

# The COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(Published twice monthly).

Vol. VIII. No. 2.

Workers' Library Publishers,  
35 East 125th St., New York.

February 1st, 1931

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FIVE CENTS

## THE LESSONS OF THE MOSCOW TRIAL

THE trial of the wreckers and spies has come to an end. When the indictment was published, the scribes of the "Vorwärts," of the "Sotsialistichesky Vestnik" and other similar "honourable" organs raised a loud howl that the Bolsheviks had put into the dock the "flower of the Russian intelligentsia" and the "most capable men in Russia." And what was it that transpired? This "flower of the intelligentsia," these "most capable men in Russia" before the popular tribunal publicly confessed the crimes that they had committed, and revealed their accomplices and instigators. Instead of defending themselves before the highest tribunal, they expressed contrition for their acts and themselves acknowledged the disgraceful character of their behaviour.

How is their attitude before the Court to be explained? The story that they had been forced by "torture" to confess was shown to be ridiculous. The Social-Democrats were left with only one explanation, that they were trying to save their skins and therefore said anything that the Communists wanted them to. We are acquainted with numerous examples from history, where not only revolutionaries but even notorious counter-revolutionaries, *subjectively* fully convinced that they were right, have refused to attempt to save their lives by denying their past, by public self abasement, and self-condemnation. But how is the behaviour before the Court of these people, all of them without exception, to be understood? The answer to this question can only be found in the history of their criminal activity.

What drove these bourgeois intellectuals on to the road of counter-revolution was their bourgeois ideology, their bourgeois prejudices, their caste-like separation from the working masses, their lack of faith in the creative power of the proletariat, their conception of the workers as labouring cattle, their conviction that the working class which had attained power would not be able to build up Socialism and that the Soviet power would inevitably lead the country into collapse and economic catastrophe. Owing to this, they, like the majority of the bourgeois intellectuals after the October revolution, carried on sabotage. Owing to this, they were convinced that after the introduction of N.E.P. the

Soviet power would degenerate. They declared themselves ready to collaborate with it, exclusively with the object of promoting the degeneration. Precisely on this account, when the Soviet power passed over to the Socialist offensive and any hopes of its degeneration were ruined, they began, for their part, a counter-revolutionary attack and stooped to sabotage work, to espionage, to the preparation of intervention, and even stooped so low as to agree to the partitioning of their country and its conversion into a colony of the Western European imperialists.

It was in this way that they started on their path and so proceeded to its logical conclusion. When they stood before the bar of the proletarian dictatorship, when they, as the accused Ramzin said, became conscious of the grim hatred of the widest masses of the Soviet Union towards their dark deeds, it suddenly became inexorably clear to them that all their hopes had collapsed.

At first, they carried on sabotage because they took the view that the Soviet power would be overthrown in a few months. They found they had made a mistake. In the further development of N.E.P. they based their hopes on the degeneration of the Soviet power. They were again deceived. They took the view finally, when the Soviet power passed over to the Socialist offensive and for the reconstruction of the entire economy, that with their support the catastrophe would come about by 1930. And even this last hope was smashed. It is true that some weak places arose, economic difficulties such as are inevitable in years of steep upward development and heavy capital investments, but there was no catastrophe. On the contrary, the tempo of development surpassed all the proposals of the Five-Year Plan and any previous tempo in history,—thanks to the enormous superiority of the Soviet system, thanks to the enormous enthusiasm of the proletariat, thanks to the iron leadership of the Party and in spite of the systematic espionage work carried on in various regions.

The actual facts were, of course, very well known to the saboteurs who occupied very responsible posts. These facts signified the collapse of their whole theory. One can there-

fore believe Ramzin when he says, as he did in his final speech :—

“The year 1930 appeared to me the decisive year, the year of the decisive experiment, the result of which I awaited with the same excitement as I have often waited for the result of my scientific investigations in the laboratory. . . . And here it must be honestly admitted that the results of the year 1930 entirely upset all our theses and calculations.”

Not only did life mercilessly destroy all the theses of the saboteurs concerning the apparently inevitable collapse of the Five-Year Plan, but it also mercilessly exposed the lying character and untenability of the perspectives which Ramzin depicted, partly for self-deception but mainly for the deception of the engineers in connection with the success of intervention. He tried to draw a picture for the engineers purporting to show that, as a consequence of intervention in the Soviet Union, there would result not capitalism but State capitalism, that the power would pass into the hands not of the capitalists but of the engineers as the true architects of life and that after a short, quite “innocent” military dictatorship in the Soviet Union there would be built up a democratic republic on a new social foundation.

If this senseless “theory” was not entirely a conscious deception in order to get hold of the engineers who had been drawn to the espionage organisation, if Ramzin believed, if only for a moment, in the silly Utopia of a state in which not one class but one profession should rule, then, when he saw during his journeys abroad who the real leaders of intervention are, when he saw that the future economic fate of the country would not be decided by him and his accomplices, the other engineers, but by the French imperialists and Messieurs Deterding, Urquhart and the former Russian capitalists, and that the political system in the country would be determined by the French general staff and the Denikin generals, Lukomsky, Miller, etc., that the bear’s carcass had already been divided beforehand among themselves by the capitalists of the various countries, and that he and his assistants had been from the beginning cast for the role of helpless executors of the tasks and orders of the French general staff, after all this he could not but recognise what miserable dreams he had indulged in.

Of all the theses of these leaders of the wreckers’ organisation (the “Industrial Party”) on the collapse of Socialist construction and the

“re-birth of Russia,” not a trace remains. How, then, should they be able to pluck up the courage to die for their “idea,” since this, hardly worthy to be called an “idea,” proved itself to be an absolute vacuum! Of all the hopes on which the saboteurs relied only one remained, foreign intervention.

*The first lesson of the Moscow trial is that it showed up in its full reality the immediate danger of counter-revolutionary intervention and of the motive forces behind it. Simultaneously it has demonstrated the victory of the principle of Communism and of the revolutionary creative spirit of the proletariat which is building up Socialism as against the ideology of the bourgeois intelligentsia.*

The path of Ramzin and Laritchev was not only the path of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois specialist; the trial showed that from beginning to end they proceeded on a common path with the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries and the whole Second International. The Menshevik expert and engineer Kirsch was the first who instigated Ramzin and Laritchev to take up sabotage after the October revolution. Their assistants in this work for the capitalist degeneration of the Soviet power in the period of N.E.P. were the Menshevik Gromann and his friends, on the one hand, and the former Social-Revolutionary Kondratiev, the Narodnik Chayanov and Co. on the other hand. The Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries allied themselves with them when they began the preparations for intervention. The Mensheviks, Gromann and Ginsberg, made reports at the sessions of the espionage centre on the economic situation which were forwarded by the Central Committee of the “Industrial Party” to the chief organisers of intervention in Paris. Finally, work was done abroad in the interest of this same intervention by the Russian Mensheviks and all the other Parties of the Second International. Yurovsky, a member of the Kulak Party of Kondratiev and Chayanov, who was summoned as a witness to the trial of the “Industrial Party,” declared that Miliukov, in answer to his question as to the attitude taken up towards intervention by the various strata in France, had answered as follows :—

“Although the workers in France were opposed to any war and in particular to such a war, the leadership of the Socialist Party would support such an intervention if not openly, at least in essentials in some way or another.”

The path of betrayal of the Parties of the Second International was precisely the same way as that of the wreckers Ramzin and Laritchev. The starting point was hatred towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, the goal was active realisation of the exploiting imperialist policy of robbery of finance capital. Among both categories of wreckers we find the same spiritual emptiness and limitless hypocrisy. As an example, we may refer to the "left" reports of Monsieur Vandevelde, which are strongly reminiscent of the attitude of Ramzin, who in the beginning of 1930, according to his own admission, had no more faith in a breakdown of the Five-Year Plan and consequently proceeded in the most active way to prepare for intervention.

When the Belgian bourgeoisie were disquieted because the Soviet Government, as a result of the measures of the Belgian authorities against so-called "Soviet dumping," arranged for Soviet vessels to forsake the Antwerp docks for those of Rotterdam, Monsieur Vandevelde, who was in charge of the affairs of the Belgian bourgeoisie, slightly lifted the veil from his inner thoughts. He said:—

"My last stay in Moscow made an enormous impression on me. I am thinking of the tremendous creative efforts of the Soviets, the building of dwellings and grain factories with the application of the most technical achievements . . . Let those who maintain that the Five-Year Plan has come to grief exercise caution if they wish to avoid an unpleasant surprise."

Monsieur Vandevelde refers further to an American economist who assured him that the collectivisation of agriculture would be finally carried through within two or three years and that the successes of Soviet industry would in the next ten years create such conditions of life in the Soviet Union as would be the envy of all workers throughout the world.

If this is how Monsieur Vandevelde appraises the successes of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union—and we can assure him that things are so—then the question naturally arises as to why this "Socialist" comes to this view just at the moment when it is a question of defending the trade interests of the Belgian bourgeoisie! Why was he silent, and why does he remain so, in regard to the feverish preparations for intervention against the land of victorious Socialism? Why is he and the other "left" Social Democrats not only silent about these preparations but actively promoting them?

In what way do the "left" Social-Fascists differ from the saboteur Ramzin, who, in the beginning of 1930, carried on espionage and organised acts of sabotage although his original disbelief in the possibility of the construction of Socialism in the Soviet Union was, as he himself says, refuted by the facts? The only distinction is that Monsieur Vandevelde and his fellows by old-established custom call themselves "Marxists."

*The second lesson of the Moscow trial is that the Parties of the Second International, including their "left" wings, are the most active participants in the preparations for intervention.*

When the bourgeoisie and the Social-Fascists were compelled to recognise that the facts discovered could no longer be refuted, and that they themselves were being reduced to complete confusion, they tried to distract attention by a new manoeuvre. They prophesied that the trial would be the prelude to a new "era of red terror," that the "Bolshevik barbarians" were going to "wade in blood," that the "accused were to be publicly executed in the Red Square in Moscow," etc. Here also their reckoning was quite incorrect. The Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union altered the extreme penalty for the criminals who had pleaded for mercy, to ten years' imprisonment.

What does this remission signify and how is it to be explained? Indubitably, the accused had earned the extreme penalty for their monstrous crimes; *for the Soviet tribunals however, the supreme law is that of the interest of the revolution and not revenge and retribution* Precisely from the standpoint of the interests of the revolution, the Soviet power regarded it as more expedient to modify the extreme measure of punishment of these criminals who had laid down their arms and who had exposed the true instigators and organisers of intervention.

The Soviet power mitigated the punishment of these living witnesses to intervention preparation. This decision emphasises, first of all, that the liquidation of the "Industrial Party" does not abolish the *chief danger*, that the *chief enemy* is the international imperialist bourgeoisie, who will not forego for a single moment the preparation of intervention, and that it is against it that all the forces of the international proletariat must be mobilised. In the second place, this decision in connection with the

revelations during the trial, draws the backward proletarian reserves to the defence of the country of proletarian dictatorship. The proletariat of the Soviet Union and the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world are firmly convinced of the triumph of Socialist construction and are prepared to sweep away all who hinder them or put obstacles in the way. This is again confirmed by the powerful echo which the trial has evoked. The backward strata of the proletariat, however, stand in need of still clearer lessons. For these backward strata, the exposure of the espionage process and of its bankruptcy in the course of the trial was a more convincing proof of the victory of Socialism than would have been the shooting of the saboteurs. Finally, this decision, in connection with the whole process of the trial, contributes to the conclusive enlisting of the majority of the old intellectual technicians in the work of active Socialist construction.

Attempts at sabotage will undoubtedly occur again in the future. The Soviet power cannot and will not, when it is necessary, refrain from the most severe reprisals. However, the clear exposure of the theory of the "neutrality" of the Court of Justice, which represents the starting point for counter-revolutionary sabotage, also serves as a weapon against acts of sabotage. The Soviet power, which is training up new cadres of proletarian technicians, at the same time bends all its efforts for securing a mass participation in Socialist construction on the part of the old experts. Already now, the majority of the old technical intellectuals, inspired by the spirit of upbuilding stand honourably on the side of the Soviet power. One can be convinced that, as a result of the trial, the overwhelming majority will decide on this course.

The modification of the extreme measure of the punishment for the members of the "Industrial Party" is a testimony, not to the weakness

of the Soviet power, but that it is conscious of its power and capacity to draw to it the backward reserves.

The Moscow trial is of the greatest historical significance. It has revealed to the international proletariat the whole mechanism for sabotage and intervention preparations, it has heightened tenfold the vigilance of millions of proletarians and it has delivered the severest blow to the Right opportunists who objectively favoured the saboteurs, who facilitated their activity and objectively carried through their tasks. At the same time, the Moscow trial has revealed that the Soviet power has succeeded to a significant extent in making good the damage done to Socialist construction by the saboteurs, and that the successes of Socialist construction, when the destruction of the sabotage machine has been accomplished, will even more than before arouse the astonishment of the world.

The Moscow trial, finally, has by its exposure of the criminal role of French imperialism, made possible the postponement of intervention, even if it is only for a period of some months.

There can be no doubt that intervention is being prepared and that it will also in the future continue to be prepared in the most intense fashion. The members of the Central Committee of the "Industrial Party" have been exposed, rendered harmless and punished, but the chief organisers of intervention who have their seat abroad remain and continue their nefarious activities. This signifies that our Communist Parties and the proletariat of the whole world must be on their guard to expose in time and in the most comprehensive manner every active step of these war-makers and that they must counteract their work. The trial of Ramzin, Laritchev and Co. has come to an end. The judgment on the imperialist intervention must, however, for the world proletariat still remain on the order of the day.

# THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

By VALYA.

THE Indian National Congress (a broad association of Indian Nationalists) ever since its first inception has been a class organisation of the Indian bourgeoisie leading enormous masses of the toiling population.

It is necessary to have complete clarity as to the class character of the National Congress, for almost right up to 1930 there has been a certain hesitation and confusion on this question among Indian Communists. It is precisely on this question that the Left National-reformists—Kandalkar, Roy (the renegade Communist), etc.—are attempting to sow confusion in the ranks of the working-class.

## THE "NEHRU" CONSTITUTION.

In order to throw light on the policy of the Indian National Congress in relation to the Round Table Conference now taking place, we need take only one episode in the past history of the Congress viz.: the famous "Nehru" Constitution (that of the elder Nehru), worked out by a commission appointed at a conference of all Indian parties, beginning with the National Congress and extending to organisations outside it, the Liberal Federation, the All-Indian Muslim League, the reactionary organisation of the Hindu Maha Sabha, the Landholders' Associations in the various provinces, etc.

The proposed constitution was worked out by a commission which included the Congress leaders, Motilal Nehru and S. C. Bose (the "Left" Congressman), the Mohammedans Sir Ali Iman and Qureshi, the Liberals Sapru and Aney, and finally, Pradhama, the agent for British influence among the untouchables, and with the closest participation of Jawaharlal Nehru (the younger Nehru). This project was ratified at a conference of All-Indian Parties and issued as a brochure at the end of 1928.

