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Organisation Conference of the C. I.

First Session, Moscow, March 15th, 1925.

Comrade Piatnitzky opened the first meeting of the Organisation Conference. In honour of the victims in Halle, those present rose from their seats. Before proceeding to the agenda, Comrade Piatnitzky moved that a Presidium be elected to consist of Comrades Miłskievitch (Organisation Department of the ECCI); Suzanne (France); Winterich (Germany); Dorsey (America); Viola (Italy); Zapotocky (Czechoslovakia); Gypfner (Youth); Brown (Great Britain); Piatnitzky (Russia). When this motion had been unanimously accepted, Comrade Miłskievitch took the chair and announced the following points for discussion:

1. Information on the activity of the Organisation Department of the ECCI.
2. Report of the delegates on the status of work.
3. The experiences of nucleus activity.
4. Fractions.

5. Development of the local party organisation.
 6. Model statutes.
 7. Contact between nuclei of various countries.
 8. Factory papers.
 9. The organisation of campaigns.
- To facilitate the work, the following Commissions have been appointed:

For the development of the Party organisation, for the model statutes, for contact between the nuclei, for factory newspapers, for the organisation of campaigns.

The experiences of nucleus work and fractions will be dealt with at the Plenum and a commission will be appointed there.

On point I of the agenda, Comrade Piatnitzky made the following report:

Information on the Activity of the Organisation Department of the ECCI.

If I make certain criticisms here, I do it for the purpose of clearing up various questions of organisation. Certain comrades think the "Bolshevisation" of a Party is only an organisational question. That is wrong. A Party which has a good organisation will be able to follow good tactics, but if these tactics are not Bolshevist, then it will not sweep the masses with it and lead them into the fight. A good policy of the Party, which leads the masses, together with a good organisation — that is Bolshevisation!

The Party organisation in Russia was built up under circumstances different from those abroad. We had no opportunity of building up a legal party organisation, to hold meetings, to issue papers, etc. We were compelled to seek other forms in order to come in contact with the masses and that was only possible in factories. With us the Party organisation developed first and the trade unions were organised later. Thus the Party was compelled at first to deal with the petty every-day questions of the workers until it created the trade unions. This is how the close connection between trade unions and the Party came about. In the other countries, as a rule, the trade unions were organised first and then the Parties, which divided the work between

them. The trade unions concerned themselves with the economic questions and the Party with politics.

Now the question arose whether the foreign Parties could reach their goal with the old forms of organisation, or whether our form of organisation could not also be applied to them. Certain comrades claimed that the old form of organisation was standing the test and that the Russian form of organisation, which can be traced back to special circumstances, could not be applied abroad. Reports which came to us, however, prove the contrary. In the French Party the formation of nuclei was started with great enthusiasm, and the contact of the Party with the masses became much closer. This was clearly evident on the occasion of the funeral demonstration of Jaures, when we succeeded in getting 70,000 workers out of the factories into the streets, in spite of a parallel demonstration organised by the Left Bloc and the Social Democrats.

It is reported that in the Berlin-Brandenburg District the Party succeeded in getting a considerable proportion of sympathisers to take part in the last Lenin-Liebknicht-Luxemburg demonstration in those municipal districts where reorganisation had already been completed, whereas in the

other districts, where the reorganisation had not yet been begun, only the registered Party members appeared.

From those countries where our Parties work illegally, as in Bulgaria and Roumania, favourable reports have also been received. The Parties have become more proletarian and more active, and have also gained followers in the country. All this proves that the Russian form of Party organisation can be successfully applied abroad.

In the organisation of the nuclei we also observed great faults. Nuclei were organised and then their development was neglected; they were left without instructions. Now and then meetings were called, petty factory matters were discussed, but nothing more. The nucleus was not what it should have been — a means of contact between the Party and the masses in the factories. Naturally workers would sometimes say: "What do we need these new organisations for which accomplish nothing and because of which we might lose our jobs?" Such nuclei are worse than none at all.

The nucleus must meet at least once a week and discuss all those political and economic party questions which closely affect the workers. Under normal conditions the Party should never initiate measures which have not been first discussed in the nuclei. For instance, the Czechish Party started a campaign on prices without its having been previously discussed in the nuclei. In Czechoslovakia elections took place to factory councils without the participation of the nuclei; that was left to the trade unions.

It is not sufficient for the nuclei to meet only once a month particularly in order to discuss the current tasks in the factory, which is stated, if I am not mistaken, in a communication from the Berlin-Brandenburg District. (Geschke: You are mistaken!). For such a purpose no nuclei are necessary. The nuclei must meet at least once a week, in order to discuss all questions.

The Relation of the Factory Nuclei to the Local Organisations is an Important Question.

The reorganisation has often been misunderstood and it was believed that the reorganisation of the Party on the basis of factory nuclei would destroy all organisations and that nothing but isolated nuclei would exist. But it must be clearly stated that the nuclei are only a part of the organisation. The local group will continue to exist as a co-ordination of all the nuclei of the locality.

Certain comrades think that the nuclei are good only to bring the masses into demonstrations, whereas other work (for instance, election campaigns) can be done only by the residential organisations. That is absolutely wrong, since our electors are workers and must be influenced in the factories through the nucleus. The nucleus gives the members the opportunity of talking over all questions with their colleagues at the place of work, an opportunity which was never offered by the residential organisations of groups of ten.

France demonstrated to us that by the organisation of nuclei and the dissolution of the old residential organisations, the best results have been obtained. The Party did not become weaker by this reorganisation and did not lose any members. I do not want to go so far as to state the reorganisation in Germany and in Czechoslovakia can be done equally rapidly. In these countries there have been socialdemocratic organisations for many years with practically thirty years of experience and customs, whereas in France no such deeply rooted organisations existed. Therefore it was easier in France to dissolve the old forms of organisation and build up new ones. The main thing is that enthusiasm for the reorganisation should exist, then all difficulties can be overcome. If, in the larger Parties, the officials would go at the work of reorganisation according to a fixed plan and with determination, then we would obtain the best results. But both forms of organisation are allowed to exist and the work is done incompletely by both.

