

priation is still capable of attracting and revolutionising the peasant masses. This is why we hope that if the Communist Party understands how to extend and advance this slogan, it will be so successful as to merit the praises of comrade Varga and of the International. (Applause).

Chairman Markhlevski: Comrades, before we begin with the translations, I would like to inform you of the commissions which are to meet today:

At 7 o'clock, meeting of the Presidium in the Lower hall;

At 7.30, meeting of the French Commission in the dining room;

At 5.30, meeting of the commission for Workers' Relief in the Hall.

At 6 o'clock, meeting of the Czech-Slovak commission, likewise in this Hall. Tomorrow's session begins promptly at eleven o'clock a. m.; at the same time a meeting of the large Italian commission will take place. Both fractions are hereby notified. The meeting of the commission will take place in the lower hall at eleven o'clock sharp.

The session closed at 4.0 P.M.

# BULLETIN

## OF THE IV CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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December 2nd, 1922.

### Twenty-Second Session.

November 25, 1922.

Chairmen: Comrades Neurath, Kolaroff.

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Speakers: Koszowa, Katayama, Scheuller, Billings, Mac Kay.

Chairman Neurath: I declare the session open. We will continue the discussion of the agrarian question. I will call on comrade Koszowa.

Koszowa: Comrades, I wish to discuss the agrarian question from a special standpoint. I wish to draw the attention of the Congress to the disproportion between what we say,—particularly between what the most eminent and penetrating spirits of our International have to say on the importance of the rural population during the revolutionary period,—and the theoretical and practical attitude of our Communist Party upon this question.

Lenin told us at the Second Congress of the International that the most essential and profound problem of the present time, and of every revolution,—not only of the Russian revolution, but of every social revolution—is the problem of the revolutionary alliance of the workers and the peasants. These words of Lenin did not meet with sufficient response in our International.

At the Congress of the Spartacus Bund in December 1918, Rosa Luxemburg characterised the German Revolution in the following manner; "It was above all a

political revolution, while it should have been essentially economic. At all events it was a city revolution. The villages have not yet been touched. If we earnestly desire to attain a socialist revolution, we should fix our attention on the villages as much as on the industrial centres, and in this respect we have not yet got any further than the beginning of the beginning". Since then four years have elapsed, four years of the most terrific experiences known in the world's history, Comrade Varga was right when he pointed out here all the complex reasons, all the difficulties that confront us every time we go to deal with the agrarian question.

As a matter of fact, we gave here a motley variety of conditions, and are confronted with a number of diversified problems, and great technical obstacles making our activity in the villages rather difficult. All this is quite true, but there is yet another thing, another factor which hampers our work. From a political standpoint the question is quite clear within our International, but it is not yet so to speak, organically incorporated in our political doctrine.

Comrade Zinoviev said in his report



that the force of the revolutionary movement in any country may be measured by the degree to which the struggle for the factory committee movement is developed in that country. If we were to look for objective criterions of this kind, we could say that the maturity of the revolutionary situation in the different countries may be measured by the progress of the disintegrating factors disturbing the economic and social equilibrium, not only in the cities but also in the villages. But the analysis of the situation from this point of view has so far remained outside of the field of vision of our parties. One cannot get information on these things from our comrades, whether on questions concerning the economic and social structure of our villages or on the struggles that take place in them and on the object of these struggles. We have spoken a great deal about the capitalist offensive. We have tried to take account of all the consequences it would have for the life and the struggle of the proletariat of the city. But we did not try to make the same analysis, and to conceive all the consequences of this offensive upon the class struggle in the villages. Yet in all these countries various agrarian reforms were promised by the bourgeoisie at the time of the proletarian offensive, which the latter will now try to withdraw. This attempt of the bourgeoisie should render the agrarian question extraordinarily acute.

We will confine ourselves to an incomplete analysis, because we have to limit the very territory of our action.

I think I am right in saying that the slowness with which the idea of the revolutionary alliance of workers and small peasants has made headway in our Communist International, is the indication of the slowness with which our Young Communist Parties transform themselves into real general staffs of the revolution. For the general staff of the revolution ought to face all these problems and to understand all these questions in their entirety.

We always speak of the social revolution, but in many respects we do not grasp the problems of the social revolution, and remain the slaves of the traditions of the old International. We cannot entirely get rid of our old selves. We

still think that it suffices to develop action solely among the proletariat to defend exclusively the interests of the working class. But this is not only task at the present time, when the proletariat must fulfil its great historic mission of emancipating all the oppressed and exploited. In this period we must approach the other social strata as well and take the lead in their battles. This idea has not yet been fully appreciated by the major part of our parties.

It was for this reason that the agrarian theses of the Second Congress have in a sense remained a dead letter to us. These theses have not sufficiently influenced the practice and activity of our parties.

Every time we take up the agrarian question we are immediately confronted with the tendency of restricting its scope by declaring that in the villages, just as in the cities, we must rely solely on the proletariat, that is, on the hired labourers.

Comrades, the essential task of every communist party is to organise the proletariat of the cities and villages. This is only a problem of organisation, and is quite clear. But there is a political problem which is quite different. It is the problem of finding the means of approaching other strata of the oppressed population, a problem we have always tried to evade.

The comrades of Western Europe tell us that this question is important only in Eastern Europe.

The agrarian question has reached a very acute state, but a great many of our comrades fail to realise it. It is true, they say, that there are a million and half small-holders possessing a total of four million hectares of land, while a handful of large landowners have grabbed eight million hectares of arable land, that is to say, twice as much as the small-holders. It is also true that there are obstacles, emigration, that there is over-population in the villages with a scarcity of land. But with all that it is not quite important, and it cannot be demonstrated that the rural population will bring about the overthrow of the bourgeois State.

But without taking into consideration all the complexity of events, it cannot be proven that any particular section of the proletariat could overthrow the bourgeois

State. This kind of argument amounts to evading the question.

Comrades, every time the question of our activities in the villages appears on the agenda we are immediately confronted by a thousand political doubts. Do we not run the risk of transforming ourselves into a peasant party. Do we not exaggerate the political role and importance of the peasant population? Do we not expect too much from it? Do we not minimise the role of the agricultural proletariat in favour of the peasantry etc?

Comrades, let us try to come to an understanding. When we speak of winning a part of the peasantry for the revolution, what does it mean. Do you believe it possible to make the peasant population the vanguard of the revolution. Certainly not, the vanguard and the creative force of the revolution can be none other than the proletariat of the cities. We will never make of the peasants a disciplined revolutionary army to match the working class. Any one indulging in such hopes would be possessed of illusions dangerous to himself and to the Party, but this is altogether beside the point.

Nor is it a question of the illusion that the role of the peasantry in the revolution would be the same in all countries. In those countries where the division of the land will play a deciding role, one may reckon with the possibility of revolts, in other parts the peasants' participation in the revolution will be less active, but everywhere the attitude of the peasant masses will be of tremendous importance to the revolution.

When we speak of the possibility of winning a part of the peasantry for the revolution, what do we mean by it. It means that the period of disintegration of capitalism creates conditions that increase the discontent of the peasant masses, render the class antagonism in the village more acute, and bring a part of the peasantry close to the workers. To increase and to encourage this discontent, to point out to the peasants the identity of their essential interests with those of the workers, is what we mean by winning them to the Revolution. Let us not forget that the stability of the bourgeois regime rested always on the immobility and the complete inertia of the villages. To shake

this inertia is to shake the foundations of the present regime.

The comrades of Western Europe tell us that all we do is to neutralise the peasants. But it is no small task to neutralise the peasants. It is a great political task, and a very difficult and complex one.

The task of winning a part of the peasants for the Revolution is an essential task for all countries; it is not a problem of organisation, but, above all, a political problem: it is a question of devising the means of overcoming the obstacles which separate us from the small peasants, the obstacles which consist of the antagonism of interests which still exists and which is artificially fostered by our enemies.

It is a difficult problem. We should take advantage of every political opportunity to accomplish this task.

The resolution presented to this Congress asserts that it is not enough to have a good programme; we must also develop an activity which would demonstrate to the peasant population that we are their real spokesmen, that we are capable of defending their interests. For this purpose it is not enough to give an abstract explanation of this problem; we ought also to familiarise ourselves with the life of the village, and to choose the proper moment for the application of our programme.

The resolution contains many indications which can lead us in the direction of promoting the alliance of the workers and the small peasants. It tells us how to evade conflicts on questions of prices, taxes, etc. how to establish the United Front of the small peasants and the workers. A great obstacle that hampered our approach to the rural population were the misunderstood illusions of collectivism.

These illusions centred around the idea that we, immediately after the revolution, could establish the collective farming of all the large estates. These illusions should have been crushed by the theses of the Third International at its Second Congress. But they still existed in the minds of a certain number of our comrades.