The plan of a Constitution bears a clearly expressed landlord-bourgeois character. It not only preserves the landed property of the landowners, but also expresses itself in favour of the preservation of the despotic native princes and a whole number of other feudal relics. The All-Parties Conference put as the basis of its

constitution the demand for the granting to India of the rights practically of a semi-dominion in which the supreme power should be held by the British Crown acting through its agents (the Governor-General, etc.). In the opinion of the authors of this Constitution:—

"A Bill passed by both Houses of Parliament shall not become an Act until the Governor-General signifies his assent . . . and the Governor-General may signify such assent or withhold the same . . . The executive power of the Commonwealth is vested in the King and is exercisable by the Governor-General as the King's representative." (Report, page 108.)

The same position in the Constitution is adopted both as regards the centre and the provinces:—

"There shall be a Governor of every province who shall be appointed by the King. . . . When a Bill has been passed by the local legislators' Council, the Governor may declare that he assents to or withholds his assent from the Bill . . . If the Governor withholds his assent from any such Bill, the Bill shall not become an Act." (Page 111.)

According to this plan for a Constitution, the Army is to be controlled by a Commander-in-Chief appointed by the King over whom the legislature will actually have no control. Essentially the same complete control is exercised by the Governor-General in all remaining spheres of State and economic life in the country.

One of the central points of this "Nehru" Constitution is in regard to the question of federation and the native States. The authors of this report, leaders of the National Congress, Liberals and "Lefts" like Bose and the younger Nehru, put forward the idea of federation and preservation of the existing princedoms.

"If the Constitution of India is to be a federal one as we think it might well be, the position of the Indian States in relation to that federation appears to us to call for a definite determination." (Page 82.)

Concerning this "position," the leaders of the Congress proposed to negotiate at a special conference which should comprise representatives of the ruling princes, of the *British Government* and of the peoples of British India (page 72), being convinced that "at such a conference all difficulties could have been solved with mutual goodwill" (page 72). At the same time, Nehru, Bose, etc., promised that:—

"If the Indian States would be willing to join such a federation, after realising the full implications of the

federal idea, we shall heartily welcome their decision and do all that lies in our power to secure to them the full enjoyment of their rights and privileges." (Page 73).

This is only a small thing. The leaders of the Congress have also hastened to promise to the princes an additional guarantee, in the form of defence and mediation on the part of British imperialism.

"... In case of any difference between the Commonwealth and any Indian State on any matter arising out of treaties, engagements, sanads or other similar documents, the Governor-General in Council may, with the consent of the State concerned, refer the said matter to the Supreme Court for its decision." (Page 74.)

which consists of :

"Lord President and as many other justices . . . shall be appointed by the Governor-General in Council . . . and shall not be removed from office except by the Governor-General in Council." (Page 112.)

Besides the preservation of the princedoms and the rejection of independence, the leaders of the Congress introduced into the Constitution a further series of propositions amounting to a demand for the rights of a pseudo-Dominion, a bitter jest at the expense of the movement for emancipation of the Indian people and aimed at still further underlining its position as a slave without rights of British imperialism.

One of the basic proposals of the Constitution reads as follows :—

"All titles to private and personal property, lawfully acquired and enjoyed at the establishment of the Commonwealth are hereby guaranteed." (Page 166.)

By this clause, Bose, Nehru and the other Congress members promised to preserve landlordism, guaranteed the payment by the peasantry of their indebtedness to the usurers, etc., etc., in short, they guarantee the maintenance of the existing agrarian relations and all the feudal survivals in the social structure of India. By a separate clause, Nehru, Bose and the other authors of the report guarantee the inviolability of British enterprises (page 12).

At the same time, the authors of the report, in order to throw dust in the eyes, adopt a decision, saying nothing concretely, to the effect that—

"Parliament shall make suitable laws for the maintenance of health and fitness for work of all citizens, securing of a living wage for every worker, the protection of motherhood, welfare of the children and the economic consequences of old age, infirmity and unemployment, and Parliament shall also make laws to ensure fair rents and fixity and permanence of tenure to agricultural tenants." (Pages 102-166.)

The authors of the report only restrain the grinding down and oppression of the masses of

workers and peasants by the promise of trifling reforms. The anti-popular and anti-proletarian character of this bourgeois-landlord-feudal constitution, which completely corresponds to the interests of British imperialism, stands out in every one of its words and clauses. Let us quote a few more examples :—

"The right of free expression of opinion as well as the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, and to form associations or unions is hereby guaranteed for purposes not opposed to public order or morality." (Page 102.)

This is precisely what the Bombay factory-owners declared who demanded the dissolution of the Red Textile Trade Union, the Girni Kamgar Union, and the arrest of its leaders. The Indian bourgeoisie and its legal advocates Nehru, Bose, etc., make precautionary reservations in case of a rising of the toiling masses.

"Every citizen shall have the right to a writ of Habeas Corpus. Such right may be suspended in case of war or rebellion by an Act of the Central Legislature or by the Governor-General in Council." (Page 102.)

The National Congress and the "defenders", of non-violence know what they are doing ; they are preparing for a bloody settlement with the workers and peasants' movement. The most radical proposal of the authors of this Constitution is that :—

"All citizens have an equal right of access to, and use of, public roads, public wells and all other places of public resort." (Page 103.)

The leaders of the Congress in adopting this Constitution proceeded out of their desire to achieve an agreement with British imperialism, to extract some sort of concessions and to corrupt, disorganise and disperse the revolutionary struggle of the toiling masses for independence, for the agrarian revolution for land, for the abolition of all feudal survivals, for the improvement of the position of the working-class and for the perspective of a Socialist development of India.

### *The Manoeuvres of the National Congress and the Revolutionary Upsurge.*

Approximately from 1928, signs began to appear in India of the coming crisis and of the new upsurge of the movement for national emancipation. At about the same time, British imperialism, in accordance with its promises of 1920 to 1921, appointed the Statutory Commission (the Simon Commission), which did not

include in its composition any representatives of the Indian bourgeoisie, for the purpose of preparing a plan for the new reforms promised ten years previously.

The Indian bourgeoisie in reply entered on a united front, beginning with the Liberals and ending with the Left Wing of the Indian National Congress, and produced their basic document—the “Nehru” Constitution. In order to deceive the masses the younger Nehru, who had most actively participated in the drawing up of the constitution, refused to sign it on the pretext that it did not embody as its basis the principle of independence. At the same time, in his declaration, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote :—

“We, however, decided not to oppose or to put obstacles in the way of the labours of the conference . . . and we will not put forward amendments or vote. Thereby, at any rate, we shall not take on ourselves the responsibility for all the decisions in the second part of the Constitution.” (Page 161.)\*

How insincere and false this position was, as well as all the subsequent activity of the younger Nehru and the Independence League created by him, is evident enough from the fact that Jawaharlal Nehru signed along with the Liberals and Gandhi the Delhi Manifesto, in which a request was made that India should be given the status of a Dominion subject to all kinds of limitations, and in return for which he promised complete solidarity, support, participation in the Round Table Conference, etc. The whole practice of recent years confirms the assertion that the policy of the Congress and *especially of its Left Wing* has been directed towards reaching a compromise with British imperialism and preserving the leadership of the National movement in its own hands, exploiting this movement for the object of exerting a moderate pressure from below on British capitalism, at the same time disorganising the revolutionary movement.

This has been confirmed by the programme of Gandhi—Gandhi’s eleven points—put forward by him after the session of the National Congress at Lahore in December, 1929 had adopted the independence resolution, and it has been confirmed by the negotiations in prison of the “arrested” leaders of the National Congress with the Liberals, by their sabotage of the peasant

movement and their disorganisation and disruption of the Labour movement.

The National Congress covers up its policy of betrayal of the emancipation movement by playing at “opposition,” a play which it is compelled to carry on in view of the fact that negotiations and bargaining with the British have not yet reached a conclusion and also, what is more important, in order to preserve its influence over the masses. At the present time, the economic crisis in India is growing more intense, the revolutionary emergence of the masses of workers and peasants is proceeding at a vehement pace, the revolutionary crisis is deepening. This faces the Indian bourgeoisie and the National Congress with the task of exploiting their influence over the masses for the purpose of forestalling a revolutionary rising against the British imperialists, the landlords, the princes, the usurers and the other exploiters.

From the very outset these tasks were very clearly in the minds of the Indian bourgeoisie. The “Bombay Chronicle,” an organ of the Indian National Congress, wrote in a leading article (January 18th and January 25th, 1930):—

“Everyone in Britain and in India will say without hesitation that only the Indian National Congress has made the Round Table Conference a possibility, and, if there is to be any kind of hope to be placed on it, it will only be as a result of the coming campaign of the Congress.”

Further, addressing itself to the Indian Liberals, the paper declared :—

“A united front between us is possible in the form of the co-ordination of our programmes . . . Congressmen have declared themselves at the moment for independence but this does not exclude the possibility of peace and an agreement with the British Government.”

And further,

“We are glad that there are Liberals who have not lost their heads and who understand that their highest duty is to exert *the maximum pressure on the Government with the aim of securing dominion status* . . . At present there is not much place for constitution making, because the Nehru constitution remains in force.”

The division of labour is shown up very clearly, nor can the role of the Liberals as plenipotentiary representatives of the National Congress be doubted. Turning to the second task of the National Congress, the warding off of revolution, the newspaper writes as follows :—

“To those who fear that Gandhi may become a cause of violence in the country, he himself gives the answer. If violence is floating in the atmosphere, it has been caused by the feeling of despair to which some have given way as a result of the oppression and torture of our country. While many are sitting with folded arms,

\* This second part of the Constitution includes both the union with the native ruling princes and the preservation of feudal landlordism, etc.



Gandhi is exerting himself to neutralise or diminish this danger as far as it is possible to do so."

And in another place :

"If there is any group in India which, without sparing its efforts, is attempting to prevent violence and anarchy and to preserve an atmosphere of non-violence, it is the Congress."

These quotations from the leading articles of the Bombay Congress organ exhibit the Congress leaders clearly declaring : " A division of labour is necessary—we will disorganise the revolutionary struggle, we will exert pressure on the British, while you, Liberals, go and negotiate at the conference and put the ' maximum pressure ' on the basis of the Nehru Constitution worked out in collaboration with us." This plan is being logically carried into effect.

In order to deceive the masses of the people, the Congress has recently been compelled to push forward new "left forces." Besides the younger Nehru and Bose, there have been brought into the light of day the "Groups of a Hundred" in Bombay, the Roy agents, etc.

They have raised the question of the necessity of an economic programme for the workers and peasants, of the convening of a Constituent Assembly under the protection of British soldiers, etc. The left National-reformists are attempting to take the initiative in the railway workers' movement into their hands, they have talked about a general strike on the railways in the hope that the workers would forget that it was they who disorganised and betrayed the strike on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and who disrupted the Girni Kamgar Union. The left National-reformists are hoping that the peasants will not understand or will forget how the National Congress also disorganised their movement for the non-payment of taxes, rent and interest payments to the Government, usurers and landlords.

#### *The Mediation of the Liberals at the Round Table Conference.*

Only on the basis of the policy of the Indian National Congress is it possible to understand the present attitude of Congressmen to the Round Table Conference. The Congress, formally not participating in the Conference, actually takes part through the Liberals Sapru, etc. The Liberals collaborated in drawing up the Nehru Constitution, the Liberals Sapru and others, before their departure for London, had a

number of conferences with the arrested leaders of the Congress, organised with the consent of the British Government in the prison at Yeravda near Poona. In these negotiations there took part the two Nehrus, Sarojini Naidu, Gandhi, the Liberal Sapru and others. On the basis of these negotiations, the Liberals went to the Round Table Conference. This is fully understood by British imperialism. The "Times," in a leading article on September 6th wrote on the subject of the Conference :—

"All other sections of British-Indian opinion will be represented in London and it should be remembered that, in essentials, there is no difference in principle between the demands of the moderate parties and those of the Congress Party."

At almost the same time, the "Manchester Guardian," in a leading article wrote :—

"What is acceptable to the Liberal Sapru and his colleagues, the Indian National Congress perhaps will sniff at very suspiciously, but in all probability it will swallow it . . . The difference between the Moderates and the extremists is now very slight . . . *The Indian Liberals will only accept what will receive the support of a great part of the supporters of the Congress.*" ("Manchester Guardian Weekly," November 14th, 1930.)

These experienced organs of the British bourgeoisie excellently understand the situation. To complete the estimate, it is interesting to note the views of the "Economist" (January 4th, 1930), after the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress :—

"The Viceroy obviously cherished the hope that his (Gandhi's) influence might be used for the peaceful development of India. The refusal of Gandhi to play this role will perhaps make the task longer and more difficult, but it serves as a compensation, which is not at all bad, that his presence among the irreconcilables will save India from more serious disorders which might take place if the opposition had been left in other hands."

The role of the Indian National Congress is clear to the British bourgeoisie. The chief and basic enemy for British imperialism, for the Indian bourgeoisie and for the National Congress alike remains the revolutionary workers and peasants of India. This is what the workers and peasants of India need to understand.

The composition of the Round Table Conference is familiar—it is made up in the way that was proposed by the National Congress in its plan for a constitution ; from representatives of the Indian ruling princes, from the British Government and from the Liberals, acting as political representatives of the National Congress. It should be remembered that Sir Tej

Sapru, the Liberal leader at the Conference, signed the plan for a Constitution along with Nehru. At the Conference, as could be expected, the central question was the proposal for a federation and, no doubt, bargaining behind the scenes on the subject of economic concessions. British imperialism is attempting at the present moment to establish such a form of administration in India as will, while presenting certain privileges to the exploiting classes and offering them the rights of a junior partner in the general imperialist system of exploitation of India, at the same time strengthen the ruling position of Britain in the country. This is obvious from the whole course of the discussion; it is confirmed by the organs of the British bourgeoisie itself. Thus, the "Manchester Guardian" (November 28th, 1930), says:—

"The representation of princes in the All-India Federation will liquidate this conflict (between Britain and India) not because the Indian princes will send to the All-India Federal Parliament representatives who will enjoy more confidence in our country than the representatives of British India, but because they will introduce into the Parliament an element of racial, religious and political equilibrium . . . And if such a degree of equilibrium is assured, then it will put an end to our past doubts and will give us the possibility to put before India without serious hesitation that for which she has so long striven, responsible Government in the centre and in the provinces."

"The Times" (November 6th) adds to this that it will give the possibility of correcting the error that was committed during the period of application of the Montagu—Chelmsford reforms, which directed the attention of Indian politicians to the question of power in the centre "instead of concentrating attention on administration in the provinces . . . which in fact represent countries equal in size to those of Europe."

The aim of the British imperialists is clear. It is, with the collaboration of the ruling princes, feudal landlords and capitalists, to alter the constitution in such a way as to guarantee their rule "for ever," to *decentralise* the State administration as far as the participation in it of the population is concerned, and on the basis of the new relations and equilibrium of forces to grant a ludicrous, mutilated "responsible government" which would give the leaders of the Congress the possibility of posing before the country with their "victory."

