence of the petty bourgeoisie. Under the influence of the strike wave in the last days of November, and especially in December, there were waverings in the ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie. These waverings found their expression in the strikes of teachers and doctors, in the anti-government demonstrations of the students, etc. The situation became unfavorable in the army. The old army discipline was being destroyed. It had become more and more difficult to use the army for crushing revolutionary actions. It became necessary to resort to all sorts of slander against the Communists, and to cajole the soldiers. The army ceased to be the obedient tool of the ruling classes. The approach of the so-called "Zafra" (harvest season on the sugar plantations) upon which the profits of American capital in Cuba depend, compelled American imperialism to hasten the overthrow of the government, notwithstanding the fact that Grau, with all his zig-zags, was undoubtedly moving to the right. This found its expression not only in the attempts to crush the revolutionary movement, but also in the release of the counter-revolutionary officers arrested after the revolt.

In the middle of January the fall of the Grau government had become inevitable. The fact that this change of government took place by means of an agreement and not by means of armed rebellion and the fact that Evia, who came into power after Grau, could hold power only two days, shows the force of the revolutionary pleasure of the masses.

Thus, American imperialism has been successful in placing finally in power a government of united counter-revolution without resorting to open armed intervention which, for reasons of an international character, would be inconvenient. Of course it is not excluded that disagreement in the camp of the ruling classes still exists.

The immediate tasks of the Mendieta government are clear. It must launch a decisive offensive against the revolutionary movement, it must bring to naught the economic victories of the working class and ensure the carrying out of the Zafra in the interests of American capital.

While the Cuban counter-revolution—the bourgeoisie and landlords—are calling for full confidence in Mendieta, American imperialism is doing all in its power to help them carry their aim into effect. For four months American imperialism stubbornly refused to recognize the Grau government under the pretext that it did not represent the "will of the nation." This same American imperialism hastens to recognize the Mendieta government a few days after its formation, evidently considering it to be definitely proved that it represents the "will of the nation," though a considerable part if not the majority of the Cuban nation—the proletariat and the urban poor—by means of strikes demonstrate their will to overthrow this government of united reaction. With the same object of supporting Mendieta, American imperialism hastens to promise a big quota for Cuban sugar (according to the plan of Chadbourne, the export of sugar in the years of the crisis must be a little more than one-third of normal) and to finance its manufacture and export in the coming season. The latest statement in the *New York Times* speaks of the decision of Roosevelt to send two million dollars worth of food to Cuba on credit for the supply of the population whose purchases of food have fallen greatly during the years of the crisis, thus reducing wide sections of the population to a state of actual starvation.

Will the Mendieta government be able to carry out the tasks imposed on it and deprive the revolution of its "social character which fatally threatens to bring it to a crisis," according to the expression of the most openly reactionary organ of the Cuban ruling classes, *Diario dela Marina*?

The first steps of the new government showed that it was trying to "step cautiously" at first. Mendieta's government confirmed Grau's "50 per cent law" against which the American sugar manufacturers who import cheap labor power into Cuba—Negroes from Haiti and Jamaica—had protested as well as the maintenance of government control over the plant of the American Electric Company. These measures show that Mendieta, not feeling himself strong enough to make a frontal attack on the pro-

letariat, at any rate, at the given stage, tried to carry out the slogan proclaimed by reaction: "Not for sovietism, not for feudalism but for enlightened opportunism. We must all sacrifice something so as not to lose all."¹ As can be seen, the Cuban landlords and capitalists understand perfectly well *what* the further development of the revolution may mean to them. However, the objective conditions and the growing indignation of the masses proved to be stronger than the cunning calculations of counter-revolution which wished to continue Grau's policy of honied phrases and empty promises a little longer so as to utilize this time for rallying its forces and above all for strengthening the shattered discipline in the army and forming supplementary armed forces in the form of class military organizations.²

By the objective conditions to which we referred previously we mean the beginning of the season for harvesting and manufacturing the sugarcane and the so-called Zafra. The question of Zafra is a question of national importance for Cuba since sugarcane is practically the only crop of the country. Sugar and allied products comprise 85 per cent of Cuban exports and directly or indirectly affect the immediate interests of two-thirds of the population of the country. The chief profits of the American capitalists who operate in Cuba and appropriate 75 per cent of the entire national income of the country, are connected with the manufacture of sugar.³ As the result of some months of strikes, the workers in the plantations secured a rise in wages from 15-20 cents to \$1 for an eight-hour day. At the present level of prices for sugar, the maintenance of these wages is incompatible with the colonial superprofits to which American capital is accustomed. The American sugar manufacturers refused to begin the Zafra until the Mendieta government took steps to "protect them from the discontented workers," *i.e.*, until wages were reduced to the level of Machado's time. The Zafra season usually begins January 15. On January 20, 1934, only eight Centrales were at work, while a year ago about 200 were in operation at this period. But neither the American capitalists nor the Cuban government can limit themselves to a mere sabotaging of the Zafra on which the profits of the former and the income of the latter depend. However much the Mendieta government may wish to tarry a little before exposing its anti-worker face, its attack on the gains of the workers has become

quite inevitable. During the last few days this attack has found expression among other things in the prohibition of strikes. Such are the objective conditions which have accelerated the new rise of the strike wave. Under the leadership of the C.P. and the C.N.O.C. (National Federation of Labor of Cuba) these mass strikes have grown into a counter-offensive of the workers against reaction, into a general political strike which at the present time is paralyzing almost all the economic life of Cuba.

The political significance of the present general strike differs in principle from the strike which overthrew Machado in August, 1933. In the overthrow of Machado, besides the working class which was the main driving force, there took part also various groups of the Cuban bourgeoisie and the landlords who felt offended by Machado and his clique which monopolized for itself all the spoils of office. In the August strike the proletariat was not yet opposed to the ruling classes, because in practice the working masses did not yet see that *essentially* in their class hatred for the toilers these bourgeois-landlord groups in no way differed from Machado although they opposed him. It is precisely for this reason that the liberal press in Cuba and outside it speaks so lovingly of the national character of the "glorious" revolution which overthrew Machado. The present general strike is developing after four months of revolution, after hundreds of thousands of workers had been drawn into the economic struggle against the capitalists, thousands of them, in all probability, having taken part in strikes several times (we have no exact data), when not only the workers but also the broad masses of the people have felt on their own shoulders the policy not only of the rights but also of the most "left" radical demagogic part of the Cuban bourgeoisie as represented by the Grau government. In the present strike it is not against the government of a part of the ruling classes that the workers are striking but against the government of "national concentration" which has the open support of all the political groups of the Cuban bourgeoisie and landlords. Therefore the present general strike is bound to be accompanied by a sharp division of the class forces on the political stage of Cuba and is bound to be directed objectively against the bourgeois-landlord semi-colonial regime as a whole. The full realization of this central point—the political significance of the present general strike by the working masses depends entirely on the successful work of the Communist Party. But the further development of events depends to a great extent on the correctness of its policy.

* * *

Having called on the workers to defend their gains from the attacks of reaction, the C.P. of Cuba, ac-

¹ *Diario dela Marina*, Jan. 23, 1934.

² According to the *Daily Worker*, the A.B.C. has already started to form counter-revolutionary detachments of "Green Shirts."

³ Figures from *Wirtschaftsdienst*, June 16, 1933.

ording to the casual information of the *Daily Worker*, launched two basic political slogans in the workers' and peasants' committees of action and the present general strike—the formation of united seizure of the power in the localities by the workers and peasants. Both slogans are correct but insufficient. The brief history of the Cuban revolution can already show cases when the workers, having seized the local power, did not know what to do with the power they had seized. There was such a case in Sienfuegos, where the workers kept the local municipality in their hands for several days marking time until they were driven out by the troops. The only measure undertaken by the workers' power was the handing over of 40,000 pesos belonging to the local authorities for distribution among the unemployed. Likewise when the workers seized the centrales and formed Soviets in the centrale at Mabei, nothing was done for the immediate distribution of land to the peasants. These facts show that the slogan of the seizure of the local power is not sufficient. It is also necessary to indicate a series of concrete transitional demands for which the Party is now struggling and which can be carried out *immediately* either by direct action or as soon as the power in any district comes into the hands of the workers and peasants even if this power is of short duration. Among such transitional demands are: workers' control over the factories with increased wages, introduction of the eight-hour day, etc., the annulment of the debts of the peasants and the division of the land of the landlords and the government, as well as the plantations among the peasants, the confiscation of the reserves of food and clothing for the benefit of the unemployed, the moving of the workers to the best houses, a considerable reduction of taxation, determined measures for the struggle against speculation and high prices, a guarantee that the Zafra will be carried on in the interests of the toiling population, and, last but not least, the arming of the workers and peasants, the formation of defense detachments, red guards, etc.

A short and simply written platform of such intermediate demands will not only show the workers what to fight for at the present time but will also serve as a guide to *immediate* action for the workers and peasants; will rouse and direct the initiative even in places where the direct leadership of the Party is difficult or inexperienced. It is true that even on November 10th, the Party published quite a good program of the workers' and peasants' government, pointing out concretely what the Soviet power will give to the various strata of the toilers. This program is useful and necessary for general agitation for the Soviet power but cannot replace a short program of action for the present period which

is *transitional*, passing into a direct struggle for the workers' and peasants' government. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that there are mistakes in this program. The demand for the collective cultivation of the land when the plantations came into the hands of the peasants and farm laborers is the most dangerous of these mistakes, because firstly, it deprives the Party of the support of considerable sections (if not the majority) of the peasants and of some of the farm laborers who depend on the plantations and who wish to cultivate their own farms and secondly, inasfar as the methods of large-scale cultivation used on the plantations are connected with the manufacture of cane sugar, it makes it difficult for Cuba to build up its own food basis, on the development of which the future fate of the workers' and peasants' revolution will depend to a great extent *after* the overthrow of the bourgeois-landlord government.

In the past the Party did not always show ability to maneuver with slogans so that they should be in accord with the various levels of the movement in the various districts, with the rapidly changing situation, with the turn and changes of particular phases in the development of the revolution. It is sufficient to look at the leaflets and manifestos of the Communist Party to see that all the slogans of the Party belong to one of the two basic groups—immediate economic demands or the agitational slogans of the Soviet power. However, even under the Grau government, it was necessary to put forward a number of intermediate demands which do not deny but presuppose (this applies also to the present stage) the preservation and extension of elementary economic demands in those districts of the country where the movement is only beginning, for those backward sections of the working class and especially of the peasants, which are rising to the struggle for the first time, etc.

A most important task faces the Party in the sphere of the *political education and organization of the masses*. We have already noted the great successes of the C.P. of Cuba in winning over the working masses. The fact that the Party secured these successes as a result of the successful leadership of mass economic struggles is a tremendous asset to the Party. But the trade unions won by the Party from the reformists have not yet been consolidated. The reformists still sit in the trade unions. They have quieted down for a time and are waiting for a convenient opportunity to come to the fore again. If the Party does not carry on mass work with the aim of politically isolating the reformists from the masses then there is still the danger that some sections of the proletariat will waver and some ex-reformist trade unions will withdraw from C.N.O.C. This actually happened in some districts

when Grau began his repressive measures against the revolutionary unions. The present general strike provides particularly favorable conditions for developing energetic work with the object of politically educating the masses on the experience of their own struggle, for the raising of the movement to a higher level, for plainly showing to the masses that all the reformists, however they may call themselves, are on the other side of the barricade, and that the only leader capable of carrying the working class and the peasants to the victorious completion of the revolution and the winning of power is the Communist Party.