It is the task of our Executive to furnish a theoretical basis to these theses,



to demonstrate their connection with the principles of the New Economic Policy and with the entire Marxian theory, which bases our action on the objective march of events. The objective march of events in a country where there is a dearth of land cannot be anything else but the division of the land.

The Communist Party cannot cling to a utopian standpoint and ignore realities, it cannot oppose the march of the revolution.

All these questions are not yet quite clear to the Third International, and they need a thorough study.

I am convinced that in the very near future with the aid of the Executive and through our collective study of the political and theoretical problems, our essential task will be much facilitated, and that we will make more rapid strides towards the revolutionary alliance of the urban and rural proletariat with the small peasants' class.

I am not unmindful of the dangers that lurk along this path. I hope that we will successfully overcome them. But I wish to say frankly what I think of the method of thought which sees nothing else but danger and treason everywhere. In every enterprise the leader should be aware of all the dangers. But those who will doom themselves to inactivity by their constant dread of the dangers will not be revolutionary chieftains, but politicians.

We are aware of the antagonism between the worker and small and middle peasant, an antagonism created and artificially fomented by capitalism, but this will not exist under the proletarian State. To pave the way for our future power, we must exert all possible efforts right now to do away with the diversity of secondary interest, to demonstrate the identity of the essential interest and to bring these two classes together in order to make and defend the social revolution (Cheers).

Chairman Neurath. Comrades, before we go on with the debate, I have a few announcements to make. We have a number of points to discuss today: 1) The agrarian question, 2) the Negro question, 3) the Youth question, 4) the report on co-operation. It is clear that if we wish to dispose of the agenda today, the speaking time must not be

extended as was done in the last case. There are still seven speakers on the list. I have a motion to close the list of speakers. Does anyone wish to speak to the motion? Nobody. Is anybody opposed to the motion?—The motion is carried.

Katayama. Comrades, We, the Japanese delegation, approve the report of Comrade Varga. Japan is a new capitalist country, and, as I reported before, it is still dominated by the agricultural population. Sixtythree or sixtyfour percent of the entire population are engaged in the agricultural industry. Of these, 3,750,000 families out of 5,500,000 families, cultivate less than two and a half acres of land each, which shows that they are very small cultivators. Of these, about 1,500,000 families own the land. The rest are mostly tenants or half tenants. They are exploited because they must pay high taxes, consumption taxes, income tax and other local taxes. These poor peasants have no political rights; they have not even the parliamentary franchise. We must take these facts into consideration when we consider the work of revolutionising Japan. I want to tell you that the Japanese tenants are traditionally a real revolutionary people, because during the feudal period for several centuries they had no political rights whatever and no education. By revolt they demanded betterment. We have had countless numbers of revolts during the last 300 or 400 years and by these the peasants have always demanded rights of a democratic sort. There was one democratic instance that was ignored by western writers and even by Japanese bourgeois writers—that is, whenever the peasants as tenants revolted against the feudal landlords, always put up a demand for the election of tax collectors. This demand was always put up by the peasant tenants whenever they revolted during feudal times, and then only the ringleaders were punished. That kind of peasant revolt has always been successful. Through it the peasant got reduction and general betterment of conditions. Of course the feudal landlords always tried to oppress and exploit the peasant, and therefore the rebel tradition has been maintained till today.

Today, according to the newspapers that came across, the peasants take their

grievances to the village Mayors and county offices in the form of a revolt writings and appeals backed up by mass demonstration. Historically, therefore, the peasants are really revolutionary in practice against the landlords.

During the last fifty years capitalism has come into the land, with the result that today 900 families own the land but do not cultivate it.

The majority of the 5,500,000 families—3,750,000—can be considered as revolutionary factors in Japan. Only a few weeks ago it was reported that the peasants in some parts of the country revolted and demanded the nationalisation of land.

The Japanese tenant farmers and agricultural labourers are already trying to organise; in fact, from 35,000 to 50,000 are already organised, and at least 35,000 are affiliated with the Japanese Federation of Labour. Therefore there has been established the beginning of cooperation between the agricultural labourers and the proletariat of Japan for the revolution.

Ordinary Japanese peasants are better than most of the peasants of even western countries, because in the matter of education they are emancipated. All over the country elementary education is compulsory and now we have the same grade of textbooks in the schools in the farming villages (10,000 in number) and the same grade of teachers giving instruction. The peasant children can read and write, and there is much literature appealing to and concerning the life of the tenant farmer and peasant. Moreover, the peasant youth are organised, both girls and boys, and their organisation, although it is patronised by the government, is revolting against that patronage.

Therefore the Japanese Communist Party can go in, and already the Party is working among the peasant unions and gets influence by working against the landlords. The Japanese agricultural labourers can be and are organised in some cases and moreover they are good to organise because being seasonal workers—the silk industry works three or four weeks, rice industry one month, etc.—they can demand high wages. In reality they had secured three times to four

times more in wages than the ordinary agricultural labourer.

The Japanese poor peasants are connected with the industrial workers. This is greatly due to the fact that Japanese industry has been built up only within the last 40 to 50 years. The Japanese workers come to the city from the country where work is seasonal and where exists the tradition of rebellion. I suppose it is also the case in Soviet Russia. In a newly developed industrial country there is always this close connection between the industry and the land. Therefore, the awakening of the city proletariat can be comparatively easily extended to the agricultural labourers, and vice versa, so that the Japanese revolution will be conducted not by the proletariat alone, but by the peasants and agricultural workers of Japan as well.

Chairman Neurath: I have before me a proposal to close the discussion. Does anyone wish to speak on this proposal? Such is not the case. Is anyone against this proposal? As this is not the case, I declare the proposal carried. (Applause.) We come now to the closing speech, and I call on comrade Varga to address you.

Varga, Hungary: Comrades, the discussion which has taken place here, has not come up to my expectations. It would have been the right thing for the comrades of the various countries who have done actual work among the rural population, to put before us the methods, the obstacles, and the results of this work, for our mutual benefit. Instead of this, the discussion concerned itself mostly with generalities.

In surveying the various expressions of opinion, I find that those perils from the right and from the left, to which I referred in my report, have been fully confirmed. The fact is that many comrades are quite unfamiliar with this question. The chief reason for this is that the Communist Party came mostly into being in the cities as a Party of the industrial proletariat. There is a certain ideology which seems to follow only the interests of the industrial proletariat, and is quite wrongly of the opinion that the industrial proletariat, which is destined during the period of dictatorship to have a decisive influence on the policy of the State, will also be able to accomplish the revolution



by itself and without the support of the rural population. This is certainly an error. We cannot carry out a successful revolution in any country of Europe without the collaboration of the rural proletariat, and without the support of considerable sections of the poor peasantry, the small farmers, and the poorer sections of the small peasantry. Neither can we retain power without their assistance.

There was a strange clash of opinions on the question as to whether the peasants are revolutionary or counter-revolutionary! The discussion on this question as applied to France, between comrades Renaud Jean and Rieux assumed an acute form. I should like to say that one cannot treat a question in this fashion. One cannot approach a subject in this uncompromising, unhistoric and undialectic fashion as was done by comrade Rieux, who asserted that Renaud Jean was wrong, and that the French peasant was not revolutionary, but conservative and counter-revolutionary. This is not correct. The chief characteristic of the peasant population is its vague and always shifting class attitude. At certain historic periods it is counter-revolutionary. One cannot say once and for all, as comrade Rieux did, that the French peasant is conservative or counter-revolutionary.

To say this is tantamount to a denial of the possibility of our own revolutionary activity. How are we to approach the rural population if we are ourselves of the opinion that nothing can be done with it, that these people are counter-revolutionary or conservative, and that at best we can only neutralize the small peasantry. I venture to say that this is an absolutely unhistoric conception which at the same time is a great obstacle to our own work. Therefore, I am of the opinion that fear and distrust of the peasantry and the small peasantry has no justification whatever. We must bear in mind that the peasantry, as Comrade Koscheva quite rightly said, is not the corps d'élite of the revolution but at certain historic periods, it is the great reservoir of revolutionary forces from which we can replenish our ranks and take whatever can be taken.

For this reason, I should like to lay special emphasis on the statement made by Comrade Koscheva that we cannot

proceed to attract the rural masses without a continuous and exhausting analysis of their conditions. If we omit to do this, we shall arrive at as uncompromising conception of Comrade Rieux, and partly also of Comrade Renaud Jean, one of whom says that the peasant is revolutionary while the other says that he is conservative. It is impossible to work in this fashion. One must continuously study the attitude of the rural population, submit it to a careful analysis, and draw the rural masses into movements when they are politically sympathetic to them.

