

# THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

D. Z. MANUILSKY

(XIth Plenum)

ONE SHILLING

MODERN BOOKS LTD.

Publishers of Workers' Books

16 KING STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

THE  
COMMUNIST  
PARTIES AND  
THE CRISIS OF  
CAPITALISM

D. Z. MANUILSKY

MODERN BOOKS LTD.  
16 KING STREET, LONDON, W.C.2



Speech delivered on the First Item  
of the Agenda of the XI Plenum of  
the E.C.C.I. held in March-April 1931,  
together with the speech in reply to  
the discussion on this subject

PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY  
THE GARDEN CITY PRESS LIMITED,  
LETCHEWORTH, HERTS.  
(T.U. all departments)

## CONTENTS

### REPORT :

#### *THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM.*

	PAGE
<i>Introduction</i> - - - - -	I

I. TWO WORLDS : - - - - -	4
The World Economic Crisis - - - - -	4
Social Democracy and the Crisis - - - - -	5
What did we say ? - - - - -	8
The Language of Facts - - - - -	9
The Increasing Crisis in Figures - - - - -	11
Capitalist Attack on the Working Class - - - - -	12

#### *THE U.S.S.R.*

What do we see in the U.S.S.R. in the midst of the Raging World Crisis ? - - - - -	16
Intervention - - - - -	20

#### II. THE MENACE OF IMPERIALIST WARS :

Social and Political Consequences of the Crisis - - -	26
Accentuation of Differences and the Menace of Imperialist Wars - - - - -	30
Fascism - - - - -	36

#### III. THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE : - - -

The Revolutionary Political Crisis - - - - -	53
Germany : Poland : Spain : China : India : The Upsurge in Indo-China - - - - -	54-60
Conclusions - - - - -	60

#### IV. SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, *The Main Social Pillar of the Bourgeoisie* - - - - -

The Tactics of Class Against Class - - - - -	69
Disintegration in the Ranks of the Social Democracy	74
The Manœuvres of the Social Democracy - - - - -	75

	PAGE
V. THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS IN THE WORK OF THE SECTIONS OF THE C.I.:	77
Lagging Behind - - - - -	83
Conclusion - - - - -	92
CONCLUDING SPEECH:	
<i>THE PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS AND THE TASKS OF SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL</i> - -	94
On the Revolutionary Crisis - - - - -	96
Fascism - - - - -	104
Social Fascism and the Theory of "The Lesser Evil"	110
The Struggle for a Revolutionary way out of the Crisis and the Basic Tasks of the Sections of the Communist International - - - - -	114

# THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

## REPORT BY D. Z. MANUILSKY TO THE XI PLENUM OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COM- MUNIST INTERNATIONAL

### INTRODUCTION

A LITTLE over a year has passed since the February Presidium of the E.C.C.I., a year of the greatest world economic crisis in history, a year of great economic, social and political changes reflected both in the life of States and in the relation of classes, a year the importance of which can be measured on a scale of decades of "organic" accumulation of capitalist contradictions.

1. The present crisis of over-production which arose on the basis of the general post-war crisis of capitalism, **weakens the position of capitalism**, by deepening and sharpening this crisis, by increasing the elements of decay in capitalism, its parasitic features, the anarchy of the capitalist mode of production which hinders the development of productive forces within the framework of capitalism. As a consequence of the sharpening of all the main contradictions of capitalism, the capitalist world is approaching the end of capitalist stability. This weakening of the position of capitalism is not a brief episode, but the outcome of radical changes in the correlation of class forces in two world systems (the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world). The shattering of the position of capitalism is expressed in the extreme instability of all capitalist international alliances and agreements, and in the rapid changing of international groupings of the capitalist powers, in the growing elements of the disintegration of the Versailles system, in the growth of imperialist aggression on the part of all the capitalist countries against each other and above all against the U.S.S.R.

Under the influence of the crisis, and of fear in the face of victorious Socialism in the U.S.S.R., and faced with the stormy outbursts of indignation of the masses in capitalist countries, the aggressiveness of the bourgeoisie against the working class, the ruined peasants and the toilers of the colonies is increasing; they increasingly strive to transfer all the effects of the crisis on to the

workers by lowering their standard of living to the lowest possible level; the forms of political reaction are growing stronger and the fascisation of the methods of domination employed by the bourgeois dictatorship are rapidly developing.

2. Along with the successes in carrying out the Five-Year Plan of Socialist construction, especially in the first two years of the Five-Year Period, along with the successes of collectivisation of agriculture in the U.S.S.R., **the position of Socialism under construction has improved, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat has been strengthened owing to the fact that millions of poor and middle peasants are turning towards Socialism; the relative importance of the economic system of the U.S.S.R. in world economy and the relative importance of the U.S.S.R. in the sphere of international politics have increased.** At the same time, there has been an increase in the significance of the U.S.S.R. as the **fortress of the World Revolutionary Movement** of the workers, the peasants and the toilers of the colonies.

But this all-round strengthening of the land of the proletarian dictatorship at a time of world crisis, together with the victorious onslaught of the C.P.S.U. on the capitalist elements of town and village, the defeat of Right and "Left" opportunism which has completely undermined the hopes of the world bourgeoisie in the capitalist degeneration of the U.S.S.R., has led to a fresh sharpening of contradictions between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world. It has increased the danger of intervention against the U.S.S.R., settling the fundamental question of "who will be the victor" on the arena of international war, to a degree greater than at any time since 1918-20, because on the arena of internal class relations in the U.S.S.R., the hopelessness of attempts to solve this problem in favour of the class enemy without intervention from outside, is obvious.

3. The changes in the correlation of forces between the world of capital and the world of growing Socialism during the past year have been accompanied by **a strengthening of the position of the International Revolutionary Movement.** The capitalist offensive along the whole front on wages, social insurance (where it exists), the working day, the political rights of the working class—the right to strike, to meet and to organise—the dismissals of millions of workers from the factories (first of all the revolutionary elements), reducing the standard of living of the lower paid employees, together with the attacks on the peasants ruined by high taxation, the frantic repression of the colonies, of the oppressed nationalities—all this causes innumerable calamities to the workers—starvation, cold, illness, and increased death-rate, the extinction of whole districts in the colonies (in China, India and Indo-China).

At the same time, the successes of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., which present a striking contrast to the worsening of the situation of the toiling masses in the capitalist countries, revolutionises the latter and greatly accelerates the rate of their radicalisa-

tion, forcing them more and more along the only correct path of revolutionary mass action for the purpose of repulsing the attack of capital and passing on to a counter-attack against it.

This accelerated rise of the revolutionary wave, together with the symptoms of disintegration among the ruling "upper classes," forms the basis for converting the present economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis. This revolutionary crisis, linked up with the elements of the general post-war crisis of capitalism (monopolist decay, contradictions between productive capacity and markets, the agrarian crisis, the industrialisation of trans-oceanic countries, the revolutionary movement in the colonies and, above all, the establishment of the U.S.S.R.) developing more rapidly in the weaker links of the capitalist structure, and not being of a universal character, illustrates the unevenness of development of the revolutionary processes. Its elements mature most rapidly in countries like India, China, Spain and certain countries in Latin America. In countries like Poland and Germany, the prerequisites for the economic crisis to grow into a revolutionary crisis are at present only developing. In the third type of countries comprising the majority of capitalist States (chiefly U.S.A., Great Britain, France) we can observe at present only a rising tempo of revolutionary upsurge, expressed by sharp conflicts between capital and labour, violent demonstrations of the unemployed, an increase in the sympathy of the workers towards Communism, extensive peasant movements and sporadic revolts in the colonies (Indo-China). In spite of this varied picture of the state of the revolutionary movement in different countries, there is no doubt that during the last year the world revolutionary movement has made a serious and considerable step in advance.

4. World Social Democracy and the apparatus of the reformist trade unions is the chief hindrance to the Communist Parties winning the majority of the working class to the conversion of the present revolutionary movement of the masses into a decisive fight of the proletariat and the toilers against the capitalist system. The present crisis reveals most clearly the fact that Social Democracy has become a party of decaying, parasitic capitalism of the period of its general crisis, which renders it a party of social and political retrogression and disintegration; a party more reactionary and counter-revolutionary than the bourgeois parties were in the past when capitalism was still on the upgrade. By disorganising the working class, by pushing it along the path of capitulation to Fascism, by concealing the fascisation of the class government of the bourgeoisie behind phrases about "organised capitalism" and the "social classless state," the Social Democrats seek to create the conditions for the destruction of the working class, of its organisations and its achievements, so as to save decaying capitalism, which is in the grip of a general capitalist crisis, and thus clear the ground for the triumph of Fascism. Social Democracy has become an integral

part of the bourgeois dictatorship in all its forms, including the Fascist system. Its chief function is to provide a mass basis for Fascism, for, as Lenin correctly emphasised, no régime can exist without a certain mass basis. But this does not exclude the fact that under the pressure of the economic crisis, which radicalises the masses, the Social Democrats are compelled to resort to "left" manoeuvres within the limits set it by the manoeuvring powers of capital. The past year was a year of greatly accelerated fascisation of Social Democracy, fascisation which it endeavoured to conceal by "left" manoeuvres and which here and there caught the Communist Parties unawares. This combination of Fascist methods and "left" phrases forms a new zig-zag, characteristic of Social Democracy, which the Communist Parties must take into account in their tactical line.

5. The past year has also revealed most clearly and sharply the backwardness of the subjective factor—the Communist Parties. The events in India, Spain and the countries of Latin America would have had a very different aspect if there had been mass Communist Parties in these lands. In the same way, if there had been a strong Communist Movement in Great Britain or the U.S.A., the character of the revolutionary upheaval in all the colonies and the semi-colonial countries would have been different. The backwardness of the Communist Parties in capitalist countries can be explained to a large extent by the fact that the rising revolutionary wave has not developed at the rate which should be possible considering the objective conditions. But this backwardness does not by any means signify that the Communist Parties have not scored serious successes during the past year. It merely signifies that even our successes have not always corresponded to the possibilities existing in the favourable objective situation created by the intensified class struggle. It is the central tactical task of the present Plenum to indicate measures for overcoming this backwardness of the Communist Parties.

In keeping with these outstanding points the report of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. will be divided into five parts. These are :

1. Two Worlds. The World of Capitalism and the World of Socialist Construction. The danger of intervention.
2. The menace of imperialist wars and Fascism.
3. The rising tide of revolution.
4. Social Democracy as the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie.
5. The position of the Sections of the Communist International.

## I

### TWO WORLDS

#### The World Economic Crisis

The first question to be raised is—who was right—the Communists or the bourgeois economists and the Social Democratic

hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, in the estimation of the nature, the rate of development and the prospects of the present crisis? We recall the estimation of the present crisis given by such authoritative bourgeois economists like Irving Fisher, Keynes, Cassel and others. Some of them, Fisher and Keynes, saw the reasons for the crisis in the conditions of money and credit circulation, and others (like Cassel) in the shortage of capital. These explanations of the crisis were not accidental, they were dictated by the interests of capital, which was trying to substantiate its policy of aggression towards the working class by "scientific" arguments, viz. that since the cause of the crisis is the insufficient accumulation of capital, it is necessary to reduce expenditure on wages, on social insurance, etc. At first, all the bourgeois economists denied that this is a crisis of over-production. It was only after the complete bankruptcy of all their diagnoses and all their prophecies that they were compelled to follow the Marxist Bolsheviks and talk of it as a crisis of over-production. It could not have been otherwise with their prophecies, because by taking one of the aspects of the crisis for its cause, the bourgeois economists were bound to make completely incorrect forecasts and draw wrong conclusions.

#### Social Democracy and the Crisis

But the greatest waverings on the question of the world crisis were undoubtedly to be found among the Social Democrats. There were several stages in their theoretical stand on the question of the crisis: **before the crisis, at the beginning of the crisis and now in the midst of the crisis.**

At the Congress of the German Social Democratic Party in 1927, Hilferding stated :

" Organised capitalism in reality means a fundamental **replacement of the capitalist principle of free competition by the Socialist principle of planned production** " (Hilferding, Minutes of the S.D.P., Germany, 1927, page 166).

A still more cynical statement was made on this question, not by a theoretician of the II. International, but by its practical trade unionist, Tarnov :

" We must distinguish two epochs in the development of capitalism : the epoch of British capitalism which was limited in its possibilities of expansion, and the epoch of American capitalism which, on the basis of the latest technical advances, can unendingly expand and develop. **For the first epoch, Marx and Lasalle were typical.** They maintained that wages are determined by certain economic laws, that they depend on the cost of labour power, etc. **For the second epoch, Ford is typical. He proved that capitalism can prosper while the workers need not at the same time remain poor.**"

He was seconded by the ideological inspirer and creator of the theory of "industrial democracy," Naftali, who wrote in 1928 that :



"Cyclical development, under which there was a regular succession of prosperity and crisis, of which Marx and Engels wrote, applies to the period of early capitalism."

Finally, the heavy artillery of the II. International was brought into operation. It is true that this weapon is of a very out-of-date type, the well-known Socialist wrecker and supporter of intervention, K. Kautsky. In his book on *Historical Materialism*, he worked out a new theory of crisis which does not differ in any way from the theory of crisis put up by reactionary bourgeois theoreticians. In his opinion the causes of crises **should be sought for, not in the capitalist conditions of production, but in the conditions of nature**. According to him, crises arise from the disproportion between industry and agriculture, and the cause of this disproportion is determined by **nature**, because industry is dealing with inorganic nature while agriculture is dealing with organic nature.

In essence, the theory of Kautsky, which is an organic and integral part of the theory of organised capitalism, does not differ from Moore's theory of crises which found the cause of crises in the position of Venus in relation to the moon, or Jevons' theory which explains crises by the spots on the sun.

This is what the Social Democrats wrote prior to the crisis.

The outbreak of the world economic crisis caused great confusion in the ranks of Social Democracy, because it fundamentally contradicted their conception of organised capitalism. At first the Social Democrats tried to pass over the crisis in silence. For many months, the journals *Kampf* and *Gesellschaft* did not publish a single article about the crisis. Even in the May Day articles of Vandervelde, Wels, Renner, Blum, etc., there is not a word about the crisis; it might not have existed. The Social Democrats continued to uphold the theory of "organised" capitalism.

On January 1, 1930, the Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung* still continues, spluttering, to repeat Hilferding's story.

"The year 1928 was a year of powerful development of organised capitalism."

"A new capitalist era commenced in 1929."

"Modern capitalism is overcoming and removing everything which made for the anarchy of capitalist production."

"Modern capitalism confirms the fact that world economy can be carried on according to plan."

And when the crisis had assumed an international character, when millions of unemployed formed an ominous shadow by the factories and works throughout the capitalist world, when starvation had become rampant among millions of people, the Social Democratic theoreticians still continued in various ways to sing their praises of organised world capitalism. Thus, Otto Leichter wrote in No. 2 of the *Kampf*, 1930:

"Organised capitalism extends beyond the boundaries of single countries and in many decisive spheres, where it is already organised

completely, it is becoming possible to introduce the principles of planning in world economy."

But the months pass on. Hopes for the rapid passing of the crisis of capitalism disperse. Hoover becomes a laughing-stock for Europe and America. Everywhere the masses begin to move.

And what do the Social Democrats say now about the crisis? What does Naftali say, what does the *Arbeiter Zeitung* write?

"The Movements will still continue in cycles. After the present crisis there will be prosperity, and after the prosperity another crisis. But probably the periods of crisis will be longer and more serious, while the periods of prosperity will be shorter and weaker than in the last pre-war decades." (So wrote the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, on February 18th, 1931.)

"Planned development of economic forces is nowhere to be found under capitalist conditions. There was never a logical connection between the development of the productive apparatus and the development of the possibilities of marketing—the buying power of the masses. Rationalisation is always carried on without plans on the basis of the estimates of individual employers regarding the chances of making profit."

Who wrote this? Rote Fahne? No, it was written by Mr. Naftali.

He continues:

"It is not rationalisation as a technical process which brings about such a calamity as a crisis, but the economic forms of capitalism which, on the basis of the process of rationalisation, give rise to more and more disturbances and crises" (Naftali, *Arbeiter Zeitung*, December 7th, 1930).

The Social Democratic press sorrowfully states:

"Capitalism was found to be insolvent even in its most modern form. . . . Organised capitalism was also not in a position to avoid the crises which are inherent in capitalism. The world economic crisis of unprecedented magnitude and acuteness is the answer to the titanic attempts of capitalism to put an end to crises by means of capitalist measures. Capitalism is absolutely unequal to the occasion" (*Arbeiter Zeitung*, December 25th, 1930).

It is permissible to ask Social Democratic workers what faith can they have in a party which turns such somersaults? Together with the capitalist system, international Social Democracy which conceals capitalist exploitation, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and Fascism by legends of "organised capitalism," is now on trial before the millions of unemployed and the whole of the working class. They cannot wash their hands of the business, they cannot avoid the responsibility for the death sentence on the capitalist system which is being passed by millions of workers at the present time. And they are conscious of this accusation of the masses.

"Neither I nor my colleagues of the Labour Government are at present in the prisoner's dock. The prisoner is the capitalist system,

which has **crashed** in England, Europe and America. This system has crashed because it was inevitable. **There is only one means of saving humanity, and that is Socialism.** . . ."

This is the testimony of the prisoner in the dock, Ramsay MacDonald in *Forward*, on October 8th, 1930. You see, comrades, that the prisoner has changed his testimony after one year of crisis. We may ask, by what tortures by the G.P.U., by what methods of Inquisition as used by Krylenko, have the prisoners from the Second International so radically changed their views? Not so long ago Beard, in opening the Trade Union Congress in Scotland, rhetorically put the question to the respectable gathering of fat English trade union bureaucrats: "Has it been proved that there is even a desire to bring about Socialism in the Labour movement?" And he answered: "**I think it necessary to say with all emphasis that there is no such desire.**" This was not a forced admission but an expression of the genuine convictions of a class enemy of the proletariat who expressed that which is thought by scores and hundreds of Beards occupying the leading positions in the reformist trade union movement. And their real nature is understood by the bourgeoisie, who gave the following characteristic of Social Democracy in the German *Rhine and Ruhr Zeitung* in the summer of 1930:

"Strange as it may seem, Karl Marx means very little to present-day German Social Democracy. Nearly all the Social Democratic Party leaders are now merely **pseudo-Marxists**. Political development has converted thousands of them into well-to-do citizens, and they would be the first to oppose the application of Marxist doctrines. Of course, in the trade unions and the Party schools, the Marxist catechism is still taught, but lessons and exercises in mastering the political keyboard and the Social Democratic apparatus is now more important for Social Democracy than questions of Marxian thought. Marx is now a Communist saint. The Communists and only the Communists are now followers of Marx. **Only people unacquainted with the world of secret conferences could confuse present-day Social Democracy with Marxism. The struggle against Communism is a struggle against Marxism**" (June 22nd, 1930).

We have nothing to add to this portrait of Social Democracy which was painted by the master hand of their employer.

### What Did We Say?

What did we Communists say in our official documents at the beginning of the crisis? In its resolution the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. (February, 1930) placed on record, firstly, that the crisis was becoming world wide; secondly, that the crisis is deepening social contradictions with terrific force; that it is giving rise to a fierce attack by capital on the working class, and as it develops further it will give rise to a still fiercer attack. Thirdly, we said that "the crisis is deepening the general crisis of the capitalist system, sharpening its internal and external contradictions, breaking down the shaky

stabilisation of capitalism and accelerating the tempo of the revolutionary upsurge, both in the capitalist countries and in the colonies." Fourthly, we said that along with the successes of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., the crisis is changing the correlation of forces of the two world economic systems in favour of the world revolutionary movement.

We spoke the truth to the world proletariat. All the developments during this year have confirmed the correctness of the diagnosis of the E.C.C.I.

### The Language of Facts

During the past year the crisis has become **world wide**, i.e., in spite of the unevenness of its development, it has affected all the capitalist countries, independently of whether they were previously on the upgrade, like the U.S.A., France, Sweden, or in a state of prolonged depression, like England, Germany and Poland, and generally the Eastern part of capitalist Europe. It hit all the branches of industry, both the old ones such as coal, textiles, shipbuilding, which were already in a state of decline, and also the new ones which were boasting of their prosperity, such as automobiles, chemicals, radio and the electrical industry. And this, in the cyclic nature of the present crisis, which is expressed in the fact that it includes countries and branches of industry which have been in a state of depression for many years, shows that the general post-war crisis of capitalism has a particularly strong influence on its development. This general crisis not only sharpens and deepens the present crisis, but is in turn affected by it. The crisis has assumed an extremely **protracted** character which has upset all forecasts as to its duration, founded on the experience of pre-war cycles of crisis made by bourgeois economists.

It has already lasted a year and a half, yet there are no signs of abatement, except for slight seasonal variations in the spring, due to greater activity in building, agriculture, etc. Certain prominent representatives of the bourgeoisie like Mussolini even "prophecy" <sup>s/</sup> that it will last another three years.

The crisis has assumed unprecedented **depth and acuteness**.

"There is no example in modern history of such a violent and rapid fall of prices as took place in the past year," says the British economist, J. M. Keynes.

"The business decline has attained an intensity and a size unprecedented in modern business development," writes the German Financial Institute.

The duration, the acuteness and the depth of the present crisis, in addition to the effect which the general crisis of capitalism has on it, is distinguished by its being interlocked with the severe agrarian crisis which has lasted about ten years.

This last agrarian crisis is a result of the unprofitableness of small peasant farms, which cannot withstand the competition of big

capitalist farms equipped with the latest technical appliances (tractors, combines, fertilisers). This crisis is not merely a disturbance of the market. It is an integral part of the general post-war crisis of capitalism. An agrarian crisis, resulting from structural changes in agriculture, occurred also after the Napoleonic wars, when European agriculture passed from the serf form to the form of small capitalist enterprises. The mass ruination of the peasants, which was brought about by the agrarian crisis at that time, differed from the present crisis in that it was not so severe, because rising capitalism was able to absorb the free "hands" who were drifting from the villages into the industrial towns. Decaying capitalism at the present time offers no perspective to the small peasants with regard to the absorption of free "hands." The small capitalist farms are unable to keep their heads above water, waiting for better times owing to **over-production** in agriculture. This over-production has arisen, on the one hand, because of the increase of the sown area in oversea countries (North America, Australia, Canada, Argentine) and increased harvests, and on the other hand, owing to the reorganisation of the technical basis of agriculture which is continually increasing the production of agricultural foodstuffs while reducing the demand for fodder. The attempts of the big farmers to mitigate the effects of the agrarian crisis by adopting other forms of farming than grain (meat, poultry, dairy products, vegetables) are paralysed by the pauperisation of the broad masses of the workers who might consume these products.

The burden of the present agrarian crisis is intensified by the existence of pre-capitalist forms of peasant farming in some of the capitalist countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and especially in the colonies (India, China, the Latin-American countries, etc.). By deliberately retarding the development of these countries, by establishing their domination on the most barbaric methods of feudal imperialist exploitation, by reducing the masses of peasants of these countries to the state of pariahs even compared with the ruined small peasants of Europe and America, the imperialist robbers have reduced the agriculture of these countries to a state of complete degradation.

Finally, the development of the agrarian crisis is affected by the greatest agrarian revolution in the world which is taking place in the U.S.S.R. and is putting fear into the hearts of all the capitalists of the world. "The worst blow against our agriculture is the collectivisation of the Soviet Union," said the leader of the big German agrarians, Schlange-Scheningen, recently in the Reichstag.

The organ of the Italian Federation of Agrarian Consortia, in an article dealing with changes in the Soviet villages, states that "they contain the seed of future tremendous phenomena which may cause new convulsions to the existing order."

Innumerable statements of a similar nature might be quoted to

illustrate the ever-growing fear of the bourgeoisie in face of collectivisation of agriculture in the Soviet Union.

Capitalist rationalisation, which preceded the crisis, had a tremendous influence on its depth and acuteness. Furious rationalisation was carried out by the capitalists with the complete support of the Social Democrats and the reformist trade unions, aiming at the reduction of costs of production in order to enable them to compete in the world market. Capitalist rationalisation in the past always caused tremendous suffering to the working class, and in the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism it caused an unusually great divergence between production and consumption. On the ~~other~~ <sup>one</sup> hand, it inflated the productive apparatus and hastened the growth of over-production. On the other hand, by worsening the conditions of the working class it helped to reduce the purchasing power of the broad working masses and in this way reduced the internal market still further.

If we remember, firstly, that in spite of the furious struggle for foreign markets which determines the modern world policy of capitalist States, the home market plays a very important part in the trade of capitalist countries (ninety per cent in U.S.A., seventy-five per cent. in Britain) and, secondly, that capitalist rationalisation was carried out in all the chief capitalist countries, everywhere contracting the internal and foreign markets, it becomes clear what a fatal effect capitalist rationalisation had on the sharpening of contradictions between the apparatus of production and the market, accelerating the maturing of the present crisis and aggravating its results.

## The Increasing Crisis in Figures

Passing on to the principal statistics on the development of the world crisis up to the most recent time, it should be pointed out that :

1. There is a *continuous* fall in the output of **all** capitalist countries. Even compared with January 1930, when the chief capitalist countries were already in the period of crisis, production in January, 1931, fell to the following extent :

- (a) *Steel*. U.S.A. : Reduction of 36 per cent. ; Germany, 43 per cent. ; Great Britain, 47 per cent. ; France, 6 per cent.
- (b) *Pig Iron*. Reduction in U.S.A., 41 per cent. ; Germany, 44 per cent. ; Great Britain, 48 per cent. ; France, 9 per cent.
- (c) *Coal*. Reduction in U.S.A., 22 per cent. ; Germany, 17.5 per cent. ; Great Britain, 22 per cent. ; France, 11 per cent.

Similar figures showing the reduction of industrial output are also obtained for the engineering and automobile industries for all industrial countries. The steel works in U.S.A. in December 1930, were working only 37 per cent. of capacity, in Germany, 56 per cent., and in Great Britain, 50 per cent., etc.



2. Demand is falling even quicker than production, which is shown by the fact that in spite of the prolonged period during which production has been reduced, the accumulated stocks of commodities are greater at the present time than last year.

According to the figures of the German Economic Institute, the world reserves of the chief types of raw material in 1930 increased as follows: coal—226 per cent; cotton—50 per cent.; jute—117 per cent.; copper—116 per cent.; rubber—98 per cent., etc.

3. The fall in wholesale prices has continued in the same way, and from January 1930 to January 1931 wholesale prices in the U.S.A. fell by 18 per cent., in Great Britain by 21 per cent., in Germany, 14 per cent., in France, 14 per cent., etc.

The fall of prices affects chiefly agricultural products, colonial raw material and the branches of industry not protected by trusts and cartels. Thus, the prices of wheat, barley, oats, cotton, wool, sugar, jute, rubber and non-ferrous metals fell 40 to 70 per cent., while the prices of coal, iron and machines fell by 2 to 20 per cent. only.

4. **The foreign trade of the chief capitalist countries** fell during the year as follows:

U.S.A.	imports fell by	38.7 per cent.	exports by	28.2 per cent.
Great Britain	"	16.2	"	26.2
Germany	"	26.9	"	16.3
France	"	6.4	"	18.5
Japan	"	33.5	"	34.1
Poland	"	25.5	"	25.7

5. There was a further fall in the price of stocks. The index of Stock Exchange prices for the year from October 1929 to October 1930, fell:

In the U.S.A. from 216 to 116.  
In Germany from 132 to 96.  
In Great Britain from 238 to 185.

6. The number of bankruptcies for the year increased:

In U.S.A. from 19,700 to 24,200  
In Great Britain from 4,200 to 4,400.  
In Germany from 13,100 to 15,200.  
In France from 8,700 to 9,200.

7. The deficits in State budgets were as follows:

Germany—one billion marks.  
Great Britain—£27,000,000.  
France—about two billion francs.  
U.S.A.—500,000,000 dollars.  
Italy—950,000,000 lire.

### The Capitalist Attack on the Working Class

The financial oligarchy is fighting against the crisis by its class methods, calculating on mitigating the effects of the crisis in such a way as not to damage the dictatorship of finance capital, and on

taking advantage of the crisis to strengthen its own position. It is fighting the crisis by curtailing production, by artificially maintaining prices in the trustified industries at the expense of a still more rapid fall of prices for all other commodities, by artificially retarding the process of bankruptcy in the trustified firms, etc. These are the capitalist methods of solving the crisis, by transferring all its burdens on to the shoulders of the workers, the peasants and the toilers of the colonies.

But these methods of monopolist capitalism only draw out the crisis and make it more burdensome. They bring about a reduction of the purchasing power of the broad masses, they reduce the home market owing to unemployment, the reduction of wages for the workers, the plundering of the masses by the high prices policy of the trusts and by the whole of the taxation system. By retarding the process of bankruptcy in trustified firms, capitalism artificially retards the automatic effects of "free competition" which was one of the elements which helped to overcome the crisis in the past.

But the principal method employed by finance capital in the effort to combat the crisis is a furious attack on the standard of living of the working class.

The bourgeoisie attack the working class and the toiling masses with the greatest stubbornness and brutality, and strive to extricate themselves from the crisis at their expense. The methods of economic plunder and mass dismissals are combined with methods of political terror, police "repression," the abolition of the right to strike, the destruction of the class organisations of the working class. The present capitalist attack on the working class proceeds in all directions and is assuming unprecedented dimensions.

Following a wave of capitalist rationalisation which forced millions of workers out of the factories, replacing them by unskilled women and children, which reduced the wages of the workers and increased their exploitation, there is a new attack by capital which brings the greatest mass pauperisation and misery to the proletariat. Mass unemployment has reached an extent unprecedented in history. A year ago, in February 1930, the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. calculated the number of unemployed in industrial centres of capitalist countries as 17,000,000 persons, or 60,000,000 together with their families. In the course of a year these figures have doubled. The present number of unemployed is estimated at 35,000,000. This does not include those employed part time, who are also on the threshold of hunger and poverty. Along with this tremendous reserve army in the cities, there are millions who are not included in this figure among the agricultural proletariat of the U.S.A., Italy, Poland, Germany, etc., who are doomed to death from starvation; millions who are not included in any statistics among the colonial proletarians and semi-proletarians of India, China and other countries, and finally masses of pauperised peasants. There are over 10,000,000 unemployed in the U.S.A., 4,000,000 in the Latin-



American countries, 5,000,000 in Germany, 3,000,000 in Great Britain, 1,500,000 in Japan, 1,000,000 in Italy, etc. About 50,000,000 people in China and whole districts in India are dying of hunger. In the State of Arkansas, in the richest of capitalist countries, America, there is famine. The suicide of whole workers' families has become an everyday occurrence in all capitalist countries.

The severe unemployment which affects skilled and unskilled, organised and unorganised workers, striking first of all at the revolutionary elements of the labour movement, affects the labour market and is utilised by the capitalists for the purpose of cutting the wages of the workers still further. With the support of the reformist trade unions, the bourgeoisie are introducing part time as a regular system, which has extended to almost all capitalist undertakings, and in this way they are reducing wages which are everywhere lower than required for a minimum standard of living. They lock out the workers, tear up wage agreements, sometimes attacking individually, and sometimes in whole industries. Everywhere, relying on Social Democracy and the reformist trade unions, capital is trying to liquidate all the gains which the working class wrested away from it under the pressure of the revolutionary masses in the years 1918-19, and to reduce their standard of living to the level of Chinese coolies. "The German people must learn to work more and eat less," said Silberberger, the coal king of the Rhine, recently.

Mussolini recommends the same programme of hunger to the Italian people. "The Italian people, who, fortunately, are not accustomed to eating several times a day, can easily stand a crisis," said he recently.

A year ago, Hoover, the spokesman of the capitalists, and the A.F. of L., were assuring people that the wages which had existed before the crisis would be maintained in the U.S.A. as a condition for maintaining the home market and the purchasing power of the masses. However, in 1930, the total amount of wages paid in the U.S.A. dropped by twelve milliard dollars. According to the figures of the A.F. of L., wages in the iron and steel industry dropped by 14 per cent., in machine construction by 17 per cent., in transport by 18 per cent., for the workers in copper mines by 15 per cent., agricultural workers by 13 per cent. "The age of gold watches, of owning houses, of radio, electric ovens, and owning automobiles, has passed finally and for ever for the American workers," declared one of the biggest American bankers, not long ago!

In Great Britain, the wages of coal miners dropped by 12.3 per cent., textile workers by 6.5 per cent., wool workers, after the famous lock-out, by 9.25 per cent., etc. In Germany, according to the figures of the reformist Textile Workers' Union, wages have dropped by 50 per cent., piece rates in the iron and steel industry by 30 per cent. After the strike in Mansfeld, wages fell by 12 per cent. and among the Berlin Metal Workers by 8 per cent. In Poland, where

wages were always extremely low, the reduction in some industries reaches 30-50 per cent.

But the attack of capital is especially brutal and insatiable in the colonies. There, the working class is absolutely defenceless owing to the absence of class organisations. In the plantations, the white colonisers widely use fetters, flogging, hunting with dogs, the compound system by which workers are prohibited from going outside barbed-wire fences which surround the plantations, etc.

