

WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
UNITE!

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL



NO.

4

First Special Vth Congress Number

PRICE

Monthly Organ of the Executive Committee of  
**THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL**

JULY | 1924  
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# The Lenin Enrolment

**O**N examining the manner in which the Comintern as a whole was built up, the development of its separate, most important sections, and judging particularly from the experience of our own Party—the Russian Communist Party—we are led to the conclusion that the development of the Communist organisations may be divided into four periods, as follows :

**First period :** the process of organising the Communist Party, and its development from the old Social-Democratic Party out of which have grown the majority of the present-day Communist parties, in particular those which take the form of mass Communist parties ; the crises connected with the transition from social democracy to Communism ; the splits and groupings arising from this transition. In a word, the **birth** of the Communist Party.

**Second period :** the struggle for influence over the masses, and the winning of sufficient control to guarantee a majority in the working class. The slogan “ to the masses ” is the most distinguishing feature of this period.

**Third period :** the struggle for power. The Communist Party, relying on the sympathy of the majority of the workers, seizes political power. But on the day after the conquest of power, new difficulties begin. The proletarian revolution struggles for its existence. The vanguard of the working class remains true to the Communist Party during this transition period so fraught with painful difficulties. The broad masses of the working class live through a period of vacillation. Moments arise when the hardships of the revolution frighten off the majority of the workers. This is the culminating point of the struggle of the proletarian revolution for its existence.

**Fourth period :** the victory of the proletarian revolution guaranteed, the fruits of the revolution are evident to the whole working class, the main difficulties are left behind. Those elements of the working class which wavered more than once during the most difficult moments of the third period, now come over completely and without reservation to the side of the Communist Party.

The majority of the Communist parties of the West are at the present time passing through the stage of transition from the first period of development to the second. To be sure, other periods also exist, and various degrees of transition. The work of organising the Communist parties has been completed, the whole gamut of crises connected with the **birth** of the Communist parties has been weathered, and the intensive struggle for gaining the ascendancy over the majority of the working class has already begun.

Our Russian Communist Party has already gone through the first two periods, and is now nearing the end of the third period. The great significance of the movement which has been called the "Lenin enrolment" consists in the fact that it marks the favourable conclusion of the third period, and possibly the opening chapter of the fourth period.

The transition period—the period of the struggle of the victorious proletarian revolution for existence, has already been prolonged in our country to the seventh year. During this time there have been more than once serious disturbances in the ranks of the working class. These disturbances, even up to the spring of 1921, were so serious that the fate of the revolution hung in the balance. Too great were the obstacles which stood in the way of the revolution. Too great were the sacrifices which the revolution demanded at that time from the masses of the workers.

In 1923 came the turning point. The masses of the workers felt that in connection with the end of the civil war and the introduction of the NEP, a change for the better had come. Even at the time of the Twelfth Congress of the party we were able to state "the party has, as it were, won over the proletarian masses for the second time." But this fact has now become especially striking. The new "Lenin enrolment" is a definite **yield of the revolution**. The party is gathering an abundant harvest because a whole chapter in the history of our revolution is ending auspiciously.

During the entire course of the first three periods of its existence the Communist Party could not, by its very nature, unite within its ranks the majority of the workers. In any particular phase of the struggle the Communists may have on their side the **sympathy** of the majority of the working class. But they could not, in any of these three periods, organise the majority of the workers within the **Party ranks**, actually to include the majority of the proletariat in the **Party membership**. The reasons for this are obvious. During the



first period the Communist Party is still of necessity so weak that no thought of winning over a clear majority of the workers is possible. During the second period the Communists ordinarily come up against frenzied opposition on the part of the bourgeoisie. As long as the bourgeoisie are in power, they do not, of course, give the Communists the opportunity of legally organising in their ranks the majority of the workers. In order to prevent this they resort to such measures as imprisonment, hard labour, execution, mass butchery. During the third period such organisation is prevented by the objective difficulties of the revolution, and the inevitable wavering among wide circles of the proletariat resulting from these difficulties.

In our country—the country of the first victorious proletarian revolution, this third period has dragged on for seven years. As far as one can foresee two or three more years will be necessary before the difficulties attendant upon this period can finally be overcome. And approximately only toward the end of the first decade of the existence of the Soviet Government will the proletarian dictatorship be able to overcome the most important difficulties to a sufficient degree to enable the Communist Party to enter on its fourth period. All, or nearly all the workers, are beginning to enrol in the ranks of our Communist Party. The “working class” and the “workers’ party” are becoming synonymous terms. The Russian Communist Party is thus not only guaranteed unlimited influence over an overwhelming majority of the workers, but it is **directly organising the majority of the industrial workers within its ranks.**

The splendid campaign in connection with the “Lenin enrolment” is important not only from the fact that it gives us a definite number of new party members. Its significance is far greater than that—it lies in the fundamental change that is taking place in the mutual relationship between the party of the workers and the working class, in that quantitative change which will soon become a qualitative change. After the first wave will come a second and a third. Additional hundreds of thousands of workers will pour into the ranks of the Russian Communist Party. By the end of the first decade of the Soviet Government’s existence, the working class and the Russian Communist Party will be one and the same thing—not only in the old sense, that the Russian Communist Party defends the vital interests of the working class as a whole, but in the new sense that the R.C.P. will include within its ranks the organised majority of the working class.

The course of the campaign for membership has proved to be even more successful than we could have expected. Up to the beginning of March the number of applications throughout the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics had attained 183,000. The problem of taking in 100,000 workers from the factories, proposed by the All-Union Party Conference, will be doubly fulfilled. The Central Committee will, in our opinion, act correctly, if it urges all local organisations not to check such a splendidly developing campaign, but to carry on the "Lenin enrolment" to the two hundred thousand mark or higher. If this is done we shall have about 600,000 members in our party of whom about 300,000, that is 50 per cent., will be workers at the bench; and including also those workers who occupy positions in the administrative apparatus we will not have less than 400,000 workers as members—*i.e.*, more than two-thirds of the party membership.

From what particular elements of the workers is the "Lenin enrolment" constituted? We attempted to find an answer to this question at two conferences called on our initiative in Leningrad and in Moscow. At each of these conferences two comrades were present from among the newly-enrolled party members in the largest factories and shops in Moscow and Leningrad. At these conferences dozens of workers spoke from the floor.

The most striking thing about these meetings was the fact that the new party members of the "Lenin enrolment" were frequently not merely rank and file workers, but included some of the most prominent individuals among the workers. And that is easy enough to understand. Just as in the preceding years our party was built up by a process of the most careful and systematic selection of the strongest and finest of the workers, so at the present time in the foremost ranks of the workers in the "Lenin enrolment" are to be found the most outstanding people, of a type far above the average, those leading workers who will be followed by tens and hundreds of the rank and file, and sometimes even by whole workshops, whole factories. As one of these workers remarked at the Moscow conference (the representative of the former Goujhon factory, now the "Hammer and Sickle"), the "Lenin enrolment" is handpicked, like berries. In every workshop, there were certain outstanding non-party workers, enjoying great authority, with whom other non-party workers lined up. "Troshkin has joined the party—why shouldn't I join too?"—is how a worker from "Mastyajarta" expressed himself.

Many of the workers who have joined during recent years

have travelled all over Russia : now at the front, now in the village—they have grown up immeasurably, both politically and culturally, during these years. “ There are no slackers among us,” was the unanimous opinion of the workers at the Leningrad and Moscow conferences. “ We all know each other thoroughly, and we will not allow any slackers to join.”

“ Why haven't you joined before this? ”

“ I was too rough and uncultured—but now I've been polished up a bit.”

“ I'm ashamed to be joining in 1924—but I had to be shoved by the crowd.”

“ Family conditions didn't allow——”

“ There was no time to think of it before. I returned from the front and then it was all I could do to earn a bite and keep a roof over my head.”

“ Now Lenin has died, we have lost a great man. We talked it over amongst ourselves. And so we all decided to join the party——” that was the way an old railroad worker put it.

“ I'm better off than I was. I'm no longer in need of bread, I can devote myself to the work now. My comrades said, ‘ Well, it's about time! As it is you are late.’ But now, since the death of Comrade Ilyitch the door of the party has been opened.” Thus spoke the representative of the “ Lenin enrolment ” from the Putiloff works at the Leningrad conference.

The finest workers have joined, 90 per cent. of the cream of the proletariat. Formerly, they hesitated or regarded the question of joining the party with indifference. Now that Lenin has died we must all join forces,” declared the worker Semenov from the Shipbuilding Works in Leningrad.

“ I couldn't make up my mind what to do, but now the time has come to act. I say : you've ridden on other people's back long enough, it's time to stand on your own legs. Join the party ! ” said a worker from the Proletarsky Works (formerly the Alexandrovsky workshop).

“ My daughter and son are Young Communists. I was working women's delegate for two years. After the death of Ilyitch my children and I decided that I must join the party. Now I'm agitating among the younger women to get them to join too. They are all coming in,” said a woman worker from the “ The Red Weaver ” (formerly the Thornton factory).

“ Now a new life is beginning—why should we be out of

it? Come along—we'll join too"; a worker from the former Semianovsky Works, now named after Lenin.

"The non-party workers were divided: some cursed the Bolsheviki, others have been defending them for two or three years. The latter are pouring into the party now. And even among those who were cursing before there are some who are saying: 'You can't get the better of the Communists, they've shown they were in the right—we might as well sign up!'"—a worker from the Baltic Works.

"Before it used to happen that one speaker would tell us one thing, and another another—the S.R.'s had their opinion and the Mensheviki theirs. The workers couldn't make much out of it all, and so they were left in doubt. But now we have all seen who is right. Wherever the workers are, I'm with them"—a worker from the Leningrad electrical station.

"Before, they tried to frighten us! Those Communists! You wait, they'll hang you yet. Others were in doubt, too"—a working woman from the Jelabov factory.

"The death of Ilyitch—that in itself isn't so important. Before he worked alone for everyone, but now we've all got to work together to take his place, we can't allow one to be drawn this way, and another that. The bourgeoisie might get on top again, and Leningrad is a revolutionary nest, they'll make us pay for it all. Let's join the party!"—a worker from the nail factory.

"That's something to think about—why we joined the party. We thought it over for a long time. But the worker looks at it this way: once you get on the right road, don't get off it—don't turn aside either to right or left. Now we understand what Ilyitch taught"—a worker from the Russian Cable Works in Moscow.

"We often have lectures on religion, on the planets, on the workers' movement. We've learnt a great deal in the last few years. We've been attending the open meetings of the 'yacheka' for a few months, and so we are beginning to understand what the party really is"—a railroad worker from the former Alexandrovsky shops in Moscow.

"Many of us have attended the party school. We have a large communal home, a fine library, bright premises. Instead of spending the evenings at home, we went along to the lectures, and gradually we were drawn in. And now Vladimir Ilyitch is dead"—a plumber from Leningrad.

“ Lenin has died, now we must join, we must be ready to give up everything, to our last drop of blood, for the party ” —a worker from “ The Red Viborg,” in Leningrad.

Frequently workers themselves remark that the recent discussion made a deep impression on a great many of the workers, previously non-party; it forced them to reflect on the general situation, and gave them an impetus to join the party.

“ During the discussion we became convinced that the general attitude of the party is ‘ the good we must keep, the bad to the garbage heap ’ ”? Thus a worker from Goujhon characterised the situation.

Summarising the above, we must say that the success of the Lenin enrolment, may be ascribed in the main to the following facts :

1. The economic conditions of the republic have improved.
2. The material conditions of the workers have improved.
3. The cultural level of the workers has been raised, and their activities have increased; they are beginning to understand that the entry into serious economic and governmental work is possible only through the party.
4. The party, in spite of certain deficiencies, has in general been able to surmount its difficulties, and has inspired the greatest respect in all those who are in any degree active in the ranks of the proletariat.
5. The death of Vladimir Ilyitch, a heavy blow to us all, aroused the best that was in the rank and file worker, touched the finest chords of his spirit, and hastened the entrance into our party of these tens of thousands of workers.

During the recent discussion there was no limit to the calumny which the “ critics ” of the old Lenin Party endeavoured to heap upon our Party. They represented it as mere dead wood, as an organisation stifled by “ secretarial bureaucracy,” “ hierarchy,” “ apparatus disease,” etc. “ The party lives on two stories: on the upper storey they decide, on the lower they are merely informed of the decisions ”—so wrote the leaders of the “ opposition.” Two stories. This theory of “ two stories ” is merely a variation of the theory of Martov who at one time wrote in criticism of the Bolsheviki that they divided the party into “ leaders ” and “ led.” If there is even an iota of truth in this absurd theory, then what is now taking place, when 200,000 of our best workers are pouring into the Party with such enthusiasm and almost reverence, must appear to be an inexplicable miracle.

But miracles do not happen. The party is reaping what it has sown.

This thing which is going on under our eyes is no "Miracle of Saint Anthony." No—here a harvest of the revolution is being gathered in—the harvest of a certain period of the work of our party. And if this great event in the life of our party has become at the same time a "harvest" for the party opposition as well, then so much the worse for them, and so much the better for the majority of our party. Our party, the greatest Communist Party in the world, is by no means the slave of a "secretarial hierarchy," by no means the victim of "party apparatus." The simple worker from Goujhon gave the best summing up of our lightweight critics—"The good we must keep—the bad to the garbage-heap."

\* \* \* \* \*

How should we begin our work with the new "Lenin enrolment," with instruction or with practical work? When we put this question up to the new comrades themselves at the two above-mentioned conferences, we received the almost unanimous answer: **instruction.**

"We want to learn. Before you give us any work, teach us!"

Their thirst for knowledge is unprecedented!

"Give us courses in 'political grammar,' study groups on party history, schools in Marxism—give us the books we need, help us to organise the clubs we should have, etc."

"Of course you can't give us party work right away. The party must first of all train us—make 'experts' out of us," remarked one of the railroad workers at the Moscow meeting.

By that he meant education and examinations and ground work in party affairs.

From the lips of the comrades who have only just joined the party such requests are easy enough to understand. We, none the less, consider that it is impossible to separate the business of training from that of participation in the practical work of the party. The task of the party is to arrange for the extensive party education of the new "Lenin enrolment," and *simultaneously* and *immediately* with that to draw the new members into practical work. Through practical work in the unions, in the co-operatives, in the wage commissions, in cultural-educational groups, in co-operative housing com-

missions, in the "smichka" societies (for linking up workers and peasants), in the school aid commission, as assessors in the courts, as working women delegates, as union representatives in the shop steward unions, in the party "yachekas"—only in some such way may the new members of the party begin to apply their efforts, and thus we shall gradually draw in hundreds and thousands of members into the most important and responsible posts in the administration of the economic affairs of the country and the government.

Still another important point. The "Lenin enrolment" has embraced workers of all age. The young, the middle aged, from 30 to 40 years, and the older ones—all of them are enrolling. "I'm the same age as Ilyitch. I was 54 years old in March," said one of the workers from the "Goznak," not without pride, at the Moscow meeting. This detail serves merely as proof of the fact that the present trend toward party membership is reflected among all ages and conditions of the proletariat.

The question as to the position of our party in the village, of the work of our party among the peasantry, will undoubtedly be one of the main questions at the forthcoming Thirteenth Congress of the Party. The new "Lenin enrolment" appears in a new light in connection with this question. We now have the opportunity, after certain preparation, of making this new mass of workers, 200,000 strong, to a certain degree the collective organiser and teacher of the village. It is now quite opportune to raise again the question in connection with general aid to villages by workers, Communists and sympathisers, to organise it on the principle of giving this aid to the village from which the particular worker originally came.

There is no doubt that the Central Committee of the Party will do everything possible to interest the members of the "Lenin enrolment" in the work of preparation for the forthcoming party congress. All the most important questions on the agenda of the congress, as well as the main results of the recently concluded party discussion, which was followed by practically all non-party workers (especially those belonging to the "Lenin enrolment"), must be given the most serious and systematic consideration by the new members of the party.

And lastly, but not least in importance, the "Lenin enrolment" plays a deciding role in the matter of increasing output in our state industry.

"One senses a different mood even in the manner in which the lathes turn now," said the secretary of the Yacheka of the "Amo" Factory at the Moscow Conference.

Just so. The first task of the new "Lenin enrolment" is—to raise the productivity of our State industry. They must not abandon their work; they must learn to combine work in the factory or shop with public work in the party, in the union, or in Soviet organisations. That is the problem of the day. Under Tsarism the best of our workers were able to carry on their revolutionary activities after 10 or 12 hours per day hard labour for capitalism. Now that our conditions of work have become comparatively normal, and we only have to work eight hours in the factory, we should be able to do this all the more.

The party is being renewed. We are receiving into our ranks 200,000 of the best workers in the country. We are receiving them in the seventh year of the proletarian dictatorship, when the working class of our country has already attained considerable growth. We are taking them in at the moment when our great leader and teacher has left us. These new comrades are opening the door into the party with deep and sincere emotion. One has but to attend a meeting of these new members of the party, to feel that our party has entered upon a new and great period of its existence. We have never before seen such meetings as the one we recently visited at the Nevsky gate—a meeting of new members of the Party, attended by about 5,000 people. "It is as refreshing as a sea bath"—as one of the comrades who visited these meetings expressed it.

At the same time our party has commenced to take systematic measures for purging our organisation of the weak, petty-bourgeois, unreliable elements. Thus, by constantly ejecting alien elements and systematically receiving into our ranks the best of the elements maturing and growing in the working class of our country, we are making of our party an organisation cast as it were from one mould. Gradually a condition will be created under which only workers will be allowed to enter the Russian Communist Party; all others, only by special arrangement. The party will once again become a workers' party in its very composition.

If we add this new and amazingly vital group of workers who are coming into our party in the "Lenin enrolment" to the old heroic Lenin group, the core of old worker-Bolsheviks, it becomes clear that the party will again and

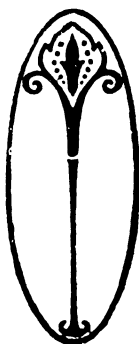


again prove equal to the demands of history, and will successfully resist degeneration. The R.C.P. is fulfilling the precepts of our great leader not in words, but in deeds.

GREGORY ZINOVIEV.

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NOTE.—A whole series of practical questions, connected with the "Lenin enrolment" have been dealt with by the author in greater detail in an article entitled "The New Lenin Enrolment, and a new chapter in the history of our party," printed in Pravda, and reprinted as a foreword to our "History of the Russian Communist Party." Those interested are referred to this work.



# An Historical Document

## NOTES ON THE PROBLEMS OF OUR DELEGATION AT THE HAGUE.

[*This striking document was written by V. I. Lenin on Dec. 4th, 1922, and was intended as an instruction to our Delegation to the Peace Conference of the Second International at the Hague.—Editor.*]

**O**N the question of combating the danger of war in connection with the Hague Conference, I think that the greatest difficulty is to overcome the preconceived idea that this question is quite simple, clear and comparatively easy to solve. "Our reply to war will be a strike or a revolution," said the reformist leaders when addressing the working class. And very often the apparent radicalism of this statement satisfies and appeases the workers and peasants.

Perhaps the most correct approach to this problem would be to begin with a sharp refutation of all such opinions; to declare that especially now, after the recent war, only the most hopelessly stupid or confirmed hypocrites can believe that such an answer to the question of the struggle against war would have the slightest effect anywhere; to declare that it is impossible to "answer" war with a strike just as it is impossible to "answer" war with a revolution, in the simplest and most literal meaning of the term.

It is necessary to explain the circumstances and the secrecy in which war is hatched and the helplessness of the ordinary workers' organisations, even though they may call themselves revolutionary, in the face of the actual approach of war.

It is necessary to explain concretely over and over again just what happened during the last war, and why it could not have happened otherwise than it did.

Particularly is it necessary to explain the circumstance that the "defence of the fatherland" becomes the inevitable question which the great majority of the workers will inevitably answer to the advantage of the bourgeoisie.

Therefore, the elucidation of the question of "the defence of the fatherland" in the first place, in the second place the explanation in this connection of the question of "defeatism," and finally, the explanation of the only possible means of struggle against war, namely, the formation and conservation of an illegal organisation of all revolutionists participating in war—for a **prolonged** work against war, all these things must be brought to the front.

"The boycott of war"—is a stupid phrase. The Communists must be ready to enter any reactionary war.

It is desirable, through, let us say, examples of German literature before the war, and in particular, through the examples of the Basle Congress of 1912 to point out very concretely that mere theoretical recognition of the fact that war is a crime, that war is not permissible for Socialists, etc., means nothing, that these prove to be empty phrases because there is nothing concrete in such a presentation of the question. We give to the masses no really vital presentation of the question as to how war may break out and does break out. On the contrary, the press of the dominating class obscures the issues by spreading lies about it in vast numbers of copies against which the weak Socialist press is entirely powerless, the more so that in the time of peace they maintain a radically wrong attitude toward this very question. The Communist press in the majority of countries also disgraces itself.

I think that our delegates at the international conference of co-operators and trade unionists should divide these questions among themselves, and examine all those sophisms, with which it has attempted to justify war at the present time, in the most careful detail.

It may be that the most effective means of attracting the masses to warfare are just these sophisms with which the bourgeois press operates on them, and the most important circumstance explaining our own powerlessness against war consists in the fact that we either have not examined these sophisms beforehand, or that we ourselves have spent our energy getting off cheap, boastful and empty phrases to the effect that we will not allow war, that we fully understand the criminality of war, etc., in the spirit of the Basle manifesto of 1912.

It seems to be that if we will have a few people who are able to make speeches against war in various languages at the Hague Conference, then our most important job will be to refute the idea that those participating in the conference

are real opponents of war, that they understand how war may and can burst upon them at the most unexpected moment, that they have the least comprehension of the means of combating war, or that they are in any way capable of undertaking an intelligent and effective course in combating war.

In connection with the recent experience of the war we must clear up that great mass of theoretical and practical questions which arose the day after the declaration of war, and which made it impossible for the great majority of those summoned to apply themselves to these problems with clarity of judgment and without prejudice.

I think that the elucidation of this question demands exceptionally detailed consideration, and from two angles :

In the first place, relating and analysing what happened during the recent war and declaring to all those present that they do not know this or that, they pretend to know it, and at the same time shut their eyes to the very core of the question without the knowledge of which there can be no talk of any struggle against war. On this point I think we must examine all the points of view, all the shades of opinion which arose at that time among the Russian Socialists in regard to the war. It must be pointed out that these viewpoints arose not by chance, but were generated in the very nature of war. It must be proved that without an analysis of these opinions, and without an explanation of the inevitability of their arising and of decisive importance in any consideration of the question of the struggle against war, there can be no discussion of preparation for war or even of any intelligent attitude towards it.

In the second place—we must take examples from conflicts now going on even though they may be of the most insignificant nature, and point out from these examples how war may break out any day from the sport of England and France over some details of the treaty with Turkey, or between America and Japan over some nonsensical disagreement on some question about the Pacific Ocean, or between any of the great powers over some colonial quarrel or from some dispute over their customs or general trade policy, etc., etc. It seems to me, that if there is the slightest doubt as regards the possibility of completing an entire speech against war at the Hague, then it is necessary to invent a whole series of clever devices in order to include at least the most important things in the speech and then to print in brochure form what has not been included in the speech. We must be prepared for being cut short by the president.

I think that for this purpose there must be invited to join the delegation not only capable orators pledged to make speeches, setting forth the entire case against war, that is, developing all the important arguments and all the necessary conditions for struggle against war—but in addition to these there must be people speaking all three of the most important languages who will devote their time to conversations with the delegates clearing up just how far they have understood the basic arguments and, in so far as there is any necessity, in bringing up other arguments or in pointing out the necessary examples.

It may be that in certain questions only actual examples drawn from the last war will have any serious effect. It may be that in certain other questions only the explanation of the present conflicts between the governments and their connection with a possible armed conflict will carry any weight.

On this question of the struggle against war, I am reminded that there are a whole series of declarations by our Communist deputies, both in Parliament, and in speeches outside of Parliament, which contain the most amazingly mistaken and superficial ideas on the subject. I think that we must take a decisive and relentless stand against all declarations of this nature, especially if they have been made after the war, mentioning the name of every such orator. You may soften all you like, when it is necessary, your denunciation of such an orator, but it is impossible to pass by a single such instance in silence, because a light-minded attitude toward this question is so mischievous that it permeates everything else, and must on no account be treated with indulgence.

There have been a succession of unpardonably stupid and hairbrained decisions of workers' congresses. We must gather at once all the material on this question and consider in the greatest detail every part and particle of this material, and prepare our "strategy" for the congress.

Not only will no mistakes be permissible, but we shall refuse to tolerate any substantial defects in the handling of this question.

LENIN.

Verified by L. FOTIEVA.

Translated by JESSICA SMITH.

# World-Wide Field of Activity of the Comintern

**T**O the distant and detached observer the full and bubbling life and activities of the Communist International may seem incomprehensible and confusing. He does not understand the historic inevitability, the fruitfulness and the inner meaning of the historic growth and development which is powerfully and consciously expressed in the Third International. Of course, it is a gradual day by day growth and development, and frequently accompanied by seemingly insignificant work and struggles. Its importance becomes manifest to the masses and to the world at large only from time to time, whenever important events and stages of development arise in the national sections, and when the revolutionary vanguard of the proletarians of the various countries makes an important advance. This growth and development becomes evident at the world congresses; here not only retrospective surveys of the development of the life and struggles of the Communist International are made, the tasks confronting the International are defined and the measures for their fulfilment determined on, but also the preparedness and strength of the movement of the world revolution is gauged and estimated.

The congresses of the Communist International are stupendous events. The number and variety of the phases of development of the countries represented at these congresses, the number of active participators, the length and variety of the agenda handled by the various commissions and delegations, the number and detailed character of the theses, resolutions, etc., which have to be elaborated and decided upon, astound the observer. Each succeeding congress shows a growth and not a diminution of these features. There is a tendency, however (for obvious reasons), to limit the number of delegates who only come merely to listen and to learn, and to concentrate on assembling working delegates.

Certain questions recur at every congress, as for instance the trade union and co-operative question, educational work, the organisation of the youth, work and propaganda among

women, etc. A great deal of tedious and exacting preparatory work by the Executive, its secretariats, and various comrades and commissions, precedes the sessions. This work takes up many weeks during which hundreds of people are busily engaged seeking solutions for the basic problems. The printed reports of our world congresses have grown from a thin little booklet into a very thick volume, and yet these do not contain the reports of the meetings of commissions and delegations. Congresses alone cannot any longer cope with the storm and stress of the activities of the Communist International. They are supplemented and prepared for by meetings of the Enlarged Executive.

There are many, even in our own ranks, who fail to understand and appreciate the historic significance of the main features of the Communist world congresses as an expression of the historic development of the proletariat. If that is so, how can we expect an unprejudiced appreciation on the part of opponents and enemies who cannot and will not understand? All of them see the foam on the crest of the waves, but are unable to see the gigantic power which raised the wave whose foam crest arrests their attention. The growing length of the agenda and of the duration of our international congresses, with their protracted discussions, are interpreted as confusion, nay even helplessness, in the face of an exacting situation, as discrepancy between promising theory and unsatisfactory practice, as a substitution of numerous resolutions for the advertised liberating revolution, as incapacity to recognise "what is possible and most needed" and to concentrate the energies of the working masses on it, as incapacity to organise and regulate events, and so on.

Consciously or unconsciously, such criticism is based on a definite fact—the character of the world congresses by which the Second International endeavoured to unite the proletariats of all countries for uniform action in the pre-war period. It must be admitted that the organisation of these gatherings reached well-nigh perfection. Their preparation was in the hands of past masters in the art of organisation and direction, who did not neglect the decorative and propagandist sides of these functions. But the work and life of the Third International cannot be measured by the congresses of the Second International, as the former is by its nature not a substitute and renewal of the Second International, but an organisation with a new historic life of its own. It goes without saying that we have still much to learn in connection with the organisation and effective staging of our world congresses, especially for the purpose

of long distance propagandist effects. But it would be utterly wrong to imagine from the character, shortcomings and weak points of these congresses, that the Communist International lacks the stamina for a proper development of its forces.

There is a mighty pulsation in the Communist world congresses. They give you a sensation of ferment which demands to be put into shape, of contradictions which must be reconciled, of something which is in the making and which must be given a final and definite form. The atmosphere which pervades these congresses is pregnant with great creative possibilities. It is an environment in which the powerful historic process, whereby the old and obsolete sinks into oblivion and the new and vigorous comes to the surface, in which capitalism becomes extinct and Communism is born, culminates.

We have no control over the objective forces of development, but, as far as human consciousness, will and action is concerned, the Communist International will be the herald and determined champion of the future world order. Its congresses, its life and activities are evidences of its rapid development, and of the vital differences between it and the Second International.

The latter was the child of a period of evolution. It was content to explain capitalism and its most prominent features, the laws by which it is governed and the process of its development; to rally the workers of the capitalist countries and to prepare them for a change in the world order. But most of its influential leaders relegated the change to the dim and distant future, to be reached along the comfortable path of democracy and social reforms. This limited the activities of the Second International. Its development went on peacefully and steadily. It did not try to undermine the foundation of the bourgeois world order in the belief that what is necessary is also possible. The Second International considered this world order so firmly established, and so little affected by the volcanic forces under its surface, that it advised the proletariat to settle in it as comfortably as possible and to wait patiently for the time when things and men will become permeated with the idea of Socialism.

The questions which emerged one by one from the evolutionary period and the narrow fenced-in field of action of the Second International were settled at its congresses by discussions and resolutions. The more they stood in conflict with capitalist economy, the capitalist State and



social order, the weaker was the influence of these resolutions, for the Second International was only a loose conglomeration of Socialist and proletarian organisations, and not a firmly-welded Party with a uniform and strongly centralised structure and strict discipline. The resolutions of its congresses were in the nature of "guiding principles" and not of binding obligations. The various national organisations treated these resolutions in an off-hand way, for they were not actuated by the desire and determination to carry them out faithfully. To carry them out would have meant a serious conflict with bourgeois society, and this is what these organisations tried to avoid. The spirit animating them was reformist and not revolutionary. Only on festive occasions did they indulge in revolutionary ideas which degenerated into hollow phraseology.

Even the most decisive resolutions on important and contentious questions were mostly in the nature of a disguised compromise between the reformism they practised and revolutionary ideas. The left wing of the Second International strove passionately but in vain to draw attention to the signs of the approaching period of revolutionary struggles and to impregnate the "evolution" atmosphere with the impetuosity of revolutionary determination. The Second International was impervious to anything but "academic questions," in fact, to anything but "storms in a teacup." The flourishing period of imperialism favoured the perpetuation of reformism, the evasion of decisions on matters of principle and the postponement of the solution of old and new problems. The Second International lacked strong and compelling impulses and attributes which result from open struggle to abolish bourgeois class domination and for the liberation of the proletariat through the establishment of its dictatorship. In short, in its activities the Second International was a well-oiled apparatus for maintaining bourgeois "law and order."

What a different impression does one obtain when observing the surging activity in the Communist International. This is because this International is not only the daughter of a revolutionary period, but revolution itself. It is the daughter of the Russian Revolution, the first powerful precursor of proletarian world revolution. Had not the Russian proletariat conquered power, had not the Workers' and Peasants' Government of Soviet Russia been established—there could have been no Third International! It came into being not only because the country of proletarian dictatorship protects and supports the revolutionary parties and movements throughout the world, not only because the rallying

call to the international revolutionary forces came from this country, but also for quite another reason. After the shameful bankruptcy of the Second International, the revolutionary action of the Russian proletariat was required to restore the confidence of the wage slaves of capitalism everywhere in the liberating power of international Socialism and in their own might and strength. Inspired by the great accomplishment of the Russian proletariat, the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat in other countries proceeded boldly and confidently under Russian leadership to establish the Third International.

“What is bred in the bone . . .” As a child of revolution, the Communist International must itself be the embodiment of revolution. It must “make revolution” in the historic sense taught us by Marx, Engels and Lenin. To further and to accelerate the proletarian world revolution is the life task of the Communist International and the historic justification of its existence. Its work must consist in rallying the exploited and oppressed of all countries and in training and developing them into sterling revolutionary forces capable of taking up a relentless struggle against capitalism, which is the classical form of the class domination of those who have over those who have not, of dead riches over living human beings. Although the conquest of power by the proletariat and the establishment of its own dictatorship is the climax of this struggle, it is by no means its conclusion. Therefore, the work of the Communist International will not end with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It will be confronted with the more difficult task of leading the proletariat during the period of construction, during the gigantic work of transferring capitalist economy and of its entire social structure in the direction of Communism.

