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Chairman: Comrade Kolarov.

Contents:

Debate on Report by Comrade Zinoviev.

Speakers: Kolarov, Humbert-Droz, Michalkowsky, Murphy, Faure.

The President. I declare the Session open and call upon comrade Humbert-Droz to read some greetings which the Presidium consider important enough to be communicated to the Congress.

Humbert-Droz: The Presidium of the Congress has received nearly a thousand greetings from all parts of Russia and from all parts of the world. We cannot read all these greetings here. However, there are two which appear to be specially important to the Presidium: 1) the good wishes from the Soviet of Workers, Peasants and Red Soldiers of Vladivostock to the workers of the whole world:

The Soviet of Workers, Peasants and Red Soldiers to the Workers of the World.

Comrades! From the shores of the Pacific Ocean, where the Red Soviet Flag flies, we send you our proletarian greetings. Today, after four unhappy years of Japanese intervention and the excesses of the White Guards, the Soviet of Workers, Peasants and Red Soldiers, delivered from its enemies, has reassembled in the city of Vladivostock. The innumerable sacrifices of the Russian workers have not been in vain. After a bloody struggle, the Red Army has won the last piece of Russian territory which has hitherto been in the power of the emissaries of the Japanese militarists, the people of

Vladivostock greet their liberators with enthusiasm; with curses it has sped on their way the reactionaries in their cowardly flight. For the first time, a powerful Workers and Peasants' Army has paraded the streets of the Free City with their victorious banner. This triumphant procession has shown the power of the working class of Soviet Russia and of the whole world, a class united and invincible. The appearance of this orderly army in the city abandoned only a few hours previously by the interventionists, has given the workers the assurance that the time of trial is over. After the departure of the interventionists and the capture of Vladivostock by the Red Army, there is no longer need of the temporary government of the Republic of the Far East, which was created in 1920 in order to prevent a collision between Soviet Russia which was still comparatively weak, and the belligerent Japanese imperialists. Comrades! you know how, during these last two years, Soviet Russia has become strong; you know what successes it has gained in the international field. You have seen how the delegates of Soviet Russia have defended the interests of their Government at Genoa and at the Hague. You know the blows which Japanese schemes of annexation received at the conference of Dairan and Tchang-Thun. Soviet Russia has built up its strength thanks to the

unexampled enthusiasm, and by the exertion of the entire strength of the workers, her innumerable enemies have been defeated and her economic disorganisation repaired. The imperialist policy of Japan has been broken by the resistance of the Russian people, by the Japanese people themselves, and by the pressure of those great Powers which are interested in hindering the growth of Japanese influence. The liberation of the Primur provinces signifies the definite reunion of all the scattered regions of Russia. The Japanese proletariat has proved itself conscious of its task, and has shown its resolute will to reunite the whole of the Primur region, devastated by intervention and by the White bandits, with the homeland of the revolutionary workers of Vladivostok. On the 5th November, in all the unions of Vladivostok, the election took place of workers' delegates to the Soviet. The peasants and the Red Army also send their delegates. The great day arrived on which we realised the dreams of all the exploited, of the disinherited and oppressed. This is not merely a victory for the workers and peasants of the Pacific coast and the workers of Russia. It is a victory for the world proletariat. It is your victory, comrades, because from now on the Primur region will be an individual part of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the hearth of the world revolution. From now on the principles of the world revolution, the principles of the October Revolution, will shed their light upon the towns and villages of the Primur region which, during long years, were steeped in the gloom of reaction. Accept our greetings, comrades, in this moment of painful struggle which you are carrying on against the master classes of your respective countries. All the sympathies of the Vladivostok proletariat are with you. Ourselves but recently freed, with all our heart we desire your emancipation from capitalist exploitation. Deliverance is near, comrades: you have as proof the World Congress of the Communist International, now being held in Moscow, the Premier City of the Social Revolution; Comrades, the working class of the Pacific Coast has conquered, but it is not assured of peace, and of the

possibility of organising its social life and the economic development of the country, so long as foreign war vessels still lie off the shores of Vladivostok. The continuation of intervention in Russian waters gives to the White Guards the hope of striking another blow at the young proletarian Soviets of the Primur region. We await your word. We are certain that it will sound from your hearts in the form of protests addressed to your respective governments. To them you should say: "Hands off Soviet Russia."

The Chief Secretary of the Regional Bureau, Pehenitsine.

Witnessed: chief of Administration:

Asamov 55, November 9, 1922.

A telegram which has just arrived from Alexandria:

"Great meeting 7 November votes complete adhesion to International. Expresses wish for complete success of Congress and for triumph World Proletarian Cause. Central Committee Egyptian Socialist Party" (Applause).

The President: Written translations have been distributed and may be read.

Michalkovsky (Poland) — Comrade Zinoviev has praised the Polish Communist Party; but he did not spare criticism either. He praised us as old revolutionists who understood especially how to combine legal with illegal activity. The recent elections in Poland can serve as an example of how, in a country where Communists are persecuted Communism can beat for itself a path in the open political field. As soon as our comrades in the provinces learned from the newspapers that a Central Committee had been formed in Warsaw, automatically there arose in 45 or more districts, local electoral committees. These electoral committees had to gather signatures in order to secure permission to be established, and then later to make up the electoral lists. We do not yet know the results of the elections, the reports from many districts are still to come in; however, 100,000 men voted the communist ticket in the three districts of Dombrovaz, Warsaw, and Lodz. Our appearance at the elections was a surprise for both the bourgeoisie and the government, so that we could publish a

perfectly legal electoral appeal. But after a short time everything was prohibited and confiscated. Even our lists which only contained the number of our ticket, No. 5 were confiscated. Thus advantage was taken even of the faintest legal possibilities. At the meeting of the Enlarged Executive, there appeared three tendencies on this question. The first tendency agreed completely with the Executive on the question of the United Front; this group finally won the great majority at the conference. The second tendency agreed to the application of the United Front, but opposed an understanding with the leaders of other organisations. This group, however, joined the first. On the First of May our Party sent an open letter to the Socialist Party of Poland inviting them to formulate joint demands. This proposal, which was naturally rejected by the P. P. S. roused a great deal of interest in the United Front among the members of the Communist Party, those of the Socialist Party, as well as among the organised masses. In this way the masses learned the attitude of our Party, and became convinced that we stood for unity while the others were against it.

Besides these two groups, we had a third, which rejected the policy of the United Front in its entirety. The views of this party condemned it as a decided K.A.P. tendency. Comrade Zinoviev has correctly judged the situation when he said that our Party could rid itself of this group, and I think it would not be a difficult matter. This group defends opinions on the character and role of the Communist Party, on the use of parliamentary action, on the United Front, on the policy of Soviet Russia and the role of the Communist Party in Russia as both Governmental Party and leading organisation of the Communist International which are in direct contradiction to the views of the Party. In all these important questions this group, showed itself guilty of K. A. P. ism. However it is a very weak group, especially in ideas, and it should be an easy task to get rid of them. They are even more naive and poorer in ideas than the similar groups in Germany and other countries (a voice: "if this is possible"). Everything is possible in Poland where the petty bourge-

oisie is intellectually poorer than that of any other country.

Since the leader of this third group happens to be in Moscow, our delegation has decided to invite him to the Congress with a consultative vote and give him an opportunity to express publicly his views and those of his Party. I hope that Comrade Schreiber will express his views here at the Congress with the same courage as at our own Party Conference.

Then Comrade Zinoviev dealt with the Agrarian question. He termed the attitude of our party old-fashioned. This word is somewhat too sharp. We will come back to this question. I am no friend of old fashions. This question is now being discussed in the Polish Party. We are publishing a book on the matter, and besides this, it is being heatedly discussed in our Party Press. One thing I can say already, at our last Party Conference the party decided unanimously that revolution was possible only if the working class worked hand in hand with the landless population, and with the small peasants. This is very important for Poland, where the small peasant element forms the very great majority of the working population. Since our Party is already of the opinion that a practical political and economic ground must be found for joint revolutionary action of the working class and small peasantry, I believe that the chief task has already been achieved and a programme will easily be formulated.