The worsening of the conditions of the working class is increased also by the unexampled attack of the capitalists on **social insurance**. In some countries, like the U.S.A., where no social insurance exists, the bourgeoisie refuse State help for the unemployed; in others, like Germany, Great Britain, etc., where it exists, capital is taking steps to cut it down or completely abolish it; in other countries where it is being introduced it is converted into a sort of legalised method of reducing wages. Young workers are excluded from the categories having the right to receive insurance payments (Great Britain, Germany), they exclude married women (Ireland), compulsory labour is being introduced for unemployed on agricultural work (Great Britain and Holland), the social insurance funds are plundered to cover the deficits of bankrupt firms (Hungary, Bulgaria), the length of service required to become eligible for insurance payments is being increased (Austria, Germany), the workers' contributions are being raised, building workers are being deprived of the right to receive unemployment pay, everywhere the amount of assistance is being reduced.

All these forms of lowering the standard of living of the masses are combined by the bourgeoisie with other methods of plundering the toilers. Such are increases of taxes on the working class while reducing the taxation of capital. Such are the artificial maintenance of high retail prices, especially on necessities of life for the workers. Import duties are increased for the benefit of the capitalist farmers. In the course of a single year import duties reached 400 per cent. for some grain products in Germany. Monopolies combined with loans are being introduced, as, for instance, the match monopoly, which enables the Kreuger Company of Sweden to plunder the consumers by a system of oppressive loans, which make it possible for finance capital in the agrarian countries and the colonies to occupy the key positions in native industry and to impose new burdens on the native toilers.

These are the results of the system of "organised capitalism," the triumph of democracy, the result of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Conclusions: 1. The reformist theory of Bernstein on the gradual improvement of the conditions of the working class under capitalism, the theory of the labour aristocracy in the strong capitalist countries who are bribed by capital at the expense of the colonial workers and the workers of weaker capitalist countries,

who are kept at a poverty level, has been utterly smashed. The law of Marx on the absolute pauperisation of the working class is absolutely and fully confirmed.

2. The crisis has exposed to the working masses with special clearness all the results of capitalist slavery existing in all countries under the dictatorship of capital, regardless of the form of government, whether a republic, a monarchy, a bourgeois democracy, a Fascist dictatorship, and has thus refuted the legend of the apologists of capitalist slavery concerning "free labour" which distinguishes the modern worker from the slaves in Liberia, Congo and other imperialist colonies. By binding the workers to the exploiters with chains of hunger and poverty, the capitalist system is based on the economic and political slavery of the workers, independently of its colonial form or the modernised form of the capitalist conveyor. Only in the U.S.S.R. is there free Socialist labour.

3. The crisis has exposed with special clearness the fact that capitalism has become a hindrance to the development of the productive forces of society, that any partial improvement of production within the framework of capitalism is only possible at the expense of a still further worsening of the conditions of the working class and of the toiling masses.

4. At the same time the crisis has exposed to the millions of toilers throughout the world how deeply irrational the capitalist system is, from a social point of view. It has shown once more that the productive forces of capitalist society are mature for Socialism, and has thus refuted the vile falsehoods of the Social Democrats concerning the inevitability of an ultra-imperialist stage in the development of capitalism, as a condition for the establishment of Socialism by the path of "democracy."

5. As against the capitalist way out of the crisis, which is based on the further worsening of the conditions of the working class and of all the toilers, the proletariat and its vanguard the Communist Party, must offer a revolutionary way out of the crisis, of hunger and of poverty, by the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

### The U.S.S.R.

#### What do we see in the U.S.S.R. in the midst of the raging World Crisis?

**In the capitalist countries we see everywhere the falling off of production.** In the U.S.S.R. there is a constant growth of production. The year before last, the U.S.S.R. increased its industrial output by 22 per cent., and last year (1930) by 25 per cent. Already, at the end of 1930, the U.S.S.R. had more than doubled the volume of pre-war production. In 1931, there is to be a 45 per cent. increase of industrial output. Consequently, the U.S.S.R. will have trebled the volume of pre-war production by the end of 1931.

Soon two years will have passed since the world economic crisis set in. In these two years production has in several capitalist countries fallen by one-half. In the same two years the U.S.S.R. has almost doubled its production.

The rate of development in the U.S.S.R. has not been exceeded by any capitalist country in the world. It is two and a half times greater than the highest rates of development achieved by America at the height of its prosperity, and is eight to ten times the usual rate of development in capitalist countries.

One year's development in the U.S.S.R. is almost equivalent to ten years of development in the capitalist countries. The U.S.S.R. is emerging from its age-long technical and economic backwardness, as compared with the economic and technical standard of the advanced capitalist countries, with a rapidity unprecedented in the history of the world. The U.S.S.R. has already outdistanced France with regard to the production of coal; it is catching up to Britain with regard to iron and steel; by the end of the Five-Year Plan the volume of production in the U.S.S.R. will exceed that of all the most important capitalist countries of Europe—not their **crisis**, but their **pre-crisis** level, and America will then be the only country ahead of it. In another few years the U.S.S.R. will surpass the capitalist countries, not only with regard to the volume of production, but also with regard to average production per head of the population. It should be pointed out that in the capitalist countries this arithmetical average is a fiction, for it is common knowledge that a good half of the national revenue in those countries remains in the hands of a handful of financial magnates. The recent Congress of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R. not only endorsed the aim "to overtake and surpass," but made it more precise by setting before the working class and all the toilers of the U.S.S.R. the task of carrying out in the course of the present decade the slogan "to overtake and surpass" the advanced capitalist countries in the technical and economic domain.

The development of industry and agriculture in the U.S.S.R. is accompanied by improvements in the material conditions of the workers. **In the capitalist countries—35,000,000 unemployed**; in the U.S.S.R., no unemployment since the middle of 1930. There is a considerable shortage of labour power in the U.S.S.R. In 1931, 2,000,000 workers will be drawn into industry, chiefly from the villages where, as a result of collectivisation and mechanisation of labour, part of the labour power will be set free, and also from the ranks of women not yet drawn into industry. In Tzarist capitalist Russia, owing to agrarian over-population and inadequate development of industry, there was always a reserve army of labour, of many millions of unemployed. The U.S.S.R. has liquidated this capitalist legacy through the development of its industry, and by raising the material level of the countryside.

**In the capitalist countries we witness an extreme impoverishment of the masses. Everywhere the capitalists are reducing the workers'**

**wages.** In the U.S.S.R. there is a constant improvement in the material conditions of the working class. Already, in 1928-29, workers' wages had reached 167 per cent. of the pre-war level. In the last two years alone, they have increased by 12.1 per cent. In 1931 the average wage increase will amount to 6 per cent., and for transport workers to 8 per cent. The wage fund will increase, compared with last year, by almost three milliard roubles, i.e. by over 20 per cent.

**The capitalists are everywhere reducing or liquidating the social insurance funds.** In the U.S.S.R., in spite of the liquidation of unemployment, the social insurance fund (pensions to invalids, sick benefits, etc.) is growing from year to year. In 1931 it amounts to 2,138 million roubles, against 1,600 million roubles in 1930.

The Soviet Government has assigned to the building of workers' houses alone 1,100 million roubles in 1931, compared with 582,500,000 roubles in 1930. The seven-hour day and the four-day week, with rest day on the fifth, are being introduced for all industrial workers.

**In the capitalist countries there is a world agrarian crisis the like of which has never been known.** In the U.S.S.R. we have seen an enormous development of agriculture in the last years. The strengthening of the positions of Socialist industry turned the masses of the peasantry to the side of Socialism. The collectivisation of agriculture is developing with exceptional speed. Last year, 6,000,000 peasant farms, 24 per cent. of the total, were organised in collective farms. By March 20th, 1931, about 10,000,000 peasant farms were organised in collective farms, i.e. 39.6 per cent. (almost 40 per cent.) of the poor and middle peasantry of the U.S.S.R. This spring and autumn the percentage of collectivised farms will reach 50 per cent.

This success of Socialist construction in the countryside has already produced concrete and palpable results, as far as the peasantry is concerned. **In the capitalist countries the bourgeoisie endeavours to reduce the sown areas as a means of extricating themselves from the agrarian crisis.** In the U.S.S.R. a steady extension of the sown areas goes on. Last year the sowing was extended by 10,000,000 hectares; this year it is intended to extend it by 15,000,000 hectares.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1930 the sowing per homestead constituted in the U.S.S.R. 2.7 hectares on individual farms, and 5.2 hectares on the collective farms. In 1930, 87.4 million tons of grain were collected, against 71.7 million tons in 1929. Agriculture handed over to the State in the autumn and winter of 1929-30 18,000,000 tons, and in 1930-31 24,000,000 tons. More than half this quantity came from Soviet and collective farms.

The Socialist reconstruction of agriculture—Soviet and collective farms—raises the material and cultural position of the peasantry to a new level. This fact was confirmed at the Congress of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R. in the speeches made by many members of collective farms and by provincial workers. An individual peasant farmer,

<sup>1</sup> Hectare, about 2½ acres.

whose previous annual income amounted to 242 roubles, raised his income after joining a collective farm to 500 roubles. Instead of the former 26 cwts. of grain, he now collects 59 cwts.

**In the capitalist countries an insignificant handful of exploiters take half the national income** (in Germany 45 per cent., in the United States 26 per cent., and in Britain as much as 55 per cent.). The October Revolution and successful Socialist construction in town and country in the U.S.S.R. have resulted in the distribution of the national income for the benefit of the workers. In the U.S.S.R., the toilers and their State received in 1929-30 over 98 per cent. of the national income (the workers and peasants 77.1 per cent., the State 15.2 per cent.).

This distribution of the national income for the benefit of the workers, the constant improvement of the material conditions of the workers and peasants on the basis of the rapid development of industry and agriculture, constitute a full guarantee that in the country of proletarian dictatorship, crises of over-production and mass unemployment, such as exist in the capitalist countries, are impossible; that flourishing development of the vital forces of the whole country is guaranteed in the U.S.S.R. Already the annual increase in the population of the U.S.S.R. equals 3½ million, whereas in capitalist Europe, though the population is larger, the annual increase equals 2,000,000. It must also be taken into consideration that the greater increase in the U.S.S.R. is chiefly due to a fall in the death-rate.

**The U.S.S.R. has entered the period of Socialism.** It is completing the economic foundation of Socialism. This means an absolute preponderance of Socialist elements both in town and country.

One can already say that from the point of view of internal class forces, the problem of the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is solved. Here, the solution of the problem "Who will be the victor?" is guaranteed in favour of Socialism.

But Socialism is not yet fully developed in the U.S.S.R.; it is only in its first stage. N.E.P.<sup>1</sup> has not yet been liquidated, but the U.S.S.R. finds itself in the last stage of N.E.P. Trade exists, and also accountancy which, in its present form, is connected with the conditions of Soviet trade. Money has not yet disappeared. Finally, classes still exist; the progress of the U.S.S.R. along the path of Socialism is bound up with stubborn class struggle which makes Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. difficult. One must not shut one's eyes to these difficulties. The international proletariat must see them and must understand their cause, in order to be well armed against the slanders of Social Democracy which endeavours to prove to the workers the superiority of the capitalist system. And the more successful the U.S.S.R. is in laying the foundation of Socialist economics, and in overcoming these difficulties of growth within the country, the more fiercely is the bourgeoisie determined to create

<sup>1</sup> New Economic Policy.



more difficulties for the U.S.S.R. on the international arena. But the U.S.S.R. is beating the capitalist world, and will inflict more severe blows on it as Socialist construction develops, for the Soviet system contains within itself the advantages which enable the U.S.S.R. to overtake and surpass the capitalist world. These advantages are—the dictatorship of the proletariat and the growth of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., which presuppose a most highly-developed proletarian democracy, planned economy, a high rate of economic development, a constant improvement in the material and cultural position of the masses, elimination of the possibility of crises.

From this we draw the conclusion: the working class of the U.S.S.R., having overthrown the power of the capitalists, is by its creative work demonstrating to the millions of workers in the capitalist countries and to the oppressed colonial peoples, the advantages of a Socialist economic system which excludes the possibility of crises inherent in capitalism which produces crises. It wants them to decide once and for all what they are going to choose: capitalism or Socialism, economic and political slavery, or the end of capitalist exploitation and oppression, colonial oppression and imperialist wars, or peace, brotherhood and freedom for the workers, capitalist anarchy and crises, or Socialist construction which excludes anarchy and crises. And this means either dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no third way out.

### Intervention

History is asking the direct question: "Who will be the victor?" And as time goes on, it will ask it more and more emphatically. That is why the menace of intervention looms big. The question is so acute, *First*, because the bourgeois world, held in the grip of a very grave crisis and the plaything of the waves of capitalist anarchy, is losing all hope of finding a way out of the crisis at the expense of its workers and colonies, and wants to transfer the burden of the crisis to the workers of the U.S.S.R. by including it into the sphere of its exploitation; because Socialism is victorious in the U.S.S.R. all along the line, and views in a new light the competition of two world systems, solving this problem in favour of the country of proletarian dictatorship; because the success of the Five-Year Plan creates premises for the development of the country of proletarian dictatorship without the help of the capitalist world: because the existence of the U.S.S.R. is the source of disintegration of capitalism.

*Secondly*, the intervention menace is growing because the victorious existence of Socialism is bound up with a decisive proletarian attack on the capitalist elements of town and country, with the policy of liquidation of the *kulaks*<sup>1</sup> as a class, with the accentuation

<sup>1</sup> Rich capitalist farmers.

of the class struggle, because the collectivisation of agriculture has brought millions of poor and middle peasants definitely to the side of Socialism, because this provides a very sound foundation to the Socialist order in the U.S.S.R.

*Thirdly*, because the struggle between capital and labour is sharpening throughout the world; hundreds and thousands of workers in the capitalist countries demonstrate and come out on strike; the peasants are getting into motion; in some places one hears more and more frequently of insubordination among soldiers; there are rebellions in the colonies which turn their eyes towards the U.S.S.R. as the main centre of the world revolutionary movement.

*Fourthly*, because the existence of the U.S.S.R. unites the capitalists in their offensive against the workers, peasants and colonies; because the U.S.S.R., together with the workers of the world, is the only serious menace to the Versailles system: it interferes with the enslavement of the peoples vanquished in the last imperialist war by the magnates of finance capital; it prevents the capitalists starting a new war for the re-division of the world.

*Fifthly*, because, in the face of triumphant Socialism, the bourgeoisie and the Social Fascist Second International have lost all hope of a capitalist revival in the U.S.S.R. and of victory on the part of the right elements in the C.P.S.U., defeated and reduced to impotence by the Leninist Party. Facts prove that the capitalist world and the Second International are making frantic preparations for an attack on the U.S.S.R., but disguise these preparations by pacifist phrases about "Pan-Europe," limitation of armaments, etc.

A sign of the preparation for intervention is the blockade of the U.S.S.R. (embargo on the import of Soviet timber, flax, and several kinds of raw material) which has begun on the part of France, the United States and other countries; the frenzied armament of the countries adjoining the U.S.S.R., especially Poland, the construction of new strategical railway lines which connect the famous Polish triangle (Radom, Tarnov and Przemysl) with Czecho-Slovakia, with the Skoda Munition Works, the fortification of harbours (Gdynia), the constant stream of arms of all kinds from France to Poland, via Danzig and Gdynia, the reorganisation of the Polish and Rumanian armies with the active participation and guidance of the French General Staff. Other signs of it are the secret military conventions of the type of the recent Polish-Rumanian Convention, directed against the U.S.S.R.; the policy of encirclement of the U.S.S.R. carried on energetically under the leadership of France, for which purpose several conferences have been organised; in the course of 1930 alone five such conferences, so-called agrarian conferences, were convened. We must recall also the rejection of the disarmament proposals of the Soviet delegation in Geneva. Yet other signs are: the activity of French diplomacy for the unification of Europe against the U.S.S.R., efforts on the part of France to bribe Germany into active participation in a war against the U.S.S.R. (Hitler

negotiations, D'Ormesson's plan), the Fascist *coups d'état* in the States adjoining the U.S.S.R. (Rumania, Finland), in Poland, falsification of the last elections by Pilsudski. Finally, the asylum given by France to the white guard armed detachments commanded by General Miller, as an effective weapon in the war against the U.S.S.R.

All this shows that at the head of the international plot against the U.S.S.R. is **Imperialist France**, the most ferocious enemy of the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, the greatest menace to European peace. French capitalism is the international vampire which sucks the blood of the German working class, of the colonies and of the vassal states in East Europe and in the Balkans. On France devolves the rôle played for decades by Russian Tsarism—the rôle of the gendarme of Europe. After the defeat of "Prussian militarism," France became the most militarist State in the world. It has not only adopted the most revolting features of German pre-war militarism, but has excelled it, both with regard to the widest militarisation of the country, and with regard to bringing its military apparatus to a high state of perfection for the brutal suppression of all revolutionary movements of the proletariat and the colonies. French "democracy" is allied to all the most infamous Fascist régimes in the world; it supports the Pilsudski régime in Poland and countenances the savage assassinations and tortures of workers and peasants in Fascist Yugoslavia.

The recent trials of the Industrial Party and of the Menshevik All-Union Bureau unfolded the picture of this preparation of intervention from outside and from inside, through the organisation of widespread sabotage in all the domains of the national economy of the U.S.S.R., of military espionage for the benefit of the French General Staff, and of "diversions" intended to weaken the defensive capacity of the Soviet Union, and to make easier the work of the interventionists. This wrecking and espionage work, subsidised by the "Torgprom,"<sup>1</sup> and—as far as the Mensheviks are concerned—by the Second International, was particularly encouraged by the French General Staff in 1930, when, according to its calculations, the intervention against the U.S.S.R. was to take place. And if this intervention did not come off in 1930, this was entirely due to the fact that the successful collectivisation of agriculture has strengthened the U.S.S.R., whereas the grave world crisis with its social and political consequences, the growing discontent of the broad masses, has made the carrying through of the interventionist plans of the bourgeoisie extremely difficult. But the whole subsequent development of the anti-Soviet policy of the Governments of the most important capitalist countries shows that intervention is not scotched, that the capitalist world—even after the exposure of its intervention plans at the trial of the Industrial Party—con-

<sup>1</sup> The Trade and Industrial Committee (of former Russian Capitalists) located in Paris which is plotting war against the U.S.S.R.

tinues to prepare for it by moulding public opinion along that line. The campaign which developed after the papal "crusade" against the so-called Soviet "dumping" and "forced labour" in the U.S.S.R. wholly recalls—by its intensity, character and tone—the intervention years of 1918 and 1919.

When the British Conservatives, the American Fish Commission, the French Government and its corrupt press, the frenzied Kautsky and *Vorwärts* assume such a tone when speaking of the great Soviet country, we can take it that the imperialist cannibals want war.

They dare speak about dumping! But in the U.S.S.R. there is no ground rent which in the capitalist countries throttles the small and middle farmers, and constitutes, for instance, in the United States almost one-third of their cost of production; neither is there usurious capital to which the peasant has also to give up part of his produce. In the U.S.S.R., collective farms received last year from the State a subsidy of over one milliard roubles. In the U.S.S.R., the State supplies the peasant farms with agricultural machinery. In 1931, U.S.S.R. agriculture will receive from the State 1,200 million roubles' worth of machinery. Collective, *i.e.* large-scale farming, receives preferential treatment. Finally, there is this year's excellent harvest. All these are factors which affect the cost of production of grain.

One should also take into consideration that U.S.S.R. economy, contrary to capitalist economy, is planned Socialist economy.

And this means that the law of value which is at the base of commodity relations in the U.S.S.R., plays a quite different rôle than in capitalist production; the price of every separate commodity being subject in the main to the provisions of the plan, and being based on the total amount of the labour expenditure of our society, is determined by the deliberately set aim of expanded Socialist reproduction. In the sale of commodities, a deliberate redistribution of value takes place for the benefit of Socialist construction.

Losses in one branch of production are compensated by gains in another branch. Prices are determined here not by the stimulus of profit, as in capitalist production, but by the interests of Socialist construction, *i.e.* of the production as a whole. One could give scores of examples of how capitalist trusts calculate prices certainly not on the basis of costs of production, but in the interests of private capital, in order to get rid of their rivals by means of dumping. The charge against the U.S.S.R. is that by selling under the cost of production it violates the law of value established by Marx. What a belated recognition of the author of *Capital* by bourgeois Governments!

The U.S.S.R. is charged with unfair competition. But the U.S.S.R. obeys the laws which rule the market of the capitalist countries. It is not the U.S.S.R. which establishes the laws of this market, but the capitalist system, which is extolled by the bourgeoisie and its

Social Democratic lackeys. If the U.S.S.R. could change these laws at any given moment, it would do so. But the U.S.S.R. has taken up the position of non-interference in the internal affairs of the capitalist Governments. It is the Sections of the Communist International which are working in the direction of changing these laws.

It is demanded of the U.S.S.R. that it should suspend industrialisation, the development of a series of branches of industry, the exploitation of its enormous natural wealth, because this might jeopardise the position of the capitalist countries. But does the U.S.S.R. come to the capitalist countries with demands of this kind? To what capitalist country have such claims been made by other capitalist countries? How is this to be reconciled with the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another country? On the basis of what rights will the bourgeois Governments dictate to the workers and peasants of the U.S.S.R. how to conduct their Socialist affairs?

They dare speak about "forced labour" in the U.S.S.R.! This has been a source of much amusement among our workers, peasants, Red Army men and young Communists. To the capitalists, the obligation of all citizens in a Socialist country to work, in order to have the right to eat, is "forced labour." The obligation to work is one of the fundamental points of the Soviet constitution of which the Soviet is proud. And this obligation Communists will introduce to the whole world. After the overthrow of the power of parasites, they will force even Kautsky to clean up his own senile mess from the heap of his ideological post-war legacy. Their arguments against forced labour are arguments against Socialism. Their defence of free labour is the defence of capitalist slavery based on wage labour.

"The system of wage labour," said Marx, "is a system of slavery, i.e. of a slavery which grows more intense as the productive forces of society develop." And the whole infamy of Social Democracy is revealed by the fact that it borrows from the bourgeoisie this rotten weapon for use, not only against the U.S.S.R., but against Socialism in general. Those who talk about "forced labour" in the U.S.S.R. are people whose whole social order rests on monstrous compulsion, on the economic slavery of millions of workers; they are people who base their rule on exploitation of all the coloured races by a small number of parasites of the white race; they are people who have introduced and who maintain slavery in China, India, Indo-China, in the Belgian Congo, on the continent of Latin-America; they are people who practise lynch law in the United States and do not protest against workers on the rubber plantations of Mr. Firestone in Liberia having to work in chains; they are obscurantists who take advantage of religious superstitions and prejudices in order to organise murderous encounters between Moslems and Hindus.

Verily, before its downfall, the capitalist world is sinking below every limit of capitalist infamy.

What change would intervention, provided it were forced on the U.S.S.R., bring into the tactics of the Communist Parties? It would accelerate considerably the effect of the world crisis, so destructive to the capitalist world, by letting loose all the contradictions of capitalism. This world, divided into victors and vanquished by the last imperialist war, carved up Europe by unnatural frontiers and corridors dictated by the impulse of the military intoxication of 1914-18, interspersed by bits of territories lopped off here, and added on there, a world where nations and economic units have been torn to pieces and forcibly appended to artificially created "big" States, this capitalist world would only be brought to an end with the end of the Versailles system in Central Europe. The discontent of the masses which has been accumulating for years would break through all the dams of this system, it would create a revolutionary situation in this sector first of all. The intervention would be transformed, on the part of the U.S.S.R., into a revolutionary war for the overthrow of capitalism, linked up with the revolutionary movements in the capitalist countries and colonies. We dare the capitalist world to attack the U.S.S.R. ! This is not 1918-19, when we had to use units of the Red Army hastily formed from the ranks of irregular partisan troops against the interventionists. The U.S.S.R. has now at its disposal a well trained and armed Red Army, the strength of which no imperialist army can resist, because it is strength based on class consciousness, on a complete understanding of the aims of the struggle, on a sense of moral responsibility. The whole history of the civil war and intervention tells us that this is so.

In the rear of the enemy of the U.S.S.R. there are now no more embryo Communist organisations as in 1918, but Bolshevik Parties which will not be deterred by anything in order to convert the war against the U.S.S.R. into civil war against capitalism. The workers of the capitalist countries and colonies will not take a leap in the dark as in 1918; they have before them the great experiment of conquering Socialism in the U.S.S.R., which inspires everyone with fresh enthusiasm for the fight, which shows a genuine revolutionary way out of the crisis, of wars and of capitalist slavery. Let the Social Fascist fomentors of intervention of the Second International bear in mind that there will be no Social Democratic workers who will make war on the U.S.S.R.; that many Social Democratic workers, and workers belonging to no Party will join the Communists in order to carry on the class war against the capitalist system and the interventionists. The masses of the workers experienced terrible years after the world war. Intervention under present conditions would not take the same course as in 1918-19, when the bourgeoisie made concessions to the proletariat, introduced the eight-hour day, social insurance, factory and shop committees, etc. At present the bourgeoisie takes away from the workers everything they gained during



the revolutionary tide at the end of the world war. Its rear is no longer secure and it cannot carry on a victorious war against the country of proletarian dictatorship.

The Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. must make the proletariat and all the toilers of the capitalist countries on whom the enormous responsibility of defence of the proletarian revolution and Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. now rests realise the enormous danger of intervention. It must enjoin them to be vigilant and to fight by all the means at their disposal for the preservation of peace. It must help the Communist Parties to get fully equipped for the struggle against the menace of intervention and cease lagging behind in this struggle. Together with them it must work out a number of political and organisational measures with regard to the struggle against intervention as well as with regard to the work of the Communist Parties, should intervention become a reality, so that the sections of the Communist International should not be taken unawares.

## II

### THE MENACE OF IMPERIALIST WARS

#### The Social and Political Consequences of the Crisis

WHAT are the social and political consequences of the present crisis? The first and most important consequence is the further **revolutionisation of the working class** and the intensification of the class struggle.

The crisis, causing a diminution of production, has in all capitalist countries, with few exceptions, thrown from one-third to one-half of the working class into the ranks of the unemployed. This enormous reserve army of labour would only be partially absorbed in the event of the crisis abating. It is, and will remain, a permanent menace to capitalist society because it is an extremely susceptible medium for revolutionary agitation. The fresh attempts at capitalist rationalisation which will be made in the course of the present crisis will in their turn make still larger numbers of skilled workers superfluous and bring about a worsening of their conditions.

The ruination of the colonial and agrarian semi-colonial countries caused by the crisis is resulting in a reduction of the super-profits by the aid of which the bourgeoisie was able to maintain the aristocracy of labour in the working class: the bankruptcy of small banks, for example in the U.S.A., in which these strata of the labour aristocracy were the principal depositors in addition to the wealthy sections of the farmers, undermines their economic position. And this inevitably undermines, and will continue to undermine, the position of Social Democracy which will for that reason all the more persistently seek for posts in the capitalist State in order to preserve as its base the numerous labour bureaucracy which has merged with the apparatus of the capitalist State. This will result in the shrinking of the base of

Social Democracy in the working class and in its further and more rapid fascisation.

Furthermore, the attempts of the bourgeoisie to rob the working class, taking advantage of the crisis for this purpose, are no longer incidental in character. The bourgeoisie strives to create a **new and lower** standard of living for the working class than it has enjoyed up till now.

In the present period of accentuation of all capitalist contradictions, capitalism will not level up wages to the "high" standard of the American workers, but will strive to reduce the standards of the American workers to the European (Austrian) standard and bring down the standards of the European workers to that of the colonial workers. One must have lost his senses to believe that the working class will quietly allow itself to be starved for the sake of the doubtful salvation of capitalism from collapse. And this, with the development of the crisis, as well as at the very first symptoms of a revival, will lead to enormous class battles.

The second consequence of the crisis is the radicalisation of the masses of the peasantry. The agrarian crisis which has caused a greater drop in the prices of farm products and colonial produce, following on the long years of divergence between the prices of this produce and those of manufactured goods, is utterly ruining the peasant farmers who are already crushed by high rents, usurious interest on loans, the continuous increase in taxation and the increasing burden of militarism. The rapid impoverishment of the masses of the peasantry creating vast starving masses unable to find employment is rapidly radicalising the peasantry and is breaking up in Europe and America the type of "united front" that has existed between the small property-owning farmer and the *kulak*, the big landowner and the capitalist; is giving rise to crises in the so-called peasant parties which are creating political dissension in them, reflecting the process of economic differentiation which is taking place among the peasantry. This process of radicalisation among the peasantry expresses itself in forms ranging from the most elementary and simple signs of opposition to the bourgeoisie, in the tacit or open refusal to pay taxes (India, West Ukraine), in the burning down of landowners' mansions (West Ukraine, Mexico), in spontaneous peasant uprisings (Syria, Palestine, Latin-America), to real class war waged by workers' and peasants' armies in China.

The third consequence of the crisis is the growing discontent among the lower ranks of the civil service and private office employees whose standard of living is reduced, who are being dismissed owing to the reduction of staffs for the sake of "economy"; among the intelligentsia and the technical staffs of industry, engineers, technicians, etc., as a result of their "over production," among small traders, commission agents, artisans, owners of small workshops, all of them ruined by the crisis; and finally among the so-called middle class who were robbed during the period of inflation by the big

capitalist sharks, i.e., among those strata which, owing to the weakness of our Communist Parties, represent the principal reservoirs from which Fascism recruits its forces.

Fourthly, the crisis is enabling finance capital to strengthen its position in the camp of the ruling class throughout the whole system of monopoly capitalism as the result of the process of concentration of capital accelerated by the crisis. Finance capital is absorbing the weaker competitors who are forced to the wall before the rest as a result of the epidemic of bankruptcies and a fall in Stock Exchange prices. It utilises the mechanism of trusts and cartels in order to maintain prices at a high level and transfers the main burden of the drop in prices to the unprotected branches of industry and the unprotected organisations of producers. But the main thing is that it robs the broad masses of the toilers by transferring to their shoulders the whole burden of the consequences of the crisis. By these means finance capital brings about a redistribution of the national income, which is diminishing as a consequence of the crisis, in its own favour. This is linked up with intensification of the struggle among the various groups of capitalists for a larger share of profits: between bank capital and industrial capital, between the *rentiers* and the manufacturers, between the agrarians and the industrialists, between the trusts and the outsiders, between the various trusts, etc.

And this leads to the break-up of the old bourgeois political parties which grew up on a basis of relations of forces among the bourgeoisie other than that which exists now; this impels the bourgeoisie more and more to centralise the means of State violence. In order to overcome the internal struggle in the face of the menace of the toiling masses the bourgeoisie attempts to create "concentration" parties or to organise mass Fascist parties to serve as transmission belts between itself and the petty bourgeois masses ruined by the crisis. Losing its old social mass basis, the bourgeoisie is compelled to seek support in a new social basis, extremely unstable and changeable in its moods, which can be retained only by means of a dangerous social demagoguery pregnant with serious consequences.

In the sphere of **international relations** the immediate consequences of the crisis are that its main burdens are imposed on the weaker and weakest nations. The burdens of the crisis fall upon the colonial and semi-colonial countries, on the agrarian countries which are the hinterland of big capitalist countries. The crisis presses down upon the countries politically and financially dependent upon the big States, for example, Poland, the Baltic States and the Balkans; and it presses on the countries vanquished in the last imperialist war of 1914-18, like Germany and Austria. The uneven drop in prices places those countries which export agricultural and colonial produce, i.e. agrarian countries, in a particularly unfavourable position in the world market. If we take into consideration the fact that in the majority of cases these countries are debtor countries it

will be clear that they must, owing to the drop in prices, pay more in commodities as interest on loans than they paid before the present crisis. Even Germany, which is a highly developed industrial country, must pay approximately 20 per cent. more on its Young Plan payments than it paid before the crisis owing to the general 20 per cent. drop in prices. This leads to the aggravation of the reparations problem, the problem of inter-allied debts and world indebtedness generally, it creates the pre-requisites for a more rapid development of elements of a political crisis in these countries than in the big capitalist creditor countries.

At the same time the decline in world trade, which indicates the general shrinkage of foreign markets, particularly intensifies the struggle for markets between the capitalist countries which, in order to preserve their positions in these markets, resort to dumping and protection. Dumping and protection are inseparable elements, or integral parts, of the economic policy of monopoly capitalism. It is perfectly clear that the more closely the capitalist countries guard themselves from foreign competition by high tariffs, the more actively will their competitors resort to dumping in order to break through the barriers of protection. On the other hand the more actively these competitors resort to dumping, the higher are the tariff walls raised in order to protect "home" industry and agriculture.

There is a great outcry against Soviet dumping. But what about the foreign trade of the capitalist countries? For example, Polish sugar is sold abroad at one-fifth of the price it is sold at in the home market; iron manufactures are sold at almost one-half the price; metal sheets are sold by the United States, Great Britain and Germany in foreign markets at half the price that they are sold at in their respective home markets. Any number of similar examples can be quoted.