For this reason I am not at all inclined to condemn the work of Comrade Renaud Jean as some comrades seem to be inclined to do. Certainly, some of the opinions expressed by Comrade Renaud Jean are not quite communistic. Nevertheless, we must admit that he is doing good work among the rural masses, that he is winning over people for the revolution. He is organizing sections which it is difficult to approach, and this is certainly very important work. I am also of the opinion that what he said theoretically about the peasant having emerged from the war with a changed psychology, is a very important statement. It is wrong to take up an uncompromising attitude and to say: the peasant has always been like this and he will always remain the same. We must, on the contrary, take facts into account and treat the question from a historic view-point.

I will deal quite briefly with the various statements, but wish to make special reference to our British comrades' speech, which was to this effect: the question of revolution is made very difficult in our country by the fact that Great Britain could not hold out longer than a few months without the importation of food. In this connection, I should like to say that Great Britain's position is not so desperate as statistical data seemed to imply.

The German professor Oppenheimer once showed in a treatise, that even if the imports of food into Great Britain were completely cut off, it would by no means be doomed to starvation. He mentioned particularly that there are large tracts of uncultivated land in Great Britain, a situation which could be altered within a year. He pointed out that there are

always large stores of food in Great Britain, that it has a great food reserve in its cattle and that it has unlimited possibilities to supplement its food stocks by fishing. If Great Britain were cut off from the rest of the world, it could easily maintain itself; of course not at the present standard of living of the English people, but for instance, according to the standard of Italy. Therefore, I maintain that it is dangerous to spread the legend throughout Great Britain that the country must not think of revolution because it cannot feed itself. (Interruption by Radek: And it could not do so). Naturally, there would be an extensive shortage of food, but the people in Great Britain would not die of hunger if the dictatorship were left for a time to its own resources.

The Rumanian comrade was the only one to make certain objections to the program of action. He pointed out that we did not want, to take up a definite attitude in the Commission on his proposal against the export tax levied by the Rumanian State. I was very much against it, for what would be the result if it were said in Rumania: "we do not want the State to levy a tax when it is exporting necessities of life."

I am not going to deal with the economic-theoretic question of who pays this tax, the foreign buyer or the home seller, but I assert that in both cases it is impossible for the proletariat to protest against this tax. If this tax is paid by the foreign buyer and fills the treasury of the Rumanian State, the abolition of this tax would mean that the Rumanian State would have to impose new taxes on the workers. On the other hand, if it affects the home prices, it affects the revenue of the big peasants, and big landowners from the sale of corn, but it does not affect the revenue of the workers and of those sections of the peasantry who have not much surplus provisions to sell.

Comrades, I do not want to detain you much longer, but will only repeat in conclusion what I already said at the beginning of my statement. There is not much in the fact that we have drawn up a program of action.

It will become a reality when the various parties will have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary

for the success of the revolution to win over to our side wide sections of the rural population; when the parties will not accept the hints contained in the program mechanically, but will take them in conjunction with the continued analysis of the political situation, as well as of the situation of the rural population. When they will make a rational use of these hints and approach the question not theoretically but practically, in order to add in the near future to the success which the communist party has already gained among the urban working class another great success,—the inspiration and the revolutionising of the rural masses. (Applause).

Chairman Neurath: Before proceeding with the translation, I wish to draw your attention to the following:

The presidium has proposed to appoint an editorial Commission which is to consist of the following comrades:

Varga, Renaud Jean, Theodorovich, Markhevsky, Rieux, Preobrazhensky, Paukert, Hörnle (or Unfried), Katayama, Joss.

In addition to the above, the Chinese delegation is invited to appoint a delegate for the editorial commission. Does anyone wish to speak on this proposal? Such is not the case. Is anyone against it?

I declare the Commission elected.

Chairman Neurath: The next question on the programme is the Youth movement. Comrade Schueller has the floor.

Schueller (Austria). Comrades, the Communist International has regarded the question of Communist work among the masses of the working Youth and the situation of the Youth International as important enough to be placed on the agenda of this Congress of the Communist International.

I should like to deal with the following three points: 1. The development of the Communist International from the Second World Congress until today; 2. The present situation of the Youth and their struggle against capitalist offensive and reaction; 3. The practical relations between the Communist Parties and the Communist Youth.

The Second World Congress of the Communist Youth International achieved a certain amount of renown among friends



and enemies, which it has well merited. This Congress brought with it a radical transformation in the activity of the Communist Youth. You know, that during the war when the Social Democrats went over openly into the ranks of the reformists, the Communist Youth were the first to pick up the banner of the class struggle, the first to declare war against war and to struggle for the social revolution. You also know that the Youth were the first to renew International organisation and have become the enthusiastic supporters and defenders of the Russian revolution and the Third International. In that period a definite type of Socialist—we may just as well say Communist—Youth movement was created as the political vanguard of the proletariat. It was the time when Communist Parties either did not exist or were very weak, and when the Communist Youth assumed a leading political role in the working class movement.

The Second World Congress of the Communist Youth International opened a new era in the activity of the Youth. Communist Parties have been created, and the Communist International has become a strong International organisation. The leading political role of the Communist Youth was no longer necessary, and they had to surrender the political leadership to the Communist Parties. This first important point was decided at the Second World Congress of the Communist Youth International.

Politics was to remain the fundamental, practical basis of the activity of the youth organisations which were to remain the heart of the Communist Youth movement, but they now could devote themselves to their proper tasks, concerned directly with the Youth. The most important of these tasks are: 1. To defend the economic needs of the Youth; 2. To educate the Youth systematically in the Marxian doctrine; 3. To carry on anti-militarist propaganda among the young workers in and outside the bourgeois armies.

The Third important result of the Second World Congress must be especially emphasised: The Communist Youth decided to enlarge its organisation. During the war and in the first years of the revolution, the Communist Youth was forced

just as the rest of the Communist movement to organise into small narrow groups of a comparatively sectarian character. This was the motto of the Communist Youth: "Clarity, then majority". This means that Communist Youth should consist only of a small number of chosen and tried elements. During the war and the year following when Communist parties did not exist, this slogan was historically justified. But it had no more justification when the parties began to organise the masses. Their new slogan became: "To the masses to win them, to organise them, to become a mass organisation both in size and in leadership. This slogan of the Third Communist Congress, "To the masses" was adopted by the Communist Youth not as a matter of temporary tactics, but as a basis for the Youth movement in general. We must keep in mind that the organisations of the Youth must be wider than those of the organisations of the Party. The Communist Party embraces within its ranks only members with a clearly defined Communist creed and a certain degree of Communist class consciousness. The Youth organisation must go to the large masses of the young workers, win the still indifferent elements, draw them into the class war, give them the first elements of Communist education in the class war, gradually train them to become class conscious workers. To achieve this the organisation of the Communist Youth must be much wider than the Communist Party. They must be open to the indifferent young workers who has not yet become class conscious. We insist so much on this because it does not seem to have been appreciated as yet by some of our parties and Youth organisations. In a recent discussion with our Italian comrades, we discovered that they did not agree with the principle that the Youth organisations must not be as rigid as the Party in the question of membership.

I must add that the slogan of the Third World Congress, "To the masses" was more necessary for the Youth International than for the Communist Parties. The danger that they might lose touch with the masses if they were to continue the tactics of the first post-war year was much greater for the Youth than for the Parties. The role of the Communist Youth

is not that of the Communist Party. The exclusively political role of the Communist Youth during the war was an exceptional historical development. Changes took place among the workers which required a change in the policy of the Communist Youth. Their interest in politics was not so great as during the year following. This was a special manifestation of the general phenomenon of the temporary weakening of the revolutionary spirit in the working class. The Communist Youth therefore could no longer continue its Communist war activity, its purely political activity if it expected to retain its influence on the masses and enlarge its influence. It had to change its policy to fit the new conditions and the mental state of the working Youth and find a new means to win over and organise the young workers. As we have already said, the Second World Congress of the Communist Youth solved this problem. It surrendered the political leadership to the Party, confining its activity primarily to Youth organisations. It changed from a narrow political organisation to a large mass organisation of the working Youth, representing the interests of the young workers in all their fields of activity.

Well, comrades, let us see whether the development of the Communist Youth International since the Second World Congress justified the resolutions of that Congress. We must answer this question in the affirmative. In spite of all the difficulties we have met, we must acknowledge that the decisions of the Second World Congress were the correct ones and have brought us nearer to our true goal. The resolutions of the Second World Congress were something comparatively new for our Youth movement and a great deal of explanation was necessary before the young Communists accepted this new view of the tasks of the Communist Youth movement. This took much time and discussion. Our Italian Comrades, for example, did not accept the decisions of the Second World Congress until March of this year, and the French Comrades not until May. The Communist Youth organisations did not remain idle during that time. They did not wait until the change will have been completely accom-

plished to enter into the working class struggle. The Youth organisations found themselves faced with a great deal of work this year already. Economic questions, the struggle against reaction, the work of education demanded their attention. They could not accomplish all the work before them because they were not quite clear about their tasks. As a result, the organisation of the Communist Youth lost some of its influence upon the unfiliated masses of the young worker. The severe economic crisis also hampered the progress of the Communist Youth just as it crippled every other organisation of the working class. The persecutions of the reaction robbed us of a large part of our membership, particularly in Italy and in other countries where reaction was especially severe.