I would like to speak a few words more on the slogan of the Workers' Government.

I would like to say that neither at the Party Conference nor in our party literature have we discussed the question, and that the party has reached no decision on the matter because this question is not a pressing one in Poland, nor do I believe that it will become pressing in the near future. I believe there has been too much philosophical speculation on the matter (very true, from the German benches). The criticism of this slogan is directed on three lines: the Workers' Government is either a Scheidemann Government—or a coalition government of the communists with the social traitors; it finds support either in Parliament or in the Factory Councils. It is either the expression of the dictatorship of the pro-

letariat—or it is not. I believe that philosophical speculation is out of place—for we have practical historical experience: what did the Bolsheviks do in 1917 before they conquered power? They demanded: "All Power to the Soviets". What did this mean at that time? It meant giving power to the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries who were in the majority in the Soviets. It meant at that time, a Workers' Government in which social traitors participated—and which was directed against the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. But this slogan was a good weapon of agitation in the hands of the Bolsheviks. We saw the same situation arise in Germany after the November Revolution. The Spartacists demanded "All Power to the Workers" and Soldiers' Councils!"; that is to the Scheidemanites and the Independents who were in the majority in the Soviets and opposed the dictatorship. That is again not a communist government. We have seen the same thing in Poland and in other countries where Workers' Soviets were created. This seems to me the essence of the question. Should the time come when Soviets will again be formed, when the workers again rush to arms, when a new revolutionary wave sweeps the country, we will appear before the working class and demand on the ground of our historical experience "All Power to the Workers' Soviets". Later, we will demand the dictatorship of the proletariat and again comrades will appear who will tell us: that this is no dictatorship of the proletariat; you demand all power to the Soviets in which we have not yet a majority. It may be that a great revolutionary movement will start at a time when we will not yet have conquered the majority of the proletariat. But when it comes ferment will enable us to win over the majority of the proletariat much more rapidly than we can now, and the slogan we will then put forward in all probability will be essentially the slogans which the Executive, in one form or another, attempted to formulate. The government we will then demand will be essentially the Workers' Government, but based on the masses. If the Executive has failed to formulate a solution for this question it is because we have mixed our terms and have attempted to give our slogans a definite form when they are

really dependent upon revolutionary circumstances. In this connection I believe that it would be well to recall what we have done during the revolutionary period. We will then see that what today appears to some of our comrades of the Left to be a subject for criticism, they at that time supported.

Murphy. Comrades! With the main line of the Executive Committee's Report, our Party is in entire agreement. So also do we agree that the diagnosis of the condition of Capitalism throughout the world is correct. We appreciate the fact that the offensive of Capitalism today against the working class is not the offensive of a class which is confident of its power, but an offensive started as the only means of defence. Probably there is no country in the world where this offensive has been more cleverly conducted than Great Britain. But in spite of the attempts, in spite of the cleverness of the capitalists there, they have still proved totally incapable of tackling their own fundamental problems. At this moment we have just witnessed the fall of Lloyd George. The fall of Lloyd George marks a new stage in the disintegrating process of capitalism in Great Britain, even though the election which is proceeding is being used as a vehicle for the consolidation of the imperialist parties. Again they have acted very cleverly and although the Labour Parties of Great Britain have had high hopes of that General Election, I feel that their hopes are not going to be realised to the extent to which they have figured. This is a most important development in itself because it foreshadows a new period of more violent activity in Britain than what we have experienced hitherto.

Comrade Zinoviev stated in his speech that the Fascist movement is confined to Italy. As a matter of fact when the Fascists of Italy began their attack on the Communists, the trade unionists, co-operatives, etc., the capitalist papers in London were announcing the regularising of the special police and announcing that these were the future Fascists for England.

Now, with such conditions obtaining generally, practically everywhere, it is of the utmost importance that we should take the measure of these events and

outline for ourselves the policy of the immediate future. We have heard a great deal about the United Front, and there is no doubt that the opposition to the United Front, is steadily disappearing in the ranks of the Communist International.

Its introduction in Britain however, had some rather remarkable effects. It came to the Party in Britain practically as a galvanic shock. The party was young, and had no great experience, and at first the demand for the United Front resulted in some districts in considerable loss of membership of the Party. This particular demand for the United Front had come successively after a struggle with the Party which was practically in the process of formation.

At the Second Congress there was no Communist Party. There were only a number of parties, small parties, with all shades of socialist colour from pale pink to brilliant scarlet. These were ordered by the Second Congress to come together, unite, and to immediately proceed with the application for affiliation to the Labour Party. It is one thing to make a demand. It is one thing to unite Socialist parties and call them a Communist Party. But it is another thing to make out of those forces a real Communist Party: and the following months have been months of insistent struggle within the Party itself striving to get clear of the various difficulties within its ranks. The Labour Party issue had divided the parties even before they had come together, and now that they had come together, at the first Conference that particular issue was only carried by a small majority. It took another year before this particular issue was enabled to pass into the party experience for practical work. In this the Labour Party had unwittingly assisted us, because at the Brighton Conference they had deferred consideration of the issue, and twelve months had elapsed before it became a fighting issue for the party in relation to the Labour Party. Previously it was more a matter of theoretical discussion inside the party, than a matter of practical fighting with the Labour Party. This fight was brought to a head by the Labour Party Conference in Edinburgh this year.

In order to appreciate the difficulties we have had to face in tackling this

question, I want to remind this Congress that we have not only had difficulties to tackle in relation to this question of affiliation to the Labour Party but it was not until October this year that the party elected its Central Committee at its National Conference—an indication of the syndicalist character of many elements in the party.

With the struggle in the party, and being compelled to face this larger issue of unity in action, you can readily appreciate that this was no light matter for us to undertake. But once the Party got into its stride, valuable lessons were learnt both by the Party and the Labour movement as a whole. The Labour Party which in the general election has been out manoeuvred—or in the period leading up to the general election has been out manoeuvred—by the capitalist parties in their attempt to play up to the middle class has been losing the support from the working class. One of their tactics in order to capture all the middle class votes has been the tactics of expulsion of the Communists from their ranks. The Edinburgh resolution focused the struggle between the Communists and the Labour Party. There the two resolutions put forward that no party which had parliamentary candidates in the field should be permitted, if they were running in opposition to the Labour Party, to become affiliated.

Consequently we were faced with this situation: that the conditions of the party at the moment were prohibiting us entering the Labour Party. Furthermore, the Labour Party challenged the situation by compelling the Labour organisations affiliated to it to exclude such members as were part of a party which conducted parliamentary campaign against itself by running candidates. Consequently we delivered a counterstroke. Immediately the party withdrew its parliamentary candidates who were running in opposition to the Labour Party, accepted the constitution of the Labour Party. By this means the Communists have won a considerable victory inside the ranks of the Labour movement. In spite of the fact that we lost membership at first, yet the influence of the Communist party increased in different sections of the working class.

In Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham, the Labour Party has been totally unable to put into operation its own resolutions. Furthermore in other places, Barrow, Battersea and other local Labour Parties, the Communists have practically got control of the Labour Party organisations.

Further, we were faced with this fact, that this attempt to exclude the Communists from the Labour Party only produced further problems for that party which it could not overcome. For example, the fact that the Labour Party is made up of affiliated trade union organisations compelled them to face the issue of expulsion of Communists from Labour Party Conferences. Here they must face the big labour organisations and not all these will follow their lead. Already at least one Labour organisation, and an important one has refused to put into operation the Labour Party resolution: and immediately the Labour Party was face to face with a breakaway of a Labour union, a mass organisation. In that they dare not go any further.