The characteristic feature of dumping is that the losses which the capitalists bear by this system in the foreign market is compensated by the raising of prices in the home market. Protection operates in the same way; its whole burden is imposed on the consumer in the home market. In other words, the losses incurred in the tariff wars between the capitalist magnates are paid in the last resort by the masses of the toilers.

Protection, which is growing as a result of the crisis, has the tendency to break up world capitalist economy into parts and creates the pre-requisites for a sort of economic "Balkanisation" which multiplies antagonisms and causes friction and conflicts between the capitalist States. This Balkanisation does not, of course, prevent these multiplied antagonisms and conflicts revolving in the orbit of the main antagonisms arising from the struggle for world hegemony.

And this sporadic economic war leads to the creation of numerous powder magazines, to the accumulation of explosive material for new imperialist wars and for a new world war.

Finally, the struggle around protection, which, as a consequence of



the crisis, is converted into a quarrel among the ruling classes concerning the means of saving capitalism from collapse, leads to the regrouping of forces in the camp of the bourgeoisie and the reshuffling of political parties. In England, that classic land of free trade of the past, protection, which has become the standard of the struggle for the agrarianisation of the dominions and the colonies, for their economic strangulation by British capital, the standard of the struggle against the economic invasion of the Empire markets by the U.S.A., has already broken up the traditional "three party" system and is winning over an increasing number of adherents to its side. This process was reflected at the Nottingham Trade Union Congress at which the majority of the trade union bureaucrats voted for protection, whereas the opposition represented the export industries (coal, textiles, electrical industry). The formation of the "New Party" by the ex-member of the Labour Party, Mosley, which borrowed from Rothermere and Beaverbrook its protectionist programme and from the so-called Labour Party its social demagoguery, indicates that, simultaneously with the evolution of Social Democracy in other countries in the direction of protection, the reactionary protectionist programme of finance capital is being actively supported by the II. International in the process of Fascisation.

All these social and political consequences of the crisis intensify to a very high degree the class struggle within the capitalist countries, and the struggle between the ruling cliques in these countries, both at home and in the international arena.

They lead: (1) To the extraordinary intensification of the contradictions inherent in the Versailles system of international relations, an intensification bringing nearer the armed conflict of imperialist powers for a new division of the world.

(2) To the intensification of all forms of political reaction of the régime of the bourgeois dictatorship and its increasing transition to the openly Fascist forms of suppressing the toilers.

(3) To the further growth of the revolutionary upsurge and the maturing of the pre-requisites for this upsurge developing into a revolutionary crisis.

### **The Accentuation of Differences and the Menace of Imperialist Wars**

The Versailles system is a system of international relations which have sprung up as a result of the world war, on the basis of the general post-war crisis of capitalism. The present crisis which has grown out of the general crisis of capitalism, has very much accentuated all the contradictions inherent in this system. What is the Versailles system? At the II Congress of the Communist International, Lenin gave to it the following definition:

"A milliard and a quarter in the oppressed colonies, countries cut up alive, such as Persia, Turkey, China, countries which have been conquered and reduced to the position of colonies. Not more

than a quarter milliard in the countries which have escaped this fate, but have become economically dependent on America, and also militarily dependent during the war, for the war got hold of the whole world, it didn't allow a single State to remain really neutral. And we have, finally, not more than a quarter milliard inhabitants in countries where only the capitalists have profited by the division of territories" (Lenin's Speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1st Russian edition, Vol. XVII, p. 255).

Thus, the Versailles system is a world system of imperialism based on a very much graduated chain of oppression. It is a pyramid, the peak of which is monopoly capitalism of the United States which has reduced to economic dependence a number of large capitalist countries (France, Italy, etc.). Countries such as France, in their turn, keep a number of smaller "victorious" countries (Poland, Yugoslavia, Czecho-Slovakia) in the position of vassals. Within their bounds, the latter oppress Ukrainians, Germans, White Russians, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Slovaks, etc., and at the bottom of this pyramid are one and a quarter milliard inhabitants of oppressed colonies.

What is the present aspect of the Versailles system?

In 1931 its aspect is somewhat different from its aspect in 1919-20. At that period the Versailles system was a conglomeration of political and economic contradictions, grown directly out of the distribution of forces at the end of the world war. During the ten years or so of the post-war crisis of capitalism, new contradictions have made their appearance, which, by intertwining with the contradictions left behind by the imperialist war, and by reproducing them on an expanded basis, have created an even more complicated and entangled knot of relations between the capitalist States than that which existed at the end of the world war.

Of all these capitalist contradictions, every one of which can, in its further development, play the rôle of Sarajevo, the chief and decisive contradiction in the capitalist world is the Anglo-American. The development of the revolutionary movement in India, where Britain has invested a milliard pounds sterling, i.e. more than in all the British Dominions, the centrifugal tendencies of the Dominions which develop in the direction of separation from the British Empire, the United States' determined move in the direction of the Dominions, and also of Brazil and Argentine, the prolonged economic crisis in Britain, the enormous army of unemployed throughout the post-war period, all this makes and will make very acute the question of the further existence of the British Empire. Great Britain, like Germany, is a country where all the fundamental contradictions of the post-war crisis of capitalism have become intertwined. These contradictions develop here more slowly than in Germany, but for British imperialism they are fraught with consequences no less serious than the consequences of the world war are for Germany.

All these tendencies have very much sharpened under the influence of the world crisis and have fomented the struggle between the United States and Great Britain. Fighting stubbornly for every one of its positions, hard pressed by the United States, Great Britain is compelled to retreat step by step before America at the London Naval Conference, where, after capitulating at the Washington Conference before the United States with regard to parity of battle-ships, it accepted this parity in naval armaments also for all the other types of ships; contrary to all the traditions of the old British policy in Europe, it is compelled to retreat before France, with regard to recognition of the hegemony of France on the European Continent; it is compelled to retreat in the countries of Latin-America where in the course of 1930 six "revolutions" took place, in most cases organised by the agents of American imperialism—in Haiti, San Domingo, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Brazil; it was compelled to retreat before the Dominions, behind which is the United States, at the recent Imperial Conference with regard to preferential tariffs for the import of British goods into the Dominions, i.e. with regard to protecting Great Britain from the competition of the rest of the world, i.e. first and foremost the United States. And this retreat is not casual or temporary; it expresses the changes in the correlation of forces in the capitalist countries, which have been slowly maturing for decades, it is the line of the historical decline of Great Britain as a colonial power which, in the course of historical development, cannot be saved from downfall either by Baldwin, or MacDonald and Thomas, or Beaverbrook and Mosley. The colonial and semi-colonial peoples on four continents of the world, which have come and are getting into revolutionary motion, will be the grave-diggers of the British Empire. Only the British working class can save itself and at the same time the whole working population of Britain from the impending catastrophe—the result of the policy of the ruling classes—from the imminent armed encounter between the world imperialists, and from Britain's inevitable defeat in this encounter, by means of the proletarian revolution under the leadership of a mass Communist Party.

But the British bourgeoisie is not retreating without a fight. Most experienced in the arts of world domination, it fights with varying success in the different sectors of the imperialist front against the United States. Britain, with its imperial possessions, still controls 87 per cent. of the world production of rubber, 88 per cent. of nickel, 69 per cent. of gold, 43 per cent. of tin, 30 per cent. of zinc, 23 per cent. of lead, 15 per cent. of silver, 77 per cent. of wool, 66 per cent. of rye, 27 per cent. of wheat, etc. Its oil companies fight, sometimes rather successfully, against the American Companies. Britain carries on a very active policy in all parts of the world. It sends out missions for the consolidation of economic and political connections (the Prince of Wales' journey to Latin-America). By harsh repression of the toiling masses, combined with minor concessions to the

national bourgeoisie, Britain is still able to maintain its rule in the colonies; its navy is still stronger than the American, which constitutes only 60 per cent. of the British. Having conceded numerical parity, the British Admiralty does its utmost to increase the fighting capacity of its ships, and has shifted the question of naval rivalry on to this plane. By making capital out of the "yellow peril" with regard to Japan, as far as Dominions like Australia and New Zealand are concerned, and out of the necessity of protecting them by means of the British fleet from a Japanese invasion, Britain still keeps these Dominions in the leading-strings of its policy.

In the face of internal difficulties which are steadily growing as a result of the crisis, the British bourgeoisie has placed its steward, the "Labour Party," in power, and has thrown on it the odium of carrying through capitalist rationalisation, of suppression of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, of the enormous unemployment and of the capitalist offensive against the working class. Simultaneously, the really genuine revolutionary movements of the toiling masses of Latin-America which grow from year to year and are accelerated by the present crisis (movements due to the intertwining of three social-political systems in these countries—slavery, feudalism, and monopoly capitalism,—to the maturing agrarian revolution of the peons and the agricultural proletariat, and to the wide national movement of the Indians), undermine the foundations of American imperialism in the same measure as the growing revolutionary movement in India undermines the rule of British imperialism. All this bears testimony to the prolonged and stubborn character of the Anglo-American struggle, with the vicissitudes of which the third period of the post-war development of capitalism will be replete. Despite the ultra-imperialist theory of a "peaceful" economic victory over Great Britain by the United States, the whole development inevitably leads to a world imperialist war for a re-division of the world.

The second sharp contradiction which is undermining the Versailles system, is the Young Plan. Many people think that the Young Plan only regulates the mutual relations between the allies and Germany. This is not so. The Young Plan is the most outstanding problem of the Versailles system. Like the Dawes Plan, it was visualised by its creators as the principal basis of the bourgeoisie for the maintenance of capitalist stabilisation. And if capitalist stabilisation is experiencing a crisis, it is impossible for the Young Plan not to do likewise.

Germany, defeated in the war, robbed of everything, burdened for several generations with a tribute unprecedented in volume, throughout the whole post-war period has been an ulcer on the body of the capitalist world. She has been able to make her reparation payments only because of the loans granted to her. Not to go bankrupt, she has had to increase her exports to the utmost. Very characteristic in this respect is the fact that of all the capitalist countries

Germany alone has increased her exports to the countries of Latin-America in the past year. But this only intensified the struggle for markets and complicated the contradictions of the Versailles system. Deprived of the Lorraine ore, of the coal mines in the Saar Basin and in part of Upper Silesia, Germany had strengthened and enlarged her production apparatus in the years of relative stabilisation by means of capitalist rationalisation, but she has been deprived of her colonies, and as a consequence has experienced the ever-growing contradiction between her economics and the Versailles policy, a steady depression throughout the post-war period, interspersed with very brief periods of feverish boom. The ruling classes of Germany, in order to be able to stand the reparation pressure of imperialist France and to maintain the positions of German capitalism internally, as well as externally, transferred the reparation burden to the shoulders of the working class, gradually lowering its standard of living. The Versailles system, with its social and political consequences, was precisely one of the sources of the radicalisation of the German working class and of the consolidation of the German Communist Party, which has grown up out of the leaven of the revolution and civil war of 1918-19.

The crisis which holds Germany in its grip has accentuated to the utmost all external and internal contradictions, and has placed the German proletariat in an intolerable position. Hence, the maturing of the pre-requisites of a political crisis in Germany, the growth of Fascism, the growth of the Communist movement which bears testimony to the ever-growing swing of the masses towards proletarian revolution. Hence, the sharpening relations between the capitalist cliques of the victorious countries and those of the vanquished countries despoiled by the Versailles Treaty (Bulgaria, Hungary, etc.), the "anti-Versailles" movement which Italian Fascism tried to lead.

The provisional naval agreement concluded between France and Italy on the initiative of the British "Labour" Government, the secret negotiations between the German Fascists and representatives of French imperialism, the whole legalist evolution of Fascism after the elections of September 14th in Germany with regard to the Versailles obligations (voting against the Communist proposal to stop reparation payments), confirm once more the fact that the only party and the only class which can put up a genuine fight against the Versailles system is the Communist Party and the proletariat.

Third, the characteristic feature of the past year has been accentuation of the differences between the colonies and the whole system of world imperialism. Revolutionary movements in the colonies have been developing in the course of the whole post-war period, in consequence of the inhuman feudal imperialistic oppression, the awakening of national consciousness among the toiling masses, the

barbarous exploitation of the colonial workers, the brutal spoliation of the native peasantry by predatory methods.

The world crisis has intensified and accentuated all the forms of colonial slavery with regard to hundreds of millions of native toilers, who were the first to suffer from the fall in the world prices. It has accelerated the pauperisation of the colonial peasantry, which was bound to call forth an outburst of mass discontent. The years 1929 and 1930 were marked by spontaneous colonial insurrections which spread to the Pacific, the Arabian East and the heart of Black Africa.

But the national revolutionary movement has been intense in India, Indo-China and China. The revolutionary struggle in these countries jeopardises the principal colonial imperialist possessions. The working class is gradually coming to the forefront of the fight there, and in China the Communist Party is already becoming the leading factor of the workers' and peasants' movement. In these countries the problems of power and of the agrarian revolution are seriously considered, and on a large territory of China they are finding practical solution.

The revolutionary movement in the colonies, which brought with it the shrinkage or complete destruction of a series of important markets, which has increased the risk and lowered the profitability of capital investments for the imperialists, has helped, in its turn, to intensify the world crisis.

Finally, one must call attention to the accentuation of the national question which found expression in the peasant movement in West Ukraine, suppressed with unheard-of brutality by the Polish Fascist government. This movement, which broke out in the very heart of Europe, among the Ukrainian peasants, who were delivered to Poland by the Versailles Treaty, is of much greater significance than would appear at first glance. The movement in West Ukraine was a revolt of the toiling masses against the capitalist Balkanisation of Europe, against the artificial State and national barriers erected by the Versailles Treaty. As the Versailles system becomes more and more unstable, such movements are bound to spring up everywhere: in Alsace-Lorraine and Flanders, in the Balkans and in the Eastern part of capitalist Europe. And this calls for greater attention on the part of the Communists to the question of national oppression, greater activity in the mobilisation of the masses for the struggle against national oppression, for the right to self-determination including secession.

The framework of the Versailles system created by the play of forces in the victorious countries as a result of the world war, has become too restricted for all the capitalist powers. For the United States, because the principal colonies and largest continents are exploited by Britain, because Britain wants to be the sole mistress of the seas. For Britain, because France rules capitalist Europe, because France has become Britain's dangerous rival in the rôle of



possessor of colonies, and "mandatory powers" of the League of Nations. For France, because Germany is not quite throttled. For Germany, because she has been deprived of her "own" sources of raw material (colonies) and of rich industrial regions, because corridors have been established on her territory. For Italy, because she must have free access to Africa via the Mediterranean, in order to send there her surplus population and to rob the African natives. For all the small predatory nations, the vassal countries, because they feel cramped in the quarters assigned them by their masters, because each of them endeavours to expand at the expense of its neighbour.

And the consequence of all this is: the crisis which accentuates the antagonisms between the imperialist States and causes them to increase their oppression of the colonial peoples and conquered nations, is undermining the Versailles system, is accelerating the advent of a series of wars, is giving an impetus to the revolutionary movement in the colonies and to the national revolutionary movements in the multi-national capitalist States.

### Fascism

The increase in the antagonisms and of the aggressiveness of imperialism in international relations is reflected in the internal relations of classes in the capitalist States by the intensification of the class struggle and the oppression of the bourgeois dictatorship, which is more and more assuming open Fascist forms of suppressing the toilers. Political reaction as a system of administration has uninterruptedly increased in all capitalist countries in proportion to the development of imperialism, and represents the other, or internal side of imperialist aggression. The Fascist régime is not a new type of State; it is one of the forms of the bourgeois dictatorship in the epoch of imperialism. Fascism organically grows out of bourgeois democracy. The process of transition of bourgeois dictatorship to the open forms of suppressing the toilers represents, in substance, the fascisation of bourgeois democracy. Bourgeois democracy of the type that was characteristic in the period of bourgeois revolutions in the last century nowhere exists any longer; what exists is the bourgeois democratic form of the capitalist dictatorship in the epoch of imperialism and of the general crisis of capitalism, i.e. bourgeois democracy in the process of becoming Fascist.

The modern capitalist States, taken as a whole, represent a motley conglomeration of Fascist States (Italy, Poland) and bourgeois democracies streaked with the elements of Fascism in various stages of the process of fascisation, as for example France or England. Even those countries which are only just passing through the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution, like Mexico and other countries in Latin-America, in the environment of world imperialism,

are proceeding to adopt Fascist forms of bourgeois dictatorship in the short periods when days and weeks equal years and decades in the history of the earlier bourgeois democracies of Europe. Marx said that bourgeois democracy is a **form of revolution** and not a **conservative form** of existence of the bourgeoisie. With this form the bourgeoisie was able to purchase the active co-operation and participation of the proletariat in bourgeois-democratic revolutions. But on the day following the capture of power by the bourgeoisie this form began to evolve in the direction of political reaction.

From this the **first conclusion which must be drawn** is that only a bourgeois Liberal can contrast present-day bourgeois democracy to the Fascist régime as a political form fundamentally different from the latter. By making this contrast, Social Democracy deliberately deceives the masses in order to conceal from them the fact that the modern capitalist State represents a bourgeois dictatorship even when it is acting in the form of bourgeois democracy in the process of becoming fascised, and even when it acts in the form of open Fascism. But the **second** and very important **conclusion** that must be drawn is that the stages of development of Fascism in the capitalist States must not be ignored, that in order to be able to adopt a correct tactical line it is necessary carefully to analyse and study the concrete conditions and factors which accelerate the process of fascisation of the bourgeoisie and of the State.

The mistakes that were committed in certain Sections of the Communist International on the question of Fascism show that certain of these mistakes (the Koszewa group in Poland) were that bourgeois democracy was considered to be fundamentally different from Fascism and that others (Austria and Finland) denied that there were stages in the development of the Fascist dictatorship. Both these mistakes taken together revealed the absence of a concrete analysis of the stages of intensification of the class struggle, of the stages of the crisis in the ruling class and of the corresponding degrees of fascisation of the bourgeois parties. The opportunist nature of the mistakes committed by the Koszewa group lies not in the fact that it identified Social Fascism with Fascism, but that it failed to perceive the far-reaching process of fascisation of the P.S.P. (Polish Socialist Party) in the concrete conditions prevailing in Poland.

The establishment of the Fascist dictatorship may proceed in various ways: gradually, by the so-called "dry road," where a powerful Social Democracy, having disarmed the proletariat by calling upon them to remain within the law, and by surrendering one position after another to Fascism, leads the working class to capitulation before Fascism, as was the case in Austria. German Social Democracy is now striving to usher in the Fascist dictatorship by the "dry road." But precisely because there is a strong Communist Party in Germany, which from day to day is mobilising

the masses for the struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship now in the process of fascisation, the Austrian method of ushering in the Fascist dictatorship cannot be applied in Germany.

The Fascist type of bourgeois dictatorship is not merely a product of the "objective" processes taking place in the camp of the ruling classes, but is a product of the correlation of class forces. Its establishment is linked up either with the retreat of the proletariat (with or without a fight), or with a temporary defeat in the struggle. Another type of the establishment of the Fascist dictatorship (Italian, Polish) is linked up with a Fascist *coup d'état*. While introducing into the relations between the various quarrelling cliques of the bourgeoisie the element of comic opera, these *coup d'états* are directed exclusively against the proletariat, against the oppressed class which threatens capitalist society with a revolution. But both in the first and second cases, the establishment of the Fascist dictatorship is equally preventive of counter-revolution.

Many link up the time of these so-called Fascist "revolutions" with the moment of the establishment of the Fascist dictatorship or the final consolidation of this dictatorship. This is wrong. Italian Fascism fulfilled the major task of fascisation after its "March on Rome." The Social Democrats particularly harp on the spectre of Fascist "revolution" in order to lull the vigilance of the workers to its efforts to usher in Fascism by the "dry road." But there are also **Communists** who, hypnotised by the conception of "Fascist revolution," consider that the fight against Fascism commences from the moment it comes out into the streets armed for the purpose of accomplishing its "revolution." The "Fascist revolution" theory, in fact, rests on the purely formal and parliamentary conception of Fascism. The decisive factor in Fascism, it is argued, is that it abolishes parliament and dissolves the institutions of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, the main factor in Fascism is **its open offensive against the working class with the employment of every method of coercion and violence. It is—civil war against the toilers.** The abolition of the remnants of bourgeois democracy is the derivative, the by-product of this main and decisive line of the class offensive against the proletariat. Moreover, the abolition of parliaments under the Fascist dictatorship is not an absolutely essential feature; for example, Poland.

Frequently, in describing Fascism, some of us emphasise the very features which the Fascists themselves give prominence to when they speak about their predatory régime, for example, the Corporative character of the Fascist State, the strongly emphasised nationalist ideology ("Great Italy" the "Third Empire") and the mediæval garb in which Fascism poses, etc. But it is not these features that represent the essence of Fascism; these are rather its ideological cloak which proves the inability of the ruling classes in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism to produce any new leading ideas, and that for this reason they appeal to the past in

the same way that Russian Tsarism on the eve of its demise appealed to the times of Minin and Pojarsky or of Ivan Kalita. The Corporative State is in fact a form of State that conceals the establishment of the open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the working class. The nationalist ideology is used as a cloak to conceal the very modern imperialist aggressiveness of the capitalist States.

Fascism is not a belated historical miscarriage of the Middle Ages; it is a product of monopoly capitalism based on the concentration and centralisation of capital, the growth of trusts and cartels, which leads to the monstrous centralisation of the whole of the apparatus for the oppression of the masses and the inclusion in it of the political parties, the apparatus of Social Democracy, of the reformist trade unions, of the co-operative societies, etc. The reason why its ideological forms bear this freakish character is that it is the political superstructure of **decaying** capitalism. But this retrograde ideology is interwoven with all the ideological attributes of bourgeois democracy of the epoch of monopoly capitalism, with the theory of "organised capitalism," of "industrial democracy," "peace in industry," the theory of "State capitalism as a new era in social relationships," the theory of the "non-class State," etc.

Fascism did not invent gunpowder, it did not invent these ideas; it borrowed them ready-made from Social Democracy and clothed them in mediæval formulæ. And this community of ideas is the best evidence of the kinship between Fascism and Social Fascism. Social Democracy itself admits this when it says in the words of Albert Thomas: "Socialism differs from Fascism only in its methods. Both represent the interests of the workers." This is proved also by the fact that the social base of Social Democracy is changing and that it is more and more orientating itself on those strata which serve as the mass basis of Fascism—the petty bourgeoisie, office workers, etc.

This community of ideas and common social basis are determined by the fundamental factor that both Fascism and Social Fascism equally serve the interests of decaying capitalism in the epoch of its general crisis. Social Democracy is not simply the apologist of capitalism in general, but of decaying capitalism; it takes full responsibility for its existence with all its contradictions and consequences. In the beginning of 1930, Renner, in *Die Gesellschaft* (No. 2), wrote:

"Civil war destroys our industries to such an extent that in the last resort it becomes a matter of indifference as to who is the victor and who is the vanquished!

"**Both sides become impoverished**, and in the present conditions of the world economy they are unable to rise."

And he continues:

"The interests of the working class at the present time, in the present state of economic and political development, are almost

identical with the highest common interests . . . the highest common interests is industry as a whole. . . ."

That is to say, decaying capitalist industry.

Here we have the old idea of "National defence" in the name of which Social Democracy drove the workers of all countries to be butchered in 1914—but that is a stage that has been passed; in the present epoch of crisis Social Democracy quite frankly and cynically adopts as its central task the task of saving capitalism, which is expiring even as a result of the mere impact of objective factors.

What is the decisive factor in Fascism from the point of view of our tactical line?

*Firstly*, the bourgeois offensive against the working class, carried out by a series of blows against the revolutionary organisations, the Communist Party, the revolutionary trade unions, and other mass organisations, for the purpose of smashing the revolutionary labour movement, destroying its most active elements by physical annihilation or mass arrests, destroying the workers' press, by abolishing the right of assembly, free speech, the right of workers to participate in elections, which have already been curtailed by bourgeois democracy, by establishing a system of brutal terror against the workers, by drowning in blood every movement of the working class and thereby establishing the unlimited power of the employer and the factory administration in the factories. This smashing up of the labour movement proceeds simultaneously either with the forcible recruitment of all workers in Fascist organisations (Italy) or with the division of spheres of influence between the Fascist and Social Fascists, who become the agents of Fascism within the labour movement (Poland). Excelling Russian Tsarism in its methods of suppressing the labour movement, Fascism, which establishes its domination on the economic and political slavery of the working class introduced by the régime of the bourgeois dictatorship, perfects the system of binding labour to the capitalist State.

*Secondly*, the bourgeoisie strives through the medium of Fascism to **abolish the class struggle** and to substitute for it the one-sided aggressive dictatorship of capital over the toilers; it carries through "class co-operation," so highly praised by bourgeois democracy, by methods of naked economic and political violence. It abolishes the right to strike and substitutes for it the system of compulsory arbitration which, with great facility, is incorporated in the labour legislation of bourgeois democracy in the process of fascisation. Like Social Democracy, it utilises the idea of the "classless State" as a weapon for crushing the proletarian class struggle, and in doing so abandons the whole vocabulary of hypocritical formulæ of bourgeois democracy and reveals the oppressive character of the bourgeois dictatorship in its most cynical and frank form.

*Thirdly*, the bourgeoisie completely transforms, through the medium of Fascism, the reformist trade union organisations or the new, specially formed, Fascist trade unions into instruments of coercion of the capitalist State similar to the police, the courts, the barracks and the prison. Striving by these methods to draw certain strata of the workers into the system of the Fascist dictatorship, increasing many fold the power of the State apparatus to oppress the working class, Fascism, in relation to the whole of the working class, aims at completing in the sphere of politics what in the economic sphere the capitalist conveyor does to the individual worker, namely, at converting it into an appendage of the whole machine of capitalist oppression.

*Fourthly*, monopoly capitalism substitutes for the old political Party system the semi-military and semi-terroristic capitalist organisation under the guise of a so-called single Fascist party which is adapted for the purpose of civil war. The re-arming of the bourgeoisie for civil war is expressed, firstly, in that capital reorganises its armed forces on the basis of a mechanised and purely class army. Secondly, it is expressed in that side by side with this army it creates cadres in the form of special Fascist units. The old type of army based on conscription is dying out, because it contains within itself the seeds of revolutionary mutinies. The bourgeoisie in the epoch of wars and revolutions fears the armed nation. Hence the idea of a mercenary army, of an army of cadres, a mechanised army and army of experts in destruction. A prominent representative of this tendency is the British General Fuller. Fuller advocates the idea of a "small army of machines." This, in his opinion, should be an army of "knights in armour," consisting of reliable Fascists. To the cannon fodder—the peasants and workers—he ascribes the auxiliary rôle of an army of occupation which cannot be trusted to manage powerful fighting machines. The German General Seekt also advocates a small mercenary army and bases his arguments on the experience of the last war and particularly on the Russian army which "came under the influence of disruptive elements." The bourgeoisie is dreaming of a mechanised "select bourgeois guard," which will fulfil the task of delivering the first blow at the enemy and will provide leading cadres for the "big" army of the "armed nation." This same idea is supported by Social Democracy under the guise of "reduction of armaments."

At the same time in all capitalist countries we observe the growth of Fascist armed units (Stahlhelm in Germany, Strelets in Poland, Schutzcorps in Finland, Heimwehr in Austria, etc.). The numerical strength of these units may be judged from the fact that the Polish Strelets has a membership of over 600,000, of whom 1,000 are officers and 5,000 non-commissioned officers permanently employed in the military training of the remaining members; in Rumania, the Voinicii organisation has a membership of 200,000. In Finland, the women Fascists' organisation alone, the Lotta Svärd, has a member-



ship of 50,000 militarily trained women Fascists. In addition to this, in all countries there are numerous patriotic, sport, boy scout and other organisations which in fact are also Fascist organisations. The Polish Air and Chemical Defence League has a membership of 500,000, the British Legion, 500,000, etc.

Could Fascism carry through this murderous policy if it did not have a mass basis? Of course not. The epoch of monopoly capitalism gives rise to the growth of declassed elements which are formed as a consequence of the ruination of the peasants, small producers, artisans, and traders, of the over-production of technical intelligentsia, commission agents, and all those living on casual earnings. The modern cities in capitalist countries teem with such elements from among which crime, prostitution, and all kinds of adventurers recruit their ranks. In critical periods, for example, when the world war of 1914-18 came to an end, this army of declassed elements increased by the addition of "unemployed" officers whose only occupation was the workshop for teaching the technique of murder, and who provided recruits for the gangs of all the adventurers of that period: Mussolini, D'Annunzio, Noske, Kapp, and others. The present crisis has still greater effect in increasing the ranks of these declassed elements. By means of political corruption the bourgeoisie in the process of fascistisation creates out of these elements the skeleton of its movement which, in addition to these elements, embraces the petty urban bourgeoisie, the capitalist farmers, a considerable section of the students, the representatives of the church, the militarists, etc.

In order to retain this following of extremely fluid and motley elements, and in order to recruit certain strata of the working class to its side, Fascism must resort to crude demagoguery, a combination of the wildest reactionary demands with quasi-Socialist phraseology. The existence of the Soviet Union, which ushered in the new era of world proletarian revolution and the growth of revolutionary temper among the masses, compels Fascism to adapt itself to the spirit of the times, to call the masses to "revolution" against prostituted bourgeois democracy. Playing on the needs and misfortunes of the masses, drawing the passive strata of the population into politics, destroying the influence of Social Democracy—one of the pillars of capitalism—destroying by its policy of open violence the deep-rooted prejudices of bourgeois legality, Fascism, itself a product of the crisis of capitalism, increases the instability of the capitalist system and paves the way for its own doom and the doom of the whole capitalist system.

But the defeat of Fascism is not inevitable. It will be made inevitable by an active militant policy of the working class, led by a politically and organisationally strong Communist Party which will mobilise the class hatred of the masses against Fascism. Often this deep and burning class hatred towards Fascism is not sufficiently marked in the policy of the Communists, who, together with the

masses, submit to the hypnosis of the "quasi-revolutionary" phraseology of Fascism. It is difficult to explain why in the Communist press one finds references to the Fascists being enemies of the present system. Which system? The régime of bourgeois dictatorship? or only of the parliamentary form of this régime? But this does not determine the nature of Fascism. Fascism is not an enemy of the bourgeois dictatorship; it is its most oppressive form. It is impossible to fight Fascism without fighting against all forms of bourgeois dictatorship, against all its reactionary measures which pave the way towards the Fascist dictatorship.

And this means, *Firstly*, that the fight against Fascism calls for the systematic exposure of the deception of Social Democracy which conceals the counter-revolutionary character of the bourgeois dictatorship with phrases about "democracy," and thereby paralyses the fighting capacity of the working class in its struggle against the dictatorship of capital, and lulls the vigilance of the workers in regard to growing Fascism. *Secondly*, it means that only by determined struggle against bourgeois dictatorship clothed in the form of bourgeois democracy can the Communists secure success in the fight against Fascism. *Thirdly*, it means that the struggle against Fascism, like the struggle against war, must be carried on not only when the guns begin to roar and the machine-guns begin to rattle, but every day, against all forms of the capitalist offensive, both in the sphere of economics and in the sphere of politics.

The growth of Fascism confronts the Communist Parties with the following tasks:

The mass defence of the workers against Fascist gangs by organising in the factories mass organs of struggle on the basis of the widest possible united front with the Social Democratic workers.

Intensified work among the young workers who have not gone through the experience of war and revolution.

Untiring struggle for the young workers against Fascism, against the catholic and protestant church, against militarism which poisons the youth with its reactionary propaganda.

Intensified work among the unemployed in order to counteract the penetration of Fascist influence among them.

The establishment of self-defence units for the protection of labour organisations, the workers' press, the lives of the more active revolutionary fighters, against assault and assassination.

Propaganda, organisation preparation and carrying out of mass political strikes as one of the most effective means of fighting against Fascism.

Fight for the hegemony of the proletariat over the toiling and semi-proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements of town and country, primarily the strengthening of the revolutionary organisations of the proletariat by mobilising these strata around concrete militant slogans against ruinous taxes, high cost of living, the high price policy of the trusts and cartels, against bank speculation, against

usurer capital, and rents, for the confiscation of the land, for a programme of demands for the agricultural proletariat, against all forms of national oppression (economic, political and cultural).

### III

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE

THE third part of my report deals with the revolutionary upsurge. The first question which must be raised is the question of the character of the present revolutionary upsurge. Is this upsurge merely incidental, conditioned by factors of temporary effect, or is this an upsurge which determines the whole historical period of the world revolutionary movement? The Labour Movement knows ebbs and flows of a temporary character. During recent years we have witnessed such a tremendous movement as the General Strike in Great Britain which was followed by a certain ebb of the revolutionary tide in that country. We remember that the end of the imperialist war, ended in Germany by the November Revolution, was marked by a great revolutionary upsurge which led to the overthrow of the monarchy in Germany and Austria-Hungary, to the formation of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets.

What distinguishes the present revolutionary upsurge from the upsurge in 1918-19? Finally, in the period of the partial stabilisation of capitalism there occurred spontaneous outbursts of the mass movement. What place do these occupy in our characterisation of the revolutionary upsurge?