Comrade **Ruth Fischer** believes that the reorganisation must be so conducted that not one member is lost. That is correct. If, however, as has already happened, that an official of our Party runs away to the social democratic camp simply because we criticised Ebert when he was dead — when he was alive we were allowed to criticise him — that shows that the workers in our Party are not yet mature. But the nuclei are the best means of maturing them.

German comrades believe that many members will be lost in the process of reorganisation — this is stated in

a report from the Berlin-Brandenburg District — and they would consider it a serious mistake to drive away, or lose the passive members. Certainly, we do not want to lose any members, but the attempt must be made to work on these passive comrades, to enlighten them, and that can be done only through the nuclei.

A combination between the two organisations is impossible. This has been proved by experience. Correspondence from proletarian circles shows us how correct we were in this reorganisation work. "Rudé Právo" received several such letters from workers. In one of them it says: "The work in the nuclei has the advantage that the work is not concentrated on one or two comrades, but that practically every member of the nucleus is working, which is of great importance."

Another letter (also from the "Rudé Právo") states: "We consider the reorganisation as really practical. The work is much easier than in the old organisations, and we can mobilise the members of our nucleus in the factory at a half hour's notice."

If workers are writing in this vein, of what use then to maintain the two forms of organisation?

Factory Newspapers.

There are factory papers already in many countries. Germany has more than 1,000; France has about 350; and several exist in Czechoslovakia. In Italy small leaflets are distributed in place of factory newspapers. Since most of these leaflets are issued from a central point they have the disadvantage of not being adapted directly to the conditions and events in every single factory. Unfortunately the factory papers are not yet entirely fulfilling their purpose. Many of them discuss only factory affairs and nothing more.

That serves no purpose. Factory affairs must be so used that they are immediately linked up with the tactics of the Party and show that only the CP. has the possibility of liberating the working class. The paper must speak to the workers wherever Communists cannot appear openly. The comrades must be careful that the editors are not discovered and that the nucleus is not imperilled.

Structure of our Party Organisations

should not be dealt with. Many of our Parties have large local organisations in which no comrade supervises the work constantly. There are committees, it is true, who do their party work after their work in the factory. But that is not sufficient. In such cases someone must be on the job all day long. When the members see that something is being done, then they will also find the means of paying this comrade. In such cases where the committees tend to Party work, it often happens that the work is not divided according to department and that the instructions of the Central Committee are not carried out. Such examples as the following were given from Czechoslovakia; the leaders ignore the factory nuclei, the district secretaries are typical office people who sit in their offices and write petitions for the workers, etc. This might be exaggerated but there is probably some truth in it.

Can such leadership actually conduct a campaign? It is our task to obtain such a leadership that is capable of leading the workers in every connection.

The Institution of Functionaries and Officials

is another important point requiring our attention. This method was taken over by our Parties from the old Social Democratic parties. These functionaries, who are not elected by the members or authorised to make decisions, but are, so to speak, appointed by the executive, naturally also accomplish good party work and we are not in favour of removing them. Nevertheless, they ought to function only as advisory bodies and not be allowed to adopt decisions which are contrary to the opinions of the members, such as we have seen in Czechoslovakia in the present party crisis. The German comrades will remember that in Berlin a similar case occurred in the trade union question. The functionaries may discuss and give their opinion, but the decisions should be made by the nuclei. A Party can be really active and lead the masses only when the nuclei are up to date on all questions. We do not want such a situation where the functionaries do all the work of the Party Conference and of the membership, but that they work together with the Party.

No matter how good the functionaries might be, they can never replace the Party itself, which still often happens in Czechoslovakia and Germany.

The Question of Fractions

is an important question with which we must deal. Very little has been done here so far. To choose the best from a bad case — the Reichstag, Landtag and trade union fractions, which can be most easily directed by the executive — certain things happened even here which are absolutely inadmissible. What ought we to say when for instance the Czechish parliamentary fraction debates for three days whether or not a decision of the CC. should be carried out? I am very glad, of course, that the Czechish parliamentary fraction has finally come to the decision that it is only an auxiliary organ of the Party and of the revolutionary labour movement and not an independent political factor.

Things are still worse with our fractions in the non-party mass organisations. In the Czechish gymnastic

societies, for instance, we have practically no fractions and in the reformist and Christian trade unions, things are still worse. How can the Party have any influence on the workers in these organisations, when we have no fractions there? It should never occur that the Party removes its members from such organisations, as, for instance, our French Party did in 1923 in the reformist trade unions.

On the actual work of the Organisation Department I must report that we were compelled to conduct it under very difficult circumstances. Very incomplete reports came in from the Parties. We are compelled to collect all our information laboriously from the newspapers and to ask the representatives for everything we needed. We must set ourselves the task to organise better connections with the Organisation Departments of the various Parties. We must have the opportunity of sending instructors to the Parties who can send us regular detailed reports on the state of the organisations.

After Comrade Diatnitsky's report the Conference was adjourned until the next day.

Second Session, March 16th, 1925.

Chairman: Comrade Winterich, Germany.

Comrade Sauvage (France),

is given the floor for a

Report upon the Organisational Structure of the C. P. F.

There are two distinct periods in the reorganisation stage of the French Communist Party; 1) prior to the Fifth World Congress and 2) subsequent to the Fifth World Congress.

During the first period there were but a few comrades who realised the necessity to reorganise the Party on a proletarian basis. Of all the organisations, the Seine Federal Committee alone studied the question and had already initiated at the beginning of 1925 a campaign in this direction.