*In essence this does not differ in any way from the plan of the Nehru Constitution.*

The extent and character of the economic concessions is not yet clear. The notorious "eleven points" of Gandhi in all probability will be the basis for business negotiations on the part of the Congressmen. It will not be superfluous to repeat these points:—

- (1) Complete prohibition of alcoholic liquors.
- (2) Decrease of the State-fixed exchange value of the rupee from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 4d. (in the interests of decreasing wages and increasing the competitive strength of Indian industry).
- (3) Decrease of land taxation by 50 per cent.
- (4) Abolition of the salt tax.
- (5) Decrease of military expenditure by 50 per cent.
- (6) Decrease of salaries of higher officials by one-half.
- (7) A protective tariff against imported textile goods.
- (8) Concentration of coastal trade in Indian hands.
- (9) Liberation of all political prisoners except those condemned for acts of violence.
- (10) Abolition of the political police (C.I.D.) or popular control over them.
- (11) Right of bearing arms in the interests of self-defence.

The various demands in regard to military expenditure, control over the C.I.D., and decrease of land taxation, etc., need not be taken at all seriously. The remaining demands, which have been repeatedly put forward by the Indian Chambers of Commerce, represent the minimum programme of economic demands of the Indian bourgeoisie. On this they will insist.

The Round Table Conference has begun its business operations. The basic questions are clear, they have been worked over long ago. The Nehru Constitution represents one of the stages in this preparatory work for the Conference.

#### *Playing at Opposition.*

In India, the National Congress plays the role of "opposition" and carries on a campaign against the plans put forward at the Conference. This role the Congress will continue to play during the period of the negotiations with British imperialism, and the forthcoming session of the National Congress will take place under this watchword of "opposition."

In the country, there is taking place a strong forward move on the part of the wide masses, which on the basis of their experience of struggle are beginning to acquaint themselves with and to test the programmes of the different parties.

The Indian National Congress, exploiting the tremendous hatred of the proletarian masses towards British imperialism, endeavours with all its power to hinder the growth of class-consciousness of the working-class and to subordinate it ideologically and organisationally to the National Congress.

The National Congress comes out before the masses as fighting for freedom, preaching the united national front and accusing the Communists of being "splitters" and "agents" of British imperialists. Taking into account the emergence and growth of class-consciousness among the toiling masses, the Congress pushed forward its own "left" groups with the object of disrupting and disorganising the proletarian ranks. The arsenal of demagogic weapons of these "left" groups includes such slogans as:—"Constitutional Assembly," "Conquering the leadership of the Congress from within," "A programme of economic demands for the workers and peasants," "Aid for the unemployed," "A united front with the National Congress," "The workers and peasants are the arms and legs of the Congress."

The "left" Congressmen, including at the present time a whole series of groups which in essence do not differ from one another—Nehru, Bose, Kandalkar, Roy, etc.—are attempting to develop a wide activity among the toiling masses. As examples, may be mentioned the campaign for a "Labour Week" carried out in Bombay and the decision adopted by the All-India Trade Union Congress under the leadership of Bose for the declaration of a General Strike on the railways.

In the leading proletarian centres, especially in Bombay, the "left" Congressmen have laid chief emphasis on the struggle against the Communists. They attempt to isolate the Communists, to split the Labour Movement, to maintain the proletariat in the position of the "legs" of the Indian bourgeoisie. At the present time, the struggle between the Communist programme and the Congress platform has been carried into the wide masses of the Bombay proletariat and is exciting discussion on all sides. The Bombay workers are discussing whether or not the National Congress is a bourgeois organisation, whether it carries on a real struggle for independence, whether the theory of non-violence is correct and whether

the proletariat ought to remain the "legs" of the National Congress or whether it is its duty to head the revolutionary struggle of the masses of the people.

The experience of mass struggle and the agitation of the Communists is assisting the workers to analyse the situation and in the long run will help them to arrive at a correct solution. The process of differentiation and the gradual realisation of the historical tasks of the proletariat is indubitably taking place among the foremost strata, and thereby extending the basis for the establishment of a mass Communist Party, in the organisation of which the revolutionary Communist elements in the country have been so backward. It cannot be doubted that inability to lead the struggle, to find the correct concrete slogans, to combine the struggle for partial and general demands, lack of experience, insufficient exploitation of legal possibilities, the extraordinary weakness of the proletarian groups—all this has retarded and is hindering the struggle for the conquest of the majority of the working-class for the Communist position.

Alongside of this move forward of the ranks of the working-class and *the growing advance of the agrarian movement*, a process of differentiation is taking place among the urban petty-bourgeoisie and especially among the youth. The most characteristic sign of this differentiation and of disillusionment with the programme of the National Congress is seen in the terrorist movement. The terrorist movement was never so widely spread and never bore such a relatively mass character as at the present time. Hardly a day goes by without the press giving information about some terrorist attempt or preparations for an attempt, about the finding of bombs, etc., in the most diverse parts of the country.

This situation the National Congress and especially its "left" leaders are taking into account. Hence the support by the younger Nehru of the propaganda for a Constitutional Assembly and an economic programme for the workers and peasants. Hence the support given by Bose, in words, for the demand for a general strike on the railways.

Consequently, it can be expected that not only will the National Congress session be held under the watchword of opposition, but that there will occur even the embodiment at the Congress itself of the "opposition" in the

official programme and decisions that are taken. There can be expected, if not at the session itself then after it, the emergence of oppositional groups, possibly parties like the previous Independence League.

The Indian bourgeoisie and its organ, the Indian National Congress, has proved in the past its capacity to manoeuvre. There is to be expected a new manoeuvre directed against the working-class, against its struggle for hegemony in the national movement, against the development of the agrarian-emancipatory revolution.

The National Congress is manoeuvring, it is playing at opposition in the country, through the agency of the Liberals it is participating in the Round Table Conference. While adopting a decision (through the mouth of Bose) to support

the general strike of the railway workers, it breaks the Red trade union, the Girmi Kamgar textile union, and betrays the struggle on the G.I.P. Railway. While talking of sympathy for the peasants, it (in the person of the Bengal Congress leaders) mediates with the British Governor for the dispatch of troops to suppress agrarian disturbances in Bengal.

The revolutionary movement has to overcome the resistance and disorganising activity of the National Congress. In spite of all the cunning devices of the Congress, the Labour Movement is passing to a higher stage, the further development of the Labour Movement and of the peasant movement in India is inevitable. Now, as previously, the chief decisive factor consists in the creation of a mass Communist Party. This is the task of tasks.

## THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE AND PARTIAL DEMANDS

By M.R.

**T**HE world economic crisis is in full swing. The last months have not shown signs of any improvement for capitalist economy; on the contrary, all the signs of the crisis point to an uninterrupted intensification of it. All the capitalist attempts to put a stop to the development of the crisis, to regain control over the elements of capitalist economy which have slipped out of their grasp, have proved futile. The development of the crisis is leading to a new sharpening of the class struggle in the capitalist countries, to a new outburst of anti-Soviet measures on the part of imperialism and to a further intensification of the inner-imperialist antagonisms (the events of the last session of the League of Nations may be adduced as an example).

The crisis is being deepened by the strengthening of the Soviet Union and the booming upward development of Socialist construction in the sole proletarian State in the world. The crisis manifests itself in the growing wave of strikes, street demonstrations and other mass activities on the part of the workers and peasants in the capitalist countries, and in the ever-strengthening revolutionary storm in the colonies.

Those countries which at the time of the extended Presidium of the Communist International in February 1930 were still in the stage immediately preceding the crisis (Britain, France and partially the Scandinavian countries) are now fully in the grip of the general development of the crisis and are more and more feeling its effects. In some countries, the economic crisis is already being transformed into a political crisis, the elements of which are maturing and giving rise (though not with uniform speed in the different countries) to a revolutionary situation. The growing revolutionary upsurge is embracing ever-wider layers of the masses of the people. Strata previously apathetic are being drawn into the movement under the influence of the crisis and are being awakened to political life.

While at the time of the extended Presidium of the E.C.C.I. there was not yet a political crisis in any of the big European countries, excepting Poland, at the present time we are faced with a rapid transformation of the economic crisis into a political one in Germany, as demonstrated by the Reichstag elections and the Berlin metal workers' strike. At the same time, the crisis in Poland has been considerably

deepened. The "red cock" is beginning to crow throughout the Western Ukraine. The Government is inflicting on the peasant masses the most brutal and cruel acts of repression. We witness here the first skirmishes heralding the coming civil war.

In Italy, the mass movement is already making the first breaches in the edifice of fascist dictatorship. The fascist *coup d'état* in Rumanian and Finland demonstrated the strengthening of reaction on the basis of the developing crisis in these countries and also the strengthening of the war danger against the U.S.S.R.

The political crisis, after a certain delay, is deepening in Austria, it is seizing on Egypt and the majority of the countries of Latin America. In China, in India, and even in Spain, we see an already highly developed phase of political crisis and its transformation into a revolutionary situation.

Thus, the picture of the crisis is not at all a uniform one. On the contrary, it is very different in different countries. The tempo of capitalist collapse under the blows of the crisis is by no means uniform. Accordingly the various sections of the Communist International must, on the basis of the general lines of the C.I. for the sharpening of the crisis, particularly differentiate their tasks in accordance with the peculiarities and specific features which characterise the situation in each given country. The sections of the Communist International are faced with a series of general immediate tasks. All of them have now the task to create a united fighting front from below of the masses which have been set in motion under the influence of the crisis, in order in some countries to convert themselves into real mass Parties, and in order to dislocate the vertebral column of social-democracy and to advance in practice to the conquest of the majority of the proletariat in other countries.

For all sections of the Communist International, the developing crisis puts forcibly in the centre of their tasks the organisation of resistance of the working-class—employed and unemployed—against the offensive of the employers which is taking place on every front. Nevertheless, even these tasks which at the present stage are common to all sections of the Communist International have to be solved along special lines in those countries where the economic crisis is

being transformed into a political crisis, and along different lines where this has not yet taken place.

In view of these enormous tasks with which the present historical situation confronts our Parties, and in view of the coming big battles, it is essential to check the composition of our Parties and to examine to what extent they are prepared for the fights in the immediate future and what weak places they exhibit. In the course of recent months, the E.C.C.I. has to a considerable degree concentrated its work on this task and has conducted a review of our forces in preparation for the approaching big struggles. The results of this review have shown up our weak spots on which it is necessary to concentrate all efforts in order to cope with the demands of the moment.

In the present article it is intended to summarise the results of this work as regards the sections of our Party in these *countries in which the economic crisis has not yet been transformed into a political one*.

In spite of the successes which have been achieved by sections of the C.I. in the direction of bolshevisation, the struggle against social-fascism and independent leadership of proletarian struggles, it has to be noted that in the sphere of organisational consolidation of our influence we are still *glaringly backward*. The gap between the extent of our influence and the measure of its organisational consolidation frequently displays no tendency to diminution. In a number of sections, we do not note an increase in mass membership corresponding to existing possibilities. Rather we observe a certain stabilisation, and in some sections even a decrease in membership. In several sections, systematic recruiting activity is lacking! There is to be observed a very marked *fluidity* in the composition of the Party.

Up to the present, the various sections have not devoted sufficient attention to these problems. They have often been regarded negligently, without a proper understanding of the importance of measures to be taken for the strengthening of our influence among the masses. They have been entirely relegated to the practical workers in the sphere of organisation, who have regarded them quite apart from any connection with the political tasks of the Parties. Yet, all these problems—recruiting,

fluidity of membership, the work of factory cells, etc.—at the present moment are acquiring absolutely first-class political importance. Without improving the position in regard to our organisational work, we shall not be able successfully to solve the big tasks which history is now putting before us. This is, further, one of those tasks which is *common* at the present time to all sections of the C.I.

Weakness of the footholds of the Party in the *big enterprises*, passivity and slackness of work in the reformist trade unions which still embrace great masses of workers, the non-application of the tactic of the united front from below, incorrect estimation of the social-democratic workers (who are on many occasions identified with the leaders who have sold themselves to capitalism), mechanical, bureaucratic and formal methods in leading the masses and in the internal life of the Party, the unattractive character of our propaganda and agitation and, finally, a sectarian attitude in regard to immediate partial demands of the workers—these are the most important causes of the insufficient connection of some sections of the C.I. with the masses. These causes explain how, in consequence of mistakes in the application of the correct line laid down by the Communist International, some of our Parties have not been able in a full measure to make use of the consequences of the world economic crisis in order to develop themselves in the course of economic struggles as big mass Parties capable of leading the proletariat towards political class fights on a large scale, towards revolutionary struggles.

The preparation and organisation of *leadership in economic struggles* demands the creation of powerful organisations adapted to this task. At the present time, the Red trade unions and the revolutionary opposition in the trade unions as a whole has devoted too little attention to this specific task, occupying itself for the most part with agitation of too general a character. Its basis was too narrow (e.g., the Minority Movement in Britain). It is necessary to make use of the present crisis in order everywhere to create revolutionary trade union organisations (trade union opposition or Red trade unions) which will represent real weapons for the organisation and conduct of economic struggles. In Germany and Poland the task formulated by the Fifth Congress of the R.I.L.U. is now par-

ticularly urgent—"determinedly, consciously and incessantly to work for the organisation and development of the revolutionary trade union movement, for the creation from top to bottom of independent organs of the revolutionary trade union movement."

For the Parties in those countries where the economic crisis has not yet developed into a political one, where the broad path to the masses has not yet been found, there must be put forward alongside of the organisational problems, as the basic decisive link in the chain at the present moment, the problem of struggle for the *partial demands of the workers*. The struggle for the "Workers' Charter" for instance, which is being conducted by the British Party represents one of the means by which it is possible to make concrete the line of the Sixth World Congress and the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. under present-day conditions. In this connection, of course, it must be noted that it is impossible to transfer in mechanical fashion the British example which makes use of the traditions of revolutionary chartism for contemporary struggles, to the soil of other countries, but it is essential in every separate case to weigh up accurately the specific conditions in the particular countries themselves.

What is the significance of the struggle for the "WORKERS' CHARTER"? The British Party has been insufficiently connected with the masses; the masses still have not confidence in the Party as leader in day-to-day struggles. How is a solid connection with the masses to be established? How is the united fighting front of the workers to be brought about? The comrades of the British Party are attempting to realise this united front through the "Workers' Charter," that is, a programme of immediate demands, of demands of the greatest interest to the masses of the workers and most closely affecting them. This programme embraces some five to six demands: establishment of a minimum wage, the seven-hour day, provision for unemployed, withdrawal of imperialist forces from India, and so on. These demands, included in the "Workers' Charter," are being discussed at wide meetings of workers. In this connection it is essential to utilise to the full all existing possibilities. The final formulation of the "Charter" must in the full sense of the word be the creation of the working-class itself.