In general, however, we have overcome the difficulties, and at the time of the session of the Central Executive and of the enlarged Executive of the Communist International we had already entered upon a period of progress. We had a sort of belated crisis in the communist Youth movement of Czecho-Slovakia. This organisation continued its purely political activity for a much longer period and thereby greatly lost its influence on the masses of the young workers. As a result, we witnessed a crisis in the organisation. But we have recuperated from this crisis as well. In general, we can say that our Communist Youth Movement has well understood the necessity of the new policy. This has been a success which we cannot fail to mention. The surrender of political leadership to the Party proceeded rapidly, which proves that the problem was long ripe for solution and that the decisions only gave expression to an historical necessity.

In general, we may say that the political activity of our Communist Youth was wise and healthy. In a great many countries, we scored a great many political successes along the line prescribed by the Communist International. It was due to the activities of the Communist Youth in France, for instance, that the left Wing grew to such importance and that the slogans of the Communist Youth international gained firmer footing among the workers of France. The Communist Youth of Italy has been able to adapt



its political activities to the conditions created by the reaction of Fascism.

As another example, I must mention the communist youth movement in Norway, which during the last year has carried on its activity in complete agreement with us, because the conditions in the Norwegian Party demanded it. A few differences of opinion arose recently, but they were only over minor questions, and on the whole the recent political activity was fairly healthy.

We must however, admit that the political activity in the Y. C. Leagues of Central Europe has grown weaker, and that a decline of political interest is to be observed not only among the masses, but also among the members of our organisation and even within our central committees. It is this fact which is troubling our comrades in the Communist Parties most. For instance, whenever one meets comrades who have come from Central Europe and had something to do with the Youth Movement, they will invariably say: the young people do not trouble much about politics, they are only concerned with their education. Naturally, these comrades are very concerned about this state of things. To some extent, such statements are exaggerated. This is due to the fact that the tasks of the Y. C. Leagues in the present phase are not quite correctly understood by many of our Party comrades. In the main however this statement was and is still correct to-day. There is no doubt whatever that political activity and political interest is at a new ebb at present in our Y. C. Leagues. How are we to account for this? First of all, we must establish the general facts. Our Y. C. Leagues are of course part of the working class youth, and are therefore influenced by the moods and conditions prevailing among the working class youth as a whole. As has been already said, these moods and conditions and the entire position of the working class youth have undergone a change since 1921 which served to detract their interest from political matters, and caused them to concentrate their attention on the questions more immediately affecting the working class youth, such as the economic, the educational and the social questions. This is the first and foremost reason. This attitude of the working class youth as a whole has naturally

influenced even a section of the communist youth. Another reason for the dwindling political interest among the communist youth in Central Europe, is the fact that there we have not had (except in Czecho-Slovakia) such crisis as have convulsed the parties in France, Norway, and Italy. We had, of course, the Levi question in Germany, but on the Third Congress, the Central European parties had a quieter time than those in the other countries. This has greatly contributed to a slackening of the political activity of these parties. A third reason is the erroneous conception of the nature of the political activity of the Y. C. Leagues, as laid down by the Second Congress. In some localities a wrong interpretation of the decisions of the Second Congress led to an exaggerated restriction of the political activity of the Leagues. The Young Communist International paid great attention to this matter and did much to combat it from the centre, as well as through the Central Committee of the respective parties. This attitude of the Y. C. I. made the latter realise their mistake and encouraged them to resume their political activity, and to take part in the political life and struggles of the Party to a greater extent than had been done before. We can assure the Communist International that by this means we shall prevent such wrong and exaggerated ideas from spreading and bring the Young Communist Leagues to resume the political struggle in conjunction with the Party.

The Y. C. Leagues have made great strides on the economic field. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the question of the economic struggle viz. of the struggle for the immediate needs of the working class youth, was a very contentious question at the Second, as well as the Third Congress of the C.I., and that was the subject of lively discussion even after these congresses. This task was something new for the masses of the Y.C. Leagues, excepting of course Russia, Austria, and Germany. However, we are justified in saying to-day that the necessity for the economic struggle through the Y.C. Leagues, has not only been recognised by all our organisations, but that a beginning has already been made to put this recognition to a practical use. To-day

the economic question and the economic struggle of the working class youth are everywhere the centre of the interest and the activity of our Y.C. Leagues. Moreover, definite steps have already been taken towards arousing the interest of the working class as a whole in this question of the struggle for the young workers' demands. If we study the Young Communist press of to-day, and compare it with the Y.C. press previous to the Second Congress, we notice that our papers reflect the daily life of the working class youth in the industries and among the artisans, the peasants and small landowners, and that they abound with news and articles concerning the exploitation of the working class youth. We also notice that owing to the conditions which I have just described, the Y.C. Leagues have brought forward demands for which they are ready to stand up by word and deed. They have also begun to be active in the trade unions, which will soon lead to a systematic agitation within these organisations. We notice that an extensive propaganda for definite and concrete demands is being initiated in almost all countries. Finally, we see that the Y.C. Leagues in Germany, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and Denmark are becoming real militant organisations fighting against the State and have already conducted and been partly successful in actions for some of the demands of the working class youth.

This campaign of the Y.C. Leagues was carried on under the young workers' united front and of the resistance against the capitalist offensive and the impoverishment of the working class youth. This first step on the economic and trade union field, on the field of the representation of the economic interests of the working class youth, is a good augury for the future work of the Communist youth.

Comrades, I must deal now with our anti-militarist work. This work has remained the same in the various Y.C. Leagues. As before, this work was conducted with great enthusiasm, and our young comrades have their press and continue their anti-militarist campaign. This work has exacted many sacrifices and victims. It is only to Central Europe that we must admit a lessening in the interest for the

anti-militarist question, and a decreased activity on this field. This is as grave a feature as the slackening of the interest in politics in general, which we must combat by the same methods.

A beginning has also been made on the field of education. However, we soon saw that we could not do as much on this field than on the economic and trade union field, because the educational work demands forces which we ought to get from the parties, but which were not forthcoming. Many improvements were also made in the work of organisation. Let us take, for instance the Y.C. Leagues in France and Great Britain, which, like the parties had a federalist basis. In those countries we were successful in establishing centralised collaboration within the organisation. A division of labour was introduced, and we were successful in achieving increased individual activity of the members, as well as centralisation. We have also made progress on the international field. The collaboration between the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International and the Leagues is to-day as close as that between the Central Committee of a League and its districts and groups. The Young Communist International is justified in saying that in many questions it works better than many a Central Committee of a national section, especially in the matter of giving advice.

On the whole, on looking back on the time that has elapsed since the last Congress, we may say that events have shown our tactics to have been correct, and that the Communist Youth has managed to adapt itself to the new circumstances and to understand and carry out its tasks. We have had our struggles in several fields, particularly in the economic field, and to some extent we have carried out also organisational and educational work that has advanced the Young Communist Leagues along the path of winning the masses. Nevertheless we have not yet become mass organisations. By mass organisations we understand an organisation that has a mass membership and exercises constant influence over the masses of young workers, and leads them in their struggles. In our progress towards mass organisation we are na-



turally confronted with the difficulties of the Communist movement as a whole, which with the exception of the German Communist Party has not made very pronounced progress in the direction of mass organisation both with regard to increasing membership as well as strengthening its hold on the masses. We entertain no illusions on that score and we take the question quite seriously; we know that the Communist Youth Movement was dependent in this respect on the development of the Communist International, but we also know that in can and must run in advance of the latter. Our Third Congress will definitely and completely lay down the tasks which we are to pursue in order to accelerate the progress of winning the masses to our organisation. I would not like to dismiss this point without pointing out a fact that is perhaps not quite so self-evident. If you look at the social-democratic Youth movement you will find the following picture: the social-democratic party as the political organisation of the working class, adopts certain resolutions that are to be carried out, and the Youth organisation plays there a more or less passive part. Struggles of the working class of the greatest import may be proceeding, the greatest events may take place, but they do not affect the activity of the Social Democratic Youth; they are always in tow of the Party, without showing any sign of independent and live activity. In the Young Communist Movement we find quite a different type of young workers organisation. When the Communist International launches a slogan, or resolves upon a certain tactic line, the Young Communist International takes part not only formally but also practically in the carrying out of the decisions of the International. The Young Communist movement exerts all efforts to apply the slogan of the Communist International in definite and practical manner.