At the Seine Federal Congress in May 1923, it was stated in the report "that the main activity of the Party, the only real revolutionary activity in the struggle of labour against capital will consist in the reorganisation of the Party and in the re-grouping of its members. Grouped according to factories, workshops, etc. . . . the Communists will constitute the new organs of the Party, etc."

At that time the Seine Federation even established 14 nuclei in the most important works.

Many comrades including even leading and influential comrades, were of the opinion that only the local branch can serve as an organisational basis. This idea is a heritage of the Socialist Party.

The Seine Federation continued nevertheless, to carry out the decisions of the International, but it was hindered in its work by the fight against the Right which it had to carry on against Souvarine and his friends.

Not only was the activity of the Seine Federation impeded thereby, but the influence which the Federation might have had in the provinces, was rendered null and void. In fact this question was never raised there.

The Lyons Congress approached the problem timidly, but the manoeuvres of the Right and the battle which the Party had to wage against it, retarded the reorganisation.

Nevertheless the National Council of St. Denis which met on June 1 and 2, 1924, examined the question of the reorganisation of the Party seriously and thoroughly. A central reorganisation commission was appointed and work was at last begun in real earnest.

A Press campaign was organised and the question was studied in all its aspects. Articles were published in the "Humanité" on June 19 and 26, on July 3, 9, 16, 22, 23 and 29, on August 4 and on September 1 and 3. These articles were reprinted by our provincial daily and weekly press and were thus brought to the notice of our members.

The resolutions adopted by the Fifth Congress were also published in the same manner. As soon as our delegated comrades returned, federal conferences were organised at which the work of the Fifth Congress and especially organisational tasks were explained.

From that time onwards, work was accelerated and our comrades who had gradually come to understand the enormous tasks before us realised that it would be impossible to do justice to these tasks under the old form of organisation, that factory and workshop nuclei were necessary for this task.

Because our comrades understood this the French Party has been able to accomplish the reorganisation at the appointed time in the most important industrial centres.

The Clichy National Congress (January 17-23, 1925) reported progress.

The process of fusion among the federations (90) enabled the establishment of 27 regions with their seat in the most important industrial centre with which the adjoining peasant regions were connected. In this manner, a connection was established between rural districts and industrial centres.

On March 1, 1925, 2,500 nuclei existed. The following table shows their distribution in the most important regions:

Region	Nuclei	Districts	Factory newspapers
Paris	700	49	260
The North	300	17	44
Lyons	138	12	10
Marseilles	122	12	—
Central	117	17	—
Troyes	115	20	—
Bordeaux	93	11	7
Lower Seine	85	9	12
Alpine	85	14	3
North-East	83	19	—

But reorganisation has not been fully carried out everywhere. This applies especially to the centres where not much preparatory work had been done on the ideological field and where the apparatus was inadequate. About one thousand local sections are still to be reorganised.

The Clichy Congress has fixed April 1, 1925 as the final date.

We have encountered certain difficulties in our reorganisation work, which after careful investigation have been solved. We enumerate a few of these difficulties below:

1. Lack of Helpers in the Workshops and Factories.

It is a fact that in order to establish a nucleus, one must have suitable elements in the enterprise. We organised a recruiting campaign, but the results did not come up to our expectations. Only the existing nuclei gained new recruits, but this did not happen in local sections where no nuclei had existed at all.

We then selected the most important works. Even if we had only one comrade there, the nucleus was formed with the addition of isolated comrades working in the adjoining enterprises. The foremost task of the nucleus members was to win over the workers employed in the neighbouring factories.

The experience of the Bouget district (Seine) was conclusive. The nucleus which had to start with the works

for its base and 8 members, developed rapidly and in the course of 3 months 17 nuclei were formed in the enterprises which our propaganda had covered, each with a minimum membership of 9-10 comrades.

2. Continuous Service. Three Eight-Hour Shifts (24 hours).

This difficulty has been overcome by holding nucleus meetings on Sunday.

3. Special Cooperations (Builders, Railwaymen).

In the building trade it is impossible to form nuclei in the wood-yards because of frequent changes. Therefore, factory nuclei were established which meet on Sunday.

For the railwaymen (alternative service) evening meetings are arranged. It goes without saying that those who are on service cannot attend. They attend every other meeting, whilst in the old organisation it frequently happened that railwaymen attended the meetings only once or twice a year. This shows, of course, that a considerable progress has been made.

We must point out here that repressive measures on the part of employers cannot be an obstacle to reorganisation. The hesitation which became apparent at the beginning among some of our comrades, has entirely disappeared after the political and ideological campaign carried on at the conferences.

In France we have got beyond the stage of street nuclei. In fact, one can say that they hardly existed. Those which have been formed were practically inactive and subject to deviations. They have been abolished, and their members have been transferred to factory nuclei. This has resulted in establishing closer contact between the comrades not engaged in factory work and the proletarian masses by making them take part in the everyday work. We have of course, issued instructions that the right of nucleus membership be mainly reserved to the workers employed in the enterprise.

Through this new form of organisation the Party has been brought into closer contact with the workers, and its influence is growing. We have seen this at the Creusot works where at a meeting attended by 5,000 people the agenda proposed by the Communists was voted by four fifths of the audience in spite of the presence of senator Bouveu, the mayor of Monceaux-Mines who was in the chair, Paul Faure, General Secretary of the French Socialist Party (S. F. I. O.) and Brefin, delegate of the S. F. I. O. It should be stated that at the elections in May 1924, the S. F. I. O. had polled close on 5,000 votes whilst the Communist Party polled 250.

We must also draw attention to the demonstrations in the Paris region which are an unmistakable proof that the Party has increased its influence through its nuclei. The meetings campaign organised by the S. F. I. O. has been a complete failure. The Paris working class is true to the slogans of the Party. This is due to the work of the factory nuclei.

