

# The COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(Published twice monthly).

Vol. VIII. No. 17.

Workers' Library Publishers,  
P.O. Box 148, Station D, New York.

October 15th, 1931

## CONTENTS

	Page
THE COMMON FATE OF CAPITALISM AND OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY By Bela Kun	482
THE ENGLISH ATLANTIC FLEET	492
GENERAL ATTACK ON THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASS	495
THE ROLE OF THE SECOND INTER- NATIONAL AFTER VIENNA By Palme Dutt	500
THE REFERENDUM IN PRUSSIA AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOBILISA- TION OF THE MASSES By Knorin	511
THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN INDIA By Valiya	516
ON THE DRAFT PLATFORM OF ACTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA	526
THE RED ARMY OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION (continued) By G. Sinani	527
THE NATIONALIST QUESTION IN CAPITALIST EUROPE By Kuusinen	538

TWENTY CENTS

# THE COMMON FATE OF CAPITALISM AND OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

The Results of the Vienna Congress of the Second International.

By BELA KUN.

**T**HE Fourth Congress of the Second International met at Vienna at a moment of *extreme peril and difficulty*, alike for capitalism and for international Social Democracy.

At the very moment when the Congress opened the economic world-crisis was assuming such disastrous forms as we have never before experienced. The apparition of financial crisis in all countries of Central Europe, and the menacing thunderclap of financial crisis in England have driven the bourgeoisie to such desperate measures as have produced unheard-of confusion in the so-called "normal" course of capitalist economy.

The Hoover plan upon which all international Social Democrats had fastened their hopes, has turned out to be unfit to allay even the symptoms of the fever of which capitalism lies sick. The international solidarity of the bourgeoisie, whose first act should be, as the Social Democrats think, the fulfilment of the Hoover plan, has chosen instead the way of truly radical "economy measures," programmes of "national self-help" at the expense of the already extremely debased standard of living of the workers and Government officials, petty bourgeois and small farmers.

In this merciless offensive which capital is making all along the line on the workers' standard of living, international Social Democracy is bound to play a *decisive part*, for it does not want to lose its influence to Fascism *inside* the bourgeois camp.

The crisis has also served to place the question of the *two systems*—capitalism and Socialism—in a new light before the eyes of the industrial slaves who are working for reduced wages, of the starving short-time workers and the permanent full-time unemployed of the capitalist countries. The light of Socialism from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—where unemployment has been fully liquidated—is now breaking in upon all countries in which capitalism—to quote the words of Otto Bauer—"is no longer able to turn the working power of its wage-slaves to account." Industrialisation, collectivisation and the liquidation of the last remaining capitalist class, the kulaks, on the one side, and the growth of revolutionary activity among the working-classes in capitalist countries on the other, have strengthened to such a degree the Soviet Union's power to defend itself, that the plans of intervention entertained by international imperialism—in spite of support on all sides from the Second International—"have, for the moment at

least, proved to be a house built upon sand" (Stalin). International imperialism is obliged to *re-group* its forces in order to be able to prepare the war of intervention against the Soviet Union on an extended front and with the reinforcement of fresh powers (*Germany* first and foremost). The chief *organiser of the anti-Soviet front*, France, financially and militarily the most powerful State in Europe, relies precisely upon the financial crisis in the first instance in order to accomplish this re-grouping without the slightest alteration of the Versailles Treaty.

The mutual hostility of the two systems is extreme, not only on an international scale, but also, in most capitalist countries, on a national scale too. The revolutionary upthrust of the mass movements is advancing parallel with the growth in mass influence of most of the Communist Parties. International Social Democracy must strain its strength to the utmost in order to fulfil with adequate success its historic mission of providing a mainstay for the bourgeoisie. This explains its embittered struggle against its foes from without, the Communist Parties, but also its agitated discussions inside the bourgeois camp with its chief competitor, Fascism.

The crisis and its results lay, therefore, with their full weight upon the Vienna Congress, and this often raised the Congress's declarations to a pitch of hysterical pathos. Here found expression not only *the common fate of capitalism and Social Democracy*, but also *their peculiar position within this community of misfortune*—that is to say, that Social Democracy has more to fear from the crisis of capitalism than even the most pronounced and barefaced representatives of financial capital itself. The bourgeoisie, which relies not only upon the reformist workers, loses everything only through the revolution and after the revolution, whereas Social Democracy must lose the greater part of its influence and strength in the earlier stage while the revolution is still maturing.

In fact, the world situation in politics and economics contained every factor calculated to make the Second International feel most deeply its responsibility for the fate of capitalism at the moment of this Congress. And this precisely was the keynote of the Vienna deliberations as to the cure and salvation of capitalism.

*Three main directions* in which the cure and salvation of capitalism and a capitalist line of escape were to be sought, can be distinguished in the discussions and resolutions of the Vienna Congress :

1. The struggle to alleviate the evils resulting from the crisis with a view to overcoming the growing influence of Communism.
2. The pacifist struggle for the settling of inter-imperialistic differences with a view to preparing an anti-Soviet war.
3. The struggle to maintain the semblance of bourgeois democracy as a better means of defending capitalism against the proletarian revolution.

These three lines of attack are united in one front under the shamelessly-applied watchword "the fight for Socialism." The point of the whole manoeuvre as it came to light in the discussions of the Congress was, stated on a broad basis: to *compel the working-class, in the name of "Socialism" to bear with patience the results of the crisis and to take upon its shoulders the costs involved in capitalism overcoming this crisis.*

#### ON THE RUINS OF DEMOLISHED THEORIES.

Even before the Vienna Congress all theoreticians who took part in the discussions of the Second International on a national scale (Tours, Cracow, Leipzig) were busying themselves with sweeping out those broken fragments of theories which have attained to such especially luxuriant growth since, roughly speaking, the Brussels Congress of the Second International, and which relate to what is called the "new era of capitalism."

At the Brussels Congress Otto Bauer declared:

"No one can dispute the fact that capitalism is surviving the tremendous shock of the world war, that it has subjected the world to itself more mightily even than in the pre-war period."

This declaration of the "left-wing" Otto Bauer was supplemented by the former financial editor of the *Frankfurter-Zeitung*, Naphtali, whose theories afterwards achieved the position of a sort of "Marx-substitute" among the German Social Democrats. He likewise declared at the Brussels Congress:

"Capitalism has not finished the part it has to play in history. . . . We have progressed into a new capitalistic world. . . . And we can discern already, though it be but a picture of the far future, the origin of a new, of an organised economy."

Support and promotion of national and international monopolies and of capitalistic rationalisation, —such, according to this theoretician of "organised capitalism," is to be the task of the working-classes. For in the authoritative opinion of Naphtali:

"The collective regulation of the conditions of labour already signifies a signal attack against the action of unrestrained competition on the labour market. The trade unions are here the wielders of that collective power which compels capitalism to abandon the perfect freedom of its movement in this field. . . ."

and

"The achievement of unemployment insurance in a number of countries means the victory of the principle of systematic adjustment of income over the principle of a free market for labour power."

Between the Brussels and Vienna Conferences capitalistic rationalisation has become, to employ the present Bauer terminology, *rationalisation manqué*. He would be equally well justified in saying that the "collective power of the trade unions" exists as a matter of fact only as a power directed against the working-class, while the unemployment insurance still exists for the sole purpose of being reduced, thus making possible the economy measures which serve to alleviate the financial crisis. Small wonder that the leaders of the Second International were already attempting, before ever the Vienna Congress began, to sweep the remnants of these bankrupt theories out of the way. The leader of French Social Democracy, Leon Blum, had to declare in elegiac style:

"What we are now experiencing means the breakdown of an ideology, namely of the new economic optimism, which was desirous of veiling the class-war from the working-classes by promising them . . . an unlimited rise in wages."

The "left-wing" even succeeded in spreading a feeling of panic and jabbered about the "last crisis" of capitalism, and the most fatuous "scientist" of all the "left-wing" Social Democrats, Max Adler, wrote in the Congress number of the Austrian *Kampf*:

"This world crisis is far from being simply a result of the war, but it is just as far, on the other hand, from being a crisis of the type which before the war came as a periodical or temporary occurrence, as the result of over-production and of changes in the economic relations. That is what is so terrifying and hopeless in the situation, that no way of escape from capitalism can be found and that no end can be foreseen save an end attended by terror."

In its welcoming article to the Vienna Congress, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* wrote:

"The world crisis of capital has in the last few weeks been aggravated to an immediate danger of economic collapse in Central and Eastern Europe. Millions of human beings are paying in misery, hunger and desperation for the inability of capital to maintain the world any longer in its system. Millions of human beings are seeking a way of escape from the chaos which threatens. The economic confusion threatens to shake also the political structure of the world."

But all "left-wing" or right-wing Social Democrats were surpassed by Vandervelde, who declared:

"And if in the coming winter there will be not four million, but six to seven million unemployed in Germany and 25 million in Europe, that means a catastrophe which will certainly hit the working-class hard in the first instance, but may also wreck the whole capitalistic system, the entire capitalistic supremacy."

Kautsky who had already completely lost his reason, was the only one who did not lose his optimism. He alone prophesied after his fashion among the panic of the others:

"We have every reason to expect that the coming prosperity will lead to an era of lasting well-being and lasting security, and of quickly progressing adaptation of the processes of production to the needs of the working-class."

Nevertheless the rubbish-heap of theories about "organised capital" demolished by the crisis could

not be completely swept away before the Congress. In great agitation the Congress discussed the fate of capitalism. In order to save what is still left to save, the executive craftily removed the subject of the world economic crisis from the list of subjects for debate. They altered the list and at the last moment placed "Crisis in Central Europe" on the programme instead of the "World Economic Crisis." In this way the Vienna Congress attempted to direct everybody's attention to the rescue of endangered German capital and to divert it from the fact that the country over which MacDonald rules, was also threatened by financial crisis.

In England the Labour Government under MacDonald's leadership, was still at the helm. In a country where Social Democracy "dominated," no crisis may take place. But without England a world economic crisis is out of the question. So the crisis could only be treated on a Central European scale. (How little this manoeuvre availed, however, is shown by the coming of the financial crisis to England at the very moment when the Congress was sitting and by the ensuing formation of the "National Government" under the firm MacDonald instead of the Labour Government of MacDonald and Co.)

#### FOR THE OFFENSIVE OF CAPITAL IN THE NAME OF SOCIALISM.

The session on the rubbish-heap of the theory of "organised capital" had to be craftily changed into a session on the fight for "Socialism." The arch-reformists who, before they developed into Social Fascists, tried to twist Marxism from a revolutionary teaching into a teaching on peaceful growth into Socialism by way of reforms, squeaked at the Congress as though they had heard nothing about reforms or about the daily struggle of the worker to improve his standard of living. It was as if the shade of the Vienna police chief, Schober's erstwhile bosom friend, Friedrich Austerlitz, who died a few weeks before the Congress, were hovering over the discussions. Austerlitz wrote in his last article :

"It was once said, the end is nothing, the movement is everything. That was even then an empty phrase, since the movement receives its sense and its dignity from the end alone, its greatness and sublimity are dependent on the end which it serves. But to-day, the thought latent in this saying would be the height of folly ; for Socialism has already become possible of fulfilment and is advancing from the condition of mere aspiration into that of immediate accomplishment. . . . But let us rather take the thought, taking it with that fervour and passion which a great thought, the greatest thought of the world, claims—the thought that Socialism is at the door and that our task is to tear open that door—the thought that ' *The end is all!*' "

In these "sublime" thoughts the strike-breaking activities of the Social Democratic trade unionists, all the murders of workmen perpetrated by Social Democratic police chiefs and war ministers, the

support given to the anti-labour Fascist legislation of the Social Democratic ministers and parliamentarians—these, in all the depth of their infancy, are here exalted to theoretical sublimity. And this in the name of "Socialism" !

The Vienna Congress of the Second International trod the way to which these words pointed. It followed therefore that at this Congress alike in the discussions and in the resolutions, a deathlike stillness reigned in regard to the current demands of the working-class. The experts in tariff agreements, the specialists in workmen's insurance, those thoroughly versed in workmen's legislation, the evangelists of economic democracy, past and present trade union leaders, editors of trade union papers, social politicians and party secretaries—*trade union politicians* of every sort and kind—avoided and rejected everything which had to do with the "sordid present."

"The future" of "Socialism" hovered in the air of the session hall. For capitalism, tossing on its deathbed, can bear anything rather than the tumult of the starving unemployed in their daily struggle and the shouts of protest from the workers at wages oppression, tax robbery and reduction in social insurance.

One single passage in the resolutions deals with the struggle of the working-class and the everyday interests of the proletariat. But this, too, is connected with the fight for "Socialism."

"The struggle of the working-class to overcome the capitalist economic system and to build up a Socialist economy must, in the interests of the proletariat at the present time, be bound up with the struggle to alleviate the crisis and the distress of its victims."

Even the "crisis programme" which was adopted some months ago at Zurich and in which the Congress demands of the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals were embodied, received extremely niggardly treatment. All that was said about this programme was :

"The Fourth Congress of the S.A.I. confirms the decisions made at Brussels and Zurich which have laid down in a comprehensive style the directions and aims suitable for this united struggle, and calls upon the working-class to throw all its weight into a vigorous support of the claims there raised."

That is all. Not a word more.

On the other hand "Socialism began to march" once again at the Vienna Congress of the Second International. It should not be forgotten that at the time when the watchword in Germany was "Socialism is marching on," other watchwords of a different kind were to be seen on the street notices, before the barbed wire, the machine-guns and the liquid-fire machines in the streets of Berlin. "Persons going further will be shot" was one of these. And, in fact, tens of thousands of proletarians *were* shot, among them Karl, Rosa and their comrades.

The Congress appealed in the most emphatic terms for

"the public democratic control of business . . . The first condition of its full success is the shifting of property which is in the form of the means of production . . . The Congress regards the socialising of the key industries as an important step in this process."

This is to be regarded as a correct way of finding "theoretical" grounds for the policy of Brüning, Braun and Sievering in Germany and of MacDonald, Snowden and Baldwin in England. It is a brilliant introduction to the reduction of municipal servants' wages by Social Democratic town councillors in Germany and to the 10 per cent. cut in the unemployment benefit by the new MacDonald Government in England. It follows as a matter of course that even during the Congress, Rudolf Breitscheid responded to these resolutions with the following declaration :

"We do not say we will make revolution . . . We have no interest in force or in civil war, the more so since the working-class would possibly stand to lose much by such a civil war at the present moment."

The demands of the Congress in combating the crisis centred around the point of "help for Germany," for the country that is not only most oppressed by the financial crisis, but also most menaced by proletarian revolution. This demand was the connecting link which led the Congress of the Second International on from economy to politics and from the economic crisis to the question of war and disarmament.

#### FOR THE FRANCO-GERMAN RECONCILIATION AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION.

Apart from all the talk about Socialism the Vienna Congress could only find one single "real remedy" for overcoming the crisis, namely, in the form of an international credit on a generous scale for the salvation of capitalist Germany, on the part of the great imperialist Powers, first and foremost on the part of France. On the question of the method of the salvation so far as home politics were concerned, of reducing the wages of the workers, already on the brink of starvation, of the sphere of unemployment insurance and the "policy of acquiescence" adopted by German Social Democracy as against the Brüning Government, the Vienna Congress found hardly a single word to spend.

Breitscheid made no secret of the fact that the German Social Democrats would support the policy of "national self-help," only expressing his opinion that the measures of "national self-help" adopted by the Brüning Government, would fail of their object if the Social Democrats took no immediate part in the National Government.

"In the present constrained situation" declared Breitscheid, "there is much talk of Germany's resorting to national self-help in the economic question. It goes without saying that we are on the side of national self-help, though we believe that national self-help will not achieve very much."

*Der Klassenkampf*, the theoretical organ of German "left-wing" Social Democracy, writes that :

"Otto Bauer refused to take a definite stand with regard to the policy of the German Social Democrats (i.e., the policy of acquiescence.—B.K.), remarking that the International must leave the German Social Democrats *freedom of movement* for these tactics in the present situation."

Only the English Independent Labour Party, continued the *Klassenkampf*, made at the Vienna Congress

"an offensive against the acquiescence policy of the German Social Democrats. They put forward a resolution in this sense which caused some little discontent at the Congress."

The Congress were discontented that some questions of a delicate nature were put even in a resolution so fibreless as that of the I.L.P. Just as the pathetic declamations about "Socialism at the door" served to assist the successful carrying through of the capitalist offensive against the working-class, so the "aspirations towards international peace and reconciliation" had to be *secretly* enlisted in the cause of *bringing Germany into line on the anti-Soviet front*. In the cause of this "international reconciliation" the Congress—as the private organ of Karl Renner expressed it—gave "the impetus of the whole workers' International" to the support of a French loan to Germany (which loan, however, did not come to pass).

The "rapprochement between France and Germany" is one of the most important means, in the eyes of the Second International, of defending itself against the tendency of the economic crisis to accelerate the maturing of a revolutionary crisis in the direction of Communism. Otto Bauer, the "champion of the union of Austria with Germany," gave his assurance even before the Congress began, to the French, Belgian, English and Polish Social Fascists that :

"It is only Fascism and Communism which recommend the forcible tearing-up of the peace treaties."

At the Congress itself he declared still more solemnly in the name of the Social Democrats of the countries oppressed by the peace of Versailles :

"All of us, not only the Socialist Parties in the victorious countries, but also the Socialist Parties of the conquered countries, have always recognised that much that is contained in them (the peace treaties) was the fulfilment of historical necessity."

This fresh profession in favour of the Versailles system of robbery treaties, signifies a *profession in favour of France as organiser of the imperialist and Social Fascist front against the Soviet Union*. It means that the Second International is championing the *resoldering of the European continent, which the Versailles treaties have split into two parts even at the price of subjecting Germany unconditionally to the hegemony of France ; and its object is to extend the anti-Soviet front*.

Not much was said at the Congress about the Soviet Union. Even before it began, Friedrich Adler declared that the Second International was not obliged to repeat indefinitely that it is opposed to intervention against the Soviet. Not much was said either about concrete questions of the international political situation.

*Der Klassenkampf* declared with touching naïveté that "the German question took first place in the Vienna deliberations," and pretended to be totally ignorant of the fact that this "German question" was on the one hand a question of fighting against the German revolution, and on the other a question of preparing a war against the Soviet. In connection with the Franco-German rapprochement the Second International unfolded at the Vienna Congress a genuine realistic line of policy on the question of war. The drivel about the "disarmament question" was only a piece of supplementary declamation, only a musical accompaniment to this policy.

#### HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER PEACE ARE ALLAYED.

"For all peoples in common have the hunger and thirst after peace" declared De Broucker in his paper on the subject: "The Fight for Disarmament and against the Danger of War." During the course of the Congress a wave of pacifist eloquence surged over the peoples, in order to allay this hunger and thirst after peace without however recommending, even in mere words, any actual step whatever *against the preparations for war*.

Just as free use was made of the word "Socialism" at the Vienna Congress in connection with the question of "battling with the crisis," so did the word "revolution" provide unstinted refreshment when it came to the treatment of the question "The fight against war"; this word was almost exalted to the rank of a new fashion (a Vienna fashion). Vandervelde ended his address at the opening of the Congress with vibrating insincerity:

"But if, to borrow a phrase from Friedrich Adler, war should nevertheless break out, and if once again as in 1914 two groups of nations should stand opposed in hostile array, then let it be known that the International will this time *remain united* and that nothing will again be able to prevent the workers of the belligerent nations from keeping their solidarity in good and ill alike and uniting their strength against those who have disturbed the peace of the world, that the war, in short, will finish in a civil war and that out of this civil war will come the revolution."

Even in Basle—before the war—he had not spoken with more vibration or more insincerity. But the *words* of Basle were followed *during the war* by the *acts* of Antwerp, when Vandervelde became minister of the Belgian king. Then came his *acts* of Petrograd, when he appeared as champion of his ally the Russian Tsar, and finally—not to appear petty—his *acts* of Versailles, when he in common with Clemenceau did

service for the press which would wrench from the bones of the German workers the last remnants of marrow remaining to them after the murderous and exhausting war.

"The language of Socialist idealism," as the *Arbeiterzeitung* describes the "different demonstrations for disarmament," has not been forgotten by war—or pre-war—ministers. They have even learnt something in addition to it: not to commit themselves by written resolutions in the question of preparations for war and home defence. For these resolutions might obstruct them in the race against Fascism in the sphere of home politics. *That is the reason why the Second International in its Vienna Congress did not re-adopt the decisions of the pre-war International.*

The English Independent Labour Party laid a resolution before the Congress. It contained the following passage:

"The Congress calls upon all Socialist Parties to contend vigorously and systematically against the war danger that is threatening and to bring to bear the greatest possible revolutionary pressure upon their Governments to prevent the outbreak of every war which threatens. But if war should in spite of all break out, the Congress makes it the duty of the Socialist Parties to organise the masses to the cry of: Put a stop to the war by overthrowing the capitalist order of society. This programme is in harmony with the decisions of the International in Stuttgart and Copenhagen, which read as follows:

"If war should nevertheless break out, it is our duty to take steps to put an end to it quickly, and to strive with all our might to utilise the economic and political crisis occasioned by the war as an opportunity to stir up the people and thus accelerate the abolition of the capitalist class's supremacy."

If the English Independents could permit themselves to go so far in their manoeuvrings as to recommend for adoption by a congress of Social Fascists the words of Lenin and Rosa Luxembourg from the decisions of the pre-war International, the leaders of the Second International showed thereby no hesitation *in rejecting* this inheritance. They referred the proposal to their executive (burial, second class) and adopted a resolution whose main point was the organising of a petition-campaign in connection with the forthcoming disarmament conference of the League of Nations. One or two threatening notes in the resolution in the event of war breaking out will no more prevent the English bourgeoisie from placing its armed force in the hands of a Labour Party War Minister, if that course suits their book, than will Renaudel restrain himself from exercising the whole of his zeal in the development of the French air force.

Even the German Social Democrats—relying on the decisions of the Vienna Congress—may approve and support the building of another dozen armoured cruisers, nay, may even have further armoured

cruisers built *themselves*. At the Vienna Congress no decision was arrived at, which forbade the Social Democratic Parties to agree to war credits. The words of Vandervelde that "the International will remain united this time" are thus to be taken in the sense that the International of Social Fascists is reckoning with that war which is not mentioned in the resolution, namely, the war of imperialist intervention against the Soviet Union, against the land of Socialism. It is in *this* war that Vandervelde wants the International to be really united by supporting international imperialism. In any *other* war the "unity" will consist of *uniform* support given by each party to its *own* bourgeoisie.

It would of course have had no real significance if the Vienna Congress had once more confirmed the decisions of Stuttgart and Copenhagen, had once more raised them to the level of decisions. Nevertheless, the rejection of these decisions is extremely instructive: it shows once again quite openly and with all emphasis that the Second International is ready *actively to participate not only in war, but also in the preparations for war, and to play a leading part in these preparations*.

How grounds could be found for this support of war preparations was shown to the Vienna Congress in the name of the Amsterdam International by the syndicalist Jouhaux, who declared roundly enough:

"It (disarmament.—B.K.) is a difficult problem for the working-class, a problem of interests and a problem of convictions. For the working-class must see clearly that there can only be a reduction in armaments when there is a limitation in, or abolition of, the manufacture of weapons. That, however, means the stoppage of a part of industry which is occupied to-day. And that may mean a rise in unemployment, which means difficulties and sacrifices."

It is not the milliards which are pressed out of the people for war preparations that mean sacrifices for the working-class, but the political direction of the armaments. There can be no doubt left that the Second International will defend without "doctrinairism" the interests of the armament capitalists in the working-class conflict of "interests" and convictions.

#### "SOCIALISM" AS A MEANS OF BLACKMAIL.

The Russian Menschevist Theodor Dan declared in his article of welcome to the Congress:

"Whether we desire it or not, all the labours of the Congress are going to be overshadowed by the great question 'Socialism or Bolshevism.'"

He was right! Even though most of the discussion turned upon the question of "Fascism or Democracy," this could not conceal the fact that it was really a question of "Bolshevism and the Soviet Union." The victorious march of the one system, of Socialism in the Soviet Union, as against the expiring system of capitalism, forced not only the question of Socialism upon the attention of the Congress, but also the question, long ago interred as a

question of first importance by Social Democracy: *proletarian dictatorship or bourgeois democracy*.

And just for this very reason the Second International wanted to speak just as little as possible in its sessions about the Soviet Union, the land of proletarian dictatorship and of Socialist construction. The Second International was forced to adopt this attitude for:

(1) The rapid growth of Socialist construction, the raising of the standard of living of the working-class, of workers on collective enterprises and of the peasantry in the Soviet Union, the complete abolition of unemployment, nay, the immigration of large masses of foreign workmen, turns every comparison of the bare facts of labour under the proletarian dictatorship of the Soviet Union with the expiring capitalist economy, with the unemployment, reduction of wages, restriction of social welfare work, and debasement of the standard of living of all working-classes, and with the advance of Fascism in all capitalist countries, into a *crushing political blow* at Social Democracy. (This has also resulted in a change in the methods of Social Democratic anti-Soviet propaganda: its main emphasis has been shifted on to the "dumping," which now takes the place of the slanders about the conditions of life of the Soviet working-classes.)

(2) The growing sympathy of the working masses in favour of the Soviet Union, as the land of proletarian dictatorship and Socialism, make it seem "inadvisable" at the *given moment* to continue anti-Soviet propaganda by the bludgeon methods of Kautsky and Co., though to be sure the "finer methods of fighting the Soviet Union" in the manner of Otto Bauer seem unacceptable to Tarnow, Wels, and others.

(3) Hopes of being able to render Russian Bolshevism unpopular in the eyes of the masses are conceived only in desperation. In consequence of the growth of Communist influence on the masses (especially in Germany) the Social Democrats have also adopted a certain political expedient: let each strike his own Bolshevik first (which of course does not mean that the anti-Soviet propaganda in this connection is not to continue in full swing).

(4) The *pushing-up* of the danger of a war of intervention against the Soviet. This is a necessary *complement* to the systematic deafening by pacifism of the ears of the masses, who not only do not want war, are not only throwing their weight against the war, but want to protect the Soviet Union with all their might.

(5) As a result of the crisis, the Second International has been compelled "to raise the question of Socialism." But raising the *problem of the Soviet Union*, which has entered the period of Socialism, meant *having to put the question of Socialism and of the way to Socialism in a concrete historical form* on the

basis of the experience of the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union. And this had to be avoided at the Congress, even at the expense of momentarily giving up the idea of a widespread anti-Soviet agitation (which is of course by no means synonymous with the task of anti-Soviet agitation undertaken by Social Democracy; the Social Democrats have conducted and are conducting an anti-Soviet agitation in every country with unremitting zeal alike during and before the conference).

So the question of the two systems—capitalism and Socialism—was raised *but the already existing system of Socialism in the Soviet Union was excluded*. (The “Vienna Socialism” of the erstwhile Austro-Marxists had to be excluded from the question on the simple grounds that Vienna has lost the very colour of its so-called Socialism). One was thus able to chatter away calmly about anything styled Socialism in the terminology of the Second International—anything, that is to say, except actual Socialism. And this was done with a vengeance.

The English Independent Labour Party had drawn up in their resolution a complete programme of the “transition to Socialism.” There is nothing new contained in this programme, but it is nevertheless worth while to become acquainted with these guiding principles of the “left-wing” Social Democrats.

“The plan for the transition from capitalism to Socialism must in its details bear a different stamp in different countries, but must none the less be directed at two main objects: firstly, at a new division of the public wealth in such a way that the workers’ standard of living is raised above the level of poverty, and secondly, at transferring the economic key positions into public possession.

“The injustice of the present distribution of public wealth cannot remain unchanged till the setting-up of the Socialist state has been completed. In every country the national budget is to be regarded as a revolutionary instrument for a new division of the national income. The revenues derived from taxation of the rich are to be consciously used to free the masses of the people from destitution.

“Together with such measures for the socialising of the national income, measures must be found for transferring the key positions of capitalism into public possession. Every Socialist plan for the transition to Socialism must comprise the State control of banks, of the means of communication, industry, agriculture and commerce. In every country the Socialist Parties should prepare programmes in which these great aims are given the foremost place.”

As can be seen from this little anthology the “left-wing” Social Democrats could produce nothing to excel the “plan-economy” of Herr Naphtali in “radicalism.” Nevertheless, the plan-making efforts of the English Quaker-Socialists were rejected by the Congress. The question of the national budget in particular was not allowed to be touched upon even in the petty-bourgeois, reactionary, utopian form employed by the English I.L.P.’ers, in their resolution. It is now a question of the imminent

economy measures with a view to overcoming the financial crisis, of restoring the balance of the national budget at the expense of the workers. And on this point the bourgeoisie will endure no jesting.

The Congress endeavoured—in time-honoured fashion—so to define the *way to Socialism* that this “way to Socialism” might provide capitalism with an avenue of escape from its crisis.

The Second International possesses much old and tried experience in this field. Call to mind Otto Bauer’s “Way to Socialism”! By following this way the working-classes of Austria not only placed themselves under the domination of the priests and the policemen’s baton and sabre (the weapon of secret and of French financial help), but received also, in the trustensense of the word, the beggar’s staff, which they can only cast away, if they are able with much hardship and distress to reach the frontiers of the Soviet Union, there to find work, in the land of Socialism, where, according to Otto Bauer, the building of Socialism was impossible even theoretically, as “democracy” had been destroyed by the proletarian dictatorship.

The Second International—the “left-wing” no less than the right—has once again and with solemn emphasis, reaffirmed that it “*will not renounce democracy for Socialism.*” The “left-wing” is not disposed to go further than to offer the “economic power of the working-class” in the event of

“The capitalist class making a resistance to such measures (i.e., socialising measures.—B.K.) by economic or other means.”

The talk, then, about the “way to Socialism,” served a double purpose, on the one hand to divert the starving workers from the smaller claims and from the capitalist offensive, on the other hand to threaten the bourgeoisie with Socialism if they do not give the Social Democrats preference in the attempts to solve the economic crisis, but make exclusive use of the Fascists.

Hence the threat of “civil war” and “Socialism,” in the event of the bourgeois-democratic form of bourgeois dictatorship being replaced by the open, unmasked Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship, as would ensue if Social Democracy were driven from its position in the frame of the bourgeois State. In his speech, justifying the political resolutions, Otto Bauer told “the capitalist classes who rule the world” that “if they are no longer capable of keeping order in their own house,” they may expect that “the working-class will then really begin to fight for Socialism.”