In order to consolidate its influence in the trade unions, the Party must considerably strengthen the Party backbone in them, which presupposes the extensive recruiting of trade union members for the Party and the Y.C.L. It must bring about the correct functioning of the Communist fractions, get possession of the trade union apparatus and drive the reformists out of the leading organs, and without fail, introduce non-Party revolutionary workers into them as well as Communists. Finally, the organizational fusion of the ex-reformist unions with the revolutionary unions demands that they should be recognized on an industrial basis, and especially it demands the organization, widening and strengthening of the factory committees in the various enterprises. All this work can only be successfully carried on provided it is accompanied by a struggle against the influence of the reformists and by our mercilessly unmasking them before the broadest working masses, and provided that at the same time we carefully take into account the concrete situation in every trade union.

The Party theoretically understands the significance of the agrarian revolution. However, in practice the Party has so far done very little to organize peasant committees in the villages, to develop the struggle of the peasants for land.

The level of the peasant movement throughout the whole period since the fall of Machado has lagged greatly behind the powerful strike struggle of the proletariat and in general has not gone beyond the limits of the partial demands of the peasants. This is the basic weakness of the Cuban revolution. Only in two Eastern provinces (Oriente and Santa Clara) which, however, are extremely important from the point of view of the distribution of the population, the peasants in isolated cases began to seize the land of the landlords. The lagging of the peasant movement behind the development of the proletarian struggle is undoubtedly connected with the fact that the Party, having incorrectly understood the task of maneuvering in connection with

the danger of intervention by American imperialism, withdrew the slogan of the confiscation of the plantations belonging to the imperialists and their division among the toilers of the villages. In the program of the workers' and peasants' government mentioned above, the peasants are left somewhere in the background, after the petty-bourgeoisie, after the office workers, handicraftsmen, students and traders.

The Party in general, it should be said, neglected work in the villages, not only forgetting the importance of this work from the point of view of ensuring support for the proletariat by its chief ally—the peasants—but forgetting also the connection between the attitude of the peasants to the proletariat and the attitude of the army to the revolution. The Party says nothing about the giving of land to soldiers. It formulates the slogan of soviets thus—soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies, supported by committees of soldiers and sailors, seemingly denying the soldiers and sailors direct participation in the soviets, which is absolutely impermissible. If we add to this that the Party pays little attention and devotes little effort to the work in the army, it will explain the comparatively small success of the Party among the masses of soldiers, especially in the matter of organizing soldiers' committees. However, we must mention that the latest information of the *Daily Worker* speaks of improvement in this work. For example, it is mentioned that the sailors from two warships offered their support to the Party, in some districts the soldiers and junior officers send their delegates to the Party committees, expressing their readiness to act at the instructions of the Party. This shows that the Cuban comrades have realized that at the present stage of the movement the disintegration of the army and the winning of even part of it to the side of the revolutionary people is one of the most important conditions for the victory of the revolution.

In order to get the masses to join our organizations and to guarantee a Party backbone in the mass organizations, the C.P. of Cuba must become a mass organization. For this purpose 6,000 members and about the same number of Y.C.L.'ers is not sufficient although these figures signify that the membership of the Party and the Y.C.L. has more than doubled during the last four or five months. The Party must strengthen its illegal apparatus and improve its guidance of the provinces in order to ensure a united political line and unity of action in the various districts. Finally in every organization of the Party we must enforce iron discipline and inflict strict punishments including expulsion from the Party for any negotiations with class hostile groups without the preliminary decision of competent organs.

The C.P. of Cuba and the worker and peasant

masses which follow it are entering a transition stage to decisive struggles for power, for the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasants. The next few weeks will show whether American imperialism, through its puppet Mendieta,

will once more fully establish a colonial regime in Cuba or whether the toiling masses of Cuba, led by the working class and its Communist Party, will obtain their freedom, will obtain firm gains which no reaction will be able to take away from them.

THE WORKERS IN THE KINGDOM OF "ORGANIZED NATIONAL LABOR"

By F. DAVID

THE law passed by the Hitler government on January 12, 1934 "on the regulation of national labor," is so inimical to the interests of the working class that one can not find its equal in the entire history of German capitalism. The noose of poverty, ruin and hunger is tightening. *The bourgeoisie is frantically intensifying its economic means of exploitation by methods of fascist violence, by robbing the toiling classes. . . .* (From the theses of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Italics mine. —F. D.)

The German bourgeoisie is callously and cynically attempting to coin its temporary victory into dollars and cents. It wants to wipe out at one blow all the social victories that the German proletariat has gained in the seventy-five years of its class struggle. It wants to bring back the years of the "dynasty" of the Dreissigers,¹ to establish once more the horrible conditions of labor described in "The Weavers"—written by Gerhardt Hauptmann in his youth. Now Gerhardt Hauptmann adapted himself to the hangman's regime of the modern Dreissigers.

In the days of the November revolution of 1918, much discussion was evoked by the winged words uttered by Emile Bart, the "representative of the people" in the "revolutionary government," who was at that time an independent Social-Democrat. He defended the property and profits of the German capitalists with high-sounding phrases about the great tasks of the revolution, which the proletariat must not, he said, "degrade to the level of an economic movement." In the opinion of this Philistine, in the revolution of 1918, the workers had "to conduct themselves modestly and restrainedly towards their employers," or else the revolution would be lost. Only counter-revolutionary philistines failed to understand that during the revolution the German workers were absolutely right in fight-

ing for an immediate and radical improvement in their conditions—advancing demands for a rise in wages, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, etc. And now the German bourgeoisie is teaching the workers a lesson: it is using the establishment of the sanguinary dictatorship of fascism—which it calls the "national revolution"—for an "economic movement" of unparalleled scope, for the unheard-of robbery and enslavement of the working class.

The masters of Hitlerite Germany—the Tiessens and the Krupps, urged on by the crisis and their avaricious hunt for profits are neither willing nor able to wait any longer. The Hitler dictatorship is fulfilling its real task—to serve as a whip in the hands of the slave-owners.

I. THE ABOLITION OF THE TARIFF AGREEMENTS

What are the new developments which the law of January 12, 1934, carries with it for the working class? Of the eleven labor laws annulled by the new law, the most important were the decree on tariff agreements of December 23, 1918, and the law on shop and factory committees of February 5, 1921. Since the burning of the Reichstag, factory and shop committees have practically ceased to exist. But up to the present, the situation in regard to tariff agreements was quite different: expiring tariff agreements were in most cases renewed without great changes, by the fascist labor authorities. But now this will be *radically* changed.

How have wage rates and conditions of labor been regulated in post-war Germany up to the present? In this respect we had the *labor agreement, the tariff agreement, and rules for the internal management of the shops and factories*. All the conditions of work were provided for in the labor agreement, which was concluded separately between the employer and each individual worker upon starting work. The tariff agreement was concluded between the trade-unions and the employers, or the employers' organizations. However, the conditions of the labor

¹ The Dreissigers—a family of textile barons of Silesia (figures in Hauptmann's "The Weavers"), which owns large textile factories to this very day.

agreement could not be worse than those provided for in the tariff agreement. And this was the most important point in the decree on tariff agreements of December 23, 1918. It was precisely this point in the tariff agreements—a point known under the appellation, “unalterability” (*Unabdingbarkeit*)—which was most furiously resisted by the employers.

The law of January 12 *abolishes the entire system of tariff agreements*. Hours of labor, wages, and all other conditions of labor are determined solely by the employers. The *Vossische Zeitung* in its editorial of January 18, on this law wrote:

“The collective regulation of wages, in the sense in which it has existed up to now, will not exist in Germany in the future. This is one of the most profound consequences of the establishment of the principle of leadership (*Fuehrerprinzip*) in the shops and factories. The dissolution of the trade-unions and the employers’ unions has already made impossible any collective negotiations and agreements by organizations standing above the factories. With the introduction of the new rules of internal organization, not even the workers of individual shops and factories will be able to come out jointly and collectively against the employers.”

The employers decide personally, dictatorially, on all questions of hours, wages, and other conditions of labor. Tariff agreements no longer exist; and, according to the law, in concluding labor agreements, the employer—who has behind him the entire apparatus of the murderous fascist dictatorship—is to be faced by scattered, individual, unorganized workers. And the rules of internal organization are also dictatorially established by the employer alone. This is emphasized in the law in the following manner:

“The leader of the enterprise (the employer—F.D.) decides for his followers (the workers of the enterprise—F.D.) all questions connected with the affairs of the enterprise.”

Strikes are prohibited in Hitler’s kingdom. The law provides for “courts of honor,” whose duty it is to bring to account “members of the factory community who by their malicious instigation and incitement endanger the industrial peace of the shops and factories.”

Then what means may the workers use to defend themselves against the arbitrary power of the employers? According to the law of January 12, only one way is open to the workers in exceptional cases, they may appeal to the fascist labor authorities. Of course, this is about as useful as complaining to the devil about his grandmother. But it is characteristic that even this possibility of complaining to the

labor authority—this agent of the fascist dictatorship and of monopoly capital—is hedged in with all sorts of difficulties for the workers. This authority has the right (and the law persistently emphasizes that he must use this right only in exceptional cases) to issue general instructions fixing the wages and the wage rates for various categories of workers. The shop and factory delegates¹ appointed by the employers and the leaders of the National-Socialist Party nuclei in the shops and factories may, if such is the desire of the majority of the delegates, protest to the labor authority against the decisions of the employer. But at the same time the law states that an appeal to the labor authority does not stop the decisions of the employer from taking effect, and even—which is rather interesting—that “members of the factory community who repeatedly place before the labor authority frivolous, baseless complaints or proposals” will be punished.

The workers are thus handed over to the most arbitrary power of the employers. The employer obtains the right to make dictatorial decisions in relation to wages and other conditions of labor in his enterprise.

II. THE LEGISLATIVE ABOLITION OF FACTORY AND SHOP COMMITTEES.

The law on factory and shop committees is also annulled by the law of January 12. The factory and shop committees are replaced by *councils of delegates*. But how is such a council of delegates formed?

“The leader of the enterprise, in agreement with the leader of the national-socialist factory organization, draws up a list of delegates and substitutes in March of every year. The followers (the workers) immediately express their opinion about the list by a secret ballot. Should it prove impossible to form a council of delegates in this manner, the labor authority may appoint the proper number of delegates.”

The delegates, together with and directed by the employer, constitute the council of delegates of the enterprise. This institution gives the employer “aid through advice,” and is a deliberative organ under the authority of the employer. The employer calls this council together from time to time; and the very first task of such a council is the struggle for “an increase in the productivity of labor.”

The law of January 12 also provides for an institute of labor authorities and an establishment of so-called “social courts of honor.” The Hitler gov-

¹ We shall deal with the shop and factory delegates in the next (the second) section of this article.

ernment gives the labor authority the power "to look after the maintenance of industrial peace" in his definite economic district. The police apparatus is at the service of the labor authority. The "social courts of honor" are constituted in the following manner:

"A court of honor includes a legal functionary as chairman, one of the leaders of the enterprise and one of the delegates as jurors. The leader of the enterprise and the delegate are co-opted by the chairman of the court according to a list of candidates drawn up by the 'German Labor Front.'"

The "courts of honor" can impose various punishments, from warnings and reprimands to dismissal from work.

But what are these councils of delegates, these labor authorities, these "social courts of honor"? They are nothing else but *police organs*, whose task it is to spy out "undesirable elements."

With mealy-mouthed speeches the fascists attempt to sweeten this law of January 12 which unequivocally ratifies the right of the modern slave-owners to unlimited robbery and the most callous arbitrary rule. The exploiters, the employers, in this law, are termed "leaders of enterprises"; the exploited, the workers—the followers. All this is done in an attempt to create an appearance that class antagonisms and the class struggle have been removed in the fascist kingdom where poverty and lawlessness are the lot of the toilers. The words "loyalty" and "honor" figure in every paragraph—words borrowed from the times of the brigandage of the feudal barons.

Two days before the law became known in all its monstrous details, the fascists called upon the Berlin workers to come to the Lustgarten and there to demonstrate in honor of this law. Goebbels, in a speech at the Lustgarten, called the law—which ratifies the unlimited power and terror of the capitalists—a measure of the "socialist revolution":

"You misunderstand us altogether," said Goebbels, "if you believe that we set as our task the protection by force of the money-boxes of any grouping of capital. Our revolution was directed not only against Marxism, but also against reaction. It was a socialist revolution."