All this speaks irrefutably in favour of the reorganisation of the Party on a proletarian basis, and is also an encouragement to do our utmost to accelerate this reorganisation it is not as yet complete.

Our cadres which were but small are growing and developing. Through the political activity of our nuclei, we will hasten the political education of our members and will thereby accomplish the tasks awaiting us.

Comrade Thorez C.P.F. (North of France):

Comrade Piatnitzky pointed out yesterday that the reorganisation of the Party upon the basis of factory nuclei could be done with greater ease in France because we have there no old social democratic traditions. In the North district that is not the case, for here we face a social democratic — political as well as trade union — organisation on Central European lines, with decades of experience behind it. That is precisely why the reorganisation of the Party on the basis of factory nuclei has been very difficult, but time has shown that the method employed in the rest of France could also be employed successfully here.

Re-organisation began here also, before the 5th world Congress, but without success, for the duplicate organisations continued in existence. At first we had to carry on an ideological campaign. The result is that we have today 300

urban and 20 rural nuclei with 40 nuclei newspapers, and that the nuclei are really the basis of the Party. The nuclei take up every question of interest to the Party.

Street nuclei have been of no use to us. On the contrary they were the breeding ground for political deviations. Hence they were dissolved in those places where they already exist and their members transferred to factory nuclei.

The apprehension that the affiliation of comrades not working in a factory nuclei might slacken the factory atmosphere has proved groundless. On the contrary the affiliated comrades do fruitful work and are in fact, indispensable, for they can be utilised for work which might cause the immediate discharge of the workers employed in the factory in question (propaganda, distribution of leaflets at the factory gates etc.).

It is not very difficult for us to destroy the old local organisations. As soon as the factory nuclei had fully developed the local organisations automatically died out. Instead of the former local organisations, we now have districts, which, however, differ from those in Paris. In Paris they include the organisations of a section of the city; in the North district, they are nothing but nuclei groups. The region comprises 17 districts and is supervised by an executive of 23 members. This executive then elects a bureau with 3 paid secretaries. Each member of the executive is assigned a district which is under his direct leadership and control.

How favourably the reorganisation has affected the social composition of the Party is illustrated by the circumstance that at the last Party Congress 280 workers from the factories were present as delegates, and that practically no intellectuals were delegated to our district Party Congress, which 350 factory workers attended. Of course, the speeches are not so rhetorically beautiful as they used to be, but in place of that the rank and file workers have in simple language said more of importance and have done much more practical work.

Comrade Geschke (Germany):

We have tried to prepare the masses of the Party ideologically for the reorganisation by issuing leaflets on organisation and by adding an organisational supplement to our theoretical paper. "The International".

I want to give here only a brief report of the difficulties and the experiences which the CPG, encountered in the sphere of reorganisation. In comparison with the Russian Party which we are emulating we have some very serious handicaps which developed in the history of the German labour movement itself, due to the existence for decades of a great Social Democratic Party and the trade union movement, which was an integral part of it, and which impressed its whole ideology and entire organisation so strongly on the working class that it is difficult to dispel this influence.

Now how did we get the experience which taught us that an organisational reorganisation of the Party is indispensable? The October defeat, above all, showed us that the Communist leadership did not have the contact with the masses which is necessary in order to fulfil the tasks of the struggle.

The crux of the whole social democratic organisation was the pay evening, when membership fees were paid. No political work was done here; nothing was accomplished only chattering and just shortly before the elections activity was aroused. We have set ourselves entirely different tasks. The CPG, has developed in a comparatively short time into a mass Party and if we now loudly proclaim the Communist Party as the only workers' party of Germany, then that also lies within the policy of the reorganisation of the Party. From this arises the tasks which confront the factory nuclei.

Things are not quite what Comrade Piatnitzky thinks, that the factory nuclei in Germany meet once a month. The factory nuclei are in reality the organs of the Party which impart the policy of the Party to the masses of workers in the factories. All work is conducted in the factories.

We have 1,000 factory newspapers and 4,000 factory nuclei.

Comrade Piatnitzky mentioned the meetings of the functionaries and believes that for instance the functionaries cards are distributed in the Berlin-Brandenburg District, that is, that the District appoints the functionaries. The matter is

somewhat different. The factory nucleus, the local group, or the street nucleus elect their functionaries from their midst, who are coopted to the next immediate municipal district and then to the entire Berlin District to the chief meeting of functionaries. But it is not enough to be elected as functionary. By means of questionnaires inquiries are made as to where he worked before and what his mental outlook is, and on the basis of these, his election is approved by the District Committee.

The meetings of functionaries pass resolutions, and adopt a policy on everything where necessary. But only the decisions of the Central Committee are decisive. All sub-organisations adapt themselves to them, just as the Central Committee adapts itself to the decisions of the Executive Committee. Whenever the District Committee does not agree with the policy of the Central Committee, the Central Committee gets on to this District and has a boxing match with it. We do not step aside, as may be the case in Czechoslovakia. In the course of the fight we conquer the districts. We worked this way in the "South German Week" in Stuttgart, where the greatest fractional business was going on and where we have now carried through our policy even in the very smallest factory nuclei.

I have already mentioned resistance in connection with reorganisation. How are we trying to overcome this resistance?

I would like to mention the Berlin District organisation. The Berlin organisation very carefully, and rightly so, proceeded to the business of reorganisation. The impetuous youth caused us much bitter experience. And here I wish doubly and trebly to emphasise what we said every day to every organisation, every factory nucleus, every local group: **In the Process of Reorganising the Party on the Basis of Factory nuclei, not one member should be Lost; But rather, it must Result in a Gain in Members.**

How careful we must be in the work of reorganisation, is shown by the instance of the Liebknecht-Luxemburg demonstration in Berlin on January 18, where the District Neu-Koeln, in which there is not a single large factory and only a very few medium-sized and small factories, provided the greatest number of demonstrators, especially sympathisers. On the other hand, in districts where there are large factories, the masses did not support us, partly due to the fact that the nuclei are not yet functioning well.