Realising the importance of the "Charter" for the advance of the mass workers' movement in Britain, the British Party must throw all its forces into this campaign, must concentrate all activity around it. It is necessary to create committees of struggle for the "Charter" in the factories. It is necessary to utilise every manifestation of discontent in the ranks of the reformist trade unions in order to direct it on the lines of struggle for the "Charter." The struggle for the "Charter" must be closely connected with the struggle against the Labour Government, the Labour Party and the trade union leaders. The struggle for the "Workers' Charter" must become in our hands a mighty weapon for the exposure of the "left" social-democrats, those heroes of revolutionary phrases and of disgusting betrayal of the workers' struggles.

Alongside of the national "Workers' Charter," it is necessary in the same fashion to work out demands for the unemployed, for different regions of the country and for different trades and enterprises, in each case mobilising for this purpose the most active participation of the workers themselves. It is necessary that the supporters of the "Charter" should formulate their demands in short, very concise proposals for legislation, in order that they can be popularised among the masses, on this basis exposing bourgeois parliamentarism and the Labour leaders. The "Workers' Charter" is that decisive link in the chain in Britain which we must now seize hold of as strongly as possible in order to build up factory cells, committees of struggle for the "Charter" and in order to create a mass trade union opposition.

In other countries (France, Czecho-Slovakia) where there are big Communist Parties, the methods of concrete application of the united front slogan, the methods of forward advance, and sometimes also the content of the partial demands will be different from those in Great Britain. Here our Parties already enjoy a more or less broad base among the working masses, these masses already follow our Party, considerable breaches have already been effected in the wall of social-democracy. The chief form of the united front in these countries (a form applicable under certain conditions also where our Parties are weak) is that of open letters addressed by factory cells to all workers in the

enterprises with a proposal for joint struggle on a concrete programme of immediate demands.

It is necessary in these countries to determine which are the decisive links that must be fastened upon. In France, for example, such a link now is the campaign against the growing cost of living, which immediately affects enormous proletarian masses. The Communist Party of France did not advance in time to the organisational struggle against the social insurance law and did not succeed in working out a correct line for this campaign. This situation facilitated the manoeuvres of the Socialists (who, however, exposed themselves as a result of their hasty treachery). But the struggle against the reactionary social insurance law and for the Communist law of social insurance, can still, in connection with the ripening governmental crisis in France, rouse wide masses, and the French Communist Party must be prepared to take the lead in this struggle on the basis of a correctly worked-out line and valuation of the mistakes committed previously in the campaign.

Besides the dependence on the concrete forms through which the tactic of the united front must be expressed in the different countries, it is necessary to emphasise the indispensability of all sections of the Communist International formulating partial demands even in those countries where radical political questions have already come to be in the centre of attention of the masses. The expanding deep economic crisis, giving rise to want and unemployment, laying its hands on the elementary rights of the workers, disintegrating the petty-bourgeoisie and forcing them to search for means of salvation, is bringing the widest masses into movement. In these conditions, our task is to organise, to extend and to co-ordinate their struggle and to place ourselves at the head. In these conditions, the programme of partial demands can and must play a most important rôle.

Not all kinds of partial demands, however, are correct and serve to develop the fighting capacity of the masses, which is our chief aim. The criterion of the revolutionary character of a partial slogan consists in whether it heightens the class-consciousness of the workers and spurs them on to further struggle, whether it is connected closely with the mass movement and whether it can serve as a lever for the mobilisation of the masses. Even the most modest

partial slogan can play a most revolutionary rôle when and only when it assists the development of the mass struggle, when in the further course of the struggle it enables us to raise the struggle to a still higher plane.

This fundamental truth must never be forgotten in formulating a programme of immediate demands. Those partial slogans which are correct for one district or for one branch of industry may at another time prove incorrect when they are put forward on a national scale for the whole country or transferred to a different situation.

It is precisely on the basis of a programme of concrete demands, a programme of the united fighting front from below, the preparation for economic struggles and the struggle against the employers' offensive, that we are able to create in all countries wide trade union oppositional movements. It is absolutely impermissible that these struggles should come upon us unawares or that we should prove to be unprepared for them.

The struggle for partial demands must be closely linked up by the Parties with the struggle for our basic demands and slogans. Now, more than at any previous time, the Communist Parties are faced with the task of proving themselves equal to raising the struggle for partial demands to the level of the struggle for the basic political slogans. This must be done, not mechanically, but concretely explaining to the masses on each occasion on the basis of examples the connection between economics and politics. In the circumstances of the present crisis, *all sections of the Communist International must work out with the greatest care their revolutionary programme for the solution of the crisis* and get it to the acquaintance of each individual worker in order that the working masses should understand our position, in order that they can convince themselves that the Communist path for the solution of the crisis is the only one that is in accordance with their interests.

Enormous significance attaches to the question of the methods and means for work and agitation for partial demands, which so far have sometimes been unsatisfactory and inappropriate to the needs and strivings of the masses. The struggle for these demands has been looked upon in many Parties as *one* of the spheres of Party

work and not as an essential link, a most important driving belt which gives us the possibility at the present moment of becoming a real mass Party. Up to now our concrete demands in many cases have been of an artificial, unthought-out character. Attempts are made to force them upon the masses without listening to the criticism of the workers themselves. No attempts are made to convince the masses of the correctness of these demands. The members of the Party look down from on high on to the non-Party workers. All these things must be altered at all costs.

The most careful working out and putting forward of partial demands at the present time—this is the concrete application of the line of "class against class" in the conditions of the existing crisis. The essence of this line consists in the most intense struggle for the millions of the masses, for their mobilisation on the basis of their immediate demands by means of a wide application of the united front from below, in intensive activity in the trade unions for the conquest of the reformist workers, in the creation of a broad revolutionary trade union opposition movement resting not only on the trade unions, but also and especially on the enterprises and on the unemployed. All this must be carried out on the basis of merciless struggle against the reformist bureaucracy which is developing towards fascism, and on the basis of an intensified exposure of their most dangerous form, the so-called "lefts."

In connection with the developing crisis and the growing dissatisfaction of the masses, *we can witness a strengthening of the "left" manoeuvres of social-democracy*. These "left" manoeuvres are, of course, not in the least in contradiction with the progressive fascisation of social-democracy. These manoeuvres in the hands of social-democracy represent only a weapon for the better fulfilment of its tasks proceeding from its ever more complete absorption in the apparatus of the capitalist State. The events in Budapest, where the social-democrats organised a demonstration of the unemployed, the heightened activity of the Cook and Maxton groups in Great Britain and of Musty in the United States, the development of strike movements under the French Socialists (the strike in the North and the twenty-four hour strike of miners on October 6th)—all this demonstrates



that, under the pressure of the masses, the Socialists are compelled to make "left" gestures in order to divert the masses from the real struggle against their oppressors.

The Austrian Socialists are organising a big campaign for a referendum on some questions of living significance to the workers, the Musty group in the U.S.A. puts forward, after us, the question of the introduction of State social insurance, the Belgian Socialists are organising on a wide scale a petition campaign around their holiday law, the I.L.P. in Britain puts forward a manifesto for struggle for immediate demands and for a campaign on behalf of the "Labour programme,"—these are some of the latest attempts directed towards deflecting the activity of the masses into parliamentary channels. Our Parties must struggle in the most energetic fashion against all these "left" manoeuvres of the social-democrats. We must not permit the masses to let themselves be carried away by the noisy phrases of the "lefts."

Social-fascist centrism at the present time represents a very big danger. The attention of all our Parties must be concentrated on the struggle against it and against the 'rights' in our own ranks who represent an agency of the social-democrats. The differentiation between us and the social-democrats proceeds not only in regard to slogans—the reformists in demagogic fashion can put forward any number of radical slogans such as the seven-hour day etc.—but also, and this is the most important, in regard to the struggle for the realisation of these slogans, we have to show at every hour of the day to the widest masses of workers that the social-fascists in fact represent the greatest hindrance even for the realisation of the most modest demands of the workers. We have to show every hour of the day by deeds that the Communist Party represents the sole Party capable of leading the class struggle of the workers in such a fashion as to achieve a victory for the demands of the working class. It is precisely on the basis of the preparation and organisation of struggle for the simplest day-to-day demands of the workers

that we must conduct the decisive fight against the social-democrats, closely linking up the struggle with our fundamental political demands.

In order to utilise in the fullest possible measure the consequences of the present economic crisis, which is opening up revolutionary perspectives before us, in order as fully as possible to strengthen the organisational consolidation of this work, all our Parties must transform their organisational work. It is essential to divide the work among the Party members in a carefully thought-out fashion, to utilise every comrade, and to give every member of the Party a definite task which he must fulfil under the control of his organisation and with the live and active support of the higher organisations.

Recently, a whole number of Parties have already partially corrected mistakes and deviations which have been committed and developed a mass movement on the basis of the wide united front from below (e.g., the campaign for the defence of "L'Humanité" in France, the struggle for the "Charter" in Britain, the unemployed demonstrations in the U.S.A., the extension of the Parties in Austria, Italy, etc.). Methods of leadership are beginning to improve and become more concrete. The Parties have addressed themselves in a serious fashion to the improvement of their organisational work.

All this, however, is far from sufficient. We are faced with heavy class battles. All sections of the Communist International must exert every effort to the maximum degree possible in order to utilise completely the extending crisis for strengthening their ranks and increasing their influence among the masses. All sections of the Communist International must strengthen to the maximum extent their fighting capacity and their organisation in order to be able to enter the approaching battles completely prepared. It is indispensable to increase the tempo of our work, to increase our fighting readiness, for time will not wait. The moment fixed by history may arise sooner than anyone anticipates.

## NOTES ON THE BRITISH PARTY AND ITS CHARTER CAMPAIGN

ONE distinctive feature of the situation in Britain during the past year is that British capitalism was drawn into the world economic crisis *after nine years* of post-war decline. The fall in trade came after nine years of diminished exports and imports; the fall in production after a whole post-war period in which the British bourgeoisie saw themselves outdistanced by their capitalist rivals, above all by the bourgeoisie of the United States; the two million and more unemployed after nine years when the number of unemployed had never sunk below the figure of one million; the revolutionary upsurge in the colonies, especially in India, Palestine, China and Africa came after a whole decade of disintegration and struggle within the British Empire.

Under these circumstances the oncoming of the crisis witnessed a Labour Government which had been put into power with the expectation that it would carry through a programme of rationalisation in industry along with the reformist trade unions and at the same time enable war preparations to go steadily forward under a mask of pacifism. These were the expectations of the bourgeoisie. But the world economic crisis shattered these hopes and as it proceeded made the situation of British economy worse and worse. Though there had been a steady upward movement of unemployment from the middle of 1929 onwards, it was in the first quarter of 1930 that the effect of the crisis became more marked. In the second quarter of 1930 the speed of the deterioration of British capitalist economy became more rapid, and with the third quarter the pace continued until the fourth quarter brought a further downward movement that completed the worst year in the history of British imperialism.

Meantime, during the whole twelve months from the middle of 1929, the working-class which had looked forward to the establishment of the Labour Government in the vain hope that it would considerably improve their economic position, that it would abolish or at any rate considerably mitigate unemployment, that it would enable wages to be raised, shorter hours to be legalised and the Baldwin Trade Union

Act of 1927 to be repealed, had now begun to go through an increasingly rapid process of disillusionment.

The Labour Government, on the contrary, carried through wage-cuts and drove forward a programme of rationalisation. In foreign affairs it laid stress on the "continuity" of imperialist policies and proved itself a brutal agent of the imperialist bourgeoisie in its attempt to suppress the colonial revolution. It strove to carry out faithfully its obligations to the bourgeoisie, as a government of the Second International should, and sharpened the capitalist offensive against the workers.

Consequently, the Labour Party began to lose the possibility of carrying into operation as smoothly as the bourgeoisie had hoped, its policy of rationalisation, colonial repression and war preparedness.

The growing resistance of the masses to the capitalist offensive showed itself in a series of class conflicts and in the revolutionary upsurge in the colonies, above all in India.

Already by the spring of 1930, the halcyon days of the Labour Government were over.

Sharpening contradictions, causing fissures in the ranks of all the capitalist parties, open fascist tendencies, disillusionment of the masses, the emergence and maturing of the elements of political crisis—here was a situation objectively favourable for the growth of a revolutionary mass party.

In sharp contradiction to this objectively favourable situation in the summer of 1930 was the situation of the Communist Party which had become dangerously isolated from the mass of the workers. The Party Congress of December, 1929, had effected a change, had correctly laid down the line of the Party, as decided at the Ninth Plenum of the Comintern but not carried out by the old opportunist leadership, had changed that leadership, and chosen another leadership that gave a better guarantee of sincere efforts to carry out the line of struggle against the Labour Party, and independent leadership of the working-class.

But though the Leeds Congress had marked a big step in advance, the Party had not shown

itself able to apply the new line quite correctly in practice. Consequently, the declining membership of the British Party which had begun after the end of the miners' struggle and had continued to decline steeply during the period of the opportunist leadership, was not brought to a halt. The imperfect discussion in the Party preceding its Congress, and the failure thereafter to carry through an ideological campaign on the decisions of the Leeds Congress, resulted in the emergence of sectarian attitudes on various issues. The tendency towards opportunism, not yet completely rooted out, on the one hand, and towards sectarianism on the other, worked side by side and prevented the Party from gaining the leadership of the masses or from gaining that increase in membership which would have registered a growing mass leadership.

By midsummer of 1930, the figures of still declining membership made it clear that means must be found to break through the isolation in which the Party found itself. Hence, a decision was taken at the end of July to initiate a campaign for immediate demands, and in the discussions of the next month the decision was reinforced and the basis of it broadly laid. It was clear that it was a fundamental task for the Party to overcome all its mistakes and weaknesses in the shortest possible time, in order to overcome this isolation from the masses, to prepare successfully the counter-attack of the working-class against the employers' offensive and to develop the economic strikes of the proletariat for immediate demands into a mass political struggle against the Labour Government.

The task was to create a wide movement of the working masses around a "Workers' Charter" which would formulate the most important immediate demands affecting the widest sections of the working-class. The Charter was to consist of five or six demands regarding wages and hours, unemployment, housing, the repeal of the Trade Union Act, support for the Indian revolution. The struggle for this programme was to be the centre of all Party work in the period immediately following. Further, the Party had to make the Workers' Charter a chief means for stimulating the work of the Minority Movement and converting it into a mass revolutionary trade union opposition.

What degree of success did the Party attain in

its campaign for the Workers' Charter? The success attained can be partly estimated by the number of the Workers' Charter pamphlets sold, which was 120,000 and compared well with a normal circulation for Party or Minority Movement pamphlets of less than 10,000. At the same time, a considerable number of mass signatures for the Charter were collected, demonstrations were held, resolutions were brought forward in trade union organisations and other mass organisations, the factory papers and the Party Press were mobilised in support of the Charter. Charter campaign committees were built up, the work in the trade unions, which had fallen off very seriously, was stimulated, new contacts were made and new workers and organisations (I.L.P. Guild of Youth) were drawn into the campaign. Moreover, the support drawn from the working-class, as shown by the response to the appeal for funds, was greater than ever before in the history of the Party.