Angriff characterized the law of January 12 as "a piece of socialism." *Voelkischer Beobachter* wrote shamelessly in its editorial of January 19, under the title, "Socialism in Action": "The law gives the workers what they have been striving for throughout many years."

The "highly cultured," truly "Aryan" defenders of the rule of the fist, and the unlimited exploitation of the proletariat attempt to attain two ends through

this base demagogy: in the first place, to deceive the workers and retard the inevitable growth of the indignation and the revolutionary struggle of the masses; and in the second place, to discredit the very idea of socialism. However, the idea of fooling the people, with fascist sergeant-majors and executioners in the role of demagogues, cannot be successful. And in answer to this general attack of capital and fascism the Communist Party of Germany is doing everything to mobilize the masses within as short a time as possible, against the removal by the fascists of the social achievements of the proletariat, against the whole system of fascist slavery.

III. WHY THE GERMAN BOURGEOISIE AND FASCISM BEGIN THEIR ATTACK ON THE STANDARD OF LIVING AND THE SOCIAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE WORKING MASSES PRECISELY AT THIS TIME

It is quite obvious that from the very first days of its coming to power the Hitler government was determined to put an end to all the social achievements of the German working class. During all the years of the crisis the capitalists have carried on a most violent struggle against these achievements; for they see in the destruction of these achievements the only way out of the crisis (apart from war). Then why did the Hitler government wait a whole year before promulgating the law of January 12? Does not this mean that the fascist dictatorship in Germany has consolidated itself—that it now feels strong enough to carry out a frontal attack against the working masses?

No; of course not. The publication of the law precisely at this moment, far from testifying to the strengthening and consolidation of the Hitler dictatorship, on the contrary signalizes the enormous difficulties which are growing up before the bourgeoisie in Germany. In 1933, the capitalists robbed the workers mainly by all sorts of indirect methods (raising prices on the prime necessities of life and on articles of broad consumption, shortening the working week, raising the workers' norms of production, forcing "voluntary subscriptions," etc.). Owing to this robbery, and to the war orders, German industry experienced a certain revival in the summer and autumn of last year. However, *the winter brought the curve down*; the indirect possibilities of robbing the workers were in the main exhausted, and the bourgeoisie was faced with the necessity of a transition to a direct attack on wages. It considered that in the conditions of the beginning of the revolutionary revival, it would be impossible to carry out this attack through the tariff agreement system; this would have provoked the opposition of the great, compact masses of the proletariat. The German bourgeoisie preferred to carry out this at-

tack in the individual enterprises; and it *was in a hurry* with this measure, apprehending lest the strengthening of the Communist Party and the growth of the revolutionary revival may create a situation in which such a general attack will no longer be possible.

Thus, the abolition of the tariff agreement system was caused by the desperate attempts of the German bourgeoisie to keep up the economic revival which was beginning, and by their dread of encountering large, compact masses of workers in any attack against wages.

In reality, notwithstanding all the promises of the fascist leaders, the winter has brought a sharp increase in the number of unemployed. Bernhardt Koelier, the director of the economic division of the Central Committee of the National-Socialist party, wrote in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* only a few weeks ago:

“The guaranteed prevention of the seasonal growth of unemployment in the winter months of this year is a success of great strategic skill.”

However, the published figures on employment for December show an entirely different picture. According to these figures, the number of registered unemployed increased by 343,000 in one month, and the number employed on public works decreased by 123,000 so that there was a total increase of 466,000 in the number of unemployed. This considerably exceeds the figures for the increase of unemployment in December, 1932. According to the same statistics, the discharged workers were not engaged in agriculture but in industry and in the building trade. Thus it is evident that we have to deal not with a seasonal depression in the economic situation, but with a general lowering of the level of industrial production.

In these conditions, the German bourgeoisie is trying to get out of the crisis by further lowering the standard of living of the proletariat, by bringing it down to the standard of living of the Chinese coolie. Of course, even last year the Hitler government carried out a cut in wages by all sorts of measures—even though in most cases its labor authorities renewed the current tariff agreements without great changes. Even the Institute of Conjunctural research, which has been “unified” in harmony with fascism, admits that despite the rise in prices, the turnover of commodities in the retail trade in 1933 decreased by 7 per cent in comparison with 1932. In its New-Years thoughts the fascisized *Frankfurter Zeitung* of December 31, 1933, spoke about “economic recovery,” about the provision of work for the unemployed, and about the improvement which allegedly has set in in the situation of the workers.

However, at the same time the paper was compelled to admit that except for the textile industry, the situation in the light industry was lamentable. Thus, for instance:

“In the food industry in general there is as yet no recovery; and in some of its branches one can even notice a certain decrease in sales. During the past months of the fiscal year 1933, the tax on beer has so far brought in 12 per cent less than in 1932; and the tax on tobacco, 4 per cent less. However, the decrease in purchasing power in this sphere was expressed, not by a decrease in sales, but by a transition to the cheaper brands. The halt in the development of consumption is illustrated also by the tax on travel.”

This forced admission of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* is very significant. Why—one would like to ask—did not the production of the food industry in 1933 reach even the dimensions of 1932; why was less beer drunk, and less tobacco used? Fascist statistics give no answer to this question. Why 1,500,000 unemployed are supposed to be back at work, receiving wages; the labor authorities have renewed the tariff agreements in most cases without lowering wage rates; the situation of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and in the rural districts seems, according to fascist reports, to have been improved during 1933. Then, if this is so, what could have caused the decrease in purchasing power? The explanation, however, is quite simple—fascist wage rates in the shops and factories were considerably lowered in 1933, despite all statements to the contrary. And if new workers were hired anywhere, this was done at the expense of the old workers, precisely through shortening their working week with no corresponding increase in wages. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* itself is forced to admit in this same article that the hiring of new workers often brought about a decrease in the total sum of the wages paid to the workers of the given enterprise.

“In the places where a decrease in working time was the premise for hiring new workers, the decrease in the wages of the older workers was supposed to cover in part the wages of the new workers. In many cases the hiring of new workers affected only categories paid according to the lowest tariff divisions, while the decrease in working time hurt the interests of the skilled and higher-paid workers as well.”

In 1933, wages were cut by various means and methods, but all this was not enough for the employers. The fascist government which is the political representative of “the most reactionary, the most chauvinistic elements of finance capital (Theses of

the Thirteenth Pleum of the E.C.C.I.) is striving for something entirely different; *it is striving for a lowering of wages in Germany on an unprecedented scale.* Moreover, they want to deprive the workers of all possibilities of resisting this robbery, which the bourgeoisie regards as its only means of reviving industry and getting out of the crisis. The law of January 12 is the beginning of a *general attack* by the German bourgeoisie on the standard of living of the working class; it is the adventurish, predatory policy of monopoly capital, dictated by the situation of the most profound economic crisis in Germany, by the enormous difficulties of maintaining and strengthening the elements of some economic revival which appeared in 1933.

IV. GERMAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

Our class enemy is taking advantage of its temporary victory, and attempts to deal the working class a crushing blow so as to secure to the capitalist the way out of the crisis. German social-democracy, which even under the fascist dictatorship remains the principal social support of the bourgeoisie, is hastening to fulfill its role. How did the German social-democracy react to the law of January 12? The *Neuer Vorwaertz*, organ of Wels and Stampfer, in its editorial of January 21, writes on the law:

"The stronger the pressure, the more cleverly the methods of weakening the working class are planned, the more general will be the struggle of the working class and the aims of that struggle—*some day.*"

The full weight of this declaration lies in the two little words, "some day." The enemy is ruthlessly tearing the last piece of bread from the mouths of the German workers, is decisively destroying all their social achievements. Social-democracy, however, *does not call on the workers to struggle.* It does not indicate *any* way of struggle against the law of January 12. It only holds out the promise that some time *in the future*, "*some day*," this struggle will become "more general"; that this "more general" struggle of the proletariat will be a "struggle for freedom." The social-democracy is *repeating* the traitorous tactics that it has tried out so many times before, in particular in the days of the fascist coup in 1933. Then, in the January days of 1933, they called for a *future* struggle (in case the fascists abandoned the "legal methods of struggles," and this after the fascists had burned the Reichstag, after they had begun mass arrests and murders); and just as, in the name of this future struggle, it disrupted the general strike called by the Communists—so now also, they speak of a future, "more general" struggle, in order to disrupt the *present day*

resistance of the proletariat to the fascist law of starvation and slavery.

And as far as the "struggle for freedom" is concerned, the German workers know from their own experience the value of freedom *concocted according to the social-democratic recipe.* The Weimar Republic—that is the name of the social-democratic "freedom" which means freedom for the bourgeoisie to prepare for the fascist form of dictatorship *and with the help of the social-democrats to prepare also for the destruction of all the social achievements of the working class.*

The social-democrats and the trade-union bureaucrats are insolent liars, when they say that they have been and remain true fighters for and defenders of social reforms. They are agents of the bourgeoisie, and, step by step, have surrendered to the bourgeoisie, the positions wrested from it by the working class; they have paved the way for the destruction of the achievements of the working class by fascism. The social-democrats and the trade-union bureaucrats like to take credit for all the social victories achieved by the November Revolution of 1918. This is sheer impudence. It was not the Welses and the Leiparts, but the millions of German workers, with the Spartacusbund in the van, who struggled, in the stormy days of the November Revolution, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for a Soviet Germany—and who won in battle the social achievements of the November Revolution. The history of capitalism in all countries has shown that only the revolutionary mass struggle of the proletariat leads to the winning of social reforms. It is only when the bourgeoisie is faced with the possibility of losing everything, that it makes serious concessions, and grants serious social reforms. The "social" laws enacted during the revolution of 1918-19 merely sanctioned what the working class had already taken by force, in the revolutionary struggle. Now the German bourgeoisie wants to make a clean sweep not only of the achievements of the November revolution, but also of those social reforms which were attained by the German working class in the decades of struggle before the revolution. And what does social-democracy do, social-democracy which pretends to be the only bulwark of social reforms? It soothes the workers with hopes for the future "struggle for freedom," while *actually calling on them to capitulate.*

However, this is not the only time that German social-democracy has attempted, on the instructions of the bourgeoisie, to bind the working class hand and foot and to divert it from the task of smashing the frontal attack directed against it. During all the fifteen years since the war, German social-democracy has step by step opened wide the doors to fascism, to please the ruling classes. And it has

paved the way for the fascist club-law in the field of social reforms, just as in all other fields.

Even then, in the days of the revolution, social-democracy and the trade-union leaders helped the German bourgeoisie to transform the social laws into a noose for the proletariat. They attempted to split the working class by means of these laws—to strengthen and perpetuate the arbitrary rule of the bureaucracy and the aristocracy of labor in the shops and factories and in the trade unions.

The employers have struggled for years against the principle of "unalterability" in the tariff agreements; and the trade-union bureaucracy has unceasingly helped them in their struggle to achieve this aim. The trade-union bureaucracy set its hand to the extraordinary decrees of the Bruening government, of June 5 and December 8, 1931—decrees which dealt the first serious blows at the principle of "unalterability" in the tariff agreements. The trade-union bureaucracy, which was afraid of the masses and their struggle, tried ever harder to shift the negotiations in connection with the conclusion and renewal of tariff agreements from the enterprises to the offices of the trade unions; it tried to deprive the broad masses of the possibility to influence the conclusion of the tariff agreements. The workers and office-employees affected by the tariff agreements gradually ceased to take any interest in these agreements. The reactionary elements contained in the tariff agreement system were developed more and more. The policy of the trade-union bureaucrats made the task of the gradual elimination of the tariff agreements easier for the German bourgeoisie. The Communist Party struggled against the obvious hybrid character and halfway policy of these laws—against the numerous anti-working class elements which they contained—against the exploitation of these laws by the bourgeoisie and the trade-union bureaucracy—against the latter's policy of preventing the working masses from participation in the conclusion of the tariff agreements. *But at the same time the Communist Party strove to make the utmost use of the positions given to the proletariat by these laws.*

V. THE TASKS OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE STARVATION AND SLAVERY LAW

The abolition of the tariff agreements and of the shop and factory committees will inevitably entail an enormous sharpening of the class struggle in Germany.