This means that the activities of the Communist International must be greatly extended, for its field is the whole world even from the geographical and ethnographical point of view. The Second International limited itself to organizing and uniting the workers of the advanced capitalist countries, namely, the workers of the white race. The appearance of Sen Katayama at the Amsterdam Congress as the representative of Japanese proletariat eager to find the way to Socialism was regarded as an extraordinary event. His presence at this congress was interpreted as a pacifist symbol of international proletarian brotherhood standing above the conflicts between nations created by bourgeois greed for exploitation. It was not in the least regarded as the initia-

tion of a determined campaign against capitalist exploitation and enslavement of the colonial peoples.

Against this, one should consider the fact that among the adherents of the Communist International there are 62 sections, some of whom comprise several nationalities and peoples as, for instance, the large sections of the Caucasus and of the adjoining territories. Its congresses are made picturesque and are given a special oriental charm not only by the presence of the representatives of the Southern and Eastern Soviet Republics (from the Crimea to Vladivostok), but also by delegations of Persians, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, Malays, in short, of all the peoples of the Near and Far East which capitalism has either already brought under its rule, or intends so to bring. These delegates (men and women) do not by any means attend these congresses for decorative purposes, neither are the women exotic "prima donnas" intent on treating the audience to an *aria di bravura* on the misery of their brothers and sisters and on their aspirations to freedom and equality. They are active working members of the Communist International, alert and energetic outposts of the proletarian world revolution. One of the main objects of the Communist International is—to encourage and support the awakening, the revolt and struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples against capitalism, and against any form of slavery and exploitation. True to the spirit of the Communist Manifesto, it helps the native bourgeoisie in the Eastern countries when this bourgeoisie takes part in the revolutionary national struggles for the overthrow of capitalist imperialism. It does its utmost to bring to power exploited proletarian and peasant masses under the banner of Communism and revolution, and to endow them with strength to throw off the yoke of foreign and native masters and tormentors.

Communist sympathy for the colonial slaves of the capitalist States is sheer hypocrisy, the Communist International with its colonial policy is nothing but a tool of the new Russian imperialism behind which the Bolsheviks try to conceal the bankruptcy of their revolutionary policy! Thus, echoing the words of the imperialists of all countries, the reformists, under the cloak of the "liberation of Georgia and Armenia," work for the delivery of the rich oil wells of the Baku district to the big capitalist trusts, and MacDonald, their leader, the head of the pseudo-Labour Government of Great Britain, defends the colonial enslavement of India. Let them talk and abuse us. The Communist International fully realises all the consequences of its colonial policy. It is convinced that a complete victory of

the proletarian revolution and the complete destruction of bourgeois capitalist domination and exploitation can only be achieved through world revolution.

The wage slaves of the capitalist States cannot be free and happy as long as the colonial slaves of capitalism, the serfs of landowners and the victims of patriarchal traditions and customs remain in their present state of misery and slavery. The colonies are a fertile ground and a sound foundation for capitalism. From them capitalism draws enormous excess profits by the old method of primitive accumulation, as well as by the most refined methods and tricks of modern production and speculation. They enable the capitalists to placate the contented "rebellious" proletarians of the home countries with sops in the form of small concessions. If the irresistible rebellion of the exploited in the colonial and semi-colonial territories tears out of the hands of the world bourgeoisie the fabulous wealth accumulated there, the latter lose the means and the inclination to fiddle about with "tariff concessions," and social reforms. In the hearts of the bourgeoisie there will be nothing left for the "dear fellow nations," (dear, but not in the endearing sense of the word) but grim determination and power to exploit. In the highly developed capitalist States, the last illusions of the working masses about the possibility of making bourgeois social order bearable, and of being gently and gradually transferred into a higher social order, have been shattered. Reformism is being undermined at the root, while the masses are realising the necessity for revolution and the will to revolution of the proletarian vanguard grows and becomes the will of the masses. 'The time has come for the "expropriation of the expropriators."

There is no doubt whatever that the conditions created by the Russian revolution in the Union of Soviet Republics have brought home to the Communist International the enormous importance of the colonial question. Could the leading Russian comrades adopt an attitude of "benevolent neutrality" towards the attempts of the imperialist robber States (and above all of intriguing, conspiring Great Britain) to convert the adjoining belt of countries (from Turkey to China) into a rallying point for an attack on the Soviet regime? Could they allow these Powers to inundate Soviet Russia and its allied Republics with their journalistic, political and military agents and spies for the purpose of working up conspiracies and risings? From the first the leaders of the Bolshevik party considered the Russian Revolution as the beginning of the proletarian world revolution. It was but natural, therefore, that, while intent on world revolu-

tion, they fully appreciated the necessity to protect the achievements of the Russian Revolution from imperialist designs and malignant machinations. It is one of the chief merits of Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin that he fully recognised and exposed the historic connection between the colonial question and the continued existence of capitalism. Thereby he opened before the Communist International a wide and important field of activities bristling with new and difficult tasks.

In connection with two other questions, the Russian revolution has made the field of activity of the Third International much wider than that of its predecessor, namely, in connection with the peasant and national questions, which are, moreover, closely connected with the colonial question. In fact, the colonial question by its nature is to a great extent a national and peasant question. The attitude of the Second International towards these two problems, as well as towards colonial policy, to say the least was passive. On the other hand, the Communist International adopted a very positive attitude towards these questions because the Russian Revolution showed with great clearness the necessity of developing the utmost activity in these questions for the purpose of ensuring and facilitating the trend and work of the revolution. The fact that proletarian dictatorship was established in a country 80 per cent. of the population of which are peasants, that the economic and social structure of that country has undergone a change in the direction of Communism, and the very boldness of this achievement, showed the enormous importance of the peasant question. In such a gigantic country whose population, origin, languages, economy and culture are in themselves an International—a conglomerate of nationalities and various stages of historic development—the national question was bound to come to the surface with the advent of revolution. All honour is again due to Lenin that in both these questions the Russian Revolution policy and the Communist International adopted the right methods and tactics in theory as well as in practice.

In all more or less agrarian countries, agrarian crises of varying degrees of acuteness and duration are arising. In all these countries the peasantry is making efforts to organise itself into political parties and to gain political power. Both these phenomena indicate that in spite of spasmodic capitalist economic revival, bourgeois domination and exploitation, capitalism, and with it the entire bourgeois social order, have been deeply shaken. The former economic and social equilibrium has not been restored. On the contrary, a very

painful state of uncertainty has taken its place. The thunder of world revolution is approaching nearer and nearer, although its progress is perhaps too slow for the fierce determination of the masses to free themselves.

In this fateful period the Communist International, as the leading world organisation of the proletariat, must give a direct answer to two very difficult questions: (1) in this struggle for power between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, will the small working peasants be the allies of opponents of the revolutionary workers, and will the middle peasants be their bitter enemies or benevolent neutrals?; and (2) in transferring the methods of production in the direction of Communism, can the farms of the small and middle peasantry be brought into line with large scale collective farming? In other words, will be it possible after the conquest of power by the proletariat to enlist the sympathy and support of the small and middle peasantry in the work of economic and social construction, or will these elements sabotage and hinder this work by standing aside? In the Soviet Republics, proletarian dictatorship, which under the existing historic conditions considers these questions as vital revolutionary questions, has answered in the affirmative the first part of the question.

In all bourgeois countries the small peasantry, as well as a considerable section of the middle peasantry, have come into sharp conflict with finance capital. Hundreds, nay, millions of these peasants were expropriated, proletarianised and even pauperised by Joint Stock Companies, Trusts, Banks and big landowners. They are at last rebelling against this state of affairs. In the situation which has arisen, the old ingrained hatred of the peasantry against the bourgeois State with its bureaucracy, taxes and interference with individual life has become more acute. Also in the countries of bourgeois "freedom and democracy," the oppressed and impoverished small peasantry looks upon the State as a hostile power, as an apparatus for exploitation and oppression in the hands of the "mighty." Economically and politically they feel they are "shorn lambs," so to speak. At the same time they are attached to their plot of land and their farms with all the fervour and ideology of property owners. Therefore, their attitude to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for power is not wholehearted, their sympathies waver between proletarian revolution and capitalist counter-revolution.

An important factor in the struggle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the side which the small

peasants will chose to support. This will be the case in most capitalist countries, perhaps with the exception of Great Britain, where there are no peasant masses and where for this reason the agrarian question assumes a different form. The revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for the overthrow of the class domination of the bourgeoisie must everywhere assume the form of a final settlement between the exploited and oppressed and capitalism. Alliance with the small peasantry is one of the pre-requisites of a proletarian victory. In the face of fascism, revolutionary workers begin to realise that such alliance is necessary not only for great political campaigns and in the time of rebellion, but also for the solution of the food question for the urban and industrial population during civil war. This problem cannot be solved anywhere by the revolutionary land proletariat on the basis of the existing big agricultural enterprises. Hence, the importance of the co-operation of the small peasant after the establishment of the proletarian Power.

It behoves the Communist International to effect the union between the proletariat and the small peasantry for revolutionary co-operation in the overthrow of capitalism. For this purpose, its national sections must adopt a strong unequivocal agrarian policy, capable of defending with the utmost energy the interests of the small peasantry against big capital and the bourgeois State. At the same time, the sections must remain the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat and must do their utmost to develop economic and agrarian conditions, as well as the workers and peasants themselves in the direction of Communism. The agrarian policy of the Bolsheviks has revealed the enormous difficulties attending this question. It has served to guide and facilitate the work of the Communist International. It goes without saying that it could not provide all countries with suitable recipes for a Communist agrarian policy. For, in spite of international unity of interests and principles, an agrarian policy must be adapted to the specific conditions prevailing in the respective countries. For instance, the agrarian programme and the agrarian policy for Bulgaria and for the U.S.A. cannot be concocted after the same recipe. The best forces of the Communist International will have to be concentrated in drawing up satisfactory agrarian programmes and methods of successfully conducting a truly Communistic agrarian policy. Important problems cannot be settled in the twinkling of an eye.

The consequences of the monstrous imperialist slaughter of 1924, which the so-called peace treaties perpetuates, the

clash of the economic and imperialistic interests of the various States and groups of States, the renewed preparations for fresh mad adventures, the tendencies and conditions of the economic and political development in the period of imperialism: all these make it incumbent on the proletariat and its leaders to concentrate their attention on the national question in theory and practice. What a host of "national questions" was brought into being by the peace treaty of Versailles, with its off-shoots of St. Germain, Trianon, Neuilly! To mention only a few of them, there are the struggles for Memel and Upper Silesia and for the delimitation of Czecho-Slovakia and Yugoslavia, the incorporation of Bessarabia into Roumania, the isolation of German-Austria from Germany and the colonisation of this victim of anti-national imperialism, which is going apace. The fierce rivalry between France and Great Britain for supremacy in the Balkans and in the Dardanelles, the competition of American and British trusts for the great oil reserves of the world, the intention of the greedy imperialist States to dismember and enslave China and Eastern Asia—raise complicated questions concerning national self-determination of peoples and nationalities, etc.

While there was still a spark of revolutionary spirit in the Second International, it rejected bourgeois patriotism, basing itself on the saying of the Communist Manifesto, "The proletariat has no country." But this was only a showy declaration, for in practice the Second International was not at all inclined to adopt the principle proclaimed by Rosa Luxemburg after war was declared—"that the international solidarity of the proletarians of all countries is the supreme law." It was at all times influenced by truly petty-bourgeois unrevolutionary considerations for "national peculiarities" and was never truly international. Therefore, its attitude towards the national question could not be anything but negative. In view of the economic and political complications resulting from the capitalist system, proletarian internationalism is the inevitable pre-requisite of a correct attitude towards the national question. By giving up its internationalism, the Second International was deprived of its capacity to understand and represent the national question in a Socialist, that is, in an historic sense. Instead of advancing social development, it was itself driven by the ebb and flow of bourgeois class interests and by "defence of the fatherland" psychology.

When the carnage let loose by capitalism compelled the Scheidemanns, Vanderveldes, Renaudels and Hendersons to



realise the significance of the national question and demanded from them decisive and prompt action, the Second International became the champion of vulgar bourgeois patriotism and its Chauvinist leaders, to the sound of trumpets, drove the workers into the gigantic slaughterhouse of the capitalist world war. In their eagerness to compete with the patriotism of the bourgeoisie and to identify themselves with the bourgeois social order, they forgot that sentence of the "Communist Manifesto" which complements the above quotation and clearly defines the Communist attitude to the national question. It states that, in its revolutionary struggles for emancipation, the working class must become the nation by capturing political power. The leading reformists of the Second International failed as positively in replying to the question "What is to be done?" as they ignored the axiom that in the bourgeois world, proletarians, as the exploited class, have no country.

The prosperity and independence of the nations which were plunged into the world war should have induced the Second International to explain to the workers the positive and historic meaning of their being without a country. It was its duty to make them realise the necessity of international solidarity for the purpose of making their respective countries their own by tearing the political power out of the hands of the ruling minority and by establishing the rule of their own class—the rule of the overwhelming majority of the nations. Ebert and Co. failed ignominiously to do this. They induced the proletarian masses to believe that the capitalist State was their country and that in the interests of the Empire it was justified in oppressing and exploiting national minorities and to expropriate and enslave large populations. They concealed the fact that the workers can secure a fatherland only through revolutionary struggle, proletarian dictatorship and the establishment of the Communist social order. Had they done their duty, the bourgeois imperialist war would have been converted into proletarian civil war for the destruction of the exploiting bourgeois State. National independence and free development can only be secured through the new type of State power—workers' dictatorship.

The reformist leaders of the Second International shrank from this solution, owing to their lack of confidence in the destructive, and constructive and liberating power of the proletariat and of Socialism. With slavish submission, they sacrificed to bourgeois dictatorship the very ideals which served them as the pretext for their betrayal of the workers at the outbreak of war—national independence and peace among

nations. They deluded the confiding proletarian masses into believing that the rough but effective methods of revolution can be substituted by clever clauses in a treaty drawn up by the expert representatives of Entente imperialists in the "League of Nations." The war and the Peace Treaties have exposed the total impotence of this bourgeois caricature of the proletarian international and the imperialist designs hidden behind pacifist phraseology. By its very nature the "League of Nations" is unable to prevent the state of war existing between bourgeois national states and to solve the national question. Nothing would be changed even if the ardent desire of the reformist leaders, that the States, which are still outside this congregation of capitalist saints, (especially Germany) be included into the League of Nations, were to be fulfilled.

The deliberations and decisions of the League of Nations on national questions had precisely the same result as all other national and international conferences of Ministers, diplomats, politicians and great financiers. They leave all the problems arising out of the existing conflicts untouched, and in some instances made them even more complicated. This "peacemaker" and "advocate of all nations" understands to perfection the S.O.S. of the capitalist syndicates of the various States for complete domination (without competition) over territories which provide raw material, cheap labour and markets, as well as the imperialist call for submarines, long range guns, aircraft, bombs and poison gases. But it turns a deaf ear to the humble and stammering bequests of the conquered and subjected nations for right and justice. It is impervious to these demands, for it is deaf and blind to the just demands of the enslaved and exploited classes.

Nevertheless, the Second International, which has been galvanised into some semblance of life, continues to pretend that the League of Nations will unravel the complicated national questions. The significant attempts of the Austrian Social-Democrats (forced on them by the conglomerate of nationalities which constituted the Hapsburg dual monarchy) to solve the national question in theory and in practice ended after all in opportunism and made no impression whatever on the attitude of the Second International towards this question. The national policy of the latter is in theory a bourgeois-pacifist game of hide and seek, and in practice an anti-labour defence of capitalist interests. This is borne out by the shameful and mendacious decisions of the Hamburg "Unity Congress" on the national question, "fratricidal

war " between the German and Czech social democracy in Czecho-Slovakia, occupation of the Ruhr, and reparation questions, etc. The national policy of the British Labour Government under the leadership of MacDonalld strikingly shows how the Second International is wallowing in a morass of contradictions. The inspired champion of national self-determination, the passionate advocate of pacifism, in his capacity of head of the government regards the alliance with French imperialism sacrosanct in spite of the fact that it aims at the colonisation of Germany. With the support of the Conservative and in the face of Liberal and some Labour opposition, he secured the passage of a resolution in the House of Commons in favour of a considerable increase of the air fleet. He demonstrated his belief in the "liberty and independence of nations" by sending a "large armed force to India for manœuvres." He approves of the perpetuation in that country of the oppressive measures against national and social movements and allows workers on strike and rebellious peasants to be shot down.

Thus we see that in the national question the heritage received by the Communist International from the Second International was nothing but a waste of tares and weeds, and not a fertile field yielding rich harvest of ideas.

The Second International could not serve the Communist International except as a warning. The latter had to go back to Marx and Engels to define its position as a revolutionary international in connection with the manifold national questions of the times. Since the summer of 1914, these questions have been springing up like mushrooms on the blood-drenched soil of the capitalist State. The revolution also had a share in forcing them into the foreground, but the revolution provided also the means and possibilities to solve them. It brilliantly vindicated the revolutionary proletarian attitude on the national question as laid down in the "Communist Manifesto."

What the Communist Manifesto briefly outlines has been thoroughly elaborated by Lenin, who based his deductions on actual historic facts and experiences of the times. He gave to revolutionary policy on the national question a combination of firmness of principles and aims with the flexibility of "realpolitiken," and it is to this that the first Workers' and Peasant State of the world owes its firm establishment and the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics" its existence.

Russian bourgeois "democracy" proved unable to protect Russia against the predatory intentions of the other

imperialist States by a continuation of the imperialist war. On the contrary, it placed the safety of Russia into jeopardy. The proletarian revolution saved Russia. While the Russian workers assumed State power with the support of the peasantry and established their dictatorship in the Soviet Government, the revolution roused the social forces of the country and almost out of nothing produced armies of fighters for the independence of the newly-created State. The peasants flocked into the "Red Army" determined never to give back the land to its former owners. And proletarians filled its ranks because they needed the Soviet power in order to destroy the domination of the exploiters and to put an end to the oppressive economic power of the bourgeoisie through Communism.

The emancipation of the socially enslaved and exploited elements from age-long class domination enabled Soviet Russia to frustrate all the attempts of the imperialist States and of the world bourgeoisie to destroy the new workers' and peasants' state by violence, blockade, diplomatic tricks, financial machinations, etc., and to make its existence secure. Russia solved the national question as a social question, for it gave autonomy to and abolished the racial and religious disabilities of the many nationalities which the Muscovite power had brought under its sway and had exploited and oppressed.

When the revolutionary workers' and peasants' State had proved its vitality in the struggle against the capitalist powers and proved to be unconquerable, it turned its attention towards constructive work, and at the same time proclaimed in its territories the right of all nations (including small national minorities) to self-determination. The end of the class domination of the bourgeoisie and of the aristocracy over the proletariat and the peasantry was also the end of the domination of the nationally strong over the nationally weak. The Soviet social order created the political pre-requisites for the future Communist order by such revolutionary economic and social measures as, for instance, the nationalisation of land. The constitution of the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics" has brought into being a new Soviet Great-Russia which, notwithstanding strict centralisation in questions of State, has granted a liberal autonomy to the various nationalities and peoples contained in it. The little Republic of the German Volga Commune has autonomous rights of which the States federated in the much vaunted "democratic" Ebert-Seeckt Republic may be justly envious.

And what is the result of the Bolshevik national policy? Outwardly, a Great-Russia has come into being whose free

and autonomous component parts are much more firmly welded together than was the case under the military and knout regime of Czarism—a Great-Russia which holds together much better than the bloodstained colonial empire of Great Britain or of any other colonial power. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has proved itself strong enough to protect its independence and revolutionary institution against its capitalist enemies. It has compelled its enemies finally to recognise it *de jure*. It repulsed Curzon's provocative attempt to violate its rights and interfere in its home and foreign policy, and to force from it big concessions to British capitalists. It will deal in the proper fashion with the shameless provocation of Stresseman—the pigmy Curzon who acts at the behest of Poincaré and the magnates of the heavy industry.

In spite of its mixture of nationalities, the revolutionary transformation of its economic and social conditions and the long years of civil war, the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics" is, internally, the most firmly established State in the world. Although surrounded by enemies to a greater extent than any other country, the Union of Soviet Republics is the only country which has considerably decreased its armed forces, having sent hundreds of thousands of its citizens in the army back to the plough and to the bench. This characteristic fact does not only proclaim Soviet Russia's determination not to draw the sword except in the service of freedom and revolution, but is also a sign of the calm strength and determination of a great people not to allow the achievements of the revolution to be tampered with.

Let us now consider the result of the Bolshevik national policy in its application to the various peoples and nationalities of the Soviet Union. By conferring autonomy this national policy encouraged the economic, political and social development of the new autonomous Republics. It revived the true culture of these nationalities which lay dormant for many centuries, and overcame traditions which helped to keep these peoples in bondage. For instance, the Soviet social order in the Caucasus and elsewhere succeeded in abolishing the blood feuds between nationalities, peoples and races—a relic of the past. It provided an outlet for national and racial peculiarities in the movements for social development in which it gives these nationalities scope. The national policy of the Bolsheviks has created in the remotest parts of this gigantic State and among its wildest and most backward peoples desire for union and for collaboration in

lieu of the former seclusion, surliness, hatred, internecine struggle and struggles against the oppressive and predatory central power. The seed sown there fell on good ground.

In the "Union of Soviet Republics" all the nationalities are engaged in fruitful and joyful activities, and one cannot help marvelling at the pristine freshness and natural impetuosity of these nationalities. It is as if they were determined to make up for all their former lost opportunities. Of course, the results of the national policy are not the same everywhere. Frequently, old traditions and customs are an obstacle in the way of social revolution. Step by step the impetuous new displaces the tenacious old. Step by step characteristic feature of all this is the determination to develop and to go forward at all costs. The desire for international unity is stronger than all the national peculiarities of the Soviet conglomerate of nationalities. It is an historic fact of considerable significance that this will to international unity is not limited to the nationalities within the Soviet Union, but is meant to include the proletarians and exploited of the whole world. The common aim and the common desire of all are—maintenance and development of the Soviet order and overthrow of the capitalist order. The national peculiarities develop in the warm sunlight of internationalism into active revolutionary forces.

The Russian revolution and the Bolshevik national policy gave to the Communist International clear and definite directions on the national question. Unlike the policy of the Second International, this policy has a positive character and is full of revolutionary possibilities. I believe that this policy, based on the Soviet system, has hastened the advent of the type of State of the near future, determined by the present development of the capitalist system. This development has produced the supernational colonial State, the "Empire," which transcends national boundaries. By its historic nature it is twofold, for it is an affirmation and at the same time a negation of the national, and international in world economics and world politics. To reconcile these contradictions the "League of Nations" was established. But this is an abortive institution built up of capitalist national refuse, lacking revolution. The "League of Nations" cannot solve the task imposed on it, because it contains within itself all the contradictions which it is supposed to overcome. In those parts of the world where the revolution has destroyed the bourgeois order and has placed power into the hands of a proletariat inclined towards Communism, the

economic and political development takes the form of the new super-national type of State, the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics." As the contradictions of its social foundation have either been solved or are on the way to solution, such a State is the strongest vindication of internationalism, the creative synthesis between it and nationalism. It does not need an international corrective, but an international pioneer who will break down the resistance which capitalism still offers to its progress. This pioneer is the Communist International—the leader of the proletariat on the road to world revolution, the pre-requisite of the World League of Socialist Communist Soviet Republics.

The results of the Bolshevik national policy are restful islands in the turmoil of the national phenomena created by world capitalism in the process of its collapse. These results are the guiding stars of the world Communist movement. The Communist International must give definite directions to its various sections on the treatment of the national question. Our Parties must find definite solutions for the many problems connected with this question. The reparation demands of the Entente to Germany, the Irish struggle for independence, the national movements, and struggles of colonial peoples or of countries threatened with colonisation, etc., etc.—everyone of these problems must be studied and appreciated according to their influence on mass psychology. In taking into account this mass psychology the sections of the Communist International while not ignoring the capitalist present must not forget the Communist future which can only be achieved through world revolution.

By a positive revolutionary attitude to the national question, Communist parties can get into touch with large masses other than the proletariat. As yet Communists have not done much in this direction. Some of our sections "are afraid" to come into conflict with strong, bourgeois-patriotic convictions. Others are, consciously or unconsciously, still influenced by the negative attitude of the Second International, and fear that by insisting on a more positive attitude towards the national question, we shall get a repetition of what took place in the Second International—bourgeois patriotism and betrayal of working class interests. The fear of failure, of losing one's Communist bearings in the chaos of contradicting phenomena, is the cause of the greatest mistake of all—passivity, which is the worst enemy of revolution for which even the most plausible radical reasons are not an excuse. The Communist International must not limit itself to general directions to its sections, but must en-

courage and urge them to accept a positive policy on the national question. It is a revolutionary path with a revolutionary aim of world wide significance.

This article has already assumed such proportions that I refrain from dealing in detail with other activities of the Communist International. On this subject I will limit myself to a few cursory remarks. On the eve of the proletarian revolution, the question of the middle class claims the attention of the Communist movement. It is a supplementary question to the peasant question and presents problems of its own, for example, the problem of civil servants and intellectuals. Both these questions may become important factors in the dissolution and destruction of the bourgeois State, and of bourgeois social order, as well as important factors in revolutionary construction after the assumption of power by the victorious proletariat. This can only be the case, however, if Communists take up the right attitude towards these problems and develop the necessary activities. The Russian revolution has thrown light on the question of civil servants and intellectuals, and has emphasised its importance for the transition period from capitalism to Communism.

In connection with these problems we have to deal with various forms of differentiation between "manual and brain work." This differentiation has been accentuated by capitalism to such an extent that it makes the already difficult question of the relations between masses and bureaucracy still more acute during the transition period. This problem will not be completely solved until we have a society of free human beings with equal rights and obligations and no class distinctions whatever. For it is only by the abolition of private ownership of the means of production that labour power will cease to be a purchasable commodity and will become the expression of free individual effort for the welfare of society as a whole. During the transition period the social contrast between manual and brain work is bound to be the cause of acute conflicts.

There are two ways of making this problem less acute and of hastening its solution. In the course of the revolutionary process the workers, as the chief actors in this process, are given an opportunity to raise their cultural level. Their ranks yield an ever-growing crop of "civil servants" and "intellectuals." The workers themselves begin to appreciate the importance of this kind of work. On the other hand, "civil servants" and "intellectuals" begin to realise the enormous significance and the liberating character of the revolutionary change not only for the workers but also for



themselves. This results also in a correct appreciation of their part of the difficulties connected with such a process. Having become participators in this process, they do their bit in the constructive work of the masses willingly and joyfully. To put it briefly: "civil servants" and "intellectuals" cease to exist as separate groups or "castes." The tasks of the Communist International in connection with this process of development are numerous and difficult, for in the period when the proletariat is struggling for State power, it must divide its attention between social and political activities. In all capitalist countries the State apparatus is in the hands of civil servants and intellectuals who are ardent champions of imperialism and the mainstay and driving power of fascism.

Our revolutionary times demand that the Communist International should assume the leadership of the large non-proletarian section of the population. The Communist International has also greatly extended and intensified Communist work and propaganda among the proletariat. In this connection one has only to compare the agenda of international congresses and the subjects with which the sections of our international and their leaders have to deal with the questions occupying the attention of the Second International. A comparison of the agenda of the First and Second Congresses with the agenda of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International itself is also instructive. What a testimony of growth! The Communist International has drawn into the orbit of its activities everything connected with the historic life of the proletariat as a fighting class, everything which indicates the growth of proletarian strength and can benefit revolution: trade union and co-operative movement, women and youth movement, educational work and sports, solidarity in rendering help wherever needed, etc., etc.

Of course, some of these branches of work were by no means neglected by the Second International. But most of them were considered secondary and unimportant, and were left to be managed by the Parties and organisation of the various countries instead of being given international importance. One must say that on these fields of proletarian life and activities one generally met the notice: "rubbish heap"—for the refuse of every variety of petty and big bourgeois ideas and aspirations, a hotch-potch of the most variegated illusions and confusions. It is only when political or economic conditions were exceptionally bad that the Second International deigned to discuss "the question." It lacked the main attribute of a workers' organisation—the will to revolu-

tion, as an immediate aim. It concentrated all its energies on the development of large national Social-Democratic parties with restricted political activities which degenerated into parliamentarism pure and simple and lost all revolutionary impulse. Therefore, there was no real connection in these parties between "politics" and other aspects of proletarian life.

This applies to a great extent even to such an elementary historic phase of revolutionary life as the trade union movement. Its value and its relation to the political party was for a long time a contentious question in the Second International. Party movement and trade union movement were not welded together as part and parcel of the revolutionary movement. They ran parallel to each other as two independent movements. This was greatly due to the fact that after the collapse of the Chartist movement in Great Britain trade unions became strong organisations imbued with the craft and compromising spirit, while socialism only formed small, weak and scattered parties, and in Germany the anti-Socialist laws and the reactionary association law caused a split in the social democracy. The false theory of "trade union" neutrality triumphed. This separation of the two movements made trade unions an easy prey to opportunism. But as proletarian class parties and trade unions are of the same origin, opportunism also invaded the Socialist parties. When the prominent German trade union leader Doernburg concluded an impassioned oration on relations between trade unionism and social democracy with the famous remark: "The Party and the trade unions are one," he was right in the sense that they were one in the morass of opportunism and reform. This applies not to Germany alone.

How different are conditions in the Communist International in connection with the various forms and events of proletarian life. All these forms and events are made to harmonise with the activities of the Communist Parties, and the union between the latter and the proletariat is becoming stronger every day. The Communist International personifies the unity of a powerful and extensive fighting apparatus whose component parts intertwine nationally and internationally in joint action. The driving power of this apparatus is the world proletariat's will to revolution as an immediate aim. Trade union, co-operative, women's and youth movements, cultural and educational work, etc., are only the emanation of this will in various directions and forms and on various fields. All these movements culminate in

the one aim—to rally, to prepare and mobilise the working masses for revolution.

We cannot afford to lose a single moment or a single opportunity.

A crisis within the Communist International would have incalculable consequence for the proletariat. Therefore, every branch of activities with its manifold tasks must be carefully studied, separately as well as in connection with Communist activities as a whole, in order that they might be put to a good use. We must not miss a single opportunity of leading the workers into the decisive struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. We have already given the reasons for active interference by the Communist International in the question of revolutionising petty and middle bourgeois and peasant sections of society, as well as colonial peoples. Its tasks and obligations gain in magnitude. To cope with them successfully one must have a good knowledge and appreciation of the smallest details as well as of the big and important matters connected with the workers' movement, and also of their inter-relation. The demands which the important events of the last few years make on the Communist International cannot be always regulated once and for all according to statutes, clauses and agenda items.

Some questions crop up again and again in various forms and claim the attention of the Communist International. They do not come before it in proper sequence allowing sufficient time for their discussion and solution. On the contrary, they frequently take the Communist International unawares and insist on being dealt with at once. For all these questions are the outcome of the ever-changing events and rapid progress of our epoch. Thus decisions made to-day are perhaps of no avail to-morrow. For whatever bourgeois sages and their reformist echo may say about the stability of capitalism, the Communist International lives and works in an epoch of revolution and for revolution.

Its activities are as wide and as varied as the world. Therefore, its methods and tactics must also be varied. Our revolution is a world revolution with definite tasks and aims. This is reflected in the Communist world congresses. It became the custom to call the meeting of the Second International "The Parliament of Labour." There was an unconscious, profound meaning in this simile, for it represents exactly the nature of the Second International, and it shows to-day how obsolete this institution is for present working class aspirations. It is as obsolete as parliamentarism itself,

in spite of MacDonald's attempts to rejuvenate it in Great Britain through the reformist Labour Government. Who would dream of calling the congresses of the Communist International "the parliament of labour?" It would be more appropriate to compare them to the war council of a gigantic army whose battlefield is the capitalist world.

It is a war council the like of which has never existed before. In the midst of the present struggles it prepares the ground for the future. It rallies to its banner all the vital historic forces for the purpose of destroying the old bourgeois order based on exploitation and oppression. But it also rallies forces for the construction of the Soviet State and for the establishment of the Communist social order. The Communist International teaches the proletariat, among other important lessons of the Russian revolution, the close connection between the process of destruction and the process of construction, and also the great difficulties not only of the seizure of power, but of its maintenance and right application. But these difficulties do not frighten the revolutionary proletariat. The stern demands of history make it incumbent on all proletarians to get rid of their chains, and not only to conquer the world but to change and rejuvenate it. Under the leadership of the Communist International they will accomplish this. The revolution, whose champions they are, is a conqueror as well as a rejuvenator. It is at the same time the Titan of destruction and of construction, the mighty embodiment of human will to power and action.

CLARA ZETKIN.