But, after the first weeks of the Charter Campaign, there was a certain falling off. The reasons for this were to be seen not so much in the weakness of the Party and of the Minority Movement, as in a failure on the part of the Party leadership to explain effectively the political meaning of the Charter. There was a tendency to put forward the Charter by itself as if it were a full programme, to put the Charter into a watertight compartment away from the other political and economic activities of the Party, and to submerge the Party's revolutionary programme. If the danger of the earlier period had been that the Minority Movement was becoming a duplicate of the Party, a new danger began to appear that the Party would become a duplicate of the Minority Movement. Serious instances of "watertight compartments" were to be observed in October in South Wales and Scotland, where at a moment when an economic struggle was maturing in the mining industry, Charter conferences were held which dealt with everything except the mining industry.

At the same time, the Party was brought up sharply against a series of long-standing weaknesses, the full extent of which was only revealed by the attempt to carry through such a broad mass campaign as that around the Workers' Charter. In the united front work from below, for example, there was the sectarian

tendency to treat all mass organisations as bodies in which it was not necessary for the Party to struggle in order to carry out its line, but in which the necessity of struggle could always be avoided by confining the organisation to a narrow circle of workers. Other long-standing weaknesses of the Party now began to have their effect in crippling and disabling the efforts made to break through the isolation from the masses : The ideological and political narrowness remarked upon at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, and the absence of any Party training alternating with training of a somewhat academic nature unrelated to the immediate struggle, the serious under-estimation of colonial work in the ranks of the Party and manifesting itself in the discussions and the standpoint of the British delegation at the Sixth Congress, the existence, unliquidated for years, of unprincipled inner-Party struggles, due mainly to bureaucratic methods.

All these things together meant that while in the Charter campaign the Party had made a definite turn towards mass work and was able to record successes in this, these successes had been chiefly in a field of agitation and could not be described yet as a full mass campaign drawing wide masses of workers in the factories and trade unions and labour exchanges into the struggle ; while the separation of this campaign from the other activities of the Party combined with the failure to unfold the whole of the revolutionary programme of the Party to produce a dangerous situation.

For by the early winter the increased rate of development of the economic crisis was beginning to tell more and more heavily. The elements of crisis were steadily maturing and began to have their effect on all the political parties. The bourgeoisie, more and more feeling the approach of the crisis, began to regroup their class forces and to seek new political forms. In all three parties, Conservative, Liberal and Labour, this process was to be seen.

Already in the summer, Churchill, Lloyd George and Bernard Shaw, representing all three parties, had each proclaimed that parliament was an outworn piece of machinery. Already also in the summer, within all three parties of the bourgeoisie, there began the move towards Protectionism. (Beaverbrook wing of

the Conservative Party with its Empire free trade crusade, Liberal economists' proposals for 10 per cent. duty on all imports, the Bankers' Manifesto demanding tariffs on imports, and the memorandum of the Trade Union Congress whose purpose was to present free trade as discredited.)

But with the increasing rate of the development of the economic crisis, these tentative approaches to protectionism, bound up with growing drive to fascism, which were brought out most strongly in relation to the Imperial Conference, began to be more and more marked in all three parties of the bourgeoisie. It became clear too that an unprecedentedly fierce attack on the standard of living of the working-class was maturing and that the first to bear the brunt of this attack would be the miners, the railwaymen and the textile workers. The Round Table Conference marked continued repression of the revolutionary upward movement in India, while unmistakable signs appeared of increasing hostility on the part of the Labour Government towards the U.S.S.R. (support of France at Geneva, hostile attitude towards the trial of counter-revolutionaries, etc., etc.).

It was at this moment, beginning in November, when, in the bourgeois parties, new plans were preparing and new programmes were being set forth, that the municipal elections followed by the Shipley by-elections, with their meagre Communist votes, indicated an extremely serious situation for the Communist Party. The Labour vote fell, but the Conservative vote rose. The disillusionment of the workers with the Labour Party was clearly expressed, but instead of coming to the Communist Party, workers were going over to the older parties of the bourgeoisie. In Shipley the Communists received 701 votes. It became clear that the danger of the Communist Party missing the tide was very real.

These electoral results, especially Shipley, brought the Party sharply up against the danger with which it was confronted. In the immediately following parliamentary bye-election at Whitechapel, an effort was made to improve the whole method of the campaign, linking the Charter Campaign up with the other activities of the Party, and carrying the campaign into the

masses—with the result that a vote of over two thousand was obtained.

Further, an appreciation of the need for linking up the Charter Campaign with the economic struggles was seen in the strike of the Scottish miners at the beginning of December, when the United Mine Workers of Scotland was able to make a forward step through the fighting leadership it gave to the miners.

But, while the Party reacted in this way to the defeat in Shipley, at the municipal elections, it was clear that more was needed. The elements of a political crisis were developing, and as a result, the regroupings within the parties of the bourgeoisie became more and more pronounced.

Typical of the movement within the bourgeois parties is the programme put forward by Sir Oswald Mosley and a number of other “young men of good family” within the ranks of the Labour Party. This programme, issued in the middle of December, contains the fundamental elements of fascism. It demands the re-establishment of British industry and the postponement of any question of socialism until capitalist industry has been rescued, expressed in “the English manner.” It demands import boards, as a means whereby to obtain a closed internal market (which means to lower the standard of life of the British workers). It “promises” higher wages. It stipulates for the establishment of an emergency cabinet under the dictatorship of five persons. This manifesto, signed also by several leading members of the Independent Labour Party, represents the most open and clear indication of the fascistisation process inside the Labour Party.

The Communist Party must bring forward all the principal revolutionary political issues before the workers. It must answer the doubts of the disillusioned masses now looking for some way out of the trap in which they feel caught, by showing the revolutionary way out of the crisis, by meeting the whole propaganda of fascism with an explanation of the Communist perspective, combining this with the intensified

campaign for the Charter in which a central feature is bound to be economic struggles. In a propagandist manner it is necessary to show that the rapidly sharpening contradictions of world capitalism are bringing about the collapse of the British Empire, that no one of the nostrums put forward can have any effect in averting this collapse. The means by which to secure a free collaboration of all the peoples within the Empire is not tariffs or import boards, but is by the overthrow of capitalism, the ending of imperialist domination, by the establishment of the self-determination of the peoples within the British Empire and a free union in close alliance with the U.S.S.R.

This programme of the revolutionary workers’ government would show that India, liberated from imperialism, and building up socialist industrialisation, would carry on free exchange, or, at any rate, would be in a position to carry on free exchange of raw materials and manufactures. Steady raising of the standard of living of the colonial peoples is the condition for the retention, for the raising of the standard of living of the British working-class. For example, the Soviet Union, standing in the completest contrast with the condition in England, requires to be stressed and explained. This means the Party will attract large masses of workers who will see that the condition of the working-class is such as can be remedied only by a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Finally, the Party in intensifying the Charter Campaign must link up closely with the economic struggles of the railwaymen, textile workers and the other trades. In this way the Charter Campaign will be brought into constant relation with the daily struggles of the workers, will rally large masses for the Minority Movement and the Communist Party, while at the same time the revolutionary perspective of the Party prepares the workers for the struggles ahead of them and coming rapidly nearer, as elements of political crisis in Britain come to maturity.

## UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.A.

### *The Number of Unemployed.*

ON the determination of the number of unemployed in the U.S.A., there has been for easily understood reasons, much furious dissension. The official point of view speaks of only 3,000,000 unemployed. Such were the declarations recently of Hoover and Lamont. The method of calculation giving this figure of 3,000,000 is nothing but a falsification of the facts. This was exposed by the well-known economist Pirson, who has said that if the statistical method used were altered then the number of unemployed would easily reach 5,000,000. It must be noted that in America it was only in 1930 that graphical statistics of the position of unemployment have been introduced. Previous to this, the determination of the number of unemployed rested on approximate calculations. It is impossible to believe the official sources, especially those of recent date. This assertion is no malicious "Communist invention," but the opinion, for example, of such an authoritative person as Franklin Roosevelt, the Governor of the State of New York. Roosevelt, in his speech at the Conference of the U.S.A. Governors, where he was the reporter on the question of "unemployment and old age pensions," declared :—

"We can fully approve of the assurances against panic which proceeded from the Conferences in our capital last autumn, but, on the other hand, many persons seriously and reasonably protest against the spectacle of Government officials and leading financiers juggling with figures in order deliberately to distort actual facts. Then, when twelve to fifteen workers out of every hundred in many branches of industry are unemployed, they tell us that unemployment at the present time has practically returned to the normal level. This is neither true nor rational."

The exposure of Pirson and the declaration of Roosevelt have recently had the effect of causing William Stewart of the Chief Statistical Department to declare that unemployment embraces 8 to 9 million persons. Stewart's estimate of the number of unemployed coincides with the estimate given by the Communist Party of the U.S.A. The methods of calculation will be referred to below.

The existing "League for Struggle against Unemployment" considers that in the U.S.A. the number of unemployed in a few of the cities alone amounts to about 7 millions. According to the observations of the League, during the

last twenty to thirty years unemployment in the U.S.A. has covered 5 per cent. of the working population in good years and reaches 20 per cent. in bad years. According to the opinion of Dr. Hart, previous to 1917 the average number of unemployed in America was 2.5 millions, not counting agriculture. The figure of 20 per cent. unemployed at the present time as given by the League is not far from the truth. Thus, for example, electoral investigations in New York and Philadelphia show that the number of unemployed varies between 17 and 20 per cent. of the whole working population.

It remains to determine what is the figure of the whole working population. According to the opinion of the League, the number of the working population in America amounts to 33 million persons in a few of the towns alone, i.e., without counting the agricultural working population. The census of 1921 returned the number of persons living on wages as 31 million. Of these, 5,400,000 were agricultural workers. The number of agricultural workers in 1930 has increased not at all, or only to an insignificant extent. The working population has increased by approximately 6 to 8 million. According to preliminary data of the census of 1930, the population in the U.S.A. has increased during the last ten years by 17 million. Taking as a basis the old but somewhat altered relation between the working population and the remaining sections, it is possible to agree with the correctness of the calculation, excluding agricultural workers, of 33 million. Thus, the number of persons actually selling their labour power or ready to do so, amounts in America to 40 million persons. Of course, this does not contradict the fact that the number of workers engaged in productive labour has decreased. However, the figure of 20 per cent. unemployed which gives only 7 millions in all, is far from complete, without speaking of the fact that it is quite inadmissible to exclude agricultural workers from those living by the sale of their labour power, and it is incomplete because it does not take into account the number of old men, invalids and others who are not able to find work in the conditions of rationalised American industry. If the number of these people were to be taken into account, the figure of unem-

ployment would undoubtedly be increased.

What, however, is the definition to be given to the concept "unemployed"? American statistics consider a worker unemployed who is not able to find work, who offers his labour but finds no demand for it. The C.P. of the U.S.A. defines unemployment in the same way. According to the calculations of the Communists, the number of unemployed at the present time reaches 8 million. This figure is compiled in the following way:—At the beginning of 1929 the number of workers in American industry had decreased by almost 2 million in comparison with 1923.\*

At that time, 2 million had come into the towns from rural areas and there was a normal growth of 2 million in the working population. Since then, from 1929 to July, 1930, the number of workers decreased by 1 to 2 million. Thus, the number of unemployed attains 8 million.

In our opinion, all these determinations are incomplete, for they only take account of the *sharp* form of the phenomenon of relative surplus population. The number of unemployed only includes persons who are actually seeking work but unable to find it. But, taking the industrial reserve army, it reaches much greater measures than is shown by the sharp form of relative surplus population.

Marx distinguished three regular forms of surplus population—floating, latent and stagnant. The present crisis in America which has given rise to 8 to 9 millions of an unemployed army is evidence that in the U.S.A. the relative surplus population has reached enormous dimensions.

According to official statistics for 1928, only 78 per cent. of the workers in all were employed on full time. The remaining 22 per cent. were on short time. The number of such workers has grown considerably in the U.S.A. now, since, for the most part, even in big industry during the last year-and-a-half, interrupted work has been the rule. Unemployment has now drawn into its ranks a part of this floating relative surplus population, but only a part. It is obvious that several million workers of those employed are working on short time. To the

latent form of relative surplus labour Marx referred that part of the proletariat which was on the point of passing into the ranks of pauperdom. Among them he included first of all agricultural workers. Marx said :

"The payment of the agricultural worker tends to be lowered to a minimum and he always stands with one foot in the swamp of pauperism."

The number of agricultural workers in the U.S.A. amounts to some 5½ millions. Their wage is equivalent to \$50 a month, according to official data, but in actual fact it is lower. Moreover, this wage varies very considerably in different parts of the country and at different seasons of the year. The agrarian crisis in the U.S.A. converts these 5 million workers into real paupers. In the circumstances of agrarian crisis and bad harvest, the scattered and disunited agricultural workers will represent the most suffering portion of the American proletariat, and the coming winter after the bad earnings of the summer will see them converted into a veritable starving population. Finally, it is necessary to remember that there are a series of branches of industry where, as a matter of fact, unemployed labour is used and the work is only of a seasonal character, as e.g. radio, biscuit trade, preserving, etc. Thus the number of unemployed workers who are seeking work and are unable to find it is supplemented by a further 10 million who are only nominally at work but actually should enter into the number of unemployed. In this way it can be said that unemployment in the U.S.A. directly embraces some 40 per cent. of the working population.

For this reason, even the figures issued by our Party under-estimate the depth and extent of the relative surplus population and of unemployment. Actually, unemployment threatens almost half of the working-class of the U.S.A. The whole working population in general suffers from unemployment, since in the absence of social insurance, the burden of unemployment is placed on the working-class and very little short of half the workers are directly affected by unemployment.

*Unemployment and Its Duration, by Branches of Industry and by States.*

Data on the number of unemployed by branches of industry are completely lacking. Such data, however, are not essential since American workers even from some decades back

\* 1923 is taken as the basis of comparison because in that year there was a radical improvement after the crisis of 1921. 1923 was a year with minimum unemployment and only the commencement of rationalisation on a wide scale.

have been distinguished by their mobility. The process of rationalisation in industry has still further increased this mobility. The majority of American workers are not connected by their occupation with one single branch of industry but pass easily from one industry to another. For this reason, data according to branches of industry are not so essential. Some data will be given below where the unemployment among organised workers is dealt with.

More interesting are the facts on the duration of unemployment among different strata of workers. About 5 million of the unemployed have been without work for more than three or four years. Already in 1928, unemployment had claimed 6 millions. Even according to the data of Al. Smith, the candidate for the Presidency, the number of unemployed reached 5 million. Since that time, this number has continuously increased. In the first place, these 5 or 6 million persons now belong to the class of "old persons." Consequently, the American trade unions have for some years been putting forward and discussing the question of old age pensions. The intensity of labour in industry causes workers to age rapidly, and hence the problem of insurance for the aged was already a couple of years back acquiring great importance. It is necessary to say that our Party did not raise this question early enough and did not work out concrete demands. It can confidently be said that about 5 to 6 millions of the unemployed have been without work continuously during the last four years.