We introduced the following method. We divided the members in such districts in which there were few large factories, into so-called workers' groups, or home-workers' groups, which represented a link between the street nuclei and the nuclei groups. These workers' groups and nuclei groups become town organisations, and these in turn are combined into district organisations. We are now going to adopt a new district division, which will correspond with the economic struggles of the proletariat. The separate nuclei of an industrial group or a large factory are in touch with the nuclei on the same industrial group of the same branch of trade.

In Germany we have a great advantage over the other organisations, for we have the factory councils. These are responsible to the nucleus. The nucleus is responsible for the whole political work which is carried on in the factory. The nucleus does not meet once a month, but sometimes even several times a day for the discussion of the questions of the factory. The monthly nuclei days are meetings of whole nuclei groups, where extensive political reports are given and discussed.

Now and then the German Party is reproached with the fact that although it understands decisions correctly, it is incapable of putting them into effect among the masses. It is true that the Party does not yet possess the necessary facility to manoeuvre. But we are trying, by severe self-criticism, to get rid of these faults and make every single party member a leader of the indifferent masses. The Party is trying to bring the teachings of Marx and Lenin closer to every functionary and through him, to every single member.

In Germany there are numerous auxiliary and supplementary organisations wherever we have fighting to do. We have the red sportsmen who do excellent work; we have the cooperative workers, who are conducting a bitter struggle against the reformist bureaucrats. The cooperative bureaucrats do not expel single individual revolutionary members from the cooperatives, but sometimes destroy whole unions. We carry on constant activity among the tenants. The Red

Front Fighters' organisation is a counter organisation to the Red-White-Red and Black-Red-Gold. In a short time there was a strong influx of non-Party sympathising masses to us. The "Rote Jungsturm" is specially active.

We go out to the country not only before the elections, but our agitation detachments for the country visit constantly **According to Calendar** individual villages, especially on the "red country" Sundays. Thus steadily growing contact has developed between town and country.

We also established contact through our workers correspondents with factories in Russia, and France.

The factory papers are composed, issued and distributed independently by the factory nuclei.

Our nuclei officials are subjected to the greatest persecutions by the employers. The employers often offer a reward for the name of the nucleus leader and the editor of the factory paper.

In examining the work which the Party has accomplished since the Party Congress at Frankfurt, we can safely say that not until the Frankfurt Party Congress was there a real Communist Party of Germany. We are working with all our strength at the real Bolshevisation of the Party. And although our work is hempered by old traditions and inhibitions which are manifested in the attitude here and there towards the left leadership, I still believe that our self-criticism and the objective criticism which we hear here, will help us to become a worthy brother of the RCP.

Comrade Bertz (Saxony):

In Saxony we have the strongest reformist organisations both in the political and in the trade union movement. In reorganising the Party we encounter the greatest difficulties in the factories. Comrades find it very difficult to accustom themselves to something new.

I believe we are keeping pace with the French comrades. In Erzgebirge Vogtland we have already reorganised two complete districts. There may be faults there, but the District Committee is doing everything to overcome them once and for all.

Our greatest difficulty is the great distance between the home of the industrial worker and his place of work. Some of the workers must spend one and a half to two hours early morning and again after work riding to and from the factory. Besides this, we have about 700 municipal representatives in 600 municipalities, which may not be drawn from their work in their places of residence, which are far removed from the factories.

In many places in which we have no factories, we cannot reject the street nuclei. Naturally we are introducing this reorganisation everywhere, and where necessary, even with dictatorial means (Dianitzky: That is unnecessary!).

We have 300 nuclei, of which 50% are working actively. Our factory nuclei issue 51 factory papers. The contributions to these papers come from the comrades working in the factories. The District Committee does no more than occasionally make suggestions.

The editors and distributors of the factory papers are subjected to the greatest persecution, but the inventive spirit and the initiative of the comrades are already overcoming all these difficulties.

We place great value on the fact that we not only unite the workers of the individual factories, but the entire town with the country.

It is not right to reproach us with the fact that we have not accomplished enough. Resistance, however, in doing away with the old forms of organisation, is very difficult to overcome. Further there are a great many more detectives in our midst than elsewhere. It sometimes occurred that in one factory all the members of the nucleus of the Party were dismissed three times. But we hope that with persistent work we will be able to overcome all difficulties in a short time.

Comrade Westfal (Hamburg-Wasserkante):

We have good nuclei in Hamburg, but nevertheless reorganisation will require hard work.

The Hamburg revolutionary proletariat and the Communists have since 1918 a strong hold over all the workers in the big industrial concerns. We have also been able, hitherto, to mobilise the industrial workers for every action

decided upon by the Party. Therefore, it is rather difficult to supplant the former types of organisation by a new form. But we will overcome this difficulty. Just as we were able to organise the rising in October 1923, we will be able to do justice to the work of reorganisation.

Police and government persecution, as well as persecution by the Pinkertons and Sherlock Holmes of the Social Democrats has assumed such enormous dimensions that factory nuclei dare not work openly. But, they have been able to adapt themselves to perfectly systematic legal work within the factories. In spite of persecutions, our enemies have not been able to get at the comrades who take part in the publication and circulation of factory newspapers.

Third Session, March 17th. 1925.

Comrade Winterich — Germany —, in the Chair.