Hence we can see that policy of the United Front, instead of being a policy which weakens the Communist Party, is a policy which is accumulative in strengthening the Communist Party.

Equally important has been the progress in the industrial movement, and here let me say that in the industrial movement, equally important strides have been made. At the Trade Union Congress, for example, by pursuing the policy of putting forward a programme for the consolidation of the union movement, we have been able to parade all the union leaders before the masses and show them their defects.

With regard to the actual struggles in the factories or in the union movement we have one considerable influence. In the Engineer's lockout it was the Communist and the supporters of the R.I.L.U. who controlled that struggle and made whatever fight was made.

Here I must take exception to one point in Comrade Zinoviev's report and it is his statement on the factory committees movement. He said that "No Communist Party can be considered a bona fide, formally established mass party that has no stable influence in the factories and

workshops, mines, railways, etc. In the present circumstances no movement can be considered a well organised proletarian mass movement of the working class if its organisation do not succeed in establishing factory and workshop committees."

To this we take exception. We think it has been written with eyes too closely fixed on Germany. In England we have a powerful Shop Stewards movement. But it can and only does exist in given objective conditions. These necessary conditions at the moment in England do not exist. How can you build factory organisations when you have 1,750,000 workers walking the streets. You cannot build factory organisations in empty and depleted workshops—while you have a great reservoir of unemployed workers.

The movement under these conditions takes other forms. It takes the form of a minority movement in the unions and throws up a great unemployed workers committee movement. In the engineers' lockout it was these organisations which conducted the fight and rarely those who were actually locked out workers from the factories.

Hence the Communist Party must adapt itself to the various forms of the struggle thrown up by the given historical conditions. In one country the conditions make possible a drive into the factories and the creation of factory committees. In another minority movements in the unions and unemployed workers' committees and the order of the day. That Communist Party which is deeply rooted in the struggles of the masses and adaptable to the varying forms of mass organisation which the conditions make possible is a bona fide Communist Party whether the form of mass organisation is that of factory committees or some other form.

Let us face also the International implications of this policy as expressed by the demand for the United Front. Since the Conferences of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals what have we seen? We have seen a number of struggles taking place in this country and in that country. At the time of the engineers' lockout there were some countries in which open red disputes of the metal workers, the Communist Parties of these countries did not know what the other was doing

and had no vital contact with each other. They did not put forward the same slogans and no measures were taken to make even a United Front of the Communist Parties. In this direction the Communist International has much to do to improve the situation.

But further we have heard much talk of the awakening peoples of the East and the colonial populations. We hear of a rising movement in India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and we have a revolutionary movement developing in Ireland, yet little has been done to bring together the parties of those countries which control and subjugate these peoples, into live contact with the problems of the struggling masses. Remedy the defects in these directions and we shall make possible a wider application of the United Front and develop the Communist International in the process.

Haakon Meyer (Norway): Comrades! I shall not say much concerning the Norwegian question; this question will be discussed in the Commission on Norway, and will then be referred back to the Congress. I have a few words to say anent Comrade Zinoviev's casual remarks in his report concerning the doings of the Executive. In the view of the majority of the Norwegian delegates, who upon this question do not see quite eye to eye with the Communist International, the matter is above all one (as Zinoviev puts it) of the birth of a Communist Party in Norway. This is mainly a problem of organisation, but it is also preeminently a tactical question for the Party. Here are the two chief problems which have to be solved in the Norwegian question.

But this is not the main question, like that of the names of the newspapers of the Norwegian party. Comrade Zinoviev, in our earlier discussions, and also here at the Congress, referred to these names; and in its last letter to the Norwegian Party the Executive alluded once more to the names of the party newspapers. Comrade Zinoviev says: "In Norway, all the Party newspapers are still termed Social Democratic." The Norwegian Party is a strong one, comparatively speaking. It is a party which has not originated out of another great party; it is a great party which has captured nearly all the

newspapers. In our tongue, the name "Social Democrat" has never become a term of abuse. (laughter) Yes, comrades, it may sound amusing, but such is the fact. This, however, is not the most important point. The most important point is that Comrade Zinoviev knows perfectly well that the national executive of our Party has unanimously decided upon a change in those newspapers that are still entitled democratic. In a small country like Norway, to be able to publish more than 40 newspapers which have for 5 years defended the Russian revolution and maintained revolutionary ideals, represents a strength which cannot be nullified by a name. As Comrade Zinoviev is aware, a proposal from the Central Executive awaits the consideration of our Party. A proposal on this subject would have been considered at the Party Conference in September, had not the International itself demanded the postponement of the Party Congress until January. The Executive knows perfectly well that the names will be altered in January.

I should like to say a word or two concerning the Mot-Dag group. Comrade Zinoviev has nicknamed this group in the Norwegian Party a "Levi Group". I myself belong to the Mot-Dag group. It consists mainly of young university men. This group, which as an organised group has been expelled from the party, is in sharp conflict with certain individual members of the party. But none of these comrades have as yet called us a Levi group. Generally speaking by the term "Levi group" we understand a group which turns treacherously against its own party while some action is in progress. The Mot-Dag group has never done anything of the kind. It has never committed any act of treachery against the Party. There is absolutely no reason for the sudden discovery of a Levi group in the Norwegian Party.

In the discussions at the Congress the question of the Labor Government has come to the front a good deal. As yet the matter has been very little discussed in the Norwegian Party; it would hardly be too much to say that it has never been discussed at all. It is, however, sufficiently clear that there are elements in the party whose deliberate policy it is to work for the formation of a Labor

Government based on the united front—a united front which is to contain bourgeois groups as well as Labor Parties. If we oppose this trend, it is not merely because we believe the policy to be unsound. We oppose it above all because the comrades who advocate such a course, the comrades belonging to the parliamentary group of the party, are the ones whose policy in parliament has been purely opportunist. During the debate on the position of the party and the Government, the vice-chairman of the parliamentary group said of our party: "My views upon governmental questions were expressed long ago to the effect that I should not under all circumstances oppose a bourgeois government. My own opinion, which did not coincide with the views of my party, was that it would be incumbent upon us in certain circumstances to recognise what has been contemptuously termed 'ministerial socialism.'" When I said this a good many years ago, I put myself in opposition to my party, fully expecting that at the next election my candidature would be disallowed by the party because of this utterance. What I said has its bearing on the present situation. We may find ourselves—perhaps in the very near future we are destined to find ourselves—in a position where it will be impossible for us to say: "In any circumstances we are opposed to a bourgeois government."

As I have already said, the Party held other views. The Party was of opinion that every liberal-bourgeois government ought to be opposed. This is no chance matter, but is symptomatic of the entire policy of the parliamentary group of our party. When comrades in the parliamentary group repeatedly return to this policy (above all in the matter of the compulsory arbitration law, which the parliamentarians of the Party have supported, so that the Party would have had to accept this law if such an opportunist policy had been repeatedly pursued) then it must be understood that we do not believe it possible to conduct a policy that will lead to the formation of a Labor Government, without the party being completely corrupted parliamentarily by this group. I could mention a whole series of additional cases showing how the parliamentary group has been opportunist in its policy. For example, it discussed whether a bourgeois bank ought to be

assisted by the State when the affairs of the bank were in a critical condition. The group decided that in certain circumstances such support ought to be given. There are many more instances of the same kind, but the most important is the matter of compulsory arbitration.

In the last letter but one from the Executive of the Communist International to our party, we were told that the position taken up by the parliamentary group in this question fell under the stigma of parliamentarist opportunism. But in its last letter the Executive informs us that this is a difficult tactical question. If in such a situation the group decided we ought to accept the compulsory arbitration law on behalf of the workers, that recommendation was not given solely with an eye to the welfare of the trade union organisations. It was also an outcome of the opportunist policy of the group, which had found expression long ere this. Another reason for the support given by the group to the compulsory arbitration law was the wish of the group to support the liberal government (or, indirectly—so we are informed—to support ministerial socialism) in order to avoid the coming to power of a more conservative government.