# Fundamental Problems of the World Trade Union Movement and the Fifth Congress of the Comintern

SOME comrades think that the time has come for the Comintern to revise its tactics in the trade union movement. In Germany there are already advocates of these "new" tactics, which after all are not as new as their advocates imagine. But as this question has been raised, we must be well acquainted with the conditions under which the present struggle of the working class has to be carried on. If on the strength of a thorough analysis of the economic conditions and trade union movement throughout the world we were compelled to change our tactics, the Comintern would not be worth its name if it did not change its line of action. We have no special reverence for slogans and are always ready to change our tactics whenever necessary. For this reason we must deal seriously with this question, and our point of issue must not be abstract discussions concerning the usefulness of new ideas, but the concrete conditions under which Communists have to fight for the leadership of the working masses. If it is shown that the "new tactics" are better adapted than the old to enlist the sympathies of the masses, it would be criminal folly on our part if we refused to adopt them. This is the only criterion.

No doubt a turning point has been reached in the Labour movement. We witness at present a great revival of economic struggles in France, Germany, and Great Britain. Conflicts of considerable magnitude spring up one after the other. Hundreds of thousands of workers have been brought into action, and the workers are not only showing greater activity in defence but are also attacking. It would be premature to say that the general retreat is over. What is happening now in some branches of industry is nothing in

the nature of a general offensive. It merely shows that there is a big move forward in working class ranks, but that there is no uniformity in their activity. These forces have not yet learned to act in unison. Nevertheless the signs are that the period of the capitalist offensive and the defeats inflicted separately on the various sections of the proletariat have taught their lesson. In all countries there is a better understanding of the necessity of international action and of bringing large masses into the struggle. We are only at the beginning of a revival which (there is every reason to believe) will last several years. It is this revival of the economic as well as of the political struggle which raises before us a number of practical questions that require an immediate answer.

The capitalist offensive considerably reduced the numerical strength of all trade unions. This applies to all reformist organisations, but the German trade unions were the greatest sufferers. The powerful German trade union movement has become considerably weakened. Instead of the former membership of eight and one-half millions, the reformist trade unions can only boast at present five million members. Some say that even this figure is an exaggeration. There are no exact data, and to get a correct idea of the diminution in trade union membership, one has to rely on various symptoms and indirect data: one cannot put any faith in the official communications of the All-German Trade Union Federation (A.D.G.B.). Considerable reductions have also taken place in Great Britain, France, Italy, the Scandinavian countries, etc. It is significant that in France the United Confederation of Labour is growing, while the reformist General Confederation of Labour is losing members. This general slump in the trade union movement is not only a natural consequence of the failure of the unions to counteract the capitalist offensive, but is mainly caused by the disinclination of the leaders of the trade union movement to organise the workers for struggle. If we add to this the financial bankruptcy of the unions, especially in countries with a depreciated valuta, and the fact that it is utterly impossible to fulfil even purely trade union obligations, we shall understand the reason of reduced trade union membership. An important reason for the decline of trade union influence is the failure of the trade union leaders to organise any resistance to the capitalist offensive. The Amsterdamers' evolution to the right went on apace, and in the year 1923, and in the beginning of 1924, we had glaring examples of the treachery of the Amsterdam leaders. It is

sufficient to refer to the conduct of the reformists in Italy, and to the role played by the trade union bureaucracy in Germany for the last eighteen months. In conjunction with the Social-Democrats, the Amsterdammers succeeded in ruining a promising and growing movement towards the end of 1923. Moreover, the Amsterdammers excelled themselves: their present role is that of strike-breakers. This is the climax of Social democratic development. Social democracy and its ally trade union bureaucracy, have become the main support of fascist reaction and a strike-breaking apparatus for employers' organisations. This must be taken into account when we define our tasks and consider the adoption of effective methods of struggle.

As the trade union bureaucracy is becoming more and more an adjunct of fascist reaction and a strike-breaking body, it is compelled to take very drastic measures against the growing opposition. This is its present historic mission. It is only in the capacity of a strike-breaking organisation and of a dsorganisiser of the working class movement and struggles that trade union bureaucracy is still of some use to the bourgeoisie. In this role the trade union bureaucracy sticks at nothing. For instance, the last months of a very acute struggle of the workers in Germany for their elementary demands were coincident with the expulsion from the unions of all revolutionary elements and attempts on the part of the trade union bureaucrats to split the Labour movement at all costs. With characteristic cynicism some of these bureaucrats declared, "it is better to have only half the former membership provided it is loyal, than to allow Communists to interfere with and hinder our work. It is better to have fifty per cent. without Communists than one hundred per cent. with them." But the trade union bureaucrats would be satisfied with less. If it is impossible to retain fifty per cent. they will rest content with forty and even ten per cent., provided the apparatus remains in their hands and provided they can prevent the Communists from organising the workers for the struggle against capitalism. These gentry will not leave the organisations unless they are forcibly ejected from them.

Lately, the struggle against the opposition has assumed a very acute character. This is explained by the fact that a revolutionary workers' movement is developing rapidly in spite of enormous difficulties. This applies to countries with parallel revolutionary organisations (France, Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, etc.), as well as to countries where

the revolutionary elements still remain within the trade unions. In this respect, one can say that the United Confederation of Labour and the Federation of Trade Unions in Czecho-Slovakia have considerably grown during the last eighteen months. Even reformists do not deny this fact. In France the leader of the struggle is the United Confederation of Labour, while the reformist Confederation spends its time in pacifist talk about peaceful methods of improving the conditions of the working class. We witness a similar growth in Czecho-Slovakia. Of considerable interest is the growing movement in Germany and in Great Britain. In the former, the revolutionary movement is continually attracting new masses of workers, while, in the latter, the masses have had such an object lesson from the Labour Government that they see there is no other way open to them but the way of revolution. It is this growth of revolutionary forces and the fear of losing its influence which drives the trade union bureaucracy to schismatic tactics, and induces it to break up organisations rather than that they shall fall into the hands of the Communists. This is obviously the reason for the provocative conduct on the part of the bureaucrats, such as insistence on solemn promises and signatures, refusal to endorse and even expelling elected representatives, etc. There have been repeated examples of this monstrous conduct during the last eighteen months which witness to the profound democratism of the Amsterdamers. The gentlemen who shout on the highways and bye-ways about democracy tread underfoot the most elementary democratic rules of workers' organisations, provided they can retain in their hands the trade union funds and apparatus.

Such in general outline is the situation in the trade union movement, and we are brought right up to the question: should Communists allow themselves to be provoked by the action of the Amsterdamers or not? We all know that the insolence of the Amsterdamers will increase as our influence grows, and excessive sensitiveness will only show that Communist nerves are not up to the mark. Indeed, what reprisals can we make to their acts of provocation? These acts have not commenced only recently. We have passed through a whole period of provocation, mass expulsions, etc. Nevertheless we did not allow our indignation to run away with us, we controlled our feelings and continued our tactics for the capture of the trade unions, employing every time new means and methods for permeating the masses: and this is really what matters most. Yet there



are comrades who say that "capture the trade unions" is already obsolete because the trade union bureaucracy is determined to prevent the Communists from capturing the trade unions. But this is not new to us. Of course, the bureaucrats will do their utmost to prevent us from capturing the trade unions, but we must not interpret the slogan: "Capture the Trade Unions" in this bald way. The Communist International never regarded the capturing of the unions as the capturing of the apparatus and the funds of the unions; it was always taken to mean winning over the masses, the rank and file of the trade union members. Has anything changed in this connection? Have we fulfilled the tasks we set ourselves; if so, to what extent? If we examine one country after the other, we shall see that our conquests on this field were considerable, but nevertheless there are still millions of workers who are outside of our influence and still follow the reformists. This being so, what would have happened if we had allowed ourselves to be provoked and had substituted the slogan of capturing the unions by a slogan of forming new unions or splitting unions? Had we done so, we certainly would have lost, especially under present conditions, when the working class is fully alive to the necessity of unity for an effective resistance to the capitalist offensive. Provocation must not be tolerated. It is time to cease giving in—so say our impatient comrades. We cannot accept such a slogan as a general rule. Of course, we cannot tolerate provocation, and, of course, we must not retreat. But there are moments when the revolutionary party does not resort to provocation, because it does not want to allow itself to be provoked, and retreats in order the better to advance later. To lay down a general rule in this connection, and to make every provocation of the Amsterdamers an excuse for changing our trade union tactics, would be the height of folly. Has the slogan "capturing the trade union masses" become obsolete? Not in the least. The Fifth Congress of the Communist International will have to confirm this slogan. It is applicable both for countries where the opposition is inside the trade unions, as well as for countries with parallel organisations, as in France and Czecho-Slovakia. The slogan "Capture the Trade Unions" is the most important Comintern and Profintern slogan, and must on no account be relinquished. We must reject all attempts coming from Communist circles to induce us to abandon this slogan which has been instrumental in bringing over millions of workers to our side.

But the political success of this slogan can only be assured if it goes parallel with the slogan of: "Fight for

Unity." Here, too, we meet with new tendencies. These tendencies, which found their expression at the Frankfurt Congress of the German Communist Party, can be summed up as follows: the slogan of the fight for trade union unity has lost its meaning because circumstances and conditions have changed. We must give up the slogan which can only benefit our enemies. This new point of view is connected with the rejection of the slogan of the conquest of trade unions. The error of such an attitude is obvious. If Communist Parties and the Comintern were to give up the struggle for the unity of the trade union movement, it would be an irretrievable mistake. For are we not fighting for working class unity, are not all our efforts directed towards united proletarian organisations? All the activities of the Comintern are devoted towards the formation of proletarian organisations based on the class struggle. It would be a catastrophe for Communism if every rank and file worker were to interpret these "new tactics" as follows: the Communists are for trade union unity when they are in the majority, and for a split when they are in the minority. Such a policy is absolutely contrary to the methods of the Comintern. We are for trade union unity even when we are in the minority, because in the end trade union unity will work to our advantage. It is only by going forward under the banner of unity, by mobilising the masses under this slogan and by carrying on a relentless struggle against any form of split, that Communist Parties and the Communist International will be able to make their political influence duly felt among the masses. If we were to give up this slogan, we would place a very strong weapon in the hands of our enemies. We would make it possible for those who really split the Labour movement, who betray it almost daily, to parade as champions of unity, while the more determined section of the working class, which carries on a relentless struggle against the bourgeoisie, would appear in the light of striving to cause a split. This would be a topsy-turvy way of doing things.

Comrades who oppose the slogan of the capture of Trade Unions and of the struggle for unity, by so doing reject the slogan of the united front, both from the top and the bottom. What is the meaning of united front from the bottom? It means that we strive to unite in action all workers irrespective of their tendency; that we do our utmost to unite them against capitalism; that in time of stress we draw all workers into common action, and finally that we endeavour to keep workers of different political opinions in one and the same

trade union, gradually winning them over to the side of Communism. How can we speak of a united front from the bottom if we declare ourselves in favour of a split? What kind of united front could we advocate under such conditions? If we are against unity of the trade union movement, then to be logical we must be against all forms of unity in the Labour movement. Why should we be against unity in the trade union movement, and for unity in factory committees? Where is the logic of this? There is no logic in it. This viewpoint logically leads to the repudiation of any united front whatever. Such a viewpoint leads to the complete isolation of the Communists. A Communist who allows himself to be isolated from the masses is not worth his salt. One cannot have a high opinion of a Communist Party which invents slogans which are bound to weaken its contact with the masses. Comrades who oppose the slogan of "Capture the Trade Unions" and unity in the trade union movement, oppose the slogan of the united front from the bottom. And it cannot be otherwise. With the repudiation of the struggle for trade union unity, the united front slogan falls to the ground.

But this is making a fetish of organisation, some comrades will say. Not a bit of it. Certainly, the Comintern cannot be accused of making a fetish of organisation. For us organisation is not an aim in itself, and it is not from this viewpoint that Communists must approach the question of unity or splitting in the trade union movement. If a split were in the interests of revolution, it would have to take place. The interests of the revolution is the supreme law. But the fact is that those who speak against struggle for trade union unity and against the tactics of winning over the masses, cannot give any valid reasons for the attitude. Surely, such reasons as: "We must not tolerate provocation," "We must not give way," "We must not compromise," etc., cannot be regarded as satisfactory. This is sentimentality, not politics. It would be different if these comrades could prove that the Labour movement in all countries, including Germany, would gain by splits. But, comrades who are particularly keen on this question themselves admit that, in the event of splits, for instance, in Germany, many workers who now follow the Communist Party would not join the new organisation. In other words, all attempts to organise new unions would be ignored by millions of workers who at present are in sympathy with us, and, of course, by the millions who now follow the reformists, but who to-morrow will follow us. Thus it is quite clear that

our policy is not based on the fetish of organisation, on the conception that organisation is an aim in itself, that unity must be maintained at any cost, but that it is based on the conviction that splits which may lead to our becoming isolated from the masses are inexpedient, nay even politically harmful. This is how struggle for unity must be interpreted. We would commit a great mistake if we approached the question of trade union unity or splits purely from the organisational viewpoint, for this is a great political problem, and if we do not properly solve it it may cost the Communist International very dearly. This does not mean that we shall not organise those who were expelled from reformist unions, and those who have not yet been organised in trade unions, etc. Nothing of the kind. It means that we must struggle for the unity of the trade union movement, that we must mobilise the masses under this slogan and must continue our permeation of the reformist organisations until we succeed in getting rid of the bureaucrats and bureaucratism, and in rallying an overwhelming majority of the proletariat to our platform.

This brings us to the problem of the organisation of the unorganised. Strictly speaking, the entire work of the Comintern and the Communist Parties consists in organising the unorganised. From the Communist viewpoint, not only non-party workers, but even workers belonging to trade unions and the Social-Democratic Party are unorganised, for only the Communist Party can be rightly regarded as a real proletarian organisation. This question arose recently when workers began to leave their trade unions *en masse*. Hence we have to deal not only with unorganised workers, but also with workers who have left their respective organisations for some reason or other. This category includes passive elements, as well as active elements who have become disappointed with the trade unions. One must say that with the exception of two or three countries, a large majority of the working class is at yet unorganised. Suffice it to say that out of ten to eleven million workers and employees in France, there are in the two Confederations only seven hundred thousand members; that out of thirty million workers, employees and officials in the United States of America, only four million are organised in trade unions; and that even in Germany, where the percentage of organised workers is very high, there are many millions of workers who do not belong to any organisation. It is only natural that this question must occupy the attention of the Communist parties. It is a very important question which must

be given due consideration. Communist parties must above all take the initiative in establishing trade unions in those branches of industry where they do not yet exist. There is a considerable number of such industries in the United States, and also in other countries. Efforts must also be made to bring new categories of workers into the working class struggle. How is this to be done? It can only be done by continuously extending the scope of our work, by permeating new sections of the population, by extending beyond the narrow craft limits, and by going right into the masses and building up a special party apparatus for this purpose. But it would be a highly dangerous process if, under the slogan of the organisation of the unorganised, we began to form dual organisations. This would inevitably lead to splits, for it is impossible to create a new union, side by side with the metal workers' union, say, without by this very fact drawing all the revolutionary elements out of the old union. At the Comintern Congress we shall have to work out detailed forms and methods which shall be adaptable to each country. Certainly this question must receive our attention and it is essential to draw fresh millions of town and country workers into the struggle.

The most effective means for organising the unorganised and for drawing large masses into the struggle is the initiation, development, and extension of the activities of factory and workers' committees. The Social-Democrats have succeeded in taking all the life out of the existing factory committees, and our task until now has been revolutionising these factory committees. The best work in this direction was done in Germany, where there is a fairly strong revolutionary factory committee movement. But even in Germany, where social antagonism has become very acute and circumstances compel the working masses to take up the struggle, it cannot be said that everything has been done in the direction of extending the network of factory committees and of getting political control over them. And yet factory committees are the only means for effectively organising large masses of workers. The factory committee represents all the workers in the factory; it is on the spot; the workers feel it is their own committee and usually have confidence in it. We must learn to retain this confidence. We must set to immediately on the preparatory work for converting the factory committees into the base of the unions. The factory committee must be more active. It must not only be active on revolutionary holidays, but on ordinary days, too, and conduct the ordinary organisational, poli-

tical and educational work. There are many ways and means of attracting unorganised workers into our movement through factory committees. The best method is: increased activity on the part of our organisations. Unorganised workers will support factory committees and their connection with them will become more intimate provided they see that the initiative is always in our hands, and that Communists are bold fighters in the struggle for the every-day needs of the working class. Only through factory committees shall we be able to remedy the lack of organisation among the workers, for these committees are primary organisational nuclei of a highly developed trade union movement. We must set to work immediately to establish the factory committees and extend the trade unions. The formation of industrial unions on the basis of the factory committees must be the main feature of our Communist work throughout the country.

How can the work of the factory committees be made more effective? The only way in which the factory committees can become a force is by creating nuclei in the factories. The pre-requisite for exercising any serious influence on the masses, especially in the places of their employment, is the formation of Party nuclei in the factories. This is a new field of activity for our Parties. Only three to four per cent. of the tasks we have set ourselves have been carried out. Our parties are only just beginning to form nuclei, and yet it is useless even to think of revolution if we have no sound basis in every factory. We have experienced the October-November defeat in Germany, and we know all the weak points of our Party. All our Communist Parties have the same weak points. It is a question of breaking as quickly as possible with the past. There must be no delays, no procrastination. We must veer round sharply, for no trade-union-political work is possible if we have no compact groups within the factories. How can you expect the factory committee to do useful work if it has no fraction in the factory? How can you expect any serious revolutionary work from it if the soul of the committee—the Communists—are all at sixes and sevens? How can you expect satisfactory results from the factory committee movement if Communists are organised not in their place of employment, but in the place where they reside? This type of organisation cuts the Communists off from their factory, from the place of production, and from the life of the workers. It isolates them from the masses with which they should be organically connected. Therefore, we are

justified in saying that the pre-requisite for the correct functioning and revolutionisation of the factory committees is the establishment of factory nuclei and the intensification of their work.

Factory nuclei are needed not only from the trade union but also from the political viewpoint. For only if we have fundamental nuclei in the factories shall we be able, when the time comes, to build up our functions from the bottom to the top, and thus be able to counteract the strength of the reformist organisations by the strength of our compact Communist organisations' apparatus. Let us now consider how we are progressing with the formation of fractions within the unions. Progress in this direction is not very satisfactory as yet. Even where fractions are comparatively well organised (in Germany) they are not up to the mark. What are the chief shortcomings of our fractional work in the unions? In some countries Communist Parties considered, and still consider, this work to be of secondary importance, while in other countries this work is conducted too formally. Many imagine that by establishing a trade union department, the question is almost solved. Such a department cannot be useful unless it crowns the formation of a network of fractional organisations built up from the bottom. The building up of our fractions from the factory to the industry, and from the industry to the country as a whole, demands energetic organisational-political activity. We must do our utmost to strengthen and improve our trade union press and the trade union columns in our Party publications. We must look upon trade union work not as of secondary importance, but as one of the most important tasks of the Party which, if left undone, will alienate the masses from the Party. We must study carefully the experience of countries where fractional work in the trade unions had good results, and we must profit by this experience. We have at our disposal various forms and methods for the organisation of opposition. The most effective of these forms and methods are: fractions, opposition blocs, trade union propaganda leagues, etc. But apart from the forms of organising the opposition, one thing is clear: **opposition will grow, develop and exercise political influence provided it rests on firmly-welded fractions knowing their own minds.**

One of the most important problems now confronting the Communist parties is the question of the growing economic struggle of the proletariat and of the strike-breaking activities of the reformist leaders. A whole series of con-

flicts and mass strikes are taking place which are opposed by the reformists, who contract agreements with employers in order to sabotage them. The workers, therefore, are compelled to fight not only against the employers supported by the bourgeois State, but also against their own unions. Under these circumstances the question of leadership in these strikes and conflicts is of great importance. We must admit that we have done very little on this field as yet. Spontaneous strikes, of course, produce their own leaders. But we have not paid sufficient attention to the fact that workers, deprived of their leaders, frequently suffer defeat in spite of their heroism. **The formation of fighting organs capable of assuming leadership in unofficial strike movements will have to be seriously considered by the parties.** Fighting cadres will have to be formed, for it must always be borne in mind that even a small strike is a very important battle in the working class movement. We have to deal with well-organised employers who have an extensive organisation and a well managed press at their disposal, and who will do their utmost to strangle us. On the other hand, tens of thousands of workers, treacherously abandoned by their leaders in the midst of the fight, are yearning for a way out of their present slavery. To form fighting cadres and a leading organ under such conditions is a task of considerable magnitude. It is a question of winning over to our side large masses of workers. The Parties cannot be mere spectators in the great strikes and conflicts which are at present convulsing every country. They must take an active part in them, and wherever trade union leaders abandon the workers in their struggle, the opposition controlled by our Parties must create organs capable of leading and directing the strike movement, bearing in mind that these organs after all will form the fighting cadres needed for the guidance and leadership of more extensive battles. The problem of the formation of fighting organs, committees of action, etc., is closely connected with the unification of all opposition forces. Almost in every country we have various forms of opposition: an opposition wing within trade unions, wings split off from various organisations, expelled trade union members, unattached unions, etc. All opposition groups must be welded together with Communist cement, otherwise there will be continued waste of efforts and overlapping. We cannot create cadres without using the existing material. There is no other human material but the material which is to be found in the working class and its organisations. That is why it is so important for our Communist Parties to amalgamate all the



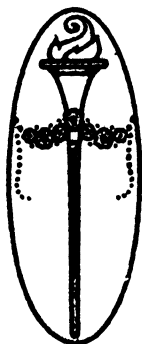
opposition unions, and in times of acute struggle to form fighting organs like strike committees, committees of action, etc., to attract to this work all the elements of the opposition movement, and continually to bring forward such new forces to the front. In many countries our Communist Parties have already developed into mass Parties. Every single day of this struggle will bring new and ever-growing demands. Communist Parties cannot do justice to these demands unless they be firmly welded with the Labour movement in general and with the trade union movement in particular. We must get rid of the pessimism under which many comrades are labouring when they say: "We shall never be able to capture the unions; let us, therefore, concentrate on the formation of new forms of the Labour movement, etc." All this is a sign of weakness, and not of strength. It is an indirect admission that bureaucracy is unconquerable. The Communist Party has set itself the task to overthrow capitalism. Is it possible that we will allow ourselves to be checkmated by trade union bureaucracy? We must get hold of the masses—and everything else will follow.

We see, therefore, that there is no reason whatever for the Comintern to change its tactics, and that this "something new" discovered in some countries is anything but new. We had an example of the new tactics immediately after the German revolution in the slogan "destruction of trade unions," brought forward by the German Communist Labour Party. We would like to ask those comrades who parade this old slogan in the guise of something new how they explain the disappearance of the Communist Labour Party from the political arena? How did it happen that the tendency which had a majority in Heidelberg is no more, while the minority of the Heidelberg Congress, whose tactics were endorsed by the Comintern, recently polled close on four million votes? This happened because the Heidelberg majority took up a wrong position on the question of Communist attitude to mass labour organisations, because the Communist Labour Party adopted a sectarian viewpoint; it declaimed about revolution but did not make it; it made a principle of destroying the union; and because it strove to invent new forms of organisation while failing to see the millions of workers in the old organisations. Is not this a warning example to our Communist Parties? Is not the fate of the German Communist Labour Party a warning to those who are inclined to swerve from the right path? We have witnessed many changes during the last few years. We

have grown up, and we can afford to apply new methods and forms of propaganda and struggle. **We have grown much stronger, but this is because we applied the tactics of capturing the trade unions and fought for unity in the trade union movement.** Let those who advocate the seemingly new, but in reality very old and inadequate tactics, bear in mind this very simple and yet important fact.

A. LOZOVSKY.

Moscow, May 12th, 1924.



# The National Question in Czecho-Slovakia

**D**URING the first two years of the existence of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, it seemed as though the only problem this new State would have to face would be the old question which had been the principal problem under the old dual monarchy, namely: the relations between the Czechs and the Germans. It soon transpired, however, that the new republic would have to face a far more important problem which, if it did not threaten the very existence of the State, would at least profoundly influence its direction. The problem is presented in the question: is Czecho-Slovakia a national State or a State of nationalities?

## A National State or a State of Nationalities?

Light on this question is shed by the figures of the Census of 1921. At that time the national composition of the population of Czecho-Slovakia was as follows:\*

Czechs	...	...	6,727,408	or	49.42	per cent.
Slovaks	...	...	2,033,529	„	14.94	„
Germans	...	...	3,123,568	„	22.94	„
Magyars	...	...	745,431	„	5.48	„
Ruthenians	...	...	461,849	„	3.39	„
Jews	...	...	180,855	„	1.33	„
Poles...	...	...	75,853	„	0.56	„
Others and foreigners			264,679	„	1.94	„
<b>Total</b>			<b>13,613,172</b>	<b>„</b>	<b>100.</b>	<b>„</b>

\* Nationality was determined in this Census on the basis of individual declaration of national allegiance. The Jews were recognised as a nation; yet only one-half of those adhering to the Jewish faith (343,925) declared themselves as belonging to the Jewish nation. Czechs and Slovaks, as we shall see presently were classed as one nation; so there was no choice as between the two nations. I have separated them here by putting down as Slovaks the "Czechoslovaks" resident in Slovakia proper and in Carpathian Ruthenia. This assumption is even more favourable to the Czechs than the current pro-Czech estimate whereby one-fourth of the "Czechoslovaks" are given as Slovaks.

From this table it follows that none of the nations and nationalities resident in Czecho-Slovakia represents a majority of the population. Czecho-Slovakia may, therefore, be considered as a State of nationalities in which, like Poland, no single nation is overwhelmingly in the majority. In order to create at least the fiction of a national State, another fiction was contrived: that the Czechs and the Slovaks are a single and homogenous nation. This was even carried to the extent of concocting a fictitious "Czecho-slovakian" language, which does not exist at all. Thus, everything was done to create artificially a majority-nation or to use the expression of the national-imperialist vernacular, a State-nation and a State-language, in order to justify the existence of a Czecho-Slovakian national State. But even the State-nation so contrived embraces only 64.36 per cent. of the population, or less than two-thirds, so that even after the performance of the trick there are no grounds for speaking of a national State. It can only be maintained artificially, and by means of State coercion.

### The Slovak Problem.

What are the essential features of the Czecho-Slovak question?

That the Czechs and the Slovaks ethnographically constitute one nation is a matter on which there can be no doubt; this was duly recorded by maps and statistics in numerous scientific publications of the pre-war period. The Czechs and the Slovaks were mostly heaped together under the description of "Czecho-Slavs." The philologic differences between the two languages are rather slight; less pronounced than, for instance, between Swiss-German and low-German. But national questions should not be treated from the standpoint of ethnography and philology, but rather from the historical economic and political standpoint. Already in feudal times, *i.e.*, at a time when the conception of a nation in the modern sense did not yet exist, the Czechs and the Slovaks were separated politically and ruled by different sets of rulers. The contact between them during the Hussite and Reformation period was too episodic to leave any lasting effects. Although since 1526, except for short intervals, the Czechs and the Slovaks were governed by the same dynasty, nevertheless, they remained politically separated; for even at the zenith of Habsburg centralism, Hungary constituted a separate political entity. The Czechs and the Slovaks had gone through the decisive economic development of the 18th and 19th centuries under two entirely dif-

ferent sets of economic circumstances. In the Austrian half of the Habsburg monarchy, the Czechs had been drawn into the stream of capitalist development. They produced a prosperous middle-class, a large and small peasantry, a bourgeoisie, an industrial mass-proletariat, as well as numerous classes of alert and ambitious intellectuals of all grades. The Slovaks remained under the sway of the economic and nationalistic policies of the dominant Magyar aristocracy—the latter-day landlords and capitalists—and this Magyar domination in Hungary was nationally more powerful and efficient than that of the “German” nobility and of the German bourgeoisie in Austria. The bulk of the Slovaks remained a poverty-stricken peasant people, for whom the only chance for advancement lay in emigration to America. It is true that, during the period of “national awakening” starting somewhere about the 20’s of the 19th century, there were numerous literary and political points of contact between the two nations; but on the Slovak side they were shared only by an infinitesimal group of intellectuals, leaving the rest of the people entirely unaffected. The Czech bourgeoisie took no interest in the poor Slovaks from whom nothing could be drawn; they considered Vienna, Chernowitz and Trieste to be more important places by far. On the other hand, the Czech agrarians were far more concerned with the competition of Hungarian grain than with the lot of the poor in the Slovak villages. The attempts of the Czech Social-Democrats to gain influence in the Slovak Labour movement met with no appreciable success, because the Magyar Social-Democrats, in league with trade unions, had so centralised and *Magyarised* the Party that the Slovak movement had become for them a mere appendage.

The Slovaks were even more surprised than the Czechs by the advent of *national emancipation*, and by the formation of the new State. The Czechs had at least carried on some national-revolutionary activity within the country (of course, illegally), and among the emigrants in foreign lands, whereas the only Slovak activity to speak of was conducted entirely abroad. The Slovaks in the Czecho-Slovak legions in Russia and the Slovaks in America (before the Revolution, more Slovak newspapers were published, and more Slovak national activity was carried on, in the United States of America than in Slovakia proper) were the only two factors in the cause of Slovak national emancipation, and the covenant for the formation of a joint Czecho-Slovak State was signed on the 30th of May, 1918, at Pittsburg, Pa. In that document there was as yet no talk of *one* Czecho-Slovak nation, nor the “Czecho-Slovak” language. On the contrary, provision

was made for a separate parliament, for separate law courts and administration, and the promise of far-reaching autonomy for Slovakia was given.

The voluntary union into one *common State* corresponded fully to the degree of national and linguistic affinity which existed between the Czechs and the Slovaks, and it could be advantageous to both sides. Weak as separate units, the two nations would have been strengthened by this bond of union. By this union the Slovaks would gain culturally, because they would be brought nearer to the West, the walls of Magyar captivity would be demolished, the rich Czech literature, original as well as translated, would be brought within the reach of the Slovaks (the Slovak of average education reads the Czech quite freely), and the whole level of enlightenment would be raised. Furthermore, the new spirit of anti-clericalism that prevailed among the Czechs during the days of revolution (somewhat reminiscent of the times of Huss) could certainly have cleared the foetid atmosphere of the Roman Catholic domination in Slovakia. It may also be taken for granted that the common national, economic, political and cultural life in our modern fast-moving and fast-changing times would have brought the Czechs and Slovaks together, nationally as well as linguistically, and would rapidly remove any of the effects the century-old separation may have had.

Such indeed were the things anticipated by Masaryk, Benes, Stefanik and all those who were active in the legions in Russia, and who signed the Pittsburg covenant. Of course, amid the trumpets of war and victory, amid the exuberance of sentiment and the enthusiasm of speech-making, many things that lay in the dim future seemed present and close at hand. Nevertheless, all these anticipations were based on quite shallow petty-bourgeois ideology, whose spokesman failed even to foresee that the Czecho-Slovak State planned by them would turn out to be a capitalist and bourgeois State, dominated by the laws of capitalist economy and by the class-interests of the bourgeoisie.

To the Czech bourgeoisie, to Czech financial capital, the national emancipation was merely a means to render their economic domination secure against foreign competition, to protect the independence of the country in which they possessed the monopoly to exploit the masses, both as producers and as consumers. These motives were akin to those which moved the Polish, Serbian and Rumanian bourgeoisie,

while the two last-named bourgeoisies were prompted by similar motives to seek to extend their respective territories of exploitation. Thus, while in addition the Habsburg empire was broken up politically (and that is the crux of the problem of Central Europe) a large economic domain was broken up that had gone through common capitalist development in the past. In order to secure the existence of the new Czech state as a capitalist country in a capitalist world, it was necessary to incorporate the industrial border-districts in which the majority of the population were Germans. Thus, the Czech state was burdened with fully three million Germans, who were simply annexed, while the inclusion of the German industrial districts meant the absorption of German capital, a strong rival to Czech capital. In order to carry this out economically and politically, and with the greatest possible speed, in order to secure the monopoly of the Czech bourgeoisie (monopoly is indeed the chief item in the bourgeois conception of the State), a strong hand was needed, a strong and firm centralised regime, and to this end it was necessary by hook or by crook to create a "democratic" majority, *i.e.*, a majority—or State-nation. The Czech bourgeoisie could not afford to wait until the prolonged co-existence of Czechs and Slovaks would weld them into one nation; the thing needed was immediate, *a priori* Czechoslovak nation. Dreamers like Massaryk, Benes and Stefanik, and the wise Czech and Slovak intellectuals of America, had a quick and rude awakening. Already at Versailles a different wind blew and the crude capitalistic realities at home (where the Czech bourgeoisie adapted itself to the revolution as it did to the former Habsburg monarchy) mocked the dreams of bourgeois politicians and ideologists like Massaryk and Benes, like Habermann and Klopa. The Pittsburg covenant was torn into shreds, and instead of Slovak autonomy came the centralism of Prague, far more rigid than the former centralism of Vienna or of Budapest. The Czechoslovak nation and the "Czechoslovak language" were created by decree.