With the law of January 12, the bourgeoisie and fascism have opened a new general attack on the standard of living of the working class. Monopoly capital and its fascist agents, who in 1933 established the regime of open, brutal political enslave-

ment of the proletariat, are now intensifying the robbery of the working class to an unprecedented extent. At the same time, by abolishing the tariff agreements, they are trying to split up the resistance of the working class and to deprive it not only practically but also by law of all legal bases of resistance (the factory and shop committees). The robbers and slave-owners are *preparing for the workers conditions of penal servitude.*

The social-democratic party babbles lying revolutionary phrases; but in deed it serves fascism loyally, attempting to imbue the masses with the spirit of capitulation and defeatism and hold them back from immediate struggle.

Only the Communist Party calls on the workers to develop a struggle on a united class front *against the abolition by fascism of the social gains of the working class*, against the attack of capital, against fascism.

At the same time, it comes out consistently *against social-fascism*, which has done everything to turn the old tariff agreements into a noose for the workers, and to prepare the ground for the abolition of these agreements by fascism.

The situation is such that the Communists—if they are sufficiently active and skillful in their work, and have enough initiative—can draw the enormous masses of the social-democratic, non-party, and Christian workers, and even the workers who belong to the fascist trade-unions, into the struggle under the banner and the leadership of the Communists against fascism, which is abolishing the most important social gains of the working class. The situation is such that the Communists can stir up, organize, and lead a great strike movement in the shops and factories.

The capitalists will very soon begin to lower wages and worsen the conditions of labor in individual enterprises—without waiting for the law of January 12 to come into force (*i.e.*, on May 1). The law of January 12 makes mass organized resistance difficult by the fact that wage rates and conditions of labor will in the future be determined at different times, by each employer individually. However, it is certain that the *mass character of the future conflicts in the shops and factories will open up to the Communists and the officials of the revolutionary trade-unions the possibility of uniting the scattered demonstrations of the workers into a great strike movement.* This task in the struggle for leadership in every conflict, for the organization and expansion of the strike struggle—the *task of leading the masses to a general mass strike*—must in these conditions be considered by the Communists as the most important part of their work in the near future. The general strike can and must grow up on the basis of the

broad strike struggle in the individual shops and factories.

A broad strike movement—as a counter-attack of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism—can develop only if the Communists and the independent class trade unions advance *concrete economic partial demands*, especially the demand for *higher wages*. However, it would be a mistake in the present conditions to limit ourselves only to such economic demands. The uniting of the scattered actions of the workers in the individual shops and factories into a great strike movement culminating in a general strike, will be really successful only if, from the very beginning, along with these economic demands, the movement is given a *revolutionary character*—assuming the form of a struggle first and foremost against the penal servitude law of January 12, against the entire system of the fascist dictatorship.

Today, *as never before*, success in the struggle depends on the strength and initiative of the party organizations of the C.P.G. *in the shops and factories*, and especially in the *big shops and factories*. More than ever before, the present situation demands an intensification of the shop, factory, and trade-union work of the C.P.G.; this work is a necessary prerequisite for the organization by the Communists of a strike struggle on a more or less wide scale.

The fascist henchmen of the Tiessens and Krupps know very well the danger that threatens them from the Communist Party. Therefore, on the one hand, they employ frantic demagoguery, maintaining that the law of January 12 is a “piece of socialism,” and on the other hand, they resort to a monstrous intensification of terror. Himmler, the chief leader of the

defense troops and the commander of the political police in all parts of Germany except Prussia, published a reminder in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* of January 12, in which he said:

“As before, the main work of the political police is directed against Marxist organizations which continue to struggle against us even from underground. The Communists have no doubt promoted a new leadership which works very carefully and cunningly.”

Our class enemy admits that the Communist Party of Germany is fighting successfully for the establishment of a united revolutionary front of struggle against fascism and capitalism. The Communists must *use the law of January 12 with the object of broadening and consolidating this united front in the class struggle of the proletariat.*

The law of January 12 aims at establishing in Germany the conditions of labor of the age of early capitalism. Engels gave a masterful description of the situation of the English workers in the forties of last century, and told the English bourgeoisie where this path would lead them:

“Driven to despair the proletarians will take to the torch as preached by Stephens; the revenge of the people will break out with a fury which will put into the shade 1793.” (Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England.*)

However, in contradistinction to 1793, this will be a revenge of the people, which will lead to the establishment of a soviet power—to the final abolition of the whole structure of wage slavery—to the victory of socialism.

Recommended for Further Reading on the Situation in Germany

The Present Situation in Germany—By <i>O. Piatnitsky</i>	10c
Social-Democracy—Stepping Stone to Fascism—By <i>D. Z. Manuilsky</i>	5c
The Communist Party of Germany Lives and Fights	5c
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ONCE MORE ABOUT WORK IN THE REFORMIST AND FASCIST UNIONS¹

By O. PIATNITSKY

WHEN Lenin in 1920, during the period in which the proletariat took direct revolutionary action, devoted a special chapter in his historical work *Infantile Sickness of "Leftism" in Communism* to the question of the necessity to work in reactionary unions, he had before him but a few instances of refusal on the part of "left" Communists to carry on such work. However, even then he foresaw the danger that might arise from Communists refusing to work in mass organizations which had been seized by the enemy. Today we see the consequences of this "leftism" practiced by some Communist Parties of the capitalist countries. I think, however, that even the functionaries of the revolutionary trade-union movement not only then, but even now underestimate the importance of this question.

We are today attending the Enlarged Meeting of the R.I.L.U. Executive Bureau. One of the most important questions on the agenda is the question of work in the reformist unions. But oh, how poor we are in this sphere! It would be no exaggeration if we say that practically nowhere, in no country, is work carried on in a real Bolshevik manner, that only lately have Communists begun to work a little in the reformist unions. That this work was almost completely ignored is an indisputable fact. And what are the results? The Communists and adherents of the R.I.L.U. in most countries surrendered the reformist trade unions to the trade-union bureaucrats almost without a fight, and thus not only isolated themselves from the broad working masses, in these unions, but rendered it possible for the agents of the bourgeoisie to pursue their treacherous policy unhindered. And the reformists in all countries made the best of this situation so favorable for them. The Executive Bureau, I think, must quite frankly admit this, must admit it in order to put an end to this scandalous state of affairs.

The question of work in the reformist unions is more acute today than it ever was before. We must bear in mind that as soon as the Communists will really begin to work in the reformist unions, measures will be adopted against them by the trade-union bureaucrats. In a number of countries such repressive measures were used even before when the R.I.L.U. adherents very poorly carried on this work. Now, in all probability, repressions will take on a

sharper form. These repressions are already spreading to such countries which only recently had been considered comparatively "safe" in this respect, as, for example, Sweden. Therefore, we must even now prepare and make sure that these repressions do not catch us unawares, we must come to an understanding here on the tactics which Communists will have to adopt in the reformist unions, when they are expelled from them. I am of the opinion that R.I.L.U. adherents can and must sign any obligation which the trade-union bureaucrats force upon them under the threat of expulsion from the reformist unions. However, they must clearly understand that they do so not in order to "behave" like "good boys" in the reformist unions, as some Communists do, but to carry on their active, class, bolshevik work. Under such conditions we can sign any documents which the trade-union bureaucrats force upon us. But how must this tactic be carried out? It is necessary that the Communist Parties widely and in a popular manner explain this tactic to the broad working masses, let alone to members of the Party.

The experiences in Sweden must serve as a lesson in this respect. I believe that the directive issued by the C.C. of the Communist Party of Sweden to Communists instructing them to sign the obligations demanded from them by the reformist unions, was correct,—there was this mistake, however, that the Party was late with this directive, as a result of which several hundred revolutionary workers were expelled from the reformist unions. What was wrong in the carrying out of this tactic? The fact that the Communist Party of Sweden failed to explain to the broad working masses and even to its members why it issued such directives. The Communist Party of Sweden is legal, it has a number of daily papers, etc., and consequently, has the widest possibility of explaining its position to the workers. They should have been told what the situation is, namely, that: (1) the reformist unions support the social-democratic party, which is in power; (2) the social-democracy carries out all the measures of the bourgeoisie, while we, Communists, as is understood, have not and cannot have any common interests with the bourgeoisie; (3) precisely because the reformists actually go hand in hand with the bourgeoisie, they want to drive out all the adherents of the revolutionary T.U. movement, who expose their policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie and carry out the line of the class struggle in

¹ Speech at Enlarged Meeting of the R.I.L.U. Executive Bureau, December 16th, 1933.

the trade unions; (4) Communists, in the interests of freeing the workers from the influence of the reformist leaders, must on their part do everything in order to remain in the reformist unions, and even sign any obligations demanded of them by the trade-union bureaucrats, who are looking for pretexts to expel them; (5) while remaining in these unions, the Communists must fight there, defending the Communist line.

It was necessary concretely, plainly and comprehensively to show the workers how the reformist unions betray the interests of the working class, and had the workers understood this, matters would not have reached such a state, when Communists are driven out of these unions unhindered. You must understand that in Sweden, where almost 80 per cent of the proletariat is organized, Communists in leaving the reformist unions lose the arena of struggle, while the reformists are left free to do as they please, and have the possibility to betray the interests of the working class. Perhaps we shall have to change the outer forms of the work of the R.T.U.O., to give the R.T.U.O. another name, perhaps an absolutely "innocent" one, so as to be able to continue our work in the reformist unions. And if necessary, we must organize secret Communist Fractions in the reformist unions, in order that they group around them the R.I.L.U. adherents. We must now give instructions to the T.U. Oppositions, that should the necessity arise they can adopt such methods of work.

We must discuss this question, without fail now, from all sides. If you find this question a disputable one, let us dispute it. But if we do not overcome all the difficulties and formalities that the bourgeoisie and trade-union bureaucrats are putting in our way in order to hamper our work, all our decisions on the question of intensifying our work in the reformist trade unions will remain on paper. What sort of revolutionaries would we be if, because of some formalities we could not or would not work in the reformist unions?

Although the question here is about work in the reformist unions still we cannot help touching also the question of work in the factories—this cornerstone of all trade union work.

In order to intensify the work in the reformist unions we must work in the factories and also among the unemployed. Among the unemployed, and naturally, among the workers in the factories, there are members and adherents of the fascist and reformist unions, and, of course it is easiest to work among the workers in factories, paying special attention to work among members of fascist and reformist unions. We must miss no opportunity concretely to expose the treachery of the fascist and reformist trade-union bureaucrats before the workers, to ex-

pose the various forms and methods of these traitors in different periods (before the war, during the period of the relative stabilization of capitalism, at the beginning of the crisis, etc.). While uniting in the factories the unemployed, the workers who are dissatisfied with the policy of their leaders, we shall be able through them to extend our work both in the fascist as well as in the reformist trade unions. It is impossible here not to touch on the question of work in the factories, not to link up this work with the task of reinforcing our work in the reformist and fascist unions.

On the other hand, there are many instances when Communists and R.I.L.U. adherents fail to utilize their positions in the trade unions for intensifying their work in the factories. However, the work in the factories is closely linked up with the work in the trade unions. Let us take, for example, the work among the unemployed. Was it not possible to work among the unemployed members of reformist and fascist unions and unite them, explaining them the role of the reformist and fascist unions, which supported or carried out measures of rationalization of labor in times of crisis, measures for worsening insurance and lowering unemployed benefits? We could have developed this work, but not enough was done. In Germany and Italy work could have developed in connection with this question also among members of fascist factory and shop organizations (in some places these organizations have not died out altogether), and we could have united around this question part of the fascist workers. By uniting them for the struggle against unemployment and rationalization it is possible to weaken the influence of fascism over them, and to draw in the best of the workers into the revolutionary workers' organization.