The distribution of unemployment according to States corresponds to the distribution of the working population among the States, since unemployment embraces pretty equally the whole country. In a number of small towns, however, the position with regard to unemployment is worse than in the big towns. There are some smallish towns in the U.S.A., where practically the whole population is unemployed. This population, tied to its dwellings, cannot move freely in search of work as can the population of the big towns. Unemployment has hit most of all the States of New England and the regions of Chicago, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Detroit and New York, i.e., the north-eastern industrial area of the U.S.A.

#### *The Position of the Unemployed Workers.*

According to the testimony of all witnesses,

the unemployed live either on savings or on the resources of relatives. We reproduce without comment a characteristic communication of the Federated Press ("The Labour Telegraph" Agency), written by its Washington Correspondent, Lawrence Todd, who stands very close to the circles of the trade union bureaucrats.

"Trade union officials on the boards of various national trade unions in Washington anticipate dangerous months during the approaching winter. They are thinking, will there be a revolt of the unemployed or not? Famine is not far off, if work cannot be found. Disquiet is growing. One-seventh of the whole membership of the Machinists' Union, for example, is now jobless. Among the metal workers, unemployment is four times as great as it was a year ago. So far there have been few demonstrations of a riotous character of the millions of unemployed persons wandering in the streets of American industrial towns. A considerable flexibility has been exhibited during these difficult times in the level of existence of the trade unionists and organised workers. If one member of a family is working, another has thus a place of refuge and food. If one section of a family is absolutely exhausted, it can sell its furniture and plant itself in the rooms of another section of the family, thus saving on rent, heating, clothing and food.

"For eight months the depression has not diminished. On the contrary, the times have become worse. Many thousands of families have moved into the homes of thousands of other families. The summer weather and partial labour on the farms at intervals has lightened the monotony of inactivity in the small towns, preventing the situation from developing into mass meetings and organised protests, but autumn and winter bring forward the demands for more clothing, more fuel, better housing and more food. The credit afforded by the small traders, by friends and relatives, drops down. Complete exhaustion is possible. What then?

"Our people still have some patience, but they are not prepared to starve in silence," declared the Vice-President of the Machinists' Union, with an experience of fifty years as trade union secretary. "Our people fall ill, they are attacked by pneumonia, they need the service of doctors, they must have money. If they cannot get these things, they will begin to discuss the reasons why this has happened and we shall see demonstrations of unemployed on the streets."

This year the assistance given by philanthropic organisations has increased fourfold. Such philanthropic assistance, however, is only given in so-called "desperate cases." Philanthropy is only concerned with the lowest strata of the pauperised. Thus, the fourfold increase in philanthropic assistance for the destitute is evidence of the general growth of destitution.

"The greater are the impoverished strata of the working class and the industrial reserve army, the higher the official level of destitution recognised by the authorities (Karl Marx)."

The position of the unemployed is closely connected with the position of the working-class as a whole. It need only be mentioned here that, even according to the words of the President of the American Federation of Labour, W.



Green, the workers have lost, owing to unemployment, during the first six months of 1930, 2 million dollars. Official statistics indicate that the share of the annual income falling to the working-class amounts to about 30 milliard dollars. An indication of the worsened position of the unemployed and of the workers in general is afforded by the contraction in the sale of milk in the towns by 15 to 20 per cent., and similar contractions in the sale of meat, poultry, etc. Further testimony of the same sort is seen in the opening of low-class cheap vegetarian restaurants and suchlike eating-houses.

### *Unemployment Relief.*

The unemployed, as pointed out above, receive assistance from philanthropic organisations; this assistance takes the form of distribution of cups of coffee and slices of bread or organisation of night shelters and covers only a minute section of the unemployed. Thus, for example, in 129 towns in 1929 various industrial corporations spent on charity 13 million dollars.

Only 100,000 workers in all are covered by the insignificant insurance or aid schemes of their trade unions. The chief union concerned in this is the Union of Male Garment Workers. This does not mean that 100,000 unemployed are already covered by social insurance. In several local municipalities, assistance is given to the unemployed, but in an extremely peculiar form. For instance, in some automobile centres of Michigan State, the municipalities which consist mainly of automobile companies, have afforded assistance to those unemployed workers who own their own houses, but those workers who do not own house property have been simply thrown out of the town by the police forces. Even this peculiar "assistance" was only granted to a minute group of workers. In Detroit, the total insurance fund for this purpose from the funds of the municipality was £700,000. The following table gives some idea of the growth of the problem of assistance to the unemployed which becomes particularly acute this winter.

### *Unemployment Among Trade Union Members.* (Percentage Unemployed of Trade Union Membership)

Year.	Month.	All T.U.s	Build- ing.	Print- ing.	Metal.	Others.
1928	March	18	38	5	13	—
	July	12	24	5	13	—
	August	9	19	5	9	—

Year.	Month.	All T.U.s	Build- ing.	Print- ing.	Metal.	Others.
1929	March	14	34	5	7	—
	June	9	19	3	7	—
	July	9	16	4	6	—
	December	16	32	4	11	10
1930	February	22	43	5	18	13
	April	21	40	6	19	12
	June	20	37	6	19	14
	July	21	37	7	21	16

Unemployment among textile workers has reached unprecedented heights—47 per cent. of the trade union membership among textile workers are unemployed. Among water transport workers, 23 per cent. of the trade union members are unemployed. Below we give some figures of unemployment among trade unionists according to towns.

### *Trade Union Unemployment by Towns.*

(Percentage of Membership Unemployed)

Town.	June, 1930	July, 1930 = increase in one month
Atlanta	10	14 +40
Baltimore	16	21 +31
Birmingham	19	25 +32
Boston	26	25 - 4
Chicago	22	24 + 9
Cincinnati	18	17 - 6
Cleveland	22	25 +14
Denver (Colorado)	20	23 +15
Detroit	26	28 + 8
Los Angeles	21	23 +10
Minneapolis	13	12 - 8
New York	21	22 + 5
Philadelphia	32	37 +16
Pittsburg	19	19 nil
San Francisco	12	13 + 8
Saint Louis	13	15 +15
Seattle	12	12 nil.

In all the towns, decrease of unemployment among trade union membership refers to building workers, but this does not mean that building workers have found employment, since they may merely have left the town. Further, these statistics hide the absolute figures. According to official data, 3½ million of the members of the American Federation of Labour are unemployed. Excluding two mass unions, the Miners' Union and the Building Workers' Union, the Federation covers highly skilled industrial workers, e.g., machinists, printers or such persons as are connected with work of an artisan or highly-skilled character. The A.F. of L. does not give data on the number of unemployed among its mining members. All the same its figures are very striking as an indication because they refer to the most highly paid strata of workers.

The A.F. of L. until recently took up a negative attitude with regard to State social insurance. The leaders of the A.F. of L. were at the same time leaders of big workers' banks or even had direct connections with private insurance companies; consequently they were directly interested in the absence of social insurance. Indeed, theories were even in existence that workers who purchased shares were thereby converted into small merchants and became capitalists.

At the present time, the A.F. of L. has in some ways altered its attitude. Thus all the journals of the A.F. of L. are now commenting on European legislation with regard to social insurance. The slogan of the A.F. of L. at the present time is "Work, not Charity." A few weeks ago, a meeting of 4,000 members of No. 3 Section of the New York Union of Electrical Workers declared against the plan for trade union unemployment benefits. The plan was as follows: \$15 a week to the unemployed member, but for not more than 21 weeks in the year. The means to be derived from contributions of a day's pay once every three months. Sixty per cent. of the assembly were against the project according to a report of the "New York Times," because what they wanted was "not charity but work."

Obviously, however, the matter is not as the "New York Times" depicts. The workers have expressed themselves against the formation of company unions which have frequently been formed in the same fashion and also against lowering of wages.

It is worth while to point to another fact. The demonstrations of March 6th, which evoked such great perturbation, initiated also a movement for unemployment insurance as an alternative to revolution. At the end of March, 1930, there was set up by the Senate a Commission on Unemployment. At this Commission, Green, President of the A.F. of L., declared:—

"Persons ought to earn money but not to receive it without giving labour in exchange. However, if the employers do not change their tactics we shall be faced with the necessity for State Unemployment Insurance or with revolution."

The A.F. of L. has not yet openly declared for unemployment insurance, but it will be compelled to do so as the situation grows more acute. At the last conference of the A.F. of L., support was actually given to the demand for the intro-

duction of the five-day working week, five hours work per day (i.e., 25 hours per week), and for nominal preservation of the old rates, but actually a reduction of them, since hourly payments or piece work prevail.

The bureaucrats of the A.F. of L. are doing everything possible to keep the workers under their leadership. Various bourgeois organisations and individual leaders of the bourgeoisie, including notable Government officials, are speaking now about unemployment relief.

Hoover has set up a special Commission to investigate the question, Walker, who has only just recently been exposed for corruption, is sacrificing millions of dollars to the unemployed, assigning sums for unemployment relief, but, as already pointed out, this assistance is not really for the unemployed, but to persons dying of hunger or existing on the border line of starvation.

These measures may have a certain success among backward strata of workers. It is not for nothing that at the elections just concluded for local parliaments and local government boards, as well as for the Senate, the Democrats received a very large number of votes spreading big demagogic propaganda on the evil of unemployment and on the need for social insurance— at the expense of the workers.

Quite recently, the Commission appointed by Hoover on unemployment relief has been dwelling insistently on the so-called "Stagger system." The essence of this plan is that the work available in a given branch of industry in a given town or locality is divided among all the workers. This plan was already experimented with on a small scale at the time of the work in the Mississippi valley. The Commission officials report that, although in this way wages are lowered almost twofold, nevertheless the workers get work, they earn their maintenance honourably not by charity, as they would regard any social insurance scheme. This plan is receiving ever more support from the industrial magnates. At the instance of the Hoover Commission, committees from leading industrial circles are being created in the localities which will discuss the practical application of this system. In Detroit, for example, Ford and other big automobile heads have joined these committees.

The new plan receives the support of the trade union bureaucracy in the A.F. of L. but it

is bound to encounter the savage resistance of all workers, for its application means lowering wages to a half or even less. Already at the present time wages have fallen by 25 per cent. ; under this system in some places they will fall by more than 50 per cent. The American Government is trying to put the burdens of the crisis on the backs of the American workers. The new plan will throw the American workers back a century and reduce them to a lower standard of living than even the impoverished European workers. The extent to which they succeed in realising this plan will depend upon the organisation and fighting capacity of the American proletariat. But the Communist Party of the United States will undertake the historic role spoken of by comrade Stalin in the American Commission. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Stalin declared that the capitalists are seeking a way out from the crisis through an offensive on the working-class, war against the U.S.S.R. and through imperialist destruction, but, "the working-class will seek a way out of the crisis through revolution."

This is why it is important that our Party should unceasingly continue the struggle for social insurance.

#### *Various Plans for Liquidation of Unemployment and for Unemployment Relief.*

(1) First of all must be mentioned Hoover's proposal for assigning 7 milliard dollars for employment. Half of this sum is to be expended by the Federal Government and by the States, the remainder by municipal organisations. There is no need to dwell here on the unreality of this proposal. The American bourgeoisie are hardly likely to put through such a measure since the sums assigned for social work will inevitably, even if only in part, fall into the hands of the Morgan bank, of the Mellon company and other capitalists who direct and control the Government apparatus.

(2) Hoover proposes duties for protection of American industry, which it is calculated will raise the cost of living by 20 per cent.

(3) Ford proposes a reduction of the number of working months in the year to ten, which is equivalent simply to reducing wages by 17 per cent.

(4) A number of economists recommend that wages should be reduced now, since this, they

argue, might reduce retail prices and thereby increase trade.

(5) The A.F. of L. in practice adopts the standpoint of lower wages and determinedly opposes any wage increase. For instance, in Cleveland, the Building Workers' Union a month ago rejected a proposal for demanding a wage increase. In Saint Louis, the Leather Workers' Union concluded an agreement with the employers for limiting the working day to six hours, which only means a reduction in wages as they are paid not by the day but by the hour.

In general, the above-mentioned plans amount to promises to find work for the unemployed. There is another group of proposals which amount to a demand for social insurance.

(a) The following is taken from the speech of Governor Roosevelt :—

"We can cry out about Bolshevism as much as we like. But, if our industrial system does not do anything for the removal of this social injustice (i.e., unemployment) we shall encounter an upheaval."

Roosevelt proposes the following temporary remedies for unemployment : Careful industrial planning, reduction of the working day, five working days in a week, an increase of public works. However, according to Roosevelt, it is inevitable that the main answer to the problem should be Insurance against Unemployment. The ideal form of insurance would be a fund created by the workers themselves. He demands the institution of such a law and of a law for old-age pensions.

(b) The position of the Musty group is very little different from that of Roosevelt's proposals. This group of "The Conference of Progressive Labour Activity" has set up a committee to conduct a campaign for unemployment insurance. Its standpoint is the demand for compulsory social insurance, but they do not say at whose cost this scheme is to be carried out.

(c) We reproduce below in full the demands of the Socialist Party representing the central feature of their electoral programme :

(i) Immediate organisation of public works on a large scale by the federal authority, the States and local administration, and rapid acceptance of a plan for a lengthy period of future public works.

(ii) Extension of the network of Labour Exchanges under strict civil control.

(iii) Reduction of the working day, which should not exceed six hours per day and five days per week ; issue to legislation on child labour with absolute prohibition of child labour below 16 years ; compensation on dismissal in accordance with period of service ; old age pensions after 60.

(*iv*) State insurance against unemployment. In addition, we are in favour of the establishment of an all-embracing system of social insurance which would include illness, accidents, maternity and death. We are for State insurance funds as the sole holder of compensation to the workers.

In some towns, e.g., Detroit, Leagues for Social Insurance have been founded. In general, it can be said that the question of unemployment and social insurance is attracting attention in all newspapers and journals which touch upon the labour question. All these journals reproduce and discuss the systems of social insurance prevailing in Europe. On this subject, a pamphlet was recently issued by the National Association of Manufacturers and by the National Industrial Council. This pamphlet declares, reflecting the opinion of the U.S.A. industrial world, "Before embarking on the legislative establishment of social insurance, it is reasonable to approve of a more extensive application during the important interval of several years of all kinds of means which will hinder and alleviate unemployment." In their opinion such means are: (*i*) insurance against unemployment by industry itself; (*ii*) payment on dismissal; (*iii*) stabilisation of industry and labour; (*iv*) public works; (*v*) insurance against unemployment by insurance companies; (*vi*) stabilisation of the dollar; (*vii*) lowering of imposts on industry; (*viii*) seasonal alterations of wages.

Some firms, e.g., the "General Electric," are already introducing insurance against unemployment, with a fund based on contributions by the workers and supplemented from the company. The fund is controlled by the company and the latter also determines the conditions for its distribution.

There is nothing new in this plan, which essentially continues the traditions of the company unions, binding the workers to the enterprise and making them dependent upon it. This insurance, however, only embraces 100,000 workers. All these plans represent a lowering of wages and an increase of the company's funds.