I now come to the position of the young workers, and to the campaign led by the Young Communist International in this connection. You all know that the condition of the young workers, along with the condition of the adult workers, have not improved during the 15 months that have passed since the

Third World Congress, but have rather become worse in the economic sense under the pressure of reaction and the menace of war and militarism.

You know that the young workers have to experience the same hardships as the grown-ups under the capitalist offensive, such as wage reductions, long working hours, unemployment and exploitation. But these events have taken even worse forms in regard to the Youth than in regard to the adult workers; for they have to undergo some special hardships, which I am not going to enumerate here in detail. Speaking of the economic position of the young workers, one only has to refer to the statement made by the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International nine months ago: "The economic position of the working youth under the present circumstances of the period of collapse of capitalism must be studied in all earnestness by the working class as a whole. The working youth are confronted with the menace of physical and moral impoverishment".

This fact, stated by the Communist International 9 months ago, has not changed during the nine months that have followed, and it became even much worse.

During the same period the campaign of the reaction against our Young Communist Movement has become more acute. We witness a systematic reactionary attack in all countries directed against the Young Communist Movement. For instance, we have to register persecutions of the Young Communist Movement in France, Poland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Czecho-Slovakia. In France and in Czecho-Slovakia the Young Communist organisations were dissolved by the authorities on account of their anti-militarist propaganda, while the Party carries on its activities quite legally.

The menace of militarism, in the first place hits the working youth, because they have to furnish the cannon fodder for the bourgeois States. Tens of thousands of young English workers joined the army, tens of thousands in Morocco, in Asia and Africa, in all parts of the world, were forcibly taken to the front. We thus see that the position of the young workers has grown worse everywhere, but we must emphasise another

fact of importance, namely that the young workers are used as a lever to bring down the standard of living of the adult workers. The wages of the young workers are the first to be reduced, thus paving the way for a reduction of the wages of the adult workers. Reports of this kind will be found in abundance in the young workers journals. The young workers are made to work longer hours than the adults, in order to use that as a means of compelling the adults to work longer hours. An example may be seen in Germany. The time spent in the continuation school was hitherto counted in Germany as part of the eight-hour day. The Government did not dare to abolish the eight-hour day for the adult workers. But it adopted a law which excludes the time spent on education from figuring in the working time. It further makes it permissible for the apprentices to work an extra hour in sweeping up the shop. It means nothing else that raising the working day at least to nine hours per day. Similar examples may be found in all countries. It is a means of pressing down the condition of the adult workers. Let us take a practical instance. When the young workers are made to work 10 hours in a given industry, one would not expect the adult workers would be allowed to work shorter hours, and this is what actually happens, i.e. the long hours of the young workers are followed by similar hours for the adults.

There have also been cases where the young workers were left at work while the older workers were discharged. It means that the young workers were used as a means of increasing the unemployment among the adult workers. There have also been cases where young workers were pressed in the service as strike breakers against the adults and were made to serve as a weapon of capitalism against the adult workers. The capitalist offensive has further increased this system of using the young workers as capitalist tools against the adult workers. The reformists of all countries have taken an equally treacherous attitude upon this question as upon all the other vital questions of the working class. The reactionary trade unionist bureaucracy, the Amsterdam International, did not give a lead in this question, but rather

sacrificed the interests of the young workers in all these matters. Whenever it is a question of fixing wages, conditions of labour, the right to strike etc. we see the reactionary trade unionist bureaucracy everywhere taking passive attitude in regard to the young workers. We even see them sacrifice the demands of the young workers on the pretext that they would thus be able to obtain better conditions for the adult workers, but in reality they only helped to make conditions worse for the adult workers also.

The Young Communist International was the first to take up the slogan of the fight against the capitalist offensive, and of the United Front between the Youth and the adult workers. It was a slogan adopted and carried out both in the national and international campaigns.

What do we find in the Social Democratic international of youth? We see the same comedy that was played by the 2nd International in the questions of the Youth. True to the example of the Amsterdam trade unionist bureaucracy and its parties, they give no heed to the misery of the working youth, nor to reaction and militarism. Where the young workers develop their action and fighting, we seen the Young Social-Democratic International anxious to stifle the struggle. They do everything to dissuade the young workers from fighting. The Young Communist International proposed to the Amsterdam Young Workers International and to the Vienna Young Socialist International to meet at a world congress to join the forces of the young workers with that of the adult workers against the capitalist offensive. But the socialist Youth Internationals, who before our invitation had asserted their eagerness for a world congress of Youth, pretending that we were the only obstacle, revealed themselves in their true colours when they declined to come even to a preliminary conference to discuss the question of organising a world Congress. On the other hand, in company with the Amsterdam trade union leaders, they drew up a programme of so-called demands, that are of such trifling character that they could not at all be taken seriously. Instead of calling the working youth to the United Front with the adult workers, they carried out their



manoeuvre of amalgamation. Now we stand before the amalgamation of the 2½ Youth International and the Workers Youth International, i. e. before the final capitulation of the centralist Eunuchs of the 2nd International.

We now come to a chapter which is of particular importance, namely the movement of the young workers themselves, which made its appearance among the indifferent masses as a weapon against the impoverishment and against taking part in the fight of the adult workers. We have examples where the young workers have taken militant action in spite of the dictates of the social-democratic trade unions and the social-democratic youth organisations, and unfortunately also without our direct impulse. We have such an example in the English Engineers' Strike. The trade unions forbade the apprentices to strike. The apprentices, mind you in a place where there was and there is no youth movement, spontaneously met and declared: "No, we won't stay at work, we will strike!"

We have another example in Germany, where there was a spontaneous strike at Hamburg of about 1,000 apprentices and young workers at the wharves fighting for a wage increase, and who maintained their strike 5 to 6 days in spite of the sabotage of the trade union leaders. Other examples of spontaneous strike movements we find at Munich, Mannheim, etc. We also learn that in a city in Austria 400 young workers went on strike because they were not consulted in concluding a wage agreement. Thus we see the growing militancy on the part of the young workers, which throws itself spontaneously into the battle of defence against the capitalist offensive.

This phenomenon should cause us to ponder. What conclusions are we to draw. The first conclusion is the one that I have pointed out, namely that the young workers to-day are anxious to take part in the struggle of the adult workers and in the struggle against the impoverishment of the young workers.

Secondly, we should draw the conclusion that the adult working class organisations to not protect the interests of the young workers, and the young workers are no longer willing to wait

until their demands will finally be taken care of. When I say that the working class organisations do not protect the interests of the young workers, I speak not only of the Trade Unions and the social democratic party, but also of the party and of the Young Communist organisation. We should cherish no illusions on that score. The comrades in Germany who have taken part in these movements are well aware of the fact that the movements were in existence before the young communists came to take active part in them; that they were spontaneous movements without a direct initiative of the Communist International and it was only later that they came under the leadership of the Communist International. These movements were not called into being by our organisations but sprang up spontaneously. It is clear that the young workers will not wait any longer for someone to take care of their interests. This fact has its good and bad side. Its good side is that it shows that the young workers are willing to fight, that they are eager to take their place in the revolutionary struggle. But it should cause us to think because it shows that even the Communist organisations, the communist trade unions, etc., have hitherto failed to carry on active work among the young workers, and if they continue to do so, there is bound to be an estrangement between our organisations and the young workers. On the other hand if the Communist International will take a hand in this movement of the young workers, as has been the aim of the German Communist League then our influence among the masses of the young workers will be assured.

It is clear that a strike of young workers will be useless and fruitless if unsupported by the adult workers, if not backed by the trade unions. I must say that in these local and spontaneous movement of the young workers we recently met with the sad experiences of some adult workers actually taking part as strike breakers, because while the wages of the apprentices were ridiculously low, those of the adults were increased. The apprentices were getting 1,000 marks and the adults 4,500 marks. The proprietors of the wharves had declared that if the

adult workers would not do the work of the striking youths and at the same wages as the youths, then they would also be locked out. The same has been observed in other places. What did the adult workers do in such cases? They acted as strike breakers, and not even at the higher wages, but at the miserable pittance of the young workers. This fact causes us misgivings, showing the wide cleavage between the masses of the young workers and the masses of the adult workers.

It shows how capitalism has succeeded to cause enmity between the two groups of the working class.