There are some disputable questions concerning work inside the fascist unions. Some comrades say that in Italy today it is possible to work only in the fascist unions. This is not altogether true, for there are also other organizations to which workers belong. Some comrades say that it is possible successfully to work only when we succeed in organizing a "legal opposition in the fascist unions." I must admit, that I do not quite understand the way in which the question is presented. What does it mean—legal opposition in the fascist unions? I understand it in the sense, that our comrades come out openly at fascist trade union meetings and raise certain demands. Such a tactic is correct, this is how we must work. But how do the Communists or our adherents act before presenting these demands, what arrangements are made among themselves in connection with the demands which they are going to put up? This is another matter. Why, in order successfully to come out at a fascist trade union meeting it is necessary beforehand to assign

each his task, to decide, as to who and how is to speak, as to how this or that resolution is to be proposed. Is it possible to do this work legally? No, by no means. Which means, it must be done illegally. Evidently, in our work in fascist countries it is necessary to combine illegal preparation of questions of trade union work with legal action. I conceive this work as follows: In the factory or in the branch of the unions our comrades, Communists, both members as well as those who are not members of the fascist unions, draw up demands, discuss methods of work, etc. Numerous reasons can nowadays be found for presenting demands which are comprehensible to every worker: wage cuts, non-payment of unemployment benefits to workers who are forced to pay insurance dues, new rationalization measures which raise the intensity of labor, etc. On this basis demands can be raised in the factory or even in the trade union at every step. Only it is necessary to agree beforehand on the methods for raising these demands, beforehand to divide the duties between the separate Communists or sympathizers. These demands must be raised at workers' meetings, mobilizing the workers on them. If, however, no such meetings are called, we must get the fascist unions to call them. Sometimes a non-Communist worker may come forward with our demands openly at a meeting, in order to raise some question, we must face the possibility of an arrest or dismissal of some Communist or member of the revolutionary T.U. movement. Such work too will mean the combining of two methods: illegal organization as well as illegal preparation of questions and plain speaking at the meetings, carrying on of individual or group agitation, etc. What are the advantages of such a method of work? With such a method of work, that is, of course if it is correctly carried out, in the worst case only the one who comes out at the meeting might suffer, while the rest of the organization remain unharmed and can continue the work. If the Italian comrades, referring to a legal opposition, have in view this kind of work, then, and only then, is the tactic they propose correct. By the way, it is high time that the Italian comrades come out here and tell us concretely, how they carry on their work by now.

If in the fascist unions there are elements who are dissatisfied with the policy of these unions, and, surely there must be such elements there, for apart from their entire policy of open coercion, the fascist unions take part in the cutting of workers' wages, in introducing rationalization measures under conditions of widespread unemployment, etc.—then the Communists and members of the illegal Confederation of Labor must help these opposition elements to crystalize into a legal opposition in the fascist unions, and through this opposition to attempt to popularize

the slogans of the Party and the Confederation of Labor.

In Germany the situation is somewhat different. The basic task in connection with the dissolution of the existing fascist reformist unions by the fascists is the organization of independent unions in all industries, in all cities, even in separate factories. It goes without saying that along with this, it is necessary to utilize those basic trade union organizations, which now are called fascist, but which according to their composition are most likely still reformist, to win them over and turn them into Independent unions. This is not a disputable question. But the fascists in Germany are now setting up a Labor Front, where they intend to accept individual workers and employers. While calling upon the workers not to join the Labor Front our adherents must also work among those workers who have joined it; their aim must be to mobilize the workers, members of the Labor Front, against the fascists and for this purpose refer to the worsening conditions of the workers, the fascists' failure to keep their promises, etc. In some provinces the fascists carry through the following measures: with the object of reducing unemployment, the fascists compel the enterprises, employing up to 15 workers to take on one unemployed; those employing up to 50 workers, to take on 3 unemployed, etc. But on what conditions do the employers hire these unemployed? They pay them only 50 per cent of the wages, and the other 50 per cent has to be paid by the workers and employees of the given enterprise. There is no need to mention the fact that the employer squeezes out of these newly-hired unemployed the same surplus value as he does out of the other workers. Is it possible to mobilize the workers on such a ground? Is it possible on such a ground to mobilize also the members of the Labor Front who are workers belonging to fascist organizations in the factories? It is quite possible and necessary. When we had an R.T.U.O. in Germany before the fascists came to power, we saw that although it had carried on a certain useful work, it did it almost entirely outside of the reformist unions. I am afraid that if we begin to organize independent trade unions, now, too, work among members of the Labor Front or in fascist organizations in the factories will be neglected. But work in these organizations must be carried on so that the work and struggle of the independent trade unions may be supported through them. For the independent unions will formulate demands, will organize strikes, will carry on propaganda and agitation, etc. But should we fail to exercise influence in the factories among the members of the fascist organizations, then the strikes will not bear a mass character, our demands will be

responded to only by narrow circles of workers. The absence of our influence in these organizations will make it possible for the fascists, quite unhindered, to drive out of the factories those revolutionary workers who will take part in strikes. What is most important is that if we fail to carry on work in the fascist mass workers' organizations (Labor Front, "*Kraft Durch Freude*," ("Strength Through Joy," youth and women's organizations, sport organizations and forced-labor camps), it will be impossible to free the backward workers and employees from the influence of the fascists and organize them for the struggle against the fascists. It is therefore, imperative to combine work in the fascist organizations with the founding of illegal trade unions. The mistake of the German comrades was, that having organized an R.T.U.O., they neglected work in the reformist unions. This mistake must be avoided today in relation to the fascist unions.

The German Communists must work also among the unorganized, all the more so, since there will be more unorganized in Germany now than ever before. Our work, however, must be concentrated mainly on members of the Labor Front, of the fascist organizations in the enterprises and outside the enterprises, because honest workers too join these organizations in the hope that in this way they will avoid beatings, arrests, dismissals and other repressions.

And in all probability these honest workers will not refuse to participate in the struggle if we properly organize it. Many of them, I am convinced, will come over to us with the upsurge of the movement. But in order to accelerate their coming over to us, we must work among them. In the future we must avoid the one-sidedness that formerly existed in our work.

In Poland the situation considerably differs from the situation in other countries. In Poland we are approaching a revolutionary crisis. The mass movement there has developed very extensively. At the same time, there in our trade union work we have special difficulties which are not met with in other countries. What are these difficulties? The incredibly scattered state of the organized workers—there are four trade union federations and all of them have a mass following. The basic mass of the workers occupied in the leading branches of industry, are in the organizations of our enemies. This is the main hindrance to our winning over the majority of the working class, a hindrance which the Party must overcome at all costs.

What is characteristic of the present-day movement in Poland? There is a powerful strike movement, the Communists and left trade union opposition exercise tremendous influence over these strikes. In most

cases they actually direct the work of the strike committees. But the influence won by the Party as a result of its conducting the strikes, irrespective of their results, is in no way consolidated and no conditions are even created for consolidating this influence. Some might draw the conclusion: once we fail to utilize the leadership of strikes for consolidating our influence, we might as well give up that leadership. Such conclusions would be absolutely wrong and extremely harmful. On the contrary, we must strive to win the leadership of any strike, thus extending our influence among the workers and consolidating it.

How can Communists and R.I.L.U. adherents consolidate their influence? The number of trade union organizations under revolutionary leadership is extremely small. Furthermore, the greater part of these unions in Poland are illegal and it is impossible to draw large numbers of workers into them. Which means that it is not mainly in this way that we can consolidate our influence. New forms must be found. These other forms can only be the existing mass trade union organizations, *i.e.*, the P.S.P. unions, the nationalist and fascist unions, in which we must work. This is the root of the question.

But is it possible for us to consolidate our positions in the P.S.P. unions? I answer, yes, it is. Let us take, for example, the strikes organized and won by the R.T.U.O., despite and against the wishes of the reformist and nationalist leaders, who had hindered these strikes. These strikes are utilized by the reformists for their own ends. Is it possible to organize inside the P.S.P. unions an opposition on the basis of successes won by us in strikes? Quite possible. In these unions we must organize around our adherents—and there are very many of our adherents there—a wide opposition, to fight against the leadership and to wage a struggle for every elective position. Work in these unions must be carried on systematically, and we must not draw the conclusion that we must get the workers who sympathize with us to leave these unions. Why? Because past experience has shown us that when we succeeded in some countries in winning over trade union branches, which sometimes had as many as a thousand members each, and made haste to transfer these branches won over by us to our union, one part of the membership would soon drop out and return to the old union, which they had left and where we no longer carried on any work. Only the active members, connected with the Communist Party, remained with us. But these active members were always ours. Is it more important from the viewpoint of the development of the revolutionary trade union movement for these active members to remain in our union and not in the reformist? No! They must be left in the reformist union, striving to win over the entire given

union or the given branch of the union, and when they have strong positions in some branch of the union they could fight for winning over the majority of the whole union or even of other unions. Such work must prepare the soil, so that in the decisive struggle we have the support of this or the other organization, and are sure that it will follow us. Let the leadership of the organization temporarily remain in the hands of the enemy, this does not decide the matter, for the leadership without the basic organization is a mere nothing. Today only in Poland have we such a possibility of consolidating our influence among the masses on a large scale. Therefore it is particularly important to remain and work in the unions of the enemy.

At the same time in conducting strikes, as well as in the course of their work in the reformist unions, the Communists and the members of the R.T.U.O. must under no circumstances hide the face of the Party; on the contrary whenever opportunity permits, they must emphasize that the given strike, the given work is carried out on the instructions of the Party or the R.T.U.O. And only in this way will we be able to rally the best elements to the side of the Party and the R.T.U.O. The Communist Party of Poland is an illegal party, it cannot build legal, broad unions. Therefore, until the proper moment arrives, it must consolidate its positions in the mass organizations of the enemy, must have its reserves there, must create its stronghold there. But in winning over these organizations it must make sure that when the proper moment comes, it will have behind it the broad masses who will answer its call despite and against the trade union bureaucrats.

Does this mean that we must not build and strengthen our trade union organizations wherever possible? By no means. We must distribute our forces so as to provide all sections of our work. We must be able to do so, for otherwise how can we ever raise the question of seizing power? We are here discussing the question of work inside the fascist unions. Both the draft resolution and the comrades who spoke so far are for getting our adherents to leave the fascist unions. But I ask—where are you going to transfer them to? If we had parallel legal unions of our own, we could transfer them there, but there are not any. Must you transfer our adherents from the fascist unions to the P.S.P. unions? Sometimes, of course, we can and must leave the fascist unions. But if we take a concrete country, in this case Poland, and the concrete stage of development of the class struggle, then we must take into consideration what elements will respond to our call for leaving the fascist unions. They will be those who sympathize with us, *i.e.*, elements who have become disillusioned in their fascist leaders.

In solving the problem of the fascist unions we

must take into consideration the different periods of their development. The first period, when the bourgeoisie only begins to build them; then the task of our Party is to do everything in its power to convince the workers not to join these fascist unions, explaining to them the real aims and tasks of these unions. In Poland the followers of Pilsudski began to organize trade unions when, on the one hand, they began to lose their mass basis among the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, when the P.S.P. nationalist and other unions were no longer in a position to safeguard the fascist dictatorship against the growing mass discontent of the workers. The whole history of recent years shows that the workers, organized in the P.S.P. unions, together with the Communists, against the wishes of the P.S.P. leaders, are fighting against the bourgeoisie and the fascist dictatorship. Recent strikes have shown with particular clarity that the Communist Party is succeeding in wresting the leadership of these strikes from the hands of the P.S.P. and nationalist unions and in creating the united front of struggle. This is why the fascists are beginning to set up trade unions apart from the P.S.P. unions in order to embrace the workers of the large-scale enterprises in the most important branches of industry: in the metal industry, especially at the war plants, in the chemical industry, on the transport, etc., which play such an important part in time of war.