Since from time to time the parliamentary group has pursued a purely opportunist policy, we naturally regard it with suspicion when it advocates a policy tending to promote the formation of a Labor Government, and when this Labor Government is to be one embracing not workers alone, but groups attached to the bourgeois parties.

In conclusion I have to say a few words concerning the resolution brought forward yesterday. The Congress is presumably aware that a majority of the Executive of the Norwegian Party dissents from the last letter sent by the Executive of the Communist International, and that in various other matters we have been at odds with the Executive. If the Norwegian delegates were to accept this resolution, we should be approving something which the majority of the Party Executive, whose representatives we are, would be unwilling to accept. We shall therefore be able to accept the resolution only if it be so modified as to express merely a general approval of the work

of the Comintern, exception being made of individual matters. I mean that approval must be suspended regarding these particular cases until they have been discussed in the commissions. We do not, however, propose to vote against the resolution, for that might be interpreted as meaning that we are in general opposed to the International. We are not so opposed. Consequently, if the resolution should remain unaltered, we shall merely abstain from voting—and this, indeed, applies only to the representatives of the majority of the Executive, to three members of the Norwegian delegation (Applause from certain quarters).

Bukharin: (Greeted with applause): Esteemed Comrades, first of all I wish to say that it seems strange that at this International Communist World Congress not a single speaker so far has spoken of the International situation as a whole, of the situation in all the Parties. Every speaker—without exception—spoke exclusively of the situation in his own Party. Even our red-hot Comrade from the Berlin organisation, Comrade Ruth Fischer, dwelt almost exclusively on the matter of the Berlin organisation, or at best on the subject of the German Party, although our present discussion follows the report of Comrade Zinoviev which analyses the situation of the International as a whole. After this analysis we were entitled to expect from our friends, the representatives of the various fraternal Parties, that they would discuss the general situation. As you all know, we shall later on in our proceedings discuss questions dealing with the situation in the respective parties, and it will then be opportune to discuss separate questions. This shows that we are still too social-democratic, we are still unaccustomed to analyse the situation upon an International scale. I would like therefore to analyse the general tactics of the Executive and its bearing upon the various groups and tendencies.

We have to say, whether the Executive of the Communist International has acted properly or not. This may be divided into two main questions: 1) Whether the International has rightly judged the various tendencies within the Communist International, whether the inter-

nal political tactics were properly carried out. 2) Whether it has rightly or wrongly defined the general line of tactics. These are the two main questions to which we should receive the answer. Within the International I can distinguish various tactical currents and tendencies. I would like first of all to enumerate them: firstly, the Centrist tendencies; secondly, the semi-reformist tendencies, parading under the mask and phraseology of the Left Wing; thirdly, various transitory forms partly reformist, or perhaps embodying the two currents at one and the same time; and fourthly, the Left Wing proper. By the Left I understand such grouping that commit the so-called "Left" errors. After these we have the proper 'kernel' of the International, which as we hope, is pursuing the right policy.

The Centrist tendencies have been expressed in their crudest form in the general activity of the International and at the Congress through the delegations from two parties, firstly by a section of the French Party and secondly by a section of the minority of the Norwegian Party, the representatives of which have spoken here. The French Centrist tendencies are a survival of the former social democratic ideology, and they also pass under the mask of pretending to accept everything that is proposed to them. They are offered the 21 conditions, and they will accept them. Some good resolutions on Party activity may be suggested to them they will accept these unanimously without even discussion, and with acclamation (laughter). Yes, it is always like this. They are ready to assent to anything that the so-called Moscow Dictatorship may desire. Later of course, they will abuse the Moscow Dictatorship with characteristic communist vigour, but they subscribe to everything that is asked of them. Outwardly this looks perfectly loyal, but the great danger consists of the fact that all this exists only on paper. As a rule after the acceptance of such good resolutions, nothing is done. Those tactical deviations which are real and which really take place have never yet been formulated. The attempt has never been made to elucidate the standpoint underlying these deviations.

One of our French Comrades was quite right—this was perhaps one of the few points in his speech, where he was right—when he said: “We of the Left have always our discussions, but the Centrists always make reservations and it is therefore difficult to know what these people are really driving at”. Yes, this is the most dangerous thing, and when speaking of the French Centrists, we have to define their tactics in the struggle for the conquest of power, within the limits of their own party of course (Laughter). With regard to that half of the Party which is turned towards the masses, we must say that there is nothing here of real support to the labour movement in France. Of the struggles of the *Tradé-Unions*, which is the real substance of working class social life in France, one finds no trace in the Party. This the Party entirely ignores. This can be seen in the work of all the sections, in the Central Committee of the French Party and in its central organs. The central organ is still far from being a communist organ, we must say this frankly to our French comrades. “*L’Humanité*” is still a long way off from being a communist paper, although it has very great possibilities for influencing the workers in a communist sense. If the French comrades would take a deeper interest in the working class, they could exercise a much greater influence among the French workers than they have done hitherto. Within this tendency we also have a strong pacifist current of pronounced humanitarian colour, which has the only virtue of prolonging the existence of French bourgeois traditions.

There is yet another point. This tendency contains also a certain anti-communist leaning which is directed against the international discipline of the Communist International, and against this danger from the Right we must combat.

With regard to the Norwegian Party, we have heard even a comrade of the Right Wing speaking here. What did he tell us? He told us that the name of the Norwegian paper “*Social-Democrat*” was nothing else than a jumble of letters (Laughter). But why do we call ourselves *Social-Democrats*? Possibly our Norwegian comrade thinks that it is due to our liking for particular letters. Nevertheless,

we take it that the name is a symbol which defines our methods at the very start. We have tolerated the social democratic newspapers for two years, and do you think that this has no influence on the contents of the papers? We can and will prove that by their contents also these papers are partly semi-social, democratic, and in these papers one at times comes across articles which are written in a spirit of hostility towards the Communist International. This is the absolute truth and when our comrades here tell us that this is only a minor matter, that things will be put right in January,—after two and a half years—I say that this has been promised many times, but never done. Then again, what about International discipline? The comrade is entirely oblivious of that. We have repeatedly and unequivocally stated the decision of the International and of the Executive that our Congresses will not tolerate such a situation, and yet they come along here and tell us that this is a matter of little importance. No, comrades, this is not a minor matter. After the decision of the International you must not believe that it is a minor matter. The same thing applies to the question of discipline. Here again we see a mask, but on this question I will speak later on. Some of the Centrist and semi-Centrist elements form a special category whose peculiarity is that they always appear under a Left mask. We have heard two criticisms of our program, notably on the agrarian question and on the question of nationalities. On the agrarian question we were criticised very sharply from the Left by our friend Serrati. He said it was a strange sort of Marxism to divide part of the land between the peasants, i. e. the petty bourgeoisie, and he thinks that as truly revolutionary and orthodox Marxians we should fight against the petty bourgeois canaille. This sounds very well. But experience has shown that it is only a cloak. And I hope that Comrade Serrati himself will not deny it. Something is wrong at the root.

The same thing as to the question of nationalities. In the question of nationalities we also had an opponent in the person of Herr Levi. He said that we were making terrible concessions in rais-

ing the question of nationalities. He wanted to know what had become of nationalities. He wanted to know what had become of our orthodoxy. Later on we saw the wonderful development of our quondam Comrade Levi. Here we had an ocular demonstration of what was heretofore hidden in the shell. Yes, it was only a mask that was assumed by the opportunist tendency to conceal its opportunist character. Our Mensheviks and social-revolutionists are shouting from the housetops that they represent the real interests of the workers. This is a strategical trick which we have to expose.