In order to lend reality to the decreed phantom, a *regime of relentless violence* was instituted in Slovakia. To start with, Slovakia and the Slovaks are much more backward in comparison with the "historic" countries (as Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia used to be described by the Czech bourgeois professors of political history) and with the Czechs in general. Slovakia, in spite of its considerable natural wealth, is a poor and economically mismanaged country, which was severely shaken by the collapse of Hungarian

economy, which had been more centralised than that of Austria. Slovakia lacks a sufficiently strong bourgeoisie: the peasantry is too poor and backward, and the intellectuals are too weak to enable it to become a "State-nation." Of course, it never entered into the mind of the Czech bourgeoisie to succour the weaker brother; on the contrary, they took advantage of its weakness to subjugate it completely. A new Local Government Act was adopted, whereby the old Austrian and Hungarian local government bodies were either abolished entirely or virtually subordinated to the State bureaucracy. This has been carried out so far in Slovakia, which was promised "autonomy," and to an extent to which the Government would never have dared to apply in the so-called "historic countries." To give an idea of the working of this Act, it may be mentioned that the county councils in Slovakia, powerless as they are, have not the right to appoint their own chairman. This power is held by the representative of the Central Government, who also prepares the agenda. The government also has the right, which it uses, to appoint one-third of the Council, even after it is elected. The country was overrun by Czech officials and gendarmes, who were not chosen from among the best elements of the service (as a matter of fact, many of them were exiled to that country as a punishment) and who behaved as if they were in an occupied country. Troops were sent into Slovakia in such numbers that new barracks had to be erected. There are far more gendarmes, policemen and officials in Slovakia to-day than there used to be under the old Hungarian regime. In places where enough exiled Czech officials could not be procured, the worst and most brutal of the old Hungarian officials were retained. Many of these are of Slovak origin, who, under the old regime were rabid Magyar Chauvinists, and to-day are equally brutal in their zeal for Czechoslovakia. It is characteristic that the Prague government could not find any other to appoint to the posts of chiefs of police at Kassa (Kaschau) and Bratislava (Pressburg), the two principal cities of Slovakia, than two of the worst Habsburg creatures of the old Austrian political police of Prague, who have distinguished themselves in the past by ruthless persecution of the Czech national-revolutionary movement. The principal features of this regime was the complete absence of security of personal liberty and political rights. Taking advantage of the continuity law adopted when the Republic was founded, according to which all the laws and regulations of the old regime were to remain in force until repealed, the bureaucrats in Slovakia applied a royal decree dating back to the 18th century to deprive the opposition parties of their right of



assembly and of other political rights. Then, during the last municipal elections in Slovakia the authorities abrogated the general law of the Republic, which permits the holding of electoral meetings without special permits from the authorities, and this was done on the strength of a royal decree of 1848.

The greatest injustice occurs in the question of **citizenship**. In Slovakia the qualification for citizenship in the Czechoslovakian State is not residence or birth, but is acquired according to Hungarian law, upon the payment of taxes in the same community for five years. Whoever possesses this right in a region which forms part of the Czechoslovakian State, is a citizen of Czechoslovakia. Tens of thousands of people suddenly became aliens, or became uncertain of their citizenship, even though they may have been born in Slovakia, lived there for decades, and may never have lived anywhere else. The majority of workers never earned sufficient income to bring them into the scope of the state and local taxes; the State employees were exempt from such taxes, and many communities did not raise these taxes because they had sufficient revenue from other sources. All these people now cannot obtain citizenship rights in Slovakia and State rights in Czechoslovakia. How many workers could have saved up all their tax-certificates in the conditions prevailing during the war? Nevertheless, if one of these certificates were missed, all was lost. The practices of the Czechoslovakian authorities in this respect are much more stringent than those of the Hungarians. The community cannot decide in this matter; even if the community be willing to reinstate a citizen, it cannot do so against the veto of the State officials, who may arbitrarily withhold the right of citizenship without even citing any reasons therefor. Thousands of workers have absolutely no political rights and no legal protection. If they become restive, they are promptly deported and handed over to Horthy. If they are out of work, they get no unemployment benefits. But if one becomes a police spy, a social-patriotic agitator or any other kind of governmental creature, he promptly receives rights of citizenship.

To this must be added the *economic policy* pursued by Czech financial capital in Slovakia. The industries of Slovakia, although as yet undeveloped, were of importance to the economic life of the country, and their separation from the Hungarian economic sphere was a heavy blow to them. The Czech capitalists determined to ruin them com-

pletely. The Slovak industries were the first to be hit by the industrial retrenchment undertaken by Czech financial capital. Some factories have been idle for years; others are being gradually closed down. The greatest iron foundry in Slovakia, which employed three thousand men, was dismantled and the equipment sold to Hungary; the smoke stacks were pulled down. The results of the industrial stagnation, and partial destruction, coupled with the heavy burden of taxes, which on the average has increased to 14 times that of the pre-war burden, aggravated by all kinds of duties, imposts and monopolies, with a depreciation of money to one-seventh of the gold parity, drive the people to emigration as the only resort. The former stream of Slovak emigration from Hungary to America was revived from the Czechoslovak Republic after the "emancipation." Since its establishment the Czechoslovak Republic has lost about two per cent. of its population through emigration, and the greater part comes from Slovakia.

Such is the policy of the Czech bourgeoisie and of the Czech social-patriots and agrarians in Slovakia. The political outcome of this policy is quite evident. The Slovaks are in a state of profound disappointment bordering on bitter resentment. In Slovakia there are about two million Slovaks, 140,000 Germans, 637,000 Magyars, 83,000 Ruthenians and 70,000 Jews; but the greatest and strongest resentment against the Prague regime is felt by the Slovaks. All the nations in Slovakia are on good terms with each other, there is hardly any national hatred worth speaking of; but of late years the Slovaks have developed a national hatred which is directed exclusively against the Czechs, for the simple reason that the Prague regime is Czech. The Slovak proletariat remains for the most part unaffected by this wave of nationalist sentiment; it has drawn but one conclusion from the workings of the bourgeois democratic regime: it has gone over to the Communist camp. On the other hand, the overwhelming part of the Slovak peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie has thrown itself into the arms of the Slovak clericals, who have kept the governmental majority and have inscribed upon their banner the slogan of *autonomy* and the fulfilment of the Pittsburg covenant.

This slogan does not imply, of course, that the Slovak clericals (who call themselves the "Slovak People's Party") are sincerely out for autonomy; they merely use it as a tool to further their own ends. Their leader, Illinke, the priest, is a confirmed reactionary demagogue whose chief

aim is to keep the masses of the Slovak peasants and petty-bourgeoisie in the state of reaction, and whose only worry ever since the revolution is the fact that at the head of the Czech "Hussite Republic" is a man who once "fought against Vienna and Rome" and who might bring about the separation of church from State, and the secularisation of the schools. Illinke vacillated from one side to the other, and has still failed to make up his mind whether to achieve his aims by the aid of Poland, where his colleague Jehlikca, has become the centre of Slovak reactionary irredentism, or by Hungary, whither the Horthy reaction lures him, or by the rulers of Czechoslovakia. As long as he sees no other possibilities, he will be ready to ally himself with Prague. If his bankrupt bank will be re-established with the aid of government funds, if the schools and the church will be left undisturbed, he will be content with any sham or bogus autonomy, or with no autonomy at all. This would be a none too heavy price for the governmental coalition to pay, since instead of the separation of church from State the clericals have been steadily gaining in power throughout the Republic. The clerical schools in Slovakia have been almost entirely retained, and another couple of millions of State funds will be ungrudgingly spent to tickle the palate of a present or a future governmental party. It is only a question whether Illinke, who has carried on a tremendous campaign in favour of autonomy, will be able to whistle back his own followers.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia at its National Conference of 1923, in the theses on the national question, took a definite stand upon the situation in Slovakia. Its message was brief: war upon the Czech bourgeois regime, exposure of the reactionary autonomy swindle of the Slovak clericals, complete local self-government for all the communities throughout the Republic, and removal of bureaucratic interference by State officials in local government matters. I am of the opinion that this programme should be extended to include the demand for a *separate territorial administrative autonomy* for Slovakia. To my mind this demand would meet substantially the needs of the people of Slovakia. Purely from the political standpoint the propaganda for this demand would take the wind out of the sails of the clericals and facilitate the unmasking of their demagogical spouters. The agitation of our Party among the Slovak small peasantry would be given a tremendous fillip; our position in Slovakia would be strengthened, which is of paramount importance to our politics in general; in short,

the regime of the Czech bourgeoisie, the whole coalition regime, would receive a fresh blow.

That we still have a wide field for activity in Slovakia, that there are still great masses whom we have to win over was shown in the *last elections*. These were the town and country council elections held in September, 1923, the first since the foundation of the Communist Party. These elections were such a defeat to the governmental coalition that the Government is even to this day afraid to publish the statistical returns of the elections. A report was published in *Narodni Listy* which is certainly drawn favourably to the government; nevertheless it confesses that the governmental parties obtained about 400,000 votes as against 915,000 votes recorded for the opposition parties, which means more than a two-thirds majority against the government, and that in spite of all the territories and jerrymandering of the authorities! The votes were divided somewhat as follows:

#### GOVERNMENTAL PARTIES:

Agrarians	...	...	...	...	311,000
Social-Democrats	...	...	...	...	63,000
National Socialists	...	...	...	...	38,000
National Democrats	...	...	...	...	16,000

#### OPPOSITION PARTIES:

People's Party (Clericals)	...	...	...	...	432,000
Magyar and German bourgeois parties	...	...	...	...	248,000
Communist Party	...	...	...	...	178,000
Jewish Parties	...	...	...	...	44,000
Ruthenians	...	...	...	...	16,000

As already said, the returns are inexact and unreliable; nevertheless, they are not favourable to the government, although they were doctored to the disadvantage of the Communists. This much is obvious; the overwhelming majority of the population of Slovakia is deliberately hostile to the present governmental regime of Prague; the overwhelming majority of the working class in Slovakia are on the side of Communism, but we have failed as yet to penetrate into the masses of small peasants and petty-bourgeoisie. In order to win those proletarian elements who are still holding aloof from us, we need no new programme, no new policy, but increased organisational and agitational party work and intense activity in the trade unions. But in order to win over the rural population, which constitutes the bulk

of the population in Slovakia, we need an agrarian and national programme of the above-described kind, which should, of course, include also the linguistic and cultural demands of the Hungarian and German minorities. This could easily be done, because as we have already pointed out, the majority of the people in Slovakia are not affected by the propaganda of national hatred against the Germans. All the national oppression existing in this country emanates from the Czech bourgeoisie and from its system of government; it is decreed from Prague, and it does not strike root in Slovak soil.

### The German Problem.

In Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, in the so-called "historic" or "original" countries of the Republic (which should be particularly taken into consideration in examining the national question), the national composition of the population is somewhat as follows:

Czechs	...	...	6,727,408	or	67.24	per cent.
Germans	...	...	2,973,208	or	29.73	„
Poles	...	...	73,020	or	0.73	„
Jews	...	...	30,267	or	0.30	„
Others and aliens			200,831	or	2.00	„
			Total		10,004,732	or 100.00 „

Already from this table it may be seen that the national question in this most important economic and political section of Czecho-Slovakia is exclusively a German question.

This is quite the opposite to the situation in Slovakia, where the Germans are not numerous and where they live under different circumstances.

It was also shown by statistics that even in the "original" countries the Czechs have just a two-thirds majority of the population. At the same time the 30 per cent. of the Germans represents a permanently *settled population*. Little fluctuation was shown among this population by the last censuses taken under the old Austrian regime. The last strong fluctuation in favour of the Czechs occurred in 1890 (the census was taken in Austria once in 10 years), at the time of the first industrial development, because the proletarianisation and impoverishment of the Germans was

more rapid. Emigration to industrial Germany, high mortality and terrible infantile mortality decimated the German population, while the Czechs, who were still a people of peasants, were not so rapidly affected by these consequences of capitalist development. The legend about the much higher birth-rate among the Czechs has proved to be unfounded. Since the '80's the Czechs, too, became strongly proletarianised and industrialised; poverty got them into its grip, and their temporary gains over the Germans were set at naught. A certain process of Germanisation had begun; but it was soon ousted by the recrudescence of nationalist sentiment among the Czech workers towards the close of the 19th century. The German workers had gained by the rise in wages, by the shortening of hours and by the social policies inaugurated in the '90's, and their state of misery was somewhat mitigated. The rate of adult and infant mortality had dropped. In this manner the German population was practically brought back again to its former numerical level. If there was an increase of the Czech minority in the German-speaking industrial centres, it was accompanied by a corresponding reduction in the population in the Czech rural districts; a similar movement took place in the German-speaking rural districts where the population was reduced by emigration to the industrial districts.

It was only during the world-war and after the creation of the Czecho-Slovakian State that a noticeable shifting took place. The Czech national census of 1921 shows that in the "historic countries" (with the exception of the small Czech district) the population decreased by 159,797 or 1.65 per cent., while the Czechs increased by 327,625 or 53 per cent. and the Germans decreased by 508,923 or 14.75 per cent. It is interesting to note that the general average decrease of the population in the districts with a German majority was 5.18 per cent., and in the districts with a Czech majority only 0.11 per cent. The Germans had suffered a great deal more from the effects of the war, for the general misery and famine which accompanied the war were most intense in the industrial districts inhabited by a German majority. Another reason was that the Germans had responded more widely than the Czechs to the call to fight and to die for the glorious Hapsburg dynasty, "for the German cause," as it was put by the *Weiner Arbeiterzeitung*. But these were only minor causes of the great change. It stands to reason that the establishment of the Czecho-Slovakian State had a tremendous effect upon the national feelings of the Czechs in the German-speaking districts. Many thousands, who for

economic reasons had hitherto pretended to be German, now declared their allegiance to their own nation. Thousands of others did so on the chance of gaining advantage by doing so. Many German employees, state officials, petty-bourgeois and even workers turned themselves into Czechs for personal opportunist reasons. The job-hunter now had every inducement to profess Czech nationality under the new regime, just as under the old Austrian regime it paid him to be German. Finally, the Jews, who profess to belong to the Jewish nation (which was not possible in Austria), were almost exclusively German-speaking, and had consequently been hitherto counted as German.

On comparing the relative strength of the Czech and German population on the basis of the census with the relative numbers of votes recorded for the Czech and German parties in the elections of 1919 and 1920, in which the national lines were sharply defined, we find a slightly more favourable picture for the Germans. The ballots were cast in secret; whereas declaration of nationality had to be filed with the census-commissar appointed by the Government.

The statistical data in the *relative distribution* of Czech-speaking and German-speaking settlements are important. We find that there are very few isolated German-speaking settlements in the Czech districts; on the contrary, the overwhelming majority of the German-speaking inhabitants cling together upon contiguous territory, forming a majority of the population in such localities.

According to a German publication\* the contiguous German-speaking territories comprise 3,191 communities with a German majority with an area of 24,850 kilometres, while the isolated German-speaking settlements comprise 206 communities with German-speaking majorities with a total area of 1,700 kilometres. In the local elections of 1919, in which about 1,585,000 votes were cast for the German parties, no less than 1,363,000 votes, or 86 per cent. must have been obtained in the contiguous German-speaking territories; only 93,000 or 6 per cent. in the isolated German-speaking settlements and 120,000 votes, or 7½ per cent. must have been cast by German minorities. The remaining 9,000 votes (or one-half per cent.) belonged to German minorities in the isolated Czech-speaking settlements in the German-

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\* Der politische Besitzstand der Deutschen in den Sudetenländern  
Eger 1922.

speaking regions; there were 16 such localities, and the Czechs cast 15,309 votes in them. Comparing the totals of German and Czech votes in contiguous German-speaking territories exclusive of isolated Czech-speaking settlements, we find that the Germans obtained 1,372,678 votes and the Czechs 136,538—a proportion of 91 to 9.

The Czech statistician, D. A. Bohac, puts the total German-speaking territory of Czecho-Slovakia at about 25,000 kilometres and 2,937,000 inhabitants. Comparing these figures with those of the German authority just quoted, and bearing in mind that the size of German-speaking territory in Slovakia is rather negligible and that the average of ratio of the number of voters to the number of inhabitants under Czech law is about 1 to 2, there is hardly any appreciable difference between these two sets of figures emanating from the Czech and from the German sides. We may, therefore, calculate on the basis of the figures furnished by Ogerschall, that Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia are really divided into three national territories and in the following manner :—

Czech-speaking territory, about 53,000 sq. kms. or  
67.4 per cent.

German-speaking territory, about 25,000 sq. kms. or  
31.9 per cent.

Polish-speaking territory, about 700 sq. kms. or  
0.7 per cent.

Out of an area of about 78,700 square kilometres.

This ratio is further confirmed by the statistics on population which show that the German-speaking inhabitants in the Sudetic countries are concentrated in fairly compact settlements.

The German-speaking districts of Bohemia, the population of which includes no less than two million Germans, are by far the most important industrial districts of the country. Only in Moravia and Silesia are the German-speaking districts more agrarian. The glass, porcelain, linen, cotton, and paper industries, as well as the cultivation of red cabbage, are located chiefly in the German-speaking districts. The German inhabitants of all classes are more inclined to industrial pursuits than are the Czechs. In short, the German-speaking districts are economically the most important regions of Czecho-slovakia. Because of their



economic importance, which renders them indispensable to the existence of the State as a capitalist state in a capitalist world, these districts were arbitrarily annexed to the State, regardless of nationality or the wishes of the population.

Bearing in mind that the Germans in Czecho-Slovakia are by no means inferior to the Czech people, either culturally or politically, there can be no doubt as to the extreme importance of the German question to the State, if only on these domestic grounds alone, to say nothing of the larger issues of foreign policy.

The question becomes even more serious when its *international character* is taken into consideration.

There are approximately three million Germans in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia who not only ethnographically and linguistically belong part and parcel to the 80 millions of Germans in Germany proper, but are closely bound to it by their settled habits and by the whole of their cultural and above all, their political life. The German settlements in the Sudetic countries are separated only by mountains and state-boundaries from the rest of the settlements of the German nation. It is only in the valley of the Glatz that the Czech settlements extend to any appreciable degree to the borders of the German Empire. The frontiers on the German and Austrian sides are for the major part in districts where the German population is in the majority. Over a long stretch of country, starting from Oberberg in the Upper Silesian corner, via Bodenbach and Egar, and all the way to Pressburg, the Czecho-Slovak State is hemmed in by Germany and Austria from North, West and South. It is indeed a miracle that the Czechs have managed in this geographical situation to maintain themselves as a nation throughout the centuries, a miracle explained only by the fact that there was no united national German State. It sounds paradoxical to-day; nevertheless, it is not historically incorrect to assume that the Czechs owe a great deal to the Habsburgs for the maintenance of their national existence. Austria, as already admitted by Palanching, was the salvation and security of the Czech nation. If the dismemberment of Austria has given the Czechs their national independence, it was possible only because the power of Germany was crushed at the same time. An indispensable condition to the existence of the Czecho-Slovak State in its present boundaries within the capitalist order in Europe is the impotence of Germany, the perpetuation of the present

balance of power in Europe. The restoration of a strong and mighty capitalist Germany would render it impossible for seven million Czechs to continue the subjugation of the three million Germans who belong to a nation of 80 million people; and this would mean the end of the Czecho-Slovak State. A Czecho-Slovakian State within the proper boundaries of Czecho-Slovakia under the capitalist system would be practically impossible, both from the economic and strategical point of view. The principal railway arteries from Prague to Bruenn, and from Prague to the coal mining and industrial centres of the Ostrau district, that is, the railway communications with Eastern and Northern Slovakia, run through German-speaking territory!

Herein lies the fundamental reason for the nervous zig-zag policies of the Foreign Office of Czecho-Slovakia. It seeks to avoid any open quarrel with Germany and Austria, but at the same time to keep them both in their present state of economic and political impotence; however, it would like to prevent their economic collapse, because such a calamity would be of great danger politically and socially to the bourgeois republic of Czecho-Slovakia. What the Czecho-Slovakian Foreign Minister, Herr Benes, fears most, is a break-up of the Anglo-French entente, and a rapprochement between a big European power and Germany, which is quite conceivable in view of the circumstances described above. This accounts also for the nervous journeys of Herr Benes between London and Paris during last year. When the Anglo-French Entente seemed to be in peril, Benes sought refuge in the "Little Entente," so as not to be dependent entirely upon the big powers. When Poland would not join, when Yugoslavia carried on her own little game with Italy, and when the break-up of the Entente seemed imminent, the only way for Benes to be consistent in his own policy was to throw himself entirely into the arms of Poincaré. Imperialist France is the only power in capitalist Europe which has both the interest and the ability to keep Germany down, and, under the circumstances, there is nothing left to Massaryk, Benes and Kramer than to pray to Almighty God for a long lease of life to the foreign policies of Poincaré.

The net result of national emancipation and the establishment of the State under the leadership of the bourgeoisie is this: the entire fate of the Czecho-Slovakian nation is bound up for better or for worse with the balance of power in capitalist Europe, or rather with the hegemony of France. It is with this that the Czecho-Slovakian Republic

will stand or fall. Under the old Austrian regime, the Czechs as a nation were not free and independent, and they were oppressed politically and nationally; but their existence as a nation and their future development were far more secure than in present-day capitalist Europe. The Czech statesmen could hope only to become Austrian ministers, not Czecho-Slovakian presidents and ministers; but they could sleep more peacefully than to-day.

The **Communist Party** of Czecho-Slovak perceived this situation from the very beginning, and it did not fail to point it out to the masses of the Czech and German workers. At the inaugural conference of the German section of the Czecho-Slovak Communist Party (Reichenberg, March, 1921) and at the first regular conference of the United Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia (Prague, February, 1923), our comrades expressed their views upon this question. In its theses, the Party pointed out to the Czech workers, peasants and petty-bourgeois into what situation the Czech bourgeoisie has guided the nation. It told them that the victory of the European proletarian revolution alone would remove all the dangers which beset the liberty and independence of the nation, that the existence and further development of the nation would be secure only under a system of federated Soviet Republics in Europe. In the event of the redistribution of power in capitalist Europe, the only real factors opposed to German imperialism would be the class-struggle of the German proletariat, and the power of Soviet Russia, the true defender of the small nations.

The German workers of Czecho-Slovakia were already told by the Reichenberg conference that any irredentist movement would only serve the interests of German capitalism and imperialism, and of international reaction.

The experiences of the German proletariat in the former Austrian Empire have taught it that national oppression means more oppression and reaction for the proletariat of the "ruling nation." The fusion of the German-speaking districts of the Sudetic countries with a recuperated capitalist Germany could be effected only under the banner of imperialism and reaction, and it would simply increase the misery and slavery of the German workers. Therefore, the German workers should not shout: "Deportation from Czecho-Slovakia!" but should rather unite with the Czech and Slovak workers for the common fight, for the overthrow of

capitalist domination, which will remove national oppression. The Reichenberg conference warned also against any "revolutionary" irredentism towards the proletarian revolution in Czecho-Slovakia in the event of a victorious proletarian revolution in Germany. For such irredentism would not strengthen but weaken a proletarian Germany and menace it with military complications, while the Czech revolution would be crushed and the Czechs driven into the army of the counter-revolution, and the best protection of its flank on the South-East would be the strengthened and united revolutionary action of all the nations of Czecho-Slovakia, which would eventually bring victory to the proletarian revolution in that country as well. The votes cast in October, 1923, by the Czecho-Slovak workers who were influenced by our propaganda, has shown that the workers of all the nations of Czecho-Slovakia endorse our policy at the decisive hour.

But this political task confronts us only during periods of acute revolutionary tension. At ordinary times we are merely confronted with the question of *policies of national oppression* as practised by the Czech bourgeoisie against the Germans, and of our attitude to such policies. The Czech bourgeoisie seems determined to "un-Germanise" the Germans and to turn them into "Czechs." This policy manifests itself everywhere: in the schools, in the language question, in the distribution of government offices, in the agrarian reforms, and so on. It cannot assume the brutal forms and huge dimensions of the German anti-Polish policy and of the Magyar national policies before the revolution. The existing co-relation of forces prevents this in spite of Germany's helplessness. Official statistics indicate that only 1.7 per cent. of the German children are attending non-German schools, and the number of cases in which German children are compelled to attend Czech schools is insignificant. But for a cultured nation, the workers, peasants and petty-bourgeoisie of which attach such wide importance to the school, the subordination of its educational system to the whims of an alien bureaucracy, and the consequent disruption of the system, seems an extreme form of nationalist oppression. The language question is treated only from the standpoint of the dominant nation, which is again a source of injustice and oppression. Many thousands of German state officials are suffering from unjust dismissal, from unwarranted transfers, and from irrelevant language-tests at civil service examinations. The agrarian reforms and the distribution of large estates is carried out not merely in an anti-social manner, but it is deliberately calculated to promote Czech

colonisation in the German-speaking districts. Many questions are handled in a silly and idiotic fashion with the aim of subjecting the Germans to all sorts of petty irritations which are embittering them. But the cap to the climax is the arrogant Prague centralism, which is becoming more aggressive day by day, and which aims at reducing all local self-government to a mere farce. It is the German worker who is hit the hardest by the consequences of these policies of national oppression. The elementary schools are the only ones to which the worker is able to send his children. The language difficulties also cause the greatest hardships to the worker, who is less able than the bourgeoisie to learn languages and who cannot, like the latter, afford to hire Czech-speaking lawyers and clerks to attend to his dealings with the authorities and the courts. The petty officials and workers are victimised more than any other by chicanery in the government services described above (the German railway workers are particularly harassed by the Czech authorities). National oppression has imbued the German petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry and a section of the workers with intense nationalist sentiments, which renders more difficult the class-struggle of the German proletariat against the German bourgeoisie.

It goes without saying that the *fight against national oppression* constitutes one of the tasks of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia. The Party took it up from the very first, and the Prague Conference of February, 1923, formulated this task for the first time. The principal demands were formulated as follows: removal of centralism in the administration of State-bureaucrats from the local councils; complete local self-government; local control of the educational system; solution of the language question from the standpoint of practical necessity, giving each citizen the right to negotiate with the authorities in his own language. Owing to many other pressing tasks, this stand of the Party upon the national question has been scarcely utilised in propaganda and agitation, and a systematic campaign against national oppression, and for the collection of materials and discussions in the press, has only just begun. The Communist fraction in Parliament accomplished something on this question, for example, the protest raised against the persecution and chicanery practised against the German workers on the State railways.

The necessity of fulfilling this task and the fruits which may accrue from such work are indicated by two facts:

(1) The proportion of strength between the Communists and Social-Democrats among the German workers of Czecho-Slovakia is far from favourable; as a matter of fact, the latter out-number the former by more than two to one.

(2) The communal elections last autumn showed a strong drift of workers of German Nationality from the Social-Democratic ranks into the bourgeois parties, particularly into the Fascist organisations. Our influence extends at most to one-fourth of the German workers: our position among the German workers is weaker than among the Czech workers, of whom we, as the strongest party of the working class, have about one-third. Our following among the rural and petty-bourgeois German population of Czecho-Slovakia is not worth speaking about; we have not even begun our work among these people to the extent that we have done on Czech territory.

### The Polish Problem.

The slice of Teschen territory (in the eastern portion of the former Austrian Silesia) had to be awarded to Czecho-Slovakia because it affords the only convenient railway communication (via the former Kauschau-Oberburg Railway) with Northern and Eastern Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. This vital artery of communication, which connects from East to West over the long, narrow stretch of the country, cuts so close into the Polish border that it can easily be captured by artillery fire at Teschen from the Polish side. Of course, the government would like to remove this strategically weak point. This explains the official statistics which purport to show that 13.2 per cent. of the Polish school-children attend non-Polish, *i.e.*, Czech schools. With Poland, as with Hungary, the Czech government made no agreements on the questions of State citizenship, and the conditions in this district are as flagrant as in Slovakia. The majority of the Polish population of Czecho-Slovakia are workers, consisting chiefly of miners and metal-workers. The sympathies of the mass of these workers are on our side; but the influence and nationalist propaganda of the Socialists from Poland are still strong, and lately many Polish workers joined the Czech Social-Democrats in the trade unions and in political activity because the latter promised to secure the rights of citizenship for their members. The question of the Polish workers is another task which the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia must fulfil more completely in the future than hitherto, be-

cause these workers play an important part in one of the most important industrial districts of the Republic.

### **Carpathian Ruthenia.**

Carpathian Ruthenia represents an important problem in itself. This country was annexed by Czecho-Slovakia by virtue of Articles 10-13 of the Treaty of St. Germain on the 10th of September, 1919, for reasons of international politics. Ethnographically and linguistically the bulk of the population belongs to Russia, notably to the Ukraine; but it was not desirable to leave the country to Poland or to the Ukraine, or to a Soviet Republic. Carpathian politics were also played in the United States during the war. On the basis of a resolution adopted in America in July, 1918, by the "National Council of Hungarian Russians," a covenant was signed at Philadelphia between this organisation and Massaryk which guaranteed "absolute independence" to Carpathian Ruthenia. This condition was also included in the above-mentioned Articles of the Treaty of St. Germain. Thus far the Czech government has failed to fulfil the terms of the Peace Treaty, and it has not even shown any honest intention of doing so. On the contrary, it has inflicted upon the little country a bureaucratic police and military regime even worse than that of Slovakia. What has been written about Slovakia applies to an even greater extent to Carpathian Ruthenia. The Ruthenians of the Carpathian forests were driven into starvation and despair by this system.

The attitude of the Communist Party upon the Carpathian question was clear from the very first. While demanding the distribution of the lands, forests and pastures of the big estates among the poorer peasants, we insisted also on the fulfilment of the pledge of independence that was accorded to the Carpathians by the terms of the Peace Treaty. Our Party was the only one which championed the cause of the poor and oppressed Carpathians, in Parliament and in the press. This, and the tremendous effect upon the poor Carpathian villages of the tidings of the great liberation of the Russian peasants by the Bolshevist revolution, brought us victory in the elections, which was not at all unexpected. In Carpathian Ruthenia, the majority of the population of the countryside are on our side. It will be our next and immediate task to transform this adherence and sympathy into active and conscious solidarity for the revolutionary

action of the masses. Our economic, political and national programme here is quite clear.

The population of Carpathian Ruthenia is not composed of one nationality which the following figures will illustrate :

Carpathian Ruthenians	372,884	or	61.48	per cent.
Magyars	...	...	102,144	„ 16.84 „
Jews	...	...	80,059	„ 13.20 „
Czecho-Slovaks	...	...	19,737	„ 3.25 „
Germans	...	...	10,460	„ 1.72 „
Others and aliens	...	...	21,284	„ 3.51 „
			Total	606,468 „ 100.00 „

Among the Magyar population there is a strong proletariat, the majority of which is in our camp. The Jews in this country are also strongly proletarianised, but they are orthodox and are inclined for the most part towards Jewish nationalism. In the North-west are the Slovak peasants, who are as susceptible to our propaganda as the Ruthenian peasants. The Czechs consist almost exclusively of officials, soldiers, gendarmes and State employees. The Germans are mostly peasants (colonists like the Germans of Zips and Siebenbuerger). National strife is almost unknown among the population. Everyone wants to be rid of the Prague regime. Autonomy is demanded even by the non-Ruthenian population. The internal national questions present no difficulties whatever. The national question was raised by other questions, for instance, whether the Carpathian Ruthenians are Great Russians (Moscovites) or Little Russians (Ruthenians, Ukrainians). Although the great majority of these poor fellows are still illiterate—conflicts arose between various factions over an alphabet and a grammar! The masses remain unaffected by these squabbles. All they want is Land and Liberty.

Czecho-Slovakia is a small country, but its national problems rank in variety and importance with those of the big states. In this respect, as in many others, it is heir to the former Austrian Empire. The labour movement of Austria was led astray by national problems, which broke up its political and trade union organisation. The leaders of the Amsterdam and Second Internationals in Czecho-Slovakia, like true heirs of the pre-war reformism and social-patriotism of Austria, have bequeathed the proletariat in the new State a labour movement torn with national dissent and took no step to bring about international solidarity.



But the Communist International, for the first time in the history of the countries now belonging to Czecho-Slovakia, has created an international, united workers' party—the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia, while the Red International of Labour Unions has, for the first time, brought about a united trade union movement that is free from national antagonism. And it is the Communist Party alone, under the leadership of the Communist International, that will master the national problem in Czecho-Slovakia. The question can only be solved by the formation of a Czecho-Slovakian Soviet Republic in a Socialist Europe.

KARL KREIBICH.

(Translated by M. L. KORTCHMAR.)



# The National Question in the Balkans

**T**HE national movements in the Balkans started at the beginning of the 19th century. They arose out of the struggles of the new economic forces to liberate themselves from the shackles of the obsolete feudal relations which prevailed under the Empire of the Turkish Sultans. The movements found expression in a series of national uprisings and wars, which gradually broke the power of the Beks and the Pashirs, liberated the peasants, and resulted in the formation of the present independent Balkan States.