Thus, during the first period, when the Pilsudskites are only beginning to organize fascist unions, we must wage an energetic struggle against the workers joining these unions. But if in spite of our efforts such unions have been organized, embracing considerable masses of the workers, then the second period sets in, when active work inside these unions must be carried on without fail. Yes, I am of the opinion that we must remain in the fascist unions and fight there for our influence, and not only for our influence, but for the leadership of these unions in the factories. Is this possible? It is.

The Polish proletariat has a great revolutionary history—also in Czarist times it fought side by side with the Russian proletariat. In no other country except Poland did the Communist Party succeed in leading all the big movements of the workers on such a wide scale, in spite of the different trade union organizations of the enemy. I do not believe that the secret service department could pick and choose tens of thousands of workers for the factories and plants of the war industry. This is impossible. Of course, among these workers there might be some provocateurs, but in general these masses consist of honest misled workers, whom we can, through good systematic work, win over to our side. And I repeat, if we do not succeed in dissuading these workers from joining the unions created by the fascists, then

we must work inside these unions. There is no other way.

How must we work in these unions? We must react to all the vital needs of the workers and make such proposals which can be understood by every worker, proposals for which he will be ready to fight. We must mobilize the workers for such demands as pay for accidents, unemployment benefit, etc. Or, for example, in connection with the collection of membership dues through the administration, we must raise the question before them—where does this money go to, why is it not used for satisfying the real needs of the workers, for sick benefits, for unemployment relief, for creches, for the building of clubs, etc. Every worker will understand us then, will support these demands, will follow us. We must not be frightened by the fact that the executives of the unions will be appointed by fascists. If we will work well, then the fascists themselves will regret having organized these unions. We can and must win over the workers in these unions to our side and at the necessary moment have them with us for carrying on strikes and other forms of mass action. While raising the vital, everyday demands of the workers, we must link them up with the tactic, program and slogans of the Communist Party, with the program of the revolutionary way out of the crisis, with the organization of the struggle for power.

Must we say that we refuse to remain in these unions because they are fascist, that we want to be independent and want to join some other legal union, be it even a small one? I once again repeat that I would consider this a mistake. We must go nowhere, but hold fast to the influence we have among the workers in the fascist unions and factories.

We will not get the workers to leave. This will remain nothing but empty words, leftist tricks, and nothing more, for the workers will be afraid that if they leave the fascist union they will be thrown out of the factories.

This question, it seems, is a debatable one. Very well, let us discuss it. Already at the Plenum, when Comrade Henrichowsky spoke, I said that I do not agree with our leaving the fascist unions. Should elections take place in the fascist unions in the factories, must our comrades go into these elected organs? Yes, they must. If we succeed in getting a majority on some executives, and if we work well on them, work so that the workers see that we really carry on correct and good work, that we not only wish but are able to defend the interests of the working class, then they will not so easily let the fascists dissolve such elected executives and in the future will not so easily let them appoint executives.

Once more I want to stress the question of our struggle against the *creation* of fascist unions. In

those places where such unions have as yet not been organized, we approach the P.S.P. and other existing unions, although we know that they are not much better than the fascist unions, with the proposal to establish the united front of struggle against the organization of fascist unions. But, if fascist unions have already been organized, and our forces proved insufficient to prevent the organization of such unions, then we must make it our aim to win them over.

Until very recently the experience which many of us had in connection with this question showed that we carried on no work in the fascist mass trade unions. And as a matter of fact, not only in the fascist unions. We talked a lot about work in the reformist unions, but it was the reformists who really worked and not we. Now we must talk less and work more, we must establish a base not only in the reformist, but also in the fascist unions.

There is undoubtedly discontent among the members of the reformist trade unions in *England*. But in *England* the situation is different—there the reformist unions are actually also a political party. The overwhelming majority of the reformist unions are affiliated as unions to the Labor Party. Take the trade unions away from the Labor Party and practically nothing remains of it, except about 5-10 per cent individual members, chiefly belonging to the petty bourgeoisie. Thus, the Labor Party, which was in power twice, and which will in all probability form another government after the coming general elections, consists as a matter of fact of the trade unions. Consequently the approach to the reformist unions in *England* must be of an even more serious nature than in other countries. All the attempts made by the revolutionary trade union opposition recently to consolidate its positions in the reformist unions yielded only partial results. The Minority Movement soared in the air, but did not carry on any work in the reformist unions.

Recently the Communist Party of *England* has adopted a new method of work, in creating a broad "Rank-and-File Movement," which is particularly developing its activities during strikes. But this movement usually appears on the scene after a strike is already on. It rendered aid during strikes, but in the majority of cases, with the ending of these strikes the activity of this movement drops. The influence won by us in the course of strikes is not consolidated. How can we consolidate our influence? For example, a textile workers' strike was declared in *Manchester*. We mobilized all Communist textile workers, who began to help the strike. But while the Communists concentrate all their energy on the strike so that it may lead to the satisfying of all the demands that were raised, their aim must be to work in such a way that the strike, irrespective of whether it is won or lost, leads to an upsurge in the

class consciousness of the workers, to a growth in their organization, to the growth of the political and organizational influence of the Communist Party. And for this purpose it is imperative that the Communists should untiringly carry on political work among the strikers, utilizing all the possibilities which their active and self-denying participation in the given strike offers them. Whether the strike is successful or not—they must in both cases expose the role of the trade union bureaucrats, in every way popularizing the Trade Union Opposition and Communist Party of England. They must acquaint the new strata of workers with the program and tactics of the Communist Party (about the existence of which part of the strikers probably never heard before), with the *Daily Worker*, the daily organ of this Party, they must explain to the workers that the Communist Party is the only party which defends the interests of the working class, and that precisely for this reason it renders aid to the strikers. While carrying on such explanatory work it is necessary to ask the workers the question whether any of the strikers want to join the Communist Party and fight in its ranks for the defense of the interests of the working class. Those who express such a wish must without any hesitation be accepted in the Party: why, the workers went on strike, which means they are ready to fight; the best of them must be accepted in the Party, while a broader circle of non-party active people must be formed around the Party organizations. Strikers who are members of reformist unions must be organized into a special group, which could carry on work in the reformist unions under our leadership. And if at the given factory there happens to be no reformist branch of the union, we must none the less recruit our adherents into the respective reformist unions of the given locality or city, provided, of course, there is no revolutionary union in the given industry. (If the latter proposal seems a disputable one, let us discuss it.) This must be done in order to establish a base in the reformist union of the given locality through our adherents in the given factory. And such work will lead to the real consolidation of the influence won by us as a result of our leadership in the strike. This will mean that not only do we hastily throw our forces into a district in the case of emergency, when a strike movement is pending, and as hastily withdraw from the district immediately the strike is over, but that we really draw new strata of workers into political life. Our task is not only to help the strike, but to extend and consolidate our influence over the working masses on the basis of the aid we render. If, for example, there are no Communist textile workers in Manchester, then we have to mobilize Communists from among the busmen, metal workers or Party members of other trades to help

the strikers. Such organization of aid will be quite comprehensible to the workers. Communists who are not textile workers, and who are actively helping the strike, must organizationally consolidate their influence among the strikers, just as Communist textile workers would have done. Only in this way will the Trade Union Opposition and Communists get a footing in the factories, in the unions, among the workers whom we helped, with whom we spoke, to whom we gave literature. Only by consolidating our influence will the Trade Union Opposition grow. Also in this way will we be able to win elective positions in the reformist unions.

I remember our conversation with Comrade Pollitt two years ago, when he said: "It was easier for you to overthrow the Czar than for us to overthrow the trade union officials, for they are elected for a lifetime." This is not quite so, the Czar was not elected at all, but handed over the power to his sons by right of inheritance. I think that Comrade Pollitt at that time was not right. Why, the revolutionary workers were able at the elections to win 10,000 votes for Comrade Horner, true, in three rounds. They were able to consolidate their position among the busmen, where there was a solidarity movement, to strengthen their position on the executive of the busmen's union and get five of our adherents elected to the executive out of a total number of six. Thus, we see that it is possible to fight for elective posts in England, although trade union officials there are elected for life, but is it not possible to discredit them through effective exposure? If Communists as a result of their work succeed in discrediting the trade union official to an extent that it is impossible for him to show his face in the workers' organization, will he then be able to continue to hold his elective position? In my opinion he will not. Let him continue to consider himself as the elected official, but actually, however, another person will be elected to whom the workers will apply, whom the workers will listen to and whose instructions they will carry out. Is it possible to do this? Yes, it is. The only possibility really to consolidate our positions in the reformist union is to fight for elective posts. This is how the question stood at the Tenth and Twelfth Plenums of the E.C.C.I. It remains correct also today, there is not and there cannot be any other possibility.

However, is it enough only to fight for elective positions? No, it is not. We had in Germany Red factory committees, we fought for the electing of our candidates to them. But after our candidates were elected no one any longer cared about their work in the factory committees and in most cases they worked no better than the reformists. This did not help to extend or consolidate our influence. The workers did not see any difference between us and

the reformists, and therefore preferred the reformists, since the latter at least do the trade union routine work.

Take the question of Comrade Horner. We got him elected, but how will he work—as a reformist or as a Communist? We have five comrades on the executive of the Busmen's Union, we got them elected, but how will they work, as reformists or as Communists? Here is the crux of the matter. By this I do not of course mean to doubt the work of Comrade Horner and the five members of the executive of the Busmen's Union, who were elected on the ticket of the "Rank-and-File Movement." I take them merely as examples. The Party and the Trade Union Opposition must guide the work of those whom they put forward and for whom they are responsible before the workers. Live contact, live connection must be maintained constantly between the Party and the Trade Union Opposition and their candidates. And in the event of these candidates failing in their work to carry out the line of the class struggle, then the C.C. of the Communist Party and the leadership of the Trade Union Opposition must openly dissociate themselves from them, in order that the working masses should know that, although the Party and the Trade Union Opposition were responsible for the candidature of this or that official, they will renounce him immediately he follows the path of reformist practice. I emphasize, if this were to happen. It is important to state that we must constantly tell the working masses what our policy is. Our Party and the Trade Union Opposition must take care of the elected comrades, must give them the materials necessary for their work, must individually work with every one of them, must together with them outline the methods, content and character of their work, must help them correct mistakes committed by them. Should all this prove of no avail the Communist Party and Trade Union Opposition will have to appeal to the workers against the wrong actions of those elected officials.

Now with regard to *France*. We have stated tens of times, and today can state once more, that no systematic work is carried on in the reformist unions in France, that neither the Party nor the Unitarian unions carry on any work. Now it is precisely in France that we have the possibility to work in the reformist unions, even through the Red unions. Under what conditions could we successfully work there? Only if our Red unions worked better than the reformist, if they carried on the tedious mass work, if they undertook at least to explain to the workers under what conditions they can get accident insurance, sick benefits and unemployment relief; if the Unitarian unions during the organization of struggle raised slogans that answered the needs of the masses, if they prepared and declared strikes and in the course of the development of such strikes

drew the broad strata of workers into the strike struggle against the will of the reformists; if in all circumstances they proved able to establish the united front of struggle, etc. Then and only then would the Unitarian unions prove to the members of the reformist unions that they are better than the reformists and the reformist workers would follow them.

If the workers do not see us in the factory, in the plant, and if the Red union in many cases does not differ in its work from the reformist union, if it joins the strike after it had been declared, if there is no active life in the union, and if the Red union hands out less benefits than does the reformist union, then why should the worker go to the Red union? Consequently only by improving our work can we strengthen our activities in the reformist unions, even wrest from them whole organizations (in France in certain instances I stand for wresting whole organizations from the reformists). The question of France is a special question. There we can more easily secure big achievements in our work. There we have comparatively strong Unitarian unions, we have a Party with a more or less broad basis, we have a few hundred thousand readers of our daily press. It is possible to improve the work among the reformist unions, and this must be done even if it is necessary to organize special committees or sections at the executives of the Unitarian unions or Party committees. The question today does not stand as it did two years ago, the moment is extremely acute, matters must not be delayed.