Now I will turn to various concrete things. Let us take our French comrades. Their main tactical course is one of pure passivity. They do not support strikes, and so forth. But they also wear a cloak: the dangers of the United Front. They say: what can we do with such miserable fellows who are really not socialists at all? We had an illustration of this in the speech of our extremely Left Comrade Duret. Some time ago Comrade Duret spoke against the expulsion of Verfeuil and Co. He was and continues to be in favour of trade union autonomy, and at the same time he comes here to accuse us of opportunism. A few days ago he was against the expulsion of Verfeuil. Verfeuil is an out-and-out bourgeois wretch. And now Comrade Duret tells us: What an opportunist International we have, that it demands from us the United Front, the welcoming of Serrati, etc. What does it mean? It means, Comrade Duret that also in your person the International has a survivor of reformism, and that your phrases are meant to deceive (applause).

Nevertheless, we are extremely glad that you are on the road to convalescence (laughter), but in politics the symptoms of convalescence are not everything, and the situation has to be watched (laughter), to see how you will get on in future. We must have practical proof of your recovery before we can fully trust you. We know how some people are apt to be swayed, and when a comrade talks here so sharply, almost with derision at the International, then we have to repeat what Comrade Radek once said to such a comrade: You should be a little more modest, and you should first of all give us

proof of your own really revolutionary activity.

Let us examine the substance of Comrade Duret's arguments in so far as I have been able to crystallise his more important points. His first point was that our Party was unable to manoeuvre. This was the first argument against the United Front, and it has already been brought up by our friend Bordiga. But I say that this is wrong to believe that a party must first be built up to the last man before manoeuvring before they are perfected, because it is in the process of manoeuvring that real parties are built. If we were to wait until we get perfect parties, we would be falling into the tactics of passivity which has been consistently criticised by the French Party. The Left point a finger of scorn at the Centrist comrades and accuse them of being passive people who will not do a stroke of work, yet they themselves repeat the same mistakes when they wish to wait until they get a perfect party. No, the Party is produced in the course of the struggle, and the same thing will have to happen to France.

Comrade Duret raised another argument, that socialist opportunists are unwilling to march together with us. This is indeed a smashing argument. Just fancy, you must at once give up your communist virtues for the reason that the socialist-opportunists refuse to march with you. What a strange argument! If you cannot come to an agreement, it is your duty to expose them, to write against them, to agitate against them, and so forth. This is the only sensible way of making use of the sins of the social-patriots. But here again you are handicapped by their confounded passivity. You are too lazy, that is what I would like to say to you (applause).

The third, and extremely comical argument was, that for Germany of course the tactics of the United Front was an excellent thing. This is what the Reformists usually say. Even during the war it used to be said in Germany: Why, of course, we support the revolution in Russia, but in Germany it is quite a different matter. You are arguing in a similar way. In Germany, you say, the masses are organised, in our country they are not. Therefore, in Germany the masses can be won by the

tactics of the United Front, and in France they cannot. But, in the name of common sense, where is the proof or shade of proof of such an argument. In France, just as in Germany the movement cannot depend upon the organised workers alone. The unorganised too should turn to you for guidance. The growth of the numbers of your organised comrades would bring you a corresponding increased following among the unorganised. Your argument is really an extraordinary one. Not being a parliamentarian, I would simply call it piffle (laughter).

Now, comrades, let me turn to another category who are so to speak half way between the Left and the Reformists, and whose typical representative is comrade Weithauer. He declares himself an adherent of the left, it is the Left Wing Opposition in Czecho-Slovakia, comrade Weithauer appears to me to be one who appears to be at his wits end endeavouring to invent an ideology for the Left Wing Opposition. I maintain that all criticism should not come from the Right but from the Left. What comrade Weithauer proposes has really nothing to do with Communism, but has much in common with petty bourgeois Proudonism from beginning to end. The Labour Movement in Germany knows of a certain Dr. Bernstein who, for the purpose of fighting against capitalism, advocated a strike against child-bearing, because it would mean that no new children would be born, and without children militarism cannot exist (animation and laughter). Weithauer comes along with a proposal to deal capitalism a mortal blow by advocating a boycott of goods of capitalists who are callous towards the working class. Here we have a bright idea. I cannot conceive of any other weapon that comrade Weithauer might wage against capitalism that would hit the working class harder than the one he now proposes. This is the language of philanthropy, which would fit comrade Weithauer much better if he were a member of the gentle sex (laughter) and at the same time of aristocratic descent (laughter). But, comrades, it is really a serious matter. This is not Marxism; it is theoretically wrong from A to Z. This fallacy that the worker is more exploited by merchant capital than by industrial ca-

pital, betrays such profound ignorance that I would advise comrade Weithauer to join an elementary Marxian preparatory school (Laughter). This theory is not only ridiculous, but it is also absolutely opportunist.

Comrades, one cannot help regretting that such foolish ideas seem to find adherents, and even comrade Bordiga applauded throughout the speech of comrade Weithauer. What does this mean? It means that these people are entirely misled by the practical manoeuvring of those who have to wear a mask. Of course, I do not suggest that these comrades are doing it consciously but that it is a minor matter. The essential thing is the actual and the objective effect.

Comrades, I would like to enlarge upon the fallacy of comrade Weithauer. I hear that he is a philosopher. But his philosophy is not the embodiment of Pure Reason, but rather the dialectical negation of pure reason (laughter). The question is did the Executive treat this question properly? The Executive saw at once that here we had to deal with some honest working class elements. In the French question, the Executive took a firm stand and demanded the expulsion of the Right Wing Opportunists, yet with regard to the Centre, the Executive proposed the policy of patience,—up to certain limits, of course. Was it right or wrong? It was right of course. In the case of Czecho-Slovakia we knew that here were some honest workers behind the fallacies of comrade Weithauer. What did we do? We practiced patience, urging the Czecho-Slovakian Party to retain in the Party those workers who were influenced by these fallacies. It is for you here to decide whether the Executive was right.

I would like now to say a few words on the so-called mistakes of Leftism, and in the first place with regard to the speech by Comrade Ruth Fischer. Her principal mistake was in exaggerating dangers. In some cases the criticism was proper, and Comrade Radek who can by no means be described as a Leftist, has declared this criticism was justified. But the mistake begins when Comrade Ruth Fischer says: "Here we have Reformism and Revisionism in full bloom". This is an exaggeration, an entirely undialectical

treatment of quite complete situations and action. This is her mistake, which should be frankly pointed out.

Another mistake I noticed in the speech was, when she said the following phrase which I put down in writing: "The idea of strong organisation is a survival of the social democratic spirit". No, it is not in any way a survival of the social democratic spirit. We should not frame our policies on the assumption that the strength of organisation means nothing to us, while the whole bourgeoisie devises even new forms of organisation. Fascism is not merely a form of organisation that the bourgeoisie had possessed previously, it is a newly invented form, adapted to the new movement, calculated to drag in the masses. In other words, the bourgeoisie sees the necessity of having a mass party, which unfortunately even Comrade Bordiga fails to understand. It is a question of the form of organisation, and of course, we cannot take upon ourselves to dictate the former organisation which should be adopted. On the contrary, it is the masses that have to decide, but we have the nucleus of the form of organisation, and this is a problem not only for a social democratic party, but for every militant party (Hear, hear).

Now we come to the third point. Comrade Fischer said that the Putschist tactics has been the subject of much strife within the German Party, and has brought about a certain state of depression in the Party. That may be so. But it is a known fact that in the battle of life not every point can be defined and described beforehand. It would have been much worse for the Party if there had been no vigorous campaign against Putschism.