All of these questions are deliberately confused by the Right and Trotskyist renegade elements in order to prove that there is no upsurge in 1931, but a capitalist offensive, the triumph of political reaction and the growth of Fascism, that the working class in the period of the crisis is even more on the defensive than heretofore.

It is necessary first of all to point out that the present revolutionary upsurge is one of the maturing second round of revolutions and wars. It differs from the first round of 1918-19 by the fact that it has not yet reached the intensity of the upsurge of 1918-19, but it is taking place at a time when the State of the proletarian dictatorship has been strengthened, is building Socialism and is already completing the construction of the foundation of Socialist economy. It is taking place at a time when the differentiation within the Labour Movement has become very marked, compared with 1918-19. We now have crystallised and politically strengthened Communist Parties. During the past twelve years the working class has gained experience; it has seen Social Democracy in power in a number of advanced capitalist countries. All the contradictions of capitalism are much more acute now than was the case in 1918-19.

The mere fact that the number of revolutionary centres has increased in all corners of the capitalist world (China, India, Indo-

China, the Latin-American countries) is evidence that the second round of revolutions and wars will not be of a merely European character, but of a world character.

Therefore, the second round of revolutions and wars must shake the world much more deeply and widely than the upsurge of 1918-19, and its swing will be a continuation of October 1917, leading to the victory of the proletariat in a number of capitalist countries.

There will be no return from the present crisis to capitalist stabilisation, despite Otto Bauer's predictions. But there will be a further decay of capitalism and the maturing revolutionary tide will surge with new strength. But precisely because this is an upsurge of a whole historical period, and not an incidental upsurge, there may be temporary ups and downs. We have had examples of such ups and downs more than once in our work in the past year. In the U.S.A., on March 6th, 1930, the Communist Party of America succeeded in leading into the streets about one and a quarter million workers. Nevertheless, on February 25th of this year the American Communists could bring into action only about three hundred thousand workers.

The present revolutionary upsurge is developing unevenly. Now some countries get ahead of others, then fall somewhat behind, allowing those who were behind yesterday to get ahead to-day. For instance, it would be no exaggeration to state that in Czechoslovakia, International Unemployment Day was carried out this year better than in all other countries, judged by its preparation and militancy. But, despite this unevenness in the ebb and flow of the movement, **the general line of development** of the revolutionary tide as a whole is undoubtedly upward.

In connection with this, the question arises about spontaneous partial outbursts of the movement (like the Cracow insurrection of 1923, when the Polish soldiers sided with the workers, or the demonstrations in connection with the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927, the Vienna uprising of June 15th), and of the rôle and significance of such outbreaks under the conditions of the present revolutionary upsurge. In 1916, Lenin wrote that so much explosive material had accumulated in Europe that an incident like the Zabern incident might lead to an outbreak of revolution. Since then such explosive material has accumulated still more. Although the organised strength and the experience of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the proletarian revolution has grown, nevertheless, there can be no doubt that in the present terrible conditions of the masses, their starvation, want and suffering, their growing discontent with the capitalist order, every such outbreak may serve as a starting-point for most profound revolutionary movements.

The error of some Communists in the past, particularly of Comrade Zinoviev, consisted in the fact that they regarded every such



partial outbreak, which was only of local significance, as signifying the end of capitalist stabilisation, and as ushering in a new revolutionary era. On the other hand, the opportunist viewpoint which characterises the offensive of capital and the growth of Fascism as a one-sided process, as the strengthening of the position of the bourgeoisie alone, is nothing less than complete defeatism and capitulation before the class enemy. This is incorrect because, if for no other reason, the most stubborn offensive of capital and the greatest growth of political reaction is taking place precisely in countries with the most undermined economic situation, with the maturing pre-requisites of a revolutionary crisis. But even if we were to assume that such a paradoxical situation exists, that the working class of the capitalist countries is only retreating, which contradicts the facts of the class struggle, then the mere fact of the gigantic offensive which the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. is waging against the capitalist elements of town and country repudiates completely this defeatist theory of the general retreat of the world proletariat.

But the assertion that the proletariat in the capitalist countries is only retreating is the basest falsehood. The economic crisis is revolutionising the masses. What is the significance of a demonstration like the one of September 1st in Budapest, of the almost daily sanguinary clashes in Germany, of battles like the Ruhr strike which was carried on in the face of the united forces of capital, of the events in China and India, in Spain, in the Latin-American countries, of the ferment which is beginning among the Social Democrats, of the anxiety of the ruling classes?

We must not simplify the question of the revolutionary upsurge, or fail to see the additional difficulties in the struggle which the working class under the conditions of the crisis has to encounter. The tactics of the employers in the struggle with the strike movement have become more subtle: capital is now attempting to break the resistance of the workers by means of an offensive not only in individual districts, but also in individual enterprises; in concluding wage agreements they set different periods for the expiration of the agreements for the different districts, in order thereby to break the unity of action of the proletariat. Finally, capital resorts to the system of short-term agreements, which enables it to lower wages gradually, step by step.

The crisis has also brought about a change in the relative importance of various forms of the struggle, in accordance with the changes within the ranks of the proletariat (unemployed and employed), in accordance with the drawing in of other social groups into the movement, of the peasantry, the urban poor, the office workers. Until the end of 1929 the predominant form which characterised the upsurge was that of strikes. At the present time, alongside with strikes, other forms of struggle are being more extensively used: demonstrations of unemployed, street clashes of the masses with the police, refusal

to pay taxes, peasant uprisings with the use of such forms of struggle as were employed in Western Ukraine. The strike movement which has developed this year repudiates the lie of the reformists and opportunists that strikes are impossible during a crisis. In Berlin, in the Ruhr, in Scotland, in South Wales and, especially, in Lancashire, and elsewhere, the proletariat has waged strikes and not so badly at that. But the use of strikes as a weapon of struggle has become more difficult. At the present time the specific importance of an economic strike is many times greater compared to previous years of the upsurge. In what way does the **higher stage** of the present revolutionary upsurge as compared with preceding years express itself? In the fact that in a number of capitalist countries, and in a number of separate actions, the Communists are beginning to assume the independent leadership of the class battles.

The Communists in China are not now carrying on a victorious Northern Expedition, occupying Shanghai and the other industrial centres; nor is Chang Kai-shek striking them in the flank in the moment of victory. The Communists are now independently, as a Party, directing the Chinese Red Army of peasants and workers against Chang Kai-shek, against all the counter-revolutionary generals and the united forces of the whole imperialist front. In the matter of winning the hegemony of the proletariat in the national-revolutionary movement they have made, since 1926, a tremendous and decisive advance and have raised the revolutionary movement to a new height as a result of its class differentiation.

The Communists in Europe are not at this moment leading general strikes on the scale of the English strike of 1926 which was betrayed at the decisive moment by the Purcells, Citrines and other leaders of the General Council. But they have led the strike in the Ruhr **independently** as a Party, and in opposition to the reformist trade unions. They have made an important stride towards winning the leadership in the Labour Movement. These facts show that both the German and the Chinese Communist Parties, despite their different levels of development, their influence and their Bolshevik experience, each one in its own way, in accordance with its concrete national conditions, is solving the central problem—the problem of winning the majority of the working class by means of correct Bolshevik methods.

We have accomplished little since the X Plenum in the matter of independent leadership in class battles, but it is stupid to wail, as the opportunists in our ranks do, about the alleged narrowing of the base of Communist influence resulting from the Communists having begun to assume independent leadership in class battles. Had the Communists given independent leadership to movements like the General Strike in Great Britain or the Northern Expedition in China, it would have implied that they had won the majority of the working class and toiling masses, and this would have resulted in the immediate victory of the proletarian revolution. This higher

stage of the revolutionary upsurge is characterised by the **revolutionisation** of the class battles, and this is connected with the fact that the Communists have assumed independent leadership in these battles. Precisely because of this, as was shown in the Ruhr, economic strikes, with independent Communist leadership, assume a political character, and it may be asserted that every movement under Communist leadership will tend to rise to a higher stage, since its development will not be hindered by the heavy anchor of reformist officialdom, which drags the movement back.

And our weakness consists in the fact that in most of the Communist Parties we have not gone beyond the passing of resolutions, praising the principle of independent leadership in class battles. The task of independent leadership in class battles cannot be accomplished in two or three weeks or two or three months. Some Communists reveal a tendency to raise "new tasks" at every Plenum of their Central Committee; some believe that all that is required to solve a problem is to write a resolution about it, that the problems of all the "three periods" of the post-war development no longer confront us in 1931.

This is the most harmful and pernicious error the Communists can commit in their work. The task of winning independent leadership in the class battles will require much time before it is accomplished. It is a constituent part of the great strategical task of **winning the majority of the working class** which the E.C.C.I. submitted to the Communist Parties at the X Plenum, and its accomplishment presupposes, apart from winning independent leadership in class battles, the undermining of the mass base of Social Democracy, which has a sound footing in the reformist trade unions. The decision of a number of Communist Parties in favour of **organising an independent revolutionary trade union movement is a decision of truly historical importance**. This signifies that they raised the question of the revolutionary upsurge in all seriousness before the masses, that the Communists are drawing practical revolutionary conclusions in their everyday organisational work on the basis of the appraisal of the character and tempo of the present revolutionary upsurge. Only on the sweep of this tide will the Communists be able to build and consolidate an independent revolutionary trade union movement.

The treacherous policies of the reformist trade union bureaucracy during the present crisis create the conditions for a successful solution of this task by the Communist Parties. Wherever the Communist Parties have been weak heretofore they have now opening before them wide opportunities for swift growth and **entrenchment of the movement of the revolutionary trade union opposition**. For these Communist Parties, this is the most important road towards winning independent leadership in the class battles, towards winning the majority of the working class.

In those countries where the proletariat has strong Communist Parties, these Parties should strengthen and broaden the independent revolutionary trade union movement in the process of mass movements of the proletariat, they must do their utmost to raise the fighting ability of the Red Trade Unions in the struggle against the capitalist offensive. Only in the class struggle will the Communists be able to forge strong mass revolutionary trade unions, capable in deed of preparing for and leading the economic battles of the proletariat and of becoming organisational strongholds for the Communist Parties in the matter of winning the majority of the working class. But what is the situation at present in regard to winning the majority of the working class? We must state that since the X Plenum, of the four Parties which were mentioned by the Plenum, and which have approached most closely the winning of the majority of the working class, one of these parties, the C.P. of Germany, has really taken a serious step forward. The C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia has begun to work not so badly of late for the accomplishment of this task, the C.P. of Poland has scored small successes, but the French Party has even dropped some steps backward.

The mistake many Communists have made since the X Plenum has been that they have looked upon the problem of winning the majority of the working class, of winning independent leadership in the class battles as a task which can be achieved at one single stroke. This mistake was not accidental. It followed from the wrong position they occupied on the question of the character and tempo of the revolutionary upsurge. These comrades assumed that it must be of very short duration, they simplified its movement, representing it as a continuously-rising curve, as a kind of rocket shooting upwards without any slowing down and without any temporary ups and downs. This mistake was aggravated by the fact that the question of the revolutionary upsurge was presented to the rank and file of the Party in an extremely abstract fashion, mechanically, without taking into account the specific peculiarities of each individual country which determined its tempo and form of development. And this attitude led to the skipping over of the complex "painstaking" tasks of organisational spadework; it bred the assumption of an easy and swift victory ahead, fostered the idea of spontaneity, and led to a simplification of the approach towards all Party tasks. It assumed that a spontaneous revolutionary wave would drive the masses towards the Communists, that the independent leadership of the Communists in the class battles would win recognition by the working class without any particular efforts on our part.

They put it this way: Social Democracy has already exposed itself and will disintegrate, as it were, automatically, and all the Communists need to do is "to give the final push." **The economic strike "grows into" a political strike under the conditions existing**

in the "third period" without the Communists undermining the positions of the reformists in the working class, etc. Many Communists have approached in too simple a fashion the most important and the most decisive problem in our tactical arsenal, the question of the mass political strike. And now, having burned their fingers on the difficulties of realising the mass political strike, some have come to believe that the question of the mass political strike is postponed to the indefinite future. Yet the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I. clearly stated that the problem of the **mass political strike** is the decisive problem for the present period:

"The application of the weapon of the mass political strike will help the Communist Parties to bring about greater unity in the isolated economic actions of the working class, to accomplish the broad mobilisation of the proletarian masses and gradually to augment their political experience, leading them up to the direct struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Resolution of the Tenth Plenum "On the International Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Communist International").

Now, when the economic crisis is revealing tendencies towards growing into a political crisis in some of the capitalist countries, the question of the mass political strike is assuming much more actual significance than at the time of the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I. The rapid revolutionisation of the masses, the confusion in the ranks of the ruling classes, a certain disorganisation of the State apparatus of capital, and the profound ferment within Social Democracy, are creating the pre-requisites for successful application of this weapon of class struggle. The mass political strike is becoming of special importance as a weapon of struggle against advancing Fascism and the menace of intervention.

The whole experience of the world Labour Movement has shown that precisely in moments of a maturing revolutionary crisis in a country, the mass political strike becomes transformed from a slogan of agitation and propaganda into a slogan of action. Such was the case in Russia in 1905, in Germany in the revolutionary years of 1918-23. Such is the case now in Spain, in China, in India, that is, everywhere where the State has disintegrated and where the revolutionary tide is rising high.

Mass political strikes in such moments, following rapidly one after another, growing in strength, scope and intensity, lead up to the armed struggle of the working class for power. But it would be incorrect mechanically to apply to all countries what Lenin wrote in regard to mass political strikes under the conditions which existed in 1905. In the largest capitalist countries the proletariat is moving, not towards a bourgeois democratic revolution, but towards the proletarian revolution. The relation of class forces here is different. The question of the allies of the proletariat presents itself differently. The degree of the influence of Social Democracy is different. And so

forth. The transition from economic strikes to political strikes in these countries is much more difficult than in China, India and Spain. Here, in order to transform the political mass strike slogan from a slogan of agitation into a slogan of action, considerable political and organisational work must be done towards winning independent leadership in class struggles, and towards undermining the mass base of Social Democracy, this chief obstacle on the road of bringing about the mass political strike.

But, in practice, the Communists have not linked up the question of carrying out the mass political strike with the task of independent leadership in the class battles and of undermining the influence of Social Democracy. They have relied more on the element of spontaneity, which in the capitalist countries, owing to the existence of a strong Social Democracy, plays a lesser rôle than in India or China or in Russia in 1905.

This was but a short step to "dizziness from success." The C.P. U.S.A., after the amazing success of March 6th, 1930, failed to observe in time that the revolutionary trade unions were losing their membership during the raging world crisis, that its recruiting drives, which were said to have resulted in thousands of new members, did not much increase its numerical strength owing to the great fluctuation in its ranks, and to the fact that many of its new members, failing to find serious political training in the Party, quietly dropped out of the organisation. In Hungary, the Communist Party, after its success on September 1st, called for a hunger march without serious preliminary preparatory political and organisational work; it assumed that the masses had already become as fully class conscious as the young militant leadership of the Party. And since the broad working masses, even in Budapest, were not aware of the hunger march, it resulted in failure, and led only to the mobilisation of large forces of the gendarmerie and police.

The French Communist Party really had no reason for getting "dizzy" during the past year, but this did not hinder it from manifesting similar haste in its practical everyday work.

In connection with March 6th and May 1st, 1930, it put forward the slogan of the "general political strike" without in any way preparing the masses for such a movement. When it became clear that the strike movement in Northern France against the social insurance law was receding, the Communist Party, even before the strike had actually come to an end, put forth the slogan of "revenge in October," without the slightest attempt to undertake anything of the kind.

In England, the Communists' mechanical approach to the question of independent leadership in the class battles resulted in the desertion of their work in the trade unions on the pretext that the Party had transferred its work to the factories. It resulted in the Minority Movement becoming too political and reduced to as narrow a basis as that of the Party. It resulted in neglect of the struggle for the



immediate demands of the working class, and for a time the Party was exposed to the danger of becoming isolated from the working masses.

But this error of the Communists in regard to the question of the character and tempo of the revolutionary upsurge found sharpest expression in their appraisal of the maturing political crisis in various countries. If the conception of the political crisis is not to be vulgarised, not to be reduced to its parliamentary forms, if we are not to identify it with the growth of Fascism, not to represent it as a one-sided process of dislocation of the governing circles, not to confuse it with the political elements of the general post-war crisis of capitalism, then we must say that there is no difference between a political and a revolutionary crisis. Of course, the changes of Cabinets in the present crisis are somewhat different in significance from ministerial crises in the period of capitalist stabilisation. Of course, the increase in Fascist tendencies in this or that country is a symptom of the ripening of the elements of a political crisis, and reflects the disquietude of the ruling classes. The transition of an economic into a political crisis in the capitalist world is, of course, determined in the wide historical sense by such factors of the post-war crisis of capitalism, as the existence of the U.S.S.R., the growth of the world revolutionary Labour and Peasant Movement, as the national revolutionary movement in the colonies, the sharpening of the contradictions of the Versailles system, of the separatist tendencies of the Dominions, etc.

But this is entirely different from the revolutionary conception of the political crisis that we have in mind. The post-war crisis of capitalism has created an objective revolutionary situation in the capitalist world, but this situation does not signify the existence of a revolutionary crisis. The maturing of the political crisis is proceeding unevenly, not only from the standpoint of geography, but also in the degree of ripening of the different elements of the political crisis, of the objective and subjective elements. The General Strike in Great Britain created a political crisis in England, although before the strike there was no crisis in the governing circles of that country. At present the objective factor is developing much more rapidly than the subjective factor. The growth of Fascism is evidence of this. The inclination to hasty generalisations has resulted in the Communists proclaiming the existence of a political crisis, although its various aspects have only partially developed. The French comrades discovered in the formation of the Steeg Cabinet the beginning of a political crisis in France. Similarly the American comrades regarded the electoral victory of the Democrats as a symptom of political crisis. The Czech Communists went even further and beat the record by announcing in the first draft of the Theses for their last Congress the beginning of a world political crisis, etc.

## The Revolutionary Political Crisis

Unfortunately, we have no fully developed revolutionary crisis in any of these countries. We are moving towards it primarily in China where we can already speak of a revolutionary crisis, but of a crisis which has not yet spread throughout the whole country. Things are moving in this direction with less impetus in India. Pre-requisites for development in this direction are present in Germany and Poland, but whether these pre-requisites will develop into a revolutionary crisis will depend upon a number of conditions: the further growth of the U.S.S.R., the degree to which the world crisis becomes sharper and deeper, the degree of growth of international contradictions, the degree of disturbance and weakening of capitalism in the leading capitalist countries, the U.S.A., Great Britain, France, the successes which will be achieved by the Communist Parties, etc.

The elements of a revolutionary crisis are latent in the whole capitalist system of the post-war period. They arise from the general crisis of capitalism; they are being sharpened by the present world economic crisis, and develop on the basis of the revolutionary rise of the mass movement; they are bound up with the extraordinary increase of poverty and suffering of the masses, as a consequence of the crisis, with their growing revolutionary activity, with the undermining of the whole international and internal system of capitalist domination, with the rapid regrouping of the class forces, with the maturing crisis in the ranks of the ruling class, which is seeking a way out of the contradictions through Fascism, war, and intervention. The maturing elements of a political crisis in their turn lead to a further sharpening and deepening of the world crisis. It is not accidental that the international Chamber of Commerce sees one of the sources of the present crisis in the "political unrest" which has spread through a part of the world. A correct approach to the question of the revolutionary crisis necessitates a concrete analysis of the situation in each particular country.

Pre-requisites for the transition of the revolutionary upsurge into a political crisis become manifest first of all in the weak links of the capitalist system. They become manifest in those countries which in the general system of post-war capitalism represent the weak spots and where the economic crisis coincides with special, particularly difficult features of the general post-war crisis of capitalism in these countries. Among these is Germany, where the burden of the Versailles system, of the Young Plan, the restricted opportunities for colonial exploitation by highly developed monopoly capitalism, the existence of a strong proletariat which has gone through the experience of revolution and civil war, influence the rate of development of the tendency towards the political crisis. Among these is Poland with its varied national composition, its oppressed nationalities and their struggle, which is the cause of the extreme instability of its

borders. Here the rapid rate of development of the tendencies of the crisis is due to the general weakness of the capitalist economic apparatus owing to the loss of the old Russian markets, the difficulties of competing in the European markets, the monstrous burden of militarism which is due to the special rôle of Poland in the preparation of war against the U.S.S.R. Among these are also such countries as Spain, where the remnants of feudalism, alongside of capitalist exploitation, create additional explosive material for the development of a political crisis. Finally, the colonies, China, India, where the maturing political crisis is called forth by the close interweaving of the economic crisis with a particularly severe form of the agrarian crisis, by the frenzied imperialist attack on the colonies under the influence of the crisis, which intensifies the feudal-imperialist exploitation of the colonial toilers, by the terrible impoverishment of the masses, and by the wave of national-revolutionary movements, colossal in their scope and intensity.

### Germany

In **Germany** where, of all the capitalist countries of Europe, the revolutionary upsurge has reached its **greatest extent**, the pre-requisites of the revolutionary crisis are expressed in :

(a) growing indignation of the broad working masses against the capitalist offensive, poverty and unemployment ;

(b) an increase of the revolutionary forces of the proletariat, in the **mass** growth of the Communist Party and revolutionary trade union movement ;

(c) considerable progress made by the Communist Party in the matter of **independent** leadership of the class struggles of the proletariat (Ruhr) ;

(d) a sharp **division** of class forces, which is accompanied, as Lenin said, by the "self-exposure" of all parties and party programmes, by the disintegration of Social Democracy **all along the front** (affecting the whole country and seizing the strongest positions of the Social Democrats, e.g. in Braunschweig and South Germany) ;

(e) rapid evolution of the bourgeois dictatorship, as the result of the sharpening of the class struggle to its most oppressive, i.e. Fascist form, which testifies to the inability of the German bourgeoisie to rule and direct in the old way, using Social Fascism only as a weapon for quietening the masses ;

(f) the **crumbling** of the foundations of the Versailles system and the Young Plan.

The particular merits of the C.P. of Germany are that it succeeded in **linking** up the tasks of the struggle for the **national** liberation of the working masses in Germany with the struggle for their **social** emancipation, for the **dictatorship of the proletariat**. This programme of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, having the hege-

mony over all the toilers, must be the pivot in all the revolutionary class struggles, for the purpose of combining the struggle for everyday interests of the masses with that for the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The **central task of the Communist Party of Germany** is to **win the majority of the working class and destroy the mass basis of Social Democracy** as quickly as possible. This requires first of all that there shall be a fearless development of the **independent** leadership of the class struggles of the proletariat in the future, and that large sections of Social Democratic and non-Party workers shall be brought into all organs of the united front which are formed from below. The German Communist Party is strong enough to prove **in practice** that the working class can put a stop to the capitalist attack on the wages and the standard of living of the toiling masses. This further demands that most serious attention be paid to the actual conversion of the Red T.U. Opposition and the revolutionary trade unions into **mass** organisations, into the genuine leaders of the economic struggles of the proletariat. The C.P.G. is strong enough to prove to the workers **in practice** that the Red T.U. Opposition and the revolutionary trade unions are capable of organising this struggle and of carrying it on. This, finally, presupposes the continuation of the struggle of the C.P.G. to **secure allies** for the proletarian revolution in Germany, to obtain the **hegemony** over the petty-bourgeois masses of town and country, with greater energy and speed than has been the case up to the present time. The C.P.G. must **put an end** to the mass growth of Fascism ; it must link up its attacks against Fascism with the general struggles of the working class and pay special attention to those branches of industry which the Fascists have penetrated (chemical, mining, railroads).

We must completely approve the general line of the C.P.G. which, while struggling for the rapid fulfilment of these concrete tasks, is systematically and undeviatingly carrying on propaganda for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and is proving to the toiling masses of Germany that the only real way out of the capitalist crisis and the slavery of Versailles is in the **overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a Soviet Germany**.

### Poland

The ripening of the pre-requisites of a **revolutionary crisis in Poland** is chiefly shown by the enormous increase in the discontent of the masses of workers and peasants, due to the extreme sharpening of the economic crisis which has thrown more than half of the industrial workers into the ranks of the unemployed or the semi-unemployed, while the majority of the unemployed receive no sort of assistance whatsoever. In the villages, the agrarian crisis makes itself felt with equal acuteness and is accompanied by the wholesale expropriation of the poor and middle peasants for non-payment of

taxes and the interest on loans. In the occupied districts of Western Ukraine, Western White Russia and other territories, the discontent is increasing still further, owing to the fierce persecution of the national liberation movement. The discontent of the masses is expressed in stormy unemployment demonstrations which have a wider scope than those of 1930, in the anti-tax movement in the villages, which is increasing to an ever-greater extent, in the national revolutionary movement of the West Ukrainian peasants, etc. The maturing of the revolutionary crisis is also demonstrated by the contraction of the mass basis of Pilsudski's "*Sanacja*" ("sanitation") organisation and the transmission belt of the Fascist dictatorship to the toiling masses. Finally, owing to the ever sharpening crisis, friction is growing in the Fascist camp and even in the camp of "sanitation."

**The main tasks** of the Communist Party of Poland under such circumstances are :

(a) to strengthen the mass basis of the Party, especially in the big factories of Warsaw, the Dombrowa Coal Basin and West Ukraine.

(b) to strengthen the revolutionary trade unions and to conduct more intensive work in the reformist unions.

(c) to fight to win the peasants by mobilising them against imposts and taxes, bearing in mind the special features of each district and province, the degree of maturity of the peasant movement in each district. These movements must be organised to the utmost possible extent.

(d) to mobilise the toilers against national oppression, for their right to national self-determination, including separation. To rally the Polish workers and peasants in support of the movement against national oppression.

(e) to fight against the burden of militarism and the threat of military intervention by Polish imperialism against the U.S.S.R. This fight must be linked up with the defence of the everyday needs of the masses and with the anti-tax movement of the peasants. The achievements of the U.S.S.R. in all spheres of Socialist construction must be made widely known. To fight for a revolutionary way out of the crisis, for a Soviet Poland.

## Spain

Another very weak spot in the capitalist system in Europe is Spain. Its whole social and political order bears the imprint of strong relics of feudalism, which find expression, first, in the predominance of large land ownership which keeps in bondage millions of peasants and agricultural proletarians doomed to slow death by starvation ; second, in the political predominance of the landed

aristocracy which is closely associated with industrial and bank capital ; third, in the dictatorship of the military *camarilla* and the Roman Catholic Church, which is also a big landowner and wields power with the help of most powerful Jesuit Orders. These relics of feudalism, kept alive by the division of Spain into separate provinces, would seem to indicate that a bourgeois-democratic revolution is maturing in Spain. But such a deduction would be erroneous. There is an industrial proletariat in Spain, and the Spanish monarchy has become interwoven with the whole system of finance capital and imperialism : the mass of the peasantry here, through its movement for the liquidation of feudalism, can become the natural ally of the proletariat in the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

The proletariat and the peasantry alone can be the driving forces of the Spanish revolution. Whether they will become the driving forces, depends on the ability of the young Communist Party of Spain to overcome the lack of compactness of the Spanish proletariat, the demoralising influence of the reformist and anarchist traditions, and take the lead of the movement of the proletarian masses, and bring over the peasantry to the side of the proletariat. Therefore, the strengthening of the position of the Communist Party on the basis of struggle for leadership in the fights of the workers and peasants is a necessary premise for the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Spain into a proletarian revolution. Only if the Communist Party is able to expose the treacherous policy of bourgeois republicanism in Spain and of its agency in the working class—Social Democracy and anarchism—by putting up a fight for the needs of the masses, and only if able to dispel the republican illusions of these masses, will it be able to divert the movement of the masses into the channel of struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system. The Spanish revolution begins as a movement directed against the monarchy, but it can and must develop into a movement against the capitalist system. And this development the Party must express in its fighting platform. The Communist Party must proceed immediately to mobilise the masses of workers and peasants for the struggle for the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, for a workers' and peasants' government based on Soviets, and for carrying out the agrarian revolution, i.e. the transfer of the land of the big landowners, monasteries and the church to the peasants without compensation to the former owners, establishment of the seven-hour day, introduction of social-insurance at the expense of the capitalists, liquidation of the power of the capitalist church, liberation of Morocco and the other colonies, the right of national self-determination to the Catalonians and Basques. In the bourgeois democratic revolution the Party must undertake, from the outset, to defend the interests of the working class, especially against unemployment.



## China

In China, the deepening of the political crisis has found expression in the organisation of Soviets and the Red Army, on a territory with a population of tens of millions. This is at present the most important fact of the revolutionary upsurge in China, giving it first place in the national revolutionary movements of the colonial world. This is the highest form of the revolutionary upsurge, it is the victory of the armed mass uprising merging into civil war, over a considerable part of the territory of China. The formation of Soviets and the skeleton of a Red Army gives a firm basis for the hegemony of the proletariat in the national revolutionary movement and the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution of the toilers. This hegemony is being established and strengthened not only through the Communist Party, but by the embryonic Soviet Government.

“ It is not an unarmed people that stands against the troops of the old Government, but an armed people represented by its revolutionary army. In China, the armed revolution is fighting against armed counter-revolution. This is one of the peculiar features and one of the advantages the Chinese Revolution possesses ” (Stalin, *Prospects of the Chinese Revolution*).

The formation of the Soviets and the Red Army, the product of the early stages of the agrarian revolution and peasant wars, has in turn a revolutionising influence on millions of peasants who are rising up against feudal landownership in the non-Soviet districts.

The fact that the Soviet Government already extends over whole districts is a good source for agitation among the workers of China on the basis of the concrete experience of the revolutionary policy of the young Government in the Soviet areas.

The existence of the Soviets and the Red Army is undermining the hangman's régime of the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang in the towns and industrial centres, thus increasing the confidence of the working class in its own strength. The strike movement is extending to the furthest parts of the country in spite of the wildest terror. Simultaneously, the Soviet movement in China is revolutionising the whole colonial world. The Red Army is becoming stronger from month to month; it is arming itself chiefly at the expense of the defeated punitive expeditions sent against it by Chang kai-shek.

The Red Army of the Chinese Soviets has already secured many brilliant victories. It has repelled the first attack of the Kuomintang in Kiangsi Province, it is victoriously extending its territorial basis in Hunan and Hupei, and recently it has dealt severe blows to the bourgeois-landlord counter-revolution in North China, in the Province of Hunan.

The Chinese Communist Party must accomplish the following triple task at the present stage :

1. Convert the Red Army into a regular worker and peasant Red Army with a sound territorial base.

2. Form a Soviet Government which will carry out the programme of the anti-imperialist and the agrarian revolution on its territory.

3. Develop the economic and political struggles of the working class and the peasants on non-Soviet territories and organise the masses in the course of this struggle (trade unions, peasant committees, the strengthening of the Party, work in the Militarist armies).

## India

In India the revolutionary upsurge is characterised by the following features :

1. New millions are being drawn into the movement and the anti-imperialist struggle has become the struggle of the whole nation. In 1930, not only were new strata of the working class brought into the movement, but also enormous masses of the petty bourgeoisie in the towns, and—under the influence of the towns—ever-growing masses of peasants.

2. The anti-imperialist struggle of the masses is more and more frequently breaking through the framework of counter-revolutionary Gandhism. Strikes of the workers, in spite of the efforts of the National Congress to prevent them; political strikes which are growing more and more frequent; ever more frequent clashes between the peasant masses and the armed forces of imperialism (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Karachi, etc.), an unprecedented growth and sweep of the terrorist movement, indicating that the petty bourgeoisie, and especially the revolutionary youth, are leaving the Congress; armed rebellions in which part of the soldiers go over to the side of the people (Peshawar) and under the leadership of the workers (Sholapur), all demonstrate that the masses are adopting higher and higher forms of struggle.

3. The movement of the peasant masses is to an increasing extent growing into an anti-imperialist **agrarian** revolution, as for example in Bengal and Berar.

4. Although the working class is separating itself from the other classes with great difficulty, nevertheless it is being organised into an independent class force, and is liberating itself from the influence of bourgeois nationalism.

5. In England, a national united front of all political parties of imperialism is being formed (Conservatives, Liberals and Labourites) to fight against the Indian revolution. The “ Labour ” Government, as the agent of imperialism, is welding together all the forces of counter-revolution in India (native princes, Maharajahs, feudal landlords, usurers and the big compradore bourgeoisie) and is simultaneously letting loose a reign of wild terror against the revolutionary movement.

The capitulation of national reformism before British social

imperialism, which was prompted by the fear the Indian bourgeoisie entertains in face of the mass movement, will not stop the revolutionary struggle. On the contrary, it will accelerate the separation of classes in the Indian revolution and will raise the movement to a higher level.

6. The weaknesses of the movement up to the present are that the process of differentiation and separation of classes has not yet gone far enough (it has quickened now), that the struggle of the workers and the peasants is not united, that the working class is badly organised, that most of the trade unions are in the hands of the national reformists, and, chiefly, that there has not been a Communist Party in India.