There is no doubt that in Germany we lost a great deal on account of our failure to work in the reformist unions and now we must make up for lost ground.

In all countries the Communist Parties must work and consolidate their positions in all working-class organizations, so that at the time of big events the Communist Parties should have their members, their nuclei in the factories, their fractions in the reformist organizations. It is necessary to work and consolidate our positions so that the reformists remain with their leaderships, while we have the basic reformist organizations and, when the proper moment arrives, are able to lead these organizations to battle. In a number of countries the question of the seizure of power by the working class is becoming an urgent task and we must therefore reorganize our ranks accordingly. Our work must absolutely take another direction. If a year ago we talked a lot and did little, adopted resolutions but failed to carry them out, today we must not lose even one minute in our work. If those Communists who are now chiefly responsible for the state of trade union work are unable to organize this work and consolidate our positions in the mass working-class organizations, first and foremost in the reformist and fascist unions, then their place will have to be taken by others.

SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(Speech of EARL BROWDER at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.)

THE situation of the United States confirms most strikingly the correctness of the draft thesis before us, when it speaks of "the tremendous strain of the internal antagonism . . . as well as of the international antagonisms". The policies of the Roosevelt administration, known as the "New Deal", called into being by the crisis and by these "tremendous strains", have by no means softened these strains and antagonisms, but on the contrary have intensified them. Precisely the period of the Roosevelt regime has marked not alone the sharpening of the international relations of the U.S., but also the internal class relations.

Roosevelt's policy called for "national concentration" and "class peace". But in spite of the apparent surface successes of his regime, even the "honeymoon period" of the New Deal has been marked by rising mass struggles, by great class battles, by a radicalization of large sections of all the toiling masses of the population. The protracted strikes of 70,000 or more miners in Pennsylvania, Utah and New Mexico; the long strike of 60,000 silk workers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania; the many strikes of steel workers, penetrating into the heart of the steel industry around Pittsburgh; and the hundreds of smaller strikes, in almost all industries and regions, increasing in numbers and intensity from March to October—all disclose the hollowness of the "civil peace" of the Roosevelt New Deal, resulting from the fact that N.R.A. while promising wage increases, actually made a general wage-cut of exceptional severity. The mass struggles of the bankrupted farmers, quieted for a few months by the promises of the Agricultural Act and a moratorium on debt foreclosures, are breaking out again on a large scale and with full sharpness with the disclosures that the Roosevelt "allotment plan" has failed to meet a single one of the problems faced by the poor farmers. Even the middle classes are stirring with unrest, under the pressure of continued expropriations carried out by the closing of many hundreds of small banks, by the rapid progress of trustification in all lines, and by wholesale inflation. Never before in modern times has the "strain of internal class antagonisms" in the U.S. been so sharp and so general.

Characteristic for the whole system of policies known as the New Deal is their nature as preparations for war. The economic contents of these measures are those of war economy. The famous three-billion-dollar building program turns out in reality to be a program of Navy building, mechanization of

the Army, building of military roads, and the putting into operation of the Muscle Shoals explosive plant abandoned at the close of the World War. The "unemployment relief" program turns out to be first of all the setting up of a network of military training camps, under the direction of the War Department, where 300,000 young men are being prepared for the Army. The *National Recovery Administration* follows the pattern laid down by the War Industries Board of the World War. Never before has there been such gigantic war preparations at a time when the "enemy" is as yet unnamed. Simultaneously, U.S. oppression of the colonies and semi-colonies takes on sharper forms, as the resistance of the colonial masses grows; witness the fifty million dollars loan to Chiang Kai-shek to finance the anti-Soviet campaign, the naval concentration in Latin-American waters, and especially in Cuba, where the anti-imperialist revolution has already partially broken through the chain of American imperialist puppet-governments.

If we witness all these developments during what may be called the "honeymoon" period of the Roosevelt regime, when the illusions created by an unprecedented demagogy were bolstered up for a time by a rapid rise in production stimulated by an enormous speculative market (the flight from the dollar)—then we have every reason to expect the growth and intensification of class conflicts, and of all the contradictions of capitalism, now when the Roosevelt program has already exposed its inability to improve the condition of the masses, when production against declines precipitately, when rising prices and inflation cut further sharply into the living standards of the masses, and when demagogy is rapidly being reinforced with a sharp development of fascist ideology and terror directed against the struggling masses.

International social-fascism has hailed the Roosevelt policies as "steps in the direction of socialism". The British Labor Party and Trade Union Congress have adopted the Roosevelt program as their own, demanding that it be imitated in Britain. In this way they are but continuing, in the period of crisis, that complete ideological subordination to the bourgeoisie which, during the period of American prosperity created out of the figure of Henry Ford the reformist "saviour". The American Socialist Party has not lagged behind in this respect; Norman Thomas and Morris Hillquit hastened to pay a public visit to Roosevelt, upon his assumption of office, to congratulate him upon his policies, which they hailed as noth-

ing less than a "revolution" in the interests of the masses.

But the fascist direction in which the Roosevelt policies are carrying the U.S. is becoming clear to the whole world. Nowhere is this more manifest than in the efforts to merge the reformist American Federation of Labor into the machinery of government, under the avowed banner of the fascist conception of the "corporate state", prohibition of strikes, compulsory arbitration, governmental fixing of wages, and even control of the inner life of the trade unions. For the edification of the masses this was spoken of as a "partnership of capital and labor, together with the government". Under this program the A.F. of L. is given governmental support and even financial assistance, and a determined effort is made to control and eventually choke off the strike movement, by driving the workers into the A.F. of L. where it is hoped the official leadership will be able to bring the masses under control.

THE A.F. OF L. AND THE T.U.U.L.

During 1933 over a million workers have engaged in strikes. From six to eight hundred thousand workers have come into the various trade unions; of these, between four and six hundred thousand were recruited into the A. F. of L., about one hundred thousand into the Red Trade Unions of the Trade Union Unity League, and one hundred thousand into newly formed independent unions opposed to the A. F. of L. but not yet prepared to enter the Red Trade Unions

Of outstanding importance to us is the fact that the A.F. of L. has grown by about a half million members, placing very sharply before us the urgent task of organizing a mass revolutionary opposition and overcoming all hesitations in our ranks towards this work. This growth has resulted from the mass illusions built up around the N.R.A. from the direct support of the Government, which looks upon the A. F. of L. as its main support within the working class. The A. F. of L. was able to capitalize these illusions and the mass faith in Roosevelt. It must be said, however, that the bourgeoisie has been disappointed by the performance of the A. F. of L. which could not control the masses nor prevent the strike movement, nor recruit such masses as was expected of them.

The comparative failure of the A. F. of L. to recruit the great masses or control the strike movement arises from a number of factors; first, not all capitalists accepted the government policy, and especially in the basic industries most employers preferred to establish "company unions" instead of the A. F. of L. or even to continue to refuse to have any kind of union at all in their plants. Second, the crude and open strike-breaking policy of the A. F. of L. repelled large numbers of workers ready to join but disillusioned

by their first contacts. Third, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, which is of tremendous size, with 15,000 full-time paid officials, has, to a great extent, become so parasitically corrupted and degenerated by their past life, that it is incapable of the energetic activity demanded by a mass recruitment campaign, to the great disgust of the more virile leaders in the Roosevelt administration. And fourthly, the A. F. of L. unions have, in many places, been captured by the underworld gangs, turned into typical American "rackets", dealing in blackmail and bribery on a huge scale, and become incapable of conducting mass policy on the scale contemplated in the Roosevelt program; it is interesting to read, for example, the complaints in the stenograms of the last A. F. of L. Convention, voiced by the leader of the Chicago teamster's union, who revealed that his union office must be fortified with steel plate and constantly protected by armed guards to prevent the dues payments from being seized by underworld gangs and even to prevent these gangs from taking possession of union elections and assuming the union offices. Revolt among the two and a half million members of the A. F. of L. against these primitive, semi-feudal conditions, not to speak of the more complicated betrayal of the no-strike policy and the New Deal, has been stimulated by the rising wave of mass struggles and by the influx of the half million new members. This, combined with the beginnings of more systematic and energetic work by the Communists inside the reformist unions, has played a great role in the development of the strike movement among the A. F. of L. workers, and begins to crystallize again into a broad revolutionary opposition movement. This becomes even more important when we see the determined policy of the bourgeoisie to bring forward the A. F. of L. especially in every case where the workers are mobilized in struggle and organized into the Red trade unions.

The growth in the trade unions, and in the strike movement, after four years of decline during the first years of the crisis, is of tremendous significance to our Party. This is all the more true, when we see the character of the strike movement. With only a few exceptions, these strikes were directed not only against the employers for economic demands; they were also strikes against the official leaders of the American Federation of Labor, they were against the operations of the N.R.A. and the Labor Boards set up by the Government—that is, they were also political strikes. This was true of almost all the strikes, whether of A. F. of L. members, of the Red unions, or of the independent unions. From this situation it followed that, when our Party (after some hesitations) began boldly to develop work inside the A. F. of L. as oppositions in combination with the independent building of the Red unions, even in the same industries and fields, and also to build independent

unions where the workers hesitated to join the Red unions, our Communist and sympathizing forces played a constantly growing role in the whole strike movement. Thus it is that we have 45 per cent of all strikers (during 10 months of 1933) members of the A. F. of L. but fighting in opposition to their officials and the government, and to a growing extent openly following the lead of the Red unions, even while remaining in the A. F. of L.

THE STRIKE MOVEMENT AND THE RED TRADE UNIONS

Very significant also is the comparatively large role played in the strike movement directly by the small Red unions. With about 40,000 members at the beginning of July, they rose in membership to 70,000 by September, and now stand at approximately 125,000, having recruited about 100,000 and having lost about 15,000 during the same period. The Red unions are thus about 5 per cent of the volume of membership of the A. F. of L. But these small unions directly led 20 per cent of all strikers, and indirectly influenced in a decisive manner more than half the struggles of the A. F. of L. members and the independent unions.

During the strike movement, conditions often changed very quickly, making necessary quick changes of tactics on our part. At first we were very slow in recognizing the changed situation and adjusting our tactics. Thus in the Pennsylvania mine fields, our Red miners union led the strike struggles of April and May directly, but after the establishment of the *N.R.A.*, the reformist United Mine Workers Union (A.F. of L.) swept through the field with a broad recruitment campaign, and our Red union members (without even consulting us) went along with the masses, and together with them organized the strike movement of July and thereafter through the local unions of the U.M.W.A. We were slow in reorientating ourselves to work mainly through the reformist union, and therefore were weakened quite seriously for a period, and we are only now beginning to re-establish our forces organizationally in that field. During the same period, the coalfields of Utah and New Mexico were completely organized in our Red Miners' Union, which led long strikes, holding the miners solidly in the face of military rule and the jailing of most of our leaders. Even in these fields, however, we were also forced to maneuver, as for example in Utah; there, the protracted strike and military persecution caused some of these new and untrained forces to weaken and hesitate and to consider the possibility of settling the strike by joining the reformist U.M.W.A. Just as we left America it became necessary to give directives to our Utah comrades, that if a split of the miners became a serious threat, we should avoid this by taking the entire

body of miners unitedly over from the Red union into the reformist U.M.W.A.