“Order must reign,” then, in the “house of capitalism,” just as once in the empire of the house of Hapsburg, for “order” alone can rescue capitalism from its crisis. Then there is to be no civil war, no Socialism, but “prosperity” once again. And probably “organised capitalism” once again too. In the cause of such “order” and of such “organised



capitalism" the Social Democrats may even abandon bourgeois "democracy" at any time and apply the open dictatorship of capitalism, robbed of its democratic covering, with all its measures of terrorism against the reluctant working masses and against Bolshevism.

Many kinds of "Socialism" were known before it was exalted by Marx and Engels, from utopian dreaming to science and by the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin from a science to action. The word "Socialism" served to describe various movements and ideas which had nothing to do with Socialism, but which served to patch up the rags of the social order then reigning and to set back the wheel of development. There were various forms of bourgeois and feudal Socialism. Even betrayal and murder of the workers were and are described by and concealed under the word "Socialism." The Vienna Congress has proved what a many-sided thing "Socialism" can be. The leaders of the Second International have in their present international sessions not only served up the theory of the "lesser evil" for the working-class, but also concocted a similar theory for the bourgeoisie by attempting to prove that their "Socialism," their Social Fascism is, as opposed to true Fascism, the "most profitable thing" for capitalism. This thought appears again and again in all the speeches and resolutions of the Congress. One of the delegates expressed it briefly and wittily when he said :

"It is capitalism's duty to let itself be rescued by Social Democracy. But woe betide it if it does not agree to be rescued."

This "woe betide it" is the "Socialism" of the Second International.

The Vienna Congress of the Second International has succeeded in *making Socialism a means of blackmail*.

#### THE "LEFT-WING" AT THE CONGRESS.

The "left-wing" as could already be seen, was represented at the Congress by the English Independent Labour Party. One of the leaders of this party, Fenner Brockway, even boasted that :

"The most important manifestation at the Congress of the Labour International was undoubtedly the appearance of one wing of the "left" Socialists, who in their mental attitude and in their tactics stood in strict contrast to the Congress majority."

This "strict contrast" between the "left" and the Congress majority (the "left" could even find the courage to describe this majority as right-wing), lay in the question : How to save capitalism in such a way that democracy (i.e., bourgeois democracy) could maintain its effectiveness. When the Brüning Government, with the aid of Social Democracy, thrust aside Parliament in order to carry through its first emergency decrees, the German "left-wing" Seydewitz wrote :

"Democracy has now been saved again, but it is a democracy which has lost its possibility of effectiveness and simultaneously, to a great extent, its power to attract the masses."

The "left-wing" has weaker nerves than the right ; as the leading party and bureaucracy of the trade unions, it points in anguish to the radicalisation of the masses ; it wants to pour more Socialistic, democratic sauce on the acts of Fascism than does the right, lest democracy—in view of the mass influence of the Communist Parties and the danger of proletarian revolution—lose its power of effectiveness with the masses.

It throws Fascism and Communism together in one pot, even as the right-wingers do, in order to increase "democracy's" power of effectiveness as the best means of defence for the capitalist economic system, as can be seen from the decisions of the English Independents.

"In the present desperate economic position the responsibility of Socialists for a non-Socialist policy and for a capitalist administration is destroying confidence in the Socialist movement and arousing doubts in democratic methods. It tends to increase the influence of Communism and Fascism"—so did the "left-wingers" proclaim their opposition views at the Vienna Congress.

This means that the "left" wants to operate with more reserves than does the Social Democratic party leadership. "Anxieties about the future of the movement" means to say, in the language of the "left," the feverish anxiety for Social Democracy's mass foundation among the proletariat, which is being ever more and more endangered by the open support given to the carrying through of Fascist measures, nay, even the active initiative of Social Democracy in all these fields. Hence the *indirect acquiescence-policy* of this "left-wing," which, as characterised in the waverings of the Congress, consists in

"the party leadership assisting in the policy of dictatorial emergency measures under the name of acquiescence, and the "left" acquiescing in the acquiescence-policy of the party leadership."

At the Vienna Congress there was not a single atom of this "left-wing," which did not remain within the bounds of the *division of labour* between "left" and right. There was in fact no strict division of labour, no particular partition of rôles. The phraseology of Vandervelde, Otto Bauer and Leon Blum was in many cases no less decked with "revolutionary and socialistic" flowers of speech than the fibreless decisions and speeches of the official "left." The Fascist danger was pointed out by all to the bourgeoisie and both regarded Fascism as a lesser evil than the revolutionary proletarian struggle against Fascism for proletarian dictatorship.

The "left-wing" manoeuvre was once more not allowed to remain the monopoly of the "left-wingers" at the Vienna Congress, it was executed *in common*. At this Congress not even a "capitulation"

of the "left" took place; the "left" could not capitulate because it had never even offered opposition.

#### THE NET RESULT OF THE VIENNA CONGRESS AND THE TASKS BEFORE THE COMMUNISTS.

The net result of the Vienna Congress can be briefly summarised as follows:—

1. In the cause of assuring capitalism a way out of the severe and increasingly bad economic crisis, the Congress has renounced all idea of championing, even with words, *the current demands of the working-class* with a view to "alleviating the results of the crisis."

2. The Congress has not only offered the services of international Social Democracy to the bourgeoisie for the salvation of capital at the expense of the toiling masses, by means of the latter's economic plundering and political enslavement, but also attempted to force those services upon the bourgeoisie by all the rules of the art of blackmail.

3. The Congress has declared itself once again with solemn emphasis for the system of Versailles robbery treaties, that is to say, for the basis of the Second International's pacifist policy, in order to lend still more effective support to France, the organiser of international imperialism's *military intervention* against the Soviet Union, by *bringing Germany into line* on the anti-Soviet front.

4. The Congress *rejected* every idea of binding the Social Democratic Parties to a refusal of war credits or of armament expenditure.

5. The Congress refused to think of making a stand against the "acquiescence" of the German Social Democrats in the Brüning Government's introduction of Fascism.

6. Under pressure of the success of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union and the simultaneous aggravation of the world economic crisis in the capitalist countries—Germany in particular—of the mounting of a wave of revolution in the capitalist countries, and the growing influence of the Communist Parties with the masses of the people—at the expense of Social Democracy—the Congress was compelled to raise the question of the *two systems* after its fashion. Notwithstanding all the phrases about "revolution" the "fight for Socialism," "in the event of bourgeois democracy being threatened by Fascism," the Congress took a clear, definite, militant stand for the defence of capitalism against the proletarian revolution.

Tarnow's slander of the working-class at the Leipzig Party Conference of the German Socialist Party, viz., that "the entire story of the development of the Labour movement" is "nothing but a process of lending support to the capitalist economy," ceases to be a slander if one thinks of the Second International during and after the war. The Vienna

Congress has provided every thinking proletarian with a clear proof of this.

It would, however, be nothing less than mistaken for the Communists in their fight against Social Democracy to rely upon the latter revealing its true self. Not only because the Vienna Congress has made full use of the "left-wing" manoeuvre method in order to conceal from Social Democratic workers the true purport of the Second International's policy, but also because Social Democracy is defending its positions with all forcible means of the bourgeois State against the reluctant and indignant masses of the workers.

Bearing in mind the results of the Vienna Congress, it must have become obvious to every Communist and to every Communist Party that the present moment calls for the activation and intensification of the struggle by the Communists against the Second International on every front. This the more so as the world economic crisis is becoming more and more acute so that even the Social Democrats had to permit the question of the fate of capitalism to be placed on their agenda. We are now face to face with this question on our order of business.

There can be no real struggle to decide this question, no real struggle for the revolutionary solution of the crisis without a determined fight against the Social Democracy. The further development of the revolutionary upsurge and the further advance of the preconditions of the revolutionary crisis depend above all upon our success in the struggle against the Social Democrats. We will not be able to catch up with the revolutionary upsurge of the masses without first overcoming the influence of the Social Democracy and of the reformist trade unions over the broad masses of the workers.

Under the historic conditions of the present moment the struggle for Socialism means primarily a struggle against the Second International, as it is the mainstay of the bourgeoisie in all industrial countries, even in those where capitalism is less developed.

The decisions of the Eleventh Plenum, which placed these tasks before the various Communist Parties with absolute clearness and the correctness of which has been confirmed by the Vienna Congress of the Second International, must be carried out in every detail.

This is the point of view which must govern the selection of the means of organisation and of the manner in which this struggle is to be conducted. This is the angle which must guide us in our daily tasks arising in the struggle to counteract the influence of the Social-Democratic Parties and Social Fascist trade unions.

From this standpoint, supported as it is by the net results of the Vienna Congress, it should be clear to every Communist Party and to every Communist that:

1. The combating of Social Democracy can only be carried out with speed and real success if it is really carried on *in the workshop*. Not only does Social Democracy still possess a large following among the workers in the shape of voters, but it still holds large masses of workers in its clutches. It is an incontestable fact that these masses of workers are being radicalised. This also appeared at the Vienna Congress, where it was seen that apart from the sworn-in "left" wingers from England and their friends who did not get a chance to speak, the representatives of precisely those parties in whose social composition the workman's element still preponderates (Austria, Belgium), made a display of being extreme "lefts." It is only in the workshop that the radicalisation of the Social Democratic workers' elements can be used as a really effective lever to overturn Social Democratic influence with the masses. Social Democracy has long maintained its influence over the broad proletarian masses thanks to its "small-scale work" and thanks to the fact that it put itself at the head of the daily struggle for the small part-demands. But now at this stage in the advance of the crisis the chief task of the moment for Social Democracy is to assure the carrying through of the economy measures in the face of Fascism, and it is just this struggle which it fears above all others, since under the circumstances of the aggravated economic crisis this struggle will bring revolutionary results in its train. It was not for nothing that they passed over the question of partial demands in silence at the Vienna Congress.

And just for this reason a blow must be given Social Democracy *in this field*. The prolonged Social Democratic education of these workers in the school of "immediate action," and Social Democratic "small-scale work," and not least by means of more or less qualification, makes it absolutely necessary to conduct the work among them, not with idle talk about generalities, but with full knowledge of the conditions in the particular branch of production and in the workshop concretely considered.

2. Every opportunity must be utilised to shake the Social Democratic influence over the mass membership of the reformist trade unions in these most important organising points of support for Social Democracy. The fact that the Social Democratic present-day politicians at the Vienna Congress were obliged to employ the sublime language of high Socialist idealism, and maintain a complete silence in regard to the daily demands of the working-class, proved that the capitalistic way of escape out of the crisis is being still more laid and paved by the reformist trade unions than even the way of capitalist rationalisation.

No endeavour should be too great to cast the Social Fascist bureaucrats out of the trade union fortress of Social Democracy. *Every independently conducted*

*economic battle against the results of the crisis, if it draws in the organised reformist workers,* means an obstruction of the strategy laid down at the Vienna Congress for the salvation of capitalism and Social Democracy.

In the present situation at the present stage in the advance of the crisis and in the search for a capitalist avenue of escape out of this crisis, it is just this struggle against the results of the crisis, against the different economy measures and the self-help measures of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the working-class, which is most dangerous for Social Democracy. The thesis delivered by Hilferding at Kiel, that the "workers' wages have become political wages," is the ideological justification of capital's great offensive on the workers' wages and on other factors in the income of the workman's household (social welfare, insurance, etc.). The practical execution of this offensive falls largely to the hands of the reformist trade unions. The factories and the factory workers must therefore be put into a state of mobilisation against the united offensive of capital and trade union bureaucracy, but in addition to this the work in the reformist trade unions is an indispensable necessity. The more so since the work in the reformist trade unions is one of the essential first conditions for the laying of a mass foundation for revolutionary trade unions.

3. But simultaneously with the organising of the daily struggle of the workers against the offensive of capital and trade union bureaucracy, the combating of Social Democracy needs also to be brought on to a higher ideological plane. The Vienna Congress, as has been shown, was obliged to put the question of Socialism, the question of the two systems, even though the word Socialism was misused. The theory of the "lesser evil" must be the object of this opposition, but the great main questions of the way to Socialism—Democracy or dictatorship—must be set before the working masses far more than hitherto in a form theoretically sound and deep, but yet comprehensible to all. This question can be considered concretely to-day only on the basis of the experience of already accomplished Socialist construction, and already realised Socialism in the Soviet Union. Every "general" way of raising the question in this field can, if the questions of the Soviet Union are avoided, only serve the tactical ends of Social Democracy.

Thus the propaganda of achievements of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union attains a most practical and actual significance in the combating of Social Democracy. This propaganda must therefore be carried on more thoroughly and on a much broader basis than has ever before been the case, that is to say, on the basis of the experience of factory workers and unemployed in capitalist countries and

of proletarians who have emigrated from those countries to the Soviet Union and are working here.

4. The combating of Social Democracy as the most important factor for the preparing of war in the hands of the bourgeoisie of every nation, the combating of the Second International as a whole, as an agency of French imperialism and as organiser-in-chief of the war of intervention against the Soviet, demands and requires that the Communist Parties and each individual Communist follow the events of international politics with heightened attention and apply them in agitation. The Communist Parties must set up a dam against the wave of pacifism which, issuing from the Vienna Congress, has flooded over the world of workers. It must be daily demonstrated that in this time of transition to the organising of the anti-Soviet war on a broader basis than formerly by the inclusion of Germany on the anti-Soviet front, the pacifism of the Social Democrats is

playing a principal part. Not only as a means of masking their true intention, but also as a means of subjecting Germany together with the other countries oppressed by the Versailles peace system (Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, etc.) to the hegemony of France and of French imperialism. For this reason all-round support of the only real opponent of the Versailles peace system in Germany, the Communist Party of Germany, in its revolutionary battles for the social and national liberation of the German workers, has an extremely important international significance.

In spite of all "left-wing" manoeuvres, the Vienna Congress showed clearly to all Social Democrats of the right and left alike the common fate of capitalism and of Social Democracy. Their common fate demands that the working-class under the leadership of the Communist Parties shall strike at Social Democracy in order to be able to strike down capitalism together with it.

## THE ENGLISH ATLANTIC FLEET

IN the middle of the feverish preparations of the English National Government of Finance Capital, for the general attack on the English working-class, in the middle of the growing upheaval of the English workers, hundreds of meetings, protest demonstrations, marches through the streets, etc., a defence-struggle was opened from one sphere where it was least expected, and in which the conditions for struggle are the most difficult. As an answer to the announcement that there would be reduction in their pay up to 25 per cent. 12,000 sailors of the Atlantic Fleet went on strike.

They prevented the ships from sailing, they held meetings, they elected delegates and committees, they went on shore as in Invergordon and demonstrated, with the result that there were conflicts with the mounted police. The commands of the officers were ignored and not obeyed, the ships which should have engaged in manoeuvres in the North Sea had to return to harbour. On the flagship of the line *Rodney*, the sailors refused to man the boats that plied between the shore and the ship. On the cruiser *York* there took place a secret meeting of the sailors at which it was decided to strike. At a meeting in the shore canteen at Invergordon the "Red Flag" was sung. The *Evening News* reported that no smoke rose from the funnels as the fires had been damped out. The stokers had also struck work. As the *Daily Herald* reported, "the ships were in the hands of the sailors."

The mutiny in the English Navy is an event of world importance. The bourgeoisie and the Social Fascists of all countries are filled with dismay, the English ruling class and the English Social Democrats are trying frantically to cover up the importance of

this movement and to declare it harmless. But the Press of the bourgeoisie of other countries cannot deny the enormous significance of the strike in the English Fleet, whereat the *Vorwärts*, the paper of the German Social Fascists, hopes that the "elasticity" of the English Government will be able to overcome this difficult situation.

Sons of the workers, especially from the Scottish coalfields, driven into the Navy by unemployment, drilled in religion and patriotism, under the iron discipline of the English Navy which regulates every movement, robbed practically of all political rights, systematically isolated from the mass of the working-class, they struck against the Government which, in order to rescue the nation, announces the cuts in wages. They knew what such a struggle means, the sailors have been told a thousand times, they have been acquainted a hundred times with the draconic penalties for breach of discipline, they have been severely penalised hundreds of times for the smallest offence, and, in spite of this, they declared a strike, which they know that the laws of the English Navy will call mutiny, and which will be classified as the most unheard-of breach of the "glorious traditions" of the British Navy.

The striking sailors know that for their offence, heavy prison sentences and even expulsion from the Navy into the army of unemployed face them. They have even read in the papers how the Government of Chili bombed the ships of the revolting sailors, whose movement also began as a struggle against wage cuts, and how the English bourgeoisie congratulated the Chilean Government for this display of energy. But in spite of them all the sailors of the Atlantic Fleet declared for a strike, they feel them-

selves strong as a consequence of their solid action and in the certainty of the sympathy of the workers.

The strike of the sailors of the Atlantic Fleet commenced as the result of the announcement of tremendous cuts in pay, but the systematically worsening position of the sailors on the English warships which has gone on for the last ten years prepared this step. In the last years there have been a whole series of cases of mutiny in the English fleet arising out of bad food, and brutal treatment. The application of corporal punishment for the smallest offence, the worsening of their rights in connection with complaints, the barbaric court-martial proceedings, the continued sharpening of discipline in the last ten years, have all prepared the present explosion.

In January of this year there was unrest on the submarine *Lucia*. The Labour Government answered this with the arrest of forty-two sailors. The mutinies which took place not so long ago on the warships *Ramillies* and *Royal Oak* had all the same cause—the inhuman conditions on the English warships. When at this moment arising out of the impending cuts in wages this tremendous movement developed, then it is also because this stratum in the camp of the working-class is also infected with the fever of the rising will to struggle of their class, the English working-class.

In spite of all methods of the isolation of the sailors of the warships from the working-class movement, in spite of all efforts of the English imperialists to transform these sons of the workers into machines to man the guns, the sailors are filled with a growing will to fight for the English workers, and are using in their struggle the proletarian methods of fight—strike. It may be that their heads are full of traditions, prejudices and illusions just as the heads of millions of English workers are filled,—traditions which have been drilled in by the English bourgeoisie and the Social Fascists. But the decade of chronic crisis of English capitalism, the impending enormous general attack of the English bourgeoisie has wakened the class instinct of the English sailors, and has driven them to break through all these traditions.

The action of the sailors of the English Fleet who, with one blow, threw on one side the iron chains of discipline and tradition, is a barometer indicating the storm over England, the barometer for the tremendous approaching class conflicts, the workers and peasants in the colonial countries will watch with the greatest inspiration. The strike of the Atlantic Fleet is a tremendous indication of the growing threatening clouds of the social thunderstorm, which menaces the bourgeoisie of Britain and of the whole world. Where in the whole world in the armies and navies of the bourgeoisie can one be free of the danger of mutiny, when the English Fleet mutinies? Which

army and navy of the bourgeoisie of any country has such a tremendous tradition as this gigantic instrument of British imperialism? It is no accident that the German bourgeoisie and the German Social Fascists have prohibited the *Rote Fahne* for four weeks because it published a message of solidarity from the German Communist Party and the German working-class.

The English bourgeoisie is preparing for the greatest attack on the English working-class. MacDonald and Snowden appeal to the patriotism of the English people. "Come the world against us, England yet shall stand," and just at this moment, the sailors, as the first section of the revolting working-class, give the answer, and come out on strike.

The British bourgeoisie is feverishly preparing for a life and death struggle for the world market. To-morrow they will introduce tariffs. They will increase the exploitation of the Colonial peoples, in order to try and find a way out of the crisis. And in the middle of these preparations for general attack on the English working-class, and on the Colonial peoples, in order to assist in the competitive struggle, the most important weapon of British imperialism—the Fleet—rebels. When the General Strike broke out the Fleet remained in the hands of the officers, but to-day, the sailors by their strike, have opened the resistance struggle of the English working-class against the general offensive.

The English bourgeoisie is quite clear about the importance of this event. It was surprised by the outbreak of this movement, and by the degree of its organisation. It knows what the "peaceful strike" of the English sailors, indicates. And with the help of MacDonald and the English Social Fascists, it is manœuvring. Its aim now is to prevent this movement of the sailors from taking sharper forms, and from connecting itself with the mass movement of the workers.

When the revolt of the Chilean sailors was defeated, the *Economist* wrote :

"One must congratulate the Chilean Government on its energy, and the world must congratulate itself on the results of this energy."

The English bourgeoisie congratulated the Chilean Government, because they attacked the revolting sailors with bombs. They congratulate the Chilean Government for their energy, the Government which proposes to put each fifth man of the striking sailors against the wall, and to shoot them. The English bourgeoisie thus, quite showed its view, as to how revolting sailors should be dealt with.

A few days after these congratulations, the English bourgeoisie found itself with a mutiny of its own sailors, in its own country, on its hands. On the 17th September Sir Austen Chamberlain made a speech about the sailors' movement, and declared

"What's past is past, and should be forgotten in the interests of all. I am not going to look back, but I am now going to look forward, and I am confident in the traditions of the Navy . . . therefore let the past be forgotten. We will all go forward together."

To the fact of a mutiny of 12,000 sailors, which according to the laws of the Navy, should be met by the most severe penalties, a leader of the English bourgeoisie answers in Parliament with "Let us forget the past" and indicates the readiness of the English to make certain concessions. The "glorious traditions" of Nelson's Navy, have been trodden in the dirt by 12,000 sailors, but the English bourgeoisie, which clapped its hands in applause at the bombardment of the Chilean sailors, speaks mildly and in a conciliatory tone. Does this mean that the English bourgeoisie did not mobilise all its forces in readiness, that they likewise did not mobilise the flying officers in secret? Does it really mean that the English bourgeoisie is really willing to forget the past? Naturally not.

The English bourgeoisie is always prepared to drown the sailors' movement in blood, but it knows that this would start a tremendous explosion in England. And therefore it tries to disorganise the struggle of the sailors, with mild phrases and general promises and to lead them back into the prison of naval discipline on the ships.

They made use of MacDonald for this, in order to try and get them to end their fight. It made use in this way of the influence of the Labour Party and the trade union leaders (who before the defeat of the Labour Government, had already decided on cuts in pay for the sailors) in order to prevent and hinder solidarity action by the workers. At the moment, when the broad masses of workers would, as a consequence of the sailors' strike, have made a successful resistance against the attack of the bourgeoisie; at a moment when broad masses of soldiers face cuts in their pay on October 1st, and are as a consequence resentful, when the police are holding big protest meetings against the Government

measures to cut their wages, the Labour Party uses its influence to hinder a successful united resistance struggle of the sailors, workers and soldiers, to hinder the urge to fight against the attack of the Government.

The *Daily Herald* wrote on September 16th :

"While there can be no condonation of insubordination, it is necessary to consider the psychology evoked by the swift imposition of heavy cuts in pay. These new events show that the situation has been handled with tact and sympathy by the naval commanders as never before."

Could there be a more shameless attitude than the attitude of the English reformists, who, instead of helping the strike, decry it, and work against it, as a "breach of discipline" and speak their great wonder at the "tactful" admirals. Shamelessly and openly, the *Daily Herald*, the organ of the English Social Fascists, carries on a strike-breaking policy, and places itself on the side of the admirals.

If the English bourgeoisie with the assistance of the Social Fascists, succeeds in leading the sailors back to the chains of naval discipline, then in spite of all the mild phrases, all the conciliatory speeches, they will to-morrow commence a systematic campaign of reprisal. They will try to "cleanse" the Navy of all militants. They will try to destroy all forms of independent organisation amongst the sailors. They will work feverishly at the task of making the Navy an instrument which can be used against the workers, when they develop the broad mass struggle against the attack of the English bourgeoisie.

Where are, at this moment, the leaders of the trade unions, the leadership of the Labour Party, and of the I.L.P.? Where are these leaders who are pretending to lead the fight against the robber National Government? The betrayal of the striking sailors, by the leaders of the Labour Party, and of the trade unions, is no less great than their betrayal of the General Strike of 1926.

On the shoulders of the revolutionaries lies a tremendous responsibility.

## GENERAL ATTACK ON THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASS

**I**N England, the country of great Parliamentary traditions, a new Government has been formed while the English Parliament was on holiday. That which had only been achieved once in the recent history of England, during the critical days of the war and the crisis of the war policy of the Allied Powers, has now been created for the second time in England: a Government of a coalition of all parties, the so-called National Government. Its purpose is to overcome the critical situation. And the eight million workers, who voted for the Labour Party in May, 1929, in the hope that it would be a Government of the workers, a Government of the defence of working-class interests, see now at the head of this Government of the general attack against the working class Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the Labour Party. The newspapers report that the excitement of these days exceeds that which reigned prior to the outbreak of the General Strike.

Indeed, a very critical situation! The sharpness of the crisis pushed impatiently on one side the ancient and honourable traditional plunder. The English bourgeoisie, led by its most aggressive section, the representatives of Finance Capital, especially by the banks, proceeds to the brutal realisation of its plans which have been prepared for years by continual successful attacks on the working class, through agitation, propaganda and through "science." The skin of English democracy is torn, the class content of this bourgeois democracy stands open and more naked before the English workers as the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The presence of MacDonald and Snowden as Ministers of the Government of general attack is not sufficient to make it possible for this Government to supply the fig-leaf to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, as the Labour Government was still partially able to do. The Fascist papers of Italy state with considerable complacency that the recent events in England constitute a noteworthy step in the direction of Fascism.

\* \* \*

The events during these days in England stand in close connection with the decade of depression which English economy has undergone, which grew into an acute financial crisis through the world crisis, and especially through the latest developments in Germany. Whereas in other capitalist countries during this period temporary booms occurred, for the last ten years in England chronic depression has existed with occasional

vacillations. Since 1921 unemployment has never been under the one million mark, and during the years of "the rule" of the "Labour" Government it has mounted from 1,154,129 to 2,713,350. This, in proportion to the small population of England, is the same percentage of unemployment as in Germany. In the decisive industries, iron, steel, shipbuilding and textiles, approximately 50 per cent. of the entire working class are unemployed. The average level of unemployment for all branches of industry is approximately 22 per cent. To be quite clear as to the extent and importance of the approaching attack against social insurance one must remember that approximately eight millions are involved in this unemployed army (workers with their families).

The crisis in mining, heavy industry and shipbuilding has rapidly intensified in the current year. Production of pig-iron and steel, for example, has dropped during this year, in comparison to the second quarter of 1929, approximately 50 per cent., coal 25 per cent., shipbuilding has received the smallest number of orders for the last 45 years. Gross exports fell 22.4 per cent. in the first half of 1931 and net exports fell over 34 per cent. in comparison with the similar period of the previous year. The disparity between imports and exports amounted in 1930 to 42 per cent. of net imports. In the first half of 1931, 47 per cent. of the imports were no longer covered by export of goods. This development of a high passive trade balance was already, years before the war, the expression of the fact that English capitalism was developing more and more to a completely parasitical position. English imperialism lived more and more from the interest on its investments distributed throughout the entire world with which it corrupted relatively wide strata of the workers. The fact that, despite the ten years' chronic depression of English economy, the crisis develops only now in all its intensity is explained by the fact that the English bourgeoisie lives from its riches amassed in the past and its historical parasitic position.

The ten years of chronic depression of English staple industries, however, together with the sharpening world crisis, which renders the foreign deposits of British capital more and more valueless, has delivered a powerful blow against the parasitical position of British capitalism. The income of British imperialism from foreign deposits, loans, etc., amounted, before 1929, to about £350 millions. This income sufficed to cover the unpaid imports and even for consider-

able new investments abroad. This active balance fell in 1929 to £138 millions, in 1930 to £30 millions. *English imperialism is threatened this year, for the first time in its history, with the fact that the active trade balance will transform itself into a passive one.*

In conjunction, therefore, with the ten years' chronic depression of English industry now appears the danger of the collapse of London as international finance power. The rapid acceleration of the process of the collapse of the English position of world power is threatened.

The crisis of the pound during the last few weeks signalises this development in all its sharpness. The "Times" of the 30th July writes hopelessly :—

"These facts are that a profoundly disquieting change has taken place in the standing of this country in the eyes of the world and that that change is itself a reflection of an equally disquieting change in our economic and financial position. The events of the last few weeks have shown that British credit is no longer a fortress made impregnable by the two bastions of the solvency of our industry and commerce and the honesty of our national finance."

And the "Daily Herald," July 29th :—

"There is a campaign afoot these days to shake the financial credit of Great Britain and to destroy the confidence of European countries in the stability and solvency of the London money market."

It is naturally correct to say that French imperialism utilises the financial crisis in England to compel England to renounce the policy of interference in French policy in regard to Germany, as well as to strengthen her general position. But that is only a part of the truth which serves the organ of the Labour Party to conceal the whole truth, namely, that English capitalism, after ten years of depressed English industry, the world crisis and the threatening loss of the active trade balance, could no longer meet the blow caused by the German crisis.

The breaking-point of the acute financial crisis, the development of which has been prepared for the last ten years, with its tempo accelerated through the world economic crisis, was the freezing of the English milliard-credits in Germany and the breakdown of England in its attempt at the London Conference to organise an international relief action for Germany, i.e., for its own credits in Germany, by the refusal of America and France to assist. The whole depth of this financial crisis is expressed in the fact that English capitalism for the second time since the war has been forced to apply for a £50 millions loan to the French and American banks. Whereas the first loan in connection with the return to the gold standard in 1925 was not utilised but used as reserve, the

newspapers report that the present loan has been used up after a few weeks and that at the moment the Government is negotiating over the ultimatum of the English banks with the American banks regarding the issue of new credits.

The feeling during these days of the highest point of the financial crisis are described in the following manner in the "Daily Herald" (20th July) :—

"Never since the fateful days of August, 1914, when war or peace hung in the balance, was this country nearer crash and calamity than during the last seven days . . . behind the scenes Ministers, great Civil Servants, bankers and financiers were fighting a grim battle against time and against great odds to save not only Britain, but the world from overwhelming disaster . . . When the full history is written people will be amazed to learn how near we were to the edge of the precipice."

And Thomas, the present Minister in the National Government, declares in these days :—

"At no time since August, 1914, have things been so serious as now. I am convinced that it is a divine providence that there is a Labour Government and a Labour Party Premier which will solve this problem."