7. This determines the tasks confronting the Communist Party as follows :

- (a) to strengthen the Party and to convert it into a legal, centralised, all-Indian Party.
- (b) to form and strengthen the revolutionary trade union opposition in the national reformist and the reformist trade unions.
- (c) to strengthen the existing Red Trade Unions and to form new ones.
- (d) to organise the peasant movement and fearlessly conduct propaganda for the slogans of the agrarian revolution.
- (e) independent leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle, combined with a merciless struggle against national reformism, and especially against its "Left" varieties.

### The Upsurge in Indo-China

The symptoms of a growing crisis in the imperialist colonial system are evident not only in China and India, but also in Indo-China.

The upsurge in Indo-China—which has been subjected to the fiercest terror, mass shootings, executions, the annihilation of whole villages by the French occupational troops—her developed mass demonstrations embracing thousands of people, armed conflicts to the point of attacks on the army and sporadic mutinies, the wrecking of the houses of notables, officials, landlords, and mandarins, and of rice storehouses, the division of the rice among the poor, the seizure of the village local Government, guerilla warfare, and in places in the North, where the influence of the Chinese Revolution is felt most strongly, the formation of Soviets.

### Conclusions

1. The diagnosis given by the E.C.C.I. both at the X Plenum and at the February Enlarged Presidium concerning the inevitability of a further growth of the revolutionary upsurge, and the accelera-

tion of its tempo, is fully and completely confirmed. In spite of the unevenness of its development, to the extent that the world crisis has widened and deepened, the revolutionary struggle has spread to new territories, to new strata of the proletariat and the toiling masses, has reached a higher level of development in some countries and, in others, it creates the pre-requisite for the economic crisis to grow into a revolutionary crisis.

2. In taking up the independent leadership of class struggles, some of the Sections of the Communist International (Germany) have achieved considerable success on the basis of the organisation of a united workers' front from below, and this has led to the revolutionising of the class struggles, and to a real undermining of the influence of Social Democracy among the working class, not only in words, but in deeds. The political and organisational experience of these Sections in bringing about their independent leadership of class struggles must be studied by all other Sections of the Communist International.

3. The maturing of the political crisis in some of the colonies, semi-colonies and capitalist countries of Europe, whose further development rests on the whole system of world imperialism, gives special force to the question concerning the backwardness of the Communist movement in **three** of the biggest capitalist countries—**U.S.A., France, and Great Britain.**

In order to assure the success of the revolutionary movement in Germany, Poland, China, and India it is necessary to concentrate attention on the strengthening of the Communist movement in the U.S.A., Great Britain and France, especially the first two countries (U.S.A. and Great Britain), where the Communist Parties are now the weakest spots in the world revolutionary movement.

4. All the Communist Parties must develop the movement of international proletarian solidarity and revolutionary support of the mass actions of the German and Polish workers and of the proletariat and toilers of India and China. The Communist Parties of all countries, and above all of the U.S.A., Great Britain, Japan and France, must mobilise the working class to prevent intervention in China on the part of world imperialism.

5. The Communist Parties of Germany, Poland, China and the young Communist Party which is being formed in India, their work for the mobilisation and organisation of the masses, is of tremendous importance at the present time. Their successes in widening and deepening the revolutionary upsurge through the mobilisation of ever-newer and wider sections of the working class, and of all the toilers, exert and will continue to exert an ever-increasing influence for the revolutionising of the Labour Movement in the more backward countries.



#### IV. SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, THE MAIN SOCIAL PILLAR OF THE BOURGEOISIE

THE crisis is putting an end to the post-war development of Social Democracy which has passed through a number of stages in the process of fascisation.

*The First Stage.*—The World War, 1914-18. In spite of all the decisions of the international congresses of the Second International concerning the attitude of the Social Democratic Parties towards war, world Social Democracy took an active part in the war under the slogan of "defence of the fatherland," established "civil peace" with the bourgeoisie, crushed the class struggle of the proletariat which was subjected to the harsh dictatorship of the militarists and saved capitalism from the destruction which the fury of war had in store for it. It hid its treachery behind the promise of a new "golden age" for the working class which was to come true as a result of the world war. It promised disarmament, eternal peace and the inauguration of an era of social justice and the triumph of democracy.

This stage includes also the period of proletarian revolution which interrupted the war—the October Revolution in 1917 in Russia. The German Social Democrats betrayed the Russian proletariat at the most critical moment and supported in every way the campaign of the German imperialist army against the Russian workers and peasants who had abandoned the war. It supported the occupation of the territory of the revolutionary peoples in the old Tsarist Empire (Ukraine, Don, Latvia, Poland) by the generals of the Kaiser; it fettered the Russian Revolution with the Brest-Litovsk Peace, which was more disgusting and shameful than the Versailles Treaty. At this period, by the hand of the bloodhound Noske, it drowned in blood the revolt of the workers and sailors and saved capitalism from the proletarian revolution in Germany.

*The Second Stage.*—The Social Democrats assisted capitalism to extricate itself from the severe crisis which was the aftermath of the war, and thus restored capitalism. This period of capitalist stabilisation was bought at the cost of the greatest calamities for the workers which came as a result of inflation, devastation and the European post-war chaos.

*The Third Stage.*—The period of capitalist rationalisation, the period of "organised capitalism." At this stage the Social Democrats were not now saving, but reconstructing capitalism, extending the economic basis of the dictatorship of finance capital. They were not only the party of the stabilisation of capitalism, but became even more the party of the trusts and cartels. This is the period of their increased fascisation. They were preparing to wield the dictatorship of finance capital with their **own** hands, and through the mouth of Wels at the Magdeburg Congress, they

threatened the toilers with the "dictatorship" of the Social Democratic Party.

And suddenly all this breaks down. "Organised capitalism," capitalist stabilisation collapses. The Social Democrats returned to their original position and once again they had to save capitalism from the severe social and political concussions resulting from the crisis. They have to commence the vicious circle over again, but under circumstances in which the masses have already experienced all stages of the saving of capitalism after the war, when new sacrifices are demanded from them, when a **new standard of living is set** for them, the standard for semi-colonial workers, when Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is plainly showing them the advantages of the Socialist system. In the minds of the millions a painful process of "transvaluation of values" is taking place, and the policy of Social Democracy is being weighed up.

Social Democracy promised to put an end to wars, to bring about the disarmament of the capitalist States; but in reality it has led the masses to the precipice of approaching new imperialist wars, to wars of the imperialist robbers in the colonies, to a furious competition of armaments.

The Social Democrats promised to make "war Socialism" the basis of the Socialist transformation of capitalist society after the war. But in practice they restored capitalism with all its predatory exploitation.

Social Democracy promised the masses, which were set in motion by the revolution, to bring about Socialism by "lawful" means and prepared their projects of "socialisation," but actually they have plundered the workers and are still plundering them by "lawful" means by reducing social insurance, by increasing taxes, raising tariffs on food, etc.

The Social Democrats promised to introduce the era of social justice after the war, but actually they have introduced the era of the worst capitalist slavery, worse than before the war.

The Social Democrats, in calling on the proletariat during and after the war to abandon the class struggle, promised to bring about "industrial democracy," "peace in industry," etc., but actually they have brought about the most brutal capitalist attack on the workers in all capitalist countries along the whole line.

The Social Democrats promised that "through democracy, capitalism will grow into Socialism," but actually through Fascism they themselves have merged as a party with monopolist capitalism.

The Social Democrats promised that with the introduction of capitalist rationalisation the conditions of the working class would improve, but actually tens of millions of workers have been thrown out of industry and the standard of living of the working class has been lowered to the extreme.

The Social Democrats promised to raise the wages of European workers "to the level of Ford's workers," but actually the wages

of Ford's workers are being lowered to the level of the European workers.

The Social Democrats promised to lead the capitalist world to the era of "organised capitalism," to liquidate the crisis, to lay the basis for universal prosperity, but actually they have led to an unexampled outburst of capitalist anarchy, to the greatest crisis in history, to the most terrible poverty of the masses.

The Social Democrats prophesied the downfall of the U.S.S.R., and strove by systematic slander to undermine the confidence of the working masses of capitalist countries towards the dictatorship of the proletariat and the successes of Socialism under construction, but actually Socialism is conquering in spite of all the efforts of world capital and Social Democracy, and the millions of the workers are rallying around the U.S.S.R. The Social Democrats were opposed to violence when used by the proletarian dictatorship against the oppressors, the parasites, the wreckers, but they themselves supported the violence of the exploiters against the workers, the rebellious toilers of the colonies; they supported the violence used by the dictatorship of capital. The policy of Social Democracy is the policy of Versailles, the Young Plan, the dictatorship of French capital in Europe, in short, capitalism with its wars, Fascism, suppression of the colonies, intervention against the U.S.S.R., reduction of the standard of living of the workers to the poverty level of the colonies. Those who support capitalism to the end must also support its whole policy, and this is the source of the fascisation of Social Democracy.

Many Social Democratic workers believed that when the Communists spoke of the fascisation of Social Democracy, they were prompted by agitational motives and not by the facts of the evolution of that Party. In reality, the fascisation of Social Democracy arises from the fact that, like a prisoner in chains, it has gone through the whole course of its development together with monopolist capitalism. It has deceived the masses by the fact alone that its falsehoods were moulded by the contradictions between the relics of bourgeois-democratic phraseology and the Fascist development of monopolist capitalism. The recent years of the fascisation of Social Democracy are characterised by the fact that even this "contradiction" of the first stages of its fascisation is gradually disappearing and its ideology is being adapted to the necessities of law, so to speak, to "historical necessity."

If we take the arguments they use in defending their policy before the masses, we find that they eternally repeat the historical saying of Bethmann Hollweg: "Necessity knows no law." Capitalism, which is shaken by the crisis, must lower wages in order to emerge from that crisis. Snowden demands this sacrifice from the workers. Capitalism wants to reduce its expenditure on social insurance, the German Social Democrats adopt the programme of Brüning. Capitalism wants to put a stop to the class struggle and

the strike movement of the workers, the Social Democrats follow Italian Fascism in introducing so-called compulsory arbitration. Capitalism needs the pacification of India—the Labour Government undertakes the hangman's rôle with regard to the Indian workers and peasants. For the purpose of introducing the Fascist dictatorship, capitalism needs the Government of Brüning—Social Democracy adopts the notorious paragraph 48 and, more loyal than any bourgeois party in Germany, supports unconditionally the Brüning Government.

Necessity knows no law!

The fascisation of Social Democracy is justified by the highest law of necessity. It is becoming fascised because monopoly capitalism is becoming fascised, and Social Democracy cannot move from its basis. The present phase of the fascisation of Social Democracy, connected with the crisis, is that to the extent that the decay of capitalism is increasing, Social Democracy is converted into a party not of stabilising, not of rationalising, but of increasingly decaying capitalism. Hence arise all its attributes: The policy of monstrous plundering of the masses, the policy of unhesitating support for the Brüning Government, the policy of intervention against the U.S.S.R., etc.

We emphasise this last point especially—the transition of the II International to the tactics of **wrecking and intervention**—because it is the new and decisive moment in the post-war evolution of Social Democracy. From the first days of the rise of the proletarian Government, international Social Democracy has supplied the idea of organisation of sabotage, counter-revolutionary rebellion, wrecking, espionage and subversive acts. The spreading of vile legends of "Red Imperialism" threatening the whole world, depicting Bolshevism together with Fascism as "the sources of world unrest," the inspirers of imperialist wars in the colonies, describing the social and political régime in the U.S.S.R. as a dictatorship over the workers and peasants, could not but induce the counter-revolutionary classes and groups (*kulaks*, *nepmen*, bourgeoisie, old specialists) to draw the corresponding practical conclusions. By the whole of its agitation against the U.S.S.R., the Social Democrats were preparing wrecking and intervention. But the II International was afraid to advocate an armed struggle of the imperialist States against the U.S.S.R., in the way that the senile Kautsky is doing, for fear of losing the workers who were still following them. Hence, the disgusting hypocritical tactics of the Mensheviks.

"Dear Edde, this is done but not talked about,"—in this short phrase from the letter of Auer to Bernstein, one of the prisoners, the old liquidator Ikov, characterised the interventionist tactics of the II International at the trial of the Mensheviks in Moscow.

The II International adopted a decision at its public sessions to restore economic relations with the U.S.S.R., and behind the scenes, represented by German Social Democracy, it supplied the funds for

the Russian Mensheviks who were connected with the Torgprom, and who were acting in reality on the orders of the French general staff for the organisation of wrecking in all branches of national economy and helping the interventionists by weakening the defensive power of the U.S.S.R. During the epoch of Tsarism they stood for national defence and in the epoch of the construction of Socialism they became defeatists. This says everything.

What has the recent trial of the Russian Mensheviks shown? These Mensheviks, like the II International, were not platonic defeatists; they have always stood for the defeat of the proletarian dictatorship and of Socialism in its process of construction. The new feature is that they have become active counter-revolutionary defeatists, that the difference between the Tsarist commissaries, who managed to find their way into the supply commissions and carry on wrecking activity there, and the Mensheviks has disappeared. The new feature is that the II International and its "Russian" Section of Menshevik *émigrés* have gone from defeatist propaganda with regard to the proletarian revolution to wrecking activity, not only moulding "public opinion" in favour of military intervention in the U.S.S.R., but actually working to bring it about.

Hence, the *bloc* of the Mensheviks with the Industrial Party, whose leader, Ramzin, declared at the trial, not without a touch of irony:

"Divergencies regarding the bourgeois order did not interest us. As far as we were concerned, the most important thing was that the Mensheviks should take up wrecking tactics in good earnest."

And the Mensheviks, as a Section of the II International, did so in good earnest; they interfered with storage operations regarding foodstuffs, they impeded the distribution of commodities among the toiling population, they demanded excessive credits, they deliberately narrowed down the plans of big construction and tampered with the stability of Soviet currency. All this was done, not only with the knowledge, but at the instruction of the II International and its chief nucleus, the German Social Democratic Party which, through Hilferding and Breitscheid, instructed Abramovitch and Dan regarding the "new tactics" to be adopted towards the U.S.S.R. After the trial of the Russian Mensheviks it must be clear for the workers of the U.S.S.R., for the workers of capitalist countries, that the Social Fascist international has become the shock brigade of French imperialism in the organisation of intervention by the latter. It is not important how their rôles will be distributed at the time of intervention. One thing is important—to sweep away the land of the Soviets because it is bringing death to Social Democracy throughout the world.

We may foresee the mass of leading ideas, which will be used as a halo by international Social Democracy to surround the intervention, if it is not frustrated by the international working class. The "aggressor" will, of course, be the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union,

they will argue, has systematically destroyed the efforts of Social Democracy towards peace. Already they say that by flooding the world market with cheap goods produced by the forced labour of the Russian workers, the Soviet Union ruins the peasants, increases unemployment in industry, and helps to reduce the wages of the workers in capitalist countries. The U.S.S.R., they say, has lowered the wages of the German workers by giving orders to German industry at low prices which do not satisfy the German manufacturers. Disappointed in bringing about chaos in Europe and America by measures of economic disorganisation, having lost the hope of bringing about Socialism in a backward country, they say in effect, the U.S.S.R. adopts war as the last means of saving itself from the blows of the growing indignation of the masses who do not wish to live without democracy, without French loans, without Abramovitch and Dan! The war of the capitalist world against the U.S.S.R. is a war of democracy against dictatorship. . . .

Thus, the ideology of the future "holy war" against the U.S.S.R. is written and will be written in the blood of the workers.

What is it that keeps the workers in the ranks of Social Democracy in spite of this long chain of treachery. Among the causes we usually indicate are the merging of Social Democracy with monopoly capitalism and its State—the strength of its Party apparatus is multiplied by the strength of the State apparatus; the corruption of the labour aristocracy; the growth of the Social Democratic bureaucracy. But we do not concretely analyse these phenomena, we do not show the masses how these processes go on, we merely confine ourselves to a repetition of the formulae in our theses on this question. The principle governing the relations between the apparatus of Social Democracy and the workers in its ranks has lost its voluntary character. It rests on **coercion** of all kinds. The whole capitalist system is founded on coercion. Capitalism could not exist for many days if it lost this principle of domination. Compulsion is expressed in the economic dependence of labour on capital, which is actual slavery varnished with the empty phraseology of political equality proclaimed by the bourgeois revolutions. Forced labour is an inseparable part of capitalism. The economic domination of capitalism forms the basis for its political domination founded on the police, the gendarmes, the army, the prison, etc.

The identity of Social Democracy with the whole apparatus of the capitalist system is expressed in the fact that, having become an integral part of it, Social Democracy copied its whole system of relations with the masses from the State apparatus. The worker is juridically free to work or to remain idle, but in reality he is compelled to work so as not to die from hunger. Juridically he is free to propagate any views he likes, but in reality he is put into prison and thrown out of the factories for his convictions, and shot at when he declares his convictions publicly in the streets. The worker is free



to join or not to join a reformist trade union, but in reality he is compelled to join by economic necessity. The workers are surrounded by a barbed wire fence of compulsory system by the reformist trade unions and Social Democracy, in just the same way as by the bourgeois Government. The so-called "social State" controlling the whole life of a worker, from birth to death, carries out this control through the reformist or Fascist trade unions. The worker can obtain employment only through the trade union, unemployment benefits are given through the trade union office, the system of social insurance is closely bound up with the trade union apparatus. The Social Democrats have entrenched themselves in all public institutions. The employers agree to carry on negotiations through the Social Democrats, and strive to increase their authority in the eyes of the working masses. Members of the Social Democratic factory committees have access to the manager's office; they shine, so to speak, with the reflected light of capital. Their small requests are, of course, granted so as to impress the workers with the usefulness of such a good factory committee. Death, illness, disablement, old age, these are part of the chain of dependence used by the Social Democratic bureaucrats to keep the workers fettered to the capitalist machine. An illustration of the whole system of compulsion is the method adopted by the Social Democrats after the tramway strike in Chemnitz when only those were taken back to work who had been registered during the strike in the reformist trade union.

In addition to this form of compulsion, corruption of all kinds is widely practised. Tens of thousands of Social Democrats work in the apparatus of the capitalist State, occupy posts in the police and the *Okhrana*<sup>1</sup> (Polish Socialist Party); they become the most faithful watchdogs of the capitalist system and are interested in its existence in the crassest materialistic sense of the term. The conclusion from this is that the Social Democrats are not only used by capitalism for the liquidation of the Labour Movement, they utilise the whole apparatus of the capitalist State in order to increase their pressure on the working class. Their fetters cannot be broken without striking at the whole capitalist State, just as it is impossible to fight against this State without touching the widespread system of compulsion used by Social Democracy. Therefore, the influence of Social Democracy usually begins to fall rapidly at the time when the machine of the capitalist State is tottering. The fact that strong ferment has begun in the ranks of German Social Democracy, that the workers are beginning to desert it, especially the youth, is evidence of the fissures that are appearing in the whole system of capitalism in Germany.

Such is the first objective reason why Social Democracy is strong. But this is not the only reason.

<sup>1</sup> Secret police.

## The Tactics of Class against Class

There are still other reasons which hinder the Communists in undermining the influence of Social Democracy. One of these is our own mistakes, especially our mis-application of the tactics of *class against class*.

The tactics of class against class, which were dictated to the Communist International by the sharpening of the class struggle, by the process of the fascisation of Social Democracy, by the increasing importance of the Communist Parties in the Labour Movement, and by their bolshevisation, has completely justified itself. The importance of these tactics is increasing especially at the present moment of the crisis, of sharpened struggles of labour against capital, and, in conformity with this, the sharp turn of all bourgeois groups, including the Social Democratic Party, still further to the right, i.e. their fascisation, and in view of the necessity for conducting a most active struggle against Social Democracy as the police force of capital. The tactics of class against class is a sharp-edged weapon directed against Social Democracy, with the aim of exposing it in the eyes of the broad working masses, which frequently accept it as the "lesser evil." Thus, in Finland we see how, after the Lapuan *coup*, the Social Democrats utilised the *coup* to get control of the trade union movement, its property and its halls, and even pro-Communist workers voted for the Social Fascist party at the elections, because they feared the "victory" of Fascism. The same thing can be observed in Austria. The fear of a victory of the Conservatives in England still keeps the British workers, who are betrayed every day by the MacDonald government, under the influence of the Labourists. Similar sentiments hinder the successes of the Communist Parties in the Scandinavian countries. And this proves that the Communists have not yet brought about a change of mind among the millions of non-Party workers, and not even in the consciousness of the Communist workers.

The class against class tactics have not yet been learned by the masses. Our speeches on the fascisation of Social Democracy in connection with the sharpening of the class struggle have been taken formally, outwardly, and have not penetrated the flesh and blood of the Communist Parties. This is a sad fact, but it cannot be denied. The danger of the illusion that Social Democracy is not reactionary is becoming extremely serious in countries like Poland, where perpetual squabbles take place **in the very camp of Fascism** around the State pie on the question of utilising more effective methods of muzzling the working class and the revolutionary peasants. The Communists, in spite of favourable conditions, have not succeeded by the tactics of class against class in completely shaking the position of the Social Democrats in the working class. Evidently the Communists make mistakes in applying these tactics.

What are these mistakes? Firstly, opportunist passivity in the

struggle against Social Democracy, a kind of tactics of defence and not of attack. This is expressed most clearly among Communists who are working in the reformist trade unions. Scores of examples could be quoted of how Communists have played the rôle of "strong silent men" in the reformist trade unions, who explain their passivity by arguments about the necessity of keeping their position and not being expelled from the trade union. The struggle against so-called trade union legalism was a struggle of the Communist Parties against this type of opportunist passivity. International Brandlerism formed its trade union policy on this system of capitulation to the Social Democrats. In the past, this tactic of defence was fostered by the conditions of "stabilisation." The Communist International and its Sections had to carry out a great deal of work in order to put the Communists on a path of more decisive struggle against Social Democracy to correspond to the sharpening of the class struggles and the growing upsurge of the revolutionary movement. Has this work been completed? Have we overcome opportunist passivity in the Communist ranks? This cannot be said. In many cases, even in the best Parties, we still have residues of opportunism. The Party officials frequently lag behind the new revolutionary non-Party workers in revolutionary activity. For example, in Austria the workers who come over from the Social Democrats to the Communist Party are frequently a much better and more militant element than the Communists of long standing in the Party. In order that the fight against Social Democracy may be successful, the Communist Parties must first of all concentrate their fire against opportunist passivity in all the forms in which it may appear.

Secondly, the Communists frequently forget that the tactics of "class against class" do not negate the tactics of the united workers' front. On the contrary, they imply primarily the widest application of the latter tactics, as the tactic of class **struggle**. By the very fact that we are fighting, we expose Social Democracy **by facts, by practice, by experience**, taken from the struggle of the working class. This is the language that is understood by the masses of workers, and not theses on the fascisation of Social Democracy. In order to expose Social Democracy successfully, we must think the thoughts of these masses. We must learn to put Social Democracy in such a position that facts would more eloquently reveal to the workers its treachery than the most fiery Communist speech, the task of which is to generalise the thoughts and deductions of the workers. Yet the methods of our agitation among the Social Democratic workers are extremely bad. We talk to them as if we were faced with a Communist audience, for whom the treacherous character of Social Democracy is perfectly clear, or as if they had already broken with the ideas of Social Democracy and only needed a slight push to join the ranks of the Communists. At Party congresses and conferences, we try more to convince each other of the fascisation of Social Democracy than to

work out speeches to be delivered to the non-Party and Social Democratic masses. If a worker does not leave the Social Democratic Party, it shows that he is not convinced of its treachery, that he thinks that the path of compromise and class collaboration is more expedient than the class struggle. We must show him the reverse by systematic and persistent work with him; we must approach him with agitation on a level with his understanding.

At the same time the Communists must **organise** the united workers' front. This means we must keep in constant contact with the rank and file Social Democratic masses in the factories; we must organise joint meetings with them, and conferences; we must work out a programme of demands jointly with them and non-Party delegates; we must convince them, argue with them; we must learn to listen to the arguments of rank and file Social Democrats so as to smash them the more easily. This means that we must discuss with factory trade union delegates, who have not discredited themselves as spies and lickspittles of the factory managements, questions which agitate the workers, for the purpose of organising activity jointly with the Social Democratic workers. This is of special importance at the present time when the Social Democratic apparatus is in many places beginning to crack from below.

This means, further, that the approach to the struggle for the independent leadership of class struggles of the proletariat in the various countries must vary in the respective countries in accordance with the varying importance of the Communist Parties and with the varying rate of radicalisation of the masses and their loss of faith in the Social Democrats. We must not mechanically transfer the methods of assuming independent leadership of class struggles from the German Communist Party, for example, to the British or American Communist Party.

When deciding on the approach to the solution of this task, we must take into consideration a number of auxiliary circumstances: the strength of our Party, the extent of its influences, the strength of the reformist trade unions and the degree to which they include the masses, the degree to which the masses have moved to the "Left," the rôle of the element of spontaneity in the movement, etc. From weak Communist Parties, e.g. the British, which are confronted by great trade unions, considerable preliminary work is necessary in the trade unions; the strengthening of our positions by winning the leadership of the lower organisations of the trade unions, etc. If such preliminary work is carried on, the strike committees and the committees of action will be able to rely on a broad mass base. A successful struggle against the Social Democrats amidst conditions of a growing revolutionary upsurge requires that the Communists in weak Parties shall carry on the most active work among the Social Democrats, forming oppositional groups among them so that group after group will split from the Social Democrats and come over to the ranks of the Communist Party.

The Communists under present conditions must become active factors in the process of the incipient disintegration of Social Democracy; they must not hope for the spontaneous development of these processes. They must fight by a strong and active policy against tendencies to form a "left wing" inside Social Democracy, which would simply be a barrier separating the revolutionary workers from the path to the Communist Party.

Thirdly, the "class-against-class" tactics cannot be based on the assumption that all other classes form one complete reactionary mass without any differences or shades. Some Communists completely identify Social Fascism with Fascism. Others identify the Social Democratic workers with their leaders in the apparatus, the Social Democratic bureaucrats, who are in the service of capital and its State. For example, one of the Plenums of the Norwegian Central Committee stated:

"The Labour Party is the leading party of capitalism, not only from a political point of view but from the point of view of its social composition."

Such a tactical line is wrong and only leads to a complete separation from the Social Democratic working masses. At the same time it reveals a sectarian attitude towards the non-Party working masses. This is the line of despair, passivity, a product of the stabilisation period, and has nothing in common with Leninism. It is one of the causes why the exposure of Social Democracy by Communists does not bring about the required effect on the masses who support it. The masses instinctively feel the super-simplification of this line which does not correspond to reality. It is not true to say that there is no internal friction among the bourgeois classes (including the Social Democrats as a bourgeois party in its policy).

**The very rise of Fascism** is due to the friction that does exist as one of the elements of the maturing crisis in the "upper ranks." The bourgeois classes and their parties are united only on the question of fighting the working class or the movement of the toiling masses in general. To think that reaction is united all along the line, from the financial oligarchy down to the Social Democratic worker, in reality, means accepting the theory of "organised capitalism" which can overcome all its internal contradictions. This would not be applying the class-against-class tactics, but the tactics of isolating the Communists from the working class. The practical harmfulness of this line is that it signifies a rejection of the genuine exposure of Social Democracy and a refusal to work for winning over the Social Democratic workers.

Fourthly, the class-against-class tactics is directed against the theory of "the lesser evil," by means of which, by playing on the "spectre of reaction," Social Democracy deceives the masses. From day to day the Social Democrats assure the workers that they are supporting the Brüning Government because it is the lesser evil,

compared with the Hitler Government which might replace it. The English "Left" Independent Labour Party calls on the workers to support the Labour Government because it is better than the Conservative Government, etc. In many cases, the Communists have not shown the masses clearly and concretely why Social Democracy is not the lesser evil. It is not that it is "worse" than the Fascists or "just as bad" as the Fascists, but it is the main obstacle to the mobilisation of the masses for the struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in all its forms, because it is the main social support of the bourgeoisie.

All the experience of international Social Democracy, both in Austria, Germany and other countries, proves that it assists the bourgeoisie to establish the Fascist form of dictatorship and capitulates to it step by step. It carries on, with its own hands when in power, or by supporting other fractions of the bourgeoisie, as in Germany, the fascisation of the State, while pretending that it is saving so-called "democracy" from Fascism. In this way it lulls the vigilance of the masses and stifles their spontaneous struggle against Fascism. In Britain, the bourgeoisie keeps the Labour Government in office at the most critical moment, and allows it to carry out their programme, under the label "Labour Government." The indignation of the masses against this Government is stifled by the so-called "Left" independents who protect it with their "Left" phraseology. If the Labour Government were not in power in England the struggle of the working class would develop much more strongly and the process of the masses adopting violent methods would go on faster. By means of class struggle the practical-minded British worker would be better able to save himself from the attack of capital than by the capitulation of the agents of capital—MacDonald, Thomas, etc. In Germany, the Brüning Government, as correctly described by the German Central Committee, is a Government for the establishment of the Fascist dictatorship. And Social Democracy is the most active force helping the Brüning Government in the accomplishment of its mission. But it would be wrong to fail to see the difference between this Government and the Social Democrats who are supporting it, and the Hitler Government which might come to replace it.

Fifthly, the tactics of class against class does not mean the rejection of manœuvring. If the enemy still has a strong position in the working class, manœuvring by Communists is necessary so that by capable exposures this position can be undermined. However, since the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I., our arsenal of manœuvres has been of very modest dimensions. It is not we who have manœuvred, but the Social Democrats have manœuvred against us. Because many of the Communists started out from the premise that the Social Democrats had completed their Fascist development, they did not expect from them any manœuvring ability. Their manœuvres, as is particularly evident from the French example on the question



of the unity of the trade union movement, caught them unawares. In reality, Social Democracy has once again taken to manoeuvring, at the very moment when the process of its fascisation is being accelerated. The fact that the radicalisation of the masses is increasing under the influence of the crisis, and that the workers are beginning to desert Social Democracy, demands from Communists a still more active and merciless exposure of Social Democracy, while it also calls for greater activity in regard to manoeuvring.

### Disintegration in the ranks of the Social Democracy

In the course of the last months, in connection with the growing revolutionisation of the working class, increasing signs of unrest can be seen in the Social Democratic parties in several capitalist countries. This is especially true of such countries where the prerequisites exist for the development of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis, as, for instance, in Germany. This process, while developing unevenly, is evident in Germany and in the German section of the Czecho-Slovakian Social Democracy; it can be seen in Austria, and is gradually developing in other capitalist countries.

In some countries (Germany) this process expresses itself in entire local groups of young Social Democrats going over to the Communist Party; in other countries (Austria, Czecho-Slovakia), the process finds its expression in the growth of opposition to the policy of the leading Social Democratic organisations; in Great Britain this process manifests itself in people leaving the Labour Party, etc. This difference in the development of opposition sentiment in the ranks of Social Democratic workers demands from the Communist Parties a very thoughtful, and by no means a "standardised," approach to this phenomenon.

While carrying on untiring agitation for leaving the Social Democracy, while fighting against all passive sentiment expressed mainly in dropping Social Democracy and "politics" in general, the Communists must determine their methods of work to capture these elements not only in accordance with the concrete conditions in the various countries, but the concrete conditions of the various districts. But in all cases Communists must show the greatest activity in the struggle against the treachery of the Social Democracy; the political line of the Communists in this question must be a line of **offensive** against Social Democracy.

What are the questions around which this unrest in Social Democracy is concentrated?

Firstly, the question of relation to the Soviet Union. In Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and France, the workers are protesting against the anti-Soviet policy of Social Fascism. This proves that the victory

of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. has decisive importance in breaking the influence enjoyed by Social Democracy among the working class in capitalist countries.

Secondly, this opposition is being formed in the process of the economic struggles of the working class against the capitalist offensive.

Thirdly, the workers' indignation is directed against the policy of the Social Democratic leaders to capitulate before Fascism.

In all cases the Social Democratic workers put forward the demand for a united front with Communist workers; thus, they spontaneously feel the necessity for working class unity in the struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Bearing this in mind, the Communists must in every way intensify their agitation and explain to the masses the achievements of the U.S.S.R., the progress of Socialist construction and the advantages of the Socialist system over the capitalist system, which advantage is obvious from the struggle of the two worlds—the world of Socialist construction and the capitalist world. Simultaneously, the Communists must everywhere be the initiators of the united revolutionary front from below; they must fight relentlessly for the revolutionary unity of the working class in the struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship.

### The Manœuvres of the Social Democracy

The ability of the Social Democrats to manoeuvre always depended upon three factors: (a) the tempo of the development of discontent of the working class; (b) the strength of the Communist Parties and the intensity of their political activities in exposing the manœuvres of Social Democracy; (c) capital's ability to manoeuvre. During the rise of the revolutionary tide which threatened to sweep away the capitalist régime, and which compelled the capitalists hurriedly to make certain concessions, the Social Democrats never missed the opportunity to explain this as being a result of **their** "pressure upon capital." When the Communist Parties successfully exposed the treachery of Social Democracy, the latter took a turn to the "Left." Capital was in a position, owing to the "super-profits" it extracted from the colonies and its monopolised industries, to bribe the Labour aristocracy; Social Democracy boasted of this as being its greatest victory.