#### *Contemporary Labour Legislation.*

In the U.S.A., complete freedom of exploitation of labour prevails. Only four States have adopted old-age pension laws (Montana, Wisconsin, Kentucky and Nevada), the first legislation being promulgated in 1923. The pen-

sions are extremely small, for instance, in Kentucky, the highest amount is 250 dollars a year. In Montana it is 150 dollars a year, and, in fact, these amounts are practically never given out. Most widely extended is insurance against accidents, but these laws are extremely limited and in the majority of cases it is necessary to apply to a court for a decision in the matter. The courts themselves as a rule are under the thumb of the local employers. In practice these laws do not play any particular part. It must be noted that this question is of considerable significance since one worker out of every twelve in the U.S.A. during the year receives an injury while at work. Statistics indicate an increase every year in the number of accidents.

Thus, the question of social insurance and labour legislation is an immediate question of struggle for the working-class. After March 6th, the Communist Party was faced with the task of raising the movement to a higher level and introducing clearness into the slogans of struggle and forms of agitation. Up to August the central slogan of the Party was "Work or Wages." Only in that month did the Party work out a plan for a law on social insurance. The essence of this plan was—\$25 weekly assistance for all unemployed and an additional \$5 for every member of the family. The means to be collected through a special tax on the capitalists and to be administered by elected Labour organisations. Further, the Party demands that expenditure on armaments should be transferred to assistance to the unemployed. The general sum demanded by the Party is about 5 milliard dollars.

Extremely important is the question of forms and methods of struggle, of the development of the mass movement which continually embraces new strata and passes to newer and higher forms, separating the workers from the bourgeois Parties.

It is necessary to strengthen and extend the unemployed committees, drawing into them also employed workers; it is necessary to strengthen the everyday mass work among the unemployed and employed in order during the winter, when the horrors of unemployment are unfolded in their full measure before the American proletariat, to be able to lead the working-class in struggle under the leadership and slogans of the Communist Party.

# RESOLUTION ON THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES

(Final Text, confirmed by the Political Secretariat of the E.C.C.I., October 26, 1930)

I. The C.P. of the United States has always acted openly and energetically against negro oppression, and has thereby won increasing sympathy among the Negro population. In its own ranks, too, the Party has relentlessly fought the slightest evidences of white chauvinism, and has purged itself of the gross opportunism of the Lovestoneites. According to the assertions of these people, the "industrial revolution" will sweep away the remnants of slavery in the agricultural South, and will proletarianise the Negro peasantry, so that the Negro question, as a special national question, would thereby be presumably solved, or could be put off until the time of the socialist revolution in America. But the Party has not yet succeeded in overcoming in its own ranks all under-estimation of the struggle for the slogan of the right of self-determination, and still less succeeded in doing away with all *lack of clarity* on the Negro question. In the Party discussion the question was often wrongly put and much erroneous counter-poising of phases of the question occurred, thus, for instance, should the slogan of social equality or the slogan of the right of self-determination of the Negroes be emphasised. Should only propaganda for the Negroes' right to self-determination be carried on, or should this slogan be considered as a slogan of action; should separatist tendencies among the Negroes be supported or opposed; is the Southern region, thickly populated by Negroes, to be looked upon as a colony, or as an "integral part of the national economy of the United States," where presumably a revolutionary situation cannot arise independent of the general revolutionary development in the United States?

In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question the Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely as the question of an *oppressed nation*, which is in a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent *racial distinctions* (marked difference in the colour of skin, etc.), but above all because of considerable *social antagonism* (remnants of

slavery). This introduces into the American Negro question an important, *peculiar* trait which is absent from the national question of other oppressed peoples. Furthermore, it is necessary to face clearly the inevitable distinction between the position of the Negro in the *South* and in the *North*, owing to the fact that at least three-fourths of the entire Negro population of the United States (12 million) live in compact masses in the South, most of them being peasants and agricultural labourers in a state of semi-serfdom, settled in the "Black Belt" and constituting the majority of the population, whereas the Negroes in the Northern States are for the most part industrial workers of the lowest categories who have recently come to the various industrial centres from the South (having often even fled from there).

The struggle of the Communists for the *equal rights* of the Negroes applies to all Negroes, in the North as well as in the South. The struggle for this slogan embraces all or almost all of the important special interests of the Negroes in the North, but not in the South, where the main Communist slogan must be: *The right of self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt*. These two slogans, however, are most closely connected. The Negroes in the North are very much interested in winning the right of self-determination for the Negro population of the Black Belt and can thereby hope for strong support for the establishment of true equality of the Negroes in the North. In the South the Negroes are suffering no less but still more than in the North from the glaring lack of all equality; for the most part the struggle for their most urgent partial demands in the Black Belt is nothing more than the struggle for their equal rights, and only the fulfilment of their main slogan, the right of self-determination in the Black Belt, can assure them of true equality

## I. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF THE NEGROES.

2. The basis for the demand of equality of the Negroes is provided by the *special* yoke to which the Negroes in the United States are subjected by the ruling classes. In comparison with the situation of the other various national-

ties and faces oppressed by American imperialism, the yoke of the Negroes in the United States is of a peculiar nature and particularly oppressive. This is partly due to the historical past of the American Negroes as imported slaves, but is much more due to the still existing slavery of the American Negro which is immediately apparent, for example, in comparing their situation even with the situation of the Chinese and Japanese workers in the West of the United States, or with the lot of the Philipinos (Malay race) who are under colonial repression.

It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally it has been abolished, but in practice the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word. Formally, they are "free" as "tenant farmers" or "contract labourers" on the big plantations of the white landowners, but actually, they are completely in the power of their exploiters; they are not permitted, or else it is made impossible for them to leave their exploiters; if they do leave the plantations, they are brought back and in many cases whipped; many of them are simply taken prisoner under various pretexts and, bound together with long chains, they have to do compulsory labour on the roads. All through the South, the Negroes are not only deprived of all rights, and subjected to the arbitrary will of the white exploiters, but they are also socially ostracised, that is, they are treated in general not as human beings, but as cattle. But this ostracism regarding Negroes is not limited to the South. Not only in the South but throughout the United States, the lynching of Negroes is permitted to go unpunished. Everywhere the American bourgeoisie surrounds the Negroes with an atmosphere of social ostracism.

The 100 per cent. Yankee arrogance divides the American population into a series of castes, among which the Negroes constitute, so to speak, the caste of the "untouchables," who are in a still lower category than the lowest categories of human society, the immigrant labourers, the yellow immigrants and the Indians. In all big cities the Negroes have to live in special segregated ghettos (and, of course, have to pay extremely high rent). In practice, marriage between Negroes and whites is prohibited, and in the South this is even forbidden by law.

In various other ways, the Negroes are segregated, and if they overstep the bounds of the segregation they immediately run the risk of being ill-treated by the 100 per cent. bandits. As wage-earners, the Negroes are forced to perform the lowest and most difficult work; they generally receive lower wages than the white workers and don't always get the same wages as white workers doing similar work, and their treatment is the very worst. Many A.F. of L. trade unions do not admit Negro workers in their ranks, and a number have organised special trade unions for Negroes so that they will not have to let them into their "good white society."

This whole system of "segregation" and "Jim Crowism" is a special form of national and social oppression under which the American Negroes have much to suffer. The origin of all this is not difficult to find: this Yankee arrogance towards the Negroes stinks of the disgusting atmosphere of the old slave market. This is downright robbery and slave-whipping barbarism at the peak of capitalist "culture."

3. The demand for equal rights in our sense of the word, means not only demanding the same rights for the Negroes as the whites have in the United States at the present time, but also demanding that the Negroes should be granted all rights and other advantages which we demand for the corresponding oppressed classes of whites (workers and other toilers). Thus in our sense of the word, the demand for equal rights means a continuous work of abolishment of all forms of economic and political oppression of the Negroes, as well as their social exclusion, the insults perpetrated against them and their segregation. This is to be obtained by constant struggle by the white and black workers for effective legal protection for the Negroes in all fields, as well as actual enforcement of their equality and combating of every expression of Negrophobia. One of the first Communist slogans is: Death for Negro lynching!

The struggle for the equal rights of the Negroes does not in any way exclude recognition and support for the Negroes' rights to their own special schools, government organs, etc., wherever the Negro masses put forward such national demands of their own accord. This will, however, in all probability occur to any great extent only in the Black Belt. In other parts of the country, the Negroes suffer above all from being

shut out from the general social institutions and not from being prohibited to set up their own national institutions. With the development of the Negro intellectuals (principally in the "free" professions) and of a thin layer of small capitalist business people, there have appeared lately, not only definite efforts for developing a purely national Negro culture, but also outspoken bourgeois tendencies towards Negro nationalism. The broad masses of the Negro population in the big industrial centres of the North are, however, making no efforts whatsoever to maintain and cultivate a national aloofness, they are, on the contrary, working for assimilation. This effort of the Negro masses can do much in the future to facilitate the progressive process of amalgamating the whites and Negroes into *one* nation, and it is under no circumstances the task of the Communists to give support to bourgeois nationalism in its fight with the progressive assimilation tendencies of the Negro working masses.

4. The slogan of equal rights of the Negroes *without a relentless struggle in practice against all manifestations of Negrophobia on the part of the American bourgeoisie* can be nothing but a deceptive liberal gesture of a sly slave-owner or his agent. This slogan is in fact repeated by "socialist" and many other bourgeois politicians and philanthropists who want to get publicity for themselves by appealing to the "sense of justice" of the American bourgeoisie in the individual treatment of the Negroes, and thereby side-track attention from the one effective struggle against the shameful system of "white superiority": from the *class struggle against the American bourgeoisie*. The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes is in fact, one of the most important parts of the proletarian class struggle of the United States.

The struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes must certainly take the form of common struggle by the white and black workers.

The increasing unity of the various working-class elements provokes constant attempts on the part of the American bourgeoisie to play one group against another, particularly the white workers against the black and the black workers against the immigrant workers and vice versa, and thus to promote divisions within the working-class, which contributes to the bolstering up of American capitalist rule. The Party

must carry on a ruthless struggle against all these attempts of the bourgeoisie and do everything to strengthen the bonds of class solidarity of the working-class upon a lasting basis.

In the struggle for equal rights for the Negroes, however, it is the duty of the *white* workers to march *at the head* on this struggle. They must everywhere make a breach in the walls of segregation and "Jim Crowism" which have been set up by bourgeois slave-market morality. They must most ruthlessly unmask and condemn the hypocritical reformists and bourgeois "friends of Negroes" who, in reality, are only interested in strengthening the power of the enemies of the Negroes. They, the white workers, must boldly jump at the throat of the 100 per cent. bandits who strike a Negro in the face. This struggle will be the test of the real international solidarity of the American white workers.

It is the special duty of the revolutionary Negro workers to carry on tireless activity among the Negro working masses to free them of their distrust of the white proletariat and draw them into the common front of the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie. They must emphasise with all force that the first rule of proletarian morality is that no worker who wants to be an equal member of *his class* must ever serve as a strike-breaker or a supporter of bourgeois politics. They must ruthlessly unmask all Negro politicians corrupted or directly bribed by American bourgeois ideology, who systematically interfere with the real proletarian struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes.

Furthermore, the Communist Party must resist all tendencies within its own ranks to ignore the Negro question as a national question in the United States, not only in the South, but also in the North. It is advisable for the Communist Party in the North to abstain from the establishment of any special Negro organisations, and in place of this to bring the black and white workers together in common organisations of struggle and joint action. Effective steps must be taken for the organisation of Negro workers in the T.U.U.L. and revolutionary trade unions. Under-estimation of this work takes various forms: lack of energy in recruiting Negro workers, in keeping them in our ranks and in drawing them into the full life of

the trade unions, in selecting, educating and promoting Negro forces to leading functions in the organisation. The Party must make itself entirely responsible for the carrying through of this very important work. It is most urgently necessary to publish a popular mass paper dealing with the Negro question, edited by white and black comrades, and to have all active followers of this paper grouped organisationally.

## 2. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE NEGROES IN THE BLACK BELT.

5. It is not correct to consider the Negro zone of the South as a colony of the United States. Such a characterisation of the Black Belt could be based in some respects only upon artificially construed analogies, and would create superfluous difficulties for the clarification of ideas. In rejecting this estimation, however, it should not be overlooked that it would be none the less false to try to make a fundamental distinction between the character of national oppression to which the colonial peoples are subjected and the yoke of other oppressed nations. Fundamentally, national oppression in both cases is of the same character, and is in the Black Belt in many respects worse than in a number of actual colonies. On the one hand the Black Belt is not in itself, either economically or politically, such a united whole as to warrant its being called a special colony of the United States, but on the other hand this zone is not, either economically or politically, such an integral part of the whole United States as any other part of the country. Industrialisation in the Black Belt is not, as is generally the case in colonies properly speaking, in contradiction with the ruling interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has in its hands the monopoly of the entire industry, but in so far as industry is developed here, it will in no way bring a solution to the question of living conditions of the oppressed Negro majority, or to the agrarian question, which lies at the basis of the national question. On the contrary, this question is still further aggravated as a result of the increase of the contradictions arising from the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of the Negro peasantry and of a considerable portion of the Negro proletariat (miners, forestry workers, etc.) in the Black Belt, and at the same time owing to the industrial

development here, the growth of the most important driving force of the national revolution, the black working-class, is especially strengthened. Thus, the prospect for the future is not an inevitable dying away of the national revolutionary Negro movement in the South, as Lovestone prophesied, but on the contrary, a great advance of this movement and the rapid approach of a revolutionary crisis in the Black Belt.

6. Owing to the peculiar situation in the Black Belt (the fact that the majority of the resident Negro population are farmers and agricultural labourers and that the capitalist economic system as well as political class rule there is not only of a special kind, but to a great extent still has pre-capitalist and semi-colonial features), the right of self-determination of the Negroes as the *main slogan* of the Communist Party in the Black Belt is appropriate. This, however, does not in any way mean that the struggle for equal rights of the Negroes in the Black Belt is less necessary or less well founded than it is in the North. On the contrary, here, owing to the whole situation, this struggle is even better founded, but the form of this slogan does not sufficiently correspond with the *concrete* requirements of the liberation struggle of the Negro population. Anyway, it is clear that in most cases it is a question of the daily conflicts of interest between the Negroes and the white rulers in the Black Belt on the subject of infringement of the most elementary equality rights of the Negroes by the whites. Daily events of the kind are: all Negro persecutions, all arbitrary economic acts of robbery by the white exploiters ("Black Man's Burden") and the whole system of so-called "Jim Crowism." Here, however, it is very important in connection with all these concrete cases of conflict to concentrate the attention of the Negro masses not so much to the general demands of mere equality, but much more to some of the revolutionary *basic demands* arising from the concrete situation.