The country is in danger, all classes must make sacrifices, class peace—these are the slogans of the leaders of the Government, the Trade Unions, and the bourgeois parties for the "solution" of the crisis. The bourgeoisie and the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions were united upon the point that every possible attempt must be made to liquidate this crisis at the expense of the toiling masses. They were all quite clear that the deficit in the Budget must be removed through strong measures at the expense of the working class to recover confidence in the pound and English finance. This deficit, according to the report of the May Commission, will amount this year to about £120 millions. Naturally, the British bourgeoisie and English Social Fascists consider that the colossal expenditure on armaments, interest on war debt, etc., are "holy," unalterable expenditures. The debates centred on the method of attack on the working class. The May Commission, appointed by the English Labour Government, had proposed as the chief item for rectifying the English Budget a radical reduction of social insurance to the extent of £66 millions and a ten per cent. cut in wages and salaries of Civil Servants.

For the last ten years the English bourgeoisie has attacked the proletariat. Precisely during this time the employers in many industrial districts have launched bitter attacks against the workers with the fullest support of the trade union leaders. But until now it has not yet dared to undertake *the general attack for reduction of the social insurance*



and wages on the wide scale at present contemplated. The Baldwin Government struck the working class a heavy blow with its Trade Union Bill, but this Government also did not dare to lead the attack further against social insurance. The May Commission appointed by the Labour Government gave the signal for that, and the English banks utilised the crisis and the general panic to carry out the general direct attack on the English working class which they have prepared and propagated as a programme for years. The banks confronted MacDonald with an ultimatum made still more threatening by the intervention of the American banks and international Finance Capital. The representatives of the Conservatives, the representatives of the bank and rentier class capital, desired to utilise this "divine providence" and begin the open general attack through the Labour Government: 10 per cent. reduction of unemployment benefit, increased insurance contributions, exclusion of hundreds of thousands from the unemployed insurance, and reduction of salaries and wages of Civil Servants by 10 per cent. These were the basic demands of the ultimatum of the banks.

Sir Abe Bailey in the "Times" of the 24th of August states this plan quite clearly:—

"There must be an economic restoration plan, beginning with an all-round reduction in wages and salaries in sheltered and unsheltered industries as well as in public services and professions."

MacDonald accepted this programme of the banks in the name of the salvation of England, in the name of sacrifice by "all classes." The Social Fascists in all countries see the solution of the crisis in the policy of finance capital and are themselves the most active tools of this policy. He had accepted this programme of the general attack of the leading groups of the English bourgeoisie which has tremendously enriched itself during the intense crisis of English capitalism. In 1924 approximately a quarter of the national income went into the pockets of the parasitical rentier class. To-day this percentage is already nearing one-third as a result of the fall in prices. Incomes over £200,000 per annum rose from £504 millions in the year 1920 to £541 millions in the year 1929-30. In the same period the wages have gone down by hundreds of millions of pounds. During the two years of the Labour Government alone the wages of the workers went down by approximately £100 millions. Approximately £350 millions are paid to the rentier class capital alone from the annual budget, three times as much as the sum expended for the unemployed.

The Hendersons and other Labour Ministers, who were jointly responsible as Ministers during two years for the entire policy of the Labour

Government against the working class, who only recently have delivered a heavy blow against the unemployment insurance by means of the so-called Anomalies Bill, understood that if the Labour Party and the General Council gave formal endorsement to the general attack on the working class, it would lead to their rapid collapse. They therefore made another proposal, a proposal for the indirect attack by the establishment of a 10 per cent. revenue tariff which would result in a reduction of real wages and the real purchasing power of the social insurance.

*When the banks remained adamant in their ultimatum then this was not because they are against the proposals of Henderson and the Trade Union leaders; all the proposals of the Hendersons are completely in accord with their programme of protectionism. It is, so to speak, the second stage of their attack. But they wish to utilise the present situation to introduce the general attack on the social insurance and wages with the cover of a part of the Labour Party, the MacDonalds, Snowdens and Thomases, as they know that this attack in England, which has a General Strike behind it, is no easy task. And the Hendersons in opposition fulfil the useful task of the disorganisation of the defence of the working class against the attack. The Conservatives will be ready to carry through a programme, together with the leaders of the Trade Unions and the other parts of the Labour Party, of the revenue tariff, i.e., a programme of protectionism, in its effect a programme of indirect taxation and sinking of the standard of life of the working class, to-morrow. After the elections perhaps Henderson will be the Minister of a Government of protection as MacDonald to-day is the Minister of the Government of the general attack.*

Precisely now in the middle of the fire of the general attack the Economic Commission, set up by the General Council, has made its proposals for solving the crisis. The chief item is increased prices. When this cannot be achieved through international agreement, which, naturally, is impossible in the period of the world crisis and the constantly sharpening competition, then through a change in the policy of the Bank of England, i.e., through concealed inflation. This policy actually proposes similarly a brutal lowering of the real income of the workers, the unemployed and other broad sections. Only in a form, however, which it is more difficult for the workers to penetrate, less easy to defend against than the general frontal attack on social insurance and wages introduced from the so-called National Government.

The change of Government, however "dramatically" it may have taken place, has brought no

new class to power. For the last two years the Labour Government carried out the policy of Finance Capital. The National Government continues this policy in the form of a more open, still more brutal, attack against the working class. No alteration in the policy of English Social Fascism has taken place by the passing of the General Council, T.U.C., and the leadership of the Labour Party into opposition. English Social Fascism remains completely entangled with the capitalist State machine and the employers. On the contrary, the English Social Fascists seek through this change to opposition to put the brake on the struggle of the masses against the National robber Government and prevent the development of a mass Communist Party. They place themselves at the head of the struggle as opposition against the general attack of the National Government to make this struggle impossible. As Ministers who have washed their hands of the whole affair, Henderson and the remaining leaders of the trade unions and the Labour Party, attempt not only to make the only possible method of preventing the general attack, the revolutionary mass action, impossible, *but they prepare at the same time the second attack of the bourgeoisie, the stage of the introduction of the revenue tariff to increase the cost of living which is more and more proclaimed by circles of trade union leaders as the means to solve the crisis.* The leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions, the Hendersons, Clynes and Maxtons, are at this moment the most dangerous enemies of the English proletariat.

“Where will those Ministers who do not agree with MacDonald’s policy lead the Party? They are themselves no radicals. But it can be easily visualised that the Party will fall to pieces and the parts which will no longer remain with the discredited leaders will be radicalised in comparison with the present Labour Government. The consideration that England, so to speak, must now officially enter the ranks of the countries compelled to economise while coffee is burnt in Brazil, cotton destroyed in America, and the elevators of the wheat pools are overflowing, may support the doubt in the capitalist system in England and lay the foundation for this radicalisation. All this is only at this moment; what will actually happen cannot yet be foreseen. But one can hardly doubt that the history of these days records one of the most remarkable turning points in English development in more than one respect.” (Correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 25th.)

The Labour Government, since it has been in office, has lost the confidence of the masses in ever-growing measure. This expresses itself, among other things, also in the results of the last fourteen by-elections, where it received approximately 50,000 votes less than in the elections two

years previously. At the same time we see that the strike activity of the English workers is rapidly growing. In the first half-year of 1931 the number of strike days were already more than the number of strike days for the whole year 1930, more than 5,000,000. In constantly more numerous cases as, e.g., in the strikes of the miners in South Wales, Scotland, it shows itself in that the workers put up a bitter resistance to the attacks of the employers against the will of the Trade Union leaders. This, although the leadership of the workers through the revolutionary Minority Movement and the Communist Party is still not sufficiently extensive.

The introduction of the general attack on the social insurance and the wages by a Coalition Government, by the leaders of the Labour Party with the most hated enemies of the working class, has aroused, according to all reports, the deepest protest and excitement among the broad working masses. The attack of the English bourgeoisie is directed against positions of the English working class which it has captured in decades of struggle, although in certain cases and in several places these positions have been seriously nullified. The English working class now enters a phase in which the English bourgeoisie will seek a way out of the crisis by unprecedented blows on the English working class.

In this situation the highest responsibility rests upon the Communist Party of Great Britain. It depends on it at what speed the decisive sections of the English workers realise the manoeuvres of the Hendersons, the Labour Party, the trade unions, and the I.L.P. and erect their own independent class leadership. As the General Strike has shown, and spontaneous strikes recently have also shown, broad masses of the English working class will unquestionably, despite all the manoeuvres of the Hendersons and the Maxtons to confuse and disorganise them, put up a stout, spontaneous resistance to the attacks of the bourgeoisie. But this resistance, the organisation of this defensive struggle of the English working class, to place oneself at the head of every movement which breaks out and to develop in all these struggles the class-consciousness of the workers, is the task of the Party. Precisely now is the time to recall the English General Strike, which showed what colossal fighting power is present in the English working class, and which also showed how this fighting power must fruitlessly exhaust itself because a revolutionary Party, capable of its tasks, was not to hand.

The English Communists must now make a decisive step to the masses. They must break through their isolation and connect themselves with the masses and mass actions. They must

grasp how to lead revolutionary mass politics. There must be no Communist who does not utilise every possibility to mobilise the workers in the trade unions, and the Revolutionary Trade Unions must now organise masses of new workers in their ranks. The Communists in the unemployed organisations must transform the policy of these organisations into a mass policy. The Party and the M.M. and the Charter Committees must mobilise the factories and pits and the widest possible verbal and written agitation must be commenced. The Party must now organise the greatest possible recruiting campaign to strengthen its ranks.

The Hendersons and Trade Union leaders, and the leaders of the I.L.P. will hold opposition speeches and seek to console the workers until the next elections. They will attempt to distract the workers from the task of the organisation of the united defence front with hopes on the results of the next elections. This will be the tactics of the Hendersons and I.L.P. people to help the achievement of the general attack of the Government of robbery.

What must the Communist Party propose to the workers? Broad strata of the English workers will be more ready to listen to us and follow us after the two years' experience of the Labour Government, and the open unmasking of MacDonald and Co. How often have the MacDonalds and Co. portrayed the Communist Party before the workers as splitters of the working-class movement, splitters of the trade unions and the working-class struggle? The English Communists must now, in every factory, every pit, every office and every trade union organisation, make proposals to the workers which every worker can understand for the organisation of the defensive struggle. The Communists must in all sections of the working class, in all organisations where working class masses are, speak with the greatest patience and power of conviction that language which to-day all English workers understand.

Is not every English worker against the reduction of wages, against the reduction of the salaries of Civil Servants, which are to introduce the general wage offensive? Is not every English worker, and especially every unemployed worker, against the reduction of the unemployment insurance? Is not every English worker against the increased cost of food through indirect taxes and tariffs? And are not the broadest masses of the English workers filled with hatred against this Government of starvation with MacDonald at the head?

The Communists know the rôle of the Hendersons, the Trade Union bureaucrats and the I.L.P.; they know that these people are the

decisive enemies of the working class, that this opposition is only a lever of the bourgeoisie for carrying out the general attack. But in this moment millions of English workers do not yet understand this. They allow themselves to be deceived still through the manoeuvre of opposition. They believe that the Hendersons and the Maxtons go into opposition because they are against the general attack. The English workers will now learn more quickly to see through the manoeuvres of the English Social Fascists. But the Communist Party must accelerate this through its united front action.

As a fighting task the Communists must call the workers to meetings and demonstrations under slogans which they can understand. They must organise strikes, they must mobilise the workers in all organisations so that the workers who still have confidence in the Hendersons and Maxtons demand a clear answer from the leaders of the Trade Union and the I.L.P. whether these are ready for immediate mass action on the broadest possible scale for defence against the general attack of the National robber Government. The more intensively the English Communists organise this campaign, the more quickly will constantly-growing masses of the English workers understand that in order to organise the defence it is necessary to break with the English Social Fascists. They will quickly find out the true character of MacDonalds both big and small, and the opposition, and draw the consequences and build their defensive class front independent of the Social Fascists.

At the same time that the English Communist Party mobilises the workers with the simplest slogans of actions, naturally it must not mix these action slogans with the propaganda demands and not for one moment renounce the most intensive agitation for the Charter demands and the Communist slogans. Precisely now must the Communist Party of Great Britain make clear to the workers, in the most popular manner, the Socialist solution to the crisis. Precisely now we must compare to the workers the policy of the Labour Government with the policy of the Soviet Government. Exactly now, where MacDonald and the English bourgeoisie give the English workers a training course on bourgeois democracy, must the Communist Party of Great Britain popularise the Soviet system.

If ever there was a time, so is that time now when the Communist Party of Great Britain must make a decisive step to the masses. It must have its ear to the masses. The rapid developments and great spontaneous struggles are possible. The present situation demands from the

Communist Party of Great Britain that it overcomes its backwardness at top-speed.

The events in England impose tasks not only upon the English, but on all Communist Parties. MacDonald, the English Labour Government, was the pride of the Second International. International Social Fascism received a heavy blow from the absolute unmasking of this Labour Government through the recent developments. The Communist Parties must explain to the workers all about the end of this so-called workers' Government. These facts are weapons in the hands of the Communists in struggle against the theory and practice of the Social Fascists.

At the same time all Communist Parties must mobilise the broadest masses against the growing danger of an attack against Soviet Russia. The open support of the brutal attack of English Finance Capital through MacDonald increases

this danger to the highest point. To-day English Finance Capital seeks a way out of the crisis by an attack on the English working class and is served by its lackeys, the MacDonalds, Hendersons, etc. Thereby presses the danger still nearer that to-morrow English Finance Capital will seek a way out through the general attack on the Russian Workers' State, together with MacDonald and the old Coalition Minister of the War days, the bitter enemy of Russia, Henderson. The situation demands the closest attention and the mobilisation of all forces. The entire international proletariat must support the struggle of the English workers with all forces. The Communist Parties of the other countries must help the English Communists to fulfil their enormous tasks: *the development to a revolutionary mass Party standing at the head of the mass struggle of the English workers in struggle against British imperialism.*

## THE ROLE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL AFTER VIENNA

By PALME DUTT.

The four Congresses of the post-war Second International mark four definite stages, reflecting closely the corresponding stages of post-war capitalism.

The *Hamburg* Foundation Congress of 1923 signalled the *liquidation of the post-war revolutionary wave* by ending the left gesture of the Vienna "Two-and-a-half" International. By the reunion of the patriots and the pacifists, of the Right and the Centre, on a single platform whose essential common basis was resistance to the working class revolution, the period of confusion and conflict was to be ended, and a period ushered in of a "normal" Social Democracy, functioning quietly in tasks of governmental co-operation in a "normal" capitalism, with the ugly war past as far as possible forgotten.

The *Marseilles* Congress of 1925 was devoted to the tasks of *capitalist reconstruction*. Dawes, Locarno and the drawing of Germany into the League of Nations governed its line. Hilferding's "realist pacifism" was the slogan to express the aim of the consolidation of Western Imperialism against "the dangers of war in the East"—i.e. against the Soviet Union and the "Asiatic" nations. Alongside, the Congress called for "a return to sound conditions of currency," the "establishment of a stable and extensive world market," economic organisation through the League and its Financial Commissions, and

similar measures of stabilisation and reconstruction.

The *Brussels* Congress of 1928 reflected the *blooming of post-war capitalism*. It hailed "stabilisation and the revival of economic prosperity," and the emergence of "a new capitalist world" in which "elements of a new, of a socialist economic order are already becoming visible." It rejected with scorn the Communist International Sixth Congress designation of the third period of sharpening contradictions, advance to world economic crisis, and drive to war. It issued its direct "appeal to the workers of the Soviet Union" to "restore democracy" i.e. to overthrow the proletarian dictatorship. Its close response to the expansion and growing intensity of imperialist activity was reflected in its concentration on the colonial problem as the principal question.

The *Vienna* Congress of 1931 marks the *collapse of the post-war capitalist stabilisation*—and in consequence of the whole ideological foundations of the Second International. All the theories of capitalist revival, of harmonious economic growth, of organised capitalism, of the pacifist-democratic tendencies of imperialism, have to be abandoned. The complete crash, the worsening of conditions, the growing abandonment of democratic forms, the drive to war, have to be admitted. At the same time the advance to socialism by the method of the workers' dictator-

ship has equally to be admitted. *The Vienna Congress is a Congress faced with bankruptcy.*

The tasks of capitalism now become to carry through the most intense offensive against the working class in order to maintain itself, to strengthen its dictatorship against the growing working class revolt by emergency measures, new forms, etc., and to hasten the preparation of war, and in particular the preparation of war of imperialism against the Soviet Union. These are the orders of the day which Social Democracy, as the agent of capitalism in relation to the working class, has to find the means to express and make presentable to the workers.

*The task of the Vienna Congress was thus to find the slogans in order to make presentable to the workers this line of capitalism in crisis—the line of sharpened capitalist offensive of intensified capitalist dictatorship and violence, of the direct drive to war.*

#### 1.—THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL TO THE WORKING CLASS, AS REVEALED AT VIENNA.

In any living organisation such a colossal collapse of the whole programme, line and policy as that revealed between Brussels and Vienna might have been expected to arouse an intense and open crisis, which would be directly reflected in stormy controversy, discrediting of the proved false leadership, sharp self-correction of the line, rise of new elements. In fact, nothing of the kind happened at Vienna. The most complete ideological collapse since the founding of this "International" produced hardly a ripple on the surface. This fact is of great significance for the whole character of the present Second International, and above all for its relation to the working class.

In fact, Social Democracy in most countries is entering a period of profound internal crisis. The workers in disillusionment begin to move in revolt against it. Features of disintegration, of passing out of groups, of diminished hold on the youth, of falling election votes, are common to most countries. The spokesman of German Social Democracy at Vienna had to report the "growing and increasing strength of Communism." The British Labour Party by-election votes in the two years since the formation of the Labour Government show a net fall of 25%, equivalent to two millions on the General Election vote of eight millions. The police violence of Social Democracy in office in Germany or England has to be exercised also against their own members.

But all this process, and the issues behind it aroused no echo at Vienna. The only hint of

"opposition" that was allowed to show itself in the proceedings was the utopian-idealist futilities of the tiny British Independent Labour Party section, with their still more fragmentary Polish "left" allies (pacifism, "disarmament by example," "socialism in our time"). These, by their very emptiness and remoteness from the burning issues of class struggles and questions agitating the working class, only served to emphasise *the completeness of the separation of the Congress from the working class.*

What does this mean? For the parties composing the Second International are still carrying millions of workers with them in Western and Central Europe. How, then, can the processes which are taking place among these workers find no reflection in a Congress nominally based on their representation? How, then, can such a cynical indifference to the working class, such an open advocacy of capitalist policies directed against the workers, as was revealed at Vienna, be possible?

It means—and this is vital for the whole understanding of the proceedings at Vienna, and for the consequent character of our task in winning the majority of the Social Democratic workers—that in the present period, in the period when Social Democracy is becoming more and more an integral part of the State apparatus of capitalism, is evolving towards Social Fascism and is actually assisting to transfer the burdens of the economic crisis to the working class, the hold of Social Democracy on the workers becomes decreasingly political and ideological, and increasingly organisational—though it would of course be a mistake to state that the political and ideological influence of Social Democracy on the working class has disappeared. The worker is tied to the Social Democratic institutions, to the trade unions, to the Co-operatives, to the insurance societies, etc., by a hundred ties interwoven with this daily economic existence, by the necessity of getting a job through the trade union permit or the Social Democratic foreman's favour, by the fear of victimisation, by the needs of illness, disablement or old age, or by the fear of losing his savings or benefit rights.

On the basis of these mass institutions, which become more and more part of the ordinary framework of capitalist coercion, the Social Democratic politicians—whether ex-workers risen from the ranks to bourgeois status by their agility in serving the machine and selling the workers, or bourgeois recruits without any connection with the working class—maintain their positions and carry on their day-to-day capitalist politics in much the same way as any other group of capitalist politicians, with less and less regard

even to make a show of adapting themselves to the sentiments of the working class.

As the organised economic or police coercive hold becomes tightened, the political hold weakens. Therein lies the weakness of the whole system, which clearly shows itself as soon as we can find the way to penetrate and break through the organised network, to open up new forms of struggle and above all, to convert the confused ferment which is still going on among the masses still following Social Democracy into a movement with clear political aims.

If this separation of the political line, and especially of the day-to-day politics of the Social Democrat leaders, from the mass organisations is thus increasingly typical of the parties of Social Democracy, it reaches its extreme expression in the International Congress, which is solely the meeting of the general staff, of the Ministers, ex-Ministers and future Ministers, without relation to the working class.

On the one side, the Congress proceeds and discusses in the most complete separations from what is going on in the working class—and in the greatest closeness to the day-to-day happenings in the world of international finance and diplomacy (credits to Germany as the principal issue of the Congress). On the other side, the working class, the workers supposed to be organised in this International, remain no less separate from it, indifferent to the proceedings of its Congress, and scarcely even aware of its existence. This is strikingly shown in the expressions of both the leaders and press of Social Democracy in the different countries, and their very slight and casual treatment of the Congress (which has in the main received as it ought to have far more close attention from the Communist press).

Take the three countries that form the main basis of this almost solely West European "International"—England, France and Germany.

The British Labour Party showed its contempt for the Congress of its own International by sending not a single leading member in its delegation. Of its twenty-one Cabinet Ministers not one found time to attend; not a single Minister attended; the nearest approach to a representative of the Labour Government was a minor parliamentary secretary. Its delegation consisted, as the Independent Labour Party leader Maxton bitterly complained, of a "second eleven," of politically insignificant and hardly-known names — Hirst, Baker, Gillies, Compton, Marion Phillips. The organ of the Labour Party, the *Daily Herald*, equally showed its indifference by barely reporting the proceedings save for occasional scraps on an obscure page, devoting to the opening session the magnificent total of twenty-eight lines, and

finding the whole proceedings unworthy of a single editorial or political article. For the mass of the millions of workers who follow the Labour Party, even the existence of a pretence of an international socialist movement is kept in practice a hidden secret, of no concern to them.

Turn to France. In one of the issues of the *Vie Socialiste*, the organ of Renaudel, which deals less with "left" manœuvres and is therefore franker, shortly before the Vienna Congress, the French Socialist leader, Marcel Déat, writes of the complete indifference and ignorance of the membership of the French Socialist Party in relation to the coming Congress, and the absence of any attempt at preliminary discussion:

"Neither the sections, nor the federations, will have obtained any idea, even the vaguest, of the agenda. What interest, in any case, can all these stories have for them? There will be more palaver about disarmament. It will be like Tours, with the difference that this time the old hands of the Executive will come out with a 'white negro' resolution, which everybody will then vote for. For the rest, there will be meetings, monster processions and agreeable excursions into the mountains." (*La Vie Socialiste*, 20.6.31.)

To suggest to any member of the French Party, the writer proceeds, that big issues and the whole future hang on the proceedings of this Congress will only produce a blank look of incredulity, and a turning away with a shrug of the shoulders.

Turn to Germany. In his newly-published preface to the third edition of *Die Proletarische Revolution* (first published in 1922), which is reprinted in the pre-Congress issue of the Austrian *Kampf*, Kautsky writes something of the outlook as he now sees it in the German working class, and the change since he wrote *Die Soziale Revolution* in 1902:

"The social situation of a generation ago, when I wrote the *Soziale Revolution* was such that the feeling in the working class and in the ranks of Social Democracy was completely different from to-day. Then prevailed optimism, enthusiasm and certainly of victory. To-day, on the contrary, in many circles of the working class weariness and sullenness are widely spread." (Italics mine—R.P.D.)

He goes on to explain how 1922 already represented a disillusionment on 1919, and how by 1931 that disillusionment had spread still further:

"In 1922 we had already been in power. We had won power, but we had not been able to hold it, because the revolution broke out as the result of the war, which had split our party. I could no longer express myself so optimistically in 1922 as I had done in 1919, when I was still working in the Socialisation Commission, when I was Reporter on Socialisation to the Second Congress of Workers' Councils, when I was publishing my book on the Socialisation of Agriculture. Then we could still expect that socialisation would be rapidly pressed forward.

"By 1922 these expectations were heavily damped down. Nevertheless, they were still far more alive than they are to-day."

In this statement is contained the confession of failure, of bankruptcy, of the whole theory of the Second International, and of Menshevism. 1902—1919—1922—1931 represents for them a history of failure and despair, not an *ascent* of the working class, through experience, through struggle, through disillusionment, to ever-greater closeness to revolutionary illusions, a retreat to ever-greater weariness and hopelessness.

“Weariness and sullenness.” This is the picture seen of the outlook of the working class today, at a time when the crisis of the capitalist order is again reaching an extreme point and beginning to crack at a hundred parts, when the new revolutionary wave of the working class is visibly rising, and just in Germany above all, showing itself in increased militancy, political activity, violent state repression, and open fighting, when the advance and victories of socialism in the Soviet Union are rousing new heart in the working class. Is this picture of “weariness and sullenness” an objective picture of the present outlook of the working class? No. It is a picture of the outlook *within the leading circles of Social Democracy*, a reflection of their own consciousness of open bankruptcy and discrediting of all their theories, based on a recognition of the vitality of capitalism, and its gradual growth into socialism, and of their own approaching downfall.

## 2.—THE DEBACLE OF THE THEORIES OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL AS SHOWN AT VIENNA.

The post-war Second International was built up on the basis of two essential issues of principle, both in direct denial of any basis of Marxism:

First, the principle of *Bourgeois Democracy*; the theory that socialism and the emancipation of the working class could be achieved, not by the method of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but by the method of bourgeois democracy, by the penetration of parliament and ministerial collaboration in the capitalist state machine. The corollary of this was the principle of *Coalition Government* as the regime of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Second, and the necessary complement of this, the principle of *Organised Capitalism* and *Economic Democracy*; that capitalism had not entered into the period of general crisis since the war, was not developing to increasingly violent contradictions, crisis, worsening of the workers' conditions and break-up, raising revolutionary issues; but was on the contrary advancing to a higher plane of organisation and strength, towards a planned and regulated stage, both on a state scale and internationally; and that the working class could participate in this regulation

and regulating organs (State Economic Councils, League of Nations Economic Section, International Labour Office, etc.), and could help to guide capitalism, by a process of harmonious evolution, to higher organisation, and eventually to socialism.

In close association with these principles went the treatment of *Bolshevism* and *Fascism* as *parallel phenomena of backward countries*.

Bolshevism was treated as the path of chaos and collapse, arising in the conditions of a backward country in break-up, leading to destruction of the productive forces, and to limitless oppression and suffering of the masses, and requiring to be replaced by capitalist democracy and “progressive” capitalism with the “moral” assistance of the Second International.

Fascism was treated as a phenomenon of countries of insufficiently developed capitalism, mainly agrarian in type, in which the task of the working class becomes in union with the bourgeoisie to re-establish capitalist democracy.

All these theories reached their height and most confident proclamation at the Brussels Congress in 1928—accompanying the height of post-war capitalism just before the crash.

And now let us show the complete debacle of all these theories at Vienna—accompanying the deep crisis of post-war capitalism.

First, *Bourgeois Democracy*. The theory of the realisation of Socialism by *Bourgeois Democracy*, namely, by *Industrial Democracy*, under conditions of prosperity of capitalism disappears now from view and is being replaced either by the *threat* of realising Socialism at some distant future, or by woeful incoherent stammering that such attempts of escaping the crisis as State assistance to private banks are also bits of Socialism. *Bourgeois democracy* now is more and more being put forward by the leadership of the Second International as an end in itself, as a central objective in the present stage, while, however, in practice this bourgeois democracy is also being sacrificed to fascism to save capitalism.

Second, *the theory of Organised Capitalism was ship-wrecked on the World Economic Crisis*.

At the Brussels Congress the Executive Report spoke of “stabilisation and the revival of economic prosperity.” Presenting the report on the world economic situation, Naphtali declared:

“We have above all to reckon with the fact that capitalism has transformed its structure as a whole. Immediately after the war many of us entertained the hope that capitalism's last hour had already struck. That hope was an illusion; we can see that to-day capitalism is still a very living force in the world, much more so indeed than we could wish. Capitalism has not yet played to the end its historic rôle; we can perceive that we must continue to reckon and contend with it as an

adversary of immense vitality . . . We can perceive with subject to many changes, and that in the course of these changes elements of a new, of a socialist economic order are already becoming visible. The improvement in the economic conditions of recent years as compared with the period immediately preceding the war has not brought us back to the pre-war level. We have rather emerged into a new capitalist world."

"Stabilisation and the revival of economic prosperity." "Immense vitality." "Improvement in economic conditions." "A new capitalist world." "Elements of a new, of a socialist economic order." This was the lead of the Second International in 1928, at the same time as the Communist International was giving the warning of the character of the third period as the period of increasingly violent contradictions and near approaching world economic crisis.

At the Vienna Congress, Otto Bauer, presenting the political report, had to declare:

"When in August, 1928, at the Brussels Congress we had to review the world situation, we laid down that capitalism had overcome the heavy upheavals in which the war had plunged it, and stabilised itself anew; and we issued a manifesto to the workers of the world in which we called on them to close their ranks for the fight against the once more stabilised and once more strengthened capitalism. To-day we are in a completely different situation. The short period of the stabilisation of post-war capitalism is over."\*)

With this sole reference to the shattering of the theories of the Brussels Congress, and without further attempt at analysis or explanation, he turns to the immediate urgencies of the credit crisis in Germany.

If we turn to other expressions on the economic crisis, the complete ideological bankruptcy and failure of any attempt to face its consequences, is equally conspicuous. Let us take for example the article of Kautsky in the Congress issue of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* (25.7.31), entitled *In a Difficult Period*. In the old controversy on the theory of "ultra-imperialism" it was contended by Kautsky and his school that the development of finance-capital was not synonymous with the development of imperialism and imperialist violence, but on the contrary opened the way to a more harmonious and highly organised capitalism, a pacific capitalism, a world capitalism. And now observe how he writes:

"The war has made all-powerful the lords of finance-capital, the great banks in union with the syndicated industries which are allied with the agrarians. These are the elements that ever more completely rule the bourgeois world, and these 'leaders of economic life' show themselves ever more violent, greedy and short-sighted. For the sake of their immediate profits they prevent more and more everything that could banish or mitigate the crisis, they demand everything that lengthens and intensifies it. That does not worry them, so long as they can throw the costs of the crisis on to

the workers. That is the alpha and the omega of their economic wisdom."