Comrade Zapotocky (Czechoslovakia),

makes the following report:

In our Party the transformation of the party organisation met with great resistance both among the functionaries and the rank and file, which may be explained by the circumstance that in our Party the organisational traditions of social democracy are very strong. Seventy three percent of the members of our Party formerly belonged to the Social Democrats; in the split we won the majority of the social democratic workers, which in our opinion is by no means a disgrace. In addition, 90% of the membership of our Party are actual factory workers, many of whom have 10—20 years experience of organisational work in the Social-Democratic Party. We must also admit that amongst the leaders of our Party, reorganisation was at first looked upon with distrust and apprehension. After these fears had been overcome amongst the leaders and the plans of reorganisation had been adopted, then we had to overcome the distrust of the functionaries and the membership. We carried on a big campaign with this in view both by means of meetings and through the press. After this campaign all the members were registered according to factories, and the local organisations began to hold factory meetings and to organise nuclei. This work commenced shortly before the Fifth Congress, and the result was that on January 1st, 1925, we had 778 factory nuclei. This figure is however only apparently satisfactory, for events have shown that great differences exist in the various districts and that the reorganisation had progressed much further in districts of little industrial importance, than in the industrially pivotal districts. From the standpoint of revolutionary strategy, this was a grave weakness, and we therefore worked out a plan according to which we concentrated our efforts upon 16 of the most important industrial regions of the republic which contained compact masses of workers. The execution of this plan has met with success, as we have been able to establish factory nuclei in a number of important industrial centres. The second deficiency of our work hitherto was the circumstance that factory nuclei were as a rule organised in smaller factories with 10—15 workers and in factories which were of little importance politically and economically. We therefore worked out a second plan for the systematic organisation of the large and important factories. We drew up a list of approximately 400 industrial establishments in the republic with over 500 workers, and instructed our organisation to concentrate upon the organisation of nuclei in these factories. Today we can say that all resistance to the reorganisation of the Party both in organisations and amongst the membership has been overcome. Our experience shows that it would be wrong to make the question of the reorganisation of the Party a question of Right or Left, for we have seen in our Party that in the organisations opposing the reorganisation there were Right elements as well as Left.

The theoretical material put at our disposal was sufficient, but we had to obtain our own practical experience of course. And we have seen that it is just on this question that conditions and opposition vary widely from district to district and require special treatment. We have learned very much from this work. The most important objection made by the workers to the organisation of factory nuclei was that they would increase the persecution and discharge of Communists. These fears have proved to be without foundation. Discharges are no worse than in the period of the old form of organisation.

We can see that through the hard school of persecution and through intensive nuclei work, as well as through the abolition of the former fractions in the enterprises, our comrades are learning to carry on real revolutionary work.

Commendable results have been achieved with regard to factory newspapers, the publication of which has made great strides forward. In the factory where I work, and which employs 4,000 people, we began with a circulation of 200 copies, and are at present producing already 2,500 copies, which we sell at 10 pfennig each.

It must be borne in mind that it is the decade long socialdemocratic tradition which prevents the industrial workers from developing as rapidly as they should.

Nor has the collection of dues in the factory nuclei met with any obstacle. It is difficult to have the factory nuclei fulfil the political tasks of the party organisation and to succeed in having the nuclei work more actively performed than the local organisations and deal with all political problems. It has proved impossible to work in this field merely with instructions and circulars, and it is a grave mistake to assign to a factory nucleus at the very beginning altogether too many big and complicated tasks. They must be gradually trained to deal with bigger tasks; and that must be done in such a manner that it affords pleasure to the workers and functionaries in the nucleus. In general, we have found that reorganisation causes no decrease in membership or activity, but that on the contrary it brings about an increase of the activity of the organisation. As Comrade Piatnitsky pointed out, it is true that the utilisation of the factory nuclei in the organisation of the different campaigns leaves much to be desired. That has however been improved of late and in the demonstration against the cost of living the factory nuclei played a prominent part.

We are as yet only at the very beginning as regards the publication of factory newspapers. Comrade Piatnitsky spoke of one or two cases of such papers, but we have already quite a number. In the debate, several comrades have said that the publication of factory newspapers meets with financial difficulties. We must reject this statement. We are of the opinion that factory newspapers must be got out from first to last, editorially as well as technically and financially, by the nuclei themselves. The factory newspapers which are published with the financial support of the Party Central Committee are of no value. Only when the workers publish the paper entirely on their own will they find satisfaction in them, appreciate their value — and then the factory newspapers will also be made to fulfil the task of acting as a partial substitute for the suppressed legal press in periods of illegality. We have given the nuclei instructions upon how to get out the factory newspapers at a very slight cost, and we may say that in our Party the publication of factory newspapers is taking place on these lines exclusively and is making progress.

The instructor of the Executive has given us much valuable advice and has given us the benefit of valuable practical experiences, which were especially useful because we had no experiences of our own. However, we came into a conflict with the instructor, because he insisted upon the issue of a plan of work with wholly mechanical dates for the completion of work, which we considered impracticable. Nevertheless, the plan was published, but remained absolutely without effect. In organisational work, dates for the completion of work can be set, but the mechanical setting of dates from week to week for a long period of time is impossible.

In our Party communist fractions in the town and district councils are organised everywhere and are completely subordinate to the Party organisations. The consistent application of this principle has met with no opposition in our organisations. The fact that during the past year four-fifths of the expulsions from the Party involved comrades who as communist members of district or town councils did not act in accordance with the instructions of the Party organisation is a proof that the application was very energetic. In Czechoslovakia the problem of fractions in the trade unions and the sport organisations is very complicated. This is especially due to the fact that owing to the split in the Social Democratic Party, comrades in their enthusiasm also split the sport organisation and founded their own communist sport organisations. Furthermore, the conquest of the trade unions was at the

beginning taken up with such a plan that many important unions were conquered. This resulted in the Amsterdamers replying immediately with the exclusion not only of individual members and groups, but of entire unions. This led to the organisation of Red trade unions. In consequence, in the first period of the Party's existence the opinion prevailed in the membership that, as we have our own trade unions, we need not organise fractions in the Amsterdam Union. It was only slowly that we succeeded, and are succeeding in liquidating this wrong viewpoint in the membership.