Therefore, the Communist International must make a clear statement on this question, and it is ready to do so. It declares that the united front of the young and the adult workers for a common struggle against capitalism and reaction is an absolute necessity, and calls upon all its parties and the entire working class to stand up for the interest and demands of the working class youth as well as for their own and to make them the subject of their daily struggle. And we know that when the Communist International sends forth such a call to all its members, to the adult workers, when it adopts such a resolution that it is not mere lip service, but that it is actually determined to put this decision into practice and to pledge all its organisations to take cognizance of the importance of this question and put this decision and these principles into daily practice. The Communist International must not allow them to become indifferent. On the contrary, it must do its utmost to bring the young workers into its camp. The capitalist offensive and reaction must break down before the determined resistance of the entire revolutionary working class. If we know today how to represent the interest of the young workers and to bring them over to our side, we shall get access to them and will be able to actually organise their wide masses within the Communist International. There is the practical side to the entire question of the struggle in the interests of the young workers. It is the practical colla-

boration between the young communists and the Communist Party. Generally speaking, the practical collaboration between the Communist Party and the Young Communists have greatly improved during this year. Nevertheless, we must not relax in our mutual efforts to attain the ends which to us is both a necessary ideal and a practical demand. I will adduce one illustration in connection with this question. We had a very protracted discussion in Czecho-Slovakia with the Party officials as to whether the existence of the Young Communist League was a necessity or not. Many leading Party members adopted an attitude which practically meant that the Young Communists Leagues were not needed, that it was sufficient to have a Party, Trade Unions, and Sport organisations, which could be entrusted with the training and organisation of their young members. Such an attitude is a complete misunderstanding of the tasks of the Young Communist Leagues as an organisation which is to attract the wide masses of the working class youth and to give them a communist political training. We succeeded in converting these comrades to our point of view. But, though we have overcome this difficulty formally, it does not follow that the same view exists no longer within the Party.

We had to work hard in Great Britain before we were able to persuade the Communist Party of the necessity of bringing into being a proletarian young peoples movement, and it was only after a struggle lasting for several months that the Party Congress endorsed this idea.

All this goes to illustrate the fact that in some countries there is no proper appreciation of the Young Communist movement. But generally speaking, we are able to state that the co-operation between the Young Communist Leagues and the Party has improved decidedly. We have drawn up a resolution containing a number of practical propositions for co-operation on all fields which was submitted to the various delegations. My time being limited, I shall refer quite briefly to some of the points of this resolution.

In the first place we have the question of the economic struggle. Unfortunately the Communist parties met this question



with no open mind. Some parties, such as the German, the Austrian, and the Czechoslovakian, met us more than half way. The Italian Party has also supported us in this respect, but there is still a frame of mind among our comrades which cannot be tolerated. I will cite only one example. We had a session of the Executive Committee of the Red Trade Union International where we made various proposals concerning the representation of the working class youth on this International. In answer to our proposals we were told that outside organisations had nothing to say within the trade unions. A few days ago we had occasion to speak with a Spanish comrade, a prominent communist and trade unionist. We told him that in view of the capitalist offensive the co-operation of the young members of the working class should be taken into consideration, to which he told us that we should not trouble our adult comrades with our questions. He said that our attitude was one of 'esprit cooperatif,' that is, a guild spirit. We say to this that the guild spirit is on the side of those who do not understand that the struggle of the working class can only be a struggle of the working class as a whole. I could cite many such examples. The comrades within the parties and the trade unions should show a better understanding of the economic struggle of the young workers and of the Young Communist League. The French example must not be copied, for it was in France that at the Trade Union Congress before which the young workers laid a number of their demands, out of a hundred and fifty communists only seven comrades voted for the discussion of the young workers' question and for the reading of the letter addressed by the Young Communists to the Congress. The other comrades simply abstained from voting or even voted against it. Such incidents must not happen again. The party organisations must show a better appreciation of the interests of the young workers, and the party comrades within the trade unions must advocate the organisation of the young workers within the trade unions, the inclusion of provisions concerning the youth, collective agreements, the establishment of Young Communist fractions, and the organisation of young

communist nuclei in the various industries and workshops.

I must also say a few words about the anti-militarist campaign. This is still a sore point with most of our parties. On this field we must have more mutual understanding than before, because the present situation is such that this struggle must not be left entirely to the Young Communist Leagues. It is absolutely necessary that the parties intensify the struggle. Closer co-operation is an absolute necessity.

We also make several proposals in our resolution in connection with educational work to the effect that the Party should support the educational work of the Y. C. Leagues by supplying them with educational forces, with seats in the Party schools etc.

In connection with this, I must say a few words about the Party press. I am able to report a considerable improvement in the party press in connection with the treatment of young peoples questions, as most of the papers are paying much more attention to these questions than heretofore. Germany is no doubt the focus of the economic struggle of the young workers. And yet it happened in Germany that a newspaper editors conference arrived at the decision to stop all young peoples supplements in the entire German Communist press. We have been told that the Berliner "Rote Fahne" is very loth to accept articles on young peoples questions, and that it is almost impossible to get anything in that line accepted by the "Rote Fahne." The young peoples supplement cannot get any permanent foothold in that paper. Long was the struggle on this score, the political bureau said "yes," and the editors said no. It is a regrettable fact that in a country like Germany so little is being done for the Young Communist agitation in the central organ of the Party. Neither has the central organ in Czechoslovakia a young peoples supplement, nor was it possible to get a single article about the organisation of the youth workers into the British press. Even an article on the formation of the Y. C. League was rejected. It is even more difficult to get something about the Y. C. movement in "Humanité" than the "Rote Fahne." Thus, there is room for improvement in that direction.

In conclusion, I must touch upon the question of the organisation of the children's groups. This movement has been firmly established in the course of this year in many countries and the Parties are beginning to take an interest in this work. This interest is very welcome, and we should insist that the Parties should not encourage the tendency of a vague general education for working class children, that they should throw overboard the bourgeois nonsense of a general rational education and that they should insist on a purely communist education for the children. It must not happen as in France that a magazine like "Les Petits Bons Hommes", which is published by a petty-bourgeois intellectual group, is circulated within the Organisation, while this is not done for the communist magazine. The Czechoslovakian C. P. has also tolerated that its organisations published and circulated a colourless little paper in opposition to the communist children's magazine. The work of the Y. C. Leagues in connection with the children's groups' movement must be better supported, and the tendencies for a bourgeois education must be overcome. Comrades, it is of course impossible to deal here in detail with all the questions of practical cooperation between the Party and the Y. C. Leagues. We trust that the resolution will meet with your approval and will be put to practical application.

In this way, the Communist Youth will fulfill its duty towards the Party more eagerly than this year, and the cooperation with the Party will be more pronounced. This cooperation of the Party and the Youth in all fields will help us bring the Youth under our influence, will help us organise it. When the Communist International will have won the young workers, assuring itself of their support, then the ultimate triumph of the revolution will have been assured.

Three years have passed since the Communist Youth International was formed in Berlin. We met in a small smokey backroom of a suburban inn, forced to underground methods by the Noske reaction. Since that time the Communist Youth International has grown tremendously; its membership has been nearly quadrupled, it has grown in strength,

definiteness of purpose, and determination. We hope that the Communist International and the Communist Youth will be able to penetrate the ranks of the working Youth, to arouse them to action, and replenish the Communist Movement with powerful fighting troops. And we hope that we will be able to prove to you at the next Congress that the Communist Youth International assisted by the Comintern has fought for the interests of the masses of the young workers, has drawn them into the struggles of the adult workers and won them over to Communism. (Applause).

Kolaroff—Chairman: The Presidium proposes that the resolution on the Youth movement be referred to it and that no special commission be created. Any opposition? The proposition is accepted.

Billings (America): Comrades, the colonial question was recognised as an important question in relation to the world revolution by the Second Congress of the Communist International, but it is a general complaint among the oriental comrades, and also among some of the colonial comrades that this matter has been treated rather in the form of a step-child than as a part of the general world revolutionary problem. In the Negro question we have before us another phase of the race and colonial question to which no attention has been paid heretofore. I mean by that that, heretofore, the Second International has not paid any particular attention to the Negro question as such. Therefore we find that in the thesis of the Second Congress there is a statement that the Second International was an International of white workers, while the Third International was an International of the workers of the world.

Both Comrade Zinoviev and Comrade Bukharin in their speeches referred to the colonial question as one of the most important questions with which we have to deal at the present time. However, now that this important problem is before discussion, I expect this Congress to take cognisance of the lessons learned and the tactics applied relative to the Colonial question. The Congress must have, at least the Third International must have, gained certain experiences in dealing with the Far Eastern people and also



with the Near Eastern question, and it ought to have crystallised some knowledge out of this particular problem. It will find that, in dealing with this question certain mistakes (mistakes made inevitably) occur must be taken into account and, when we begin with the Negro question, we must begin with the very start in the proper direction.

In considering the Negro question as such, we must also be prepared to take into consideration the psychological factors which enter into the Negro problem. Therefore, we must realise that different peoples at certain given times reaching a special stage of development must of necessity have certain different psychological reactions towards the world in general. When we attempt to carry on the work amongst these masses, to carry our agitational propaganda to them, we must perforce take into consideration these factors that we find in the particular question at issue.