"Ever more violent, greedy and short-sighted." The facts, then, of 1931 would appear after all, by his own admission, to be a refutation of the Kautskyan theory of ultra-imperialism or the Hilferding theory of organised capitalism. But what is the conclusion to be drawn? What is the solution? The solution, according to Kautsky,—is—Free Trade: "Never was the freedom of the international movement of goods and men so necessary as to-day." The tigers of finance-capital, who admittedly do not listen to reason, must shed their claws, listen to reason, and go back to the middle nineteenth century, to the pre-imperialist era. This is the wisdom of the economic theorists of the Second International in the face of the crisis.

#### ANTI-SOVIET UNION AND CHINA.

In fact, however, the propaganda of Free Trade as the solution of the crisis is not so innocent and naive as it looks. The demand for the freedom of the international movement of goods and men is consciously directed to a very definite objective—the destruction of the Soviet trade monopoly. This is made clear by Kautsky in the July-August issue of the *Kampf*, where he writes with regard to the crisis and the prospects of overcoming it:

"A prolonged period of prosperity would necessarily follow if a considerable extension of the Asiatic market for the industries of Europe and America could be achieved."

Russia, China and India, he points out, contain between them half the world's population, but only 150,000 kilometers of railway, as against 1,100,000 kilometres in the rest of the world. Here the subjection of Russia and China to Western capitalism is openly and cynically held out as the "solution" of the crisis. The economic policy of the Second International in relation to the crisis joins directly on to their anti-Soviet war policy.

Third, the question of *Fascism* brings out no less clearly the collapse of the previous theoretical basis put forward by the Second International.

At the Brussels Congress Vandervelde had declared:

"A great captain of industry who boasts, and rightly so, of being a citizen of the world, recently said to us: 'If without taking into account political frontiers you trace an imaginary line from Kovno to Bilbao, passing through Cracow and Florence, you will find before you two Europes,—the one in which horse-power dominates, the other where it is the living horse, the one where there are parliaments, the other where there are dictators.' *It is in reality exclusively in the latter economically and politically backward Europe that dictatorships more or less brutal, more or less hypocritical, abound, whether veiled or not by a sham national representation.*"

(Italics mine—R.P.D.)

\*All quotations from the Vienna Congress proceedings are taken from the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* reports.



This characteristic utterance contains the two typical marks of the Second International line:—first, the throwing of Fascism and Bolshevism into a single hat as “dictatorships” versus “democracy”; and second, the explanation of them as phenomena of backward, agrarian, undeveloped countries.

But at the Vienna Congress Bauer had to come out with a “correction” of this line, which facts had proved to be inaccurate. He said:

“At the Brussels Congress three years ago Vandervelde gave us a very vivid picture of the division of Europe into two different camps, a democratic and a fascist. Vandervelde expressed this vividly in the words: ‘Wherever is horse-power, there is democracy; wherever is the living horse, there rules either fascism or absolutism.’ But this so vivid expression, which was then so true, is to-day no longer quite true.

“Certainly, the fascist ring about Central Europe on the south and on the east still exists . . . But Fascism in the years since the Brussels Congress has carried its advance forward into the lands of horse-power, into the lands of industry.” (Italics mine—R.P.D.)

What is the significance of this correction, which facts compelled Bauer to make (he instanced the advance of fascism and the fascist menace in Finland, Austria and above all Germany)?

*By this slight “correction” the whole Social Democratic theory in relation to Fascism falls to the ground.*

The Social Democratic theory turns on the setting up of bourgeois “democracy” as characteristic of advanced, developed, “progressive” countries, in opposition to the two “parallel extremes” of fascism and bolshevism as characteristic of backward, undeveloped countries.

But it now turns out that fascism can also be characteristic of the most highly developed, highly advanced capitalist country, such as Germany.

What follows? *It follows that fascism and bourgeois “democracy” are the two merely variant forms of capitalist rule, either of which may be variously used by the most advanced capitalism according to circumstances, and that the sole opposition to these two variant forms of capitalist rule is—the working class dictatorship.*

Finally, the question of *Bolshevism*. In view of the inescapable facts of the building up of socialism in the Soviet Union, has also to receive a slight “correction” in the treatment.

Previously, Bolshevism was treated as equivalent to chaos, ruin and the destruction of all productive forces. Thus even as late as the Brussels Congress it was declared:

“Eleven years after the Revolution the renewal of economic crises shows that the regime of dictatorship by a terrorist minority prevents the development of the productive forces of the country.”

(Brussels Congress Manifesto.)

Ever since the New Economic Policy Bolshevism was treated as in full retreat before capitalism. At the Hamburg Congress in 1923 Abramovitch had shown how the New Economic Policy meant that private capitalism was re-established; he prophesied that the private capitalist industry would develop far more rapidly than the state industry, and proclaimed that the victory of capitalism in Russia was a “natural necessity.”

The only logical continuation of this line, in the face of the no longer deniable facts of the gigantic productive development in the Soviet Union, would be to proclaim baldly and brazenly that these victories were victories of capitalism and not of socialism. This was the line actually attempted at the Leipzig Congress of the German Social Democratic Party, which dismissed the developments in the Soviet Union as “state capitalism,” or, in the declaration of Wels, as “capitalism” pure and simple, and nothing to do with socialism. Such a line, however, is too crude and flying in the face of facts to carry conviction with the workers, in view of the facts that inevitably begin to be known about what is happening in the Soviet Union. Accordingly, at the Vienna Congress Bauer attempted a variant which should contain a concession to the rising sympathies of the workers for the victories of socialism in the Soviet Union, while at the same time proclaiming full opposition. He declared:

“Varying paths to socialism are conceivable. There is the path of violence, of dictatorship, of terror, to which the world-historic example of the Russian Revolution attracts wide masses of the workers in all countries. Yes, we will not deny it—for the example of Russia proves it—that also in this way the means of production can be wrested from the capitalists, the property and cultural monopoly of the ruling classes can be broken, and the attempt can be made to replace the capitalist anarchy by the planned organisation of social production.”

Yes, and what then? What is the conclusion? For there is here already a very heavy climbing down from the line of the Brussels Congress. It is admitted that the path of revolutionary class struggle and conquest of power (hypocritically termed “violence,” as if social imperialism and social chauvinism knew nothing of violence) can lead to the overthrow of capitalist monopoly and the building up of social production. Can “also” lead, he says; but he may omit the “also”; for he can show no success by another method. What, then, is the ground of opposition, of “socialist” opposition? There remains only the last shred of the threadbare bourgeois-liberal cloak of hypocrisy as the final bulwark. He goes on:

“But we all know — for this also the example of Russia shows—that the attempt by this path is bought at the expense of the heaviest privations for decades and

with the sacrifice of the precious goods of personal and spiritual liberty."

This proviso cannot save his theory from debacle. It is not surprising that the Russian Mensheviks had already delivered a wholesale onslaught on the "weakness" of Bauer's treatment in relation to the Five Year Plan (in his book on *Rationalisation* he declared that if the Five Year Plan succeeded, it would constitute a world demonstration of the success of socialism) as equivalent to "the complete collapse of the world of ideas of democratic socialism" (Abramovitsch), the "open admission of bankruptcy of the tactics of international social democracy" (Jugov), and leading logically to the "liquidation of the socialist parties" (Dalin). As Abramovitsch declared in the July *Gesellschaft* :

"The logic of the situation will be that the mass of the workers in Europe will say to themselves: 'The theory of the Social Democratic transformation seems to be a very contradictory and unclear affair. But practice shows that Bolshevism has successfully solved its task of the building up of socialism in Russia, whereas democratic socialism has not only nowhere led to success, that is, to the achievement of a socialist society, but is nearly everywhere in retreat before the strengthened bourgeois.' For such a view of the situation every success of the general line in Russia will mean, not a strengthening of socialism, but a victory of communism throughout the world."\*

In silent retreat before the Menshevik onslaught, Bauer at the Vienna Congress proceeded obediently, in contradiction, not only to his pre-Congress statements on the prospect of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, but also to the opening arguments of his Congress report, to describe in the further continuation of that report the order in process of construction in the Soviet Union as "state capitalism." But the logic of his admission remains.

On the one hand, it is admitted that the path of "socialism by bourgeois democracy," the path of the Second International, has led to no success whatever, but has only led to the most desperate situation of the working class, in which even the scraps of formal rights under bourgeois democracy are now threatened with liquidation by capitalism.

On the other hand, it is admitted that the path of the Communist International, of revolutionary class struggle and the conquest of power, has led to the expropriation of the capitalist class, the breaking of their cultural monopoly and the building up of planned social production in place of the capitalist anarchy.

\*For the fuller text of the above quotations from the Russian Mensheviks, and the analysis of Bauer's manoeuvre and subsequent retreat, see the article of Valetski, 'The Capitulation of Otto Bauer before the Mensheviks' in the *Internationale Presse Korrespondenz*, 11.8.31.)

And yet the workers are called on at all costs to avoid the second path, and to choose the first, for the sake of — the "personal and spiritual liberties" which the emergency regimes and dictatorships to-day advocated by the Second International as the only path in the crisis are now busily engaged in destroying even in form.

Such is the final balance-sheet of the line of the Second International, as laid bare at Vienna.

### 3.—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SLOGANS OF "DEMOCRACY" AND "DISARMAMENT."

So far we have dealt with the negative side of the work of the Vienna Congress, which is in fact the most instructive side, but is not yet the most important side for the future.

We have now to turn to the positive lead which it gave, in the face of this collapse of its previous line.

The task of the Vienna Congress was to find means, not only of covering up this open collapse of all the previous promises to the workers, but of presenting in a plausible form the imperative and extremely unpopular needs of policy of capitalism in the present stage of crisis — emergency measures and strengthened dictatorship, heavy offensive against the workers, and the preparation of war, in particular against the Soviet Union. To this task the Congress set itself.

Two slogans dominated the proceedings and the resolutions of the Vienna Congress — the slogans of "democracy" and of "disarmament." It is important to analyse the significance of these slogans at the present point; for they contain, thinly concealed beneath their cover, the essential present line of policy of capitalism, and its reflection by the Second International.

Take, first, the slogan of "democracy." The original agenda was set out to cover three main points :

- (1) the fight for disarmament, and the dangers of war ;
- (2) the situation of the socialist movement and the working class fight for democracy ;
- (3) the world economic crisis and unemployment.

In fact, however, the situation of crisis in Germany at the time of the Congress dominated the proceedings, and led to a transformation in the character of the second point, the principal concentration of which was turned on to the German credit crisis and the necessity of credits for Germany. This became the centre of the discussion. The first point, on disarmament, which was to have been the principal subject of debate, passed to the second point ; while the third point, on the world economic crisis and unemployment, revealed the importance attached to these questions on the part of the leaders of the Second Inter-

national by being dismissed with extremely summary treatment at the end, without the participation of a single leading speaker.

This transformation was significant, not only for the typically close interlocking of the Second International and current European diplomacy that it revealed (the Congress became a kind of postscript to the London International Conference), but still more for the light that it threw on the real meaning of the issue of "democracy."

The Political Resolution of the Congress, which embodied the transformed second point, dealt first with the credit crisis in Germany and the necessity of international credits, and only then went on to deal with the question of the "defence of democracy" in Germany, as interlocked with the credit crisis and the provision of credits.

In other words, the urgency of the crisis tore aside the veil, and compelled plain speaking in terms of money, loans, finance, credits. *The "democracy" that was to be "saved" was revealed as—capitalism: German capitalism must be saved; that was the burden of the resolution and of every leading speaker; that was revealed as the heart of the issue of "democracy."*

Conscious of this exposure and that he would have to face it out, Bauer, in presenting the resolution, endeavoured to argue that the real objective was not the saving of German capitalism, but the saving of the German working class, which required the saving of German capitalism:

"We demand a large-scale international credit for Germany, not in order to save German capitalism, but in order to save the Central European working class, Central European democracy and European peace."

This is nothing less than the old basic argument which is at the root of all opportunism and of all social chauvinism—the argument of the identity of interests of capitalism and the working class. The working class under capitalism depends for its existence upon capitalism; therefore its interests are bound up with capitalism. Capitalist prosperity must be sought—for the sake of the working class; national defence under capitalism must be undertaken—for the sake of the working class; in short, exploitation must go on—for the sake of the working class. But, as Marx long ago pointed out, the identity of interests of capitalism and the working class is only true, if the necessity of the existence of the two poles capital-labour is assumed. Once the hypnotism of that assumption is broken, it becomes manifest that the supreme interest of the working class is to break the power of capitalism, even at heavy cost, and establish its own power, as the sole salvation. The alternative path, as advocated by the leaders of the Second International at every stage since the war, has only meant that every crisis has to be "solved" on the

backs of the workers, only to be succeeded by a further crisis which has again to be "solved" on the backs of the workers.

While Bauer still attempts to cover the objective of the maintenance of capitalism under phrases of the "interests of the working class" and "democracy," Kautsky is far more open in setting before the Second International the supreme task, in the present period, of the maintenance of capitalism. In his pre-Congress article *In a Difficult Period*, already quoted, he writes:

"The Labour and Socialist International is becoming to-day more and more an indispensable means to keep the process of production going, to protect society from collapse. The socialist parties have the task, not merely to hasten the advance to socialist forms, but also before that already to protect the apparatus of production from coming to a complete standstill."

In other words, capitalism must be saved first; until that is done, talk of socialism is out of place. This is exactly identical with the declaration of the British Fascist, Mosley:

"The immediate question we are concerned with is not the question of the ultimate form of social organisation, but with an emergency in which the whole structure of industry is threatened."

(Mosley: *"A National Policy,"* 1931.)

The ideological closeness of the outlook of fascism and social fascism is here strikingly revealed.

But what is the "democracy" for the sake of which capitalism must be saved. On closer examination, it turns out to be the Brüning dictatorship in Germany, which the German working class and the whole European working class is called on by the Second International to support. But the Brüning dictatorship is the antithesis of even the formal pretence of bourgeois democracy. Thus, the circle is finally rounded. *For the sake of "democracy" capitalism must be saved, even though the saving of capitalism necessitates at one and the same time, the destruction of "democracy."* The glorious issue of "democracy" boils down, and in the end leaves only—capitalism.

There is, however, more in the slogan of "democracy" than the cover for the policy of saving capitalism. For the slogan of "democracy" is the rallying slogan for the fight against the Soviet Union. It is just in this direction, in the preparation of the ground for intervention against the Soviet Union, that the activity of the Second International has been more and more concentrated in the three years since 1928 (i.e., since the Five Year Plan, since the abandonment of the hopes of the "peaceful" penetration and revival of capitalism and consequent liquidation of the Soviet regime), as was already abundantly shown in the utterances of all the leaders, includ-

ing the direct insurrectionary appeal of the Brussels Congress to the Soviet workers, and as has since been laid bare in concrete form and detail by the Menshevik trial. For the Second International, the question of war and the question of "democracy" are closely related

In a pregnant sentence in the course of an article on *The Fight for Democracy*, published in the July-August *Kampf*, the notorious Dan declared that not only

"in the years since the Brussels Congress the fight for democracy, especially in the European Continent, has become the principal content of the proletarian fight," but that

"even the fight for the avoidance of a new war has become a part of the fight for democracy."

The significance of this direct coupling of the question of "a new war" with "the fight for democracy" is obvious.

It is in this context that the slogan of "disarmament" and the discussion of the question of a "new war," and the action of the Second International, in the event of it, gains its significance.

#### "DISARMAMENT."

In general, the slogan of "disarmament" reflects closely, just as did the political resolution, the current movement of bourgeois policy. In the moment of close war-approach, of intensified war preparations, the talk of disarmament is brought to the front. Talk of disarmament was never higher than to-day; actual armaments were never higher. This propaganda of disarmament serves a two-fold purpose for bourgeois policy. In the first place it serves as a safety-valve for popular apprehension at the growth of armaments, and proof of the pacific intentions of the statesmen concerned, while they are preparing war. In the second place, it becomes itself an instrument and form of armament competition and strategy, as each Power seeks to weaken the armaments of its antagonist — the two most vociferous protagonists of disarmament being appropriately enough the two most heavily armed Powers in the world, Britain and America.

The hypocrisy of all bourgeois disarmament propaganda was publicly exposed once and for all by the Soviet total disarmament proposals of four years ago, and their universal refusal by all the imperialist states, and by the Second International. The same hypocrisy marks the Vienna Congress resolution, which in all its treatment of the problem of disarmament passes over in complete silence the Soviet total disarmament proposals.

So far, the disarmament resolution of the Vienna Congress—which treats the question of armaments in abstract isolation according to the recipe of bourgeois pacifism, and does not attempt

to touch the war question—follows the common line of bourgeois policy. Notable is the demand for an international armaments control commission which shall have special powers of inspection and control in countries in which there is no "democracy"; here the cloven hoof shows through the veil of naive pacifism.

But the most conspicuous feature of the disarmament resolution is *the complete silence on the war question—at the moment when the question of the coming war is becoming ever more urgent and dominating.*

The original first point on the agenda spoke of "the fight for disarmament and the dangers of war." In the final resolution the second-half—the question of the "dangers of war"—has completely disappeared; there is left only the bare technical recommendations on methods of reduction of armaments. The provisional agenda also shows that a number of draft resolutions were received from various parties dealing with the question of war and the action of the International in the event of war. These have also disappeared.

What of the Political Resolution? The Political Resolution "condemns the spreading of rumours with regard to war," i.e., explicitly condemns the warning of the proletariat against the coming war that imperialism is preparing. It makes one reference to the danger of war—from what quarter? From the side of imperialism? Of the leading imperialist Powers, Britain, France or America? Not at all. From the side of the victims of Versailles, against the Versailles Treaty! This is the sole danger of war against which the Second International warns.

*This complete silence on the war question, save as a danger of war against the ruling powers of imperialism, at the moment when the anti-Soviet war preparations of imperialism are open and glaring, is equivalent to a declaration of policy.* It is as close to a direct declaration of unity in the imperialist war preparations as could be attempted at the present Congress; since a direct declaration would only defeat its own purpose, by sounding the alarm to the working class.

But if the resolutions of the Congress were thus silent, the speeches made showed certain signs which are worthy of note.

Vandervelde in his presidential address, and other speakers, all made certain militant-sounding declarations on the subject of war. They condemned the "social-patriotic prejudices" which they declared to be still deeply rooted in all sections of the International; they instanced signs of still continuing mutual suspicion and hostility and nationalism on the part of leading members of the French and Belgian sections on the one side,

and of the German on the other. They re-affirmed the clause of the constitution that the International was to be, not only an instrument in peace-time, but also an instrument in war-time. They proclaimed that, although the International had broken in 1914, in the coming war it would remain united. And they further proclaimed amid applause that, if war came, the International would pursue the policy of revolutionary struggle, of civil war.

What is the meaning of these declarations, which were far too manifold, repeated and emphasised to be accidental? Have we here a confession of error of the whole basis of social chauvinism? So the masses were evidently intended to understand, and to renew their faith in the bankrupt Second International. To that extent we have simply here the familiar policy of concession to the masses of revolutionary phrases and promises, to cover a basically different policy. The "left" rôle is taken up by Vandervelde or Bauer, while the "right" leaders remain silent, to satisfy the discontent of the leftward moving workers. Vandervelde's "revolutionary" language on the question of war becomes the counterpart of Bauer's dramatic "threats" of social revolution "if" the capitalists should destroy democracy, "if" the capitalists do not put their house in order, etc. The capitalists know how to take these "threats" at their value, when the whole practical policy is basically different.

But in fact these declarations on the question of war take on a very much more definite meaning, as soon as we view them in relation to the concrete situation. For the concrete situation is the preparation of imperialist war on the Soviet Union, in which the Second International is actively participating. And now review the declarations in relation to this.

First, "social-patriotic prejudices," such as still hold apart the French and German sections, must be overcome. This is exactly the policy of imperialism at the present point, of Franco-German union, of the united imperialist front against the Soviet Union. The "social-patriotic prejudices" surviving from the last war must be cast aside as obsolete lumber, hindering the needs of the coming war.

Second, the International of the Social Fascists is to remain united in the coming war and to function actively. Exactly. For in a war of united imperialism against the Soviet Union, the instrument of imperialism in the working class, the Second International, will necessarily also be united and have a primary rôle to play.

Third, the policy of the Social Fascist International in the event of war still require to be a policy of civil war. The meaning of this at once

becomes clear, as soon as the conditions of imperialist war on the Soviet Union are taken into view. For such war is nothing less than world civil war of imperialism against the working class, which will be fought in every belligerent country. The Second International will certainly be fighting in this civil war—*on the side of the bourgeoisie*, against the revolutionary proletariat, against and under the flag of "democracy" and Socialism, as in 1918-19.

*Thus in relation to the anti-Soviet war that is preparing the threats of Vandervelde and the others take on a very precise meaning—and a meaning that is a warning to the working class.*

The spoken word of the speeches, and the silence of the Congress resolutions, point alike to the same central known fact—the preparation of imperialist war on the Soviet Union, and the direct participation of the Second International.

#### 4. THE CONDITIONS FOR THE WINNING OF THE MAJORITY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WORKERS.

It is now possible to draw the balance of the Vienna Congress, and the consequent line revealed of the Second International in the coming period.

On the one hand, the Vienna Congress registered the debacle of the previous ideological line of the Second International—of the theories of the advance to Socialism by the path of bourgeois democracy, or organised capitalism and the new capitalist era and revival, of international capitalist organisation and the pacifist-democratic era, of the inevitable liquidation of the Soviet régime by the advance of private capitalism within it.

All these had to be written off on the loss side of the account, or written down as damaged goods of negligible further practical value.

The Vienna Congress had to admit the realities of the world crisis of capitalism, of growing antagonisms and advance to war, of the growing drive of capitalism to throw over democratic institutions, of unemployment, worsening conditions and the increasing offensive of the capitalists, and of productive advance and consolidation in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the Vienna Congress endeavoured to adapt itself to the new situation and the needs of capitalism :

- (1) by concentrating on the urgency of the economic crisis as making necessary emergency measures and sacrifices in co-operation with capitalism, to save the productive system from collapse, and the consequent necessity of holding over hopes of immediate socialist advance ;

- (2) by presenting the fight to save capitalism in crisis as the fight to "save democracy" against the "twin menace" of fascism and communism;
- (3) by covering the advance to war under the bourgeois-pacifist propaganda of "disarmament."

From these, the centre-points in our task to fight the influence of the Second International and win the Social Democratic workers, in the period immediately ahead, stand out clearly.

The conditions are more favourable than at any previous point since the resurrection of the present Second International at Hamburg in 1923, for the rapid liquidation of its influence, commencing the break-up of its organisation, and advance of revolutionary consciousness and organisation in the working class. During the period of capitalist reconstruction and short-lived "boom," the Second International could still be swimming with the tide, could appear to hold out an infinite vista of promises, expansion, prosperity and peaceful advance, so soon as the immediately necessary "sacrifices" should be passed. These hopes are now smashed. Social Democracy has now to perform extremely unpopular tasks, to assist the capitalist emergency measures of intensified dictatorship and offensive against the workers, as well as of war preparation.

In consequence, Social Democracy throughout the world is confronted with the start of a crisis in its own ranks and in its relations to the workers. This is shown at an extreme point in Germany and England, that is, in the two principal sections of the Second International, which between them comprise nearly two-thirds of its membership. In Germany the Social Democratic Party has the rôle of supporting, and maintaining by its support, the Brüning dictatorship, its emergency decrees, cruiser programmes and measures against the working class, as well as directly conducting the Prussian Government on the same basis. In England, the Labour Government is faced with the emergency of the financial crisis and the insistence of the bourgeoisie on an extreme unpopular programme of all-round cuts, in the face of the opposition of its own membership. In both cases this leads to a growth of the elements of inner crisis, growing discontent of the workers, emergence of "left" oppositions, question of the possibility of splits, etc. The debacle of the Second International is reflected throughout its organisation.

On the other hand, there is a time-lag between the real political debacle and its reflection in the organisations. We have seen that the cause of this lies in the character of the mass Social Democratic organisations, whose hold on the workers is not simply political and ideological (in which case the political discrediting would produce far more rapid reflection and consequent transformation), but also, and even dominantly, social-economic, with a deliberate deadening of political consciousness. The discontent of the Social Democratic workers gropes slowly and uncertainly for expression. On the other hand, the Social Democratic leadership shows extreme agility in adapting itself, in concealing its rôle, in handing over the reins and passing into nominal "opposition" at critical points, in throwing up "left" phrases which lead the discontent only to draw the workers back to the parent body, and all similar manoeuvres.

It is here that the task of the Communist Parties is of urgent importance, to crystallise the discontent of the Social Democratic workers into definite political consciousness, to find expression for the issues in concrete forms and slogans, to expose and defeat the "left" manoeuvres, to develop and train forward vague discontent into revolutionary understanding, and to assist to break the chains of the organisational network of social democracy by helping forward the development of new united front forms, organs of independent struggle, etc.

The world process of events fights for us, fights for the complete discrediting and disintegration of the Second International, the ever more open instrument of capitalism in the working class. But the experience since 1914, since that already extreme collapse and betrayal of seventeen years ago, shows how important is the rôle of the active, conscious, revolutionary factor in the working class, for the lesson to be learnt and for the necessary transformation in working-class politics, organisation and action in the imperialist countries, where the Second International still dominates, to become realised. The increase of the crisis, and the near approach of still greater issues of struggle and in particular of war, in which the Second International is preparing to play the most shameful part in its history, makes more urgent than ever the necessity of *fighting against time* to win and awaken the majority of the Social Democratic workers to an understanding of the issues and to readiness for the common struggles in front.

# THE REFERENDUM IN PRUSSIA AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOBILISATION OF THE MASSES

By KNORIN.

THE results of the referendum against the Prussian Social Democratic Government for the dissolution of the Landtag are an indication of the further intensification of the class struggle and the growth of the revolutionary forces in Germany.

This referendum was thought of by its original initiators as a demagogic gesture on the part of the bourgeois-nationalist opposition in order to strengthen their position among the masses. *The interference of the Communists and the agitation launched by the Communist Party completely changed the nature of the referendum.* Thanks to the activities of the Communists during the referendum, broad sections of yet unclass-conscious workers, of impoverished peasants and of the poorer strata of the petty bourgeoisie and employees in the towns, who had been called upon to vote by the Fascist parties, learned better to understand the disposition of class forces and to distinguish between the demagogy of the National Socialists and the revolutionary slogans of the Communists. The participation in the referendum of broad masses of the revolutionary workers under Communist slogans quite overshadowed the slogans of the Fascist nationalist bloc. In all the industrial centres of the country, the Communists gained the hegemony of the movement. New sections of the workers came under the leadership of the Communist Party. The considerable loss of the prestige and authority of Social democracy—the chief bulwark of Capitalism amongst the masses, was shown. The increasing precariousness of Bourgeois domination, was also shown up.

These successes alone of the Party were sufficient to arouse among all the forces of the dominating regime, the whole counter-revolutionary front beginning with the National Socialists and ending with the Social Democrats, Brandlerites and Trotskyists, a ferocious campaign against the Communist Party.

The Social Fascists had to mobilise their most "left" detachments, the Trotskyists and Brandlerites, in order to make an effort to disperse the doubts which had sprung up in the ranks of the growing, strengthened, front of revolutionary workers and their allies, and thereby facilitate the Social Democratic counter-attack; and the German and Prussian Governments had to mobilise all the forces of Gozesinski and Severing, to paralyse the normal work of the Communist Party and to gag the Communist legal press. All parties and currents to be found among the bourgeoisie are shouting now more than ever before about the Communist menace; headed by Social Democracy, they are all demanding

the suppression of the Communist Party. This united front of all the forces of reaction, from the Social Democratic trade union bureaucrats to the leaders of the Stahlhelm, from "Volkville" to "Volkischer Beobachter," shows more clearly than any figures that the Communists have dealt a heavy blow to the system which constantly deceives the workers.

What was the aim and significance of the German Communist Party's interference in the national voting?

Their action is of enormous tactical importance, and became necessary as a result of the disposition of class forces inside the land. The decision of the Communist Party was dependent upon the broad movement of the exploited masses against the predatory policy of the Prussian Social Democratic Government and against the plunderous policy of capitalism in general. The fact that the Communist Party was not the original initiator of this referendum did not prevent it taking part, because the whole political situation demanded it. The Fascists—"Stahhelm"—and the National Socialists, raised the question of a referendum for the dissolution of the Prussian Landtag, as far back as in November, 1930, at a time when with the assistance of the radical demagogues, they would have been able to influence far greater numbers of the masses than at present, and to lead them against the revolutionary labour movement. However, the insignificant importance which they attached to this referendum can be seen from the fact that they renewed their initiative in the matter only upon leaving the Reichstag in February. The Communist Party, which had during this period several times proposed the introduction of a vote of non-confidence against the Prussian Government, did not, however, seek the initiative, but concentrated its forces upon mobilising the masses both against the Fascists and against the Social Democrats on the basis of the concrete demands and requirements of the working-class, proving to the masses by concrete examples that Fascism and Social Democracy are "not antipodes, but twins." The party was correct in appealing to the masses to organise themselves both against Braun and Severing and against Hitler and Brüning—for the overthrow of the power of capital.

The bourgeoisie has two mass armies to defend itself against the proletarian revolution—the Social Democratic army and the Fascist army. They cannot be smashed separately, because the one depends on the other, each helps the other. The Fascists cannot

be smashed except by smashing the Social Democrats and waging a revolutionary struggle. The Social Democrats cannot be smashed except by smashing their alliance with Fascism and their betrayal of the class struggle of the workers, at the same time tearing away the working masses from the Social Democratic leaders.

Through the development of the revolutionary class struggle the Communist Party was able to force the National Socialists almost entirely to cease their radical anti-capitalist and anti-Versailles demagogy. The petty bourgeoisie and employees in the towns and the peasants in the villages, who had anticipated an improvement in their position as a result of the advent to power of the National Socialists, could not but be convinced that the latter had no intention of taking over the reins of power against the will of the powerful magnates of the banks and trust capital. The working masses, led by the Communist Party, were successful against the terror of the National Socialist shock troops.

The Communist Party was able to check the further growth of the Fascist movement, to drive the Fascists out of the industrial centres and to undermine their influence among the petty bourgeoisie and especially among the peasant masses. The Fascist tide began to ebb. Groups of workers who had at one time been attracted by Fascist demagogy, now became the supporters of the Communist Party. Considerable small sections of the smaller peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie, now convinced that the Fascists are the agents of big capital, began to seek an ally among the revolutionary workers led by the Communist Party.