Now to Comrade Bordiga. Comrade Bordiga told us in his introductory remarks, that he accepts the spirit of the tactics of the United Front. This was said very nobly, very idealistically and spiritualistically. But your spirit, Comrade Bordiga is too ephemeral (laughter). Indeed we have no use for such ephemeral spirits, we need something more tangible. The chief mistake of Comrade Bordiga is that instead of the known realities, he clutches at the unknown. Says Comrade Bordiga: First of all we should calculate all possible eventualities

and only after that should we work out the necessary precautionary measures to prevent our spiritual downfall (laughter). But life is a complex thing, and one cannot make priori calculations: therefore Comrade Bordiga is enforced to abide his time in idleness.

Comrade Bordiga says further: "The elasticity and eclecticism" etc. Comrade Bordiga uses these two words as synonymic expressions. What does it mean? It means that Comrade Bordiga considers as synonymous with deficiency of principle and bourgeois synicism the very things which the Russian Party considers as the greatest conquest. This, of course, is a grave mistake. Such ideas are surely no reliable guide through life's hardships. Comrade Bordiga went on to say, with regard to the tactics of the United Front: First the Party, and then the action of the Party. It is the same mistake, of which I have already spoken, Comrade Bordiga applies his spiritual abilities also to the interpretation of international discipline. He tells us: Yes, I am a Centrist, I am even opposed to federative centralisation, which means representation of parties, but I am in favour of an absolutely centralised Executive. But he goes on to say: But we are not soldiers, the International is no military barracks, the army should not be transplanted into the International. We need greater national autonomy for the parties. Comrade Bordiga has much to say about dialectic contradictions; what we have here are not contradictions, but sheer nonsense; here we have also a little cloak, naturally of much finer texture. International discipline cannot be interpreted to mean that the International nominally holds power, while the national parties are perfectly autonomous and free to do as they like.

I have yet a few other remarks to make. Look at the situation in Italy to-day. Everything cries aloud for the unity of the proletarian forces. The most important problem in Italy is the problem of organisational unity with the Socialist Party. Yet comrade Bordiga has not a word to say about this important problem. His entire speech was an essay of the most abstract Bergsonian philosophy of action, which is no action at all. But not a single word on concrete problems. This is another outpouring of his meagre

spirit, which in reality is not a sound instrument of the proletarian struggle. It is the survival of purely dogmatic sectarianism. The Italian Party, having done some very good work, has also committed mistakes in the agrarian question, in the question of the "Arditi Del Popolo", etc. All the mistakes of the Italian Party are the logical outcome of the fallacious ideas that have found expression in the speech of comrade Bordiga.

Comrades, in dealing with these questions, and in correcting the errors of Leftism, the Executive did not act upon the standpoint of either "right", or "left", but on the standpoint of the proper proletarian tactics. The proper proletarian tactics need not be either Right or Left, all it has to do is to adapt itself to the concrete conditions of the proletariat of the respective countries. I therefore invite you to consider the tactics of the Executive as your very own, to test it and to continue to support it until we shall become the real power with the entire proletariat on our side. (Applause).

Carr, of the U. S. delegation, speaking in German, said:

Comrades, although Comrade Bukharin thinks it is a mistake for the delegates of the various Parties to concern themselves, in the matter of this report, solely with the affairs of their respective Parties, I shall continue the same fault. After all, that may be the best way, and certainly it is the least presumptuous for a Party as small as ours, and one which (as Comrade Zinoviev has justly pointed out) possesses so little revolutionary experience.

Let me say at the outset that my utterances this evening are those I have been commissioned by the delegations to make on behalf of the Party. Let me say, then, in the name of the Communist Party of America, that we are in full agreement with the tactics of the Executive during the past year. This applies, not only to the general trend, but also to the concrete decisions made by the Executive anent America.

I now turn to general considerations. The Third Congress issued the watchword, Back to the Masses! It is true that in America there was lacking for a long time a clear view as to the tasks of a

Communist Party. So thoroughly, however, has propaganda been carried on under this watchword that there are now very few comrades in America who, as Comrade Radek would phrase it, pride themselves on their desire to wander in solitude beneath the stars while awaiting the fine morning when the red sun of the revolution is to shine into their faces. Almost every member of the Party now understands that it is the Party's task to work among the masses. They realise that we must not restrict all our activities to our own party members, but must extend them among the various organisations of the working class. In the American Party, you will no longer find anyone to oppose this watchword.

The second watchword, that of the United Front, has also been a good one for America. In the States, however, the situation is somewhat different from that in European countries. Naturally it was different, for in America there is no Labour Party, no Socialist Party, which is backed by the masses. The yellow Socialist Labour Party still goes its way through the country like an old witch, but no one pays any attention to it, and the masses do not join it. When the watchword of the united front first came to America, it was only to be expected that there would at first be certain misunderstandings in the Party as to the matter. Some of the comrades interpreted it as a command that we should make a nice little agreement with the politicians and leaders of the Socialist Party and other organisations. It was even proposed that when we had put forward a candidate for the elections, we should withdraw him in favour of the yellow Meyer London, and that we were to support the latter at the election. Such views no longer prevail in the Party. Every member understands that this is not the meaning of the united front, but that what we have to do is to engage in activities in which we can make common cause with all the workers and with all working class organisations against the bourgeoisie.

I come, now, to concrete questions. As you know, in America we have an illegal Communist Party, whose branches are secretly organised. At one time there were two parties but they were amalgamated in May, 1921. After the union, the ques-

tion came to the front how the Party was henceforward to work among the masses. How were we to realise the slogan of the International, the slogan which the process of events was spontaneously recommending to us all?

Many of the members were convinced that it was essential to organise a legal party, for the better permeation of the masses, to secure the possibility of working among the masses. The party split over the question whether a legal party should be organised, and if so, how. The problem was discussed here in Moscow. Theses were composed on the subject, and in these theses it was recommended that a legal party should be organised. Watchwords were formulated, and partial demands were specified. It was, moreover, definitely declared that we must guard against the danger of the party being completely broken up. The underground party was to be continued and strengthened, but in addition a legal party was to be constructed, as an instrument of the Communist Party, that we might be able to work more effectively among the masses. These theses were sent to America, and were hailed with delight by the great majority of the members. Voices were, however, raised against them, from the extremists of either wing. The Left opposition, which was outside the party, was averse to the proposal, for it was a defeat to their propaganda. But the theses were not universally welcomed even within the party. Some of the comrades regard them as wrong in principle. They said that the theses were based upon false information, that the Executive was not rightly informed regarding the situation in America, and that that was why such theses had been sent. Nevertheless, the theses were officially accepted, and the debate concerning the problems propounded in them lasted for months. Upon this matter, too, a great dispute occurred. That perhaps serves as foundation for Comrade Zinoviev's remark that in America there are serious faction struggles. But now these disputes are at an end. The questions that were agitating the Party last summer were settled at the Party Congress, with the valuable aid of the representative of the Communist International, who attended the sessions. Perhaps we shall hear something more of the matter

in this place. One seems to be listening to far-off thunder, to the mutterings of a storm which has passed into the distance. The real storm over the question is finished. The theses of the International concerning the immediate tasks of the Communist Party in America, have now been accepted as sound by the overwhelming majority of our members. I believe myself to be justified in saying that nine-tenths of our members consider them to be in conformity with contemporary U.S. conditions, and are satisfied that they lay down the right lines for the work of the Party in America.

The Executive of the Communist International sent orders last winter to the Party that a reunion was to take place. The comrades of the Left opposition who came here to appeal for recognition as the Communist Party of America were instructed to re-enter the Party, and the Party received orders to accept them back. The Executive commanded that the unity of the Party in America should be re-established. In this matter, too, the Executive acted rightly. Such is to-day the opinion of the immense majority of the Party, but voices have been raised in opposition from both extremes. The members of the Left wing had split the Party and did not wish to re-enter the fold, and many of the "Right" leaders did not wish to re-admit them. These latter said officially, "yes, we will take them back!" But in reality those who came back were not welcomed with as much enthusiasm as one could have wished. Here, again, there was a great dispute between those who really desired the unity of the Communist movement in America, those who wished that all entitled to term themselves communists should be enrolled in a single Party—and those who believed that it would be better for the Party if all these left elements were to remain outside the organisation. After months of dispute, the orders of the Executive were at length carried out. Last month the two factions were re-united unconditionally, with the collaboration of the representative of the Communist International, who was then in the States. In this matter, likewise, the American Party holds to-day that the Executive of the Communist International took the right course.