The national movements in the Balkans have played a **revolutionary role of the greatest importance.**

But at the same time they were inspired and supported by interested foreign forces which were pursuing aims of conquest in the Balkans. The movements were always the **instruments** of the policy of conquest of the great European powers.

The Berlin Treaty (1878), with which the Russo-Turkish war ended, created a new situation in the Balkans. But it did not put an end to the national movements. Thrace, Albania, Epirus, Thessaly and Crete, remained as formerly under the despotic power of the Sultan and the economic oppression of the Turkish Beks. In these regions the national movements did not cease. Neighbouring Balkan states, as well as the great powers, interfered with these movements. Nevertheless, the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, and the annexation of Dobrubja to Rumania and of Bessarabia to Russia gave rise to new national questions.

It was owing to the rottenness of the economic regime and the decrepitude of the Turkish political power that the national movement in the Balkans was chiefly concentrated in the Turkish provinces, around the Macedonian, Thracian and Albanian questions. Its political programme was—state independence.

The dominant capitalist classes and dynasties in the neighbouring states naturally endeavoured to extend their

territories, to acquire new markets, and to secure an outlet to the great sea routes at the expense of the Turkish Empire. They concealed the purely annexatory and egoistic character of their policy by declarations that they were fighting for the "liberation of their brothers" from the Turkish yoke and for "national unity." Of course, "liberation" could be secured only by means of war, and the Balkan States accordingly made energetic preparations for war against Turkey. But on the other hand, "national unity" could be obtained only at the expense of each other, and therefore they prepared to fight among themselves. Up to the decisive moment, they based their "rights" upon a thousand arguments—ethnographic, geographic, historical, economic, strategic, etc.

The imperialist powers also brought pressure to bear upon the Balkans. They pursued their policy of conquest in the East under the mask of "the defence of the Christian population" and its "national rights." At this point the paths of Russia and Germany, Russia and England, Austria and Italy crossed. In pursuit of their aims, the powers were preparing a war in the Balkans, and it was obvious that this war must inevitably be transformed into a general European war.

In this manner the revolutionary movements of the oppressed peoples within the territories of European Turkey were diverted from their direct aims under the pressure of numerous interested great powers, and small "protecting" powers, with the result that they were transformed into an instrument of imperial conquest and oppression.

The Balkan war (1912-13) was preceded by artificially provoked movements of the Albanians and Macedonians. The victories of the Balkan Union "liberated" the enslaved "brothers" from the oppression of the Sultans (the Treaty of London), but "national unity" led fatally to an inter-Union war, which resulted in the annexation of certain parts of Bulgaria and Turkey to Rumania, the division of the "liberated" territories, chiefly among Serbia and Greece, and the submission of the "brothers" to fresh national oppression (the Peace of Bukharest). However, owing to the rivalry between Austria, Italy and Serbia, a part of the Albanian people secured a political semi-independence.

But the spoliatory interests of the imperialist states drove matters further. A great war flared up, the result of which was not to decide the national problems of the Balkans but to render them still more acute and entangled.

The Treaties of St. Germain, Trianon and the Nile (1919), concluded at the expense of defeated Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, created the multi-national states of Yugo-Slavia and "Great" Rumania. In addition, Rumania seized Soviet Bessarabia. Finally, the Nile negotiations and the Lausanne Conference (1923) set up new frontiers between Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece.

Before the war Serbia had a population of less than three millions, but there are now in Yugo-Slavia about 2,000,000 people belonging to national minorities (Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Rumanians, Albanians, Bulgarians, etc.), and about 7,000,000 Croatians, Slovenians, Bosnians, Montenegrans and Macedonians, who regard themselves as **separate nations**. The national minorities, who are frequently subjected to a brutal regime, are naturally drawn towards their free brothers, and **irridentism** is accordingly growing among them. But of still greater significance is the struggle between the compact national groups.

The Serbian bourgeoisie, basing itself upon monarchism and militarism, and supported by French capitalism, is endeavouring to establish its hegemony over the former Austro-Hungarian provinces, which from the point of view of capitalist relations are far more developed. Owing to this there is developing a conflict between Serbia, on the one hand, and Croatia, Slovenia and partly Bosnia, on the other. The numerical inferiority of the Serbian population as compared with the Croatians, Slovenians and Bosnians together, compels the White Guard rulers to be indiscriminately brutal in their relation towards the latter peoples, as a result of which not only the bourgeois sections, but also the masses of the population are being drawn into the struggle and the conflict is becoming more extensive and more acute. The unreliable parliamentary basis for the government obliges it to seek the support of the Turkish and Bosnian Beks (landowners), whereby it is evoking the opposition of the landless peasants and the peasants with little land. Yugo-Slavia is thus being transformed into a field of intense conflict, in which the broad masses of the population are participating, and which is assuming a nationalist character. It should be stated that the leadership of the masses is actually in the hands of the bourgeoisie. The latter has succeeded in lending its **class** aims a **national character** and thus secured the support of the masses. In 1919-1920 the Communist Party had behind it not only the proletariat, but also large sections of the toiling peasantry, but in the last few years it has become isolated from the masses. The latter, however, have

not gone over to the Social-Democrats. The national parties (of Radich, Koroshetz and Spakho) have been strengthened at the expense of the Communists, which indicates that the Communist Party failed to estimate at its true worth the national factor in the struggle of the toiling masses. A direct rejection of the national question in Yugo-Slavia, or a concealed rejection (the belief, for instance, that it is merely a question of constitution), will both react equally unfavourably upon the development of the Party. The Party will run the risk of losing the sympathy of the Macedonian peasants, which is as strong as it was in 1919-1920, if it does not actively take up a correct position with regard to the national question.

The **Macedonian question** is of extremely great importance. The possession of the valley of the River Varder (Macedonia) would mean a free outlet to the Aegean Sea (Salonika). This is the object of the ambitions of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy and its southern successor—Yugo-Slavia. The possession of Macedonia would serve as a base for the conquest of Salonika. Macedonia is of equal importance for the Bulgarian and the Greek bourgeoisie.

In Macedonia the annexatory aims of the three Balkan states are again crossing. Sooner or later, if capitalism continues its domination, the Macedonian question will lead to a new Balkan War.

The outlines of this war are already defining themselves. The Bulgarian Government has come to an agreement with the Italian Government over the Adriatic question, in order to be able to concentrate its attention on the South. It is exerting great efforts to secure its domination over Macedonia to shut her off from the ambitions of Bulgaria, either by means of a military expedition into Bulgaria, or by means of an agreement at the expense of Greece on the following basis: Macedonia and Salonika to be given to Yugo-Slavia, and Western Thrace and Dadeagatch (and Kovalla) to be given to Bulgaria. The defeat of Greece in Asia Minor, and the expulsion of the crowned brother-in-law of King Alexander from Athens, have only served to sharpen the appetites of the capitalist plunderers.

In view of this, the workers and peasants of the Balkan countries in their struggle against the imperialist ambitions of the Balkan bourgeoisie, and against the new wars which they are so zealously preparing, have an ally in the toiling population of Macedonia, which is fighting for unity and

independence. A united and autonomous Macedonia (and Thrace) would only serve to strengthen the anti-militarist front. The Balkan Communist parties, by supporting the Macedonian national revolutionary movement, will facilitate this and will extend and strengthen their own struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie. Their chief task, dependent upon circumstances, will be to find concrete methods of co-operation with the Macedonian mass national organisations. A no less important task is at all costs to defeat the attempts of the bourgeoisie of the Balkan countries, in whatever form they are made, to seize control of the Macedonian national movement, and to exploit it for their own aims of conquest and counter-revolution.

Very much the same part is played by the Thracian question in the relations between Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece; and therefore, a similar attitude on the part of the Balkan Communist Parties is necessary both towards the national liberation movement and towards the national movements in Thrace.

Rumania before the war had a population of eight millions, which since the war has been doubled, and in addition it has absorbed no less than three million Hungarians, Germans, Russians, Bulgarians, and others living in compact groups in Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia, Dobrudja, etc. As a consequence the national question in Rumania has assumed very acute forms. The bourgeoisie of old Rumania, who like the Serbian bourgeoisie depend upon the support of the court and the army, are trying to establish its hegemony over the annexed provinces. But it is meeting with great resistance in Transylvania, where a stronger and more developed Hungarian capitalism exists; there has there been formed a National Hungarian Party which is striving to embrace the whole of its Hungarian population. In Bessarabia, Rumanian violence is coming into collision with the irrepresible urge of the peasant masses towards Soviet Russia. In Southern Dobrudja the nationalism of the Bulgarian peasants remains unshaken, in spite of the terrorist methods employed by the Bukharest landowners. Thus, the whole political life of the country is strongly influenced by the national struggle. In these circumstances it is obvious that the national question is of great and immediate importance for the Rumanian Communist Party. To neglect it, to attempt to conduct the struggle solely on the basis of class contradictions, would be to deprive oneself of a powerful instrument for gaining influence over the masses and for establishing contacts with them.

The **Bessarabian question**, like the Macedonian question, conceals within itself the germ of a new war. The refusal of the U.S.S.R. to consent to the seizure of Bessarabia makes the position of the Rumanian landowners in this region very uncertain. In order to retain Bessarabia, they are obliged to expend continually huge sums of the national resources on armaments, and to seek costly patrons and protectors. Yet, in spite of all this, the population is faced with the constant menace of war. To confirm for the population of these regions the right of self-determination would be not only to satisfy Bessarabia, but also to save the whole of Rumania from the frightful menace of fresh upheavals and catastrophes.

The national problem in the Balkans varies considerably.

When the oppressed nations live as foreign minorities distributed among the dominant nations, the national question takes the form of the demand for political and civil equality, cultural and national rights, etc. Owing to the national diversity of the Balkan States, and to secular hostility and intolerance, the question of securing the rights of the national minorities is of first-class importance. All international treaties regarding Balkan affairs are concerned with this question. The Balkan Communist Parties are here presented with a favourable opportunity to come forward as the defender of the oppressed and disfranchised and as a peace-maker between the Balkan nations.

As regards, however, the compact national groups, the question is much more difficult. When these groups are indisputably of a **different nationality** (the Hungarians in Transylvania, the Bulgarians in Dobrudja, the Albanians in Serbia, etc.), their right to self-determination is indisputable.

But when they are of a **different race** (the Croats, Slovenians, Bosnians and Montenegrans in respect to the Serbs) doubt arises. The bourgeois slogan of "national unity," etc., which serves to conceal the annexatory ambitions of the capitalists, only obscures the question. And it is here more than anywhere else that revolutionary clarity and not bourgeois nationalist pedantry is required.

Where a national movement actually exists and is a mass movement, disputes as to whether the particular national group concerned is a separate nation, or only a separate race of the same nation, have not the slightest practical significance. The group itself must determine to which state it should belong.

Certain national groups strive to be united with states from which they have been violently severed (irridentism), as for instance, the Hungarians in Yugo-Slavia and Rumania with Hungary, the Bulgarians in Dobrudja with Bulgaria, etc.; or they strive to constitute themselves separate states, as for instance, the Macedonians, Montenegrans, etc., or to enter into federal relations with other national groups, as for instance the Croatians, Slovenians and the Bessarabians, are undoubtedly striving to federate with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

The Communist Parties should determine their relations towards these various movements and strivings **concretely** in each individual case, basing themselves on the right of every nation to self-determination and guiding themselves by the interests of the revolutionary movement of the toiling masses.

**The emigrant question** in the Balkan States is another phase of the national problem. In the regions where the war was fought, huge sections of the national population (Thrace, Macedonia, etc.), fled before the advancing armies. The Balkan government very often violently drove foreign national populations out of the conquered territories (the Greeks out of Asia Minor, the Bulgarians out of Thrace, etc.). The rule of emergency law in the annexed territories is driving large masses into neighbouring countries (Macedonians are fleeing into Bulgaria, etc.). The Treaty of the Nile provided for the "exchange" of populations between Greece and Bulgaria. A large amount of emigration has thus been created in the Balkan countries, and this naturally reacts upon the national movement in various ways. The emigrants are a tremendous material burden upon the countries in which they settle, and moreover constitute a perpetual source of conflict between the Balkan states. In addition, the bourgeoisie and the dynasties are trying to exploit them as instruments in their policy of annexation and oppression. The Communist Party, by taking the emigrants under their protection and endeavouring to lighten their lot, should strive to save them from the influence of the bourgeoisie and the dynasties and to co-ordinate their struggle with the struggle of the toiling masses.

The **methods** of the national struggle in the Balkans also vary considerably, from purely legal and parliamentary defence, from semi-legal mass pressure, up to the creation of



illegal organisations, insurrections, the organisation of armed uprisings, intervention in foreign states and incitement to war.

Of the **social classes** participating in the national movement, the most numerous and most important is the peasantry. In Bosnia, Macedonia, Thrace, Bessarabia and Transylvania, the **agrarian question** plays an important part in the national movement. The **proletariat** participates in the movement because national oppression is a source of greater exploitation and prevents the development of the class struggle. The **large bourgeoisie** in certain regions (Croatia, Slovenia and Rumanian bourgeoisie are attempting to subordinate it to their own interests. This diversity of class interests in the national movement still further complicates the work of the Communist Party. It confronts the party with the following tasks : to make a profound study of agrarian relations prevailing in their own country, to estimate the influence of the national oppression upon the development of the class struggle of the workers, and at all costs to snatch the leadership of the struggles of the town and peasant masses out of the hands of the nationalist bourgeoisie.

The Balkan Communist Parties, united in the Balkan Communist Federation, quite rightly regard the solution of the national question to be a Balkan Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. But in order to secure this general aim the most careful and all-embracing study of the complex national problems is demanded, and the most careful attention must be given to all manifestations of the national movement.

V. KOLAROV.

# Resolution

## On the Question of Nationalities.

**C**APITALIST Rumania is among the States which, as a result of the imperialist world war and of the "unification of all Rumanians," has brought under its rule considerable sections of nationalities of a high political, economic and cultural development. The nationalities of Greater Rumania are ruthlessly oppressed by the Rumanian boyar oligarchy in spite of the "guarantees" stipulated in the various peace treaties. All the desperate attempts of the various nationalities of the country to better their economic, political and cultural position have been frustrated by the treachery of their own bourgeoisie and by the unbridled political and military terror of the Rumanian ruling class.

The big bourgeoisie of Rumania, which is unscrupulously delivering the "united and nationally liberated land" into the hands of Entente capitalists, is at the same time depriving the masses of these nationalities of their most elementary rights and of every possibility to develop economically, politically and culturally. Of all the nationalities within Rumania only the German and Hungarians have their own political parties. But as their leadership is in the hands of magnates and capitalists, they are unable to struggle for the real interests of these nationalities.

The relentless economic and political oppression of the nationalities is sufficient explanation for the bitter struggle waged by the masses of these nationalities against Pan-Rumanian capitalism, and for their liberation from the yoke of the latter. The active elements among the peasant and working class of Bessarabia, who went through the first period of the liberating Russian revolution and are groaning under the yoke of Rumanian military dictatorship, give proof every day of their firm national-revolutionary determination to ally themselves with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Russia, ensuring by such means the development and security of their vital interests. The Hungarian and

German peasants and workers of Transylvania and the German and Ukrainian working class population of Bukovina and of the Cadrilater find themselves in a similar position. The policy of strangulation adopted by the Rumanian bourgeoisie makes their lives intolerable, drives them to emigration and still greater misery, thereby retarding their economical, political and cultural development. This being so, the nationalities of Transylvania, Dobrudja and Bukovina are just as determined as the people of Bessarabia to fight and make sacrifices in the fight for self-determination.

In view of these separatist movements of the nationalities within Rumania, the tasks of the Rumanian Communist Party are as follows :

1. By its everyday propaganda and activities it must expose the anti-national character of the ruling Rumanian bourgeoisie, the treacherous role of Hungarian magnates, German manufacturers, Russian and Bulgarian landowners and their alliance with the Rumanian oligarchy, as well as the hypocrisy and inability of the social-democratic party to solve the national question. It must rouse all the nationalities against the Chauvinism of their bourgeoisie and must relentlessly combat and expose anti-semitism as an attempt to divert the attention of the workers from the solution of social questions. The Rumanian Communist Party must take care to emphasise the fact that its struggle is directed just as much against Jewish as against any other capitalists, and that it aims at enlisting the Jewish toiling masses into the ranks of the general revolutionary proletariat. It must explain to the Rumanian masses that the struggle of the nationalities against the rule of the Rumanian bourgeoisie strengthens the liberation struggle of the Rumanian proletariat, and that it is in the interests of the ultimate victory of the revolution and of the establishment of real Rumanian independence to give support and assistance to the efforts of the peasant and working masses of the various nationalities which efforts are based on the principle of national self-determination including complete separation from the existing state.

2. In the name of all exploited and oppressed, it must resist all forms of national oppression and the principle of a ruling language and nation.

It must champion equality and must offer an energetic opposition to all economic, political and cultural restrictions, such as compulsory romanising by means of colonisation, schools, churches, etc.

It must give unconditional support to all the demands of the nationalities with respect to freedom to participate in State and local administration, unrestricted use of their native languages in the schools and in all the fields of public life, as well as with respect to freedom of the press, of culture and religion.

3. It must continually emphasise the necessity of an alliance between the revolutionary proletariat and the masses of the persecuted nationalities, showing that the ultimate emancipation of the nationalities can only be achieved through the social revolution of the working class. It must induce the struggling masses of these nationalities and their legal or illegal national-revolutionary organisations to adopt the united front tactics against the oppressive Rumanian bourgeoisie and its State power, and for the establishment of the workers' and peasants' government and of a federation of free and independent workers' and peasants' republics.

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## RESOLUTION.

### YUGO-SLAVIA.

#### I.—Resolution on the Question of Nationalities.

1. The victory of the Entente over the Central Powers has destroyed the latter's system of national oppression, only to replace it by a new system which is as hateful and as brutal. The allies and the protégés of the imperialist Entente Powers—the Serbian, Rumanian, Czech and Slovene bourgeoisie—have occupied, on the strength of their military power, large territories populated by other nationalities, and have deprived the latter of all rights, except the right of unconditional surrender to their rule, and have adopted towards these nationalities a policy of the most brutal political oppression.

The "peace" treaties of Versailles, Trianon and Neuilly have sanctioned their new oppressive system against the nationalities, have brutally violated the right of the self-determination of nations according to the free decision of the latter (the Bulgarian population in the Zaribrod region was violated), in accordance with the interests of the imperialist Powers and their vassals, especially in the interests of the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy.

Thus, Yugo-Slavia is not, as the upholders of Serbian hegemony assert, the product of a "national revolution" and

of the self-determination of the nationalities which form its population. On the contrary, it is the product of the armed victory of the big imperialist Entente Powers and of the violation of the right of self-determination of all nations living in the territories occupied by the army of the Serbian monarchy and bourgeoisie.

Thereby the emancipation struggle of the oppressed nations becomes of necessity a struggle against the imperialist treaties which sanction their enslavement by the imperialist bourgeoisie and Serbian hegemony. Against the imperialist peace treaties, therefore, the proletariat of Yugo-Slavia must intensify its struggle, which must be fought out side by side with the international proletariat.

## II.—The Serbian-Croat-Slovene Conflict.

Profiting by the victory of their allies, making use of their army, and resting on the support of the counter-revolutionary National Councils, the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy have imposed their brutal combination on all other nations. This domination, which rests internationally on the imperialist peace treaties, manifests itself in the Vidovdian monarchist and centralist constitution, as well as in the entire policy of the Belgrade Government in which the interests of the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy play a pre-dominant role.

This policy of oppression and domination is meeting with an ever-increasing resistance on the part of all the oppressed nationalities. But in view of the numerical, political and economic predominance of the Croat and Slovene nations in Yugo-Slavia, the struggle of the latter is the most determinate, and all other nationalities group themselves around it. One is justified in saying that this resistance against Serbian domination unites all the classes of the Croat and Slovene peoples. But the Croat and Slovene bourgeoisie is willing to recognise the monarchy and with it Serbian domination, provided it receives in return political and economic concessions (regional autonomy which will leave its class domination intact). On the other hand, the masses of these nationalities are determined to overcome Serbian domination and to gain the right of self-determination.

It is the duty, and at the same time it serves the interests, of the revolutionary proletariat of Yugo-Slavia to stand by the oppressed peoples in their struggle against Serbian domination and for their right to self-determination, including complete separation. The Communist Party will do its ut-

most to draw all the workers of Serbia into this struggle by explaining to them the reactionary character of this domination and of the monarchy. It goes without saying that in its struggle against Serbian hegemony the Communist Party of Yugo-Slavia must also oppose the manoeuvres of the Croat and Slovene bourgeoisie which are aiming at a compromise with the Serbian bourgeoisie with the object of protecting their class interests by betraying the interests and aspirations of the masses. In the face of these manoeuvres of the bourgeois parties, which want to make use of the masses (only to throw them aside when it may please them) with the object of getting a free hand in their haggling with the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy, the Communist Party must show to the masses of the oppressed nationalities that their interests and their struggle for the right of self-determination can only be adequately represented by the struggle of the masses themselves in close union with the proletariat.

This being so, the Communist Party of Yugo-Slavia will not waste much time over theoretical deductions, but will initiate an intensive campaign against the oppression and for the emancipation of the enslaved peoples by proposing the adoption of the united front to all organisations striving for the right of the self-determination of nations. In the first instance, the Communist Party of Yugo-Slavia will approach the Croat-Republican peasant party with the proposal to give up its conformist pacifist policy and to cease to play into the hands of the bourgeoisie (as some of its leading elements are only too willing to do), which is always ready to betray the interests of the masses, and to fight side by side with the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

In Slovenia the Communist Party will make it its business to expose the ambiguous policy of the clerical party which is always ready to betray the interests of the masses provided the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy make concessions to the Slovene clergy and big bourgeoisie. The Communist Party will persist in advocating the establishment of the united front with all the workers' and peasant organisations of Slovenia for the struggle against Serbian domination. It will invite these organisations to emancipate themselves from the influence of the bourgeois parties and to form an alliance with the revolutionary proletariat.

The Communist Party of Yugo-Slavia has adopted the following slogans for its struggle for the right of the self-determination of nations :

1. The right of peoples to decide freely about their destinies must be recognised once and for all, and every obstacle standing in the way of the realisation of the right must be removed. The struggle for the self-determination of peoples aims at creating a situation in which no power will be strong enough to prevent peoples from deciding their own destiny and from electing governments of their own free will.

2. Self-determination of peoples can only be achieved by annulling the hegemonist and monarchist Belgrade constitution. A revision of the constitution would be nothing but a compromise measure of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the masses of all these nationalities. If the domination of the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy remain intact, the only result of revision would be small concessions to the propertied classes of the deceived nations.

3. In view of the inclination of the Croat and Slovene bourgeoisie to capitulate before the Serbian monarchy and bourgeoisie, the full right to the self-determination of all peoples and the interests of the masses can only be adequately represented through the struggles of these masses themselves in close co-operation with the revolutionary proletariat. The formation of a powerful workers' and peasants' bloc is the foremost pre-requisite for a successful struggle against Serbian domination. The establishment of workers' and peasants' government by everyone of these nationalities and their voluntary union into a Federation of Workers' and Peasants' Republics is the only form of government calculated to ensure self-determination to the peoples and to protect the working masses of all nations from the machinations of the various bourgeoisies who want to come to an agreement among themselves at the expense of the masses.

4. By standing up for the right of self-determination of all nations, the Communist Party manifests its opposition to the erection of unsurmountable barriers between nations. This work of separation and hatred is the work of all bourgeoisies. The revolutionary proletariat is, on the contrary, the only power capable of uniting all peoples and of obliterating all frontiers. But to reach this aim, it is a historic necessity that every nation be the mistress of her own destiny independently of all other nations.

### III.—National Minorities.

The imperialist peace treaties have delivered to the oppression of the Serbian bourgeoisie compact masses of Magyars, Germans and Rumanians in the Northern Viovođe-

ship and Turks, Albanians, Bulgars and Aromans in the territories wrested from Macedonia. The Macedonian problem is dealt with in a special resolution. In this resolution only Magyars, Germans and Rumanians are considered as national minorities.

They too are most brutally oppressed by the Serbian bourgeoisie, and the dissatisfaction of these peoples naturally is very great. But in this case too, the abominable role of the Magyar and German bourgeoisie must be shown in its true light. Instead of carrying on an energetic struggle against the imperialist and fascist oppression policy of the Serbian bourgeoisie, the bourgeois parties of these national minorities have allied themselves with the Serbian radical party—the foremost representatives of the policy of domination. They ignored all the just demands of the proletarian and peasant masses, and only stood up for the demands of the propertied classes.

By this policy they have weakened the position of the other oppressed nations in their struggle against the Serbian bourgeoisie and monarchy.

The Communist Party must expose the policy of these bourgeois parties and must appeal to the masses not to allow themselves to be deceived, but to rally around the revolutionary proletariat and the toiling masses of the other oppressed nations.

### On the Macedonian and Thracian Question.

1. The geographical position of Macedonia secures to its owner the domination over the entire Balkan Peninsula. It is for this reason that this country was always the object of the annexation policy of the interested imperialist countries as well as of neighbouring Balkan States.

The very mixed ethnographic composition of the Macedonian population was always a favoured pretext for foreign intervention in Macedonian affairs. All the ruling nationalities of the neighbouring countries are represented in Macedonia. But their proportion is such that none of them has an absolute majority. Hence, domination of any one of the Balkan States over Macedonia is tantamount to the national subjection of the majority of the Macedonian population, and is the cause of nationalist struggle which is encouraged by the interested States in the pursuance of their policy of conquests. Seemingly, the treaties concluded in 1912 between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece had for their aim the "liberation" of the enslaved population from the Turkish yoke, while in reality they were only a preparation of the partition



of Macedonia among the allies. Both Balkan wars were conducted by the Balkan States for the sake of the conquest of the largest possible part of Macedonia.

The Serbian and Greek domination over this country, which was divided between them after the Balkan wars, is also nothing but national subjection for the majority of the population. The discontent of the latter caused by this oppression served as a pretext for Bulgaria's intervention in the imperialist world war on the side of the Central Powers, which promised Bulgaria the whole of Macedonia.

2. The Macedonian population has carried on for many years a stubborn and heroic struggle for its national liberation. The discords encouraged by the bourgeoisie of the neighbouring States and the hatred existing between the various Macedonian nationalities (which frequently led to mutually destructive wars) have certainly weakened the struggle against the common enemy—the Turkish Sultans and Beks, but did not destroy the conviction of the Macedonian slaves that only a **united and autonomous Macedonia** will be able to secure justice and freedom for all its nationalities. **The revolutionary Macedonian organisation**, the true organiser and leaders of the revolutionary struggles of the Macedonian slaves of all nationalities, did much to intensify this conviction. This was evident in the Iljinden rising (1903), which was the first attempt to obtain autonomy for Macedonia.

The wars of 1912-13 and 1915-18, which ended with the partition of Macedonia and its renewed political subjection, only intensified the aspiration of the population for national and political independence. **A united and autonomous Macedonia** is now the slogan of all Macedonians in all the nooks and corners of their ruined fatherland. It is under this slogan that they organise and carry on the struggle.

The deceived Bulgarian bourgeoisie, which received a small share of the Macedonian booty, is again endeavouring to make use of the Macedonian revolutionary movement in the interests of its policy of conquest, and to bring this movement under its influence. But in spite of all the efforts of its agents, it will never be able to win the sympathies of the revolutionary toiling masses of Macedonia and to make them abandon the path of independent struggle. The Macedonian people have had such bitter experiences in the past that it will never again allow itself to be influenced by its near and distant "friends" and "patrons."

3. Thrace, which in the Balkan war, in the imperialist world war, and in the recent war between Greece and Turkey, was the bone of contention between Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece, has also ethnographically a mixed population. Thrace which came consecutively under Turkish, Bulgarian and Greek domination and is now partitioned among these countries, is even now the apple of discord among them and can easily become the cause of new armed conflict. The Thracian nationalities, like those of Macedonia, have carried on a prolonged struggle for their political and national independence, which big as well as small States took advantage of to further their own plans of conquest.

Prolonged wars have brought this flourishing country to ruin, and have once more reduced the nationalities which populate it to a state of political and national serfdom. The bulk of the nationalities was compelled to abandon its goods and its chattels and to flee to foreign lands. Thracians, therefore, do not see any other way out but the establishment of an **autonomous Thrace**.

4. In their struggle for their national and political emancipation, the Macedonian and Thracian nationalities can only depend on the sympathy and support of the **workers and peasants of all countries**. The revolution of the Russian workers and peasants, which established the present Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, was the first to recognise the right of self-determination of all peoples, including separation and establishment of independent States. Under the banner of the Communist Parties adhering to the Communist International, the workers of all countries **are carrying on now the struggle against all national, political and economic subjection**. It is only natural that they should be on the side of the Macedonian and Thracian fighters. But the workers and peasants of the Balkan countries have a direct interest in the success of the struggle of the Macedonian and Thracian peoples. **For it is only through the establishment of an autonomous Macedonia and Thrace and their amalgamation with the other Balkan countries into a federative Balkan Republic** that peace will be established between the Balkan peoples, that favourable conditions will be created for their economic development and that their existence and political independence will be guaranteed.

The Balkan Communist Parties, amalgamated in the **Communist Balkan Federation**, have drawn the attention of the Macedonian and Thracian nationalities to the peril threatening them in their struggle from the bourgeoisie of other countries, and invite them to be watchful and to take

care that their blood be not spilt once more for the realisation of other people's plans. The Communist Parties also point out to these nationalities that their aim can only be achieved with the support and in close alliance with the toiling masses of all Balkan countries. Macedonian and Thracian emigrants run a great risk of becoming a tool in foreign hands. Thus, for instance, a section of Macedonian emigrants was used by the Bulgarian counter-revolutionary movement for the suppression of the rising of the Bulgarian workers and peasants. The action of these deluded Macedonians, who in the guise of "Macedonian revolutionaries" became the hirelings of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and the executioners of the Bulgarian workers and peasants, is a plot against the liberation of Macedonia and the Macedonian workers and peasants cannot be too strong in their condemnation of such action.

5. The Macedonian and Thracian population, regardless of nationality, is everywhere under an intolerable oppression. The bourgeoisie of the Balkan countries knows of no other method for the solution of the Macedonian and Thracian problems than **conquests, terror, mass expulsions and denationalisation by violent means**. Such were the methods of Bulgarian nationalists when they were the rulers in Macedonia and Thrace. The Serbian and Greek bourgeoisie is following their example. The Serbian bourgeoisie maintains a rigid terrorist regime in Macedonia, annihilates or compels to emigrate the class-conscious section of the Bulgarian, Turkish and Albanian population, and replaces them by settlers from other parts of Yugo-Slavia. It oppresses all non-Serbian nationalities, closes their churches and schools, prohibits their press and persecutes their language. Every act of protest and revolt on the part of the population which is driven to despair meets with sanguinary repression on the part of the Serbian government. The same happens also in those parts of Macedonia and Thrace which are under Greek domination. The Turkish government drove out the Bulgarian and Greek population from East Thrace, and Bulgarian nationalists robbed Mahometan Bulgarians (Pomacks) of all their possessions and compelled them to adopt Christianity or to emigrate. At present the Greek Government is busily engaged in driving the Bulgarian and Turkish population out of Thrace and Macedonia, with the object of installing in their abodes the Greek refugees from Asia Minor.

The Communist Parties of the Balkans deem it their duty to stand up energetically for the political, national and cultural rights and the freedom of the oppressed peoples of Macedonia and Thrace. They will publicly brand all acts of violence committed by the authorities against the

oppressed peoples and will unite with these and their organisation in the struggle against the prevailing terror and lawlessness.

6. Apart from political and national subjection, the toiling masses of Macedonia and Thrace are also exposed to excessive exploitation by big landowners, capitalists, speculators and other parasitic elements. In fact, many of the landless and land-poor peasants are the slaves of beks (big ground lords) and usurers. Labour protection legislation is non-existent, and small artisans and traders, and in fact the working class as a whole, are mercilessly exploited and impoverished by heavy taxes, usury, etc. As a consequence, the class struggle between the working class and its exploiters is in full swing in Thrace and Macedonia. In this struggle the Communist Parties are on the side of the exploited and demand confiscation of the land of the Beks with all stocks, for free distribution among the land-poor and landless peasants, abolition of the system of usury and of other forms of exploitation of the workers, a guarantee of freedom of meetings and strikes and protection of labour, the burden of taxation to be placed on the shoulders of the propertied classes, restrictive measures against speculation, etc. To ensure the success of this struggle, the Communist Party organises the masses into party groups, workers' trade unions and co-operatives, regardless of nationality. But Communists also maintain a friendly attitude to the Macedonian and Thracian nationalities which group the population around themselves under the slogan of its national and cultural interests. They keep in close contact with them and in all their activities they endeavour to secure an advantageous position to the masses which have to contend with the bourgeoisie, the big agrarians and adventurers of all kinds who frequently use these organisations in their own class interests and are always ready to betray the interests of the masses. The application of the united front tactics to these organisations and Communist participation in the work of the latter will facilitate this task of the Communist Parties.