The silk textile strike furnished most interesting and valuable experiences, in a different form. In the beginning, the workers were also entirely unorganized. The strike began in Paterson, New Jersey, called by local leaders of the A. F. of L. as a means of organization with expectations of a quick return to work and settlement through arbitration of the *N.R.A.* Both the A. F. of L. and the Red textile union began with only a few hundred members. The employers threw in their influence to drive the workers into the A. F. of L. telling the workers that only the A. F. of L. could ever gain a settlement with them. As a result, the workers in their large majority joined the A.F. of L.; among them was a considerable sympathy for the Red unions, but they lacked confidence that they could win a favorable settlement, while they were influenced by the illusions that the A. F. of L., through its support by the Government and bourgeois press, created for them more favorable conditions. We maintained our Red union throughout the strike, however, even though a minority, and fought for unification of the strike committees and picket lines. The open efforts of the A. F. of L. leaders to sell out the strike, repeated several times, were each time defeated by almost unanimous votes of all workers, in each case under the leadership of the small Red union. The result was that the influence of our Red union continued to grow in the ranks of the A.F. of L., who more and more looked to the Red union for a lead on all questions, even though they remained formally within the A.F. of L. This influence became so decisive that when a large mass delegation was elected to go to Washington, to place the demands of the strikers before the National Labor Board, even the A. F. of L. leaders were forced to accept Ann Burlak and John Ballam, the two main leaders of the small Red union, as the leaders and spokesmen of the mass delegation, while the bourgeois press and employers openly declared that it was impossible to settle the strike unless they dealt with the Red union at the same time. The A. F. of L. leaders were forced by the workers to discontinue their attacks upon the leaders of the Red union, and at the most decisive meeting the workers drove their leaders off the platform and invited our comrades to speak to them. These events were a revelation of the tremendous possibilities of a correct application of the united front tactic in strike struggles; they also showed how work within the A. F. of L. can be combined with building the Red unions, and can be strengthened thereby, provided a correct united front policy is carried out.

Since June, all trade union questions have been dominated by the questions of policy regarding the *N.R.A.* For a time we had to conduct a sharp strug-

gle within the Party on two fronts, against the tendency represented by the idea of "boycotting" the *N.R.A.* and against the tendency to surrender to the illusions concerning the *N.R.A.*, to drag at the tail of the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party. The latter, the open Right opportunist tendency, was the most serious and the most stubborn. Comrade Kuusinen has already in his report mention a few of the most crass examples. Some comrades were convinced that we would succeed in organizing mass unions only if we made them look before the workers as much like A. F. of L. unions as possible, in name, program and daily policy. Our fight to liquidate this tendency was helped considerably by the fact that as quickly as our comrades built unions in this fashion, they were immediately taken over by the reformist leaders, our people were kicked out of them without even any serious support among the workers.

Our Party and the Red unions came out openly and boldly against the *N.R.A.*, and exposed it as a general attack against the workers' standards, and as a movement toward fascism. In this we had to go sharply against the stream of mass illusions that had been aroused by the Roosevelt demagoguery. These illusions were bolstered up for a few months by the rise in production, the opening of more factories, the appearance of "returning prosperity" brought about by the speculative market created for a time by inflation. When this speculative production broke down, when the factories began to close again, when it began to be clear that the *N.R.A.* itself had cut wages instead of raising them, the disillusionment of the workers which set in, greatly increased the prestige of our Party and the Red trade unions which had from the beginning told the workers what they now see to be the truth.

THE CLEVELAND CONFERENCE

Our work to build a broad united front of struggle against the *N.R.A.* led to the calling of the Cleveland Conference in August. This was called jointly by the Red unions, the *Muste* group of "Left" reformists, and a few independent union leaders and various unemployed organizations. This conference was very valuable to us, although it failed to build a real broad united front. The great body of the conference was composed of our own forces; besides ourselves and close sympathizers, only a small group of *Muste* leaders came. For us the conference was valuable, however, in that it was a good mobilization of our own forces for struggle against the *N.R.A.*; it was a broad school in the tactics and policies of the struggle; it was a public proclamation of our program; and it was a rehearsal for our forces in the problems of building the united front. With those *Muste* leaders who came, we had agreement on

the most important questions of policy so long as it was writing general programs, against the *N.R.A.*, for unification of the unemployment movement, etc. But we quickly came into conflict with them on the question of organizing the strike struggles in the steel industry, where the Red steel workers' union was already leading and winning strikes. This question already was too close and burning for the *Muste* group to commit itself to revolutionary responsibilities; we had an open clash with them in the Conference which cleared the air greatly, and educated our movement better than a hundred resolutions could have done

THE ANTI-WAR AND ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT

Our most successful application of the united front has been in the anti-war and anti-fascist movement. We led a highly successful U. S. Congress Against War, which brought together 2,616 delegates from all over the country, and unanimously adopted a manifesto and program which is politically satisfactory. The composition of the Congress was overwhelmingly proletarian with a core of 450 trade union and shop delegates; it contained a very satisfactory youth delegation of about 500, a majority from reformist and socialist organizations, which in a special meeting openly accepted the leadership of the Y.C.L. in the Congress; a considerable delegation of farmers; representation from every important pacifist organization in the country; a group of local organizations of the Socialist Party and mass organizations under its influence; and a few important A. F. of L. trade unions with about 100,000 members. We also had a delegate from the U.S. Army. The Congress from the beginning was led by our Party quite openly but without in any way infringing upon its broad non-Party character, with the Party members at all times in a minority numerically, and leading by the quality of their work. This success was, of course, largely due to the very favorable situation, and the position of our Party as almost a monopolist of anti-war movement in the U.S. After the Congress a broad mass campaign has been launched to popularize its results, a campaign which has been highly successful, greatly helped throughout by the assistance of Henri Barbusse and Tom Mann, from France and England, whose presence added force and political significance to the Congress and the mass campaign carried on afterwards to popularize its work. The Congress set up a permanent organization on a federative basis, called the American League Against War and Fascism, which is publishing a popular monthly paper.

Our campaign of solidarity with the German working class and against German fascism has been growing and involving new circles of workers. The

American workers have been filled with enthusiasm by the magnificent defense, or rather counter-offensive, of the Communists in the Leipzig trial led by Comrade Dimitroff.

Especially effective for the U.S.A. was our exposure of the work of the Nazi organization in the United States, which was even taken up by bourgeois organizations and resulted in a criminal indictment of the Nazi leader in America, Heinz Spanknoebel, and his disappearance into hiding. We secured and published a secret Nazi letter, written from New York to Berlin, a document which has been placed in the records of New York City, and now in the last days before a Committee of the Congress of the United States, with expert testimony which substantiates its genuineness. The character of this document is so sensational that I understand there has been some hesitation in publishing and using it in Europe. I can assure you that the document is genuine. It is a letter written by W. Haag, adjutant to H. Spanknoebel, leader of the Nazi organization in the U.S., addressed on September 23 to "Uschle Berlin Alexanderplatz". The letter contains the following paragraph which I read:

"I cannot find a place for Van Der Lubbe here, it is best if you throw him overboard into the ocean while enroute to another country. Whom do you intend to hang in his place in Germany? I agree with you entirely that it would be good to give the damned Communists in Leipzig an injection of syphilis. Then it can be said that Communism comes from syphilis of the brain."

The leading Nazi committee in New York held a special meeting, with one of their important American friends, Congressman Hamilton Fish (a leading enemy of the Soviet Union) and discussed the question whether they should not bring a court action against the *Daily Worker* for publishing this letter. Unfortunately they finally decided against bringing suit against the *Daily Worker*, evidently understanding that we would be able to establish its genuineness. After two months the document is now accepted as genuine by the bourgeois press of America, but they consistently refuse to publish the paragraph about Van der Lubbe, which I have quoted above, and confine themselves to the other parts of the letter which show the Nazi violation of American immigration laws, and the organizing of anti-semitic agitation in America.

WORK AMONG THE FARMERS

Our Party work among the farmers, leading their mass struggles and raising their political understanding, has improved in the past period. We now stand at the head of a growing mass movement, which

marches under the chief slogan of cancellation of debts and back taxes, and which actively fights against the dispossession of the bankrupt farmers, and which establishes the closest unity with the city workers, employed and unemployed. This farmers' movement has just concluded its second national conference, with 660 delegates from 40, out of the total 48 states of the United States of America.

THE INNER SITUATION OF THE PARTY

A few words about the inner situation and growth of our Party. The Party leadership is fully united in carrying into effect the *Open Letter*, expressing the policy of the C.I., which was adopted at our Extraordinary Party Conference in July. The efforts of the Party to concentrate on the basic industries has given us the beginning of a growing trade union movement in almost every district. About a hundred new shop nuclei have been formed in the past five months, of which two-thirds are in the concentration industries; the proportion of Party membership in the shop nuclei has been raised from 4 per cent to 9 per cent. The Party membership which in 1932 rose from 12,000 to 18,000 dues payments per week, with 21,000 members registered in March, 1933, remained at about the same level until September when it began to rise again after the question had been sharply raised in the Party, and at the present moment the dues payments have risen to more than 20,000 per week, with more than 25,000 registered members. Our *Daily Worker* has broken out of its stagnation, improved its contents, and begun to grow in circulation, selling 45,000 copies daily in October, with 100,000 on Saturdays when the paper gets out a special edition. Our eight other daily newspapers in various languages have all registered some improvement politically and some growth of circulation, and the same can be said for most (although not all) of our eighteen foreign language weekly newspapers.

Our Party has made certain beginnings in carrying into effect the *Open Letter*, in becoming a mass Bolshevik Party. The beginnings have been uneven, and are not yet consolidated. The Party still lags far behind the objective possibilities. The danger of right opportunism, especially opportunism in practice, still shows itself in our work, and requires a constant struggle, a constant education of the new Party members and especially of the new cadres that are gradually being built up. Examples of "Left" opportunism, also, are often seen.

The last C.C. meeting of our Party stated the immediate most pressing tasks of the Party as follows:

"Special emphasis must be laid upon the daily tasks of every Party unit, fraction* and committee to (a) recruit immediately into the Party the broad

surrounding circle of supporters and especially the most active fighters in the struggles now going on; (b) a real drive to establish mass circulation of the *Daily Worker* as an indispensable weapon of all struggles of the working class; to consolidate the improvements already made and to strengthen the *Daily Worker* as an agitator and organizer, and as an instrument to carry out the Open Letter; (c) build the revolutionary trade unions and opposition in the reformist unions, develop them as the real leaders of the growing struggles, paying special attention to the masses newly recruited into the A. F. of L., prepare for the coming convention of the T.U.U.L., clarify the role of the Communists and the Party fraction in the trade unions; (d) give serious attention to carrying out the Party decisions on building a mass youth movement and Y.C.L.; (e) develop and extend the mass movement of the unemployed, build the Unemployed Councils as the leading fighters for one united unemployed movement, and develop a broad mass campaign for unemployment insurance; (f) strengthen the work among the unions, unemployed councils, share-croppers' union, etc., and organize a broad national liberation movement in the L.S.N.R.; (g) more serious extension of the Party among the farmers, leadership and support Negroes, especially for winning them into the trade to their struggles, and practical assistance to the successful carrying out of the Second National Conference of the Farmers' Committee of Action; (h) to extend activities among working class women and draw them into struggle against the N.R.A. in

factories, among unemployed and against the increased cost of living; (i) build the united front movement against war and fascism on the broadest basis."

The weakest point in all our Party mass work, from which most of our other shortcomings spring, is the weakness in bringing forward the revolutionary goal of our Party, the program of the revolutionary way out of the crisis. The deepening crisis, the growing misery of the masses, forces the workers to look for a way out. They want a leadership which can connect their daily problems with a wider perspective, with a possibility of final solution of their problems, with a program of building a new workers' state. They more and more realize that such a new society is being built in the Soviet Union. This opens their minds to what the Communist Party has to say to them. They want the Communist Party in their own country to give them the answers to all their questions, the question of power, the question of building the new society under American conditions, as well as the problems of the trade union and unemployed struggles. As we learn how to fulfill these demands of the American workers, we are succeeding, and we will more and more succeed, to build a mass movement of struggle around the Communist Party, building solid cadres which are more and more bolshevized, which will place on the order of the day in America, perhaps not as the last capitalist country in the world, the question of Soviet power, of proletarian revolution.

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