What changes have taken place since then? The general crisis of capitalism, linked up with the fact that the U.S.S.R. is lost to the capitalist world, with colonial rebellions, with a sharpening of the struggle for world markets—all this has steadily reduced the economic basis of reformism in post-war years. The capitalist offensive against the working class during the present crisis has limited to a great extent its ability to manoeuvre. What can the

reformists now present as a programme of reform in order to deceive the workers?

What programme of reform can the Social Democrats advance? How far can their manoeuvres go? In the past, whilst Noske shot down the workers of Germany, Hilferding and Otto Bauer were completing plans of socialisation; but now we find Social Democracy voting for the laws of the Brüning Government.

In the past, Social Democracy was ready to play with demands for increases in wages; now, in conjunction with capital, it is actually lowering wages. Its programme of solving the crisis is a capitalist programme aimed at strengthening the dominant bourgeois dictatorship. At present Social Democracy can manoeuvre on the question of Fascism, on the extent of wage-cuts or on the form in which these wage-cuts are to be presented to the workers. Further, Social Democracy can still manoeuvre on questions that carry no obligations, i.e. questions of the "united front," "trade union unity," etc.

And in recent years we see that the manoeuvres of Social Democracy are mainly in this direction. At the Zürich Conference of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, these Social Democratic fakers put forth the slogan of a six-hour day, the five-day week, demands for social insurance, against capitalist rationalisation, for resumption of relations with the U.S.S.R., disarmament, etc. Simultaneously, in countries like France, its opportunist agents, inside the Unitarian Confederation of Labour, the so-called Minorities, together with such experienced functionaries of the reformist Confederation of Labour like Dumoulin, issued a manifesto calling for unity in the trade union movement. The outrageous character of this swindle, this new move of the Social Fascist scoundrels is exposed by the fact that in demanding a six-hour day and five-day week, international Social Democracy is merely fulfilling the orders of capital to transfer the workers to part-time and reduced wages.

Communists are only too well acquainted with the rôle of Social Democracy in the struggle against social insurance for the workers, in the support it gave to capitalist rationalisation, its slander of the U.S.S.R., its militarist policy, its splitting tactics in the trade unions and its strike-breaking tactics in the united front questions. But it is not sufficient for the Communists to know about this; the workers, who are still under the influence of the Social Democrats, must also know of these facts. It is the duty of the Communists to point out to these workers the true significance of the Social Democratic manoeuvres. This can be done only by rallying the masses around our programme of immediate demands; (a) for a seven-hour day with no reduction in pay, for social insurance at the expense of the employer and the State, for immediate aid to the unemployed; (b) struggle against all forms of capitalist oppression of the workers, against all forms of bourgeois dictatorship, for the freedom of revolutionary organisations, press, meetings,

speech; for the immediate disbanding and disarming of Fascist organisations and for arming the workers; (c) for the defence of the Soviet Union against intervention.

In approaching the Social Democratic workers with direct proposals for united action on the basis of a united revolutionary front, and in exposing the treachery of the Social Democratic leaders on the basis of concrete examples, the Communists must take control of the spontaneous movement of the working class for revolutionary unity. This movement is not incidental. It is a result of the fact that the working class sees the abyss it has been brought to by the policies of Social Democracy, which split the working class in the interests of capitalism.

The Communists must prove to the masses that, because the Communist Party stands for the overthrow of bourgeois dictatorship, it is the only Party working for the revolutionary unity of the working class, both in its everyday struggle and in the performance of its historical mission, for without establishing such unity on the basis of class struggle, the working class will be unable to defeat its class enemies and their agents in the ranks of the proletariat. In mobilising the masses around their slogans, the Communists must utilise all opportunities vigorously to put forward questions of the class struggle in the press, parliament, meetings, street gatherings, and place the Social Democratic leaders in a position which would make their treachery obvious to the workers. As an example, we may cite the activity of the Communist parliamentary faction in Czecho-Slovakia, which by its social-insurance bill was successful in exposing the treachery of the Social Democrats who voted against this bill. In those instances where Social Democrats, for the sake of a manoeuvre, are willing to vote for Communist proposals, knowing beforehand that they will not be carried, the Communists must expose them by bringing to the fore the question of the methods to be used in the further struggle for their proposals, and especially the question of mass political strikes.

## V

### THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS IN THE WORK OF THE SECTIONS OF THE C.I.

THE E.C.C.I. comes to the XI Plenum with important successes to report. During the year since the February Presidium, on the basis of the general line laid down by the VI Congress of the C.I. and by the X Plenum, the E.C.C.I. has achieved a greater **Bolshevik consolidation of its ranks** as a single world party of the revolutionary proletariat. The consistent application of the general line has led to the political defeat of the Right Wing elements in the C.P.S.U. which were the kulak agency in the ranks of the Leninist Party,

and secured the further successful purging of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries of Right-Wing renegade elements and the defeat of conciliatory and "Leftist" elements which reflected in their vacillation the class influence of the bourgeoisie and of Social Democracy.

Never before has the C.P.S.U., the leading Party in the C.I., which bears responsibility, not only for the fate of Socialism now being built up in the U.S.S.R., but also for the fate of the world revolutionary movement, been so solid and so monolithic as at the present time; never before have the "Right" and "Left" deviators so futilely hurled themselves against the armour of the Leninist Party, only to be hurled back shattered and broken, as at the present time. And never has there been in the ranks of the C.I. greater unity, Bolshevik solidarity, based on the liquidation of the factional struggle (for example, the C.P. of Poland), groupings and political waverings as at the present time. The past year, with its extremely acute class struggles, serves to summarise the main processes of bolshevisation of the Sections of the C.I.

(a) The Right danger was and remains the principal danger at the present stage of the world revolutionary movement, and will remain so throughout the whole period from now to the victorious battles for the proletarian dictatorship. This Right danger is fostered, first of all, by the tremendous pressure of capital upon the working class. As long as capitalism with its widely ramified apparatus of oppression and hellish machine of repression exists, there will be certain strata of the oppressed who hope to evade the stern laws of the class struggle, to adapt themselves, if only a little, to the conditions of capitalist penal servitude. The working class lives, breathes and acts, not in the pure environment of the laboratory, but subject to the intercrossing influences of other classes, the bourgeois schools, science, art, the church, the barracks.

Secondly, the Right danger is the result of the pressure of powerful Social Democracy; until this pressure has been eradicated from the ranks of the working class, Right opportunist relapses are inevitable in the ranks of the Communist Movement.

Thirdly, every sharp intensification of the class struggle will be accompanied by the "retirement" of the unstable elements in the Communist Movement for all sorts of "reasons of principle."

Finally, at the present moment the Right danger is fostered by stabilisation moods which in some places have not yet been abandoned. Right relapses occurred in the period under review in the Communist Party of China, where, taking advantage of the mistakes committed by the Li Li-hsian group, the Right, Chen Du-su elements raised their heads and advocated the liquidatory views of the international Right wing; in the Italian Communist Party, which expelled from its ranks Santini, Blasko and Ferrocci, who opposed the activation of the policy of the Party, and which, after the expulsion of these three representatives of liquidatory pessimism,

heroically and successfully fought against the Fascist dictatorship; in the Communist Party of Switzerland, which expelled the petty-bourgeois group led by Bringolf. One of these Right renegades (Mariov) migrated directly to Social Democracy, without halting at any intermediary stage. Others (Santini and Co.) were gathered up by Trotsky and held up as genuine hundred-per-cent Bolsheviks.

(b) The "Leftist" deviations that occurred were fostered either by the sharp turn of events which demanded from the Parties very flexible tactics, as for example in China, or by a certain conservatism and immobility on the part of certain Party functionaries who failed to sense the present changes that have taken place in the Labour Movement, or by the new and raw strata of the working class brought into the movement, young and excellent revolutionary elements, but commencing their political training **for the first time**, people who revealed revolutionary impatience and frequently made mistakes peculiar to the stages of the revolutionary Labour Movement of the past. One of the most characteristic "Leftist" mistakes committed, to which reference must be made, is that committed by Comrade Merker, who placed the rank-and-file members of the Social Democratic parties on the same level as the leaders. Had not the Central Committee of the C.P. of Germany rectified this "Left" dislocation in the views of Comrade Merker in time, it would have hampered the Party struggle against Social Democracy. It stands to the credit of the Central Control Commission of the C.P. of Germany that it exposed this mistake at the very outset, and thereby helped other Sections to combat analogous views which are extremely pernicious, for undoubtedly the views of Comrade Merker bore an international character. Another, and still cruder, "Leftist" mistake was committed by the Li Li-hsian group in China. The mistake committed by Li Li-hsian was that he tried to interpret certain symptoms of the incipient revolutionary upsurge in China as the beginning of a revolutionary situation in China and throughout the world, and from this drew totally incorrect putschist conclusions which threatened to destroy the C.P. of China.

The *Second* important achievement of the Comintern in the period under review is the successes achieved by the Communist Party of Germany. The four million six hundred thousand votes obtained in the elections of September 1930 is evidence of the Party's enormous mass influence, which has grown on the basis of the correct and consistently conducted political line of the Party. Its successes in the factory committee elections, its organisational growth by almost eighty per cent in the course of one year, together with the organisational growth of the German Young Communist League, indicate that the Party is marching firmly along the road to winning the majority of the working class. It has shown to the masses by its struggle against the capitalist offensive (the metal-workers' strike in Berlin, the miners' strike in the Ruhr, the dock-



workers' strike in Hamburg), and by its mass street demonstrations, that it is the only force capable of extricating the toilers from their state of poverty and starvation and of leading them on to the path of emancipation from the yoke of capital. It must be said that the C.P. of Germany is as yet the only Party which, in a country where Social Democracy is strong, has managed really to win the independent leadership of class battles, to cause considerable masses to break away from the reformists, and on this basis to proceed to form mass revolutionary trade unions, a network of mass organisations in the factories, and thus very seriously to shake the positions of Social Democracy. The growth of the Communist Party of Germany as a fighting force, which is making a deep impression upon other strata of the population now being ruined, guarantees the further extension of its influences to these strata (the peasantry, office workers) which Fascism is striving to win over to its side.

The *Third* achievement is the establishment of Soviets in China in an area embracing scores of millions of the population and the creation of the skeleton of a Red Army which has placed China in the forefront of the revolutionary movement in the colonial world. This achievement would have been impossible had there not been in China a Communist Party which had grown up in the fires of civil war. The young Bolshevik Party of China has existed less than ten years but it has a history of heroic struggle any European Communist Party might envy. The successes of the Red Army in China are, first of all, the successes of the Communist Party which has managed to build up the Party backbone of this Army, give it correct political leadership, draw millions of peasants into the movement who give the Red Army devoted support. The establishment of Soviet regions, the propaganda of the Soviet system on the basis of experience intelligible to the masses, and the beginning of the agrarian revolution in these regions, is the work of the Communist Party of China. During the past year the Communist Party of that country has increased its membership from 150,000 to 200,000 and, notwithstanding its serious organisational weakness in the industrial centres and its inadequate work in the trade unions, it has managed to build up in the rural districts a network of mass organisations which are rapidly growing in power and influence.

An important achievement of the Communist International since the February Enlarged Plenum is the issue by the Communist Party of India of its programme of action which is consistent with the spirit of the programme of the C.I. adopted at the VI Congress.

In the country adjacent to India, in Indo-China, there has been definitely formed a Communist Party which for a period of many months has, with the greatest heroism, led the heroic guerilla fighting of the Indo-Chinese peasants.

The consolidation of the Communist Movement in these three Oriental countries, where more than half the population of the world is concentrated, is of tremendous importance for the future of the struggle of the colonial peoples, for their emancipation, and for the whole of the international Communist Movement.

The *Fourth* achievement of the C.I. is the undoubted growth of the mass influence of the Communist Parties in a number of capitalist countries expressed in the increase in the number of votes cast for Communist candidates at elections. Apart from the Communist Party of Germany we must mention the important victory obtained by the Workers' Party of Bulgaria. Notwithstanding the severe white terror, the Workers' Party of Bulgaria obtained in the municipal elections a hundred thousand votes. Special mention must also be made of the victory of the Communist Party of Germany in the municipal elections in reactionary Brunswick, where our Party was the only Party that increased its vote. The bourgeois and the Social Democratic press estimates these elections as one of the most important political events in recent times, which confronts the ruling classes of modern Germany with the Communist Party of Germany as the principal immediate danger.

This growth finds expression also in the victories obtained by the Communist Parties in the factory council elections. The most important victories obtained in this respect were those of the Communist Party of Germany and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in a number of important enterprises which hitherto have been strongholds of reformism.

Furthermore, the growth of the influence of the Communist Parties among the masses has been particularly emphasised by the organisation of mass revolutionary demonstrations by the Communists, particularly unemployed demonstrations (Germany, Czechoslovakia, U.S.A.) on March 6th, 1930, the demonstration in Budapest on September 1st, 1930, which was organised by the Social Democrats but which advanced the slogans of the Communist Party and ended in fierce battles with the police and the setting up of barricades, and finally, the mass demonstrations in India, organised independently by the Communist Party against the National Congress.

This growth of the political influence of the Communist Parties among the masses has been accompanied by the beginning of a turn in regard to their growth in membership.

Besides the C.P. of Germany, the membership of the C.P. of Czechoslovakia is also beginning to increase and, moreover, in the district of Komotau, where the Party managed to strike serious blows against the reformists and the Social Democrats, this growth is assuming an extremely rapid rate.

The membership of the Communist Parties of Poland, Italy, China, Indo-China, Spain, Bulgaria and of a number of other

countries where the development of the revolutionary upsurge is more rapid, is steadily increasing. Special stress must be laid on the beginning of the steady increase in the membership of the Communist Party of Austria. In other Sections (for example, England) there was a considerable fluctuation and loss of membership; this has now stopped.

The *Fifth* achievement of the C.I. is the improvement in the fighting ability of the Communist Parties, for example, in Czechoslovakia. In the course of this year all the Sections of the Communist International carried through with considerable success a number of unemployed mass demonstrations and actively participated in organising strikes. In some countries not a single day has passed but what unemployed demonstrations have taken place in one district or another. Although the Communists have not complete command of the unemployed movements and have not developed them to the dimensions and revolutionary significance which they can assume, nevertheless, it must be admitted that the Communist Parties were the only organisations that organised the unemployed movements and led them to any extent.

Coming now to the question of the lagging behind of the Communist Parties, of the causes of this, and the means for remedying it, it is necessary first of all to emphasise the objective difficulties which hamper the Communist Parties in utilising the present crisis in order to transform it into a revolutionary crisis. Among these difficulties are: First, the solidarity displayed in the united front of the capitalist States in the fight against the revolutionary movement. Second, the stronger positions of the bourgeoisie and their superior organisation compared with that of the Russian bourgeoisie in October 1917. Third, that in perfecting their methods of fighting the revolutionary movement, the bourgeoisie takes into account the lessons of the October Revolution and the "mistakes" committed by the Russian ruling class. Fourth, the corrupting influence of bourgeois democracy upon the working class which has continued for decades. Fifth, the existence of a strong Social Democracy and a bureaucratic trade union machine as the agents of capital in the labour movement. Sixth, the Fascist methods adopted for suppressing the labour movement linked up with severe employers' intimidation and political terror unparalleled even in the history of pre-revolutionary Russia. Finally, in regard to the illegal Parties, it must be borne in mind that their illegal work is being carried on, not in an extensive territory, like the former Tsarist Empire, but in a more restricted territory with closely-situated urban centres, with a widely ramified police apparatus, and a close network of telegraph and telephone communications, so that the blows delivered against them in the process of establishing the Fascist dictatorship are more brutal and destructive of human material and that, in view of the fact that these Parties were formerly legal, the police know their members perfectly well.

## Lagging Behind

But, notwithstanding all these difficulties, we must admit that the lagging behind of the Communist Parties is now the greatest danger which threatens the Communist Movement. The X Plenum of the E.C.C.I. uttered a warning against this danger when it stated that "the greatest danger at the present period is the danger of the Communist Parties lagging behind the tempo of development of the mass revolutionary movement (tailism)."

If we do not make every effort to liquidate this lagging behind very quickly, the confidence of the masses in the Communist Parties may be shaken. What is the cause of the lagging behind of the Communist Parties? From what does it arise? Great changes are taking place in the labour movement, the working class is rapidly moving to the "Left," the mass basis of Social Democracy is being undermined, and the activity of the masses is increasing. New and fresh sections of the proletariat are coming into the movement—women and the working youth. The ruined sections of the peasants, the urban petty-bourgeoisie and the toilers of the oppressed nationalities are coming to the assistance of the working class. This extends the mass basis of the revolutionary upsurge, requires that the Communist Parties so reorganise their ranks that they will not only be enabled to keep pace with the movement but be at its head.

In reality, our Communist Parties in most of the capitalist countries have not yet reorganised themselves for the fight so as to be able to stand at the head of the leftward moving masses. The numerous decisions of the E.C.C.I. and of the Parties themselves on assuming independent leadership of mass struggles of the proletariat are beginning to be carried out only in very few of the Sections of the C.I. (Germany Czechoslovakia, Poland). Many other Parties of the C.I. have not yet emerged from the agitation and propaganda period of their activity.

The danger of this disproportion between the objective conditions and the weakness of the practical and organisational work of the Communist Parties is increased by the fact that the growth of Fascism and the threat of imperialist wars and military intervention against the Soviet Union greatly reduces the period which is given us to reorganise the forms and methods of our work in accordance with the new circumstances.

How is the backwardness of the Communist Parties expressed? The *first* form is the Communists failing to keep pace with the mass movement, the under-estimation of the spontaneous scope of the leftward moving masses. The mass movement sometimes proceeds over the head of the Communists who do not lead it, but dangle at its tail. In this respect, the discussion which took place in the young Indian Communist Party on the question of the slogan of the mass political strike is extremely instructive. There were comrades who, quoting the weakness of the young trade

unions in India and the necessity of concentrating the attention of the Communist Party chiefly on the tasks of the economic struggle, spoke in the name of the "independence" of the labour movement against the slogan of a mass political strike. This was in a country which is in the grips of an enormous revolutionary movement resembling in its dimensions the Russian movement of 1905. Yet India is a country to which we can first of all apply the words of Lenin that a few tens or hundreds of revolutionists who are faithfully devoted to the cause of labour express the despair of millions of the oppressed.

In the European capitalist countries, this form of backwardness was expressed in a number of "unofficial" strikes which took place not only against the wishes of the reformist trade unions but apart from the active participation of the Communists (examples of such strikes can be found in the British strikes in Lancashire, South Wales, the political and economic struggles in Spain, etc.).

The same backwardness can be observed with regard to the unemployed movement. Extremely vivid cases of such backwardness can be observed in the countries of white terror and Fascism, where the Communist Parties have been driven underground. In Italy during the three days, November 23rd, 24th, 25th, there were turbulent demonstrations of the unemployed in Turin, accompanied by attacks on bread stores.

From the crowds of demonstrators there were shouts of "Bread for our children, or Mussolini's head." Similar disturbances took place also in several provincial towns of Italy. They took place independently of our Party.

During this year a tremendous peasant movement has developed in West Ukraine. The Communist Party of West Ukraine was not on the scene, it did not express itself at the beginning either for or against the movement, on the pretext that it was led by the Nationalist organisation U.W.O. Later the Party decided that although the U.W.O. had called forth this movement, nevertheless the Communist Party must not remain on one side; and finally there was the explanation that the U.W.O. had no relation whatever to this movement and that the task of the Party was to take charge of it. As the result of such a line—not a line, but a see-saw—the Party lost 75,000 votes in West Ukraine.

The *second* form of lagging behind is the inability of the Communist Parties to mobilise the masses on the basis of their everyday needs, which are felt with special clearness by the workers in the present crisis.

All our practice is full of examples of such backwardness. What was the inability of the Communist Party of France to utilise the great dissatisfaction of the workers against the reactionary law of social insurance, if not such backwardness? What was the original position of the C.P.G.B. during the Bradford strike if not lagging behind, when it substituted for the everyday demands of the

workers the slogan of a Revolutionary Workers' Government. If we do not wish to play with the slogan of the Revolutionary Workers' Government, but take it seriously, in a Bolshevik manner, we must admit that as a slogan of action the slogan of a Revolutionary Workers' Government had no foundation whatever in England in the summer of 1930. The Bradford strike developed as an economic movement. It could have developed into a movement for a Revolutionary Workers' Government had the Party succeeded really in winning the independent leadership of this movement. But this did not happen. The Party only made the first steps towards independent leadership in the Bradford strike.

What, if not this kind of backwardness, was the poor movement on International Unemployment Day, February 25th? The lessons of February 25th signalise to all C.P.s, and even to the big ones, the necessity of a decisive turn towards the everyday demands of the workers.

All the work of the Commissions of the E.C.C.I. this year, examining Party after Party, has been carried on under the slogan of such a turn of the Communist Parties towards the masses on the basis of their burning demands in the class war, which are put on the agenda by the present crisis. This investigation has showed us all the fundamental shortcomings of the Communist Parties, their poor recruiting forces, the weakness of the nuclei in the factories (in the U.S.A. only 10 per cent of the members, in Czecho-Slovakia 14 per cent), the tremendous fluctuation of membership, which in France reaches almost 54 per cent, the very poor work of the Communists both in the Red Trade Unions and in the organisation of the revolutionary T.U. opposition, the incorrect approach to the Social Democratic workers, the refusal to come forward in the struggle for partial demands, the extremely poor preparation and conducting of strikes. In addition to this, the commissions of the E.C.C.I. have discovered a bureaucratic conservatism in many parts of the Party apparatus, methods of commanding in place of methods of convincing, mechanisation of Party life, etc.

On the basis of the work of the Commissions of the E.C.C.I. the British comrades initiated a movement for the "Workers' Charter," which has already given certain fairly good though small results. The Party organisation has become stronger, it has increased its influence among the working masses, the number of readers of its young paper, the *Daily Worker*, is growing, although with insufficient rapidity, and the Party has obtained certain results in its struggle for the leadership of the strike movement.

In Czecho-Slovakia, with the support of the E.C.C.I., it was also possible to check the fall in membership.

Summing up all the Communist Parties which have been examined in the Commissions of the E.C.C.I., we may state that their turn towards the burning demands of the masses has justified itself and has already given positive results. At the same time it has given all



the C.P.'s a plain example of concrete leadership and has set up a system of control over the fulfilment of decisions.

But the Communist Party has been late in bringing about the turn to the burning demands of the masses in the sphere of trade union work. They are now paying for this belatedness by a fall in the number of members of Red Trade Unions in France and stagnation in the trade unions in Czecho-Slovakia. The V Congress of the R.I.L.U. gave correct instructions to the Communist Parties for rectifying the mistakes of Communists in trade union work, mistakes in action which continued many years, but some of the Communist Parties failed to popularise these instructions for many months after. They put them in the office drawer, forgotten the day after they were passed. And it behoves the present plenum of the E.C.C.I. to remind the C.P.s of this resolution which will remain fully and completely applicable for a long time to come.

Another organisation is the Y.C.I., which lagged behind in the matter of mobilising the broad masses of youth for the struggle against the attacks of capital. In October last year, the Comintern gave timely warning of the danger of lagging behind, and sounded the alarm concerning the decline in membership of the Sections of the Y.C.I. in the chief capitalist countries, England, France, etc. The comrades in the Y.C.I. enthusiastically undertook to bring about the turn towards the burning demands of the working youth, but although they did many things, they simply turned in a circle and remained in their old place. A special report will be given here on the tasks of the Y.C.I., in which will be summarised the chief ailments of the Communist Youth Movement.

But the question arises, is the Y.C.I. alone responsible for this lagging behind? Does not the blame lie chiefly on the Sections of the Comintern, which did not sufficiently offer their experience, concrete advice and guidance to assist the Leagues to overcome the weakness and the shortcomings in their work. Do the Sections of the Comintern realise the tremendous importance the question of "reserve troops" assumes in face of advancing Fascism, which is bringing the youth under its influence, the growth of chauvinism and war fever, which precedes and accompanies every imperialist war? Do they realise the rôle which will be played by the working youth in this war and in the future revolutionary battles? Do the Sections of the Comintern realise how the struggle of the whole apparatus of the bourgeois dictatorship for the youth has sharpened? Do they realise how intensely the capitalist Governments, the church, the schools, the barracks, capitalist firms and the Press, are fighting at the present moment, when great revolutionary movements are already shaking the capitalist world?

The task of seriously preparing for the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie requires most active anti-militarist work in the army. However, having left the Young Communist Leagues without attention, the Sections of the Comin-

tern cannot register any great successes in recent years in this work. In a number of capitalist countries, like France, they have receded. Here we most easily see opportunism in practice on the part of Communists who do not realise the war danger nor seriously raise in Bolshevik fashion the problem of capturing power by the proletariat. The Plenum must submit to stern criticism the underestimation of the war danger as well as the opportunist passivity of Communist organisations in the matter of strengthening the Communist Youth Movement from top to bottom, because they are chiefly responsible for the state of affairs in the Y.C.L.'s.

The *third* type of lagging behind is of exceptionally great importance. It found expression in the virtual surrender of the **Communist Party of Finland** to Fascism in the summer of 1930.

If we wish to draw the necessary lessons from the criticism of the mistakes of the C.P. of Finland for the other Sections of the Comintern, we must first of all answer the question: How did it happen that the Finnish Communist Party at a critical moment was incapable of mobilising the masses for a fight? For many years the Finnish C.P. has carried on a fairly good struggle against the Social Democrats for influence among the working class. In spite of the fact that after the crushing of the Finnish revolution it was driven underground, it succeeded in carrying on successful mass work, established a workers' press, and squeezed the Social Democrats from the leadership of the trade union movement. The working class believed in the Communist Party after the experience of the civil war in 1918. It judged the C.P. by this part of its development. However, during the whole period of capitalist relative stabilisation, the C.P. of Finland, instead of systematically working for the uprooting of its Social Democratic survivals, opportunistically adapted itself in practice to the conditions of "legality" under the régime of the dictatorship of the Finnish bourgeoisie.

The Finnish C.P. was not the only Party to suffer from such legalism. We all know that a revolution was required in the practice of many Sections of the Comintern at the beginning of the "third period" to put an end to these Social Democratic relics in the Communist Movement.

Opportunist adaptation of the Finnish C.P. to legality was expressed in the following forms:

1. The Party itself was virtually **drowned** in legal organisations; it failed to strengthen the control of the illegal Party organisations in this work.
2. The Party did not strive to develop economic struggles and the revolutionising of mass work.
3. On the pretext of preserving legal possibilities and the unity of trade unions, the Party for a long time tolerated opportunist tactics in the leadership of the so-called "Lefts" who sabotaged the confirmation of the Copenhagen agreement with the Soviet Union, insisting on Unity with the Social Democrats at all costs, etc.

The necessity for a determined change in the course of the Party was not recognised in time by the leaders of the C.P.F. This necessity became especially sharp from the moment when the economic crisis entered Finland (1929) and the Finnish bourgeoisie were especially terrified at the gigantic economic growth of the U.S.S.R.

The Central Committee of the Finnish Communist Party, on the basis of the resolution of the VI Congress and the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I., gave the Party only **general** directives on the new course, on the dangers of the growth of Fascism and war, etc., but did not take any serious measures to concretise these general instructions from the viewpoint of the actual relations of class forces in Finland. The Finnish bourgeoisie, under circumstances of the economic crisis, furiously attacked the standard of living of the working class, wrecked the workers' organisations, houses, press, arrested the leaders of the trade unions, and in this way wished to assure themselves a "peaceful" rear for the war against the U.S.S.R. which they were preparing together with French, English and Polish imperialism. But the Finnish comrades at this time were troubled with the question of how the Fascist development of the bourgeois dictatorship would take place in their country, by the so-called "dry method" or by a *coup*.

Their mistake was in imagining Fascism as a "thing in itself," as if Fascism were not one of the forms of bourgeois dictatorship, making the tactical line of the Party in the struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship dependent on a purely formal argument such as: Is there Fascism already in Finland, and if there is, there is no need for it to organise a *coup*, it will come by the "dry method." The Central Committee of the C.P. of Finland did not take into account the fact that the more the elements of a Fascist dictatorship were **already** existent (e.g. the Schutzkor) in the system of bourgeois domination in Finland, **the greater** was the immediate danger, and therefore the easier was it for the bourgeoisie to carry out the Fascist *coup*. On the other hand, the more difficult it was for the Social Democratic Party to keep the workers under their leadership, the less could the bourgeoisie rely on their agents, and the more chances were there that the bourgeoisie would adopt a *coup* for the purpose of strengthening their dictatorship.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the C.C. of the Finnish C.P. did **nothing** in the struggle against opportunist practices and legal tendencies. The Polit-Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. noted that the Central Committee of the C.P.F. commenced such a struggle in 1929 in the trade union movement and took the right steps in the sense of revolutionising the work of the Party, "but it did this **without sufficient determination, on a limited scale and very late**, and was unable to bring about the necessary **turn** in the work of the Party." **A complete and sharp turn** was required, but the C.C. made only a **half-turn**, and this **was not carried out** in the localities, or was

carried out too late, for example the purging of the leading bodies in the principal trade unions.

When the Finnish bourgeoisie at the end of 1929 began to mobilise the Lapuas Kulak Movement and the Kulaks, it was necessary without delay to sound the alarm and to raise the broadest masses for an active struggle. But the Party, which had carried out the international day of August First not so badly, at this time, when there was the maturing of a general Fascist attack, limited itself merely to organising a number of meetings in workers' houses and campaigns in the Press. The only militant act by the workers was organised on May First in Helsingfors, but after this slight conflict with the police, the Party slackened its activities until the last moment, in the latter part of June, when it was already too late. The bourgeoisie had already succeeded in mobilising their armed forces to such an extent, and creating such a reign of terror, that the calls of the Party and the trade union leaders to the working masses, who were **still** not mobilised, remained unheard.

What is the lesson to be drawn? The chief lesson is that **lagging behind and half-way measures** by the Communist Parties in the preparation of the toiling masses for the revolutionary repulse of the advancing class enemy can only lead to the defeat of the proletariat. Preparations must consist, *firstly*, in preparing the fighting powers of the C.P. itself as the genuine Bolshevik leader and organiser of the mass resistance of the workers to the bourgeois dictatorship; *secondly*, in a prompt and bold mobilisation of the masses against the Fascist and war dangers which are moving on us; and *thirdly*, in a decisive struggle against opportunist waverings and legalist illusions.

The Finnish comrades are now earnestly correcting their mistake. In spite of the terror of the Lapuasites, the bourgeoisie have not succeeded in crushing out the Communist Movement in Finland. The Finnish comrades have succeeded in restoring the illegal apparatus of the Party, of putting in order the publishing and distribution of their illegal organ, renewing contacts, gradually developing trade union work, etc. Therefore, we might have paid less attention to this question. But the example of our defeat in Finland is of great **international** importance, and raises in all its magnitude the question of the tactics of the Communist Parties in the event of a Fascist *coup* or a war. From the bitter experience of the mistakes of the Finnish Party, Communists in other countries must realise that the struggle against Fascism and war is not a single act of concentrated effort, but a systematic and stubborn struggle for every inch of the ground against the bourgeois dictatorship in all its forms, by preparing and organising mass economic and political struggles which are developing around the daily requirements and the dissatisfaction of the toiling masses, and by combining legal methods of work with illegal methods and assuring the leadership for the illegal section of the Party.

Only a Party which carries on such a struggle will be able to answer the attacks of the bourgeoisie with sufficiently strong blows in case of war and a Fascist *coup*.

Finally, the *fourth* form of backwardness is the organisational lagging of the Communist Parties behind their political influence. This is an old and deeply-rooted ailment of the Sections of the E.C.C.I., and it is hard to deal with, in spite of the enormous number of decisions on this question. Why do things move so slowly?

Firstly, this is explained by the ideological and political heritage which the Sections of the C.I. received from the pre-war period. In their political and organisational ideas we may find:

- (a) The influence of Social Democracy with its type of organisation which is adapted to the epoch of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in the form of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism;
- (b) The influence of anarchism with its neglect of mass organisations, or anarcho-syndicalism which denies the necessity of the political organisation of the proletariat;
- (c) The influence of Luxemburgism with its exaggeration of the rôle of spontaneity in the movement and its under-estimation of the organisational rôle of the Party.

Secondly, the mistaken mechanical transfer of the organisational forms of the C.P.S.U. to the Communist Parties of capitalist countries, for instance, in regard to purging of the ranks of the Party.

Thirdly, organisational backwardness has also been assisted by the shortening of the historical periods for the maturing of the revolution of which the Parties spoke. But there is no doubt that the most important and decisive cause has been the tradition of legalism which still weighs down like a heavy load on the organisational practice of the Communist Parties.