Owing to the revolutionary class struggle, the Communist Party was able also to bring over to its side considerable sections of the Social Democratic workers, who realised that the party is the only defender both of the ultimate class interests and of the current material interests of the working-class, and the only organiser of the struggle against Fascist terror.

Considerable sections of the Social Democratic workers, influenced by the agitation of the Communist Party, came to understand that the Brüning Government is a Government conducting Fascist dictatorship in Germany, that Social Democracy actively supporting this Government is the accomplice and main social support of capitalism in general, and the Brüning regime of emergency decrees for the impoverishment and starvation of the masses, in particular. But the Social Democratic organisations are far more solid and stable than the Fascist. Without isolating Social Democracy, without smashing its mass influence, it is impossible to overthrow capitalism. Social Democracy is the strongest, most dangerous, most reliable of these two armies for the simple reason that it has been able to get a hold upon

the working-class, exploiting the traditions of the pre-war period, the confidence of the masses gained at that time, to create its own broad organisational system, headed by the Social Fascist bureaucracy. However, the weakest place in this strongest support of capitalism is that its bloc with Fascism is becoming more and more obvious to the working-class. In the course of the year that has passed, Social Democracy has revealed itself more than ever before as the direct ally of Fascism, and the main force which helped the bourgeoisie to realise its dictatorship and lower the standard of living of the working masses. The Social Democratic Prussian Government is the mainstay of the Brüning-Hindenburg regime and the chief stronghold of reaction in Germany. For this reason the dissatisfaction of the masses is directed primarily against this Government.

In these circumstances, by renewing the campaign for a referendum, the Fascists aimed at once more, in the eyes of the masses, becoming the leader of the struggle against the Prussian Government, which was discredited before the masses; they aimed at gaining a hold upon the masses that were turning their backs upon Social Democracy, and restoring their own influence in the defence of capitalism, which they had gained a year ago by means of anti-capitalist demagogy. But history does not repeat itself. The Communist Party turned out to be the stronger. The expectation that it would take no part in the referendum was not justified.

The Communist Party interfered in order to lead the deceived exploited, oppressed, toiling masses, who had already begun to act themselves, against capitalism, and, primarily, against the chief stronghold of capitalism in Germany—against Social Democracy. The line taken by the Communist Party of Germany, as a result of which it decided to participate in the referendum, was not a united front with the Fascists, but a ferocious struggle to explain to the toiling masses, deceived by the Fascists and Social Democracy, the class character of their party, and the mobilisation of the masses for the overthrow of capitalism.

Thus the task which the Communist Party of Germany set itself in deciding to participate in the referendum was to mobilise the masses for a struggle to overthrow capitalism and to draw them away from counter-revolutionary mass organisations and, primarily, from the strongest, most popular and dangerous organisation for the proletarian revolution—from Social Democracy. But the mobilisation of the masses for a struggle to overthrow capitalism presupposes, first of all, a struggle against all democratic illusions and, in particular, against the illusions, still widespread, that Social Democracy is the stronghold of the workers against Fascism, against bloody suppression of the working-class, against the predatory efforts of the bourgeoisie to rob the workers of



their wages and the unemployed of their relief. To mobilise the masses it is particularly essential to struggle against deceiving the masses with slogans of "freedom" and "democracy," against the more "left" parties and fractions of capitalist society, since it is this section that is the chief and last stronghold of capitalism.

In deciding the question of participation in the referendum, it was natural that the question should arise as to how this action would affect the solution of the task of winning over to our side the workers organised in the Social Democratic Party. Opportunists of all kinds asserted that they are against participating in the referendum for the very reason that such action will drive away those Social Democrats who have not yet lived down their "democratic" illusions. Actually this is not so. The opportunists are against participating in the referendum because they are against the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, because they themselves share these illusions and, like the Brandlerites, are the paid agents of Social Democracy and supply the "left" arguments for Social Democracy. He who is in favour of the revolution, and consequently for preparing the masses for revolution, should not capitulate before the illusions of the masses, but shatter these illusions by clearly stating their case, and explaining the class relations just as they are. Nobody should have supposed that the broad Social Democratic masses would immediately understand the correctness of the Communist Party tactic and answer the appeal to vote against Braun and Severing.

But nobody can deny that the participation of the Communists in the voting against the Braun Government has caused hundreds of thousands of workers who are in favour of Social Democracy to reflect about what Braun and Severing have done against the interests of the working-class, to think out the question as to where their policy coincides or disagrees with the policy of open Fascist dictatorship. The German bourgeoisie in the very near future will bring about a further worsening of the position of the working-class in connection with their programme of "self-help." There is no doubt that this will cause still more tens of thousands of Social Democratic workers to remember the questions raised by the Communists during the referendum.

Communists never tried to win the Social Democratic workers by hiding up the crimes of Social Democracy. They have always called treachery—treachery, and it is just for this reason they have won over the workers. But if the Social Democrats think they can scare anyone with cries about the united front between Communists and Fascists—it is just a waste of energy. These cries are nothing new. And it is in Germany, in particular, that the Communists, more than anywhere else, have proved indeed *that they*

*alone are capable of organising the masses in the struggle against Fascism.*

The weakness of the position of the Social Democrats in this particular case lies in the fact that even with the assistance of their specialists on Communism, Brandlerites and Trotskyists, they were unable to think out a single argument against the Communist Party for their anti-Communist campaign.

What was the outcome of the referendum for the Communist Party?

The figures show that the Communist Party roused up multitudinous masses against the Social Democratic Prussian Government, that the party's relative influence among those having the right to vote had increased as compared with the elections to the Reichstag. It would, therefore, be a mistake to estimate the number of votes cast for the Communists, the number for the Fascist Nationalist bloc, on the basis of the relation of forces at the time of the Reichstag elections. Enormous political changes have taken place in the land since then.

"A political army is not the same as a military army. While the military staff enter into war, having control of a ready trained army, the party has to create its army in the course of the struggle itself, during the class conflict, according to the rate at which the masses themselves become convinced on their own experience of the correctness of the slogans of the party, of the correctness of its policy." (Stalin.)

The army of the German Communist Party during the course of this year increased constantly, thanks to the correct policy of the party. The party's correct decision to head the campaign for the referendum, without doubt brought masses of new workers into the ranks of its army, who had previously followed the lead of the National Socialists and Social Democrats. The German Communist Party came out of the campaign with whole new detachments of supporters for the revolutionary struggle.

But more important still is the fact that during the referendum the army of revolutionary class struggle, led by the Communist Party, successfully passed a difficult political test. Participation in the referendum, together with the struggle to win over new masses, was also an examination of our own ranks, of the multitudinous army of our supporters—a test of the extent to which they had outlived all illusions concerning Social Democracy as the "lesser evil" as compared with the parties of open bourgeois dictatorship. The results of the referendum show that in Germany there is a multitudinous section of workers as well as poor peasants and the lower strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie under their leadership, who are freed from all parliamentary illusions and understand the necessity of fighting under the leadership of the Communist Party against the entire front of capital as a whole.

The wonderful thing about this referendum was that for the reason alone that the party decided to

head the movement against the Prussian Government, the Fascist Nationalist bloc immediately fell into confusion. It knew only too well that its army, composed on the whole of workers recruited by means of radical demagogy, was open to the influence of Communist agitation. It remembered that in those centres where Communist influence was particularly strong, as the May national Elections had proved, its army, influenced by the Communists, had melted away by two-thirds. Hugenberg, consequently, is now openly and sincerely regretting the time when he had initiated this referendum himself.

Of course, the referendum also revealed several weaknesses of the party. The party was somewhat late in making the decision to head the movement for the referendum and was not therefore able to push forward its agitation, especially because of the gagging of three-quarters of the Communist Press, to the extent required in several districts, especially in the agricultural districts. The party's agitational work lagged far behind in comparison with agitation launched during the elections to the Reichstag. But of especial importance is the fact that its agitational work was still once more unable to reckon on a sufficiently well organised system in the factories and in the villages.

Consequently these questions should be of even more importance after the national referendum.

If the whole aim of heading the campaign for a referendum was to mobilise the masses for a struggle to overthrow capital, was to build up an army for determined class struggles by unmasking Social Democracy as the ally of Fascism and the chief stronghold of capitalism, then the results of the referendum can in no way be said to have solved this question, but only to have pushed the work ahead. The more rapidly the revolutionary crisis develops in the country, the more energetically the more self-sacrificing must the party work for its solution.

#### FAR MORE DETERMINED STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY.

The chief blow against Social Democracy must be delivered in the factories. In reply to the campaign of the Social Democrats, every Social Democratic worker must be told of the anti-working-class nature of the Social Democratic Party policy. The economic crisis in Germany will become much worse. No foreign capital is offered to Germany. And even if it were forthcoming, it would not be in a position to avert the further development of the crisis. It would only further intensify the class struggle in Germany, for the capitalists will invest money in Germany, without in the least being guided by motives of class solidarity. Capitalist "help" will be given there, where it is possible to get the greatest surplus profits. In order to obtain foreign credits, the German bourgeoisie will have to crush the resistance of the masses

to the additional exploitation, demanded of them by the foreign capitalists. This pressure upon the workers is necessary to them also as a guarantee of safety and immunity for the credits afforded.

But whether foreign capital is forthcoming or not, the German bourgeoisie under the flag of "self-help" is taking the same road. For this purpose the German bourgeoisie have decided to introduce a new reduction of wages and the curtailment of benefits to the unemployed. Even the existing starvation standard of living of the workers, the present miserly unemployment benefit has got to be cut down.

This new reduction in wages, curtailment of unemployment benefits and increase in taxation will be brought in first by the Social Democratic ministers, officials, and trade union bureaucrats. Social Democracy is dangerous to the working-class because it has seized the leadership of the trade unions and converted this most important weapon of class struggle into an instrument for carrying out the policy of the bourgeoisie and saving capitalism. It is impossible to isolate Social Democracy without completely unmasking the rôle of the Social Democratic trade union bureaucrats and winning the masses organised in the trade unions away from them.

Only self-sacrificing work for the winning over of the working masses, for an organised struggle against the capitalist policy of the trade union leaders, for the consolidation and development of the revolutionary trade union opposition and the Red trade unions, will make it possible for the Communist Party to consolidate its front in the class struggle and offer resistance to the new advance of capital. We must make preparations at once, in order to offer determined resistance to the plan of "self-help" of the German bourgeoisie, which plan means the conversion of the workers into semi-starved colonial slaves.

The municipal workers of Germany are to-day in the heat of the struggle.

German capitalism intends to avoid the crash which threatened the budgets of the municipalities and provincial governments, by lowering the wages of the municipal workers. It is not the Social Democratic and bourgeois high officials, with their tens of thousands of marks, who are to pay for the policy which has already reduced the public services rendered to the workers to a minimum. The working masses have to pay for this policy. The Communist Party alone can organise the defence of the municipal workers against the catastrophic worsening of their position, brought about by the municipalities, a considerable number of which are led by the Social Democrats. The task of organising the struggle of the municipal workers is therefore the most important duty, an immediate task, of the Communist Party of Germany.

In the work of organising economic and political strikes, the Communist Party of Germany is guilty of many weaknesses. The party has not been able to organise economic strikes; and has been able to bring out only a very insignificant number of factories on political strikes. This is only because these strikes were not sufficiently well prepared for in the factories, because the Communists inside the factories are still weak. The struggle must be carefully prepared for by increasing our mass work and consolidating the entire organisational system in the factories and workshops. A mass political strike is on the order of the day, but the masses can be brought to carry it out only after serious work has been done in the factories, and economic struggles have been launched.

At the same time the central task of the working-class is now to defend the party and its press from capitalist terror. The legal press of the Communist Party of Germany is already two-thirds gagged. The papers which are not yet closed down, are issued irregularly because of police confiscation. But the bourgeoisie and the Social Fascists go further: they demand that the Communist Party be prohibited and the Communist deputies deprived of their parliamentary immunity. The question of prohibiting the existence of the Communist Party is a question of class struggle. Only the working-class by launching forth a struggle in defence of its party can prevent the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy from carrying out its intention. The question of prohibiting the existence of the Communist Party is now on the order of the day for the simple reason that its growing influence is the main stumbling-block in the way of

carrying out the programme of "self-help" of German capitalism.

The bourgeoisie will take measures to remove this stumbling-block which prevents the Social Fascists operating their policy to "cure" capitalism and save it from proletarian revolution. The bourgeoisie, as in times of war, needs the appearance of a united nation in order to overcome the resistance offered by the working masses to the steps taken in its struggle for a capitalist way out of the crisis. The Communists are the only force which prevents this "unity." It is only because of this strong Communist Party that German Social Democracy, which has entered into an actual bloc *with the entire* Fascist front, cannot enter into *an open* coalition with the national Socialists and Hugenburg, which, however, is already in preparation. In Germany, where the Communist Party is strong and hinders the freedom of action of Social Democracy, the Communist Party has to be smashed up as a preliminary to the second step.

Therefore the defence of the Communist Party of Germany is the defence of the interests of every worker and every employee against the advance of capital.

The organisation of mass struggle in defence of the Communist Party and against the new advance of capital is the most important task of to-day for both the German proletariat and the whole international proletariat.

This struggle will decide the question of the prospects of development of the factors necessary for a revolutionary crisis and the question of the outcome of forthcoming decisive class struggles.

# THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASS FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN INDIA

By VALIYA.

THE Pact made between the National Congress and British imperialism and the advent of the Second Session of the Round Table Conference, with the participation of Gandhi, reflect the change which has taken place in the relation of class forces in the Indian liberation movement.

This change amounts, on the whole, to the following: In the camp of the forces of revolution, we find that a fairly broad section of the proletarian masses have freed themselves from the influence of the bourgeoisie, and their political organ—the National Congress. This movement is accompanied by (1) the formation and growth of the Communist Party, and (2) the drawing into this movement of peasant reserves—who have also begun to outlive their illusions as regards treacherous Gandhism. The activities of the peasantry are not only anti-British, but also anti-landlord, anti-moneylender, and in several places they are even directed against the National Congress. Separate sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie are also becoming disillusioned little by little.

This disillusionment in the hopes held out by National Congress is taking place on the background of a growing, animated revival of the workers' and peasants' movement, and the transition to higher forms of struggle under more and more distinctly class slogans.

In the camp of the forces of counter-revolution we find the open betrayal of the Indian bourgeoisie and a consolidation of the forces of Indian reaction with British imperialism. The Indian bourgeoisie, in fear of revolution, have entered into an alliance with the landlord-imperialist bloc. In the camp of counter-revolution the landlords and princes are beginning to play, to the tune of the British lords, a more active rôle in the work of smashing up the national movement and bringing pressure to bear upon the trading bourgeoisie.

This change in the relation of class forces raises from a different angle the question of the further trend of development of the revolutionary movement, and the struggle of the proletariat for the hegemony of the national liberation movement.

In the camp of counter-revolution British imperialism is trying to strengthen its position of domination and to get a hold upon the Indian bourgeoisie, by making use of their fear of revolution in India.

## BRITISH IMPERIALIST TACTICS.

British imperialism, by means of various kinds of measures (lathi charges by the police, financial measures, etc.), and with the help also of small concessions, is trying to strike fear into the hearts of the Indian bourgeoisie by drawing an awful picture of the disintegration of India, by depicting the country as a tangle of insuperable contradictions, which can be overcome only with the help and by maintaining the domination of British imperialism. British imperialism does its utmost to fan the flames of Indo-Muslim differences. It organises conferences of Muslim landlords, priests and merchants catering for Government supplies, which conferences create vast differences of opinion, splits in the "national" camp, which only help the nationalists to play into the hands of the British.

The British imperialists are only too willing to depict the activities of the workers and peasants against merchants, landlords and their exploiters, as manifestations of religious enmity, etc., etc. Of late the British have organised among the Princes, opposition to the Draft Federation, passed at the Round Table Conference, which tries to prove to the bourgeois Congress that the setting up of a Federal (actually feudal-federal) Constitution and the unification of the land depends entirely on the British. It is superfluous to mention the fact that the imperialists stubbornly endeavour to prove to the bourgeoisie that the only safeguard against a revolutionary uprising of workers and peasants in India is British imperialism with its military and administrative apparatus. Under cover of manoeuvres of this kind the British lords have brought considerable pressure to bear upon the Indian bourgeoisie; trying to reduce the extent of their concessions to a minimum, and to make the National Congress more compliant at the forthcoming Session of the Round Table Conference.

Moreover, the British imperialists try to make themselves out as the "defenders" of the interests of the toiling masses, *in words* but not in deeds, declaring themselves in favour of the untouchables against the higher castes, of the workers against the Indian mill-owners. The Royal Commission (Whitley) Report may be cited as an example of this; the proposals made by the Commission in this report promise to lower hours of labour from

60 to 54 hours weekly, and so on. These manoeuvres aim at disorganising the liberation movement, isolating the revolutionary trade union movement, strengthening the reformists, consolidating the position of British imperialism.

#### TACTICS OF INDIAN BOURGEOISIE.

The Indian bourgeoisie, in concluding a pact with the imperialists, concentrated all their attention on the struggle against the working class and peasantry. The treachery of the National Congress was immediately reflected in the working-class movement. The national reformists, representing the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie, concluded an alliance and pact with the Jao Shiva, Rao, etc., group from the Federation of Trade Unions, who represent the interests of British imperialism for the purpose of carrying on a joint struggle against the Communist wing of the trade union movement, and of disorganising the revolutionary struggle of the Indian proletariat.

At the same time the betrayal by the National Congress and its agents of the working-class movement, has considerably facilitated the struggle of the Communist vanguard to free the working masses from the influence of the bourgeoisie and to shape the proletariat into an independent class force, the leader of the national revolutionary movement.

The difficulty connected with the task of getting the working class away from the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, and converting it into the leader of the masses is due to many causes. We give here four which we consider to be the most important:—

*The First Cause.* India is a colonial country, under the open, boundless control of British imperialism alone. India, both formally and actually, is the slave of British capital. For this reason the struggle of the Indian proletariat, more than in any other large Eastern country (China, for instance), is in the nature of an anti-imperialist struggle. What does this mean, concretely? It means that not only the question of independence in India has always been and still is one of the main questions, but it also means that before a definite stage of development has been reached in the liberation movement (i.e., so long as the bourgeoisie, pretending with the help of the National Congress to be in "opposition" to British domination, continues to fool the workers and peasant masses, by hiding their true counter-revolutionary nature); so long as the propaganda of class co-operation and the united national front (i.e., the subjection of the working class to the leadership and interests of the national bourgeoisie, apparently for the purpose of making a joint attack of the Indian people against British

imperialism) continues to influence the proletariat in the disorganising sense, so long will this propaganda prevent the proletariat, including its advanced sections, from freeing itself from the influence of national reformism, and closing up its ranks ideologically and organisationally as a separate class force, cognisant of its own class interests and capable of leading the national revolutionary struggle.

The anti-imperialist character of the struggle has helped to make it possible for the bourgeoisie to spread illusions among the broad masses of the working class. The proletariat and even its advanced sections did not immediately realise the bourgeois character of the National Congress with its treacherous policy, for in its game of posing as the "opposition" to imperialism, the National Congress could manoeuvre and fool the masses, pretending to be a national, non-class organisation, and using the struggle of the Indian people to scare the British bourgeoisie and get more favourable conditions for their compromise with imperialism.

#### WHEN THE WORKERS LEARN.

In other words, all these manoeuvres are possible up to a definite moment, when the working-class masses on the basis of experiences gained during the class struggle, begin to understand the anti-imperialist character of the struggle. But when the advanced sections of the working class have learned the lesson of the class struggle (the more so now after the treachery of the National Congress and the Gandhi-Irwin Pact),—then, and then only, the very anti-imperialist character of the struggle greatly assists the toiling masses not only to understand the treacherous bourgeois character of the National Congress on the main question of independence, but also facilitates the development and consolidation of the working class as an independent class force, the mobilisation of the toilers around the proletariat. They see the proletariat as the only consistent fighter not only for their own class interests, but also for the interests of the Indian people as a whole, for the independence of India, for the liberation of the peasants from their bond-slavery, and the abolition of the feudal-Imperialist system of exploitation. Of course, this change in the rôle of the anti-imperialist character of the struggle did not come about all in one moment, but constitutes the qualitative change which can be observed since the betrayal of the National Congress.

The anti-imperialist character of the revolutionary movement, from being a "disorganising" factor has now become a feature which considerably hastens on the liberation of the toiling masses

from the influence of national-reformism, and thus lightens the task of forming the Communist Party, collecting together the revolutionary forces and establishing the working class as the hegemony of the Indian revolution.

Without a correct understanding of the anti-imperialist character of the struggle, it would be difficult to recognise the backwardness which still exists among the working class in the work of taking over the leadership of the national movement into their own hands.

*The Second Cause.* The Indian working class is young and the organised working-class movement is only about 12-13 years' old. The fact that the proletariat is young is expressed in its structural organisation and the amount of experience gained in the class struggle. The majority of the Indian proletariat is connected with the village; there are few workers to be found whose parents were also workers, though during recent years, of course, their number has increased. The families of many of the workers live in the villages. Hence considerable sections of the proletariat still feel that they are half peasants, since they are connected with the village petty bourgeoisie and still subject to petty bourgeois illusions. This has made it more simple for the bourgeoisie to consolidate their influence among them. Among the Indian proletariat the caste superstitions (rapidly being broken down) and other survivals of the feudal system, still carry considerable weight. The presence of different religions, languages, nationalities for a long time also has made exploitation a very simple matter, and at present this peculiar situation is still used by the bourgeoisie to disorganise the working class and to safeguard their own leadership. The agents of the bourgeoisie inside the working-class movement further make use of the illiteracy, the awful poverty of the Indian people, British terror, etc.

*The third cause* consists in the fact that the reformists and national-reformists were the first to take the initiative in "organising" the Labour movement; they were the first to consolidate their position in the working-class movement, the first to create trade unions. True, they were not real trade unions. They were trade unions composed of the leading apparatus, which was entirely divorced from the masses, and whose aim it was directly or indirectly to transplant the influence, which imperialism already had among the Indian bourgeoisie, into the midst of the workers, and to disorganise the class struggle of the proletariat.

This initiative also was compulsory. In reply to the broad wave of spontaneous strikes during 1919 and 1921, which were not only of an economic character, but in several cases political as

well—the imperialists and the Indian capitalists did their utmost to fetter the working class: the agents of imperialism, hiding behind assuring words about defending the interests of the workers, did, and are still doing, all that is possible to distract the attention of the workers from participation in the political struggle. The agents of the Indian bourgeoisie, compromising with imperialism and "calling upon" the workers to participate in the national movement, did, and still do, all they can to keep the workers in ideological and organisational subjection to the interests of the bourgeoisie and their political organisation—the National Congress.

Both these groups of betrayers of the working class, reflecting in their policy all the contradictions existing between their masters, nevertheless, in spite of this, fight unanimously against the Communists, against the closing up of the ranks of the Indian proletariat to form an independent class force, actuated by its own class platform. The agents of the exploiters conceal their disorganising activities behind phrases about defending the interests of the workers, about the necessity of organising the trade unions, and behind small concessions to the workers.

*The Fourth Cause.* In India during the last ten years there has been a very rapid spontaneous development of the class struggle among the broad masses of the proletariat. And yet the propaganda of Marxist-Leninist theories, tactics and organisational principles, the formation of the Communist Party, etc., has begun only quite recently.

In Russia,

"for half a century—approximately between the forties and nineties of the preceding century—advanced intellects in Russia under the yoke of the wildest and most reactionary Tsarism, sought eagerly for a correct revolutionary theory, following each and every 'last word' in Europe and America with astounding diligence and thoroughness. Russia has attained Marxism, the only revolutionary theory, by dint of fifty years' travail and sacrifice, through the greatest revolutionary heroism, the most incredible energy and devotion in seeking, educating, practical experience, disappointment, checking and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the emigration forced by the Tsar, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, came into possession of rich international connections, and of a grasp of the superlative forms and theories of the revolutionary movement abroad, such as no other country had. "On the other hand, having come into existence on this granite theoretical foundation, Bolshevism went through fifteen years (1903-1917) of practical history which, in fertility of experience had no equal elsewhere in the world."

*Left Wing Communism* by Lenin.

(C.P.G.B. Publication, page 11.)

In India the spontaneous movement of the multitudinous masses, which spread like a mighty force, was forced to go forward for several years without any leadership; there existed no elaborated programme or tactics suitable to Indian conditions, no trained cadres worth mentioning. The working class and its vanguard had to use its own experience as a school of working-class education, had to learn about its enemies, the bourgeoisie, the reformists, the National Congress, etc., from the lessons of the class struggle. This, of course, did not exclude the general influence of the Russian Revolution and the international proletarian movement; but the experiences to be gained from these were worked out and made use of in India only after considerable delay and then not to a sufficient extent.

Marxian theories almost entirely failed to penetrate into the working-class movement during the first years, and now still penetrate at an insufferably slow rate. This has weakened the working class. This has made it possible for the bourgeoisie to fool the proletariat. Consequently the Communist Party of India must now, with the greatest energy, spread mass agitation and propaganda of Marxism-Leninism among the toilers of the land.

True, *now*, as a result of the enormous development of the *mass* movement, a somewhat large section of active workers has been created, who have passed through the school of large, important strikes, of betrayals and deceit on the part of the National Congress and the "left" national reformists and so on. The presence of this section of *active workers now* considerably lightens the task of creating a mass Communist Party, mass class trade unions. The Indian Communist Party can from the very beginning of its existence depend upon this section of active workers; can depend upon them in the sense that the composition of leading cadres of the Party can and must include industrial workers with considerable experience in the class struggle, who will form the kernel of the Party. This will facilitate the struggle against all kinds of deviations and petty bourgeois influences.

In the course of its ideological and organisational formation, the working class had to overcome the resistance of these traitors, to get rid of illusions still current among the masses, which have not everywhere been left behind even now.

The absence of the Communist Party, or even of Communist groups, was the result of several causes, and in turn held back the process of class formation of the working class and its liberation from the influence of national reformism.

Side by side with the development of the class struggle and the growing class contradictions, side by side with the separation of the proletariat from the petty bourgeoisie, side by side with the constant betrayals of national reformism—there went forward a process which liberated the working class from the influence of the bourgeoisie and formed it into an independent class force, capable of taking over the hegemony of the Indian revolution. To no small degree this was promoted by the Communist International, by the successful construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., by the experiences and successes of the Chinese Revolution and, finally, by the international struggle of the revolutionary proletariat against imperialism. As a result of all these factors a true Communist Party has been formed and is growing in India—one of the decisive factors required for the victory of the Indian agrarian and liberation revolution.

In our opinion it is absolutely essential to be clear on the causes mentioned above, in order to arrive at a correct understanding of the fact that there has been a certain "backwardness" in the development of the Indian working-class movement.

#### THE ROLE OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT, 1931.

The process of political development among the Indian proletariat during recent years has steadily developed, especially since the beginning of 1928. The growth of the class consciousness of the proletariat is clear from the fact of the exit of the advanced sections of the proletariat from the Social Democratic movement; parallel with this there went on a process of transition to the side of Communism on the part of the advanced sections of the revolutionary intellectuals.

The activity of the working class was enhanced. Several large economic strikes and political demonstrations against the Simon and Whitley Commissions made a deep impression on the masses of the Indian people. The struggle of the proletariat left its mark on the development of the liberation movement which, in circumstances of an economic crisis, took the form of a revolutionary upsurge in 1930. The weakness of the proletarian vanguard consisted in the fact that although it understood the need for an independent organisation and saw the treacherous nature of the bourgeoisie, it was not able ideologically and organisationally to leave national reformism behind, to get rid of it altogether, especially of its "left wing"; in a word, it did not understand the factors necessary for the creation of its own class Communist party. This ideological and organisational break finally

took place at the end of 1929 and beginning of 1930; only after this did the formation of the Communist Party take place.

The working class was active in influencing the masses of the Indian people. Several large strikes, political demonstrations and other activities under anti-imperialist slogans, the split at the Nagpur Congress of Trade Unions and so on, had its effect upon the revolutionary movement, left its imprint on the forms and methods of struggle. This was manifested afterwards in Bombay, Sholapur and so on. Some imagine that the National Congress were the initiators of the movement and organisers of the Indian people in the struggle of 1930. This does not correspond with the truth and contradicts the facts given above.

Gandhi himself agreed that the movement grew up spontaneously, that the strategy of the National Congress was to increase its influence, to hasten to take control of the insurgent masses, for if this were not done, the "forces of violence," i.e., the revolution, would get the upper hand and then it would be too late, and no English troops would be able to suppress the movement of the Indian people. Moreover the bourgeoisie, of course, tried to utilise their disorganising activities against the people in order to gain concessions and make compromises with British imperialism.

In proof of the above another example can be given from Calcutta. The movement of the Indian people in Calcutta began with strikes and barricades thrown up on the streets by the dockers, on whom the police fired: demonstrations and meetings, called by the proletarian vanguard, served to start the national movement. The salt campaign was almost unheard of here.

To the same extent it is true that the Communist vanguard took upon itself the initiative in connection with the ideological attack against national reformism. This was clear in the fight against Ruikar, Nehru and other "left" national-reformists, which was carried on by proletarian revolutionaries during the railway strike on the Great Indian Peninsular Railway; this was clear from the exchange of correspondence which took place between Nehru and the Bombay workers, from the demonstrations at Chouhatti and so on and so forth.

All these facts go to prove that the Communist Party—the proletarian vanguard—had broken entirely with national reformism and was waging a decisive struggle to free the proletariat from the influence of the bourgeoisie. In this light one should look upon the split in the Girni Kangar Union and the campaign for the "working week."

During this campaign, carried on by the National Congress with the close participation of supporters of Roy, Kandalkar, Sheik and others, among the broad masses of the Bombay workers, two platforms, two programmes, two lines of development for the working-class movement were raised and discussed. One was the bourgeoisie and National Congress; the other the working-class and the proletarian vanguard. The fundamental questions of the Indian revolution were discussed. The social nature of the National Congress was discussed—as to whether it is an organisation of the toiling masses of the land, as the "left" national reformists generally try to affirm. The question was discussed as to whether the bourgeoisie and its National Congress are waging a revolutionary struggle for freedom, or whether the working class alone, together with the oppressed classes, is carrying on, and is capable of carrying on a prolonged struggle for complete liberation; the question was discussed as to whether the working class should be a special, independent class force, with its own class party, whether it should be the guide and leader of the Indian people or remain in its position as the "arms and legs" of the National Congress, the helpless appendage of the Indian bourgeoisie,—the slave of British Imperialism.