We have made remarkable progress in the factory council movement, and we can say that in Czechoslovakia the influencing and control of the factory councils is further advanced than in any other country. However, we must not omit to mention that we owe the conquest of the factory councils to a large extent to our Red trade unions. In general it may be said that the stronger the Red trade unions are in a factory and in an industry, the better we control the factory councils and the better is the progress of the development of the factory nuclei organisation of the Party.

Comrade Piatnitsky's opinion that in our Party there are differences between the functionaries' meetings and the regular Party conferences is based on an error, an incorrect report in the press respecting the resolutions voted by the Prague functionaries' conference and by the Prague District Conference. This error was corrected later. In the question of functionaries' conferences, there is no difference between the motion of the Org-Bureau of the Comintern and our views or practice. These functionaries' conferences were never anything else for us but an accessory organ of the Party for carrying out campaigns and for finding out the opinions of the membership on important questions; the decision, however, was always made by the Party authorities. We are working with all our strength for the reorganisation of the Party and are far from being satisfied with the results we have obtained. Today, however, we can already say that the reorganisation upon the basis of factory nuclei is of advantage to the Party, that it increases the efficiency of the Party for action, that it brings new, healthy proletarian elements into the Party, and that it connects the Party more closely with the masses in the factories. The chief result of this reorganisation will be that the Party will be more firmly anchored than before in the most important industries and industrial regions and that its weight will be felt in the scales in the great struggles to come.

Comrade Grünwald (Czechoslovakia) :

In our fraction work social democratic political survivals operate in our Party and make themselves felt organisationally. Comrade Zapotocky is too optimistic on this point, and I must say that it is just in this field that we are very weak in the provinces, especially as regards the trade unions and even the Red Trade Unions. Why, in many districts there are no fractions at all. Comrade Zapotocky said that we owe it to the Red Trade Unions that we have so many nuclei and factory councils. Practically, however, the real state of affairs is that where we owe these factory councils to the Red Trade Unions, these factory councils do not consider themselves the instruments of the Party but of the Red Trade Unions. Disputes often arise, in which the comrades tell us that they must do this and that because of their membership in the International General Union and that in this case they cannot obey the instructions of the Party. This shows that politically the Party is not yet organised to a sufficient degree. Matters are not very different in the fractions in the communist gymnastic societies and in other organisations. Reorganisation in the province is proceeding fairly well, especially in the districts where reorganisation was not looked upon from a purely mechanical point of view, but politically as an integral part of Bolshevisation. The mechanical setting of a date "something must be done by this or that day" has been of no value. But where we begin seriously and carefully to enlighten the membership politically in the sense of Comrade Lenin's book on Organisational Questions, we have made good organisational progress. In a factory in Aussig, in which 1000 workers are employed, we had 20-30 members before the reorganisation. Since reorganisation we have won many new members, the sale of books has doubled, and in the campaign against the cost of living we succeeded in mobilising the factory. Many comrades believe that the reorganisation of the Party means more work and nothing else. This viewpoint is nurtured by

numerous Party functionaries. It will be necessary for us to emphasise more than we have done the political significance of the reorganisation, that we do more to popularise it. In the Aussig district we have up to now 89 nuclei, of which a large number are 100% active. Great progress has also been made in the Reichenberg region. In many factories the number of members has increased 20-50 percent since the reorganisation.

Comrade Viola (Italy) :

The illegality into which we have been forced for the last three years has hindered our work of reorganisation. Nevertheless, in Turin, where factory councils already existed in 1919-1920, the reorganisation took place as a result more rapidly. In general, our work of reorganisation has met with very satisfactory results. As the meetings of the Party are prohibited, we improvise meetings at the factory gates, meetings prepared within the factory itself by our nuclei. Our speakers, always accompanied by one of our deputies, always escape in time; the police never succeed in laying hands upon them. The nuclei carry on active propaganda for our press, sell our newspapers and make collections. Money is also collected for the Red Aid. The meetings of the factory nuclei cannot be held at the place of work. They take place in cafés, but since January, the police have closed the cafés in which our comrades met too regularly. We have thus been compelled to give up this form of meeting. Today, a comrade offers his home or groups even go out for a walk in the countryside in order to discuss the work of the Party.

In Italy, we have no factory newspaper as yet. The most devoted comrades distribute in the factory leaflets upon the slogans of the Party. Not only is it impossible for us to publish factory newspapers, but it is even particularly difficult for us to distribute our daily "L'UNITA", which the police suppress two or three times a week. A few leaflets have been distributed by our railwaymen comrades as well. During the suppression of our press we have issued a few illegal newspapers.

Despite this rigorous suppression, we celebrated the anniversary of the Russian Revolution and that of the death of Lenin in a number of factories where work was suspended for two or three minutes.

Today we have in Italy almost 500 factory nuclei.

At the beginning many comrades, not understanding the slogan of the Fifth Congress very well, went at the work of reorganising the Party on the basis of factory nuclei with very little good will, but our first results made them change their way of looking at the matter. We can now state that all are working with the fullest conviction. During the campaign of 1924 we doubled our membership.

Isolated workers are organised in street nuclei.

The Young Communists are working very well and in perfect agreement with the Party.

Our apparatus has proved excellent since, despite repression and the endeavours of the police, they have not been able to unroot our organisation.

We are convinced that the reorganisation of the Party on the basis of factory nuclei will give us a greater political capacity for work.