The Comintern has succeeded in liquidating the relics of Social Democracy in the political sphere, but it has not been able to liquidate it in the organisational sphere. This contradiction between "politics" and "organisation" is explained by the transition period through which capitalist society is passing from the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of democracy to the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of Fascism. Ideas always run ahead of organisational forms, which are of a more conservative character. Every class in history has created its own forms of organisation, of types like the conspirative revolts in Spain, the hartals in India, the political strike-revolt of the modern proletariat. With regard to forms of organisation, the church, at the height of its power, organised the order of Jesuits, the bourgeoisie created the Freemason lodges, and then at the time of the French Revolution formed the Jacobin Clubs. Finally, in the nineteenth century they formed the system of political parties which formed the basis of so-called "bourgeois

democracy." The old Socialist Parties in pre-war times were the offspring of the bourgeois parties—the party as an election machine. This was also assisted by the fact that the old Socialist Parties were not uniform in their social composition. In addition to workers, they included other social groups (intelligentsia, petty-bourgeoisie), which in practice had the hegemony in the old Socialist Parties as Members of Parliament, party journalists, speakers. These groups and "leaders," not being linked up with the factories, built their organisations to suit their class and group interests.

What has changed now? The old bourgeois democracy as the form of the dictatorship of capital is dying out everywhere, gradually giving place to the more open form of the dictatorship of finance capital. Finance capital has created trusts, cartels, it has brought parliament under its control, it rules the political parties and all the institutions which are the exponents of "bourgeois democracy." In place of the **broken-down** system of the old political parties, it forms a "party" which is the fighting detachment of the bourgeoisie, corresponding to the needs of civil war. This means that it is building a new type of organisation corresponding to the character of the historical epoch, in accordance with its class interests.

But that which is understood by capital is not understood by many Communists who consider that the question of the forms of organisation have nothing to do with opportunism. They seize on the old forms of street organisations, not understanding that this is a relic of the type of organisation of the period of bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy. The Communist Parties have had to overcome many such relics of an ideological kind on the question of "the freedom of the individual" in the organisations, "the freedom of thought and opinions," when, under the pretext of free thought, people defended the views of a hostile class in the Party (Trotsky), and under the pretext of "individual liberty" work for the bourgeois Press, the freedom of election *blocs* with the bourgeois party, etc. At the present time, they drag in and wish to preserve in the Communist Parties the organisational forms of a hostile class.

What can the proletariat put up in opposition to the power of finance capital with its trusts, its cartels and its fighting Fascist gangs? Only organisation in the factories. The struggle for the factories will be the most dramatic page in the history of the struggle between Communism on the one hand and the bourgeois dictatorship, with its parties of Fascism and Social Democracy, on the other. The further sharpening of the class struggle, the imminent threat of imperialist war and military intervention against the U.S.S.R., raise and will continue to raise before the Communist Parties the question of the best organisational form which can guarantee both successful defence and also the victorious attack of the working class. This best and most flexible form is the reorganisation of the Communist Parties on the basis of the factories. The



difficulties in the way are very great. The fact that in view of unemployment, only twenty-five to thirty per cent of the members of the Communist Parties remain in the factories is a difficulty of no small importance. But this Plenum must declare war on organisational opportunism just as mercilessly as the Communist Parties have frequently carried on war against political opportunism.

### Conclusion

COMRADES, I have come to the end of my report. At the basis of the theses submitted to you on the first question of the agenda we placed the contrast between the U.S.S.R. and the entire capitalist world. This is no accident. The antagonism between the two irreconcilable worlds constitutes the pivot of the present international situation.

The proletarian dictatorship comes forward now, not on the smoky ruins of imperialist war, but clad more and more in the steel armour of Socialism; not in "lining up" with the post-war economic chaos in all the belligerent countries in Europe, but in the dynamics of the upswing of Socialism and the decline of capitalism.

It is no longer carrying on agitation only with the aid of the heroic pages of the civil war, it is corroding the capitalist world with the smoke of its gigantic factories built up under great difficulties and with tremendous effort. It is rousing the peasantry of the capitalist countries with the cheery sound of the first Soviet-made tractors in the fields of the U.S.S.R. In the capitalist world we have the philosophy of the twilight of Europe, the master mind—Spengler. In the U.S.S.R. we have the philosophy of the revolutionary struggle, and the bearer of this philosophy is the worker engaged in gigantic construction whose stern features express the power of a conquering class, the pathos of its struggle and Socialist construction. Among the capitalists there is dismay, lack of confidence in the morrow, alarm before difficulties; in the U.S.S.R. there is firm confidence in the chosen road leading to victory, a steeled will to overcome difficulties. In the capitalist world thousands are asking, says Professor Bonn:

"Whether the capitalist system has any right to exist if it is unable, in the richest country in the world, to create a system where millions of people will not be compelled from time to time to live in poverty and depend upon charitable soup kitchens and lodging houses."

What can the capitalist philosophers, politicians and journalists say to the millions of slaves of the capitalist system in justification of this slavery? By what arguments of human logic can they prove to the masses the reasonableness of this system which has proved its social absurdity, unless it be with guns, machine-guns, air-

planes, prisons, police and gendarmerie? If we were to say that the hypocritical British bourgeoisie calls upon the millions of starving unemployed to suffer patiently and look forward to the life after death it would be regarded as a bad joke. But it is not a joke. One can read this in the New Year issue of *The Times* this year, in the leading article which consoles the unemployed with the thought that this world is only part of the universe, that after this vale of tears and suffering, a better time awaits them in heaven!

But the millions of the unemployed in Germany, Poland, U.S.A., Great Britain, the masses of humanity in China, India and Indo-China do not want to wait until the promissory note which *The Times* gave to the unemployed has expired, the more so that it has not been guaranteed by a single important bank except that of the Vatican. These masses are moving into action. They see not only the glare of impending imperialist wars, they are already the victims of savage war which capital is waging against them in the capitalist as well as in the colonial countries.

"If Communism continues to improve its achievements it will have far greater effect upon the life of the West than anything else and will be the biggest factor since the crucifixion of Christ," says Norman Angell in *Foreign Affairs*. "Russia does not need to bring disorder to the West," he says, "it will be the natural result of the proved bankruptcy of the present system."

And Socialism will continue all the time to improve its achievements. From month to month and day to day it will more sharply than ever put the question to the masses in all parts of the world as to the two world systems, the two dictatorships, the two roads. And the Communist International and its Sections will help the masses to make their choice, and will take charge of this struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS AND THE TASKS OF SEC- TIONS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

### CONCLUDING SPEECH OF COMRADE MANUILSKY AT THE XI PLENUM, E.C.C.I

FIRST of all it is necessary to dwell on a question which at the present moment is fundamental and which was inadequately touched upon in the discussion, viz. the question of the lagging of the world Communist movement behind the extraordinarily favourable objective situation. This must be the kernel of all our debates. This lagging behind did not begin to-day; it did not begin from the time of the VI Congress or of the X Plenum. It is a lag of an historical order, a lag which characterises the whole period which followed the first wave of wars and revolutions. As a matter of fact, just reflect on what is the significance at the present moment of the growth of Fascism. The phenomenon of the Fascist movement under present historical conditions is testimony to the fact that capitalism has outlived itself and that all the pre-requisites have ripened for the social transformation of society. But precisely as a result of the lagging behind of the subjective factor, the bourgeoisie have been given the possibility to continue to exist during a certain historical breathing space, manœuvring by means of Fascism.

If it had not been for this backwardness, would we be discussing the question of the threat of intervention in the fourteenth year of proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R.? The threat of intervention would have long been removed from the order of the day. If there had not been this historical backwardness, would we have had to put as at present the question of the threat of imperialist war? But actually these are at the present moment basic questions confronting us.

But the question is not one of historical backwardness; the question is much more concretely one of our basic defects which have been revealed during recent months, during the last year since the time of the extended Presidium of the E.C.C.I. in 1930.

History has afforded us three basic factors in the course of the foundation, development, and consolidation of the Communist International. The first factor was the World War. This was the primary watershed which produced a sharp division in the world Labour movement, dividing it into two camps. The second factor was the

proletarian revolutions: the revolutions in the U.S.S.R. and in Central Europe. With this the Communist movement grew and gathered strength. At the present moment, a third factor is coming forward—the world economic crisis—which is bound to play a most important rôle in the consolidation of the Communist movement. And here we have been shown to have been unprepared. This is an indisputable fact which it is not permissible for Bolsheviks to blur over. How is our backwardness expressed? Let us take, for example, February 25th, the Day of International Struggle against Unemployment. We know that this was not a day of great resounding successes for the Sections of the Communist International which had fixed this day at the Conference in Berlin. But did any of the representatives of the Parties attempt to analyse thoroughly all the defects in preparation for the International Day of Struggle against Unemployment? Comrades forgot about this and it ought to have been done.

Further, let us take our organisational backwardness. There have been scores of resolutions, hundreds of directives and speeches delivered at various plenums and commissions, a multitude of instructional letters, and yet we remain where we were. Is that a fact or is it not?

Let us take the trade union work of our Party members. What do we find? In France, there are elements of crisis—not of revolutionary crisis in the country, but elements of crisis in our trade union work. In the U.S.A. there are hardly as many organised in the trade unions as in the Communist Party. And this is in the epoch of the third period and in the epoch of the economic crisis. In Czecho-Slovakia, where the Party has undoubtedly achieved definite successes, there is to be observed stagnation in the trade union work. In Britain, this work is unutterably bad. Take, for example, our leadership in strikes. Of course, we have made achievements, but they are not proportional to the objectively favourable situation.

Similar results are found if we take our work in regard to war or our youth organisations, or the question of militant demonstrations in the streets. Of course there have been successes, no small successes, and of this I spoke in my report. But we have not gathered here now in order to speak about our successes; these successes do not correspond to the existing possibilities.

In the report of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., emphasis is laid on those mistakes which were committed by the Communist Parties in the question of accelerating the tempo of the revolutionary upsurge; viz., mechanisation of the revolutionary perspective and a mechanical formulation of the question of mass political strike and of the collapse of Social Democracy, etc. At the same time, our discussions have revealed in all obviousness another more serious danger—the tendency to prolong the period of revolutionary upsurge, the tendency to under-estimate the revolutionary per-

spectives. This is expressed in the fact that many Communists judge the present position of the Parties as if there had been no world economic crisis, as if there had not been a mounting wave of revolutionary upsurge, as if history had given us much larger historical periods for the fulfilment of our tasks. Consequently, their demands on themselves, their estimations, their criteria for measuring the success of the Communist Parties, their scales of measurement in general, are all extremely modest. Hence also their dissatisfaction with criticism. It seems to them that they are presented with demands impossible of fulfilment.

### On the Revolutionary Crisis

Although the question of the backwardness of the Communist movement was to a certain extent passed over in the discussions on the Report, nevertheless, it found its indirect reflection in the discussion which developed on the question of the revolutionary crisis. How is it possible to term other than as backwardness such a formulation of the question of the revolutionary crisis which puts the latter in opposition to the political crisis and which attempts to establish some kind of preparatory stage before the revolutionary crisis in which there are present all the objective pre-requisites for revolutionary crisis but in which the subjective factor has not "ripened"? Is it not clear that such a formulation of the question is dictated by the present backwardness of the Communist movement?

We made no distinction in the Report between the political and the revolutionary crisis. For us these conceptions are identical; nevertheless, in the discussion a tendency was observable to confuse this question and to convert it into a purely scholastic dispute about words.

Let us recall, first of all, what Lenin wrote on the question of political crisis. Lenin characterised the most various situations by the term "political crisis." Thus, for example, he wrote about the "approaching political crisis" in 1911. He spoke of the ripening political crisis in 1913, about the political crisis that began with the first day of the World War.

Finally, Lenin and Stalin spoke about political crises already in the period when the revolution had begun, in 1917, about the first political crisis in the April days, about the second in the June days and the third in the July days.

But nowhere will you find Lenin or Stalin putting the political crisis in opposition to the revolutionary crisis. Comrades who have spoken here have said: give us a definition of political crisis. A strange demand. Is not this definition given in the Theses? I would request you to listen attentively to the definition given in the Theses of revolutionary or political crisis.

"Growing out of the general crisis of capitalism and of the present economic crisis, developing on the basis of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, these elements of the revolutionary crisis are linked up with the intensification of the extraordinary poverty and misery of the masses, with their growing revolutionary activity, with the break-up of the whole international and internal system of capitalist domination, with rapid re-grouping of class forces, with the crisis in the upper ranks of society seeking a way out of their contradictions by the road of Fascism, new imperialist wars and military intervention in the U.S.S.R." (Theses of the XI Plenum of the E.C.C.I., page 10, Modern Books.)

This is the definition of a revolutionary crisis. What is specific here? Reflect on each word. First of all, this crisis grows out of the *general crisis* of capitalism, i.e. out of the fact that the U.S.S.R. exists, that the Versailles system has created the pre-requisites for the decay of a number of capitalist States, that the centre of world economy has been shifted in the post-war period to countries overseas, that the Dominions are endeavouring to separate from the British Empire, that the economical colonial world has not been brought into the movement. Such are the basic features of the general crisis of capitalism, and they, of course, exert an influence on the development of the elements of revolutionary crisis. Are these elements economic or political? Of course, they are both the one and the other. They are included in a latent condition in the general crisis of capitalism. I lay stress on the fact that they are not in a final but in a latent condition. In the second place, the elements of revolutionary crisis grow out of the *present economic crisis*, giving rise to the millions of unemployed, the attack on the working class, the extraordinary sharpening of the class struggle, as well as to the extreme sharpening of all the consequences of the economic crisis. This is, so to say, a by-product in addition to the effect of the general economic crisis.

In the third place, our definition of revolutionary crisis is not separated by a Chinese wall from revolutionary upsurge. It develops on the basis of the revolutionary upsurge. Consequently, our definition is not scholastic; it embraces the dynamic revolutionary processes in all their entirety.

In the fourth place, our characterisation of revolutionary crisis includes the basic elements of the revolutionary situation. It is not that they are already apparent, but they are included for further development. This is something more than being in a latent condition, but it is still not a revolutionary situation. There is an extraordinary accentuation of the misery and poverty of the masses, there is revolutionary activity on the part of the masses, breaking out through the cracks which have been caused as a result of the crisis among the upper strata. We emphasise that popular dissatisfaction is bursting out through the cracks formed at the top, for we are not establishing a law of disproportion between the



objective and subjective factors. But, at the same time, our definition of revolutionary crisis is not identical with the proposition that the upper strata are not able to rule as of old, while the lower strata do not wish to live in the old way and the question of power becomes immediate, i.e. the proposition of a revolutionary situation which represents one of the highest forms of the revolutionary crisis. While we do not make the revolutionary crisis identical with the revolutionary situation, at the same time we do not separate them by a stone wall.

In the fifth place, our definition of revolutionary crisis is bound up with the shattering, not only of the internal system of capitalist domination, but also the *international* system. This is something new which we have introduced in the recognition of a revolutionary crisis. What is its significance? It signifies that we point to the difficulties at this moment confronting the revolutionary movement in China, India, Germany and Poland and that we signalise the obligations resting in this connection on the British, French, American and Japanese working class in relation to the revolutionary movement in China, India, Germany, Poland and Spain.

Is it correct to have done this? It is correct because the dependence of the ripening of the pre-requisites of revolutionary crisis in these countries on the whole international situation is obvious.

In the sixth place, our definition does not place Fascism in the position of a deciding factor of the revolutionary crisis but allocates it the modest rôle of one of the symptoms of the disorientation of the ruling classes and of their endeavour to find a way out of the position by suppression of the working class. Fascism is put within definite bounds. It was the more necessary to do this because there was much unclarity on the questions of the crisis among the upper strata, of Fascism and of the revolutionary crisis. We reject the identification of the revolutionary crisis with Fascism. The fact that the bourgeoisie is compelled to have recourse to Fascist methods of suppression of the movement of the toilers by no means signifies that the upper strata are not able to rule as of old. Fascism is not a new method of rule distinct from the whole system of bourgeois dictatorship. Whoever thinks that is a Liberal.

Finally, in the seventh place, our definition of a revolutionary crisis emphasises why we have spoken precisely in connection with the revolutionary crisis of the danger of new imperialist wars and of the danger of armed intervention against the U.S.S.R. Was this accidental? No, we emphasised, as connected with the sharpening of existing contradictions, the danger of imperialist wars, and particularly the great danger of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, in order to show the dialectical character of the process of growth and development of the revolutionary crisis. In so doing, we depict the revolutionary crisis, not as some kind of one-sided process only going on at the top, but we analyse it in the dialectical interaction of the extremely sharpening class struggle.

Thereby, we reject all schematic formulæ that the growth of the revolutionary crisis is connected only with the offensive of the proletariat, and we subject the question of the attack and defence of the classes to the concrete analysis of the relation of forces at each given stage of the class struggle.

Take the question of intervention against the U.S.S.R. Here it is stated that Fascism, viewed historically, is the defence of the bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution. But with the same justification it can be said that, viewed historically, intervention is also the defence of the bourgeoisie against victorious Socialism. But we would be committing a gross tactical error if we were to construct our tactical line on this thesis. Intervention against the U.S.S.R. is not the defence of the capitalist world from the U.S.S.R., but an attack on the first proletarian State in the world. This we must explain to the masses untiringly and every day in our agitation. Undoubtedly, this offensive of world capitalism against the U.S.S.R. in the circumstances of the ripening revolutionary crisis in a series of capitalist countries would grow into a general offensive of the world proletariat against world capitalism. But he would be making a mistake, who, proceeding from this perspective, formulated the question in the form that the bourgeoisie was defending itself by intervention because in the final historical analysis it is, as a class, on the defensive. This "defensive" bourgeoisie is proceeding not without success to an offensive against the working class and striking cruel blows against the latter, the class which in the final historical analysis is the attacking one.

It is essential further to emphasise another extremely important factor when marking out the revolutionary perspective. Very often in the analysis of elements of revolutionary crisis in a particular country we go astray because the revolutionary perspectives in the country are regarded exclusively in connection with the internal situation. Take such a country as Spain, or take the Central European countries. It would be incorrect if, for example, the perspectives of the German revolutionary movement were regarded solely from the angle of vision of the internal relation of class forces in Germany. Can the perspectives of the People's Revolution in Germany be viewed outside of the whole complicated international tangle and, in the first place, outside the question of the U.S.S.R.? Is it possible to imagine for a moment any big revolutionary movement in Central Europe which did not give rise to consequences in the form of a big international struggle?

The present time is not 1918-19, nor is it 1923. At the present time no single Communist Party can mark out the big perspectives before it while ignoring the U.S.S.R.

Thus, summarising the characterisation of revolutionary crisis in the Theses it must be recognised that this characterisation is complete and that it is hardly possible to add anything to it.

I pass now to the question whether it is possible to put the

political crisis in opposition to the revolutionary crisis as some kind of special stage. It is necessary here to note that the German comrades have quite correctly put the question in saying that the economic crisis leads to an extraordinary sharpening of the class struggle and to growing political convulsions, that it hastens the growth of revolutionary crisis. This is indisputable. The development of the consequences of the economic crisis must not be presented as being only in the economic sphere. The economic crisis gives rise to big political convulsions which also facilitate the ripening of political crisis. Some, however, are inclined to include in the conception of political crisis a situation of revolutionary upsurge which is characterised primarily and exclusively by an incipient disruption of the ruling classes in the absence of revolutionary activity on the part of the masses. Here, the political crisis is represented as an expression of the disproportion between objective and subjective factors of the revolutionary upsurge. Comrade Garlandi, in defence of this view, cited a portion from my speech at the Italian Commission in June-July 1930. How did the matter stand at this session of the Italian commission?

Comrade Ercoli, the reporter in this commission, spoke of the commencing political crisis in Italy. We were more modest, and put into doubt this assertion of Comrade Ercoli. This is what I said:

"Comrade Ercoli, in his report, characterised the present situation of Fascism as the beginning of a political crisis. It seems to me that, first of all, it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by the *beginning* of a political crisis of Fascism. Looking through some of the articles in the Italian Communist press, it can be established that there are indubitable exaggerations of the elements of disruption and crisis of Fascism. It will be more correct to say that in Italy we have the first signs of a commencing political crisis, so far still weak signs. And this is precisely as a result of the absence of our Communist Party as a political factor."

And further I put the question:

"What is the difference between the Mateotti crisis and the crisis now maturing? The Mateotti crisis was a crisis of the political superstructure, now the economic basis is being shaken and from this point of view the present crisis will have much deeper consequences in Italy than the Mateotti crisis had."

At the present moment, in March 1931, I consider this characterisation of the position in Italy one hundred per cent correct, because we were against playing with the conception of political crisis which did not exist in Italy in June 1930 and does not in March 1931. We pointed out that "the Mateotti crisis" did not ripen into a revolutionary crisis precisely because the Fascist dictatorship was not shaken in its economic foundations by it. And only for that reason. But where here is to be found any putting of the

political crisis in opposition as some sort of special stage preceding the revolutionary crisis? It does not exist and Comrade Garlandi's conclusion is gratuitous.

I think that one must agree with Comrade Thälmann, who declared in his speech that it is a question of the best terminology. Yesterday, in the Political Commission on the proposal of the German Delegation, we substituted the term "revolutionary crisis" for the term "political crisis." Why did we do that? We did so because we considered the view of the German comrades to be correct that the term "political crisis" has lost its force in our political language, being used to cover the most various conceptions, including a ministerial crisis. If it is a question of more accurate terminology, then we can without damage to the interests of the world revolution replace the term "political crisis" by the term "revolutionary crisis" in our Theses. For we cannot eradicate from our speeches and from our Press terms which are used for characterising the most various political situations.

But it is quite another matter when the question is transferred from the plane of terminology to the plane of discussion as to substance, when the political crisis is put in opposition to the revolutionary crisis as a lower stage of revolutionary upsurge in order to express the inequality in the development of the different elements of the revolutionary crisis. Here it is a question of the revolutionary dialectical method of Marxism which is obligatory for us in the analysis of revolutionary upsurge. We must not subject dynamic revolutionary processes to formulæ which fix a statistical situation of the movement. We must not cramp the dialectic of class struggle within invented schemes. What is the essence of our revolutionary, Bolshevik-Leninist method? As Marxist-Leninists, we are bound in each separate instance to analyse the concrete situation and alignment of class forces, taking into account the degree of disorientation of the ruling upper strata, the degree of dissatisfaction and militant activity of the masses, the degree of collapse of Social Democracy, this chief social support of bourgeois dictatorship, the strength, political influence and organised power over the masses of the Communist Party. Only under these conditions will we be in a position to mark out the correct tactical line and to alter it rapidly in moments of sharp turn occasioned in revolutionary periods by the extremely rapid alterations in the relationship of class forces, and not to remain behind the development of events, behind the rapidly-growing tempo of the mass movements.

And what is given concretely in the sense of such an analysis of the class alignment of forces by the empty term political crisis at such a stage of revolutionary upsurge where there is not yet present an insurrectionary situation? But the fact is that all situations right up to the beginning of the proletarian revolution or the bourgeois democratic revolution in the colonies are characterised by not yet

having present the elements of insurrection. Attempt to classify these situations according to the method of Lamarck or Buffon and you will get, not a process of revolutionary upsurge, but a sort of cinematographic film of different situations characterised by a different level and disorganisation of the ruling classes and by the degree of dissatisfaction and activity of the masses, influence of the Communist Party, etc. Attempt now to give an exact definition to the different stages of revolutionary upsurge expressed in these situations. We shall get an enormous stock of such definitions which will not by one iota help the world revolutionary party to get nearer to a correct valuation of the developing revolutionary process. We shall get a scheme and not a live dialectical process. Let us approach the question of the revolutionary crisis from the other end, as a crisis which is characterised by the presence of an insurrectionary situation. Is it possible to consider a so-called situation of insurrection as a criterion for the definition of a revolutionary crisis? Lenin spoke repeatedly about the insurrectionary situation and we have had to speak about it more than once, but Lenin in so doing always gave a concrete analysis of the situation.

Take India. Is there in India an insurrectionary situation or not? Who would take it upon himself to show that if the masses in India were in possession of arms, they, whatever is said in the Theses of the Communist International on this question, would not make an insurrectionary situation?

Or, take Indo-China. Is there an insurrectionary situation in Indo-China? In any case, risings are taking place there in various regions. Nevertheless, the movement in India has a wider all-national character than in Indo-China.

It is asked, which of these two colonies is nearer to the insurrectionary situation. The conception of an insurrectionary situation by itself does not yet serve to explain anything. It is a formula which has to be deciphered. But a misuse of this conception, without concrete analysis, would stupefy Communist analytical thought if Communists were satisfied with the use of this formula in place of a concrete analysis both of the relationship of forces and of the difficulties standing in the path of the ripening and the development of the revolutionary crisis in a number of capitalist countries.

If we put the question of the difficulties concretely in the separate countries, if we do not cut ourselves away from them by putting the formula of political crisis in opposition to the revolutionary crisis, then we will have to say that in Germany, for example, the basic hindrance to the revolutionary crisis is, in the first place, the fact that the mass basis of Social Democracy and of the reformist trade unions has still not been finally shattered, that the vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party—is still not sufficiently strong to win allies for itself, that these allies are still under the sway of Fascism although Communists have already constructed a definite barrier to the influence of the Fascists in Germany, that

the German revolution is threatened on its western borders by French imperialism, and that in Germany, the bourgeoisie has in the Reichswehr a class Fascist army, while the proletariat is still disarmed. All these circumstances hinder the development of the revolutionary crisis in Germany and hold back both the ripening of the elements already present and their growth into a revolutionary situation.

In the case of India, the retarding factor of the revolutionary crisis is represented by British imperialism which is still unshaken by the British working class, and, further, by the circumstance that the proletariat has still not formed itself and won consciousness as a class, that the national reformist movement draws with it considerable strata of the proletariat, and, finally, in India the development of a revolutionary crisis into a revolutionary situation has been hindered by the absence of a Communist Party. Finally, in China the chief hindering factor is the united front of all the imperialist States in suppressing the revolutionary movement of the Chinese toiling masses. And it is desired to force all these varied factors, both of a subjective and of an objective character, hindering the ripening of the elements of the revolutionary crisis into a single general formula of the political crisis as a preliminary stage of revolutionary crisis!

Revolutionary processes are more complicated than formulæ and they refute those formulæ which are constructed not on an analysis of the relation of class forces but on schemes prepared to suit all occasions. The opposition of the political to the revolutionary crisis, as a special stage, is unsuitable because this contrast can lead to definite deviations of a "Left" character and to "right" errors. If we were to adopt the point of view that in Germany the political crisis was a stage already passed through, that we had entered there on the phase of a revolutionary crisis, then that would signify that we were passing extremely rapidly through all the stages. This extremely rapid and hurried change and replacement of stages is fraught also with tactical errors. If, for example, in Germany we were to adopt such a point of view, we would also very quickly alter the tasks set by us. That would be a tactic of jumping over extremely complicated tasks, and not a determined struggle for their successful fulfilment.

But this contrasting of the political revolutionary crisis is also fraught with mistakes of a Right order. The setting-up of the political crisis as some sort of special stage preceding the "real" revolutionary crisis, implies that there is thereby sanctioned so-called "transitional periods" in the Brandler sense of the words, with such transitional slogans as control over production. We remember what Bolshevik work had to be done by the German Communist Party in opposition to this theory of stages. And now it is desired to force this theory of stages on us from the other end. The putting of the political crisis in opposition to the revolutionary



crisis is further dangerous in that it almost converts into a sociological law the lagging of the world revolutionary movement behind the favourable objective situation. Do we want, in one of the basic documents of the Communist International, to introduce this division of the revolutionary upsurge into stages of the political and revolutionary crisis, perpetuating what it is possible to hope has only temporary, passing significance? Practically, the introduction into currency of the conception of political crisis as a special kind of crisis of the upper strata would signify only that the Communist Parties will take cover in the trenches of the political crisis, in order to justify their backwardness. If the Parties, we may suppose, do not answer the offensive of capital by the mobilisation of the proletarian forces for counter-attack, if they do not offer resistance to the onslaughts of Fascism, they will always have the possibility of explaining it by the fact that in their country there was only so far a political crisis and not a revolutionary crisis.

### Fascism

The danger of putting in contrast the political and revolutionary crisis consists in the fact that it makes the whole question of the political crisis amount in essence to the question of Fascism. If Fascism is growing, it means the beginning of the break-up of the ruling classes, it means the presence of elements of political crisis. It would mean the cultivation of a special kind of mechanical theory of revolution as a sort of objective process in which it only remains for us to sweep away the dust and plaster of the crumbling edifice of capitalism already struck down under the blows of the objective factors. In such a formulation of the question, Communist tasks would be exceedingly simplified, the fulfilment of these tasks would be almost a simple march forward. To overcome Fascism would be sheer child's play. It would decay of itself, it would break down radically. The petty bourgeoisie is already disillusioned with Fascism and is going away from it. The old man Guesde, when he was still a Marxist, declared that war was the mother of revolution, but it does not follow from that that Fascism is the father of revolution. Fascism is not only an expression of the crisis of capitalism and of an incipient break-up of the ruling classes. To say merely this is still not to say everything. Fascism is one of the forms of the attack of capitalism containing elements for the overcoming of the crisis by the methods of getting out along capitalist lines. Fascism is both an attack and a defence on the part of capitalism.

Comrade Remmele, polemising with the rights on the question of attack and defence of the working class, pointed out how the defence of the working class is dialectically converted into counter-attack. And what Comrade Remmele said is also correct if we

apply this dialectic in regard to Fascism. It is only necessary to put concretely in a little more detail for the different countries what Comrade Remmele said.

What do we actually find? On one sector of the front we have an offensive of the proletariat—this is the U.S.S.R. On other sectors we have an offensive of capital and a counter-attack of the proletariat—in Germany first of all, and in France, Poland and Britain—but here it is essential to analyse in detail each separate case, not limiting ourselves to a mere laying down of the general thesis of the conversation of defence into a counter-attack on the part of the proletariat.

Finally, in a third series of countries we have an attack of capital with very weak resistance on the part of the working class, as in Yugoslavia and Italy. It is possible to speak seriously of counter-attack only if it actually exists. What is the use of announcing a world counter-attack at a time when the proletariat is still not sufficiently stirred up for the struggle? This does not produce any kind of counter-attack.

How is the present offensive of capital distinguished from its usual attack? Primarily by the fact that capital has become not stronger but weaker, and that its positions have been not consolidated but disrupted. In the second place, by the fact that this offensive of capital is proceeding alongside of the growth of Fascism, bearing witness to the commencing disorientation inside the ruling classes. But the growth of Fascism by itself does not still mean the strengthening of the positions of capitalism. When machine-guns are being employed in the streets, the ruling power does not thereby feel itself firmer and more tranquil. This is by no means a proof of the strength of the régime.

But capitalism attacks precisely in order to strengthen its positions, in order to become stronger, in order to break the counter-offensive of the proletariat along the whole line—both economic and political. The attack of capitalism includes elements of defence from the revolution but at the same time it includes also elements of offensive. It is true that a higher stage of the revolutionary struggle of the masses gives rise also to a higher stage of the counter-revolutionary defence of capitalism. But the parallel is not always absolutely binding under all circumstances. Precisely because one class passes rapidly to new forms of struggle, it catches its opponent unawares and thereby gets its blow home. Thus it always was in history. In October 1905, by going over to the new form of struggle of the general strike, we were able to catch Tsarism unawares, but the latter was already prepared in December of the same year. It will be more difficult for the proletariat in capitalist countries to carry through the proletarian revolution because the bourgeoisie has already learnt the experience of October.

And our tactical task consists altogether, not in merely declaring the objective parallelism of the forms of revolution and counter-

revolution, but in bending this parallelism to our advantage by a tactic of unexpected blows. The one who proceeds by a tactic of unexpected blows will beat his opponent. Consequently, to see where danger lies, not to be diverted, not to lose one's head under the influence of success, to estimate soberly one's own strength and the strength of the enemy, to be able to judge correctly, neither under-estimating nor over-estimating one's success, not to under-estimate or over-estimate the forces of one's opponents—these constitute the first essential obligation for Communists. Merely by tactically proclaiming a general counter-attack when blows are being delivered against us, and in a number of places very serious blows, while we retreat—from this no sort of counter-attack can be produced.

It is said that the bourgeoisie finds itself historically in a defensive position. But on this fact there cannot be built up to-day a theory of general offensive. In Germany to-day, the bourgeoisie is attempting to drive the Communists underground, in other countries the Communists are being thrown into prison, they are being shot and throttled, masses are being driven out of the factories, wages are being lowered, social insurance is being cut away. Are we to proclaim that all this is defence? Shall we console ourselves with the fact that we are the attacking side?

What is the result of all this in the sense of the tactical situation of the present day? Fascism in Germany, in the Hitler form, is maybe on the down grade, and, in fact, is already on the down-grade as a result of the activity of our Party. But the bourgeois dictatorship in Germany, which is taking on Fascist forms under Brüning and the Social Democracy, can even become strengthened if one can imagine the paradoxical situation arising of the German proletariat being lulled by its victory over the Hitler form of the Fascist movement. If that were to take place it would signify that the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of the Brüning Government would obtain the possibility of delivering an unexpected blow against the German proletariat. The German Communist Party, however, understands this danger and it is mobilising the masses in order to ward off this blow.