The question was discussed also as to whether Gandhi is right when he advocates his treacherous theory of "non-violence" and Satyagraha (passive resistance), or whether the revolutionary proletariat is right in demanding the violent, revolutionary overthrow of the domination of exploiters, in demanding a national armed rising against the British imperialists, the landlords and all exploiters—a rising for freedom, for confiscation of the land, for the abolition of feudal-landlord tenure and the institution of a workers' and peasants' government. The historic importance of this discussion in the summer of 1930 is quite obvious, as is also all the work of the Communist Party; and in consequence of the accumulated experiences of the proletariat, this discussion has already begun to bring forth fruits.

Now, after the Pact between the National Congress and British Imperialism the situation has completely changed. It has now become clear to vast sections of the proletariat that the National Congress is a bourgeois, treacherous institution; freedom from the influence of the bourgeoisie has gone ahead rapidly among the working masses and the peasantry, the influence of the Communist Party and belief in the party and its platform has begun to grow rapidly. This has become possible only on the basis of the struggle of the proletarian vanguard especially during 1931. 1930 marked the advance of the proletarian vanguard (not to



mention that in this same year for the first time there appeared in the name of the Communist Party illegal leaflets, there took place demonstrations under Communist slogans, illegal organisations began to be formed, etc.).

The Gandhi-Irwin Pact created an entirely new situation. The treachery of the National Congress became even more clear to the broad masses of workers. This has lightened the task of the Communist Party in its struggle against the "left" national reformists; this is helping the Communist party to grow and to muster around itself all the revolutionary forces of the Indian people. The conditions are being created for a mass growth of the Communist Party, which raises several new tasks both in the sphere of tactics and forms of struggle and in the correct estimation of events.

#### THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

The first, fundamental task of the Communist Party, which is linked up with all its other tasks, is to convert itself into a mass, all-Indian Communist Party. This task is being tackled now, but has not yet been accomplished. Everywhere and on all occasions the first thought of the Indian Communists must be directed towards the creation of party organisations on every hand. In all towns, in all workshops, factories, railway repair shops, plantations and mines—the Communist Party of India must have its organisations. The platform of the Indian Communist Party absolutely correctly states that—

"to ensure the victory of the Indian revolution, there is required a Communist Party of the proletariat, the leader and organiser of the toiling masses of our country. The building of a centralised, disciplined, united mass underground Communist Party is to-day the chief and basic task, long ago overdue, of the revolutionary movement for the emancipation of our country."

(pp. 53 *Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India*”).

The creation of an illegal Communist Party is the pre-requisite for the establishment of the hegemony of the working class in the Indian revolution. The Indian comrades quite correctly make this task the basis of all their work.

The most important stage in the development of the Communist movement is the fact that the Party was able to create a platform of action which puts forward all the tasks of the movement in a truly Bolshevik manner. The platform of action is ALREADY helping to muster the revolutionary forces. The platform of action is ALREADY serving as a differentiating platform in the Indian revolutionary movement and is helping the struggle against all "left" national-

reformists, especially against those traitors, like Roy, Sheik and others, who are trying to hide their treachery behind phrases about communism, loyalty to the working class and so on and so forth.

The British semi-official organ, "Near East and India," of May 14, 1931, writes as follows:—

"A new factor in the Indian political situation, the exact weight of whose influence has yet to be determined, is created by the publication of the official programme of the newly-formed Indian Communist Party. The manifesto, obviously inspired, if not actually drafted, by the Comintern, is characteristically exhaustive, though, as usual, inceptive directed against all and sundry, takes the place of constructive proposals."

The British imperialists feel that the real menace to their domination comes from the Communist Party, hence their cautious estimation of our young Communist party. Of course, it seems to British Imperialism and the National Congress that the platform of the Communist Party contains no "constructive proposals." But for the working class and peasantry of India, the Communist Party platform, on the contrary, is composed not only of concrete proposals but of EXCLUSIVELY VITAL proposals, capable of dragging the Indian people out of the poverty, hunger and slavery, in which they are to be found to-day.

The creation of a mass Communist Party can be achieved only during the process of participation by the proletarian revolutionaries in the mass struggle of the proletariat and peasantry; by their participation in the work of defending the daily interests of the toiling masses, in strikes, demonstrations, the fight against taxation, and other exactions; in mass revolutionary action.

The illegal party is urgently faced with the task of participating in all forms of mass work, of utilising all legal forms and methods of struggle, of all legal organisations of the masses. Many weaknesses and mistakes made by the Communist Party during 1930 can be indicated: one of them was the want of skill shown in the fight for the streets during the revolutionary upsurge, the clumsy combination of legal and illegal forms of struggle, the awkward confusion of concrete slogans and general slogans. These mistakes are almost inevitable when young Communists are only just building up their party, when groups spring up with very little, or absolutely no experience in the class struggle, groups that are illiterate from the Marxist standpoint or almost illiterate, and so on. But we must learn from the lessons of the struggle and make the experience acquired our own—this is the guarantee of the successful development of our movement.

### THE STRUGGLE TO WIN THE MASSES AND THE USE OF ALL LEGAL POSSIBILITIES.

The lack of skill displayed by the Indian Communists in using all legal possibilities during 1930 objectively helped the bourgeoisie to keep up and spread the illusion among the Bombay workers, to keep up among the backward sections of the proletariat the idea, that the National Congress is fighting for the liberation of India and defending the interests of the masses of the people. It was just on the question of the fight for the streets and the use of legal possibilities that the Third Congress of the Bolshevik Party in Russia passed a resolution in 1905, the draft of which was written by Lenin and which, with certain "amendments" to suit the Indian situation, might be of enormous significance for the development of the revolutionary movement in India. In this resolution ("The question of open activities"), we find the following:

"Having in view (1) that the revolutionary movement in Russia has already undermined and disorganised the autocratic government, which finds itself compelled, to a comparatively large extent, to extend freedom of political action to classes inimical to it; (2) that this freedom of political action is more and more and almost exclusively being enjoyed by the bourgeois classes, thus further enhancing their economic and political predominance over the working class and increasing the danger that the proletariat will be converted into a simple appendage of bourgeois democracy; (3) that among the working masses the tendency towards independent open activities on the political arena are becoming more and more widely developed, even without any participation of Social Democracy," (i.e., of the Communists—I.M.).

"The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. draws the attention of all party organisations to the need for:

(a) making use of all and every opportunity for open political action on the part of society and the people, in the press, in the unions, in meetings for the purpose of raising counter-proposals in the form of independent class demands of the proletariat as opposed to general democratic demands, in order to develop the class-consciousness of the proletariat and to organise them in the course of such activities into an independent Socialist (read now *Communist* I.M.) force;

(b) using all legal and semi-legal forms of struggle for the purpose of creating workers' societies, unions and organisations, always endeavouring to safeguard the predominating influence of social-democracy (read *Communist Party*) upon these unions; and to convert them into bulwarks" (of the Communist Party—I.M.)."

The resolution of the Third Congress of the Bolshevik Party raised several questions concerning the struggle for the streets, the combination

of legal and illegal forms of struggle in the fight against the influence of the bourgeoisie upon the proletariat, and on behalf of the independence of the working class and winning the masses for the party. This resolution is extremely important for the Indian proletariat, particularly now when the amount of open activities is growing and will continue to grow, when the wave of strike struggles is rising, when the movement of the peasantry is increasing, when the revolutionary youth are leaving the National Congress behind them. In these circumstances, if the Indian Party is not able to stand at the head of the struggle of the broad masses and bring them along under its banners, if it does not make use of all open activities, like those which took place in 1930, for the purpose of winning the right to the streets, for helping the struggle of the masses against national reformism, then it will objectively lighten the task of the bourgeoisie of disorganising the proletariat, in order to convert them into a "mere appendage of bourgeois democracy."

In so far as the National Congress in 1930 was the only organisation on the streets which claimed for itself the leadership of the masses, which arranged meetings, demonstrations, etc., it seemed to the toiling masses, especially those sections who had entered the struggle for the first time, that the National Congress was the leader, the true defender of the interests of the people. Now, after the Pact, the "left" national reformists are trying to take over the same rôle by issuing pseudo-radical slogans, and, where necessary, by working under cover of all kinds of new organisations, for example, under the banner of the workers' and peasants' parties, etc.

The fight for the streets, the using of legal possibilities, the creation of legal and illegal societies and so on presuppose the most energetic, indispensable launching of illegal activities, the creation of an illegal party is an essential condition for safeguarding the leadership of all auxiliary organisations by the Communist Party and for guaranteeing a successful struggle against British imperialism and all its allies in India. The correct adaptation to the Indian situation of all the points raised in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Bolshevik Party will help the Indian Communists in the shortest possible time to convert their organisation into a mass Bolshevik party, the leader of the Indian revolution.

### MUSTERING THE FORCES AND THE FIGHT FOR LENINISM.

The most important task of the young, growing Communist Party in India is to create, to mould, to urge forward and educate its cadres. The cadres will be moulded in the course of the

struggle, during the class struggle in all its many forms. The most important task of the Indian Communists is to learn to recruit and to help those active workers, who yesterday were outside the party, to understand the aims and principles of the party in order that they may become conscious members of the party.

The building up of the party, the growth of cadres, the development of its influence can take place only on the basis of a broad ideological agitation and enlightenment of the principles of the science of Bolshevism, only on the basis of the most relentless struggle against all inimical bourgeois ideological currents, and primarily against Gandhism, "left" national reformism and the special variety of the latter to be found in the Roy-Kabari-Sheik group.

The remark made by Lenin in *What is to be Done?* was never so true as when applied to India: that the theoretical front, the theoretical struggle, the struggle for revolutionary Marxism is an inalienable part of the Whole Bolshevik outlook of the Bolshevik party. Without this, without conquering the enemy ideologically, there can be no question of creating a Bolshevik party in India and of mustering the proletariat and all its allies under its banners.

Hence the Communist Party of India must launch the widest possible campaign for the propaganda of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, its theoretical principles, the tactics and strategy of Bolshevism, and lessons of the struggle of the world proletariat, especially the Russian proletariat, paying special attention to, and using as the basis, the teachings of our Leninist legacy and the experiences of the Russian Revolution. The Indian Communist Party is being built up in difficult circumstances, but to the number of favourable, decisive factors we may add the existence and the experiences of the Comintern, the experiences of the land that is building Socialism, the U.S.S.R., and also the experiences of the Chinese revolution.

The Communist Party of India must understand these lessons and use them in the struggle against the national bourgeoisie, the National Congress and all "left" national reformist groupings, in order to forge a strong Bolshevik party and overcome all its antagonists both ideologically and practically.

In India there are now growing up groups, newspapers appearing, etc., which consider themselves Socialist. On every hand there has begun a re-examination of forces; the masses seek a way out; among the revolutionary youth an opposition is growing up.

The "left" national reformists, seeing this, deck themselves out anew in fresh Socialist clothing; they swear by Socialism.

All these developments demand that the party exerts all its strength to unmask these bourgeois agents and petty-bourgeois blunderers on the ideological field. They demand that the Party explain as quickly as possible the class nature of these groups and groupings, and accompany this explanation by a further definition of revolutionary Marxism.

Only in this way, only by taking part in the daily struggles of the toiling masses can the Communist Party of India close up its ranks and unite all revolutionary forces under its banners.

The broadest propaganda of Marxism and Leninism is now one of the most decisive tasks of our party.

The Communist Party of India, in issuing its platform of action, created a fundamental document for the agitation and organisation of the workers and peasant masses; laid down the road to the national and social liberation of the Indian people.

Particularly is this true now that the country is faced with new struggles, in the face of a probable general strike—around which elements from among the revolutionary youth, who sympathise with the Party should also be mobilised, as well as the workers' and peasants' organisations.

#### WHERE SHALL WE RECRUIT OUR CADRES?

The Indian Communists complain of the lack of forces. In several parts of the country strikes are taking place, without any sort of leadership. The classic example of a spontaneous strike of the workers without any leadership is the strike of 150 thousand jute workers in Calcutta.

The reformist leaders of the jute trade union who claim to lead the workers have done absolutely nothing to "help" the workers in any sort of way, or to make any appearance of leading the movement. The tactic of the reformists is to throttle the strike, to leave it to die a natural death—hoping that hunger will force the workers to go back to work or return to the village. The "left" reformist, Bose, and other national reformists—friends (!) of the workers—are helping the capitalists to oppress the workers.

What then is the duty of the Communist Party of India which is still weak and has few members? Can we limit ourselves to statements to the effect that the weakness of the Party is a sufficiently serious excuse for the fact that the Party has stood aloof from the struggles of the working class? On no account. Of course, there is no reason to underestimate the difficulties, but these difficulties only make still more urgent the task of finding new forces, of preparing and urging forward new active workers. For example, the

Bombay proletariat has hundreds of thousands of active workers, who are capable of becoming the organisers of the working class. They still lack self-confidence, they still have no faith in themselves. The task of the Communist vanguard is to help them to find confidence in themselves. One way to achieve this is to organise propagandist circles, courses, exchanges of opinion. They are extremely important. The leaders of the proletarian movement instead of having an insufficient section of active class conscious workers to take their place, should help all the workers to speak at meetings and conferences, to lead the meetings, strikes and so on. The concrete road to helping the active class conscious workers is to organise circles for them, to divide the towns and factories into sections where activities should be carried on, to explain to the workers how to organise circles of sympathisers and factory committees, how to recruit workers into the trade unions, etc. The active, class-conscious worker who has already carried out one or two such tasks, is already to a certain extent trained for work, and can be sent to another district or town for work under the leadership of more experienced comrades.

Many class-conscious workers can in this way become leaders of the working class, according to the degree to which their experience accumulates.

The urging forward and recruiting of workers can take place in the sphere of trade union work, during strikes, demonstrations and political campaigns. The task of the Communist Party is to attract the best revolutionary workers, to help them by propagandist training and systematically lead and train them in the process of the class struggle.

The experience of the working-class movement shows that the proletarian revolutionaries have not sufficiently recognised this task. The traditions of the National Congress are still of effect: the National Congress is constructed on the principle of division into leaders and rank and file. The leaders are bourgeois lawyers who dictate, who interpret, who direct; and the rank and file are the masses of the people who obey and keep silent. Principles of this kind are not acceptable to the proletarian movement: it is impossible to allow of the existence of leaders as substitutes for the active class-conscious workers and the workers' organisations. Individual leaders, be they the best possible on earth, cannot take the place of the Communist Party.

The task of the leaders is by correct guidance and direction to help to bring the broad masses of the working class into the ranks of the Communist Party, to develop the consciousness and

activity of the proletarians, to create cadres of active workers.

The division into a narrow circle of leaders and a sympathising mass indicates lack of faith in the strength of the proletariat, means the transplantation of petty bourgeois, intellectual traditions into the Communist movement.

### THE STRIKE OF THE RAILWAY WORKERS.

The situation of the workers on the railways becomes worse and worse every day. The economic crisis which has seized the land has brought with it a sharp curtailment in the freight turnover and the cessation of the building of new railways. The State deficit, payments on loans, the increased expenditure on the upkeep of the police and the army in circumstances of intensifying crisis has forced British imperialism to take the road of lowered wages, dismissal of workers and the cutting down of work on the railway transport and in the railway repair shops.

The "Bombay Chronicle" of May 16, referring to the position of the railways, writes that the dismissal of workers continues unceasingly.

"On the North-Western Railway along the Dinapur section alone about 10,000 workers have been dismissed from the railway repair shops; in Lilloa, near Calcutta, 1,300 workers have been dismissed from work; in the railway repair shops at Nerambur and Arktam, 1,130 workers have been removed from work, and these dismissals affect not only the workers, but employees as well . . . in the district of Dinapur twenty-eight railway inspectors have been dismissed who had worked on the railways for ten to twenty years . . . and, moreover, some stations have been liquidated entirely."

The Bombay workers' paper "Kranti" of May 31 writes in its leading article:

"The capitalists are increasing their attacks on the working class. Capitalism has thrown thousands of workers out of work. It has lowered the wages of thousands of workers. On every hand, in the factories and workshops on the railways, in the docks and so on, the workers are subject to extreme oppression. Fifty per cent. of the workers are workless. The average rate of work has been doubled, and wages have been reduced by 50 per cent. In consequence of this considerable unrest is to be found among the working class; the desire for a strike is widespread. Strikes have already begun. Conditions for a general strike are favourable on the railways, since it is proposed to dismiss another 300,000 workers."

The position has become so intense and the despair and dissatisfaction of the workers has grown so strong, that the Joshi-Shiva Rao-Shri group—representing the interests of British capital—have been compelled together with Mehta, Ruikar and other representatives of the Indian bourgeoisie to take a ballot on the subject

of a general strike of railwaymen on the Indian railways.

This is only a manoeuvre on the part of the reformists for the purpose of maintaining their influence on the working class and, at the same time, having gained concessions for a more successful launching of the attack upon the workers, to act in the rôle of defenders of the proletariat and thus disorganise the strike.

The experience of the strike on the Great Indian Peninsular railway (G.I.P.) gave sufficient material with the help of which to judge of how the reformists try to betray the general strike on the railways, when it breaks out over India against their will.

The general strike of the railwaymen is of historic importance in the fortunes of the Indian proletariat and the revolutionary struggle. The task of the Communist party is to take upon itself the initiative of organising the working masses and preparing for strike action. On every hand, in the railway repair shops, on the railway branch lines and stations it is essential that mass strike committees be organised which are formed of elected class-conscious workers. It is essential that all active workers, even those who do not work on the railways, sympathetic young workers and revolutionary peasants, should be recruited to defend the interests of the workers, to demand that the dismissed workers be reinstated, to fight for higher wages, for the 8-hour working day, for the recognition of the rights of the factory and workshop committees, for the political and economic interests of the Indian proletariat. Preparations for the railway strike are now in the centre of attention of the Indian proletariat which is now entering the new period of political struggles.

It is on this strike that the Communist Party of India should direct its chief attention, by organising and arousing the initiative and activity of the broad masses of the Indian proletariat and their determination to fight.

The strike movement is spreading also to the textile industry. In Bombay a wave of strikes is taking place in individual factories. In Sholapur a strike of textile workers has broken out and over 80 per cent. of the workers have joined in. In Bangalore the police fired on a demonstration of striking workers, and the struggle is of a very stubborn character. The will to strike of the workers is spreading also to other parts of the country.

#### THE PEASANTRY.

The growing dissatisfaction of the peasantry corresponds to the movement of the workers. Of considerable importance is the fact that among the peasantry there is growing up considerable

dissatisfaction and distrust of the National Congress: the newspapers report meetings and conferences of peasants at which resolutions of protest are being passed against the treacherous pact of the National Congress with Imperialism.

Thus, for instance, at the conference of the Workers' and Peasants' Party in Anandapur, Punjab, the peasants in their resolution which on the one hand contains the phrase:

"the conference respectfully and urgently draws the attention of the Maharaja of Canortala to the need for equalling the rent in the Hoshipur district to correspond with the Jalader district."

write further:

"This conference protests against the action of Mahatma Gandhi, who considered it unnecessary to discuss the question of peaceful negotiations with the Government, with the leaders of the workers and peasants, but acted as the dictator of India. He discussed his action with the Bombay mill-owners, but completely forgot the workers and peasants."

At a series of meetings and conferences a much curter tone is used in resolutions of a more distinctly revolutionary nature.

The growth of the peasant movement is accompanied by an increase in the number of open activities against the landlords and moneylenders. The "Times" of July 6 writes:

"From Bombay to Simla and Lahore discussions are taking place concerning the disturbances which threaten us in the near future in the form of the railway strike.

"Conflicts between landlords and tenants become sharper every day in several provinces."

The Indian newspapers report frequent cases of bloody conflicts between the landlords and peasants.

The armed uprising in Burma has now entered its seventh month, despite the fact that the British imperialists have been compelled to despatch a whole brigade of troops, to reinforce the number of police and grant several economic concessions. The uprising is spreading, seizing new districts, and has taken the form of partisan warfare.

The peasant movement is growing rapidly; the peasant reinforcements are already in sight on the field of battle; the background for a general railway strike is entirely favourable. One of the most characteristic signs of the development of the revolutionary consciousness of the peasants in the village, is the increasing number of independent activities on the part of the agricultural workers. The "Times of India" of May 13, 1931, writes that:

"In reply to the declaration that wages would be lowered—the daily wages of the agricultural workers to 5 annas for men and 2½ annas for women in the Darampur district—the workers in several villages have declared a strike. This,"

writes the paper, "is the first case of an agrarian strike in the district."

These class-conscious activities of the agricultural proletariat bear witness to the degree of development of the Indian proletariat as a whole. In several districts the agrarian activities are led by agricultural workers. The most backward sections of the Indian proletariat are being drawn into the revolutionary movement; the basis of the Indian Communist Party is broadening out; the leadership of the peasant movement can be more strongly organised. We must begin the organisation of the agricultural workers separately, and begin to develop the agrarian movement on the basis of the platform of the Indian Communist Party.

"In order to destroy the slavery of the Indian people and emancipate the working class and the peasants from the poverty which is crushing them down, it is essential to win the independence of the country and to raise the banner of agrarian revolution, which would smash the system of landlordism surviving from the middle ages and would cleanse the whole of the land from all this mediæval rubbish. An agrarian revolution, against British capitalism and landlordism must be the basis for the revolutionary emancipation of India."

This declaration of the Platform of Action lays a definite obligation upon the fraternal Indian Communist Party to work energetically among the peasantry and to lead the agrarian movement. The growth of the workers' and peasants' movement in view of the treacherous policy of the National Congress, will lead to an intensification of the class struggle and a much more distinct demarcation between the various forces in the Indian liberation movement. From this point of view we should study the lessons of the split in the Congress of Trade Unions in Calcutta and the rôle of the group of Roy-Sheik and Co. But of this later.

## On the Draft Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India.

(Letter to the Editor.)

On the pages of your journal the draft Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India was printed with the request to all organisations, etc., to give their opinion concerning the Draft. We, on our part, would like to make the following changes:

The Draft Platform of Action mentions the prohibition of child labour up to the age of 16 and limiting the work of adolescents up to the age of 20 to six hours a day.

We consider these demands incorrect, since they differ from the programme demands of the Communist Youth International and lower these demands.

In correspondence with the programme of the Communist Youth International, we are fighting for a 4 hour working day for adolescents under 16 years and the 6 hour working day for adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18. Moreover, we are in favour of the prohibition of the labour of children under 14 years. The programme demands indicated and the fight for them does not exclude the struggle for all partial demands of the working class youth, lessened hours and better conditions.

We request you to bring these suggestions before the Communist Party of India.

With greetings,

Young Communist Leagues  
of England and America.

July 22, 1931.

See the *Daily Worker*.

# THE RED ARMY OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

By G. SINANI

(*cont.*)

The Red corps under the pressure of the enemy were frequently compelled to pass from one region to another. Stable Soviet territories, with partial exceptions, were established only in the middle and towards the end of 1930. The Kuomintang troops and the special expeditions for "cleansing the villages" carried out savage executions, not sparing women and children and punishing not merely all those who were suspected of giving aid to the Red Army, but even those suspected of sympathy with it. The landlords, the usurers, the gentry, cruelly revenged themselves on the poor peasants for all their material losses and for the terror which the revolutionaries had inspired in them. The Red Army could only in a few cases—previous to the establishment of stable Soviet regions—put an end to these bacchanalia of the counter-revolution. The most active elements among the poor classes either fled into the mountains and created there ever new partisan detachments or organised a Red Guard. The latter had a purely local character; it was connected with definite villages and definite regions. Its task has been that of struggle with small detachments of the enemy, with the hired bodyguards of the landlords and with the corrupt bandit detachments. It acts in defence of its village, district or region. On the approach of large regular sections of the White Army, against which it is powerless to take up the struggle, the Red Guard either conceals itself in the mountains or hides its weapons and converts itself into ordinary peasants. The fear of being severely dealt with on the departure of the Whites frequently holds back many who hate the revolution from betraying the Red Guard members. Even in the stable Soviet regions the frontiers are very conditional and alterable and are subject to frequent raids from bandits and Mintuans against whom it is necessary to organise to carry on continual struggle. The poor and middle peasantry who have driven the landlords from their strongholds and divided their land and property, who have abolished usurious debts and overthrown the power of the Kuomintang officials, cannot thereupon put their rifles, or more frequently their spears and swords, on one side. A bitter armed class struggle continues over the whole territory of the Soviet regions and it will still continue even after the armed destruction of the bourgeois-feudal Kuomintang State.

The peasant Red Guard or self-defence of the revolutionary peasantry arises the quicker because the Soviet State order is only just being created and has not succeeded in forming its organs which could guarantee every day and in every place the

defence of the revolutionary masses against all attacks of the counter-revolution. This self-defence, which under favourable circumstances is easily converted into a weapon of attack (e.g., on the approach of the Red Army), is still more necessary outside the Soviet regions where the revolutionary portion of the peasantry (the poor and middle peasants) can only carry on a struggle against the counter-revolution by its own unaided efforts.

Being a revolutionary organisation, absolutely indispensable at the present level of the revolutionary movement and armed struggle, and representing the organisation for war of literally millions of people, covering an enormous territory with a complicated network and thereby playing an extremely important rôle in the struggle of the Red Army against the Whites, the peasant guard reflects at the same time the narrow, local interests of the peasants. It joins up with the Red Army corps at the moment of capture of towns and of struggle with the Whites, but, as a rule, it confines this struggle in narrow territorial limits. It represents one of the characteristic features in the armed struggle of the Chinese Revolution and the experience of its structure and struggle must become, alongside of the experience of the creation of a regular Red Army, a heritage of the world revolutionary movement. But, while organisationally consolidating the narrow local interests of the peasantry, it, by that very means, diverts a considerable portion of the active elements of the latter from the general class State struggle with the bourgeois-landlord structure and to a certain degree hinders the development of the Red Army as the representative not of partial but of the general interests of the workers and peasants in a struggle with the landlords, the bourgeoisie and the imperialists.

The wide development of the revolutionary movement from the end of 1929 found its reflection also in the Kuomintang army. Established not on the principle of universal military service but as a hired army, opposing itself to the broad masses as an immediate weapon for their oppression and exploitation, and not letting slip any suitable opportunity for plundering them, and to a considerable degree made up of declassed elements, the army of the Chinese Generals, as a mass army, could not help being affected by the revolutionary processes taking place in the country. The agrarian revolution was bound the more speedily to have its repercussion in the army since not less than 95 per cent. of the soldiers were completely pauperised peasants who at some point stood at the cross-roads—famine, banditry

or the army. At the present time many of them are already beginning to understand that there was still another path besides the above-mentioned paths, all equally hopeless. This was the path of revolutionary struggle. The process of disintegration in the Kuomintang army is still in its earlier stages, but it has already led to a whole series of refusals to undertake activity against the Reds, to mass desertions and to a number of military insurrections. Not infrequently the revolting regiments became the kernel of new partisan detachments and even of corps. The ferment in the army is intensified by the extremely bad conditions of maintenance, by the miserable food, unpaid wages, and discipline by execution and cruel terror, by which means alone the Kuomintang is able to oppose the growth of dissatisfaction and revolutionary tendencies in the army. The most important factor which has accelerated the disintegration of the reactionary army is further the victories of the Red Army. Its blows along the front of immediate struggle and its attitude towards prisoners find a mighty response even in the furthest rear, driving an ever enlarging wedge between the mass of rank and file soldiers and the landlord-kulak officer staff.

However, in relation to the ex-soldiers and those who have surrendered to the Red Army serious mistakes have been committed which, in some cases, have been extremely dangerous. As a consequence of the enormous lack of any kind of skilled cadres there were organised not only whole sections made up of former soldiers of the Kuomintang army, but there were sometimes included as a whole in the Red Army White sections which had come over or had surrendered. Not infrequently in such cases the necessary political work was not carried out among the soldiers of these sections and cases even occurred where even the old thoroughly counter-revolutionary officer staff was left unchanged. As a consequence of this cases of treachery of such sections in conditions of war took place—by threats and promises the officers succeeded in leading away the soldiers after them. The Red corps not only lost the weapons which had been seized, which were literally worth their weight in gold, but were subjected to the danger of military defeat as a consequence of the unexpected alteration in the relationship of forces at the moment of battle.

The inclusion in the composition of the Red Army of military sections which had come over as well as the formation of separate military detachments of these ex-soldiers, carried with it not only a military but a political danger. The former soldiers, who had been insufficiently subjected to political education and who were not under the constant influence of the Red Army

workers and peasants, carried into the Red Army the customs of the militarist armies and in particular, it was also the most dangerous of all, a negligent attitude towards the peasantry, an indifference to their economic interests, a custom of autocratic rule and tendency towards plundering. These habits could not vanish in one or two days; there was necessary serious re-education, but the conditions in which these former soldiers were placed were such as could not guarantee a rapid re-education. As a result, in some cases an extremely dangerous political gulf was created between certain of the Red Army sections and the population, i.e., the revolutionary mass of the peasantry. These cases were not numerous, on the general scale of the upsurge of the revolutionary mass movement and of the growth of the Red Army primarily at the cost of the poor peasants they were merely minor details, nevertheless, in the development of individual corps they played an extremely important rôle.

At the present time the Red Army, which is forging its own cadres in the process of intense struggle, has decisively altered the old practice in regard to this question and has learnt from former mistakes.

The prisoners made are already no longer included, as a rule, in the Red Army, but after preliminary education are sent back again. The young officers are also sent back, while the colonels and generals, generally on request of the mass of the soldiers themselves, are shot. Those who are sent back are frequently even given money for their journey, and returning to the Kuomintang army they become the best propagandists of the Red forces. Nevertheless, the Kuomintang Generals are not able to refrain from utilising whole regiments and divisions which have returned from captivity, sending them, however, first of all, to the rear for "rest and cleansing from the Bolshevik infection."

The soldiers and officers who voluntarily come over to the side of the Red Army are no longer concentrated in compact masses but are distributed among the old Red Army men. As a rule, the officers are not left together with those who were formerly under them, but are transferred to different sections. An intense political work is conducted among both the officers and men. Approximately in the same way is carried out the reorganisation of those sections which have come over to the side of the Red Army by armed insurrection.