Comrade Gyptner (YCL) :

Reporting on the present state of our work, I can say that in Germany we have about 600 nuclei and that 50% of the German League has been reorganised upon the basis of factory nuclei. In Italy we have about 330-350 nuclei, in France 360-400, in Czechoslovakia about 200, in Sweden 120, in Norway 41, in Poland about 50, in Lithuania and Latvia from 30-40 in each country, in Bulgaria 80 in the larger factories and 50 comprising members working in small factories, in Yugoslavia 15-20, England 9, America 18. The smaller countries have also already begun nuclei work. From the remarks made by the reporters for the various Parties I have gained the impression that the Parties have not yet quite correctly understood the ideological significance of the reorganisation upon the basis of factory nuclei, and that the nucleus organisation is only being built up, because Moscow desires it. The Youth began reorganising the Leagues upon the basis of factory nuclei long before the Comintern. The

decision to do so was made as early as the Third World Congress of the YCI, in which we discussed how the Young Communist Leagues could become mass organisations in numbers as well as in influence, in order to be able to maintain unbroken contact with the young workers under legal as well as under illegal conditions. We set as our goal the defence of the daily interests of the young workers and came to the conclusion that this could not be done with our old form of organisation. Only with a change of the form of organisation will we be able to draw new sections of young workers into our organisation — the pivotal sections, those who work in large factories. For us the question of reorganisation is the path to a mass organisation. That is how the reorganisation can be looked upon by all Parties. We prepared for the reorganisation for a long time ideologically, but soon saw that we could attain no results if we did not start with it practically. After a certain period the German League had established about 100 nuclei, but the old form of organisation remained intact. This soon proved to be a disadvantage, for the members were still more closely attached to the old organisations than to the nuclei. In strikes and lockouts these newly formed nuclei therefore proved unstable and for the most part broke up. The German League thereupon decided to commence reorganisation on a definite date and to elaborate a plan on the following basis with a maximum period of five months for fulfilment:

1. Complete registration of the membership according to place of work;
2. Constitution of all factory nuclei, which can be formed from the present membership, and turning over all work to the factory nuclei;
3. Reforming town divisions of the old organisation with due respect for the factories and the division into nuclei groups.
4. Assignment of all other members, who cannot be organised into factory nuclei, to the nuclei.
5. Convening of town and district conferences, in which the Executives are already to be elected from amongst the nuclei.

We have obtained very good results with this methodical work. We have gained all sorts of experience. We found out that it was impossible to carry out trial reorganisations limited to individual districts. The reorganisation must be carried out all along the line, because otherwise all the early success will again be destroyed. Another thing we learnt in this connection was that different forms of organisation could be employed by us in reorganisation. We discovered that in Germany, Czechoslovakia and France we could completely avoid street nuclei, and that we only need the factory nuclei as the sole form of organisation.

The social composition of our League is still very bad. In most of our Leagues far from 50% of the membership is employed in medium and big factories. Even the German League, 95% of whose membership is proletarian, has only about 20% of its members in large factories and about 30—40% in medium factories, while the remainder work in small factories. We therefore thought that we would require various forms of organisations, but experience has taught us differently. We endeavoured to attach the members not working in factories to the existent factory nuclei. In this manner they support the agitation and propaganda of the comrades working in the factories. Thus in Germany we have cases of a factory nucleus with 10—15 members working in a factory, and with 15—20 attached members. When the factory nuclei have grown sufficiently strong, the dissolution of the residential organisations is then possible, so that in the locality only

the nucleus organisations remain. An important lesson we have learned is that the Reorganisation at once under all circumstances must be **Linked up with a very Energetic Campaign for the Recruiting of new Members.** This experience has been gathered by two Leagues in particular: the French and the Italian, both of which have increased their membership many times. In his report, comrade Geschke mentioned the example of our Berlin organisation, which lost 30—40% of its members in the reorganisation. This example must however, not be brought as an argument against the reorganisation, for our Berlin comrades of the youth stipulate altogether too short a time (6 weeks) for the termination of the reorganisation. The work in the other districts proves that the policy of the League was correct. In America also, in Chicago, where the formation of nuclei was prepared sufficiently, we lost members. This, however, is due to quite another reason. The former organisation contains elements which did not desire to do work in the factory. In my opinion, in this case it is no loss to lose such members, when one is enabled to gain hundreds of other members working in the factories.

What do we do with the members who are all alone in a factory? We consider even these individual members as small factory nuclei, for they are always able to gain one or two members in the factory. We have examples of this in Italy and England. The opinion often prevails that the reorganisation is only a re-grouping of the old members. That is not correct, for we would then not need to create any new form of organisation. Another lesson we have learned in the reorganisation is that the work of the League also requires to be reorganised. We now proceed with the publication of factory nucleus papers in order to gain influence amongst the masses; we hold factory meetings and conferences of the young workers. Our relation with the working youth thus grows more and more intimate and our influence upon them increases. Formerly we carried on economic work journalistically, abstractly, without approaching the masses directly. Today we pick out the most important industries and carry out industrial campaigns. We are also paying a great deal of attention to rural agitation. Our nuclei go out into the rural districts either as units or in special propaganda groups, not only to agitate, but to establish village nuclei there and to maintain permanent contact with them. We have obtained especially good results in the political influencing and education of young workers. Here the factory nuclei newspapers, the establishment of libraries, and the increase of the sale of books in the factories deserve special mention. In our reorganisation, we have learned that, if the reorganisation of the youth on the basis of factory nuclei is to be successful, it is absolutely necessary that our Parties also carry out this reorganisation. In the present terroristic campaign of the employers, the factory nuclei of the youth succumb to defeat much sooner than if they had the moral support of the nuclei of the Party.

As for the fractions, youth sections of the trade unions and of the sport organisations are most important for us, and also the national revolutionary organisations, with which we have made very good progress, especially in the Balkans. We consider the fraction work also a method and form of reorganising all the work of the Leagues. In the fractions we have learnt that their work is often hindered to a great degree by the Party. As for the functionaries' meetings, this is no special question, but one which must be solved together with reorganisation.

We therefore understand by reorganisation only the concrete development to a real mass organisation both in numbers and influence, which will enable us to work even under illegal conditions.