7. The national, political and economic emancipation of the Balkan people will only be achieved by means of the united front of the workers and peasants of all the Balkan countries for the purpose of establishing a Workers' and Peasants' Government, and by the alliance of the workers and peasants of other Balkan countries, and must secure the establishment of a Federative Balkan Republic. The struggle for the independence of Macedonia and Thrace is above all the business of Macedonian and Thracian workers and peasants. They must therefore become the leaders of this struggle,

must declare their solidarity with their brothers—the workers and peasants of other Balkan countries and must secure the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government in independent Macedonia and Thrace.

While the Communist Party and the Communist Balkan Federation bring forward the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, they also declare that the federative Balkan Republic, which will secure peace, independence, and free development to all Balkan countries, is a **voluntary union of independent Balkan republics**, including the Republics of Macedonia and Thrace.

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## RESOLUTION.

### The Question of National Minorities.

1. Greece, which belonged to the Balkan Federation formed for the purpose of opposing Turkish rule in Europe, acquired after the war of 1912 and 1913 territories inhabited by other nationalities.\* By participating in the European War, Greece also obtained a part of Thrace, which is also inhabited by non-Greek elements. The non-Greek inhabitants of Greece belong to various Balkan nationalities. They include Turks, Bulgarians, Arumans, Jews, Albanians and Armenians. Turks predominate and inhabit at present all the territories of New Greece (territories acquired after 1912). Bulgarians come next. They inhabit Macedonia and Thrace. Rumanians inhabit the South-west of Macedonia, Albanians Epirus, and the Jews and Armenians are scattered in the cities of New Greece.

2. Among these national minorities Bulgarians and Albanians do not even have school autonomy and cultural independence. The Greek bourgeoisie does not allow them to use their mother tongue and to have their own schools. The forcible Hellenisation of the newly-conquered territories initiated by the Venezelists still goes on.† A large section of the inhabitants of these territories was compelled to emigrate because of the misery and oppression inflicted on it, and had to leave behind its goods and chattels. The Greek government installs forcibly the refugees from Asia Minor in the houses and villages of the Turks who are driven out.

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\* Macedonia, Epirus and the Aegean Islands.

† The Greek bourgeoisie oppresses the non-Greek elements in various ways.

Expulsions and confiscation of property are also the lot of Bulgarians who persist in speaking their own language, or show in some other way that they are unwilling to give up their own nationality.

The forcible expropriation of the Turkish population of Greece, carried out on the strength of the recent peace treaty between Greece and the Kemalists, is driving the Turkish masses to despair, for they must leave their native land, leaving their property behind, and must go to Turkey to take up their abode in the houses and on the land of the Greek refugees expelled by Kemal Pasha. The same peril threatens also the Bulgarian inhabitants of Greece, for the Bulgarian government is negotiating a similar treaty with the Greek government.

3. The cruel way in which the Balkan bourgeoisie are endeavouring to solve the minorities' problem, and the oppressive measures which they take against the foreign elements, must not be ignored by the Balkan Communist Federation. The Greek Party must use all the means at its disposal to counteract the policy of oppression adopted by the Greek bourgeoisie and its government against national minorities.

The Party must above all protest energetically against the attempt to Hellenise the new territories by means of the expulsion of Turks and Bulgarians. Among other things, it must aim at the annulment of the treaty stipulating the exchange of populations, which was concluded between the Greek and Turkish governments.

The Greek Party will do its utmost, in agreement with the Bulgarian Party, to prevent the conclusion of a similar treaty between the Greek and Bulgarian governments.

The Communist Party must struggle for the political and cultural freedom of national minorities. It must proclaim the right of the minorities to self-determination, inclusive of complete separation from Greece.

In general, the Party will back the national demands of the workers of national minorities and will establish a united front with their national mass organisation.

4. The Communist Party will do its utmost to carry out the decisions made for Macedonia and Thrace.

# Organisational Problems of Comintern Sections

## Influence of Communist Parties on the Working Class.

**W**HILE the influence of the various Comintern sections on the working class of their respective countries is very great, they have failed so far to establish strong organisational connection with the masses of workers. In Rumania and Yugo-Slavia, in spite of the persecution of the Communist Party by the regular and secret police, while they protect the social democracy, the Communists have the support of the Trade Unions and yet neither the Yugo-Slavian nor the Rumanian Communist Party has well-organised Communist factions in the unions, nor party nuclei in the factories and shops.

The above mentioned applies to a greater degree to the Czecho-Slovakian and German parties. In the last municipal elections in Czecho-Slovakia (exclusive of trans-Carpathian Ruthenia) the Czech Party came out second to the government party in the number of votes received, and in the recent elections in trans-Carpathian Ruthenia the Czech Party received 40 per cent. of the votes cast. But it is doubtful whether the party has the organisation to consolidate its influence over the proletariat and poor peasants of Czecho-Slovakia.

As regards Germany, the October retreat, in my opinion, was mainly due to the fact that the German Communist Party has not effected a close organisational alliance between the local party organisations and the masses of the workers in the factories, shops and mines, etc., and was therefore unable to gauge the mood of the masses correctly. At the present time the influence of the German Communist Party on the masses has not decreased, in spite of the fact that the factory and shop owners have remained absolute masters of their enterprises, and in spite of the fact that there is great unemployment and that practically all the active Communists have been driven from the factories and shops, where party

nuclei are practically non-existent. At the elections of the factory committees the German Communist Party received no less than 50 per cent. of all the votes, while the Social-Democrats, the Christian Socialists (Catholics), the Hirsch-Dunker trade unions (Liberal), the non-party and the Fascisti tickets received all together not more than 50 per cent. of all the votes cast. (Information on the exact results of the factory committee elections is still lacking, but in the Ruhr and in the large factories and shops the Communist candidates received the majority.) And in the elections in Thuringia (to the Landtag), in Saxony (in the urban and rural council elections), and in Bavaria (to the Landtag), the Communist Party received about a million votes (in Bavaria, thanks to the Fascist terror, there was practically no party organisation, but the Communist Party nevertheless, received four times as many votes as it had in the last elections in 1920—200,000 as against 50,000 votes).

To my mind it is doubtful whether the German Communist Party will be able to consolidate organisationally its influence on the working class of Germany for future combats, if it retains its presents form of organisation.

### Forms of Organisation in Comintern Sections.

The Comintern sections all over the world, excluding those countries which were formerly a part of the Russian Empire (Poland, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), do not differ in respect to form of organisation from the social-democratic parties and organisations existing side by side with them, notwithstanding the fact that the aims of the Social-Democrats and the Communists are profoundly different.

The Social-Democrats need an electoral machine, therefore their party is built up on the basis of residential electoral constituencies. For the Communists the important question is to draw the whole working class into the active struggle against capitalism and its leaders, and to seize control of the apparatus of production and the state. Therefore, the basis of the party organisation must be party nuclei in the factories, mines, workshops, offices, stores—in a word, wherever workers by hand and by brain are employed. Elections for parliament, municipalities, etc., serve the Communists mainly as a means for propagating the ideas of Communism, and for testing their influence on the masses. Because the Communists have adopted the social democratic form of organisation rather than shift the centre of gravity of all party work to the factories, the Communist Parties are unable to



cement organisationally their enormous influence on the working class, they are unable to judge the mood of the masses correctly and to lead them into the struggle at the decisive moment.

In order not to confine myself to generalities, I will give specific examples of the forms of organisation in several countries : Italy, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany.

**Italy.** Let us take the industrial city of Turin. The form of organisation there is as follows. The city is divided into sectors, the sectors are divided into zones, the zones are divided into groups to which belong the members of the party living in the given zone. These groups are the basis of the organisation. They consider all questions of Party life, they elect the delegates to the city and gubernia conferences, etc. The city committee appoints organisers in the sectors (one organiser to a sector). The latter appoint organisers in the zones (one to a zone). The functions of the organisers of the sectors (and zones) are merely to maintain connections between the city party committee and the groups, and to keep the addresses of the zone organisers. The latter keep the addresses of the secretaries or delegates of the groups. Party nuclei still exist in the factories of Turin, but they neither discuss nor decide Party questions. Their entire work consists in the distribution of literature and recruiting new members for the Party. The members of the nuclei belong to the groups according to their place of residence, and only in the group do they decide party questions. Under this form of organisation it very rarely happens that members working in the same factory and belonging to the same factory nuclei, belong also the same district group. Is it possible with such an organisation for the Turin Party Committee to organise properly, to expend and distribute its work, to keep correctly informed on the mood of the workers, and intervene in economic conflicts in the factories? Certainly not. It is not surprising that the members of the party nuclei in Turin have begun to talk of uniting all the factory nuclei of Turin into a special party organisation, parallel to the one already existing. The Italian comrades seized eagerly upon the January instructions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern regarding the organisation of nuclei in the factories and offices, and their rights. If it had not been for this there might have been a conflict between the factory nuclei and the groups in Turin.

**Czecho-Slovakia,** The entire party organisation over all of Czecho-Slovakia is built up at the present according to

electoral districts. There are neither party nuclei in the factories, nor Communist fractions in the trade unions, in spite of the fact that since the Fourth Congress, the Executive Committee of the Comintern has held several conferences with delegations from the Czech Communist Party on the question of the organisation of nuclei, and that several letters of instruction have been sent them on the same question. This is explained by the fact that the local party organisations in Czecho-Slovakia are so conservative on this question that they regard with great suspicion the transition to a new form of organisation, the formation of nuclei in the factories and shops. The comrades on the committee of the Prague organisation declare that they have directed the local party organisations very well for thirty years, and that they have combated the enemies of the working class very successfully, and, therefore, there is no need to change the form of organisation. We quite understand that it is very difficult for the Prague comrades to part with their old form of organisation, but it is necessary to reckon with facts. No sooner had the Young Communist League built up its organisation on the basis of nuclei in the factories, than they enrolled in a very short period of time 400 new members from the factories and shops, and in 1920, when the Czech proletariat were waging their heroic struggle with the bourgeoisie under the direction of the Czech Communist Party, the latter had its main support in the factories. In spite of the splendid results of the direct union of the Communist Party with the factories and shops in 1920, the old traditions gained the upper hand and the Czech party as a whole reverted to the idea of organising the party according to electoral divisions, based on the place of residence of the voter. Recently, since receiving the regulations of the Executive Committee of the Comintern in regard to the formation of nuclei, a discussion has commenced in the party press and in party conferences on the question of re-organising the party.

**Germany.** In Germany the discussion of the question of organising nuclei in industrial enterprises has been going on for more than a year both in the periodical literature and at meetings. In some places the factory nuclei already exist, but there is not a single city entirely organised in this way. In those places where the nuclei exist, they have no party rights whatever, and along with them exist geographically organised party groups. Practically all the active workers of the German Communist Party recognise the necessity of re-organising the party, but they are hampered on the one hand by conservatism or predilection for the old form of party organisation and on the other by the disagreements which have recently

taken place in the German Communist Party. We take only the Berlin organisation, because it is typical of all the other local organisations of the German Communist Party. In Berlin there are two parallel organisations to which the Berlin Committee of the party is responsible. The Berlin organisation is divided into districts, and in each district there are groups organised according to the place of residence of the party members. These groups consider (and unfortunately all too rarely and not in sufficient detail) and decide party questions. These groups elect delegates to the Berlin party conferences. Parallel with these groups and the district conferences in Berlin there exists "functionaries" (active workers). These include the active workers in the party, in the trade unions, the co-operatives, the factory committee movement, etc. The meetings of active workers consider and make decisions on all party questions. This institution of functionaries plays a harmful role in the German Communist Party, for the following reasons :

First, the functionaries consider and decide all party questions without having been delegated to do so by the members of the party ;

Secondly, the party has created "priests" castes which take an active part in party affairs, while the remaining members of the party are entirely passive, and

Thirdly, a considerable section of the functionaries are entirely isolated from the masses, and their decisions do not always coincide with the opinion of the organisations as a whole.

Let us take for example the question which is a burning one for the German Communist Party, viz., the trade unions question. The Berlin Party conference, to which the party groups sent their representatives, decided by 95 to 15 votes against the splitting of and the withdrawal from the unions, but a few days after the party conference a large meeting of all the functionaries of Berlin—several thousand people—took place at which the resolution regarding the withdrawal of the Communists from the unions and organising a split within them received about half of the votes, and that after a series of concessions had been made on the point of the Berlin Party committee. The party can only formulate its general policy correctly, so that it corresponds to the interests of the working class, when all members of the party, and chiefly party members in the factories and offices, participate in the affairs of the party directly, and not through the functionaries.

Another example is to be found in the construction of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party (which is by no means the worst in the Comintern). Since November of last year the German Communist Party has been declared illegal and therefore the Central Committee was cut down to 11 members. The latter was divided into a political bureau and an organising bureau. From these two organs is composed the small plenum of the Central Committee (the Kopf as it is called).

The political bureau and the organising bureau meet twice a week, and the Kopf meet once a week. The latter actually considered precisely the same questions which had already been decided by the political and organising bureaus separately. If a constant connection had been established between the two bureaus by including a few members of the political bureau in the organisation bureau, then the Kopf would only have had to meet once a month for the consideration of the most important questions. In view of the construction of the Central Committee which we have described above, nothing can happen except general confusion and innumerable meetings. The apparatus of the Central Committee was no better organised. The Trade Union Department consisted of 36 people of whom more than half were responsible workers. They thought out beautiful formulæ, drew up theses and resolutions, and meanwhile the members of the Party withdrew from the unions.

Instead of organising Communist fractions in the unions and carrying on their work through them, the comrades in the trade union department of the Central Committee busied themselves with cabinet work. The work in the factory committees was entirely separated from the trade union work, while they dealt with essentially the same problems. The Central Committee has a department of work among civil servants, the function of which might easily have been transferred to the trade union department. Many more examples could be given of the defects in the organisational apparatus of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, but those already given should suffice. It is to be hoped that the new Central Committee of the German Communist Party will re-organise the apparatus of the Central Committee and put into effect the scheme of organisation which the Executive Committee of the Comintern has worked out.

### **Tasks in the Sections in the Sphere of Organising Nuclei in the Factories and Offices.**

At the Fourth Congress, Comrade Lenin pointed out in his report that the resolutions of the Third Congress on

organisation had not been carried out, although they were accepted unanimously. We may state that not one of the resolutions of the Comintern Congresses on the question of organisation has been carried into effect evidently because certain sections have not considered them important, and others *have not understood them*.

At the meetings and conferences in Czecho-Slovakia, Germany and France, where the resolutions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on the organisation of nuclei in the factories and shops were considered, the discussion for the most part was concerned with how to begin to put the resolution into effect, and what party rights should be conferred on the nuclei. Not one of the aforementioned meetings or conferences approached the consideration of this question from the right angle.

According to the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern all members of the Communist Party must form themselves into Communist nuclei in their place of work. The nuclei consider and decide all party questions. The nuclei take in new members, and collect membership dues from members of the nuclei. The nuclei elect delegates to the district conferences, and so on. In a word, the nuclei constitute district and city organisations, because the conferences, to which the nuclei send their delegates elect the ward, district and city committees, which in their turn carry on all the party work between the ward, district and the city conferences.

The above-mentioned conferences did not understand this simple scheme. In Germany they began the re-organisation by distributing questionaries and the registration of party members in the factories and offices.

In Czecho-Slovakia, they decided to organise nuclei in the factories and offices, but the existing organisations are retained until such time as the nuclei prove their vitality. And in Paris although they have gone a little further in the sense of allowing to the nuclei of the factories and offices a large representation on the party committees, the old organisation is still retained and the nuclei have not been given the right of taking in new party members nor of collecting membership dues from their members.

Under such conditions the nuclei in the factories and shops will not take root, because all party and political questions will be considered in the parallel geographical organisations and inasmuch as in the great industrial cities of Europe and America the workers live very far from their

place of work, the members of the factory and shop nuclei will try to transfer their party work to their place of residence, and everything will remain as before. However, it is more incumbent now on the Communist Parties than ever before to commence the arduous work of drawing the workers of the factories and the shops into the fight against the bourgeoisie, because the Amsterdam unions openly and cynically support the capitalists against the workers. And this work only the party nuclei can accomplish.

In our opinion, the re-organisation of the party structure must be commenced in the following manner. We will take Berlin as an example.

The Berlin committee of the Communist Party charges one of its districts to begin the organisation of factory nuclei. The latter divides the district into wards composed of all the factories in each ward. The district committee determines in which ward the work of organising nuclei will be started. One or several comrades who are familiar with the party organisation in the ward in question, are commissioned with the task of organising the nuclei. As soon as all party members who work in this particular ward are organised into nuclei, all the power which hitherto has been enjoyed by party group fractions in the ward, and which will now be disbanded, will be transferred to them. As soon as the nuclei have begun to function in one ward of a district, the organisation of nuclei in other wards of the same district must be undertaken, until the organisation of the whole district is complete. The nuclei will then elect delegates to a district conference, and the latter will elect a district committee. When the nuclei have been organised in all the districts, and the district conferences have begun to function, the latter will convene a Berlin conference, which, in its turn will elect the Berlin Party Committee.

Only by carrying out the re-organisation in this manner can there be any assurance that the nuclei will function effectively and that there will be no interruption in the work of the organisations. As soon as the ward, district and city conferences begin to function the institution of functionaries must be dissolved in all the local organisations. Certain active workers in the German Communist Party who, it seems, are not in agreement with the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on nuclei in the factories and offices, base their disagreement on the fact that "the party organisation of the Russian Communist Party is built up according to the place of residence of its members" and that "the recent party discussion in the Russian Communist

Party was the clearest evidence of this, because it was conducted in the place of residence of the party members." These comrades evidently have been misled by the fact that in the course of the discussion big meetings of secretaries of nuclei bureaux considered party questions with the active workers of the district of the city. Who took part in these meetings? Mainly the members of the nuclei committees or the secretaries of the nuclei, that is to say, the meetings were convened according not to geographical, but occupational divisions; furthermore, none of the big meetings referred to above had in fact any deciding votes. All the nuclei organised on occupational lines in all the districts of, let us say, Moscow, considered and made decisions on the questions of the party discussion, and they alone elected delegates to the district conferences. The latter elected delegates to the Moscow conference, which determined the final opinion of the entire Moscow organisation on the question of the party discussion.

### **Organisational Problems of the Fifth Congress.**

The influence of the Comintern on all its sections is enormous, but in matters of organisation its influence is negligible.

The Fifth Congress must examine the resolutions adopted by the Executive Committee of the Comintern on the organisation of factory nuclei and Communist fractions, and use its authority to bind all sections of the Comintern to execute them without fail.

Only by shifting of the centre of gravity of party work to factories and workshops and by the correct organisation of the work of the party nuclei will it be possible to draw the masses of the workers in the factories and shops into active, class conscious and organised struggle with the bourgeoisie. Only through the medium of party nuclei in the factories and shops can we organise resistance to the fascisti demagogues, who are trying to strengthen their position in the factories (in Italy, and recently in Germany, the Fascisti are organising their nuclei in the factory and shops). At the last elections of the factory committees in Germany, independent Fascist tickets were put up. The Fascisti say openly that the power of the trade unions in Germany has been destroyed, and that, therefore, the Fascisti must fortify themselves in the factories. Unfortunately, there are some active workers in the German Communist Party who still fail to understand the great importance of the organisation of nuclei in the factories and shops.

The organisation commission at the Congress must work out a uniform system of organisation of both the central and the local party organs to the Comintern sections.

Immediately after the Congress the Organisation Department of the Executive Committee of the Comintern should be reinforced by the addition of workers from the strongest Comintern sections.

The organisation department must receive full power from the Executive Committee to control the execution of all the resolutions on organisation passed by the Congress and the Executive Committee.

The Organisation Department should be given the right to send organisers to the different sections, both to the central and the local organisations (local organisations of national sections) to give instructions on the execution of the decisions of the Comintern, and to check up the extent to which these decisions are practically adaptable.

Both the Congress and the Executive Committee should apply themselves to the organisational problems of the sections with the greatest energy and determination.

Only after the Comintern sections have reconstructed their party organisation in accordance with the resolutions of the congress and the Executive Committee will the Communist Party be able to bring the party organisation into closer contact with the working masses, and to attract all the members of the party into active participation in party work and in decisions on all questions of party life.

And only when the whole party from top to bottom joins in the active execution of all the decisions of the party in all institutions, factories and offices, and in all organisations where workers are to be found, will the Comintern sections be able organisationally to consolidate the enormous influence they wield over the working class and over the poor peasants.

OSSIP PIATNITSKY.



# The International Peasants' Council

(The Peasants' International.)

**O**F the many various causes underlying the developing peasant movement, the most important was the recent imperialist war, which radically changed the economic condition of the peasantry. The prosperity of the middle and richer peasantry during and after the war proved illusory in view of the increasing prices of manufactured goods and the disproportion between the prices of the products of the city and those of the villages. This phenomenon may be observed even in the neutral countries like Sweden. Simultaneously with the increasing instability of prices on the home market, came the dislocation of the international grain trade. The post-war peace treaties, the re-arrangement of boundaries, the violent fluctuations of currency, high customs barriers—all these things helped to arouse the peasant and grain producers from their customary methods of labour and calculation. The precarious condition of the peasantry must also be attributed to the return of many workers to the country as a result of the increased unemployment in the cities, and the almost complete cessation of emigration from the countries of Central Europe, where the departure of the surplus village population always acted as a safety valve in the agricultural situation.

All the above-mentioned circumstances, the symptoms of agricultural crisis, are merely part of the general crisis which capitalism is undergoing, and can therefore be considered and dealt with only in connection with the general struggle between the forces of social revolution and the bourgeois order.

But to these reasons of a purely economic character must be added a number of equally important factors.

The foremost of these is the post-war bourgeois landlord reaction, making a mockery of all the war-time promises of "democracy" and enduring peace. The peasants, who made such enormous sacrifices during the war, by way of reward find themselves in complete servitude to the landlord, the capitalist and the state. Taxes have multiplied, rents have increased, unlimited armaments add heavily to the burden of wars threatening the destruction of vast agricultural areas, new waves of high prices and increased taxation, not to mention the millions of human sacrifices. The agrarian reforms promulgated in various countries, which were supposed to appease the peasants' land hunger, have proved a complete fraud, and the impoverishment and landless peasants are completely disillusioned.

To be sure the picture I have drawn gives only a general explanation of the change of the position of the peasantry in different countries, and of the revolutionary tendencies which they are displaying. Obviously, the agrarian question and the development of the peasants' movement varies in different countries, and a special plan is required by each country for revolutionary work in the village. But our task in the present article is merely to sketch broadly the most characteristic features in the peasants' movement, in its world aspect. It must be borne in mind, however, that the peasant question in the Eastern countries belongs to a separate sphere—that of imperialistic colonial politics, in which agrarian and peasant problems are closely bound up with the nationalist struggle for independence.

### 1. The Russian Revolution and the World Peasantry.

The great Russian Revolution exercised tremendous influence upon the world peasantry, which had been beaten out of its old rut. This influence, along various lines and in different directions, is constantly increasing, and has still to attain its highest point. The main factors contributing to this influence are the following:

First, the confiscation of the landlords' estates in favour of the toiling peasantry, and the complete expropriation and banishment of the landlord oppressors. In this the peasants of the capitalist countries see the realisation of the dream which has inspired their age-long and bitter struggle.

Secondly, the Communist parties which are developing all over the world, with their persistent condemnation of post-war capitalism and the post-war policy of the ruling class, and constantly explaining the present social disorganisation, are the direct bearers of the idea of the social revolution among

the peasantry. The slogans propagated by the Communist Party, proclaiming the idea of the link between the peasantry and the workers, the united struggle of the workers and peasants, compel the peasants to test the truth of these slogans by comparing them with the actual attainments of the peasants in the Union of Russian Soviet Republics.

Thirdly, the victories of the Red Army, composed largely of peasants, inspired respect for a Workers' and Peasants' Government which was able to maintain itself under such extraordinarily difficult conditions, and which actually accomplished the confiscation of the landlords' estates.

Fourthly, the world proletariat is witnessing more and more evidences of the unfailing attention of the Soviet Government to the interests of the peasant masses, and examples of the direct participation by the peasants in those phases of Soviet activity which play the largest role in the peasants' lives.

Fifthly, the liberation of the peasants of the various oppressed nationalities of the former Czarist empire-prison is a living proof of the reality of Soviet democracy and internationalism.

These arguments in convincing the peasantry in favour of the October revolution might be elaborated, but those already indicated are sufficient to prove what a volcano of propaganda is contained in the actual accomplishments of the workers and peasants government.

The number of the points of penetration of the influence of the Russian revolution increases in direct proportion to the growth of connections between Soviet Russia and other governments and peoples. The vilification of the Russian revolution has gradually decreased in volume and intensity. The development of our trade relations with other countries, the despatching of Russian grain to the starving unemployed, and our foreign policy generally, strengthen, explain and vindicate the great Russian revolution and the Union of Soviet Republics resulting therefrom.

A special role in the extension of the influence of our Russian revolution over the peasantry of the world is played by the propaganda of Leninism, by acquainting the world with the heroic figure of Lenin and with his ideas, among which a recognised and important place is given to the necessity of their common struggle against the bourgeoisie, and to the idea of the workers and peasants government.

The agrarian and peasant question, as the basic factor in the struggle for liberation in the East and in the colonial countries, constitutes a separate chapter in the question we have chosen to discuss, demanding special consideration.

## 2. Political Aspects of the World Peasant Movement.

The beginning of the growth of revolutionary ideas among the peasantry must be allocated to the period of the war. The association of the peasants and the workers in the armies where they spent years together in the trenches, facilitated the penetration of revolutionary ideas into the villages. The discussions on the aims of the war, on the high prices and famine, the frightful sacrifices, both human and material, demanded by the war, and the general dissatisfaction with the conditions created by the war, were particularly instrumental in preparing the ground for the reception of these revolutionary ideas. The pacifist ideas of the "last war," "democracy," etc., the fatuity of which practice has shown, also had some effect.

This mood found expression in the revolutionary ferment among the peasants at the beginning of 1919 in Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, and Czecho-Slovakia. There were frequent attempts to organise peasants Soviets in these countries.

During the last few years a constant re-grouping of the peasant parties of the different countries is to be observed. In Germany there has already existed for several months a "Working Alliance" (Arbeitergemeinschaft) composed of different peasants' organisations of various types and numbering about a million members. This "Working Alliance" regards itself as an economic organisation embodying the current demands of the radical, impoverished peasantry. It is not yet definitely organised, it has not marked out a definite line of action, nor determined the extent of its activities, while the groups in it are constantly changing. However, it is quite apparent that the "Working Alliance" is against the landlord and rich peasant class, and for a workers and peasants bloc, and friendship with the Union of Soviet Republics.

In Czecho-Slovakia a group of radical peasants has grown up within the ranks of the old Agrarian Party, numbering upwards of 2,000 members, and known as the "Domovini."

The temper of the peasants during recent events in Bulgaria is well known. In the United States, Canada, Japan,

Korea, and Turkey, peasants, farmers or farmer-labour parties and unions are being formed.

In Poland all the peasant groups and parties are in a state of flux. Re-groupings are practically a weekly occurrence. This is the beginning of the process of class differentiation among the peasantry. The old party of rich peasantry, led by Witos, has been broken up, has lost its influence, and has adopted a conciliatory attitude toward the landlords. On the other hand, the left wing of the Polish peasantry have organised radical, revolutionary groups, under the slogans of confiscation of the land without compensation, and a united struggle of the workers and peasants.

Nationalist insurrections in the colonies are for the most part peasant uprisings.

The movement of groups and classes among the peasantry of the capitalist countries reflects in itself the re-groupings of the forces of the bourgeois class in general. This movement marks the process of disintegration of the bourgeois camp, which the impoverished and landless peasants are leaving to join that of the proletariat.

The most marked manifestation of the mood of these peasants is to be found in the recent revolutionary peasant uprisings against the oppression of the landlords and the taxes, and the attitude of the peasants in the elections in Carpathian Ruthenia. The voting of the peasants for the Communists on a revolutionary ticket proved that the worker-peasant bloc has become a fact in Europe.

At the first International Peasant Conference in Moscow, the French Comrade Vazey said: "The peasants must be convinced of the fact that neither the peasants nor the workers have a country which they can call their own. Only in Soviet Russia do the workers and peasants really own their country."

The Carpathian peasants have already passed that stage of revolutionary development.

### **3. The Trend Toward International Organisation among the Peasants.**

The trend towards international organisation appeared even before the war. The Germans were the initiators of the idea. Their aim obviously was of a purely economic nature. The German peasants attempted to make connections with the foreign grain contractors with the aim of regulating the prices on the German market. This work was interrupted by the war, however, and no traces of it remain.

Immediately following the close of the war the work of organising the peasantry on an international scale was commenced. The aim of these efforts was the consolidation of the peasantry as a separate social body of reactionary proprietors. The initiative was taken by the clerical leader of the rich peasantry of Bavaria, Dr. Heim, who began negotiations in the first part of 1919 with his colleague Dr. Leyer, leader of the rich peasants in Switzerland. At the same time, similar propaganda was being carried on in Norway, Sweden and Holland. Dr. Heim and Co. also succeeded in interesting the French peasants in their project of an international association of peasants. But France approached this question very cautiously, shifted it to the political sphere, and attempted to take upon herself the directing role in the work of organisation. The French Government took matters into its own hands and commissioned M. Toussen, director of "Le Société Agricole," to call together an International Peasant Congress at Strassburg, but inviting only those countries belonging to the League of Nations. This association of peasants was broken down as a result of the general Franco-German difference at the next conference in Paris in 1920. The representatives of different countries has demanded that Germany and Austria be invited, but Dr. Heim, who was invited, did not come. Thus it appeared that the nationalism of the French and German leaders was stronger than the need for a general counter-revolutionary organisation. Such was the state of the revolutionary barometer in Europe at that time.

The next effort in the direction of an international association of peasantry was initiated by the Spaniards, who wished to unite the peasants on a Catholic platform. They began their agitation in South America. In Germany they met with opposition from Dr. Heim, who declared that religion and the church could not be dragged into politics. In reality, Dr. Heim was afraid to bring the church into an openly reactionary game, but on the other hand what other basis was there on which the peasant-Catholics of Argentine and Germany, old and inveterate rivals on the grain market, could be united?

Out of all these elements and combinations only a few fragmentary peasant conferences remain, called together by the German representatives with the participation of Austria and Czecho-Slovakia. But these conferences are not of the least importance.

Of quite a different nature was the project of Stamboulisky, in 1921. He proposed to found the Green International—an international association made up for the most

part of peasants from the Balkan and Danube countries and Poland. But the delegates who gathered in Tirnovo, with their mutually conflicting state and national interests, could find no common ground for discussion. Recently the idea of organising a Green International has again come to the fore, and new attempts are being made to call a conference of the Green International. In all probability these attempts will fail, as the previous attempts had failed.

The attempts at organising the so-called Black and Green Internationals—forms of International counter-revolution—demonstrates that an international association can only be founded on the basis of similarity of interests. In the first place the rich peasants who have taken the initiative in this matter up till now are competitors on the grain market and in the second place they represent the wealthy owners and petty proprietors, and as such are defenders of the bourgeois order and supporters of the reactionary policies of their respective governments.

An international peasants' organisation can only be formed by the poor and landless peasantry who play an insignificant part in the struggle for the grain market, and who are not interested in maintaining the present bourgeois order.

#### **4. The First International Peasants' Conference.**

The first International Peasants' Conference, held in Moscow in the autumn of 1923 was attended by 158 delegates from 40 nationalities of Europe and other parts of the world, including delegates from the colonial countries.

The programme of the conference included the following subjects: (1) the maintenance of peace, and the fight against capitalism; (2) the position of the peasantry in the capitalist countries; (3) results of the agrarian revolution in Russia and conditions of the peasantry in the Soviet Republic; (4) agricultural co-operation in Soviet Russia; (5) agricultural co-operation in capitalist countries; (6) the mutual relations of the peasantry and the working class; (7) international organisation.

The conference prepared theses on all these questions. In addition statutes of organisation were drawn up and several appeals were sent to the peasants of the colonies and of the whole world, to the peasant women and to the peasant youth. A telegram of greeting was sent to Comrade Lenin, who followed the course of the conference with great attention. The conference decided to found an International Peasants' Council and elected a general secretariat.

The conference adopted as the slogan of the I.P.C. :  
" Peasants and Workers of all Countries, Unite !"

Great historical significance attaches to the Moscow Conference. It marks the beginning of a new period in the development of the world revolution, as the I.P.C. is destined to gather together the revolutionary peasant masses of the world for the formation of an international bloc of worker and peasants.