Although for the Red Army as a whole the question of its relation to prisoners and ex-soldiers has already been decided, it is necessary to dwell on it not merely from the point of view of historical interest. While in the Red Army as a



whole the ex-soldiers constitute 20 to 25 per cent., in the Fourth Army (of Hunan-Hupeh-Anhwei Soviet region) this percentage has become approximately two to two and a half times as great. The Fourth Army has grown during the last few months from 5,000 to 35,000 men, mainly at the cost of militarist forces which have revolted. Consequently, the question of their rapid re-education of their organic linking up with the revolutionary movement of the workers and poor peasants and of their decisive abandonment of former militarist customs continues for the Fourth Army to remain the most important immediate question of internal organisation. This question is so much the more critical precisely for the Fourth Army because Hunan is one of the provinces which has been most disrupted by the militarist wars of recent years and where the peasantry will be especially on their guard against any exhibition of militarist habits on the part of the Red detachments. As everywhere, the successful development of the Fourth Army depends on the development of the revolutionary movement and on its very close connection with the wide masses of the peasantry on the basis of the struggle for the agrarian revolution. The question of the elimination of surviving militarist practices is part of the general question of the relations between the army and the peasantry, and that is its importance.

Lastly, it is essential to touch upon the question of the relation between the Red Army and the secret peasant organisations of the medieval type—the Red, Yellow and other Spears, the Societies of Long-Haired Men, Heavenly Gates, Yellow Sands, etc. These secret organisations are extremely numerous, with from two to two and a half million members. Their basis of organisation is first and foremost self-defence of the peasantry against the banditry and the militarist armies. But they are the channels through which the petty-landlords, gentry and rich peasants exercise an influence over the broad masses of toiling peasants. While they frequently reflect the growing revolutionary discontent of the peasantry, and often wage a stubborn armed struggle against the militarists, they are at the same time resolutely hostile to any expression of the class struggle in the villages themselves. They combine the struggle against militarism with dreams of restoring the “Golden Age” of the past. The latter is usually combined with expectation of the coming of a hero, gifted with supernatural powers, and the restoration of an ideal monarchy. Instruction in the art of war (boxing, sword-play, the handling of a pike and sometimes of firearms) goes hand in hand with the “science” of all kinds of incantations and witch-

craft, intended to make the body invulnerable in battle. The latter involves a number of religious limitations and tests—long fasting, unquestioning obedience to one’s commanders and elders in the family, prohibition of the use of “unclean” words and objects, sexual abstinence, repeated utterance of meaningless prayers and incantations, etc. The Red Spears and other secret societies, which substantially differ very little one from another, have spiritual features side by side with their military commanders. Both usually come from the propertied and exploiting sections of the villages, and at all events are linked up with them. These organisations, during the period prior to the overthrow of the Manchu Monarchy in 1910, tried to imbue the peasants’ fight against feudal oppression with the character of a struggle for the restoration of a national Chinese Dynasty.

Thus, reflecting to a certain degree the rising discontent of the masses of peasantry, and even taking the lead of their outbreaks in many cases, the secret peasant organisations not only give a reactionary form to the peasant movement, but are instruments for the blunting of class antagonisms and class struggle in the countryside. Their development is strongest of all in the Hwang-ho region, where large-scale landowning is relatively less widespread than in Southern China, where the percentage of independent peasants is consequently higher, and where militarism exploits the peasantry more directly. Feudal exploitation here, more than in other parts of China, takes the form of squeezing rents and taxes out of the peasantry with the help of the military and civil machinery of the State.

It should be emphasised that the revelation of class antagonisms and the development of class struggle in the villages themselves rapidly lead to the decay and disappearance of the secret societies as mass organisations. The same happens to them as was described earlier in the case of the Tufeyts: the masses of peasants enter the path of revolutionary struggle, while the leadership of the Leagues becomes one of the most active forces of counter-revolution. Frequently in these cases we also find splits in the secret societies. Previously, these splits were the result of factional struggle in the leadership of the societies, and often assumed the formal character of differences in dogma and in the formulae used in incantation. To-day they have a clearly expressed class basis, which is the expression of the commencing class struggle in the villages. This was the case in Kwangtung and Hunan in 1926 to 1927, and the same has now taken place in the Soviet districts of China.

The vast numbers of the secret societies, their great influence among broad masses of the

peasantry, their great importance as armed organisations—frequently, with mass assistance, they have been successful in fettering the manoeuvring capacity of even powerful militarist armies—mean that the problem of the relationship between the secret societies and the Red Army is of serious importance.

The experience of the Corps of Ho Lung, which had in its midst in 1929, and even in 1930, quite a large number of detachments of the secret societies which entered the corps as its constituent part while maintaining their own organisation, gives sufficiently obvious grounds for the conclusion that such wholesale absorptions are dangerous. The Right opportunist policy of the corps leadership on the agrarian question (the “under-estimation” of the importance of the mass movement, i.e., the “under-estimation” of the meaning of the revolution were also a peculiar survival of militarist practices) was greatly facilitated by the degree to which the class activity of the poor peasantry was shackled by the support given to the leaders of the Red Spears by the corps leadership. It is characteristic that it was just in this corps that militarist traditions were almost powerful, in spite of the fact that the percentage of ex-soldiers was lower there than in other corps. The result was that, while the general situation of a fairly long military truce was most favourable for the development of the corps, while its territorial position enabled it to play an extremely important strategic part in the fight of the Red Army and the development of the revolutionary movement, it was incapable of playing that part. And it was only in 1931, after correcting its political mistakes and mistakes of military organisation, that the corps was enabled to grow into the Second Army and begin an energetic offensive against Wuhan, at the centre of Middle China, drawing away to itself a constantly increasing number of Nanking armies.

The experience of Ho Lung must be sufficiently instructive for the Fourth Army first and foremost. Having in its ranks the largest percentage of ex-soldiers, organised in the main out of revolted units of the militarist armies, the Fourth Army is operating at the same time in one of the districts where the secret societies are most widespread. The perils in both questions are biggest of all here, but at the same time in both questions the Red Army has managed to accumulate experience and traditions.

No agreements whatsoever with the Red Spears (and other societies) can be tolerated which to the slightest extent water down the agrarian watchwords of the Party, and which might thereby retard the development of the class struggle in the villages themselves. Concessions on this

point—even though admitted for the purpose of “victory over the militarists”—are more dangerous than a military defeat, because they would imply that the Red Army loses its revolutionary base among the masses. More intense work by the Party and army organisations is essential, in order to effect a class differentiation in the ranks of the Red Spears, and to break away and emancipate their rank and file from the influence of the leaders. This work, of course, has to reckon with the level of class-consciousness of the peasant masses in these societies. The tactic of a united front—that must be the general line of policy of the Party in winning the masses of these societies.

It is quite obvious that this policy of the Party and the Red Army will evoke the furious opposition of the exploiting elements at the head of the societies. There will be cases when they succeed in retaining the leadership of fairly important numbers. Hence it will probably be possible in individual cases to effect strategic co-operation with the Red Spears—through their struggle against the militarists deep in the rear, and on the lines of communication—but it will be impossible to co-operate with them more closely and directly on a tactical scale.

The incorporation into the Red Army of entire detachments of the Red Spears, even those which have entered the path of revolutionary class struggle, is just as impermissible as the incorporation of militarist units which have come over to our side. These detachments must be reorganised, and recruitment to the army must be individual in character and then only of the rank and file. Recruitment of the leadership of the Red Spears, as a general rule, must not be permitted at all. In this respect still greater care is required than in relation to the White officers, in view of the experience of the leaders of the secret societies in organising and influencing the masses.

At the present time the Red Army is worker and peasant not only in its political line, but also in composition. In the principal units of the army, the workers and peasants constitute 75 to 80 per cent., and former soldiers 20 to 25 per cent. (the composition of the Fourth Army is somewhat different, as has been mentioned earlier). The overwhelming mass of the peasant Red soldiers are the village poor, with little land or no land at all. The middle peasants are in a minority.

The percentage of workers varies from 5 to 10 per cent., and sometimes rises higher (the units of Chu Teh and Pan de-kuei). However, the greater majority of the workers come from small towns with well-developed handicraft production, but almost entirely lacking in large-scale factory

industry. The percentage of industrial workers is much lower. Bringing as they do into the army all their hatred of class exploitation and their revolutionary enthusiasm, the handicraft workers will be able to act as cement for the internal binding together of the army only under the leadership of the industrial proletariat. Consequently the task of reinforcing the Red Army with the proletarians of the biggest factories of Shanghai, Wuhan, Hongkong, Canton and other cities is one of the most important tasks facing the Party in the realm of military development.

Consolidating the fighting strength of the army, the growth of its proletarian nucleus will at the same time be a basis for the further reinforcement of Party influence, the further reinforcement of Party leadership from the highest to the lowest links in the chain of army organisation.

## VI.

The structure of the organisation of the Red Army has changed with its changing development.

The guerilla detachments of 1927-1928, apart from the "guerilla army" of Chu Teh and Mao Tseh-tung, had no constant or stable organisation. Their internal sub-divisions were determined by the numerical strength of the unit, and sometimes by its past (the number of smaller detachments which had come together). The equipment of the units, their food supply and outfit, essentially had nothing organised about them. Passing from district to district, the detachment subsisted on local resources, imposing levies on the landlords and the gentry, or simply confiscating their stores. The same tactics prevailed with regard to equipment also. Armament, of course, could take place only at the expense of the enemy, by disarming small military units, police and Mintuans, while what repairs to their arms were possible were carried out by the soldiers themselves. Naturally, as a general rule, the guerilla detachments did not wander aimlessly from county to county — although there were those who went in for constant movement — but kept to more or less distinct regions, most frequently those from which the majority of the guerilla troops had come. In these regions, or fairly near them, the bases of the detachments were organised, thus affording some sort of fortified living quarters in the mountains, equipped with a certain amount of stores in which the guerilla bands could hide themselves on the approach of stronger enemy forces.

The growth of the guerilla detachments and their transformation into corps led to a complex form of organisation. However the uniformity of type and the simplicity of armament and lack of any complicated military technique—the Red

Army was not even armed with machine guns—made it impossible to apply any method of subdivision of its component parts on any permanent tactical plan of differentiation. The mutual interchange of sub-divisions was determined on a numerical basis.

Any uniform structure of a Red Army corps was not and, of course, is not yet possible. The corps whose nuclei were disaffected military sections were burdened with the former structure of the militarist army division to which they were accustomed, a quadruple sub-division (in the regiment, four battalions, in the battalion, four companies, etc.). The majority of the corps have been formed from "columns" (like regiments), and the columns from large, then medium-sized and finally small "detachments." However, the number of lower sub-divisions in proportion to the higher was extremely inconsistent. There were corps consisting in reality of one "column" and "columns" composed of two medium-sized detachments. The considerable numerical strength of the majority of the corps and the complexity of their administrative organs as well in the military as in the economic spheres has led automatically to the organisation of more complicated and even excessively large staffs, larger than in the strong guerilla detachments of the first period.

In consequence of the growth in numerical strength of the corps, it was not possible for them to equip themselves any longer only at the expense of the owners of confiscated stores and the landowners. These were already insufficient for them and became yet more so because the agrarian revolution developed and they were seized and divided up by the poor peasants. The corps had to supply themselves only from the peasantry whom they paid in cash. As a source of money supplies there was the confiscation of cash deposits in banks, and in State institutions, the confiscation of money in the possession of landlords, moneylenders and open counter-revolutionaries and contributions levied from merchants, high officials, and other opulent citizens of cities which were overpowered. From these sources the labour of the skilled workers in making uniforms was recompensed. The material was obtained from the most powerful merchants in the town by a special levy in proportion to their means. For the carrying out of the confiscation, the organisation of provisioning and the payment for products seized, special sections were organised in the staffs (or particular departments of provisioning or equipment created). In some corps, confiscation and levies were carried out by political organs.

The armament of the corps, as in earlier days, could only take place at the expense of the enemy,

but, at the corps bases, in some places there were organised repair shops and munition depots.

Political organisation in the army, notwithstanding a considerable strengthening of the work of the party during this period, was markedly behind the requirements of the work. The leadership of the Executive Committee of the C.P. of China at this time was busy with Li Li-san dreams of a general rising throughout China and did not pay the necessary attention to work inside the army—just as the Li Li-san leadership did not pay any attention to any other organisational question. Political sections were only organised in the strongest corps, in the rest they existed only on paper. The same state of affairs existed with regard to the commissar apparatus. There was no systematic political work carried on among the Red Army soldiers. Its agitation varied from one incident to another. Almost the only form of political work appeared to be the meeting. Its content was chiefly problems of the agrarian revolution though in some divisions, notably in the corps of Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung the problems of the struggle with imperialism, the world proletarian revolution and the U.S.S.R. were also discussed. The fact that the Red Army was cut off from the whole world, that it received its information almost exclusively from Chinese sources—Shanghai and Huchan—newspapers six weeks or two months out of date, a series of mistakes were made by various local party organs in their decisions on the agrarian question (the partition of the land in proportion to the means of production, i.e., the best possible guarantee of the interests of the rich peasants; not assigning land to the Red Army soldiers “lest they leave the army”; governmental division of all peasant holdings enforced by administrative order, etc.), and finally the weakness of the party workers in the army, all this reveals a whole series of defects in party work. And yet all this was vital work for the rousing and formulating of the class union with the poor peasantry. In spite of all its failings, however, the Red Army had a tremendous political effect.

Not confining themselves to internal army work, the political sections, party cells and individuals Communists — and together with them a large number of non-party Red Army soldiers—carried on an extensive political and organisational work among the peasantry. They helped to organise Soviets, groups of poor peasants, handicraftmen's unions and village party cells, they helped to carry out the confiscation of the possessions of the landowners, gentry and moneylenders and organised the partition of the land. Struggling against the armed might of the counter-revolutionaries, the

Red elements of this period acted as organisers of the exploited peasant masses.

The doubling of the numbers of the Red Army from the autumn of 1930, when there were 60,000, to 120,000 men in the summer of 1931, and the uniting of its basic forces into four armies, led to a further tightening up of the army organisation. In spite of the fact that the corps in the army yet preserve a large measure of internal independence and that the centralisation of the army is far from being completed, at the present time there is proceeding—in fact in the most important corps there has already been achieved—re-organisation on the principle of triple division (in the company, three platoons, in the platoon, three sections, etc.), which has proved its tactical flexibility not only in the civil war in the U.S.S.R. (of whose experience the Chinese Army has availed itself in every way that they have been able to do so by the possession of written sources in the Chinese language), but also in the experience of their own Chinese Red forces.

The destruction of some divisions of the Nanking armies strengthened the Red Army considerably in military technique. It is true that a considerable number of the guns they had could not be used at all in consequence of a complete lack of shells. There was also no equipment or aviators for the aeroplanes they captured. Still to a very large extent they succeeded in using the machine guns which has led to a greater—though by no means sufficient as yet—tactical flexibility of the Red divisions.

Latterly there is inadequate data about the organisation of the equipment of the re-constituted armies, but it is perfectly plain that the corps with bases in the stable Soviet regions must have been obliged to desist to a considerable extent from the practice of independent confiscation and forced levies. In the case of guarantee of provisionment from behind the lines and especially of supplies of money, they must be depending much more on the organs of civic control. Equally with the arrangements for the capture of armaments and especially for the military provisioning of central army organisations, but not for separate corps, this must compose the material basis which together with operative expediency and a conscious leadership from the party is necessary for the guarantee of the further internal unity of the Red Army.

Great work is being done in the army at present in connection with the preparation of junior and intermediate officers. For this purpose special army schools have been founded. Up till quite lately only the best corps have had schools for junior officers. Moreover, in consequence of unceasing war, they have given insufficient train-

ing to their pupils. This work is being done much better now. The preparation of senior and higher officers in the Red Army itself has not been customary up till now, but it must be noted that nearly 50 per cent. of the higher Communist officers have war experience and the senior officers have received the best practical military steeling and consist to a great extent of former Red guerilla troops, workers, peasants and soldiers. An enormous proportion of the Communist staff officers are members of the party.

The fact must be noted that the Communist staff officers of the Chinese Red Army are dressed just like the soldiers of the Red Army, eat the same food and receive the same pay, with only some additional allowances for travelling expenses. This primitive democracy is of the utmost importance for the unification of the young revolutionary army—although, in the future, the complication of army life will demand new forms of relationship between the officers and the Red Army soldier in which revolutionary democracy shall be combined with strict revolutionary discipline.

In connection with political work we must take into consideration during this latter period the organisation of actively working political departments, beginning with the regiments and so on higher up, the provision of an institute of commissars up to including the battalions, political leaders in the platoons and the organisation of lower party and Y.C.L. cells. The organisation of political work has developed particularly far in the basic divisions of the First and Third Armies; in other divisions and in the other armies it has at any rate made a start.

The change in the general political organisation of the E.C. of the C.P. of China, its repression of the leftist in phraseology but right-wing in reality supporters of Li-Li-san, and the attention, greater than hitherto paid by the party to the concrete questions of building up the Red Army, all this has done a considerable amount to advance its consolidation, political education, military capacity and improve its organisation.

## VII.

Up to the middle of 1930, the red corps conducted a semi-guerilla warfare. Naturally then they did not fight for strictly determined distinct territories. The basic practice of their military activities arose in every case from the fundamental principles of guerilla warfare—sudden, short attacks on the flank or the rear of weaker enemy detachments, occasional less important pin-pricks to the stronger forces and swift retreat in case of reverse.

In spite of the enormous advance of the peasant movement and the marked radicalisation of the

working class, in spite of the increased number of distinct soviet regions isolated one from the other, the task of uniting them into a single territory and the organisation of a soviet government by the party was not faced sufficiently concretely. The Li Li-san leadership held that a soviet government could be constituted not "in the mountains" but only in strong towns having at least provincial importance. Thus up to the middle of 1930, the red corps had no united aim for their activities. To a very large extent the struggle was carried on elementarily just as the peasant revolts broke out elementarily. The party led them politically, the local party organisations led them organisationally but they were not linked up into one system, into one plan of struggle. It was the same with the Red Army.

This lack of plain strategical tasks,—except for the general aim of struggle against the reactionary and Kuomintang forces,—threatened to check the further growth of the army. The red corps, even by the middle of 1930 were sufficiently ripe for the organisation of a strong nucleus of a regular army and a directing militant centre which could unite the basic corps around this nucleus. The development of the agrarian revolution, advancing under the hegemony of the working class and the leadership of its party, was already sufficiently advanced to make it possible to face concretely the problem of the consolidation of an extensive soviet region—developing on every side the peasant revolution and guerilla movement within it,—as a basis for setting up a soviet government and the organisation of the army. Historically it was quite possible to secure a relative respite for strengthening their forces. The Li Li-san leadership made no use of this opportunity. Considering that a directly revolutionary situation was developing all over China, believing that the Chinese revolution would swiftly lead to a world revolution, a proletarian revolution in which the Li Li-sanites, as the Trotskyites, saw the one guarantee and salvation for the Chinese revolution, they gave directives for an attack by the Red corps on Changsha whereby they might also occupy Hankow and Yuchan. This task was as yet beyond the strength of the Red Army. They could have occupied Changsha but not held it, that was impossible. It would have been impossible to take Hankow or Yuchan and if the army had engaged in this adventurist operation, it would inevitably have been destroyed. At that period such an operation must inevitably have spread the alarm in the whole camp of the reaction—from the Chinese rich peasantry and money-lenders to His Majesty's Labour Government, which has very intimate liens with the Chinese usurers. A premature attempt to occupy

strong centres without the possibility of holding them invited a very strong counter-attack. Inevitably the Red Army not only lost the initiative in the struggle but also ran the risk of serious military defeat.

As it was the operations round Changsha—in spite of the fact that it was finally occupied—showed that the Red Army was not ready for a struggle on so large a scale. Mutual co-operation between the corps was lacking. At the moment when Pen Deh-hui was making his attack, the Fourth Corps was inactive although it could have rendered decisive assistance at this juncture. (This picture of lack of co-operation was seen again on the occasion of the capture of Kweapei in Kwangsi. The Twentieth Brigade made an attack but the Third and Seventh Corps passively awaited the results of it.) The Red tactical units did not show sufficient flexibility, their victories were won at the price of severe losses. The defeat of Che Kwang and his retreat from Changsha was not used for the consummation of his destruction, the retreating enemy was not pursued but given every opportunity to rest and recuperate and bring up his reinforcements.

Showing an enormous amount of self-sacrifice and heroism, proving that the Red Army, though technically weak, was strong in revolutionary enthusiasm and could already put to flight an even stronger militarist force in stubborn open battle, attacking positions prepared and fortified in advance, the capture and eventual cession of Changsha showed with all-sufficient clarity that the question had been faced incorrectly and superficially, that the "fortress period" in the capture of towns (in counterpoise to fortified towns) had not yet come to an end, that the army still had much to learn.

Almost immediately after the defeats at Changsha, and the repulse by the whites with the direct co-operation of the imperialist battle fleet, there was brought into being on the express demand of the imperialists the first punitive expedition of the Nanking forces to Kwangsi. Against 60,000 Red Army soldiers were launched twenty divisions, nearly 200,000 men and three squadrons of aeroplanes. The operations proceeded according to a plan provided by German military advisers. Counting only the regular Red forces, the whites had a more than three-fold numerical superiority and a considerable advantage in technique. The position of the Red Army was in fact exceedingly serious. Chiang Kai-shek triumphantly declared that by January, 1931, the Red Army would be destroyed and Kwangsi cleansed from the Bolshevik pestilence. Instead of this there came to pass the complete destruction of three Nanking divisions out of which one was

captured entire including the divisional commander who was shot on the demand of his own soldiers. The front of the whites was broken. Over their torn flank hovered the threat of numerous desertions. To avoid complete defeat they had to retire to Nanking. This the first punitive expedition made off in disgrace. The Red Army was strengthened not only morally but numerically and materially.

Nanking began the preparation for a second expedition, this time for the "final" annihilation of the reds. In Kwangsi thirty divisions, nearly 300,000 men were assembled. At the head of them was placed Ho En-tsin, one of the most talented of the Nanking generals. This time German fascist advisers took an active part in the operations. Chiang Kai-shek again announced that in three months the Red "spectrum" would be exterminated. But the ring of white armies did not succeed in drawing together, it was broken on the Kwangtung frontier, the Cantonese generals, finding themselves under the high protection of Hong-Kong and its metropolis judged the moment propitious for severing their connections with Nanking. And the Kuomintang soldiers showed no zeal in "conquering," the number of desertions increased, there were mutinies in the divisions. The Red Army, encouraged by its successes in January, succeeded not only in doubling its numbers but also in re-organising itself and passed from the organisation of corps to that of armies; it showed no inclination to be "annihilated," on the contrary, it wanted to win victories and organised to do so. In May it succeeded in inflicting its first heavy defeat on the punitive expedition, a division and a half of white troops were destroyed. In June the whole white army met its fate, three or four divisions were completely wiped out.

The Red Army went on from defence to the attack; by the end of June the capital of Changsi, Nanchan, was threatened by their advance and almost the whole of the southern part of the province was brought under soviet rule.

At this time the Fourth Red Army was coming into being north of Yuchan under the leadership of Huan Che-sun. The Twelfth Division came over to him as a unit. In this region the Thirty-third Division mutinied, half of it ran away and the other half joined up with the Red forces. There also the brigade of Suchuang troops came over to the side of the Reds. There also the Third Division was partly defeated and partly mutinied, its commanding officer, who formerly in 1925-6 was in command of the People's Second Army, Yo Wei-kwun, was captured and shot. At present the Fourth Army is rapidly extending the frontiers of the soviet territory in the province of Anwei

and undertaking operations even in the direction of Hankow.

And finally, yet nearer to Hankow, are the forces of the Second Red Army advancing from the west.

The Nanking government then organised with the help of the imperialists a third and even more imposing attack. Chiang Kai-shek was personally in command of the forces operating in Kwangsi. For the third time the three months' time limit for finally liquidating the Reds was announced. From the strategy of encircling the Red Army the Kuomintang troops on the advice of their German advisers and specialists went over to the strategy of striking a decisive blow.

They were pushed into this not only by the failure of the first two expeditions but also by the hostile attitude adopted towards Nanking by the Kwantung militarists who had separated themselves from them. The concentrated might of the white armies with their superiority in technical equipment succeeded at the end of July and the beginning of August in overcoming the resistance of the First and Third Armies and occupying a series of important soviet regions in southern Changsi. But notwithstanding his reports of victory over which the Japanese bourgeois press is even now making merry, Chiang Kai-shek has not in fact succeeded in inflicting one serious defeat on the Red Army. He did succeed, by concentrating his enormously superior available forces on a comparatively narrow area, in forcing the Red Army to retreat. But he did not succeed in forcing it to fight a decisive battle in a position that was unfavourable for it. The Red Army showed a high degree of not only tactical but also strategical flexibility and cleverness in surviving the threatened attack of the concentrated might of the white armies, comparatively speaking, without great losses.

Not being able to force the Red Army to join battle with him under unfavourable conditions, Chiang-Kai-shek attempted to drive the retreating Red forces on Kwantung, in which case his calculations were perfectly clear. They consisted of avoiding direct contact with the forces of the Cantonese government and, at the same time, driving the Red Army back on them to force the Cantonese to fake part in operations against the Reds placing them between two fires. However, the leaders of the Red Army knew enough to envisage this eventuality in time. Instead of submitting to the direction of their operations by pressure from the armies of Chiang Kai-shek, the mass of the Red forces retreated to the east and south-east, to the mountainous regions of the province of Fukien, directly confronting and precipitating by their action the meeting of the

militarist armies of the two "nationalist" governments. The exploitation of this struggle between these reactionary cliques (and the imperialist powers standing behind them) was of essential moment to the strategical calculations of the Red Army.

The hidden influence of the U.S.A. on Japan and Chang Shu-kiang allowed the Nanking government to throw almost all its principal forces into Kwangsi against the Reds without fearing attacks from the Mukden militarists, strengthening their influence over Northern China and also counting on their assistance against the so-called "greys," the militarists of Honan, Chi-li and Shantung, who, in union with the Fin Hui-san and Yang Si-kwang, were dreaming of a war of revenge against Nanking. These calculations of Nanking were correct, obviously the imperialist guarantees were sufficient, for the rising of the general, Shi-Yu-san at Honan and Chi-li was suppressed at once by the forces of Mukden. However, British Imperialism, especially Hongkong, showed no inclination for such touching oneness of heart. Yet more, if the bloc was not formal, the co-operation in fact of the American and Japanese militarists (Chang Shu-lin and Chiang Kai-shek, respectively) forced British imperialism willy-nilly to work against the unity of the existing bourgeois-militarist clique for the strengthening and widening of its influence.

Making use of the Cantonese clique, British imperialism is a rival of the U.S.A. for influence in Central China. The menace of an Americo-Japanese bloc (both these imperialisms were carrying on a struggle for the support of Japan in their civil war in the Eastern hemisphere) spurs on British imperialism and strengthens the influence of Hongkong in London circles.

An armed struggle between Canton and Nanking appears, on the face of things, inevitable; a final glance shows us Canton moving its forces against the "usurper," Chiang-Kai-shek.

The strategy of the Red Army, on which Chiang Kai-shek had tried to bring pressure from two sides, in itself facilitated and accelerated the dénouement of this struggle by putting off its own conflict with the Cantonese. On the development and sharpening of warlike activities between the Cantonese and Nanking depends the possibility of the First and Third Armies getting a respite again from arms during which they may not only rest but also improve their organisation and strengthen the centralisation of their military and political leadership.

In any case, however the Canton and Nanking operations develop it is now quite clear that Chiang Kai-Shek will not succeed in destroying the Red Army. The occupation of the most im-

portant soviet regions will only give him a relative advantage. His troops are operating in a milieu of general hostility shown by the broad masses of the peasantry. They are exhausted by marching and ceaseless tension from constant attacks and raids by the Red forces, the guerilla detachments and detachments of peasant Red guards. They are cut off from their bases (Chiunchuang-Nanchan), their communications are liable to constant blows from the guerilla detachments, while at the same time the Red Army is not only not destroyed but is strengthening its activities and has latterly been threatening the left flank of the white armies.

The third "final" expedition against the Red Army has ended in the same confusion as the two first ones. The operations of Canton against Nanking will result in the strategical initiative passing over to the Red Army. The general revolutionary position in China at the present moment raises the problem of the domination by the Red Army of a much wider territorial area of military operations than before the last attack, an area which will serve as a basis for furthering the struggle for the sovietisation of Central China.

The Kuomintang armies are crumbling away under the influence of the revolution. The soldiers are beginning to understand on which side of the front they are at present, that their generals are using them against the revolution of their own class. The Kuomintang army is every day becoming a less reliable weapon in the hands of the bourgeois-feudal reaction, ever more often it is remembering that its bayonets can and will be used against its oppressors.

The Red Army, closely bound up with the revolutionary struggles of the broad masses, has strengthened itself and steeled itself during the heavy military struggles of the last ten months. Numerically it is stronger than it has ever been. It is better armed than it has ever been before. It has forged an internal unity in the struggle. It has developed its tactical knowledge and has undertaken night operations already of which not one of the militarist armies in China is capable. It has not only learnt to avoid defeat, not only learnt to war with strong regular forces, but it has also learnt to put them to flight.

The population, the fundamental, toiling, exploited masses have been a factor of primary importance in the civil war. The struggle of the Red Army was directly bound up with the armed struggles of the broad masses of the peasantry, i.e., the poor peasants organised as "Red Guards," "Young Guards," in numerous guerilla detachments or entirely unorganised. In the Red Army there are now round about 120,000

troops. Kuomintang sources reckon the number of "Red Guards" at from 500,000 to 600,000 men, of which about a half have rifles. The number of "Young Guards" who are not so well armed approaches a million. Kuomintang sources reckon that the guerilla detachments have from 150,000 to 200,000 rifles. The total number of rifles in the hands of the peasantry is said to be about half a million, four times as many as those in the Red Army.