Although the Negro problem as such is fundamentally an economic problem, notwithstanding, we find that this particular problem is aggravated and intensified by the friction which exists between the white and black races. It is a matter of common knowledge that prejudice as such, although born from the class prejudice that any group takes in society, notwithstanding the question of race, does play an important part. Whilst it is true that, for instance, in the United States of America the main basis of racial antagonism lies in the fact that there is competition of labour in America between black and white, nevertheless, the Negro bears a badge of slavery on him which has its origin way back in the time of his slavery. Hence you find that this particular antagonism on the part of the white workers to the black workers assumes this particular form because of this very fact.

There are about 150,000,000 Negroes throughout the world. Approximately 25,000,000 of them reside in the New World, and the rest reside in Africa. The Negroes in America and the West Indies are a source of cheap labour supply for the American capitalist, and we find that the capitalist class has always used and will always continue to use them as an instrument in order to suppress the white

working class in its every-day struggle. They will be the source from which the "white guard" elements will be recruited in the event of a revolutionary uprising anywhere and everywhere.

In Africa the exploitation of the Negroes afforded opportunities for the continuation of the accumulation process of capital. The capitalist class as a class has recognised the valuable aid that the Negro masses will be to them. Therefore, for years they have made it their business to cultivate a bourgeois ideology in the mind of the Negro populace. This, of course, was done in their own interests, and not in those of the Negroes. They have carefully planned out and planted organisations amongst the Negroes to carry agitation in favor of the bourgeoisie as against the white workers. They have what is known as the Rockefeller Foundation, they have the Urban League. The first organisation supplies grants of money to Negro schools; the second is a notorious strike-breaking institution. They have been on the job while most of the revolutionaries have been asleep. Facing this condition, it was inevitable that the Negro population would have some sort of reaction against the oppression and the suppression to which they were subjected throughout the world. Their first reaction was, of course, in the forming of religious institutions, the only forms permitted at certain times for their own enjoyment, but later we find that there has been a continuous development of organisations on the part of the Negroes, which, although purely Negro, are to a certain extent directly or indirectly opposed to capitalism. The three most important Negro organisations operating today are firstly, what is known as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an organisation which is composed of a large proletarian element led by bourgeois intellectuals, an organisation that today bases its action upon the principle of seeking redress from the capitalist class by means of petitions and what practically amounts to begging that something may be done for them. Then we come to the other more interesting form of organisation which is known as the Garvey Association, an organisation that is ultra-nationalist, yet composed of a rebel rank and file ele-

ment. It is an organisation which, in spite of the fact that it has drafted on its program various cheap stock schemes, is influencing the minds of the Negroes against imperialism. This organisation came into existence after the world war. Of course it did not take any definite radical form, it was saved in time by its own leader, but, notwithstanding this, the race consciousness has been planted and used to a very large extent, far into the interior of Africa, where hardly anyone could expect that an organisation could be planted there which had its origin in America. The third organisation is the African Blood Brotherhood, a radical Negro organisation which bases its program upon the abolition of capitalism. It was the one organisation which, during the time of a race riot in Tulsa Oklahoma, put up a splendid and courageous fight, and the one to which the capitalist class in America is going to turn its attention next.

We have also in Africa certain small organisations which get their direct inspiration from America, the headquarters and centre of political thought among Negroes, these organisations are stretching out and developing as far as the Sudan. These can be utilised by Communists if the means of propaganda are carefully, deliberately and intensively used to link up these movements. We see already that there is a sort of organisation which will react against imperialism throughout the world.

There are in the United States about 450 Negro newspapers and magazines, and, while they are mostly strictly racial, nevertheless they have a great influence upon the Negro masses everywhere. There is for instance the "Chicago Defender" which issues 250,000 copies weekly which are spread out all over the world, wherever there are large groups of Negroes. Then there is the "Crisis", a monthly magazine which has a circulation of over 600,000. These papers, and especially the "Chicago Defender" and others with a smaller circulation have constantly used radical propaganda material that we sent out.

The Negroes feel the impending crisis which will break out in the south between black and white. It was in the South that the seed was sown and the results

are bound to come in some way. It will probably take the form of race rioting on a very large scale.

The Negro question, comrades, is of very great interest and of very great importance to us. For example, you find that in the United States, of the approximate number of 12 million Negroes who inhabit that country, 2 millions live in the northern industrialised part of the country, and the other 9 or 10 millions in the South (and I suppose that all of you have a picture in your mind of what the South is like. When you enter there it is like Dante's Inferno. Sometimes you feel like giving up hope altogether). It is almost a country all by itself. 80% of the Negroes live on the land. They are discriminated against and disfranchised, and it is there that the class struggle is waged in its most brutal form. You find the relation between blacks and whites to be one of constant conflict and of fighting to the death. You find there lynching and race riots. You find that the lynching of a Negro is something to be enjoyed in the South as a picture show is enjoyed elsewhere. When you find that the white population in the South is so saturated with this idea of white domination over the Negro you see that this question must engage our attention. At the present time when there are big strikes in the north United States, you find that the capitalist class, and its hirelings hurry to the South in order to draw the Southern Negroes into the Northern districts as strike-breakers. They promise them higher wages and better conditions, and so induce them to enter those areas in which strikes are in progress. That is a constant danger to the white workers when on strike. Of course, the entire blame for this must not be placed upon the Negroes. The labour unions in America, and I am speaking of the bona fide trade unions, have for the last few years, insisted that, although a Negro is a skilled worker, he cannot by virtue of the fact that he is a Negro enter the trade union. It is only recently that the American Federation of Labour has made a weak attempt to try to get Negroes into the regular trade unions. But, even today, such an organisation as the Machinist's Union, still has, if I am not mistaken the assertion in its



program that the qualification of membership is that every white brother shall introduce for membership other white men or something to that effect. This means that the Negroes are permanently excluded from the unions simply on account of the fact that they are black, and the capitalist class, and the reactionary Negro press uses this to the fullest extent in order to prejudice the minds of these black workers against the labour unions. When you speak to a Negro about his joining a trade union, or about the necessity of his becoming radical, the first thing he throws at you is the assertion: "Don't preach to me. Preach to the whites. They need it and I do not. I am always ready to fight alongside of them so long as they agree to take me into the trade unions, but as long as they do not, I will scab, and, by God, I have a right to scab. I want to protect my own life". That is one of their arguments and it cannot be ignored. While theoretically we may use all the beautiful phrases that we know, nevertheless these are hard concrete facts in the everyday struggle.

The Negro Commission has prepared a thesis on the Negro Question which I shall read to you presently. While going into the Negro question, we also prepared certain definite proposals which we think should be carried out by the various sections of the Communist International who have Negroes in their territories or colonies. We have prepared these proposals of course not to have them left merely on paper, but to be carried out by the various sections, and we will request the Communist International to see to it that the proposals are carried out in the letter and in the spirit in which they are written. We have prepared an outline for the work, a proposal for the immediate carrying on of the work amongst Negroes throughout the world. We have also made a proposal for the establishment of a Negro Bureau as part of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The reason we did this was because we wanted this work co-ordinated and centralised, and we thought the best place for this Bureau or section, or whatever you like to call it, is Moscow. The Negro question is to us of very great importance, and therefore we have endeavoured

to carefully consider the situations as they actually exist in Africa and in America especially. We have not gone into any dreams about a program although we have made certain definite suggestions as to what should be included in a plan for a Negro organisation, taking into consideration the peculiar mental reactions of the Negro at the present time. The thesis on the Negro question reads as follows:

"The basis of the process of accumulation, which existed for the development of capitalism before the war, has, as a result of the war, been completely revolutionised as regards the relationship between advanced capitalist countries exporting capital and the colonial and semi-colonial peoples under their domination. At the same time there has developed among these peoples a movement of revolt, which is still making successful progress against the power of world capital as embodied in British imperialism, so much so that the penetration and intensive colonisation of regions inhabited by black races is becoming the last great problem on the solution of which the further development of capitalist accumulation itself depends. French capitalists clearly recognise that the power of French post-war imperialism will only be able to maintain itself through the creation of a Franco-African Empire, linked up by Trans-Sahara Railway. America's financial magnates (who are exploiting 12,000,000 Negroes at home) are now entering upon a peaceful penetration of Africa. How keenly Britain on her part dreads the menace to her position is shown by the extreme measures taken to crush the Rand strike. Just as in the Pacific the danger of another world war has become acute owing to the competition of imperialist powers there, so Africa looms ominously as an object of their rival ambitions. Moreover, the war, the Russian Revolution and the great movements of revolt against imperialism on the part of the Asiatic and Mussulman nationalities have aroused the consciousness of the millions of the Negro race whom capitalism has oppressed and degraded beyond all others for hundreds of years not only in Africa, but perhaps even more in America, where the movement of revolt has grown more and more intense,

with a reflex effect on the whole Negro race. Consequently the Negro problem, on subjective no less than objective grounds, has become a vital question of the world revolution, and the Third International, which has already recognised what valuable aid can be rendered to the proletarian revolution by colored Asiatic peoples in semi-capitalist countries, likewise regards the co-operation of our oppressed black fellowmen as essential in the revolution of the proletarian masses and the destruction of capitalist power. The Fourth Congress accordingly declares it to be a special duty of communists to apply the "Thesis on Colonial Questions" to the Negro problem.