The Moscow conference was the first conference in history to bring together the peasants of many lands to discuss the position of the peasantry in the capitalist countries and to seek together for a way of escape from their condition of exploitation and oppression. In the International Peasants' Council founded by the conference, the impoverished peasants of the world for the first time found a champion of their interests, a defender of their rights, and a leader in the struggle for a better future. In view of the apathy, insularity and conservatism of the peasantry, the very fact of the conference, and more especially that of the founding of the International Peasants' Council, may be considered as a revolution in itself, demonstrating the difference in the ideas of the pre-war and the post-war peasantry.

The Moscow conference has undoubtedly deepened the faith of the more conscious elements among the world peasantry in the Russian revolution and the Union of Soviet Republics, and has hastened the development of their new revolutionary mentality.

But the Moscow conference did not confine itself simply to analysing the conditions of the peasantry and to devising slogans proclaiming workers' and peasants' unity. It laid out a preliminary plan of action, and determined upon the methods of work for the immediate future. It drew up statutes of organisation for the masses of poor peasants who were already taking steps to form a bloc with the workers and to join them in the struggle against capitalism. The theses on the question of the relationship between the workers and peasants contain a definite outline of the organisational forms to be taken by the peasants struggle, in addition to an analysis of the position of the peasantry and their relation to the dictatorship of the proletariat. These organisational forms are to be the peasants councils and the workers' and peasants' councils the nuclei of the workers' and peasants' government. The statutes of the International Peasants' Council mention as one of their tasks the " establishment and strengthening of the closest connections with the **economic,**



political and co-operative peasants' organisations of the world" (par. C). In this paragraph the conference expressed two very essential ideas: first, the necessity of permeating and working through the already existing organisations, and secondly, the necessity of taking into account the characteristics of the peasants' mode of life, and the peculiarities of the peasants' organisations in the villages. Failure to take these factors into consideration would be a grave mistake, and would condemn the new organisation to sterility. Of greater importance are the theses adopted by the conference on the struggle against war and militarism. Through them the peasantry of all countries for the first time were made to realise their mutual interest in this struggle, and the need for solidarity. These theses marked a stage in the mobilisation of public opinion among the peasantry against the supreme tyranny of militarism.

The adoption of appropriate and well-intentioned resolutions and the proclamation of corresponding revolutionary slogans, although necessary for purposes of organisation and summoning to battle, do not necessarily determine the success of the actual struggle. That is determined by the correct application of the theses and resolutions to the concrete situation existing in any given country or province. The platforms and slogans indicate the general line the struggle should take. The correct application of methods and tactics is a new and complex problem for the world peasantry.

The theses, statutes and slogans of the conference dealt with the increasing poverty of the peasants, their growing tendency towards co-operation with the workers, and the inevitability of a combined struggle. But the actual tactics and policies to be pursued require the utmost flexibility in view of the diverse aspects of the agrarian question in different countries, the differences in the attendant political situations, and in the relation between the national and peasant questions.

These are the problems which confronted the International Peasants' Council from the very commencement of its activities.

This work is still very difficult because the preliminary scientific treatment of the peasant question in its bearing on the proletariat revolution is still only in its first stages. The conference, realising this, founded in Moscow the International Agrarian Institute, the aim of which is the thorough scientific study of all problems confronting the Peasants' International.

### 5. The Activities of the I.P.C.

The general secretariat of the International Peasants' Council has organised national sections in Germany, France, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland. The Secretariat has established connections and carries on correspondence with many other countries.

The I.P.C. has issued a number of appeals—on the elections in France and Carpathian Ruthenia, on the First of May, etc., has addressed a letter to the peasants' congress in Poland, drawn up detailed instructions on the matter of co-operatives, sent out questionnaires, etc.

The report of the First International Peasants' Conference was published in Russian and English, German and French translations are in preparation. In the first issue of the "Peasants' International" which appeared in April, there were articles of a scientific and informational character from 14 countries, in addition to the general and leading articles.

The popular library, "Peasants' International," has published its first three brochures and brochures in the Kirghese, Tartar, Ouzbeck, Turkish and Hebrew tongues are in preparation.

Within the borders of the Soviet Union, the I.P.C. has made connections with the village co-operative societies, the poor peasants of the Ukrain, the union of "Koshchi" in Turkestan and the Forest and Land Workers' Union.

An important place in the work of the General Secretariat was occupied by the question of the participation of peasants in the elections in Germany and France. In France peasants were put up for election under the slogan of a workers' and peasants' bloc. This marked a step forward in the agitational work for the union of town and country and notwithstanding the tardiness of the decision to take part in the elections, and the shortness of the period for campaigning, the peasants attained very considerable successes in the elections. In Germany the situation was quite the reverse. There the Communist Party has not yet outgrown its old hostility towards working among the peasants and therefore did not carry on a widespread agitation with revolutionary slogans among the peasantry during the elections. The German Communist Party is entirely wrong in this connection. Considering the strong Communist movement in Germany, the increase of taxation, the development of the Fascism and the compliance of the united rich peasantry with the class policies of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the Communist Party

could have carried on a successful agitation in the villages. It could have utilised the elections as a means of arousing the poor peasants still more against the landlords; it might have introduced a certain amount of political clarity into the spontaneous revolutionary fermentation among the peasantry, and finally it might have brought opposition and the revolutionary peasantry into closer contact with the Communist workers. In this respect the revolutionary workers of Germany failed to take advantage of an important opportunity.

## 6. Present Prospects and Tactics of the I.P.C.

In outlining the prospects of the I.P.C. the following indisputable facts must be mentioned.

The peasants' movement is growing stronger all over the world. The peasantry are manifesting a keen desire to be rid of their exploiter-guardians. A process of class differentiation is going on among the peasantry, and the poorer elements are displaying a tendency toward independent organisation.

Furthermore, the founding of the I.P.C. met with a lively response in the most diverse corners of Europe and the rest of the world, as evidenced by the numerous greetings and enquiries that are constantly pouring in to the Secretariat, and the increased attention which the I.P.C. is receiving in the press.

Among the tasks before the I.P.C. is the formulation of a separate programme and special tactics for each country. This work, of course, can and must be carried on conjointly with the workers' organisations. The I.P.C. must make special efforts to overcome the anti-peasant attitude among the revolutionary workers inherited from the Social-Democrats. The idea of a worker-peasant bloc has not yet become part of the flesh and blood of the Communist Party. It has not yet become an integral part of revolutionary Communist propaganda.

The field of work before the International Peasants' Soviet is immeasurable. In the national platforms or programmes of the I.P.C. must be included not only the fundamental questions of a general political and governmental nature, but also all local and provincial matters vitally concerning the peasantry such as questions of schools, public administration, local taxation, etc.

The members, groups and sections of the I.P.C. must penetrate into all peasants' organisations, and work within

them for the separation of the poor peasants from the rich peasants and landlords. Of great importance in this connection is the struggle to gain control of the co-operatives which until the present time have been instruments of exploitation in the hands of the rich peasants and landlords against the village poor.

In the countryside of the capitalist nations the I.P.C., in addition to its economic and political enemies, comes up against other no less important obstacles.

Foremost of these are religion and the priests. The I.P.C. must devise special methods of agitation against the priests, methods adaptable to the village conditions in the country in question.

Further, the I.P.C. must direct its attention to the youth (not only as their potential supporters in the village, but as future soldiers and inhabitants of the city barracks where they will rub elbows with the workers). The peasant youth are the most important factor in creating a bond between town and country. It must not be forgotten that the Fascisti and the nationalists of every country have made great inroads into the ranks of the village youth. The struggle against Fascism in the village is, therefore, one of the most urgent tasks of the International Peasants' Council. This is equally applicable to Germany, Poland, Italy and the Baltic countries.

Another of the main tasks of the I.P.C. is to win over the women, who play such an important role in village life. Our enemies have long realised the importance of enlisting women on their side and have consciously made use of women in their work.

In order to carry out the above-mentioned tasks in the village, and to combat all the petty every day manifestations of nationalism, exploitation and inertia, the I.P.C. must enter into the local cultural, educational and other organisations, and there extend and consolidate its influence over the peasantry through practical work.

Close contact of the I.P.C. with the organisations of agricultural labourers is essential.

Such tasks demand wide publishing activity, popular literature, our own press. The chief task of the revolution-

ary peasant press is to carry on a vigorous campaign against the social-traitors who stand between the workers and peasants. This question is particularly acute in Germany where the Social-Democrats pursue the policy of inciting the workers against the peasants.

In Germany the Social-Democrats class the peasants and landlords together as agrarians, blaming the entire peasantry for the high price of agricultural products. We must take a decided stand against such tactics on the part of the German Social-Democrats, and disclose the truth to the small peasants and workers.

It may be that in the very near future the I.P.C. will be confronted with the questions of the political organisation of the peasants' movement in different countries. But although certain comrades are already considering the question of forming peasants' parties, this is undoubtedly premature, and for the following reasons :

In general a party is a form of organisation of the masses at a certain stage of their development which is characterised by a well-formulated ideology in contradistinction to the ideology of other groups. The organisation of a certain class of society into a party, in the contemporary meaning of the term, must be preceded by a period of agitation and propaganda of preliminary struggles of victories and defeats. Without collective and practical solidarity a fighting party is unthinkable. The peasantry of all countries are still in a fluid condition and a constant shifting of groups is taking place within them. They have come to a parting of the ways, they are awakening, but are not yet fully conscious. A clear proof of the lack of class consciousness and independence of the small peasantry is to be found in the recent German and French elections.

In our opinion the I.P.C. must continue the work of general propaganda for its ideals in the period that is now before it.

The I.P.C. must strive to organise its groups and factions within the already existing peasants' organisations, and win for itself a position in the local and provincial elective institutions. Only after the outpost victories can we begin to draw up our plans on a national or State scale. If we wish to make use of the experience of the proletariat in deciding the question as to peasants' parties, let us ask ourselves whether the revolutionary workers' organisations could have

considered the question of re-organising into a party and entering into the struggle on a national scale unless they had first fortified their position in the basic industrial centres. The answer is obvious. Precisely the same situation exists in regard to the peasantry. They must first of all conquer the strongholds of the enemy in the village itself.

It is, of course, understood that the party must not for a single minute desist from propaganda for its basic aims. In its sectional and local work the slogans must always relate to and explain current demands. Agitation for the union of town and country, the slogan of the joint struggle of the peasants against capitalism, indefatigable propaganda against Fascism, war and armaments and for international solidarity, must make up the elements of its every day work, of every political meeting and every resolution.

But there is one idea which is bound to win over the peasants quickly and absolutely. That is the idea of the fight for the landlords' estates, their confiscation without compensation. 'The landlords' estates—that is the age-long dream of the peasants. 'The form of usufruct of the land is, of course, another question, a question depending on the development of agriculture in the given country, and on many other factors. But the question of the form of usufruct of land should not interfere with propaganda for the confiscation of the land and the banishment of the landlords. The Russian agrarian revolution and the free conditions of the peasants in the Soviet Union must serve as the main argument in favour of the peasants' struggle for the land.

The tactics of the I.P.C. must be directed toward tearing the small and middle peasants from the clutches of the landlords and rich peasants and toward the enlistment of the peasant masses in a joint struggle with the workers against the bourgeois order. The particular tactics of the I.P.C., its current slogans, depend on the rate of the decay of capitalism and on the development of the growing proletarian revolution and its influence on the petty-bourgeois peasant element.

With the aim of hastening the revolutionary process which is germinating among the peasantry, and of creating and strengthening the worker-peasant union, the Communist Parties of every country must organise peasants' sections capable of taking in their hands the direction of this new work.

U. KRASNI.

# The 2nd International & the Doctrine of Self- Determination

ONE of the prices with which Mr. MacDonald bought the rather dubious Liberal support has been the scrapping of the doctrine of self-determination. This doctrine, invented by ex-President Wilson to justify the depredations of one group of imperialists against another group, was taken up by the moribund Second International as an article of faith. Much breath has since been wasted on this doctrine which is, for all practical purposes, nothing but a piece of bourgeois hypocrisy. In the hands of the Social-Democrats, it served the purpose of a very convenient weapon to fight the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Second International kept on talking of the right of self-determination after the Treaty of Versailles had cynically mocked at the unsuccessful prophet of the doctrine. It valiantly fought for the Georgian democracy when democracy had become a sham in the very countries of Europe. The British Labourites led by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald took up the case of "oppressed Georgia" with the spirit of the crusaders, although the people subjugated by British imperialism were counted in hundreds of millions. But Mr. MacDonald told us that he believed in the right of self-determination for all nationalities. It was, therefore, natural to infer that, although Mr. MacDonald and his party did not fight against British imperialism with one-hundredth as much vigour as they fought "Bolshevik imperialism," the peoples inhabiting India, Ireland, Egypt and the extensive regions included in the British Empire would be given the right of self-determination when the Labour Party came to office. Of course, among the Communists there has never been much illusion on this score. It was never believed that the doctrine would prove any less to be hypocritical cant in the hand of the reformist Social-Democrats than it did in the hand of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It is a bourgeois doctrine *par excellence*, and, as such, can never work out in a way which will mean ruin to bourgeois domination.

On many an occasion half-hearted resolutions were passed by the Second International expressing sympathy with the struggle of the opposed people. But never did those resolutions mean anything more serious than an expression of righteous opinion. In short, the Second International never took the question of self-determination seriously. Its vision did not go beyond the narrow limits of the European countries. It believed in the "civilising mission" of European imperialism. When the carrying out of this mission brought in its train brutalities which could not be overlooked, the Second International squared its conscience by passing a resolution. But it never challenged imperialism as such. Had the resolutions passed by the Second International during the last twenty years been anything more than a collection of sweet phrases, the colonial policy of the British Labour Party in office would not be what it is. The politics of Mr. MacDonald, as Prime Minister, stand condemned by the utterances of MacDonald, the Socialist. The Second International never meant to approach the question of self-determination from an angle of vision different from that of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, at the first instance that its most influential section came face to face with the problem, the hypocrisy of its position is exposed.

In some quarters, however, the professions of Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues did arouse hope which has now been dashed to the ground by his action.

Mr. MacDonald wrote much about India. Although nowhere in his writings is to be found anything that can be construed as a commitment to the cause of Indian independence, his professions of sympathy and friendship were so profuse that they could not fail to make him rather a popular figure in Indian Nationalist circles. Mr. MacDonald visited India twice. Once as a simple member of Parliament, in 1910, and then three years later as a member of a Royal Commission to examine the possibilities of reforming the Public Services. On both occasions he expressed himself very sympathetically towards Indian aspirations. In fact, his first visit made him so popular in India that as a sop to the popular feelings he was appointed on the Royal Commission. After his first visit he wrote a book called "The Awakening of India," which soon incurred the displeasure of the colonial rulers, and was promptly prohibited entry into India. When Mr. MacDonald became the Prime Minister, his book was still under the ban. It was a curious situation: the Prime Minister considered to be an enemy of the Empire! This curious situation appealed to the sense of humour of the Indian Nationalists; but Mr. MacDonald him-



self chose to overlook it, obviously in the interests of the Empire.

In the newly-elected Indian Legislative Assembly it was asked if the Government was aware of the fact that a book of the Prime Minister was proscribed in India. The Government naturally was placed in a very queer position. It came out of it with the aid of some extremely lame excuse. After some days of delay the government informed the Assembly that there was no such order on record. So, without committing itself and without establishing a precedent in favour of "seditious literature" entering India, the government of India avoided the duty of declaring the Prime Minister an enemy of the Empire. How disastrous would it have been otherwise! All the guarantees given by Mr. MacDonald and his colleagues as to the safety of the Empire in the hands of the Labour Party would have been challenged by this single act!

The Indian Nationalists defended Mr. MacDonald's right to free opinion against the attacks of his own subordinates, even after he had sent his memorable message to India on the eve of his coming to power. Mr. MacDonald wrote that infamous message to insinuate himself into the good graces of the British bourgeoisie. In writing it he not only forgot all his former profession about self-determination, but voluntarily bartered away his Indian admirers. The most significant fact is that that message, which could have been sent by any representative of British Imperialism not excluding Lord Curzon, was not written under the "exigencies" of office, under which the vital planks of the Labour Party in home politics have been rejected, but before Mr. MacDonald became Prime Minister—even before his advent to office was a certainty. In other words, he sent that message when he was engaged in the task of forming the invisible coalition with the Liberals. The latter demanded that he must make his position as regards India clear. He must prove that there would be no weakness on this point during his regime. It was true that he has not written or said anything that could be construed as against the maintenance of the Empire. But his irresponsible talks had raised high hopes in India. These hopes should not be encouraged, particularly at the moment when the Nationalists were threatening to create a deadlock in the government by Parliamentary opposition. The imminence of a Labour Government stiffened the attitude of the Nationalists who counted in their ranks not a few personal friends and many an admirer of the would-be premier. The Liberals point out to Mr. MacDonald that his

loose talks about self-determination had been taken too seriously in India and that a halt should be called. If he was ready to sacrifice his Indian admirers, he could count upon the Liberal support. In order to prove that he had not meant anything serious in his previous talks, Mr. MacDonald sent the message to India, as it were, to show that the Labour Party might talk of self-determination in leisure hours, but in the moment of action it could shake the mailed fist in the defence of the Empire just as well as any bourgeois party. Therefore, Mr. MacDonald reminded his Indian friends and admirers that no tampering with imperial hegemony would be tolerated by his government. But what was after all the threatening demand of the Indian Nationalists against which Mr. MacDonald roared so majestically?

It should be remembered that the general elections took place simultaneously in Great Britain and in India. According to the same laws of democracy and constitutional government, which made it possible for Mr. MacDonald at the head of a minority party to form the Cabinet, the Nationalists in India ought to be entrusted with the administration of the country. In fact, they are in a better position. In the Central Legislature the newly-formed Nationalist Party (composed of the Right wing that broke away from the National Congress and the Left wing of the Liberal bourgeoisie) possesses a clear majority by virtue of which it has repeatedly defeated the government practically on every question. But the Government sits tight in its place: and Mr. MacDonald, as the head of the Empire, sanctions this flagrant autocracy, all his professions of democracy, self-determination and constitutionalism notwithstanding. These Nationalists entered the pseudo-parliamentary institutions granted by the Government of India Act of 1919, which Mr. MacDonald glorified as the Magna Charta of India following in the footsteps of his bourgeois predecessors, in order to fight the autocratic government on the parliamentary ground. It was quite a constitutional position to take. We should think that such an eminently respectable and positively harmless method of political warfare would not fail to receive the approbation of Mr. MacDonald. But it was not the case. It was precisely against this programme of parliamentary opposition that the anathema of Mr. MacDonald was hurled. He declared that the tactics of parliamentary opposition in India was unconditional and even "revolutionary," and shook his mailed fist at those who proposed to adopt these tactics, following the traditions of the British Parliament. Even Mr. Gladstone did not consider Parnell a revolutionary, nor did Mr. Baldwin lock Mr. MacDonald up in the Tower of London when he led the Labour opposition against the Tory Government.

To appreciate properly to what an extent the Labour Government has violated all codes of democracy and constitutionalism, which are its articles of faith, it is necessary to take a retrospective glance at the political situation in India during the last decade and to have a picture of the present condition of the Nationalist Movement.

In the darkest days of the imperialist war, the British Government bought the support of the Indian bourgeoisie with the promise for a "new spirit in imperial relations." Had not the loyal assistance of the Indian people been assured, the extensive campaigns in the East could not have been carried on and the consequence might have been disastrous. Believing in the promise of Asquith, the Indian bourgeoisie heartily helped the British authorities to secure by force this valuable loyal assistance when it was not voluntarily given. So, although rather indirectly, the Indian people contributed plentifully towards the noble cause of the war for democracy, and as such they are entitled to a share in its spoils. But they were not even given what was promised to them. The British Government rewarded the Indian bourgeoisie with some concessions in the economic field and with a shadow of political right granted exclusively to the upper strata of the propertied classes, namely, the big capitalists and landlords. The scheme was to drive a wedge in the ranks of the Indian bourgeoisie. The signs of a widespread popular discontent, in consequence of the intensified exploitation during the war and the high prices that followed, are already in sight. It was to be expected that the native bourgeoisie would not willingly let such a splendid opportunity go by without exploiting it to press their demand, unless some preventative measures were taken. The most advisable step to take was to split up the bourgeoisie and thus to weaken the imminent movement. This necessity gave birth to the famous Montague-Chelmsford Reforms which were embodied in the Government of India Act, of 1919. By these reforms a mockery of parliament was given to India, the franchise extending to less than two per cent. of the population. A very complex system of bureaucracy was introduced in the administration. The object was to make a little room for the upper bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy without affecting in any way British supremacy in every important matter. The new system was called dyarchy. The Provincial Governments were made partially responsible to the Legislatures with a majority of elected members; but the Central Government, in which was vested the supreme authority in every vital question, remained totally autocratic, although the Central Legislature also contained an elected majority. The partial responsibility introduced in the provincial governments

were, however, practically nominal. The Governor rules with the help of an Executive Council composed of two or three officials and a Ministry also of two or three chosen by himself from the elected members. These ministers, however, are not removable by a vote of the Legislature. This has been lately proved to the hilt. In several provinces, the government has been defeated repeatedly by the Nationalist majority in the Legislatures: votes of censure have been passed against the ministers: but not in one single case has the government accepted the verdict of the peoples' representatives. In the Central Government, even this shadow of responsibility does not exist. This brief information about the constitution of the present Indian administration must be given here in order to indicate fully the significance of the attitude of the Labour Government. The Government of India Act of 1919 was declared by the imperialist bourgeoisie to be a landmark in the political progress of India, and it found not a few enthusiastic supporters in the Labour Party, Mr. MacDonald himself being one. These very meagre reforms were conceded very grudgingly and from the beginning they have been sabotaged by all conceivable means. Now comes Mr. MacDonald to tell the Indian Nationalists that they should be thankful to imperialism for this Great Charter, but should not insist upon its fulfilment. This is exactly what he and his colleagues have given us to understand since they became the custodians of the Empire.

If we stop to think how moderate is the demand of the Indian bourgeoisie, it becomes clear how atrocious is the attitude of the Labour Government. The self-determination demanded by the Indian bourgeoisie is only the right to a small share in economic exploitation and political administration. In the beginning the Reform Act satisfied practically all sections of the Indian bourgeoisie. Had the government been less miserly in giving that beggar a dole, the non-co-operation movement which shook the country in the years following might possibly have been averted. But the government was mortally afraid of the brewing mass discontent which was an echo of the revolutionary tempest that swept the world in the aftermath of the Great War. Having placated the bourgeoisie, it desired to crush this discontent with an iron hand. The measures taken for this purpose meant taking away many times more than what had been given under the Reforms Act. A commission, presided over by an English judge, was set up to inquire into the causes and possibilities of the "seditious" movement. The commission, as was expected of it, submitted a report in which it was declared that there existed in the country a widespread revolutionary agitation.

The report was concluded by two projects of law which would place the entire country practically under martial law for a number of years. The agitation begun against these projected legislations soon revealed to the lower strata of the bourgeoisie the sources of a new force which hitherto had never been brought to bear upon the Nationalist movement. The constitutional agitation was readily responded to by the discontented masses, and, before the leaders had been aware of it, the movement grew too big to be contained within the narrow limits of protest meetings which passed resolutions. The industrial discontent, on the one hand, assumed the shape of a gigantic strike movement which swept the country : on the other hand, agrarian grievances were expressed through a revolutionary peasant movement which at one time came very near to a peasant revolt. The first stage culminated in the Amritsar massacre.

In those bloody days the British Labour Party had nothing but a few pious words to say. In a manifesto issued over the signatures of several leading British Labourites more concern was expressed for the safety of British women and children in India than for the lives and liberties of the Indians. A new era of constitutional advance, opened with such a blood baptism, has been found by the British Labour Party quite befitting with the doctrine of self-determination.

Hence the " reforms " granted by the Government of India Act of 1919 were very limited in their scope ; they did not fully satisfy the lower strata of the Indian bourgeoisie. The latter desired something more, but by themselves were too weak to press their demand. Therefore they reconciled themselves to the situation and gave their adhesion to the Reforms Act in the beginning. So much so that the very men like Gandhi, Nehru, Das, etc., who subsequently headed the non-co-operation movement and some of whom to-day are leading the Nationalist agitation in the Legislature, declared themselves in favour of the Reforms. They even went so far as to accept the clause which conferred upon the Viceroy the right of certification—a clause which subordinated the whole reformed constitution finally to the autocratic prerogative of the colonial pro-consul. According to this clause, the Viceroy could pass a certain measure over the head of the Legislature or reject one passed even unanimously by the parliament. The fact that even this was swallowed by the Indian bourgeoisie showed how modest was their aspiration. But the spontaneous growth of a great mass movement changed the situation. It split the bourgeoisie, one faction standing firmly by the government, the other placing itself

involuntarily at the head of a gigantic revolutionary agitation.

Then followed the famous non-co-operation movement led by Gandhi. The history of this movement is more or less known and need not be related here : nor can it be done within the compass of this article. After a rather spectacular career that lasted for three years, the movement collapsed more owing to its own reactionary socio-economic tendencies and political contradictions than under government prosecution, which, nevertheless, was also severe. One point, however, must be made clear. It is this. Although large revolutionary elements went into the composition of the non-co-operative movement, its programme and the demands put forward by the leaders have never been of a revolutionary nature. For example, it never stood for separation from the Empire. On the contrary, Gandhi has always been and still is a partisan of British connection. If the revolutionary aspects of the movement became objects of government persecution, they were no less sabotaged, condemned and disowned by the leaders. In fact the revolutionary possibilities of the non-co-operation campaign were ruined by the moderate character of the leaders. Now even this movement, which sacrificed itself on the altar of pacifism, so dear to Mr. MacDonald, and which valiantly struggled against and ultimately killed the revolutionary tendencies in its organism, failed to win the approbation of the British Labour Party.

Col. Wedgwood and Ben Spoor, who are the Indian experts of the British Labour Party and who have expressed more radical sentiments on this matter than any other of their colleagues, visited India during the hey-day of non-co-operation. They attended the Indian National Congress at Nagpur (1921) when the non-co-operation programme was adopted. On his return home, Col. Wedgwood expressed himself against the non-co-operation movement and warned the Indians to go slow. In spite of it, he has been looked upon in India as the prospective Labour Secretary of State for India under whose regime self-government would be conferred upon the people of India. This again shows how easily the demands of the Indian bourgeoisie could be satisfied : but even this degree of self-determination proved too much for Mr. MacDonald. He has declared war upon India.

The non-co-operation programme was divided into three parts which corresponded to the three social elements that went into the composition of the movement. The strength

of the movement was in its mass character and in the fact that for the first time in the history of the Indian Nationalist movement, the working class actively participated in it. The masses being the backbone of the movement, that part of the programme which hinged on militant mass action was the most vital part of the programme. But in spite of the mass character of the movement, its leadership was in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie reinforced by a large element of opulent intellectuals who socially and ideologically belonged to the big bourgeoisie, but strayed into the ranks of the non-co-operation movement, hoping that with its help they would be able to wring more concessions from imperialism. In course of time the vital part of the programme, the part calling for militant mass action, was pushed to the background and the other parts corresponding to the spirit of the two bourgeois elements came into prominence. Consequently the whole movement was placed upon an untenable basis. The economic aspect of the programme consisted of the impossible boycott of British goods and the reactionary attempt to revive backward modes of production, while on the other hand, in the political sphere, the success of the programme depended entirely upon the will of the element that had strayed in the movement from the camp of the big bourgeoisie. The political programme was the boycott of the Legislatures set up by the Reforms Act, boycott of law courts, and boycott of schools. Of this triple boycott only the first was successful, because the first elections to the Reformed Councils took place in 1920, while the non-co-operation movement was pushed ahead by a tremendous upheaval of mass energy. But this boycott was the first fatal mistake of the movement. It left the field clear for the government. The Legislatures were filled with the representatives of the loyalist landlords and the big bourgeoisie. In other words, the leadership of the Nationalist movement permitted the government to sabotage the Reforms without any serious obstruction.

In course of time the non-co-operation movement went on losing all political importance in proportion as it severed its connections with the masses. By the end of 1922 the National Congress left the government alone and was engrossed in an internecine quarrel. The two bourgeois elements had fallen apart, once the leaven of mass energy was removed. This quarrel ended in a split, which marked the beginning of a new phase. The cry was to rectify the mistake of 1920. The petty bourgeoisie, who had stood at the head of the non-co-operation movement, was opposed to this new tendency, since it was sure to push them into the

background and throw the big bourgeoisie again in the forefront of the Nationalist movement. But separated voluntarily from the masses, thanks to their reactionary character, they could hardly hold their own against the radical intellectuals who were much more advanced politically. So the section of the upper bourgeoisie, that had strayed into the non-co-operative movement, repudiated the boycott of the Legislature and did not hesitate to split the National Congress on this issue. They easily carried the day. The three social elements, that went into the composition of the non-co-operative movement, fell asunder. The most advanced and conscious one, namely the element hailing from the upper bourgeoisie, returned to their spiritual fold. The second split, therefore, undid the previous one that took place in 1920 after the introduction of the Government of India Act and under the pressure of a great mass upheaval.

Five years after the inauguration of the "new era" Indian bourgeoisie stands to-day determined to make the best of the "constitutional reforms." And by an historical accident it has fallen upon a Labour Government to fight them. The first touch of reality put Mr. MacDonald to the test and he was found to discard his profession of self-determination without much ado.

The Nationalist bourgeoisie contested the elections of 1923 with the avowed object of demanding self-government. They declared their intention of backing up this demand by all parliamentary means available under the circumstances. They threatened to obstruct the functioning of the government by creating a deadlock if their demands were not granted. For various reasons the Nationalists won more seats than they themselves expected. Though only in one province they got a clear majority, in practically all the importance provinces as well as in the Central Legislature, they acquired a substantial minority. The main cause of this unexpected success was that, owing to the economic development taking place in the last several years, the bourgeoisie to-day requires a more vigorous representation than could be provided by the Liberals who accepted the Reforms Act and stood faithfully by it when the government sabotaged it all the time and by every conceivable means. The new Nationalist Party reflected the political and economic aspirations of the bourgeoisie much more energetically than the old Moderates who proposed to gain self-government by stages. This fundamental reason aided by many circumstantial stimuli sent strong Nationalist groups in the Legislatures. Consequently a stiff fight was to be



expected in the parliamentary field. The situation was the most acute on the advent of the Labour Government. On many a previous occasion Mr. MacDonald had expressed his sympathy for the demands put forth by these parliamentary nationalists. There was nothing revolutionary in their programme. What was demanded was quite within the limits of self-determination as interpreted by the Second International. It was the right of the bourgeoisie to determine how the natural resources and the man-power of the country should be exploited. But the British bourgeoisie had staked its claim prior to that of the sons of the soil. Therefore, the otherwise legitimate demand of the Indian bourgeoisie could not be admitted so easily. The fact that the would-be Prime Minister had formerly sympathised with Indian aspirations for self-government naturally encouraged the Nationalists who, therefore, were in very high spirit. The British government considered this a rather ominous sign. Mr. MacDonald was evidently taken to task for this when he was angling for Liberal support. Therefore, to reassure the British bourgeoisie on the one hand, and disillusion the Indian nationalists on the other, he sent his message to India. In this message he thundered :

“ No party in Great Britain will be cowed by threats of force : and if any section in India are under the delusion that this is not so, events will very sadly disappoint them.”

It was not necessary to wait for other events. The message itself was enough for the purpose of disappointing Mr. MacDonald's friends and admirers in India. The most remarkable thing of the whole episode is the total unwarrantedness of it. Mr. MacDonald set up a ghost of his own imagination in order best to demonstrate his heroic determination to defend the Empire. In composing this message Mr. MacDonald had his own scheme. He was quite aware of the possibility that this would lead to some unpleasant criticism even from the ranks of his own followers. It would be asked : what about the right of self-determination? He manufactured the bogey of the “ threats of force ” to justify his position. He would argue : “ I am not against self-determination. I am against use of force.” But who on earth, ever talked of force in India? In fact, none has sacrificed so much for pacifism as the Indian bourgeoisie. They killed a splendid movement for the cult of non-violence. Now comes Mr. MacDonald to say that the followers of Gandhi were meditating the overthrow of the British Empire forcibly. Let us examine if there were any element of force in the programme and the demands of the Indian Nationalists.

The very fact that the Nationalists participated in the elections proved that they accepted the Government of India Act as a settled issue. Nowhere in the speeches, writings, resolutions and manifestoes of the Nationalists is to be found any challenge to the Empire. What was expressly demanded is the end of the bureaucracy, when the demand was the most extreme. Often the demand was much more moderate. There is not one leading Swarajist who has not on innumerable occasions deprecated the use of force and declared his faith in constitutional methods. The political demand of the Party, as stated in its programme, was Dominion status. None of the party leaders is any more revolutionary than Mr. MacDonald. In fact, there are a few among them who are his political disciples (except for his Socialism).