The revolution in China is involving enormous masses in armed activity. All the regions captured by the revolution—three hundred out of the 2,000 counties in China—are ruled by soviets and presented a compact armed mass. It was a centre of activity which decomposes politically and exhausts physically and morally the Kuomintang armies a long time before they come into direct collision with the basic armed force of the revolution, the Red Army. The mass of poor and middle peasantry, many millions of them, organised and unorganised, armed and unarmed, this Chinese ocean of toilers, making the revolution of the peasantry, is the spider's web in which the far stronger white armies are hopelessly entangled. The forces of resistance of this mass are gigantic, great in proportion to their revolutionary enthusiasm. They are greater than in any other land. In this lies one of the greatest advantages which the Chinese revolution possesses, one of the unique features of the Chinese civil war.

## VIII.

In the hands of the counter-revolution, besides the white armies there yet remain two weapons—making use of the political faults of the Red Army itself, making use of the rich peasants and gentry who enter the army to break it up and of the imperialist powers for direct military intervention.

In all the divisions of the Nanking army there have been organised counter-revolutionary bodies which also carry on work for the breaking-up of the Red Army. To help with this work there has been founded a powerful counter-revolutionary society known as "A.B." (Anti-Bolshevik) consisting of rich peasants, gentry, landlords, senior civil servants all thrown out by the revolution from the cosy nooks where they were exploiting the people. A.B. carries on work among the peasantry doing all in its power to make the most of any mistake in policy made by the political party, the soviet government or the Red Army. It attempts to discredit their leaders, penetrates into the soviet organs and into the party for direct sabotage,—support of the rich peasants in the name of the soviet government with the purpose of invoking uneasiness among the poor peasants. With the aid of material from the



Nanking counter-revolutionary bodies it carries out acts of individual terrorism in Soviet regions. For bribery in the Red Army Nanking assigned one and a half million dollars. At times the penetration of the A.B. into the Red Army and even into the party seems to have been pretty deep. In the summer of 1930, A.B. succeeded in causing a rift between the poor peasants and the Fourteenth Corps on the grounds of errors made by its leadership with regard to the agrarian question, with the result that the Nanking forces were able to inflict a severe defeat on the corps deprived of the support of the masses. In December of the same year A.B. organised a mutiny of the rich peasants in Ho Lung's corps which was, however, suppressed, the leaders shot and the corps cleansed of 4,000 troops. In the Twelfth Corps A.B. succeeded in bringing about breaking up and mass desertions, the only case of this in the entire Red Army. Finally in the same December of 1930 when Mao Tseh-tung arrested the Kiangsi provincial committee of the C.P. of China at the head of which was discovered to be an agent of A.B., this counter-revolutionary organisation succeeded in provoking a mutiny in the Twentieth Corps "in defence of the Party" and succeeded in freeing the arrested men.

It is characteristic that, making use of the errors of the Li Li-san leadership, the A.B. organisation tried to provoke the leaders of the Red Army to advance and capture Hankow and other powerful cities on the Yang-tse with the aim of opposing weak Red corps to an attack by superior white forces.

It remains to note that very often the Trotskyists were directly linked up with A.B. in their work in the Red Army. Thus, for example one of the divisional commanders of the Red Army during the second attack on Changsha led his division to the rear in spite of the fact that he had received an order to advance, by which he ruined the whole operation and nearly caused a serious reverse. He was exposed as a Trotskyist who did not wish to carry out the directives of the party and shot.

The imperialist powers, who, in actual fact, are

occupying the principal industrial centres and so keeping a tight reign on the development of the revolution of the working-class movement, are showing the greatest possible activity in the job of crushing the workers' and peasants' revolution. Not content with giving financial support to the tottering reaction and supplying it with arms and equipment, they very often take a direct part in military operations against the Red Army. Thus French aeroplanes bombed the town of Lungchow and the Red Army in the province of Kwangsi during which operation one aeroplane was shot down and the pilot killed. And again the military posts of the U.S.A. by fire from their battery drove the Red Army from Yochow on the Yang-tse. Japanese cruisers and gunboats bombarded Daiyeh at the moment of the rising of the workers there. Finally the English, Japanese, and American forces bombarded the Red Army round Changsha and even the town itself with the aim of helping the general, Yeh Kwang. Everywhere the imperialist garrisons are strengthened on the pretext of "protecting the life and property of foreigners" but in reality to prepare for intensive armed intervention when the forces of reaction appear conclusively incapable of opposing the revolution. The menace of extensive intervention to crush the Chinese revolution is very real and it grows as its victories become greater.

The Red Army to-day is not yet strong enough to inflict a decisive defeat on the armed counter-revolution, but it will do this to-morrow.

But the Chinese counter-revolution is not to-day capable of crushing the Revolution and destroying the Red Army, and it will be even less capable of doing this to-morrow.

Behind the Chinese reactionary forces stand the imperialist powers who are willing to risk their entire armed forces as a last resort to win the struggle.

It is not only the Chinese toilers, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Red Army which must be prepared to fight them; for this struggle against intervention which is even now in progress there must be mobilised the entire forces of the world proletariat.

# THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN CAPITALIST EUROPE

(From Comrade Kuusinen's report at the session of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.)

WHEN speaking to-day on the nationalist question in Europe, the first thing we have to do is to define our point of view on three fundamental aspects of it, which are of decisive importance in laying down the correct policy for the Communist Parties in this sphere. The first point we have to bear in mind is the fundamental difference in our approach to this question to-day and our approach to it in the days before the Bolshevik revolution; the second point is the problem of linking up correctly the national question with that of the Soviet revolution within the boundaries of a given State; the third relates to the character of the revolution in connection with the nationalist question.

On the first two questions I have already spoken in sufficient detail at the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. On this occasion, instead of attempting to elucidate every facet of these questions, I want to confine myself to directing attention more sharply to the existing weaknesses of our parties and to the dangers of certain definitely incorrect tendencies. In the first instance, although I run the risk to a certain extent of being one-sided in my exposition, I deem it necessary to draw attention very sharply to that weakness which has revealed itself in the work of our sections as the result of lack of appreciation of the national question and a definite *preponderance of an abstract, propagandist approach* to this question, i.e., confining ourselves in most cases to indicating in a *general* way that the national question will be settled after a Soviet revolution. In practice this turns out to be a very easy way of hiding political passivity in this sphere.

In the measure that the slogan of the right to self-determination including separation, is exchanged in practice for such clearly propagandist slogans as "For a Balkan Federation of Workers' and Peasants' Republics!" "For the Independence of a Workers' and Peasants' (Soviet) Alsace-Lorraine!" "For the Union of Western Ukraine with Soviet Ukraine!" etc., to that extent the attention of the party is, in fact distracted directly from the actual struggle against the existing concrete forms of national oppression, for freedom to separate, for national freedom from the yoke of the ruling bourgeoisie, be it Polish, Czech, Serb, Roumanian, Italian, French, etc. Assuredly not a few comrades state the case to themselves as follows: "It is not worth while, especially to-day, to carry on a struggle for national demands, for self-determination can really only be realised after a Soviet revolution." From this reasoning it is accepted that this principal demand should, correctly speaking, be addressed not to the existing bourgeois

Governments, but to the future Soviet Government only.

## I.

THE NATIONAL QUESTION MUST BE APPROACHED IN A FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT WAY TO-DAY THAN IT WAS BEFORE THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION.

Some comrades assuredly consider that the fundamental difference lies in the fact that the demand for the right of the oppressed peoples to self-determination, in the days before the Bolshevik revolution was *realisable* while to-day it is clearly *unrealisable*. To my mind, this approach to the question is incorrect since they have in mind the realisability of these demands *without* wars, revolutions or nationalist risings. This statement of the "Impossibility of realisation" served also before and during the imperialist war, playing a rôle as one of the chief arguments of the Polish comrades against the fundamental Bolshevik slogan, but Lenin smashed this argument of theirs in a whole series of articles. Pointing out that, as a result of that war, the formation of the Polish, Finnish and Czech States had become completely "realisable," Lenin, then, in 1916, thus formulated his conclusions:

"The imperialist epoch does not abolish either strivings for political independence of the peoples or the "realisability" of these strivings *within* the boundaries of world imperialist relations. *Outside* these boundaries, independence is not realisable without a series of revolutions and not enduring without Socialism or a republic in Russia or unless there take place generally a very powerful democratic transformation throughout the world." (Lenin, Works, Russ. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 216, Note.)

In this connection, I note that this question of *how much* chance there is—more or less—of the realisation of this or that political demand does not seem to us of decisive moment for the estimation of its utility as a slogan of activity. Much more decisive is the question as to how far it has potency to mobilise the masses of the workers for the struggle against the existing rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords. In this connection there is no doubt that the demand of a nation for the right of self-determination, as one of the demands of political democracy,\* has enormous power to mobilise the broad masses of the workers of the oppressed nationalities for the struggle against imperialism. So far as the question of the realisability of this demand comes in, it is obvious that it is yet less realisable than in the pre-war period, there can be talk about the realisation of the right to realisation by a peaceful route (like Norway). Such a possibility

\* See the theses of Lenin, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of a Nation to Self-determination" (1916) and his article of the same year, "Some Discussions on Self-determination," etc.

seems "big with no significance" (to quote from the speech of Comrade Stalin before the Jugo-Slav Commission of the E.C.C.I. in 1925). Instead then of building our national policy on such non-existent bigness, we must underline the possibility of national wars, risings and revolutions. Lenin wrote in 1916 :

"National wars against the imperialist powers are not only possible and probable, they are inevitable, *progressive* and *revolutionary*, although, of course, for their *success*, there is demanded either the union of the forces of a vast number of inhabitants of the subject nations (hundreds of millions in the case of our examples, India and China) or a *specially* favourable conjunction of conditions in the international situation (e.g., the paralysis of the intervention of the imperialist powers by their weakening wars and antagonisms between them, etc.) or else a *simultaneous* rising of the proletariat of one of the great powers against its bourgeoisie (the last eventuality on our list seems the most desirable and favourable from our point of view of the victory of the proletariat." (Lenin, Works, Russ. Ed., Vol. 19, p. 184.)

It would also be incorrect to assume that the content of the fundamental demand of the movement for national freedom, the demand for the right to self-determination including separation was changed at the time of the Bolshevik revolution. It was not. This demand has remained one of the demands of political democracy\* (as the chief method of a negative character). It mobilises the masses of the people of the oppressed nations, in the majority of cases peasant masses, for the struggle against imperialism. Assuredly, however, the anti-imperialist struggle of subject nations has now a *wider and new significance* in the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism. In the period after the victory of the Bolshevik revolution, when the question of the struggle between *socialism* and *imperialism* is approached on a mass scale, the movement for the national freedom of the colonial and other subject nations, as the anti-imperialist factor, actively joins in the struggle of the international revolutionary proletariat for victory over imperialism in the whole world, i.e., for world Socialist revolution.

In his speech at the Jugo-Slav Commission of the E.C.C.I., in 1925, Comrade Stalin said :

"In the second (October) stage, when the national question became broadened and transformed into the question of the colonies, when it was transformed from an inter-State into a world question, since then the national question has been regarded as part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, as part of the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

\* This applies only to the national question in the *capitalist* world, not in the U.S.S.R. There is no notion of a new concept of the self-determination of peoples either in the propositions of Comrades Lenin, Stalin, and the other partisans of the Bolsheviks at the April Conference of the Bolshevik Party in 1917, nor in the theses of Lenin at the Second Congress of the Comintern or in the propositions of Stalin dealing with the Jugo-Slavian question in 1925.

#### CHANGES IN NATIONALIST QUESTION.

The most important changes since the imperialist war in the sphere of the national question in Europe, are first as follows :

(1) The attainment of national freedom by those nations who have come into the boundaries of the U.S.S.R. and the development of their national culture with a socialist content.

(2) The creation by the might of the victor powers of a characteristic *system of an imperialist hierarchy of two stages* by means of which the bourgeoisie of some comparatively small nations, e.g., the Poles, Czechs, Serbs, and Roumanians, as a reward for the submission of their State to one of the Great Powers, get the "right" to oppress and exploit a whole number of other weaker peoples.

(3) An excessive worsening of the conditions of the masses of the people exposed in this fashion to double imperialist exploitation as a result of which, in the majority of cases, the predominating feature of this oppression is that it is all the greater when a policy of assimilation (as was practised in regard to the nationalist minorities in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, in Alsace-Lorraine, etc.) is not attempted, but there is instead a policy of colonial\* enslavement and pillage.

(4) A rapid economic rapprochement of the bourgeoisie of the subject and ruling States and, in consequence of this, the loss of the progressive rôle of the former in the national movement and, at the same time, a tremendous heightening of the interest and activity in this movement of the broad masses of the peasantry and proletariat which has already had its effect in a series of mass steps and even armed risings in Poland, Roumania, Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia and France (Alsace-Lorraine), etc.

Taking these changes into consideration, it is possible to make the following deductions which are of great political importance : In the first place the movement for national freedom, in which the nationalist bourgeoisie formerly played the leading part, is now developing rather as a movement of the working masses with a huge peasant majority and is more or less closely bound up with the struggle of these peasant and working masses for their *class* economic and political demands.

In the second place, this mass movement for national freedom is assuming more and more definitely and decisively the character of an anti-imperialist movement and is drawing, for this

\* When I speak here of colonial relations, I have in mind the actual substance of this conception as it is defined in the colonial theses of the Sixth Congress : "... the monopoly of the bourgeoisie of the imperialist country corresponding to the subject nation is based not only on economic pressure but also on extra-economic force." (Stenographic Report of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, No. 6, p. 129, section ii.)

reason, closer to the camp of the proletarian revolutionary movement and becoming its natural ally.

In Comrade Stalin's article against Semitch, he points out precisely what is the essence of the national question "now when the national question has been transferred from an inter-State into a *world* question, to the question of the struggle of the colonies and the subject nationalities against imperialism":

"The essence of the national question lies now in the struggle of the masses of the people of the colonies and subject nations against financial exploitation, political enslavement and cultural deprivation on the part of the imperialist bourgeoisie of the ruling country. The imperialist group of ruling countries exploits and oppresses the masses and especially the peasants of the colonies and subject nations, but by oppressing and exploiting them, it drags them into the struggle against imperialism and makes them allies of the proletarian revolution."

In this way the masses of the colonies and subject nations, struggling against national oppression on the part of the imperialist bourgeoisie of the ruling country, are seen to be allies of the proletarian revolution from two aspects: (1) On the international front they are allies of the U.S.S.R. and the international revolutionary workers' movement, i.e., the chief active forces of the world socialist revolution, and (2) in the framework of the individual state, in the boundaries of which this subject nation is included, the masses of this subject nation become the allies of the revolutionary proletariat of the ruling country since they are struggling against national oppression on the part of the bourgeoisie of the ruling country which is seen to be the chief enemy of the proletarian revolution in that country.

## 2.

### HOW TO LINK UP CORRECTLY IN PRACTICE THE NATIONAL QUESTION WITH THE QUESTION OF THE SOVIET REVOLUTION IN A SINGLE STATE.

If the nationalist question is divorced from the question of revolution, then there is a deviation from the Leninist line to one side or another; a national reformist deviation on the national question eliminates the question of revolution; a great-power deviation eliminates the national question from the question of revolution.

This has been expressed in the practice of our parties in the European countries especially in those instances mentioned below.

(1) In relation to *actual conflicts* arising on the terrain of the national question between the bourgeoisie of the ruling country and the subject nations. On the one hand we meet in practice with a refusal to take part in the struggle, for such concrete questions as a result of lack of appreciation of the importance of the national struggle in general and, in particular, as the outcome of a confused idea that to-day national contradictions are not only linked up with class

contradictions, but actually *confluent* with them and are simply transformed into class contradictions, i.e., national contradictions are, as it were, disappearing. Hence comes the tendency to reject the concretisation of the demands of the national programme (resistance to the various concrete forms of national oppression) and in practice the pressing of the demand for the right of self-determination and the right of separation.

Instead of this, they confine themselves as a rule to propaganda for the final solution of the national question after the proletarian revolution alone. Now this practice and approach differs little in essentials from the old outlook of certain Polish comrades with their doctrine "the revolution will decide everything." On the other side we meet with the deviation to a "positive" nationalist-reformist policy resulting in the colouring of the demands of the workers to the advantage of the nationalists, (as e.g., the defence of the independence of church schools by the right opportunists in Alsace-Lorraine), a deviation to a constitutional nationalist programme, since they avoid an approach to the question of the right of *separation* of the frontiers of the ruling country.

A *correct* tactic in these circumstances demands in my opinion, that the Communist Parties should take an independent part in all conflicts involving the national interests of the mass of the people, the putting forward, in consonance with the class demands of the party, of concrete demands against all the more important forms of national oppression in a given country, especially against those forms under which the masses of the peasantry of the subject nation suffer most directly. Here is a real *platform of action* for the Communist Party on the nationalist question (with demands of a negative character for each distinct national area.) There must be a systematic preparation of mass action by the workers and peasants of the subject nation on the basis of the national platform of the party and the careful direction of the intensification of these activities into higher forms of the revolutionary mass struggle.

(2) As regards *chauvinism* in the ranks of "their own" country, there may be noted on the one hand a very feeble struggle on the part of the Communists of the ruling country against the daily appearances of chauvinism in the policy of the Government and of the Social Democratic Party, and an evasion of the fight against remnants of chauvinism in the ranks of the workers of the ruling country. The French and Greek Communists have sinned particularly in this respect, but they are not the only ones. On the other hand many Communists from the subject nations are not entirely free from local nationalism and do not underline sufficiently the necessity for a joint struggle of the masses of the people of the subject nation with the revolutionary proletariat of the ruling country. In some cases there may be remarked even a tendency to party separatism (e.g.,

on the part of the opportunist elements of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine).

A correct tactic demands most certainly that Communists belonging to the ruling country struggle decisively, bitterly and exemplarily against all forms of national oppression and great-power chauvinism, making no concessions whatsoever to the national prejudices of the masses of the ruling country ; and in the same way, correct tactics demand that the Communists of the subject nation in their turn keep before the masses of that nation the necessity of an alliance for the fight with the revolutionary workers of the ruling country, to achieve a joint struggle, to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and landlords.

(3) Relations with the *nationalist parties and groups* of subject nations. On the one hand there is an insufficient ideological marking-off from local nationalism, and, in some cases, clearly a tendency for the Communists to get dragged behind the nationalist parties of the subject nation (e.g., Hubert and his group in Alsace-Lorraine). On the other hand, there is a tendency in the campaign of the Communist Parties generally to concentrate their fire on the bourgeois nationalists of the oppressed countries only. They lump together without any distinction the nationalist and anti-national elements, i.e., obvious renegades who have sold themselves to the ruling imperialist power, simply affirming that both the former and the latter are all the same allies of the ruling bourgeoisie.

In reality the bourgeoisie (petty bourgeoisie) of the subject peoples in Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, the Balkans, etc., give obvious proof of their double rôle in the course of their relations with the bourgeoisie of the ruling country. On the one hand there is their rapid rapprochement economically and their submission to its hegemony and the reduction of their political opposition to a minimum, but on the other hand, in proportion as this compromising of the old nationalist parties in sight of the masses of the people on the basis of a policy of capitulation proceeds, there also goes on the formation from the ranks of the bourgeois intelligentsia and petty bourgeois and rich peasant youth of new groups of nationalist activists (e.g., the Ukrainian military organisation in Western Ukraine, the I.M.R.O. in Macedonia, a student organisation in the Dobrudja, the Tuka group in Slovakia, etc.).

These are clearly anti-Communist, anti-Soviet groups which can be called *National Fascist*, but it is impossible to lump them together with the *Fascists* of the ruling nation (e.g., the U.N.D.O. with the followers of Pilsudski). All these National Fascist groups have, or are looking for connections *abroad*, are seeking support from neighbouring bourgeois Governments, i.e., are the allies of other imperialist powers but against the domination of the ruling country, they are carrying on mass agitation, organising armed risings, "putsches" etc. Therefore the

masses of the subject nations do not believe these statements of the Communists that these nationalists do not want to struggle against the oppressors of the people, the bourgeoisie of the ruling country, especially if the Communist Parties themselves are at the same time only putting up a very feeble fight against national oppression.

Correct tactics for the Communist Parties under such circumstances demand the development of methods of struggle for winning the toiling masses especially the peasants of the subject nation away from the influence of the nationalists (i.e., from the reformists as well as the National Fascists). From this it follows in my opinion that it must be part of the tactics of the Communist Parties to explain the distinction between the "external" and "internal" enemies of the national movement, reckoning in the camp of the external enemies, the bourgeoisie and landlords of the ruling country together with their open tools from the subject nation, and with the internal enemies of the national movement, the nationalists of the subject nation. The first are dangerous because they have power in their hands and the last because they have mass influence over the workers and peasants of the subject nation. The masses know the first are dangerous and detest them, but the last have not yet been unveiled ; in relation to them, the immediate task consists assuredly in *unveiling them* before the masses of workers and peasants of the subject nation. But to do this successfully, it is not enough to unveil these treacherous vacillations of the National Reformist Parties, and their transactions with the ruling oppressors, but it must be proved at the same time that the National Fascists impede the victory of the movement for national freedom by opposing the fighting union of the nationalist movements and the revolutionary proletariat of all lands, especially the Communist Parties, the Comintern and the U.S.S.R. and, instead of this, appealing for "help" from foreign bourgeois Governments which are pursuing their own imperialist aims.

Of course it is impossible to ignore the fact that all these different bourgeois parties and groups have a common class basis linking them up in every respect to one another and uniting them especially for the struggle against the revolutionary working-class movement. As regards all the bourgeois groups of the subject nations, there is more or less clearly revealed their anti-Soviet position and hostility to the Communists. In this they have a bond in common not only with one another but also with the bourgeois parties of the ruling country, including the Social Democrats. But it is incorrect to deduce from this fact the conclusion that the *difference* between the bourgeois currents enumerated above among the subject nations (National Fascists, National Reformists, Social Democrats and anti-Nationalists who

are openly lackeys of the ruling power) is all the time diminishing and will gradually disappear and lose generally its political significance. The matter is not so simple as all that.

In the majority of cases it is observed that just the reverse happens, that in proportion to the growth in strength of the Communist movement in the ranks of the subject nation and in proportion to the progressive political rapprochement of the old Nationalist Parties to the bourgeoisie of the ruling nation, so inevitably, there appear on the scene new Nationalist groups among which are those which will take more "radical" (in the opinion of the Nationalists) steps than the old National Parties ever did. If we merely examine the mutual differences of opinion of those bourgeois groups, the difference between them is very small. The struggle between them is not a fight, but only a bickering or, more often, an assignment of political rôles. But whether they quarrel with one another or not is of little interest to us, what is of moment is the difference of their methods of getting the leadership of the masses of the workers of the subject nation. In this connection there is a difference of great political significance which it is impossible to ignore.

While, for example, in the Western Ukraine, the group representing the followers of Petlura or of the Ukrainian Bishop Sheptitsky, steps forward openly like the followers of Pilsudski, the National Reformist Party, the U.N.D.O. is all the time changing its colour, approaching the masses in one way and the followers of Pilsudski in another (e.g., a third of the Ukrainian Fascists of the U.B.O. type are organising putsches against the Polish Government). Possibly there are those who think that it is unnecessary in the mass work of the Communist Parties to take into account such differences of approach by our enemies to the working masses. Not to take into account, however, these differences when determining our tactics, particularly the various methods of deceiving the masses of the workers used by the National groups, would in my opinion indicate that in practice we are refusing to win these masses away from the influence of the Nationalists.

(4) With regard to the question of national revolts by the subject nations, in some cases our comrades stand definitely *for* the preparation of Nationalist revolts, but do not understand the necessity of linking them up with the question of the Soviet revolution and remain uncritical and not independent enough with regard to the petty bourgeois leaders of the national revolutionary organisations, who try to divorce the question of national freedom from the question of Soviet revolution. In other cases their attitude towards the preparation of a national rising is *negative* ("This is not our business"), especially if there are also bourgeois Nationalists in the ranks of the subject nation busying themselves with the preparation of national revolts.

*Correct* tactics for the Communist Parties are, in my opinion, independent and active work by the Communist Parties in the preparation of national risings, a constant struggle among the masses of the workers for the weakening of the influence of the Nationalists and the attainment of a leading position for the Communist Parties; obligatory linking up of the slogans for national freedom with important economic and political *class* demands of the workers and peasants (i.e., the middle and poor peasants) directed against all landlords and capitalists irrespective of nationality (e.g., a demand for the confiscation of the property of the landlords not only of the ruling but also of the subject nation); systematic direction of the movement to overthrow a given Government, together with the overthrowing of the power of the bourgeoisie and landlords generally.

A correct co-ordination of the struggle for national freedom with the problem of the preparation of a Soviet revolution is attained not by the way of irritation of the national mass movement, but by deepening its class character and direct preparation for the development of a national revolt into a Soviet revolution.

The task of carrying over a national revolt into a Soviet revolution presupposes that propaganda for the Soviet revolution is being carried on to-day obligatorily in the ranks of the national freedom movement, that it is being correctly explained to the masses about the relation of this slogan to the right of self-determination.

The Nationalist Activists often conduct an agitation against us among the peasantry of the subject nation saying: "The Communists are for the Sovietisation and against the national independence of our people, but we are for independence and against Sovietisation; the Communists are agents of 'red imperialism' and in a sense agents of the land which oppresses us, only they hide behind the mask of revolutionary phraseology; the Communists are against our risings for national freedom, they are for the right of self-determination in words, but in reality they are against our right to self-determination unless we adopt the Soviet system."

In reply to this National Fascist slander, we must enlighten the masses by using the following basic arguments:

(1) It is true that we are for the establishment of the Soviet system of society, but it is not true that we recognise the right of a people to self-determination only on condition that they agree to Sovietisation; we recognise and support the right of a people to self-determination unconditionally and precisely as Lenin said:

"We demand this unconditionally from the present bourgeois Governments and, when we ourselves come into power, we must perforce realise this right and allow this freedom."

(2) We are advocates of a consequent mass struggle for national freedom including national revolts, but

we do not, like the Nationalists, spend our time in treacherous vacillations towards the ruling bourgeoisie and oppressing powers; we do not invite foreign imperialists here, new oppressors, as the National Fascists do. We point out the only real guarantee of the victory of the movement for national freedom is a joint struggle with the other oppressed peoples and the revolutionary movement of the workers of the ruling country at the very time the Nationalists are trying to demolish this alliance for the fight of the workers of all lands;

(3) We, the Communists, are certain that it is impossible to attain and assure the existence of the free right of a people to self-determination otherwise than on a Soviet basis, and we shall strive unceasingly to convince a majority of the working-class, to convince you all of the necessity for a Soviet revolution; in connection with the coming Soviet revolution of the proletariat of the present ruling country, our party will call on you, too, to follow its example, not, however, imposing this against the will of the people, for our party recognises that principle of the relations of the peoples which was emphasised by Engels and Lenin, that "the victorious proletariat cannot enforce any scheme for their betterment on any strange nation without prejudicing thereby its own victory."

### 3.

#### THE CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION IN CONNECTION WITH THE NATIONALIST QUESTION.

Here we have before us a fresh question—fresh in that we have not yet approached it in our exposition. And I have not treated any question here except as it has come up in my approach to the question.

The programme of the Communist International expresses itself very circumspectly on the character of the revolution in such countries as Spain, Poland, the Balkan States, etc.:

"In some of these lands a process of more or less rapid development of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution is possible; in others there are types of proletarian revolution conceivable, but with problems of a bourgeois character of great dimensions."

But it does not say precisely in which of these countries the first or the second kind of revolution will be presented. In the Communist Parties of these countries themselves there is often met with a tendency everywhere to define the character of the revolution as socialist and, after this very general definition, simply to apply this point of view. Even in the Communist Party of Poland, which stands quite definitely for its estimation of the next stage of its revolution as socialist, there has been no study of or approach to the question as to how the problem of the character of the revolution in Poland is linked up with the national question. Yet it seems to me that this is one of the immediate problems there.

Surely a correct definition of the general character

of the next stage of the revolution has special political meaning for us, especially from the point of view of replying to the question: which *problems* should the party begin with as the *fundamental* tasks of the revolution to-day? But there is certainly a definite divergence on this point, connected with the national question, of the tasks of the various national areas, let us say, under the Polish Government. It is perfectly obvious that in Western Ukraine as in Western White Russia, it is essential to begin with as the fundamental problems of the next stage of revolution, in the first instance, such questions as national freedom and the agrarian revolution, i.e., tasks of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. In Poland proper, however, it is essential in the first place to begin with, as a basic task, the confiscation and nationalisation of the capitalist industries whereby we want to mobilise for the struggle for power the decisive mass force of the revolution, the industrial proletariat. This difference is, of course, not *only* connected with the national question, but also with the different stages of capitalist development.

The method of conducting the agrarian revolution is obviously one of the basic problems of the revolution for all territories under the Polish Government, but there is even in this problem a definite variation in so far as relics of feudalism persist in agricultural relations, for although these are present in Poland proper to a fairly considerable extent, they are very much stronger yet in Western Ukraine and White Russia. How far there is a question as to whether the putting forward of a general slogan of confiscation of the industrial enterprises in these areas fully corresponds to existing conditions in Western Ukraine and White Russia, I am not prepared to say as I have not made any concrete study of this question. The Polish comrades will reply to this query definitely and positively; it may be that this is correct, but we are now considering not this question, but the question of what influence the *national* question specifically has on the character of the revolution.

In regard to that question, when speaking of the rôle of slogans of freedom for the oppressed peoples, it is impossible to ignore the fact that such slogans, which admittedly have a directly revolutionary influence on the masses of the people of the subject nations, are not for that reason adapted for the direct mobilisation of the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses of the workers of the ruling country. On the contrary, the necessary preliminary work among the masses of such a country is agitation by *class-conscious* Communist workers, who "work among" and educate these masses to conquer in them the relics of internal opposition persisting among them to a certain extent as the inevitable reflection of a bourgeois chauvinist atmosphere.

(To be continued).

# **HOW THEY DID IT**

## **Reminiscences of Old Bolsheviki**

The Strike of the Dredging Fleet  
Crimea 1906

Unemployed Councils in St.  
Petersburg 1905

The "Potemkin" (coming)

From February to October 1917 (coming)

## **AND TO-DAY!**

New Conditions ; New Tasks  
J. Stalin

The Success of the Five Year Plan  
V. M. Molotov

The Five Year Plan and the  
Cultural Revolution A. Kuvella

Red Villages  
Y. A. Yakovlev

The Five Year Plan of the Soviet  
Union  
G. T. Grinko

Social Economic Planning in the U.S.S.R.  
(coming)