The slogan of the right of self-determination occupies the central place in the liberation struggle of the Negro population in the Black Belt against the yoke of American imperialism, but this slogan, as we see it, must be carried out only in connection with two other basic demands. Thus, there are three basic demands to be kept



in mind in the Black Belt, namely, the following:

(1) *Confiscation of the landed property of the white landowners and capitalists for the benefit of the Negro farmers.* The landed property in the hands of the white American exploiters constitutes the most important material basis of the entire system of national oppression and serfdom of the Negroes in the Black Belt. More than three-quarters of all Negro farmers here are bound in actual serfdom to the farms and plantations of the white exploiters by the feudal system of "share cropping." Only on paper and not in practice are they freed from the yoke of their former slavery. The same holds completely true for the great mass of black contract labourers; here the contract is only the capitalist expression of the chains of the old slavery, which even to-day are not infrequently applied in their natural iron form on the roads of the Black Belt (chain-gang work). These are the main forms of present Negro slavery in the Black Belt and no breaking of the chains of this slavery is possible without confiscating all the landed property of the white masters. Without this revolutionary measure, without the agrarian revolution, the right of self-determination of the Negro population would be only a Utopia, or at best would remain only on paper without changing in any way the actual enslavement.

2. *Establishment of the State Unity of the Black Belt.* At the present time this Negro zone—precisely for the purpose of facilitating national oppression—is artificially split up and divided into a number of various states which include distant localities having a majority of white population. If the right of self-determination of the Negroes is to be put into force, it is necessary wherever possible to bring together into one governmental unit all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes. Within the limits of this state there will of course remain a fairly significant white minority which must submit to the right of self-determination of the Negro majority. There is no other possible way of carrying out in a democratic manner the right of self-determination of the Negroes. Every plan regarding the establishment of the Negro State with an exclusively Negro population in America (and, of course, still more exporting it to Africa) is nothing but an unreal and reactionary caricature of the fulfilment of the right

of self-determination of the Negroes and every attempt to isolate and transport the Negroes would have the most damaging effect upon their interests; above all, it would violate the right of the Negro farmers in the Black Belt not only to their present residences and their land but also to the land owned by the white landlords and cultivated by Negro labour.

3. *Right of Self-Determination.* This means complete and unlimited right of the Negro majority to exercise governmental authority in the entire territory of the Black Belt, as well as to decide upon the relations between their territory and other nations, particularly the United States. It would not be right of self-determination in our sense of the word if the Negroes in the Black Belt had the right of determination only in cases which concerned *exclusively* the Negroes and did not affect the whites, because the most important cases arising here are bound to affect the Negroes as well as the whites. First of all, true right to self-determination means that the Negro majority and not the white minority in the entire territory of the administratively united Black Belt exercises the right of administering governmental, legislative and judicial authority. At the present time all this power here is concentrated in the hands of the white bourgeoisie and landlords. It is they who appoint all officials, it is they who dispose of public property, it is they who determine the taxes, it is they who govern and make the laws. Therefore, *the overthrow of this class rule in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination.* This, however, means at the same time the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding *itself* the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the beginning that no armed forces of American imperialism should remain on the territory of the Black Belt.

7. As stated in the letter of the Polit. Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. of March 16th, 1930, the Communists must "*unreservedly* carry on a

struggle" for the self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt in accordance with what has been set forth above. It is incorrect and harmful to interpret the Communist standpoint to mean that the Communists stand for the right of self-determination of the Negroes only up to a certain point, but not beyond this, for example, to the right of separation. It is also incorrect to say that the Communists are so far only to carry on propaganda or agitation for the right of self-determination, but not to develop any activity to bring this about. No, it is of the utmost importance for the Communist Party to reject any such limitation of its struggle for this slogan. Even if the situation does not yet warrant the raising of the question of uprising, one should not limit oneself at present to propaganda for the demand: "Right to self-determination," but should organise mass actions, such as demonstrations, strikes, tax-boycott-movements, etc.

Moreover, the Party cannot make its stand for this slogan dependent upon any conditions, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negroes in the Black Belt adopts the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded), etc. It goes without saying that the Communists in the Black Belt will and must try to win over all working elements of the Negroes, that is, the majority of the population, to their side and to convince them not only that they must win the right of self-determination, but also that they must make use of this right in accordance with the Communist programme. But this cannot be made a *condition* for the stand of the Communists in favour of the right of self-determination of the Negro population; if, or so long as the majority of this population wishes to handle the situation in the Black Belt in a different manner from that which we Communists would like, its complete right to self-determination must be recognised. This right we must defend as a free democratic right.

8. In general, the C.P. of the United States has kept to this correct line recently in its struggle for the right of self-determination of the Negroes even though this line—in some cases—has been unclearly or erroneously expressed. In particular some misunderstanding has arisen from the failure to make a clear distinction between the demand for "right of self-deter-

mination" and the demand for governmental separation, simply treating these two demands in the same way. However, these two demands are not identical. Complete right to self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should *make use of this* right under all circumstances, that is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States. If it desires to separate it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States it must also be free to do that. This is the correct meaning of the idea of self-determination and it must be recognised quite independently of whether the United States are still a capitalist state or if a proletarian dictatorship has already been established there.

It is, however, another matter if it is not a case of the *right* of the oppressed nation concerned to separate or to maintain governmental contact, but if the question is treated on its merits; whether it is to work for state separation, whether it is to struggle *for this* or not. This is another question, on which the stand of the Communists must *vary* according to the concrete conditions. If the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communist Negroes will not come out for but *against* separation of the Negro Republic federation with the United States. But the *right* of the Negroes to governmental separation will be *unconditionally realised* by the Communist Party, it will unconditionally give the Negro population of the Black Belt freedom of choice even on this question. Only when the proletariat has come into power in the United States the Communists will carry on propaganda among the working masses of the Negro population against separation, in order to convince them that it is much better and in the interest of the Negro nation for the Black Belt to be a free republic, where the Negro majority has complete right of self-determination but remains governmentally federated with the great proletarian republic of the United States. The bourgeois counter-revolutionists on the other hand will then be interested in boosting the separation tendencies in the ranks of the various nationalities in order to utilise separatist nationalism as a barrier for

the bourgeois counter-revolution against the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship.

But the question at the present time is not this. As long as capitalism rules in the United States the Communists cannot come out against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the United States. They recognise that this separation from the imperialist United States would be preferable from the standpoint of the national interests of the Negro population, to their present oppressed state, and therefore, the Communists are ready at any time to offer all their support if only the working masses of the Negro population are ready to take up the struggle for governmental independence of the Black Belt. At the present time, however, the situation in the national struggle in the South is not such as to win mass support of the working Negroes for this separatist struggle; and it is not the task of the Communists to call upon them to separate without taking into consideration the existing situation and the desires of the Negro masses.

The situation in the Negro question of the United States, however, may undergo a radical change. It is even probable that the separatist efforts to obtain complete State independence of the Black Belt will gain ground among the Negro masses of the South in the near future. This is connected with the prospective sharpening of the national conflicts in the South, with the advance of the national revolutionary Negro movement and with the exceptionally brutal fascists aggressiveness of the white exploiters of the South, as well as with the support of this aggressiveness by the central government authority of the United States. In this sharpening of the situation in the South, Negro separatism will presumably increase, and the question of the independence of the Black Belt will become the question of the day. Then the Communist Party must also face this question and, if the circumstances seem favourable, must stand up with all strength and courage for the struggle to win independence and for the establishment of a Negro republic in the Black Belt.

9. The general relation of Communists to separatist tendencies among the Negroes, described above, cannot mean that Communists associate themselves at present, or generally speaking, during capitalism, indiscriminately

and without criticism with all the separatist currents of the various bourgeois or petty-bourgeois Negro groups. For there is not only a national-revolutionary, but also a reactionary Negro separatism, for instance, that represented by Garvey; his Utopia of an isolated Negro State (regardless if in Africa or America, if it is supposed to consist of Negroes only) pursues the only political aim of diverting the Negro masses from the real liberation struggle against American imperialism.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the right of self-determination slogan is a truly revolutionary slogan only in connection with the demand for complete separation. *The question of power is decided not only through* the demand of separation, but just as much through the demand of the *right* to decide the separation question and self-determination in general. A direct question of power is also the demand of confiscation of the land of the white exploiters in the South, as well as the demand of the Negroes that the entire Black Belt be amalgamated into a State unit.

Hereby, every single fundamental demand of the liberation struggle of the Negroes in the Black Belt is such that—if once thoroughly understood by the Negro masses and adopted as their slogan—it will lead them into the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the ruling bourgeoisie, which is impossible without such revolutionary struggle. One cannot deny that it is just possible for the Negro population of the Black Belt to win the right to self-determination already during capitalism; but it is perfectly clear and indubitable that this is possible only through successful revolutionary struggle for power against the American bourgeoisie, through *wresting* the Negroes' right to self-determination from the American imperialism. Thus, the slogan of right to self-determination is a real slogan of national rebellion which, to be considered as such, need not be supplemented by proclaiming struggle for the complete separation of the Negro zone, at least not at present. But it must be made perfectly clear to the Negro masses that the slogan "right to self-determination" includes the demand of full freedom for them to decide even the question of complete separation. "We demand freedom of separation, real right to self-determination"—wrote Lenin: "certainly not in order to 'recommend'

separation, but on the contrary, in order to facilitate and accelerate the democratic rapprochement and unification of nations." For the same purpose, Lenin's Party, the C.P. of the Soviet Union, bestowed after its seizure of power on all the peoples hitherto oppressed by Russian Tsarism the full right to self-determination, including the right of complete separation, and achieved thereby its enormous successes with regard to the democratic rapprochement and voluntary unification of nations.

10. The slogan for the self-determination right and the other fundamental slogans of the Negro question in the Black Belt does not exclude but rather pre-supposes an energetic development of the struggle for concrete *partial demands* linked up with the daily needs and afflictions of wide masses of working Negroes. In order to avoid, in this connection, the danger of opportunist back-slidings, Communists must above all remember this :

(a) The direct aims and partial demands around which a partial struggle develops are to be linked up in the course of the struggle with the revolutionary fundamental slogans brought up by the question of power, in a popular manner corresponding to the mood of the masses. (Confiscation of the big land-holdings, establishment of governmental unity of the Black Belt, right of self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt.) Bourgeois-socialist tendencies to oppose such a revolutionary widening and deepening of the fighting demands must be fought.

(b) One should not venture to draw up a complete programme of some kind or a system of "positive" partial demands. Such programmes on the part of petty-bourgeois politicians should be exposed as attempts to divert the masses from the necessary hard struggles by fostering reformist and democratic illusions among them. Every positive partial demand which might crop up is to be considered from the viewpoint of whether it is in keeping with our revolutionary fundamental slogans, or whether it is of a reformist or reactionary tendency. Every kind of national oppression which arouses the indignation of the Negro masses can be used as a suitable point of departure for the development of partial struggles, during which the abolition of such oppression, as well as their

prevention through revolutionary struggle against the ruling exploiting dictatorship must be demanded.

(c) Everything should be done to bring wide masses of Negroes into these partial struggles—this is important—and not to carry the various partial demands to such an ultra-radical point, that the mass of working Negroes are no longer able to recognise them as *their own*. Without a real mobilisation of the mass-movements—in spite of the sabotage of the bourgeois-reformist Negro politicians—even the best Communist partial demands get hung up. On the other hand, even some relatively insignificant acts of the Ku-Klux-Klan bandits in the Black Belt can become the occasion of important political movements, provided the Communists are able to organise the resistance of the indignant Negro masses. In such cases, mass movements of this kind can easily develop into real rebellion. This rests on the fact that—as Lenin said—"Every act of national oppression calls forth resistance on the part of the masses of the population, and the tendency of every act of resistance on the part of oppressed peoples is the national uprising."

(d) Communists must fight in the *forefront* of the national-liberation movement and must do their utmost for the progress of this mass movement and its revolutionisation. Negro Communists must *clearly dissociate* themselves from all bourgeois currents in the Negro movement, must indefatigably oppose the spread of the influence of the bourgeois groups on the working Negroes, and in dealing with them must apply the Communist tactic laid down by the Sixth C.I. Congress with regard to the colonial question, in order to guarantee *the hegemony of the Negro proletariat* in the national liberation movement of the Negro population, and to co-ordinate wide masses of the Negro peasantry in a steady fighting alliance with the proletariat.

(e) One must work with the utmost energy for the establishment and consolidation of *Communist Party organisations and revolutionary trade unions* in the South. Furthermore, immediate measures must be taken for the organisation of proletarian and peasant *self-defence* of whites and blacks against the Ku-Klux-Klan ; for this purpose, the C.P. is to give further instructions.

11. It is particularly incumbent on Negro

Communists to criticise consistently the half-heartedness and hesitations of the petty-bourgeois national-revolutionary Negro leaders in the liberation struggle of the Black Belt, exposing them before the masses. All national reformist currents as, for instance, Garveyism, which are an obstacle to the revolutionisation of the Negro masses, must be fought systematically and with the utmost energy. Simultaneously, Negro Communists must carry on among the Negro masses an energetic struggle against nationalist moods directed indiscriminately against all whites, workers as well as capitalists, Communists, as well as imperialists. Their constant call to the Negro masses must be: *revolutionary struggle against the ruling white bourgeoisie, through a fighting alliance with the revolutionary white proletariat!* Negro Communists must indefatigably explain to the mass of the Negro population that even if many white workers in America are still infected with Negrophobia, the American proletariat, as a class, which owing to its struggle against the American bourgeoisie represents the only truly revolutionary class, will be the only real mainstay of Negro liberation. In as far as successes in the national-revolutionary struggle of the Negro population of the South for its right to self-determination are already possible under capitalism, they can be achieved only if this struggle is effectively supported by proletarian mass actions on a large scale in the other parts of the United States. But it is also clear that "only a victorious proletarian revolution will finally decide the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country." (Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress.)

12. The struggle regarding the Negro question in the North must be linked up with the liberation struggle in the South, in order to endow the Negro movement throughout the United States with the necessary effective strength. After all, in the North as well as in the South, it is a question of the real emancipation of the American Negroes which has in fact never taken place before. The Communist Party of the United States must bring into play its entire revolutionary energy in order to mobilise the widest possible masses of the white and black proletariat of the United States, not by

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words, but by deeds, for real effective support of the struggle for the liberation of the Negroes. Enslavement of the Negroes is one of the most important foundations of the imperialist dictatorship of U.S.A. capitalism. The more American imperialism fastens its yoke on the millions strong negro masses, the more must the Communist Party develop the mass struggle for Negro emancipation, and the better use it must make of all conflicts which arise out of national differences, as an incentive for revolutionary mass actions against the bourgeoisie. This is as much in the direct interest of the proletarian revolution in America. Whether the rebellion of the Negroes is to be the outcome of a general revolutionary situation in the United States, whether it is to originate in the whirlpool of decisive fights for power by the working-class,

for proletarian dictatorship, or whether on the contrary, the Negro rebellion will be the prelude of gigantic struggles for power by the American proletariat, cannot be foretold now. But in either contingency, it is essential for the Communist Party *to make an energetic beginning already now* with the organisation of *joint mass struggles* of white and black workers against Negro oppression. This alone will enable us to get rid of the bourgeois white chauvinism which is polluting the ranks of the white workers of America, to overcome the distrust of the Negro masses caused by the inhuman barbarous Negro slave traffic still carried on by the American bourgeoisie—in as far as it is directed even against all white workers—and to win over to our side these millions of Negroes as active fellow fighters in the struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power throughout America.



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