There are one or two other points in

Comrade Zinoviev's report to which I find it necessary to refer. Zinoviev says that our Party is small. That is true. He also says that there is a great left-wing movement among the workers, and it would seem that he is doubtful whether we are following the right course in America. The left-wing working class movement to-day is to a preponderant extent the outcome of our Party's activities. Our members have been active in nuclei in the trade unions. Some of the noted trade union leaders who visited Moscow were sent here thanks to the work of the communist nuclei in the trade unions. Consequently it does not give quite a true picture to divide these two elements so sharply, saying: "Here is the Party, quite small; there is a great left-wing trade union movement". The description does not accord with the facts. The party work in the trade unions is not yet so ably conducted as we might wish, but from day to day we are learning better how to influence the unions, how to organise the whole left-wing working class movement against the right wing consisting of the Gompers' faction, and by degrees how to revolutionise the labour movement as a whole.

Comrades, in America to-day, thanks largely to the right lines established during the past year on the recommendation of the Executive of the Communist International, we have for the first time a genuinely united Party—a Party, the great majority of whose members are in accord concerning the problems with which the Party is confronted. We declare that this Party approves the work of the Executive of the Communist International, that the Party hopes and believes that this work will be continued on similar lines during the ensuing year.

Kolarov: The floor is granted to comrade Ferdinand Faure.

Faure: Comrades, in conformity with the judicious decision of the Executive, the questions concerning the conflicts within the respective national sections are to be dealt with by competent commissions. I must say to begin with, that I have taken this occasion to take part in the discussion of Comrade Zinoviev's report not at all as the representative of any particular section, but first and

foremost as the representative of the Communist Party of France.

Taking it as a whole, we are in full agreement with it. As a matter of fact, the conditions of the working class in the more important countries of the world, after a period of great trials and acute crisis appear at the present time to be undergoing a slight improvement, and one might say that such is also the case in our country.

What indeed is the situation in France now? I am well aware of what Comrade Bukharin has just said by way of reproof that the greatest part of the speakers that have succeeded one another upon the rostrum confined themselves exclusively to their respective countries. But it is just by means of the lessons drawn from the speeches made by the respective speakers of the conditions of their countries, that we can form a rational idea upon the actual international situation.

I do not feel called upon to furnish my personal views upon the conditions in the Communist sections of the neighbouring countries, for, those who belong to these sections are better qualified to do that. As far as my feeble powers permit, I shall try to inform you about the situation in my own country, referring of course to the conditions of the working class.

I have just said that this situation appears to have undergone a slight improvement. I said it appears, because in reality this improvement is only apparent referring merely to the matter of unemployment. For after the terrible crisis of about two years ago, it maybe said that things have now improved. At the present time unemployment in France is quite negligible. During the crisis we had hundreds of thousands of workers out of employment. It was then that Communist propaganda, Communist organisation and Communist action were a productive of very good results, at least as far as France was concerned.

It was in France that the workers in former times advanced the now famous demand "to live by working or die fighting".

The bourgeoisie felt that the privileges would be endangered if the unemployment crisis persisted, and even aggravated.

In the working class centres where we have conducted propaganda for our Party. I have done my best to open the eyes of the workers to the peculiar conditions of the unemployment crisis.

What could be the nature of our propaganda in case of a new unemployment crisis? We are going to tell the French workers: "Your government has told you that you were the victors in this war.

They told you, you must at all costs gain the victory, for defeat would mean great misery to workers after the war. You were told that in case of victory, in case you hold out to the end, you were going to have an era of prosperity and France will be transformed into a Utopia!

Now what is the actual situation?

You have been victorious, you have held out to the bitter end, and what is the result? A million and a half dead, 400,000 cripples, misery, and unemployment."

Such was the nature of our propaganda. Following the war, there was a shortage of work. In spite of a million and a half dead, there was not enough work for those who remained. It was a striking proof of the disorder of the capitalist regime. We dwelt upon these matters, producing a strong impression upon the masses of workers that are usually little susceptible to our propaganda, unless it is based upon just such concrete facts.

At present we are suffering also from the high cost of living and low wages: wages in our country went down considerably. For instance, the wages of the miners have been lowered three francs a day in the last few months, and still further reductions are expected. The cost of living has gone up about three and a half times; the average wage before the war was 6 francs a day; therefore, a normal salary should be 18 to 20 francs a day.

The present wage of the worker is about 12 francs a day, at least in the section where I live and carry on my propaganda work. The result is a state of misery, not comparable of course to that of the workers of Austria or Germany, but nevertheless considerable. If the offensive of capital continues, the condition of the workers will grow worse;

this will create the right ground for our propaganda.

The diminution of wages is aggravated by the high cost of living. The situation of the workers is becoming more and more difficult due to unrestricted speculation. As a result, our propaganda gives better and better results. There is also a rent crisis. Rents are increasing continually. No new buildings are being constructed, and while England appropriated 10 billions of francs for the construction of cheap houses, France gloriously provided 300 millions for that purpose. Our country is a "Republic." This suffices us; we do not care that the State does not intervene to protect the working class.

All these facts point to the possibility that, in the near future the French working class may be reduced to the miserable fate of the rest of the working class of Europe and of the world. This situation is aggravated by the financial crises. From Cachin's article in L'Humanité, where he develops the opinions of Mr. Bodenovsky, one of the best financiers of the French Parliament, we gather that the present budget would not be sufficient to cover the administrative charges, and the interests of the public debt, even if Germany were to pay.

We see what is coming, even if Germany is going to pay. But nobody believes any longer in such a miracle. Nobody believes that you can press blood out of a stone. Recently when somebody mentioned in the French Parliament that Germany might pay, every member began to laugh. All are convinced that Germany will not be able to pay. And nobody wants to pay; the French bourgeoisie no more than anyone else. The French bourgeoisie want to shift the burden on the proletariat, hence the offensive of capital. The same thing is taking place in every country of the world: offensive against the wages and the working hours; tax on wages and on business returns. All these taxes weigh more and more heavily upon the working masses.

We may affirm without exaggeration that the situation in our country is becoming more and more revolutionary. The policy of the International, and the United Front are well fitted to prepare us for every eventuality. The French Party has been much calumniated. I have no

hate against those who have done it, even against our most violent critics. This criticism proves that much is expected of us; and one is justified in this expectation. But one should take into consideration that we are not to be blamed for the fact that our country is ruled by the National Bloc, by the clique of Mr. Poincaré, supported by a powerful army, that France has become the mad dog of reaction, the enemy of all revolutions, beginning with that of Germany. The same army that menaces Germany also menaces our Communist movement; this must not be forgotten. This does not mean that the courage to do our duty will fail us, but when we consider the possible situation of to-morrow, when we consider the efforts of the bourgeoisie which is aware of the dangers menacing its interests, we have the right to ask the International to give us its confidence, and to realise the enormity of the difficulties we are labouring under. We likewise request that the efforts we have made to abide by the resolutions adopted and our determination to continue our efforts in order to become one of the best Communist Parties in the International—that all this be taken into consideration.

Obedience is not only our duty, it is also directed by the instinct of self preservation. Let us imagine that there had been no Russian Revolution, no Third International following upon this imperialist war. Do you think we would not ourselves have reflected upon some course of action? The bourgeoisie would have compelled us to it. We have heard of Fascism and of similar organisations in Germany; but neither have we been free of such organisations. The bourgeoisie is organising in France. It has organised the so-called Citizens' League of the Volunteers of Order. These volunteers are patronised by the police prefects, and having begun their activity in 1920 by scabbing on the locomotive engineers and the chauffeurs, were equipped in modern fashion with eight packages of cartridges each, according to official documents.