1. The Fourth Congress recognises the necessity of supporting every form of Negro movement which tends to undermine or weaken capitalism or imperialism, or to impede its further penetration.

2. Negro workers should everywhere be organised, and if and when Negro and white working masses coexist, a United Front should be formed at every opportunity.

3. Work among the Negroes should be carried on more particularly by Negroes.

4. Immediate steps should be taken to hold a Negro conference or congress in Moscow.

Well, comrades, in closing, I want just to make this remark, that I hope the comrades who come from the various sections of the Communist International where there are Negro workers will take cognisance of the Negro problem as it exists today, and that they will carry on, not in the form of a New Year's resolution, but, actually and directly, this work, in order to arouse the consciousness of the Negro masses, so that we may be able to link them up for the proletarian revolution.

Comrade McKay. Comrades, I feel that I would rather face a lynching stake in civilised America than try to make a speech before the most intellectual and critical audience in the world. I belong to a race of creators but, my public speaking has been so bad that I have been told by my own people that I should never try to make speeches, but stick to writing and laughing. However, when I heard the Negro question was going to be brought up on the floor of the Con-

gress, I felt that it would be an eternal shame if I did not say something on behalf of the members of my race. Especially would I be a disgrace to the American Negroes because, since I published a notorious poem in 1919, I have been pushed forward as one of the spokesmen of Negro radicalism in America to the detriment of my poetical temperament I feel that my race is honoured by this invitation to one of its members to speak at this Fourth Congress of the Third International. My race on this occasion is honoured, not because it is different from the white race and the yellow race, but is especially a race of toilers, hewers of wood and drawers of water that belong to the most oppressed, exploited, and suppressed section of the working class of the world. The Third International stands for the emancipation of all the workers of the world regardless of race or colour, and this stand of the Third International is not made merely on paper like the Fifteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America. It is a real thing.

The Negro race in the economic life of the world today, occupies a very peculiar position. In every country where the Whites and Blacks must work together the capitalists have set the one against the other. It would seem at the present day that the International bourgeoisie would use the Negro race as their trump card in their fight against the world revolution. Great Britain has her Negro regiments in the colonies and she has demonstrated what she can do with her Negro soldiers by the use that she made of them during the late war. The revolution in England is very far away because of the highly organised exploitation of the subject peoples of the British Empire. In Europe we find that France has a Negro army of over 300,000, and that to carry out their policy of imperial domination in Europe the French are going to use their Negro minions.

In America we have the same situation. The Northern bourgeoisie knows how well the Negro soldiers fought for their own emancipation, although illiterate and untrained, during the Civil War. They also remember how well the Negro soldiers fought in the Spanish American war under Theodore Roosevelt. They know



that in the last war over 400,000 Negroes who were mobilised gave a very good account of themselves, and that, besides fighting for the capitalists, they also put up a very good fight for themselves on returning to America when they fought the white mobs in Chicago, St. Louis and Washington.

But more than the fact that the American capitalists are using Negro soldiers in their fight against the interests of labour is the fact that the American capitalists are setting out to mobilise the entire black race of America for the purpose of fighting organised labour. The situation in America today is terrible and fraught with grave dangers. It is much uglier and more terrible than was the condition of the peasants and Jews of Russia under the Tsar. It is so ugly and terrible that very few people in America are willing to face it. The reformist bourgeoisie have been carrying on the battle against discrimination and racial prejudice in America. The Socialists and Communists have fought very shy of it because there is a great element of prejudice among the socialists and communists of America. They are not willing to face the Negro question. In associating with the comrades of America I have found demonstrations of prejudice on the various occasions when the White and Black comrades had to get together: and this is the greatest difficulty that the Communists of America have got to overcome—the fact that they first have got to emancipate themselves from the ideas they entertained towards the negroes before they can be able to reach the Negroes with any kind of radical propaganda. However, regarding the Negroes themselves, I feel that as the subject races of other nations have come to Moscow to learn how to fight against their exploiters, the Negroes will also come to Moscow. In 1918 when the Third International published its Manifesto and included that part referring to the exploited colonies, there were several groups of Negro radicals in America that sent this propaganda out among their people. When in 1920 the American government started to investigate and to suppress radical propaganda among the Negroes, the small radical Negro groups in America retaliated by publishing the fact that the socialists stood for the

emancipation of the Negroes, and that reformist America could do nothing for them. Then, I think, for the first time in American history, the American Negroes found that Karl Marx had been interested in their emancipation and had fought valiantly for it. I shall just read this extract that was taken from Karl Marx's writing at time of the Civil War:

"When an oligarchy of 300,000 slave holders for the first time in the annals of the world, dared to inscribe 'Slavery' on the banner of armed revolt, who on the very spot hardly a century ago the idea of one great democratic republic had first sprung up, whence the first declaration of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulse given to the European revolution of the Eighteenth century, when on that spot the counter-revolution cynically proclaimed property in man to be 'the corner-stone of the new edifice'—then the working class of Europe understood at once that the slaveholders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy war of property against labour, with their hopes of the future, even their past conquests were at stake in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic.

"Karl Marx who drafted the above resolution is generally known as the father of Scientific Socialism and also of the epoch-making volume, popularly known as the Socialist bible 'Capital.' During the civil war he was correspondent of the New York Tribune. In company with Richard Cobden, Charles Bradlaugh the Atheist, and John Bright, he toured England making speeches and so roused up the sentiment of the workers of that country against the Confederacy that Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister, who was about to recognise the South, had to desist.

As Marx fought against chattel slavery in 1861, so are present day socialists, his intellectual descendants, fighting against wage slavery.

If the Workers Party in America were really a Workers Party that included the Negroes it would, for instance, in the South, have to be illegal, and I would inform the American Comrades that there is a branch of the Workers Party in the South, in Richmond, Virginia, that is

illegal,—illegal because it includes coloured members. There we have a very small group of white and coloured comrades working together, and the fact that they have laws in Virginia and most of the Southern States discriminating against whites and blacks assembling together means that the Workers Party in the South must be illegal. To get round these laws of Virginia, the comrades have to meet separately, according to colour, and about once a month they assemble behind closed doors.

This is just an indication of the work that will have to be done in the South. The work among the negroes of the South will have to be carried on by some legal propaganda organised in the North, because we find at the present time in America that the situation in the Southern States (where nine million out of ten million of the negro population live), is that even the liberal bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie among the negroes cannot get their own papers of a reformist propaganda type into the South on account of the laws that there discriminate against them.

The fact is that it is really only in the Southern States that there is any real suppression of opinion. No suppression of opinion exists in the Northern States in the way it exists in the South. In the Northern States special laws are made for special occasions—as those against communists and socialists during the war—but in the South we find laws that have existed for 55 years, under which the negroes cannot meet to talk about their grievances. The white people who are interested in their cause cannot go and speak to them. If we send white comrades into the South they are generally ordered out by the Southern oligarchy and if they do not leave they are generally whipped, tarred and feathered; and if we send comrades into the South they won't be able to get out again—they will be lynched and burned at the stake.

I hope that as a symbol that the negroes of the world will not be used by the international bourgeoisie in the final conflicts against the World Revolution. I hope that just as a challenge to the international bourgeoisie, who have really got an understanding on the negro question, we shall soon see a few negro soldiers in the finest, bravest, and cleanest fighting forces in the world—the Red Army and Navy of Russia—fighting not only for their own emancipation, but also for the emancipation of the working class of the whole world.

Kolaroff. Chairman: I call your attention to the fact that this is the first time that the Negro problem has been brought before the World Congress of the Comintern; I do not believe it necessary to prove the importance of this question. We have to win over to our side a race which has lived till now in a state of oppression. The Negro commission has adopted the resolution which is somewhat too theoretical in form and may not be wholly understood by the working class and the lower section of the black race. The Presidium therefore decided to refer this resolution back to the commission to be altered and simplified.

There being no objections the motion is adopted.

It has been proposed to adjourn the session now and reconvene at 7 o'clock. The co-operative question will then come up for discussion. This motion will be considered as carried if there is no opposition.

The following commissions will meet tonight:

- 6 o'clock, the agrarian commission;
- 8 o'clock, the Yugoslavian commission;
- 9 o'clock, the commission on education;

All commissions meet here in the adjoining halls.

Session closed 4.55 p. m.