The mistake of the Rights in their estimate of Fascism consists in that they see in Fascism only an ordinary attack of capitalism, only a strengthening of Fascist reaction, and a strengthening of Fascist reaction they take as a strengthening of the position of capitalism. Hence, the conclusion that the working class has become weaker, that it must retreat, that it is impossible to strike during the period of crisis, that it is necessary to come to an agreement with Fascism in order to avoid civil war, i.e., in other words, the justification of the whole treacherous tactic of Social Democracy.

Another kind of mistake is theoretically conceivable—the “ Left ” mistake. This position amounts to seeing in Fascism only a product of the disintegration of capitalism. The Fascist movement is a

peculiar kind of objective “ ally ” of the Communists which shatters the stability of the capitalist system and undermines the mass basis of Social Democracy from the other end to the Communists. If Communists were to take up this position they would be ignoring the very important circumstance that Fascism represents a form of the attack of capitalism. They would be calculating that the phenomenon of Fascism testifies only to the fact that capitalism was becoming weaker and the proletariat stronger. They would be ascribing to Fascism an exclusively revolutionising rôle. Hence, the conclusion would follow that the advent of Fascism was almost desirable; the worse the better. The growth of Fascism, they would say, prepares the victory of Communism.

Such a form of the formulation of the question of Fascism would lead to passivity in the struggle against Fascism. Of course, such an approach on the part of Communists does not and cannot exist. The Fascist movement, in fact, is one of the forms of the offensive of capitalism in the circumstances of the general crisis of capitalism and of the commencing disintegration of the ruling classes. It is this which makes of Fascism a special unusual form of capitalist decay.

Fascism reflected the dialectical contradiction of social development. In it are contained both elements—both the attack of the ruling classes and their disintegration. In other words, the Fascist development can lead both to the victory of the proletariat and to its defeat. The question is decided here by the subjective factor, i.e. the class struggle of the proletariat. If the working class conducts an active struggle against Fascism, then the more rapidly will the elements of decay develop in the latter. If the proletariat retreats without struggle, as, for example, in Italy in 1920, the more strongly will stand out the features in Fascism of attack against the working class. The first path leads to victory over the Fascist dictatorship, the second to the defeat of the proletariat.

Comrade Thälmann mentioned the case of Lieutenant Scheringer, a very interesting case. Undoubtedly this is a sign of the commencing differentiation in the Fascist movement. But why has this process begun in Germany and not in Austria or Italy? Because over a period of months our strong Communist Party in Germany has conducted an offensive struggle against Fascism. Thereby it has shown the strength of the proletariat. To win allies to the side of the proletariat is only possible by means of class struggles, by demonstration of the strength of the proletariat and of its vanguard—the Communist Party. The petty bourgeoisie is accustomed to show respect for strength. Thus, for example, when the members of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress toured the U.S.S.R. they showed respect for the strength of the Government of proletarian dictatorship. When the petty bourgeoisie loses its faith in the strength of capital it becomes impressed by the strength of the proletariat.

The Bolsheviks have always been at issue with the Mensheviks on the point that the Bolsheviks considered that it was possible to impel the intermediate classes on the path of revolution only through the revolutionary activity of the proletariat, and not by making agreements with them and treating with them on their level. It is true the appearance and even the temporary growth of the Fascist movement does not signify the defeat of the proletariat, but the establishment of Fascist dictatorship, expressing itself in the driving of the Communist Party underground, in the forcible suppression of the class struggle of the proletariat, in the conversion of the trade unions into organs of the capitalist State of the same character as the police, prisons and barracks, alongside of inadequate resistance from the proletariat, signifies the temporary defeat of the proletariat. It will not be defeat of the proletariat if the working class fights for every one of its positions, even if under the onslaught of the superior forces of its opponent it has to turn aside from the struggle. We do not give any guarantee even in the moment of revolutionary crisis that we will not have to return again and again to the struggle. We retreated temporarily in July, 1917. But it would be incorrect to believe that it was only possible to check the advance of Fascist dictatorship by the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian revolution is the sole means for the overthrow of bourgeois dictatorship as a whole, independent of the form it takes on. We cannot say with certainty that we can, by struggle, hinder the establishment of Fascist dictatorship at all times and under all conditions. But what we can say with certainty is, that by struggle we can hinder the execution of Fascist dictatorship. It is possible to hinder the growth of Fascist reaction, and that means also to hinder the carrying through of the bourgeois Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship, by means of the everyday struggle of the proletariat—economic, political, etc. For example, we hinder the attack of capital in the economic sphere by our counter-attack. And thereby we distinguish ourselves from the reformists and Brandlerists who assert that during a period of crisis, strikes are impossible, that late strikes are destined to failure beforehand.

Would it not be the same opportunist fatalism if we were to connect the breaking of the carrying through of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship solely with the proletarian revolution? It would mean that partial struggles of the proletariat against the introduction of Fascist dictatorship by the Government would be hopeless, that they would bring with them no changes in the relationship of class forces. But in that case how would that position be distinguished from the position of Brandler? It is not only possible to hinder the carrying through of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship by partial struggles, but also successfully to struggle against the establishment of Fascist dictatorship, as, for example, in Italy or in Yugoslavia.

We do not say to the Italian or Yugoslavian comrades that they

must turn to the last decisive battle, but we do criticise such a fatalistic formulation which arises among some of them owing to the very difficult conditions of their struggle. The partial struggles of the proletariat will not overthrow bourgeois dictatorship, but they disorganise it and prepare its fall under the blows of the proletarian revolution which unites these partial fights into a mighty movement of the whole working class and all the toilers. Partial fights, becoming ever more frequent and more extended in their scope without losing the revolutionary perspective, can cause the bourgeoisie to retreat under the attack of the proletariat, can weaken temporarily the Fascist régime and cause the bourgeoisie to make a series of concessions to the oppressed classes in the hope of saving the régime of bourgeois dictatorship. The Matteotti crisis, for instance, in Italy hardly created such a position.

It would also be untrue to think that the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship is the last "political superstructure," and that its destruction, i.e. the destruction of this political superstructure of capitalism, is possible only with the destruction of capitalism as a whole.

In Spain, we have seen also other paths of the dissolution of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. It is as impossible to establish such a law as it is to assert that everywhere capitalism, before it is destroyed by the proletarian revolution, must pass through the stage of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship. This, again, would be equivalent to a mechanical formulation of the dialectical processes of the social development.

In the Programme Commission of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International there were those who defended this point of view. According to this scheme, Fascism is a sort of historical inevitability which the proletariat cannot prevent by its fighting actions, an historical inevitability like monopoly capitalism, the imperialist phase of capitalism, etc.

But, in the first place, even the monopolist phase of capitalism and the imperialist stage are not obligatory categories. Lenin repeatedly pointed out that this was a fatalistic formulation pregnant with the same dangers which, in the past prior to the war, led some of the German Social Democrats, extreme radicals like Paul Lensch, into the camp of the ideologues of ultra-imperialism. Lenin repeatedly fought against such fatalistic formulations. It is sufficient to refer to his struggle against Bukharin, Radek and Piatakoff in the national question, i.e. against comrades who, proceeding from a fatalistic view of imperialism and schematising imperialist development, denied the possibility of national self-determination in the epoch of imperialism. The processes of the growing over of bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy into bourgeois dictatorship in the form of Fascism are unequal processes, especially on an international scale, and it would be great pessimism to believe that the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship will become the



world political superstructure of capitalism before the proletariat revolution is able to put an end to capitalism as a whole. But it is just this theory which gives rise to the belief that only the proletarian revolution can hinder the growth of Fascist reaction. If we were to formulate the question in this way, we would set before the Communist Parties a demand the fulfilment of which would depend not only on their strength but on the association of a whole series of objective factors, both internal and international.

It is impossible to demand from any Party in the Communist International that it must arrest the development of Fascism under any circumstances by the proletarian revolution. We did not demand, for example, from the Finnish comrades that there should be a revolution in answer to the Lapuan *coup d'état*. What we did demand from the Finnish Communists was active struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship, considering that thereby they could and would hinder the establishment in Finland of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship. What, for example, can all sections of the Communist International demand from the German comrades in the present situation in order to hinder the establishment of Fascist dictatorship and to prepare the People's Revolution in Germany? To hinder the attack of capital against the working class, to hinder the driving of the Communist Party underground, to gain strength in the factories, independently to lead the class struggles, to strengthen and develop the independent trade union movement, to break down the mass basis of Social Democracy, to develop mass political strikes in the struggle against bourgeois dictatorship—the fulfilment of these tasks can be demanded by the Sections of the Communist International from the German Communist Party, and the latter is already now doing this.

### Social Fascism and the Theory of "The Lesser Evil"

What is it that expresses concretely our backwardness in the question of Fascism? Firstly, in view of the narrowing economic basis of reformism and decreased manoeuvring possibilities of capital in economic spheres, we, by our passivity, allow the bourgeoisie to manoeuvre on such questions as parliamentarism, the Young Plan, the Versailles question, Protection, etc. Secondly, our backwardness in the question of Fascism is expressed by the fact that we allow Social Democracy to manoeuvre on the question of forms of bourgeois dictatorship. *And this is now its chief manoeuvre of a whole historic period.* Social Democracy endeavours to divert the masses from the main questions of the class struggle, and turn their attention to arguments as to the forms which their exploitation should take—to questions such as, which is the better form of bourgeois dictatorship: parliamentary or extra-parliamentary? The theory of the co-called "lesser evil" is at the moment the chief channel for the parlia-

mentary illusions of the masses. Social Democracy will manoeuvre—not only to-day and to-morrow, but during a whole period, during a considerable time—on the question of its seeming struggle with Fascism, blurring by all methods the basic fact that Fascism and Social Fascism are two aspects of one and the same social bulwark of bourgeois dictatorship. To shatter these illusions of the masses—this it is which will assure the disruption of the mass basis of Social Democracy inside the working class.

How is it possible to shatter these illusions on this fundamental question? On the basis of the day-to-day economic and political struggle against the capital. Herein lies now the basic link for our struggle against Social Democracy for influence over the masses.

Mistakes in our midst that occur in the direction of opposing in principle Fascism to bourgeois democracy, or the Hitler Party to Social Democracy, impel the Communists objectively into the camp of people of the type of the Italian liberal Nitti, and constitute the most pernicious and destructive mistakes for the Communist movement. At the moment this represents our chief danger.

It is necessary to say directly that the fact that we incessantly employ the word "Fascism," opposing Fascism to bourgeois dictatorship as some sort of "thing in itself," not embodying in it a concrete historical class content, shows that comrades who fully support the line of the Communist International have not completely freed themselves from the liberal influence of the rubbish which is deliberately put out by Social Democracy on the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship in order to deceive the broad masses. We are all a little subject to the influence of this ideology, traces of which have even made themselves apparent in some speeches at the Plenum.

Further, our younger and even some of our more experienced experts endeavour to search out literally with a microscope the minutest details distinguishing the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship from bourgeois dictatorship of a so-called "normal" type, and in these meticulous searches attempt to find an all-embracing definition of Fascism.

Comrades, what is the use of this? It is as if the Marxist-Leninist definitions of bourgeois dictatorship have already become out of date and do not apply to the Fascist forms of bourgeois dictatorship. In all these theoretical labours which only confuse the question, the worst of all is that they conceal the putting of Fascism as a "new type" of bourgeois rule in opposition to the old democratic type of this rule. Nevertheless, the whole intensification of the class struggle testifies that the difference in the methods of class domination between so-called bourgeois democracy and Fascism will become ever more blurred and already are becoming blurred in practice. Let, for example, anyone attempt to prove that the policy of German Social Democracy in regard to the country constructing Socialism—the U.S.S.R.—is "progressive" and better than the policy of Italian Fascism.

The Social Democrats, in order to deceive the masses, deliberately proclaim that the chief enemy of the working class is Fascism, in order thereby to divert attention from the question of the struggle against the dictatorship of capitalism in general, to idealise the democratic forms of the latter and to create among the workers the impression that they must struggle for the "democratic" forms of their exploitation and against the Fascist forms.

Our first task in the matter of struggle against the parliamentary illusions of the masses consists in exposing this manoeuvre. Communists must, above all, get clearness among themselves on this question. The chief enemy of the working class always has been, is, and will be the bourgeoisie. There is no point in our inventing new formulæ. In the bourgeois democracies undergoing fascisation, in the Fascist States, everywhere at all stages of the fascisation of the capitalist States, the chief enemy of the working class is the dictatorship of capital independently of whether it assumes a democratic or Fascist form. This means that in such countries as France, Communists must not permit Social Democracy to deceive the masses with the spectre of a future Fascism while submitting in essence to-day to the dictatorship of capital. It means that in Germany the chief enemy to-day is the Brüning Government, supported by Social Democracy, a Government for the carrying through of Fascist dictatorship, embodying to-day the whole yoke of the bourgeois dictatorship in regard to the working class.

And depending on which wing the bourgeoisie will rely in the struggle against the proletariat, the Communist Party will also determine the chief direction for its attack. That in Germany it is necessary to direct the blow against bourgeois dictatorship in the form of the Brüning Government is best of all demonstrated by the recent speech of Wirt, which revealed the plans for throttling the German working class under the dictatorship of capital with the support of Social Democracy and the Hitler Party. The Brüning Government at the moment represents the chief enemy also, because the coming to power of Hitler is meeting with greater and greater resistance under the influence of the commencing differentiation inside the Hitler movement, and the recent alterations in the international situation which at this moment put an end to the hopes of the Hitlerites for the support of the U.S.A. and Great Britain in the matter of the revision of the Young Plan and the Versailles Treaty.

Precisely such a formulation of the question best of all permits us to expose the theory of "the lesser evil." Precisely in that the Communists in Germany struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship as their chief enemy, personified to-day by the Brüning Government, they are exposing the manoeuvre of Social Democracy which represents the Brüning Government as "the lesser evil" in comparison to Fascism of the Hitler type. Is it not true that the whole theory of the "lesser evil" rests on the presupposition that Fascism of the Hitler type represents the chief enemy? And starting with

this supposition it is impossible to prove to the workers that the Brüning Government is not the lesser evil without completely and entirely identifying the Brüning Government with a possible Hitler Government. But we do not identify Brüning with Hitler or Social Fascism, supporting Brüning, with Hitler Fascism.

In order to refute the story of "the lesser evil," Communists must explain to the masses that the whole system of bourgeois dictatorship is constructed on the utilisation in the struggle with the working class of both so-called bourgeois democracy and Fascism. This is clearly stated in the Programme of the Communist International:

"Adapting itself to the alterations of the political situation, the bourgeoisie employs both the method of Fascism and the method of coalition with Social Democracy . . . in order to hinder the advancing course of the Revolution."

It is impossible to separate these two methods of rule from the whole system of bourgeois dictatorship. The presence of these two methods allows the bourgeoisie to manoeuvre during the course of a series of years. Lenin says somewhere:

"If the tactic of the bourgeoisie is always of one type, or even if it is always of one nature, the working class would quickly learn to answer it with a tactic similarly of one type or one nature. In point of fact, the bourgeoisie in all countries works out two systems of governing, two methods of struggle for its interests and for the perpetuation of its rule, in doing which it replaces from time to time these two methods by one another and sometimes it interweaves them in different combinations."

Comrade Stalin puts the question in the same way:

"Fascism is a militant organisation of the bourgeoisie resting on the active support of Social Democracy. Social Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of Fascism. There is no basis for supposing that the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie could achieve decisive successes in its struggles or in its administration of the country without the active support of Social Democracy."

"There is equally little basis for supposing that Social Democracy could achieve decisive successes in its struggles or the administration of the country without the active support of the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie. These organisations do not negative, but supplement one another."

The utilisation of these two methods allows the bourgeoisie to fasten ever more strongly the fetters of bondage over the masses, speculating on their fear of the "Right" and at the same time assisting Social Democracy to come forward in the character of the champion of "democracy." This game is not a new one; it represents the continuation of the traditional policy of the bourgeois dictatorship which in the past, in accordance with concrete conditions, pushed to the fore, now its Conservative and now its Liberal wing, and thereby drew the masses away from the class struggle.

The political game with Fascism and Social Fascism gives the bourgeoisie the possibility of turning the dissatisfaction of the masses into the channel of struggle over such questions as for parliament or against parliament, for Hitler or for Wels, for the Constitution or against the Constitution. The bourgeoisie exhibits a similar manoeuvring with its two brigades—Fascism and Social Fascism—also in the questions of foreign policy, the Young Plan, the Versailles Treaty, Peace Questions, Protection, etc.

The German bourgeoisie, for example, using Hitler at the present moment against French imperialism, pushes forward its second brigade in the shape of German Social Democracy as a "fighter" for peace, for the fulfilment of the reparation obligations, for the policy of agreement with "democratic France." It has also in reserve its other brigade. At the first symptoms of a greater sharpening of the antagonisms between the U.S.A., Great Britain and Italy, on the one side, and France on the other side, German capital will push forward its other wing, for the time being kept in reserve, its Fascist wing for the execution of a policy of *revanche*.

The most far-sighted and understanding of the bourgeoisie in Great Britain are very well aware that no kind of protectionist programme of Rothermere, Beaverbrook or Mosley will assure Britain its former world hegemony. But they know that by putting Snowden in opposition to Mosley it is possible to fool the toiling masses in Britain, and to draw them into its policy of strengthening the bourgeois dictatorship. Communists will be able successfully to struggle against the prejudices of the theory of the "lesser evil" among the masses, not by including all phenomena—both protectionism and free trade and the policy of *revanche*, and the policy of capitulation before French imperialism, and parliamentary and anti-parliamentarism—under the single fashionable word, Fascism, but by concretely showing the masses the exploiting character and deception of the whole bourgeois system irrespective of the forms of methods of its oppression of the workers.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WAY OUT OF THE CRISIS AND THE BASIC TASKS OF THE SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The weakness of the Communist International consists in the fact that we have not made the struggle against the theory of the "lesser evil" in all its many forms the central key-task, that we have not supervised the propaganda and agitation of the Sections of the Communist International on this question, that we have not collected extensive material on the mistakes let pass by the Sections of the Communist International, and that we have not utilised the Plenum in order concretely to correct these mistakes.

It will be indispensable to make good this lapse after the Plenum

of the E.C.C.I. In this most serious and responsible work there is necessary, least of all general schemes and formulæ learnt by heart about Fascism, but rather a concrete approach to the conditions in this country to the position of the different classes, the degree of sharpening of the class struggle, a careful analysis of the programmes for the capitalist way out of the crisis of the different political parties of bourgeois dictatorship, and so on. Communists will not be able to win the masses by ignoring the basic slogans of the class enemy, putting in opposition to them our absolutely correct but extremely general propositions repeated from year to year, but by filling with living concrete content our slogans of the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Can, for example, the British Communist Party, in spite of its small numbers, leave out of account the protectionist movement in Britain which has a hold over many workers? Or can the American Communist Party neglect the programme of the way out of the crisis of the American bourgeoisie?

Can, for example, the Czech, Polish, British and French comrades, in the face of the rising imperialist struggle in their countries against the Austro-German Customs Union, repeat merely what the German and Austrian comrades have said who have declared, entirely correctly, that only the proletarian revolution can decide the question of the union of the German populations of Austria and Germany in the interests of the toiling masses? Is it not clear that the weight of the agitation of these sections in their relation to the Austro-German Customs Union must be transferred to the most merciless struggle against the imperialist leadership of their own bourgeoisie? Communists in the victor countries would be making a mistake if instead of a struggle against their own bourgeoisie in the interests of the "general" declarations with the German comrades they were to repeat in other words and expressions the statements of the German comrades, determined for the latter by their revolutionary struggle against the German bourgeoisie. The German comrades are struggling against their own imperialism which is raising its head, but the French, British, Polish, Czech, Italian and other comrades must struggle against the imperialist control of their own Governments which are endeavouring to perpetuate the yoke of the Versailles Treaty.

If we really in all seriousness put before ourselves the task of converting the Communist Parties from agitational and propaganda bodies into mass Parties of the working class, leading the struggles of the latter, then we must reorientate all the Sections, first of all, in the direction of becoming the revolutionary active factor of the whole political life in their country. This does not mean that they should occupy themselves with "high politics," ignoring the day-to-day work for the organisation of the masses. It does not mean that the Communists must adapt their agitational work to those questions which the bourgeoisie is making a fuss about



at the particular moment in their class interests. But it does mean that the Communist Parties must give answers to the masses on all the living questions of the class struggle, not stereotyped answers, repetitions of one and the same formula, but answers inspired by our basic propositions, and made accessible to the understanding of the masses, by being permeated and enriched by the facts and experiences of their struggle.

It must be said openly that our propaganda and agitation for a revolutionary way out of the crisis is of an extremely abstract character. Like much else in our practice, this revolutionary way out of the crisis threatens to be converted to a formula which finds no response in the mind or heart of the working class. Is it accidental that all the comrades of the different Sections who have spoken here, with the exception of the German comrades, have neglected to concretise in their speeches the slogan of the revolutionary way out of the crisis in its application to their special national conditions? This question stands on a completely different footing, for example, in Poland and Great Britain. In Britain it has at present rather a propagandist significance; in France it stands differently to Germany where the pre-requisites of revolutionary crisis are present. We can only indicate the basic factors from which should proceed our agitation for a revolutionary way out of the crisis. We can only summarise the experience of the different sections available in this regard.

In the first place, there is the experience of the U.S.S.R. It is no accident that it appears as the backbone of all our theses. The Sections of the Communist International find themselves now in a much more favourable situation than the Russian Bolsheviks during the war period because they can rely in their agitation for a revolutionary way out of the crisis on the experience of the world historical significance of the U.S.S.R.

In the second place, there is the experience of the Communist Party of Germany embodied in its programme of social and national emancipation, in its struggle for peace, as well as in the concretisation of its chief strategical slogan of the "People's Revolution."

It may be remarked in passing that some comrades have raised doubts on the question of the slogan of the "People's Revolution." Is it worth while, they say, to replace our old, clear slogan of the proletarian revolution by a new term taken from the epoch of the revolution of 1848?

But, firstly, the German comrades have not replaced the slogan of proletarian revolution by the slogan of "People's Revolution." They never abolished the old Bolshevik slogans. The slogan of "People's Revolution" in their documents, in their daily education, is synonymous with proletarian revolution; it signifies in the given concrete conditions in Germany, where tremendous class advances are taking place, that the C.P. of Germany, although it has not yet won the majority of the working class, has already

become the Party of millions of oppressed and exploited toiling masses in Germany.

Comrade Thälmann was correct when he pointed out in his speech that the task of winning allies to the side of the proletariat must not be put in opposition to the task of winning the majority of the working class. These tasks are connected with one another in the closest fashion. The closer the Communist Party approaches to winning the majority of the working class, the greater will grow its strength and influence over the other non-proletarian strata of the population.

But does that mean, comrades, that we must already do away in Germany with the slogan of the winning over of the majority of the working class? By no means. The winning of the majority of the working class remains the basic strategical task of the Communist Party of Germany, for we have still not won the majority of the working class in Germany. The recent elections to the factory committees are sufficient evidence of this. In a number of cases all other Parties lost, and only the Communist Party gained. But there were places, as for example in the Ruhr, where all Parties lost, and our Party as well, though proportionately less.

The third element in the formulation of the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis is the analysis of the concrete situation created by the crisis in each separate country, a critical examination of the paths proposed by the bourgeoisie and its parties in the search for a capitalist way out of the crisis. This means, for example, that in such a country as Austria, Communists must show to the masses that there is no salvation for decaying Austria within the limits of capitalism and the Versailles system. They must show that only through the Soviet system and Socialism, proposing the abolition of customs and State barriers, on the basis of the creation of the widest possible economic territory with division of labour between the different regions, and proposing, further, the abolition of any kind of national cliques and all forms of capitalist exploitation, that only in this way the Austrian toiling masses will raise themselves from the abyss of poverty and misery to the new upsurge of the intellectual and material forces of the German toiling masses.

It means, further, that the Communists in Britain must fearlessly raise the question before the working class of the liberation of the colonies and dominions through the proletarian revolution in Great Britain as a condition for the strengthening of the British working class itself, and as a condition for inspiring faith in the British proletariat and the new structure to be built by it on the part of millions of toilers of all races.

Only on the basis of such confidence, of a rapid rise in the material and cultural level of the colonial masses, of the victory of bourgeois democratic revolution and its growing over into Socialist revolution in the colonies, will Socialist Britain be able to make a gigantic step forward along the path of the further development of its productive

forces liquidating its long-standing unemployment and saving itself from a coming imperialist war, and from destruction in this war at the hands of American imperialism. Our Party can now go forward boldly in the name of all the toiling masses of Great Britain.

Finally, in the fourth place, it is necessary to link our agitation for a revolutionary way out of the crisis with the mobilisation of the masses round concrete tasks related to the immediate interests of the working class and the toiling masses, and, first and foremost, with unemployment. By the mobilisation of the masses around these immediate needs, Communists must also mark out the chief direction of their attack at the present moment.

In France, this chief direction now for the blows of the working class, especially in connection with the ripening of pre-requisites of revolutionary crisis in Germany, is the struggle against French imperialism, the most predatory, destructive and parasitic imperialism which appears as the leader in Europe in regard to struggle with the threat of the revolutionary movement. The privileged position of French imperialism (the spoliation of Germany, the suppression of the colonies, economic and financial domination over the vassal states of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Roumania, concentration of the biggest reserves of gold, second only to U.S.A.) deepens the enslavement of the French working class, and two million foreign workers with the aid of the purchase of the leaders of the labour aristocracy who, in the persons of the Socialist Party and the reformist leaders, support the imperialist policy of French capital.

We have severely criticised the French Party, but the French Communist Party finds itself in exceptionally difficult conditions, for French imperialism has converted into slaves not only two millions of foreign workers, the colonies and the German proletariat, but it converts thereby also into slaves the French proletariat. Without shaking the imperialism of its own country, the French proletariat will not facilitate its own liberation from capitalist slavery which is bound up with the most corrupt and decayed system of parliamentarism in the world, will not be able to maintain its standard of life and will not be able to hold back the political reaction which falls with all its weight on the working class and its organisations.

The working class will be able to develop the struggle against French imperialism, for defence of the U.S.S.R. and for the defence of the international proletariat, by means of economic and political struggles in the course of which the Communist Party must forge also powerful Red trade unions and convert itself organisationally into much more of a mass Party than it has been hitherto.

In Czecho-Slovakia, the chief direction of our blow lies in the mobilisation of the masses for struggle against the "Austrian" level of wages and against the rôle of Czecho-Slovakia as the chief reservoir of war equipment for the war against the U.S.S.R. The Czech war industry, the real master of which is French capitalism, an

industry which has grown up on the basis of the monstrously low living standards of the Czech proletariat and which strengthens the militarist yoke in Czecho-Slovakia, in its turn appears as one of the chief causes of the Austrian standard of wages in Czecho-Slovakia. Only in the process of developing mass struggles will the Communist Party be able to fulfil successfully its Party task at the present time, viz., the strengthening and extension of the Red trade unions.

In Great Britain, the path lies along struggle against the wage cuts undertaken by the "Labour" Government and the capitalists on the basis of mobilising the masses around the demands of the Workers' Charter and unreserved defence of the Indian revolution, the revolution of the workers and peasants.

In the U.S.A., the chief direction of our blow is for the break-up of the positions of American capitalism by means of mobilising the masses for struggle for the realisation of social insurance at the expense of the capitalists and the bourgeois State.

In the illegal parties, in the countries of White Terror, and first of all in Italy, our line is the organisation of demonstrations on the basis of defending the most elementary demands of the workers and peasants with the aim of breaking through the revolutionary attack of the masses, the framework of Fascist dictatorship.

In Spain, the direction of our attack lies along struggle for a Soviet Spain,<sup>1</sup> for democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, for the confiscation of the land of the landowners and for the seven-hour working day, under the condition of strengthening the Communist Party and the trade unions on the basis of their clear class delimitation from petty-bourgeois radicalism (the anarchists, republicans, Trotskists, etc.). In the countries of Latin-America, we have the modest task—to finish with *putsch* methods and to take up the class struggle and the struggle against foreign imperialism.

*All the exertions of the Communist Parties at the present moment must be concentrated on the overcoming of backwardness.*

Under this sign, and from this point of view, all the work in all the Communist Parties must be reviewed, checked and criticised from top to bottom. Every Party cell, every Party member, must, after this Plenum, take the most active part in this Bolshevik self-criticism; self-criticism not as a confession in order the next day to sin once again, but as a militant Party activity having the aim of improving the position, removing the defects and liquidating the weaknesses of our work.

At the present moment the whole revolutionary perspective is connected with the overcoming by the Communist Parties of their backwardness, as has been correctly pointed out by a number of comrades who have spoken here. We, revolutionary Bolsheviks,

<sup>1</sup>The present speech was made before the recent revolutionary events in Spain, when already the general slogan for Soviet Spain was shown to be insufficient and must be supplemented on the part of the Communist Party by the concrete slogan calling on the masses to create Soviets.

Communist-activists, are against mechanical perspectives which amount to a general judgment that capitalism has no way out, that the agrarian crisis is insoluble within the limits of capitalism, that a revolutionary crisis will inevitably grow out of the crisis of capitalism and that it is necessary to direct our course towards a "general national crisis" on a world scale. Such general prognoses are academic, they are like the speeches of a preacher about a life hereafter, for there is in them no element of concreteness, of actuality or of struggle.

Capitalism will never solve the contradictions between the expanding possibilities of the productive apparatus and the contracting markets, but it by no means follows from that that capitalism has already reached its last point or to such a hopeless position that already to-day its death is at hand. Capitalism has manoeuvred in the past and will still manoeuvre.

If along every line capitalism had been cut off from all respites and all temporary ways out, the task of the proletariat would have been very simple. Such kind of "general" perspectives are harmful, they are only capable of causing confusion, to deprive the proletarian masses of their fighting strength while the masses are having imposed on them all the difficulties of the struggle and inspiring them with fallacious hopes for an automatic collapse of the capitalist system.

We must come forward as Communist fighters against this "revolutionism" in order to prevent the sowing of illusions among the masses. We repudiate also the academic perspectives of the other kind which are bound up with the assertion that every cyclical crisis inevitably leads towards a revolution. This formulation was rejected by the Second Congress of the Communist International as purely schematic and not corresponding to historical actuality. It is sufficient to refer to the concrete example of the world crisis of 1873 in order to see that cyclical crises do not compulsorily lead to revolutionary outbreaks. Our revolutionary perspective must proceed from a concrete analysis of the position in each separate country and from an estimate of the unequal development of capitalism and the degree of sharpening of class contradictions in each country.

We believe that the consequence of the present cyclical crisis developing on the basis of the general crisis of capitalism will inevitably be a further breakdown of the capitalist system such as already began in October 1917.

But we cannot guarantee either the time or the extent of this breakdown; we can only mark out with a certain approximateness the weak points where this breakdown is most likely to be produced. What we can definitely know is that if capitalism is able to creep out of the present acute phase of the cyclical crisis, it will do so in a more shattered condition than after the World War of 1914-18.

The effects of the general crisis deepened by the cyclical crisis will be still more deleterious for capitalism. The "breathing space" which capitalism would obtain in this case would by no means put an end to the revolutionary upsurge. It is not to be excluded that it could hold back for a short period the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, for example, in Germany, but that it would hardly be able to hold it back in India and China, or even in Poland. However, what we have lost in regard to the effects of the cyclical crisis, we have compensated for and shall compensate for by the growing influence of the U.S.S.R. The latter is now a revolutionary factor of decisive significance.

At the same time, the revolutionary upsurge in the other capitalist countries would attain greater intensity in virtue of the fact that capitalism would attempt to maintain by all means the new level of existence and the level of political rights of the working class which the bourgeoisie is attempting to create for the proletariat under cover of the crisis. This inevitably leads to tremendous class conflicts and to still greater tension than exists at present. The danger with which we are confronted and which it is necessary to emphasise, in the case of this "breathing space" for capitalism, does not lie in the interruption of the revolutionary upsurge but in the failure of another order.

If Communists do not utilise the present crisis at least to shake the basic positions of capitalism and of the chief social bulwark of the latter—Social Democracy—the Communist Parties will be threatened with the danger of losing the confidence of the masses in them as an effective factor in the class struggle. Whoever underestimates this danger at the present moment is politically blind. The E.C.C.I. would not be fulfilling its elementary duty if it did not at this Plenum lay stress on this danger to the Communist Parties. This danger will only be removed from us in the case that the working class sees the Communists in the foremost posts of the class struggles during the present period. In fighting, we Communists will become a greater threat to the power of the capitalist world than during the period of the first wave of wars and revolutions; only in fighting will we put an end to the influence of the Social Democrats in the working class; in fighting we shall overcome the backwardness of the Communist Parties and draw near to the hour of the decisive victory of the proletariat.

Comrades, the historical period for the destruction of capitalism rests in your hands.



## XI PLENUM SERIES



*Other pamphlets in this series are :*

WAR PREPARATIONS AGAINST  
THE SOVIET UNION M. Cachin

DISCUSSIONS ON THE WAR  
DANGER

URGENT QUESTIONS FOR THE  
REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT  
O. Piatnitsky