This is what awaits us to-morrow. Besides these Volunteers a mobile police is being organised. Two hundred such policemen are provided just for the district of Stephanoise. You know what this

means in a working class centre like St. Etienne. Besides these measures, the bourgeoisie intend to put the municipal police under control of the central government. No doubt the bourgeoisie knows what awaits it and takes its precautions; it believes that the proletariat, seeing the preparations of the bourgeoisie, will not dare take the steps dictated by the instinct of self-preservation. The French capitalists are arming for the defence of their cash boxes.

This simple examination of the situation shows that the working class of our country is thinking of the realisation of the united front of all revolutionists. We believe that it is necessary to achieve as rapidly as possible the union of the militants of the trade union and political organisations to resist the counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie.

The realisation of the United Front is our first task. If we cannot do it now we will not be capable of defending ourselves. Why then, the indecisions? Why those discussions on the lesser or greater revolutionary worth of this or that organisation? We are not accustomed in France to the idea of organic alliances. But such an organic alliance has actually taken place in Havre; Communists and syndicalists have had a taste of unity in the prisons of the French Republic. It would be preferable of course, that such a union be made to serve as a defence against the French Government rather than being resorted to under its punishment. History proves the validity of this argument. We need only recall the experience of the Commune to lose all illusions as to the bourgeoisie; its police, its Citizens' Union, its army will be directed against us. This is why we believe that the French Party will accept unanimously the policy of the United Front of all revolutionists.

After the realisation of the United Front we will have greater credit with the masses, and it will be easier for us to make them understand that they must unite for the defence of their interests. This must turn to our profit; we will be able to show the working class the intentions of its reformist leaders.

This, in brief, is our position. It is also the position of the International concerning the relations between the Party and

the Trade Unions and the United Front of all the workers. This declaration was necessary. I have preferred to make it rather than answer to the attacks upon the French Party. However, I may be allowed to state that I regret that such attacks should have been made. I believe that all questions of conflicts would be left to competent commissions. It was unavoidable that they should be broached on the platform; but I believe that our efforts should have been taken into consideration. I hope that our declaration will be taken into account. We intend to remain faithful soldiers of the Third International. We are not of those.... I see Comrade Souvarine smiling; I do not know whether it is our declaration which makes him smile...

Rieux: No, it is your speech. My speech? Well, allow me to say that this is a strange attitude to take.

There are certain comrades who are wasting their efforts against an idea, who say that our party is still too much imbued with the spirit of the Social Democracy. There are others who make desperate efforts to increase the ranks of the Party, to attract to it those comrades who have long ago understood our ideas. Now when such comrades come before the Congress expressing their profound convictions, old or new—admitting even that they are new—there are some people who laugh. The comrade says: "It is your speech that makes me laugh..."

Rieux: This is a speech for a public meeting; it has no place at a Congress of the International.

This may be your opinion; you may have preferred that I bring here the hotchpotch of the Congress of Paris. I have preferred to inform the International of what is going on in my country. You do not show a very sincere desire to increase our party by taking this attitude. I hope to prove it.

You claim to have the moral support of the International. Allow me to tell you that you act like one who is defend-

ing a trade-mark. I did not want to use such words, but your attitude has forced me to it. It will not change our decision in any way. We are above such mean personal squabbles. I have fought on the barricades since my youth, for over 25 years. I never deserted my organisation. I have never changed parties. I came to the Third International, and I will remain there, I came to it to remain that which I have always been in the past. You may rest assured that in spite of your petty accusations of Social Democracy, we have enough youth and energy left in us to continue our task as the Congress will decide.

You assume in France the role of the representatives of the Russian Revolution, and this gives you a little tone of heroism which may fit you. I pay homage to the fighters of the Russian Revolution, and I have the right to tell you that the lion's skin fits you poorly. You have no right to monopolise this place. We consider it as a place of danger and of combat. We know what difficulties we may have to undergo in France; we know the part we may have to play, and you know it as well.

When comrades come to address you in good faith, when their action should inspire you at least with respect, do not smile. Smiling does not mean anything; it would behove you rather to come out with your resolutions and good reason.

To terminate this incident which I regret to have dwelt upon so long, allow me to reaffirm once again our fidelity to the Third International. Our national Congress has proved it; our future actions will prove it still more. We will see who has the right to lay claim to ideological purity. We are not demanding any prizes for good conduct. The satisfaction of accomplished duty suffices us (Applause).

The president: It is now midnight. The next session will be held tomorrow morning at eleven.

The meeting adjourned at midnight.

hate against those who have done it, even against our most violent critics. This criticism proves that much is expected of us; and one is justified in this expectation. But one should take into consideration that we are not to be blamed for the fact that our country is ruled by the National Bloc, by the clique of Mr. Poincaré, supported by a powerful army, that France has become the mad dog of reaction, the enemy of all revolutions, beginning with that of Germany. The same army that menaces Germany also menaces our Communist movement; this must not be forgotten. This does not mean that the courage to do our duty will fail us, but when we consider the possible situation of to-morrow, when we consider the efforts of the bourgeoisie which is aware of the dangers menacing its interests, we have the right to ask the International to give us its confidence, and to realise the enormity of the difficulties we are labouring under. We likewise request that the efforts we have made to abide by the resolutions adopted and our determination to continue our efforts in order to become one of the best Communist Parties in the International—that all this be taken into consideration.

Obedience is not only our duty, it is also directed by the instinct of self preservation. Let us imagine that there had been no Russian Revolution, no Third International following upon this imperialist war. Do you think we would not ourselves have reflected upon some course of action? The bourgeoisie would have compelled us to it. We have heard of Fascism and of similar organisations in Germany; but neither have we been free of such organisations. The bourgeoisie is organising in France. It has organised the so-called Citizens' League of the Volunteers of Order. These volunteers are patronised by the police prefects, and having begun their activity in 1920 by scabbing on the locomotive engineers and the chauffeurs, were equipped in modern fashion with eight packages of cartridges each, according to official documents.

This is what awaits us to-morrow. Besides these Volunteers a mobile police is being organised. Two hundred such policemen are provided just for the district of Stephanoise. You know what this

means in a working class centre like St. Etienne. Besides these measures, the bourgeoisie intend to put the municipal police under control of the central government. No doubt the bourgeoisie knows what awaits it and takes its precautions; it believes that the proletariat, seeing the preparations of the bourgeoisie, will not dare take the steps dictated by the instinct of self-preservation. The French capitalists are arming for the defence of their cash boxes.

This simple examination of the situation shows that the working class of our country is thinking of the realisation of the united front of all revolutionists. We believe that it is necessary to achieve as rapidly as possible the union of the militants of the trade union and political organisations to resist the counter-revolution of the bourgeoisie.

The realisation of the United Front is our first task. If we cannot do it now we will not be capable of defending ourselves. Why then, the indecisions? Why those discussions on the lesser or greater revolutionary worth of this or that organisation? We are not accustomed in France to the idea of organic alliances. But such an organic alliance has actually taken place in Havre; Communists and syndicalists have had a taste of unity in the prisons of the French Republic. It would be preferable of course, that such a union be made to serve as a defence against the French Government rather than being resorted to under its punishment. History proves the validity of this argument. We need only recall the experience of the Commune to lose all illusions as to the bourgeoisie; its police, its Citizens' Union, its army will be directed against us. This is why we believe that the French Party will accept unanimously the policy of the United Front of all revolutionists.

After the realisation of the United Front we will have greater credit with the masses, and it will be easier for us to make them understand that they must unite for the defence of their interests. This must turn to our profit; we will be able to show the working class the intentions of its reformist leaders.

This, in brief, is our position. It is also the position of the International concerning the relations between the Party and

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