Now, what are the tactics that they proposed to adopt in order to realise this very moderate and highly constitutional demand? In one word it is parliamentary opposition. The plan was as follows: as soon as the Councils assemble the Nationalists would introduce a number of demands. If the government rejected these demands they would adopt the policy of consistent obstruction by voting against every government measure. In this way they would create a deadlock in the Councils and force the government to consider their demands. It indeed requires a very long nose to smell "threats of force" in this plan of purely parliamentary action.

In the beginning Mr. MacDonald might have seen red. He might have taken the Nationalist parliamentarians of India on their face value. He might have thought that they were going to overturn the Empire. But subsequent events have proved that nothing could be more moderate and constitutional than the demands of the Indian Nationalists. Has Mr. MacDonald been any more sympathetic towards these moderated demands? Has he made any gesture to prove that he has not altogether forgotten what he said previously about Indian aspirations? In short, has he made the slightest effort to meet the Indian Nationalist half way? Has he given any reason for us to believe that he has not totally repudiated his pet doctrine of self-determination? None of these questions can be answered in the affirmative.

The first demand of the Indian Nationalists was a resolution asking for the release of political prisoners or at least a fair trial for those held indefinitely in jail. The government refused to release the political prisoners on the plea that there is a widespread revolutionary organisation

in the country inspired and directed by Communists abroad. It also intimated that the men held in jail without trial are arrested for their connection with the agents of the Communist International. Of course, the government could not make a cleverer move to disarm the Nationalists who are no fonder of the "Bolshevik agents" than is the government itself. They did not press the question any further; but the resolution was carried. The government looked upon the matter as an expression of opinion which in no way bound it. What is the crime of these "Bolshevik agents" after all? These men advocated that the Nationalist movement should not neglect the interests of the workers and peasants, and that the latter should organise for the defence of their own economic interests. If this is "Bolshevism," then the British Empire to-day has a Bolshevik Government. Taking a leaf from his predecessors' book Mr. MacDonald tells us that the Indian masses require the protection of the British Government. What sort of protection is it which does not permit the most rudimentary signs of working class movement?

After the Labour Government came into office, the Viceroy of India declared in opening the New Legislative Assembly that he would continue to rule India with a firm hand. He challenged the Nationalists. He also talked of the Communist activities and the danger resulting therefrom. Finally came the statement of the new Secretary of State from India, Lord Olivier. In this statement the Indian policy of the Labour Government was formally formulated. The Labour Government backed up the attitude of the colonial pro-consuls. Lord Olivier roundly refused to entertain any proposition to grant further measures of self-government until the Reforms Act has been given a fair trial. It is stipulated in the Reforms Act that not later than ten years from the inauguration of the reforms a Royal Commission should be appointed to consider the grant of further measures of self-government. The sum total of the Nationalist demand has been that a Round Table Conference of the government and the spokesmen of the elected members should be immediately called to consider the possibility of this further grant without waiting the full term of the specified ten years. Lord Olivier categorically declared that such a conference was out of the question. In India the resolution of self-government brought in by the Nationalists was stoutly opposed by the government.

This resolution, which was so resolutely opposed by the Labour Government and the Indian Government, was as

tame as it could be. It was so moderate that even the left wing of the Liberals, who had all along stood loyally by the Government, made common cause with the Nationalists. In fact, the resolution was moved by one of them. The Government of India Act was not challenged: only some re-adjustment of relations was requested. Even this failed to fit in with Mr. MacDonald's notion of self-determination. But in the face of a united opposition of the Indian bourgeoisie, it was not possible to continue inflexible for ever. The opposition has been beaten down for all practical purposes. Now a little weakening could be shown. The Government of India magnanimously informed the Legislature that, without committing itself to any fundamental change in the present constitution, the promise for a departmental enquiry could be given. This is, then, the right of self-determination that has been conferred upon India by the **British Labour Party**.

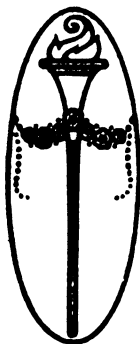
Now let us see what sort of protection the Labour Government gave to the Indian workers. 150,000 textile workers have been locked out in Bombay for more than two months. The obstinate attitude of the employers caused the struggle. In the last five or six years, the Indian mill-owners had made fabulous profit. Now the trade is reaching normal level, so the rate of profit must be lowered. The owners do not want their pockets to be hurt. They desired to pass the burden on to the bent shoulders of the workers. The payment of the annual bonus of a month's wages was suspended. This led to a strike which was replied to by the employers with a general lock-out. From the first day of the lock-out the government sent armed forces to guard the mills: but when requested by the Labour leaders to do so, the governor refused to intervene in the conflict between capital and labour.

The only thing that stands to the credit of the Labour Government is the release of Gandhi. This act of grace was, however, forced upon the government. Besides, there is a deep scheme involved in it. If the Labour Government remains long enough in office, we may expect it to call an Indian deputation to London. Gandhi would be very helpful at the head of this deputation. He is too saintly to forget an act of kindness, and could be depended upon to go back empty-handed, but with a full heart to call upon the Indian people to cultivate brotherly love with the imperialist rulers. Mr. MacDonald's profession of self-determination will then easily be converted into his passion for Imperial Federation.

But he will not have the satisfaction of performing this inglorious task.

The bankruptcy of the programme of the Second International in European politics was exposed by the debacle of the German Social Democrats. The Labour Government in England will have very little new to add on that count. The utter hypocrisy of its humanitarian professions has now been demonstrated by the action of the British Labour Party. The peoples of the colonies cannot have the right of self-determination unless war is declared upon Imperialism. But the stalwarts of the Second International talk of self-determination in theory and become the defenders of Imperialism in practice.

M. ROY.



# How the Comintern arose and what it did in the first five years of its existence

## LENIN IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR MOVEMENT.

*(A summary of two speeches delivered in Leningrad and Moscow in connection with the Fifth Anniversary of the Comintern.)*

**T**HE Fifth Anniversary of the founding of the Comintern takes place sixty years after the founding of the First International. Sixty years is not such a long period in the history of the world, but in the course of these sixty years we can clearly see three complete epochs in the international labour movement. These three epochs, broadly speaking, coincide with the three Internationals: the first, second and third. The first epoch was one of preparation, when the working class has just begun to be conscious of its strength. The highest point of this epoch was the Paris Commune. Then in the '80's the Second International entered upon its quarter of a century of existence. Meanwhile, the Third International was gradually maturing within the Second International, and finally the third epoch opened, the epoch of the Comintern.

It is necessary to follow the general line of development of these three periods in order to understand correctly the historical basis and the fundamental significance of the Communist International. Its growth was from the very beginning inseparably bound up with the activities of Comrade Lenin. Thus his influence in the international movement runs like a red thread through the development of the Communist International, the brief outline of which we give below.

### *Epoch of the First International.*

The First International did not arise as a result of a proletarian revolution. It assembled after a number of bourgeois revolutions that had shaken several countries in Europe. The bourgeois revolution in Europe, as we now know, completed a cycle in '48. But as always happens in

the case of great movements, especially when they are of an international scope, the consequences of these movements continue to develop during the course of a number of years and sometimes even of decades. So it was with the Labour movement after the completion of the cycle of bourgeois revolutions in '48.

The working class, consciously awakening first among the Paris artisans in the great French revolution of 1789, had grown much stronger numerically by '48 in France and Germany, and in many other countries as well.

The working class in England already had behind it at that time the great and powerful Chartist movement which, by the way, Vladimir Ilyitch never tired of recalling as one of the greatest movements of the international proletariat.

The powerful popular movement which found expression in a series of bourgeois revolutions in 1848 aroused the working class. Up to the beginning of the '60's the young working class, still only in the first stages of its formation, lived through the stormy period of the first epoch of its development. And in the midst of this period the first International Workers' Association came into being—the First International, under the guidance of Marx and Engels. This was not the beginning of the proletarian revolution, but rather the end of the bourgeois revolutions. The first wave of the world Socialist revolution, and the last wave of European bourgeois revolutions lifted on its crest the first detachment of the International proletariat.

The movement developed stormily enough. Not a decade had passed since the founding of the First International, when in the revolt of the Paris Commune we saw the highest point of the development of that first Marxian International.

The Paris Commune was suppressed. One of the main reasons for its defeat was the fact that at that time the working class of France was not led by the Communist Party; they were split up into a great number of groups, tendencies and fractions. The Paris Commune was a badly defined alliance between the different groups and combinations which existed at that time in the French working class. The Paris workers had plenty of courage; only one thing was lacking in the Paris Communards, clearness of aim and unity of organisation, in other words, a Communist Party, a Bolshevik Party.

The year 1871 was as a matter of fact the last year of the serious revolutionary work of the First International. After the Paris Commune the First International still continued to exist for a matter of years, but its sun had already set; it led an almost entirely passive existence. The culminating point had been passed, the international organisation of workers was no longer on the crest but in the trough of the revolutionary wave.

After the defeat of the Paris Commune, all the governments of the world, and in particular all the bourgeois governments of the world, concluded what they called a "Holy Alliance," which was in actual fact an arch-counter-revolutionary union against the members and supporters of the first International. They hunted down the Communards of that time like wolves. Among all the great powers of the world a special agreement existed for the relentless extermination of everyone who belonged to the Marxian International. They organised a special system of international police and international espionage, which set for itself the problem of exterminating the First International, root and branch.

Comrade Lenin, as is well-known, did not participate directly in the work of the First International, the activities of which came to an end at the beginning of the '70's. But from his estimate of these activities, from his attitude to the most important phases of its existence, it is entirely clear just how he regarded this first period of the history of the international labour movement.

Vladimir Ilyitch tirelessly studied the history of the Paris Commune in all its details. There was not a single piece of writing, not a book dealing with the Paris Commune, to which Comrade Lenin did not apply himself as to the most important historical document. During the time when we lived abroad together, during those difficult years of defeat and of counter-revolution, Vladimir Ilyitch took an enthusiastic part in the meetings in the colonies of foreign emigrants, the majority of whom were hostile to Leninism. And on one day of the year—the day of the Paris Commune—Vladimir Ilyitch never missed the opportunity of speaking at some meeting or other on the subject of the Paris Commune, and, in this connection, on the activities of the First International. Each year Comrade Lenin's speech on this subject became more inspired, more penetrating. He taught all those who listened to his words (these were not millions as they are now, but merely a small circle of people) to regard with the greatest respect the work of the First



International, and especially the accomplishments of the Paris Communards. From these lectures the history of the Third International really commences.

The program of the Third International as well as those things which we, workers of the Third International, had to borrow from the First International, were mapped out in these yearly lectures in which Comrade Lenin commemorated the Paris Commune. Unfortunately, however, there were no stenographic notes taken and these speeches are preserved for us only in separate fragmentary articles and in the memories of those who heard him at the time.

### *Transition to the Second Epoch.*

After the overthrow of the Paris Commune, a period of reaction set in which lasted almost two decades. During 1871-1889 the international working class had practically no international connections. It developed in separate divisions. The French workers had to spend a period of almost fifteen years in paying off the results of their first uprising, which ended so tragically for them; there was not a single worker in France, particularly in Paris, who did not have to make some kind of sacrifice. The French bourgeoisie shot down tens of thousands of workers, and as many again were sentenced to hard labour. The black reaction, the centre of which was in Paris, spread over all the rest of Europe as well.

Only at the end of the '80's did the French working class begin to recover from these heavy blows, and at the same time the workers of Germany and many other countries began to grow more class-conscious. This is the end of the first epoch in the labour movement of the nineteenth century.

Comrade Lenin did not play a parliamentary active or direct part in the activities of the Second International. In the first years of its wide political activities, Comrade Lenin regarded the work of the Second International with the greatest respect. He idealised the role of the German Social-Democrats, the principal party of the Second International. In his book "What to do," and other of his writings, are to be found whole pages devoted to the great role of the German Social-Democrats. Such an attitude was historically justifiable because at that time the German Social-Democratic Party was the core of the Second International, and played approximately the same role in relation to it that our Russian Communist Party plays in the Third Inter-

national. It gathered millions of members within its ranks, built up mass unions, created a huge Socialist press, transformed the toiling masses from human dust into an organised working class, into a labour party. This was the strongest side of the German Social-Democrats. And in this consists the strong point of the entire Second International during the first epoch of its existence. Comrade Lenin, with all his revolutionary passion, and with all his irreconcilability on the question of opportunism, was still able, even after the formation of the Third International, to maintain a sufficiently objective position to enable him to emphasise the great historical role which the Second International had played in its time. In the more belligerent of his articles directed against the Second International for its rank betrayal of the workers' cause, beginning with the year 1914, Comrade Lenin constantly pointed out that in the course of these first two decades the Second International played a very positive role in founding mass workers' organisations, mass labour parties, unions, co-operatives, educational societies, in placing the Socialist press on its feet, in enlightening the workers and teaching them the fundamentals of Socialism.

We, Lenin's executors, must clearly understand this incontrovertible service of the Second International. It is now obvious that the twenty-five years between 1889-1914, serve in the history of the world as a transition period between the completion of the bourgeois revolutions in 1898 and the beginning of the Socialist revolutions in 1917. In the course of this period, it would have been historically impossible for the working class to have acted otherwise than it did. It is quite clear that history gave this period to the oppressed classes in order that they might gradually gather their forces together, form themselves into mass organisations and go through their first organisational and political experiences. And in this sense these years did not pass in vain. The years of the Second International were for the international working class a period of continuous peaceful organic development, in the course of which it could only be occupied with organisation, propaganda and the uniting of the most trusted detachments of the working class, who, under our very eyes grew both numerically and politically. That is the reason why, in the first years of its activities, Lenin so carefully followed the work of the Second International, and regarded this work with such great respect. And only in the course of the struggle did the idea gradually arise in his mind that it was necessary to form a left wing in the Second International, which finally led him

to the conviction that it was impossible to carry on the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat without founding a Third International.

*Lenin in the Second International.*

The first practical contact of the Bolshevist wing of our Party, at that time still united with the activities of the Second International, occurred in 1903-4 at the moment of our first sharp divergence, which almost led to a split with the Mensheviks at the Second Congress of our Party.

At that time the Second International was headed by the German Social-Democrats. The leader of the Second International was August Bebel. Later a sort of triumvirate was formed, which held complete and undivided sway in the Second International, controlling all its work. The members of the triumvirate were Bebel, Victor Adler, and, a little later, Jaurés, as the representative of the French party, and, in fact, of the whole Latin section of the Second International.

Of these three the most outstanding was Bebel; his was the deciding voice. Lenin's first contact with Bebel took place in the year 1903-4 when Bebel, whose own mood was clearly sympathetic to the Mensheviks, made an attempt to interfere in our inter-party disputes with the aim of bringing about reconciliation between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. Paul Axelrod, Plekhanov and others lived abroad at that time, and were in very close touch with the Second International, but Comrade Lenin was a new member in the Second International, and had only just appeared on the international arena. The leaders of the Second International were generally inclined to listen to the opportunist voices within the ranks of our party. And when through the split in our party in 1903-4 it became clear that Comrade Lenin did not stand alone in Russia, that Bolshevism was growing, that in spite of the authority wielded by Axelrod and Plekhanov, Comrade Lenin was still able to unite a good half of the party around him, and if not to-day, then certainly to-morrow would have a good majority with him—then the Second International decided to go to the assistance of Menshevism. Bebel addressed a letter to Comrade Lenin, as the leader of the Bolsheviks, and suggested that we submit the matter to a court of arbitration. At that time it was very difficult for our Bolshevist group to refuse such a proposal; we were a small party, while the Second International was at the zenith of its glory, and Bebel enjoyed the warmest

and most undivided sympathy in the whole Second International. His proposition, therefore, placed us, and particularly Comrade Lenin, in a most difficult position. Comrade Lenin already at that time carried the main responsibility for the whole Bolshevik Party on his own shoulders, and all the attacks were directed against him. None the less, in spite of his great respect for the Second International, for the German Social-Democrats, and especially for Bebel, Comrade Lenin, and with him those who were at that time the members of the Bolshevik centre, decided to refuse this proposal politely, but firmly and categorically.

The Second International was by no means the same kind of organisation as we have in the Third International; it had none of the same discipline; it was not the single international party that the Comintern is to-day. It was a free, loosely organised federation of different parties which came together from time to time, passed resolutions, and carried them out "as far as possible." We took advantage of this circumstance and declared that we declined the intervention of Bebel.

Comrade Lenin found his own road along which he led our party. This was the first time that the leaders of international Socialism opposed with an almost united front the young, newly-organised, still weak Bolshevik Party. But for almost a whole decade after this Comrade Lenin and the whole Bolshevik party continued to regard the Second International with great esteem.

In 1904, as is well known, an International Congress of the Second International took place at Amsterdam. At that time the split in our party had already occurred. The Mensheviks sent their delegation to Amsterdam, the Bolsheviks theirs. Comrade Lenin refused to take part in this delegation. This is to be explained by the attitude of the leaders of the Second International, of which I have already spoken. Their sympathies at that time were all against the Bolsheviks.

At the Amsterdam Congress the right and left wings of that time crossed swords. On the order of the day was the highly inflammatory question of "ministerialism," of the admissibility of Socialists, members of the Second International, particularly in bourgeois governments. At the Amsterdam Congress that question was answered in the negative: Jaurés defended the policy of participation in bourgeois government, the so-called "new tactic of Millerandism,"

and he was opposed by Bebel, who was backed by the majority of the delegates. Looking back it may be said that as a matter of fact the Second International flapped its wings for the last time at Amsterdam, for this was the last time the more or less revolutionary wing won any appreciable victory.

Beginning with 1904 opportunism grew constantly stronger in the Second International, and at the present time their opportunism has grown to such an extent that the question of Millerandism, of admissibility of Socialists participating in bourgeois governments, no longer exists; no one in the Second International would think of disputing this policy. Now, we may say, every one of the leaders of the Second International is ready to enter a bourgeois ministry with the greatest joy, if only they will have him. We have an example of this in MacDonald, in the British social-patriots. In Hamburg last year they decided that in the event of any of the leaders of the Second International taking up a post in a government he must resign from the Executive Committee of the Second International, but only temporarily. Not long ago, at a conference of the International Bureau of the Second International, it was decided to consider the participation of Comrade Henderson in the British bourgeois cabinet as a leave of absence for a certain period. So it is written, openly; they regard the participation of the social democratic gentlemen in bourgeois governments simply as a short retirement from business. Henderson goes to work for the British bourgeoisie—he is on leave. And when the leave is over (which of course is expected to be short) then this same Henderson will be received back into the circle of the Executive Committee of the Second International.

In 1904, the matter stood otherwise; then this was a question for dispute. In 1904 the left wing was victorious in Amsterdam. In speaking of the "Left wing," however, it is necessary to explain that that left wing, under the leadership of Bebel, turned out later to be much nearer to that which we now call the centre. But at that time the differentiation in the Second International had not yet gone so far.

Between the Amsterdam Congress and the Stuttgart Congress of 1907 lies the Russian revolution of 1905, when our party came out into the arena, when the leaders of the Second International were convinced of the great future that lay before the Russian revolutionary movement. Under the influence of 1905 there began a great division in the parties

of the Second International. There came the famous Jena Congress in 1906, when Rosa Luxemburg entered the arena, making an attack against the left wing, and partly against the centre.

Lenin took part personally in the Stuttgart Congress of 1907. This was after the London Congress of our party, when we, the Bolsheviki, had a slight majority in the Central Committee of our Party. It was necessary to organise it so that Comrade Lenin should be at its head.

In 1907, at the Stuttgart Congress, began the organisation of that faction out of which grew the Third International: at the head of this faction stood Vladimir Ilyitch and Rosa Luxemburg. Comrade Lenin, in speeches and conversations, has told us how during the Stuttgart Congress he and Rosa Luxemburg made the first attempts to carry on illegal conferences (illegal, not in relation to the police, but in relation to the leaders of the Second International) of those Marxists inclined to share the viewpoint of Vladimir Ilyitch and Rosa Luxemburg. There were, to be sure, few such people in the Second International, but none the less the first attempt to organise a left wing of the Second International, the first foundation for such a group was laid in Stuttgart. In Stuttgart the colonial question was considered; here we came very close to the question of war and the fact was brought home to all the honest revolutionary-socialists of that time that sooner or later the majority of the Second International would fall into the hands of the openly reformist elements. Only by a small majority of votes did they succeed in defeating the resolution which openly favoured social-traitor tactics. The leaders of the Second International complained that they were defeated in Stuttgart by the fact that certain backward countries like Russia and a few other agrarian countries had a disproportionately large number of votes, and consequently the principal parties of the Second International were in the minority.

At Stuttgart it also became clear that the German Social-Democrats were becoming counter-revolutionary. This was explained by the fact that the Congress took place in Germany, that the German trade unions had a large delegation of several hundred members, and that all the leaders of the German unions conducted themselves openly as social patriots.

After Stuttgart the Second International rolled swiftly toward the precipice and Comrade Lenin from that time be-

gan to regard the Second International with the greatest scepticism. The Stuttgart Conference shook his faith in the Social-Democrats and in the Second International as a whole. He still looked upon the Second International as a powerful organisation, but he saw that within this organisation a right wing was growing and developing which at the decisive moment would betray the cause of the International proletariat.

At the Copenhagen Congress Comrade Lenin made his second attempt to organise a left wing; he tried to arrange an international conference of revolutionary Marxists, but nothing came of it: altogether ten people came together, half of whom were afraid to attend the meetings. They regarded Comrade Lenin with considerable distrust, they did not know him, and he was opposed by the foremost members of the Second International, the representatives of the united Russian social-democracy. The Copenhagen attempt to organise a left wing of the Second International ended in a fiasco. The Congress occupied itself with questions of minor importance and even on these questions displayed at each step more clearly opportunistic tendencies.

Comrade Lenin did not participate in the Basle Conference, contrary to what has been written in our papers. Only Comrade Kamenev represented our party there. At that time Comrade Lenin and I lived in Cracow in order to be nearer to Russia, as we had begun to publish our legal organs *Pravda* and *Sviesda*. The Basle manifesto, which was the Hannibal's vow of the Second International against war, proved to be a document of great importance. On receiving it Comrade Lenin said: "They have given us a great pledge, but how will they keep it?" We know that they did not keep it. The power of the Second International was already on the wane. In place of Bebel and Adler came a new generation of German Social-Democrats, and Scheide-mann made his appearance. At that time Kautsky, who at one time belonged to the left wing of the Second International, had already begun to break away and was going over to the right wing. The leadership of the Second International degenerated catastrophically. If Bebel had been really devoted to the interests of the working class, if he had been a man coming from the working masses himself, and feeling the pulse of the masses, then those leaders who now appeared upon the scene would have been people of an altogether different calibre. They were typical leaders from the labour aristocracy, they were a generation destined to act

with the blackest treachery to the interests of the international working class.

In 1914 we again participated very closely in the activities of the Second International. Comrade Lenin was at that time a member of the International Bureau of the Second International. He went to the meeting of the bureau in Brussels with a feeling of great despondency, and came away almost ill. He told us that he had had to be a witness of a shameful scene, that he had beheld the beginning of the corruption and decay of that greatest of international organisations, uniting twenty millions of workers. I shall never forget Vladimir Ilyitch's account of one of those meetings, at which a sharp dispute took place between Rosa Luxemburg on the one hand, and Bebel on the other. When Rosa Luxemburg tried to initiate the struggle against opportunism among the German Social-Democrats she met with opposition from the right wing and the centre, headed by Bebel. I was present at the Second Jena Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party in 1910-11, as the representative of our Central Committee, and there we beheld a spectacle of the most incredible and shameful baiting of Rosa Luxemburg on the part of the entire Congress. Bebel was the leader of the hue and cry. When Rosa Luxemburg attempted to enter the lists against Bebel, and received support from among the more revolutionary-minded of the German workers, they dragged her before the International Bureau, before the International Tribunal, and there they subjected her to a series of paternal reprimands, threats of exclusion, and made sport of her with sly and cutting banter. Comrade Lenin simply could not endure this, he attempted to defend her and then the thunder and lightning burst over him as well. Comrade Lenin then tried to appeal to Plekhánov, who at that time was undergoing his renaissance, was opposing the liquidators, and going hand in hand with us. But when Comrade Lenin pointed out the inadmissibility of the course they were following with Rosa Luxemburg, Plekhanov answered with this bit of wisdom: "The ears can't grow higher than the forehead! We must remain silent. When we have a million members, as the German Social-Democrats have, then they will have to reckon with us, but now we are nothing but 'poor relations'"—and Vladimir Ilyitch slammed the door behind him and left the Congress.

After that Comrade Lenin began to work more and more closely with those comrades who were grouped round Rosa Luxemburg. And the International Socialist Bureau, where such gentlemen as Huysmans played the directing role, sank



ever lower and lower. The liberal barrister Huysmans slapped Vladimir Ilyitch on the back in a free and easy manner and offered to instruct him how to organise a Labour party and to carry the working class with him. Vladimir Ilyitch attended the meetings of these lawyers and future Socialist ministers, without the least satisfaction, and regarded such trips as a most disagreeable duty.

In 1913-14 the Second International again found it necessary to take an interest in the Bolsheviks and go to the aid of the Mensheviks, because the star of Bolshevism was again in the ascendant in Russia; we had begun to grow strong, and Axelrod and company hastened to these gentlemen for support. At Jena, I remember, the present President of the German Republic, who was at that time the president of the party, spoke with unheard of arrogance of the groups and groupings in Russia which prevented him, Ebert, from occupying himself with political work, and said that a certain Lenin had appeared, with whom they would have to deal, etc.

They supplied us (mostly to the Mensheviks) with funds for elections, etc., as if we were poor relations, and considered that we were therefore obliged to listen to them. Comrade Clara Zetkin has related that when she had to meet me in Jena they warned her beforehand—"Take care, he is an agent of Lenin, beware of him, it is dangerous to deal with him!" At that time it required some courage to shake hands with a Bolshevik.

In 1913, or, if I am not mistaken, at the beginning of 1914, Vandervelde appeared in Petrograd. He had at that time a double mission—in the first place to pave the way with the Czar's government for the war on the behest of the Belgian and French governments, and in the second place, just in passing, to attempt to help the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks. He visited the editorial offices of *Lutch* and our organ *Pravda*, collected material, and in the name of the Second International, ordered us to close down *Pravda* and fuse with the Mensheviks. Returning to Belgium, Vandervelde invited all the groups and factions in our parties at that time, to come together at Brussels. Vandervelde and Huysmans decided to reconcile us all. Altogether 14 groups were summoned, and of these only one was Bolshevik. Thus we represented only a fourteenth part and in the opinion of these people we should have submitted to the remainder. Comrade Lenin declined the honour of appearing at that tribunal. The lot fell to Inessa Armand, who went to repre-

sent our party among these gentlemen. This was just before the beginning of the war. The Second International prepared a thundering manifesto against the Bolsheviki, which was intended to compel us to submit to the liquidators, but at that moment the imperialist war broke out, and the crisis in the Second International burst in all its fury.

Up until this time we had as a matter of fact already become an alien body within the Second International. Already at Copenhagen we felt ourselves to be a separate group and only awaited the opportune moment to be able to take some action on an international scale. Vladimir Ilyitch, whose well disposed attitude toward the Second International at the beginning gave way to a watchful and then to a sceptical attitude—came now to the fourth phase of his attitude to this body—to the phase of vigorous opposition, and he became one of the organisers of the future Third International.

#### *Transition to the Third Epoch.*

In 1914 the epoch of the Second International was completed and a new epoch began. What is the new epoch? We ourselves see it to-day; within five or ten years it will be clear to everyone that this is the epoch of the Communist International. This in no way contradicts the fact that the Second International still lives, vegetates, and now and then achieves partial successes. This is only temporary. The existence of two internationals merely bears witness to the fact that social life and the social struggle are not altogether simple things. You cannot make a clean cut between one epoch and another. In the life of society a new epoch ordinarily begins while relics of the old still remain and cling to the living body of the new organisation. Just such a situation may be observed in the international struggle of the working class to-day.

The first three years of the war, from its outbreak until the October revolution in Russia, serves as a transition period to the new epoch.

During this period Comrade Lenin carried on a struggle against the imperialist war under the slogan of its transformation into civil war; at the same time he carried on vigorous agitation for the founding of the Third International. With this end in view he applied himself to the preparation of measures for organisation on an international scale. He laid the basis for this at the Conferences in Zimmerwald and in Kienthal in 1915 and 1916.

Comrade Lenin attended these conferences. They were

still conferences of the Second International. The groupings participating in them were essentially the same as those in the Second International, only in slightly different proportions. There was a right wing, a left wing and a centre. The right wing of the Second International was filled with Chauvinism, they would not listen to the convening of an international congress, therefore their representation was numerically weak, and this circumstance created a certain optical illusion. It seemed that the right wing was the weakest, the centre the strongest, and the left appeared to be a growing minority, but actually that was not the way matters stood. That is why both in Zimmerwald and in Kienthal we felt that we were a separate group, and considered that our problem was to make use of this temporary unity in order to lay the foundations of the future Third International. The present Italian Socialist-Fascisti were present at Zimmerwald—the same Modiglianis and company who now are the knights of Mussolini. A considerable part of the comrades who are present in our ranks were at that time on the side of our bitter enemies, ready to fall with foaming mouths upon anyone who should come out for the organisation of the Third International. Not only was there practically no one within the Second International who wanted to hear of the organisation of the Third International, but neither was there any one at the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences. We met nothing but perplexed, sceptical, or cynical smiles from all. When Comrade Lenin spoke of the necessity of forming the Third International, when he said the Second International had gone bankrupt, he was jeered at not only by the representatives of the right wing and the centre, but even by those comrades who are now in our own ranks, both in the Russian Communist Party and in other sections of the Comintern. At Zimmerwald and Kienthal Comrade Lenin was represented as a bugaboo—they frightened little children with him; Lenin—the man who dared to propose a Third International when everyone knew that the war will pass over and that the Second International would revive, etc. The slogan of the struggle for peace was carried no further. The struggle was carried on not so much on behalf of the right as against Leninism, against the personality of Lenin. Ledebour and all the Italian Socialists took up arms against him, the French opposed him, and only single members from among the ranks of the Polish, Lettish, Swedish Social-Democrats supported Vladimir Ilyitch in the work of founding the Third International. More than this, even after the February revolution, when our party came together openly for the first time after the return of Vladimir Ilyitch to Russia, at the April Confer-

ence in 1917, there were vigorous disputes within the ranks of our party as to whether it would be possible to found the Third International, or whether we should stay within the Zimmerwald platform. Comrade Lenin demanded a complete break with Zimmerwald. We wanted to wait. The April conference passed a compromise resolution that we should remain in the Zimmerwald group for purposes of information.

When the October Revolution broke out in 1917 the German Spartacists changed the name of their union into Communist Party, and it was finally decided to found the Third International. However, even at the First Congress of the Third International the Spartacists expressed themselves against the organisation of the Third International. The question was decided against the votes of the future German Communist Party, who considered the organisation of the new Third International premature.

#### *The Third International.*

Thus, with the end of the first Imperialist war, rose the star of the Third Communist International. Taking stock of the activities of the Communist International one cannot but be surprised at the amazing victories which the Communist International has gained in its first years. Sometimes, to be sure, it seems to us that we are moving too slowly. The Communist International has existed for five whole years and we still have failed to conquer Europe, for the last three years there has not been a single revolution!

Revolutionary impatience—that is one of the symptoms, one of the manifestations of a revolutionary epoch. Our present generation is impatient, precisely because we are living in an epoch of world revolution, and five years seems an incredibly long period. Actually, five years is an entire epoch. But at the same time we must remember that these five years are only an epoch within an epoch. Beginning from 1914, or from 1917, the epoch of international Socialist revolution had manifestly opened, but that epoch will be prolonged for many decades. And within the limit of these decades there will be separate chapters, separate transition periods. The first five years is the first chapter in the first transition period in the epoch of the world proletarian revolution. We must remember this, and teach our revolutionary youth, the rising working class and the best part of the peasantry to apply a historical scale to the events that have taken place, remembering the development of the First International.

The Communist Manifesto was written, as is well-known, in 1847. From the time of the appearance of this fundamental document of international Communism, during the course of 17 years Marx and Engels worked to lay the foundation of the First International. These 17 years, from 1847 to 1864, were spent in preliminary, detailed, every-day work for preparing the program of the First International. From 1864 to 1871 we see a few years of stormy expansion of the activities of the First International, ending with the uprising of the Paris Commune, giving us an example of remarkable heroism. Marx was a revolutionist from head to toe, and his heart also burned with divine revolutionary impatience. But notwithstanding that fact, he was able to spend 17 years on work in small circles.

It is true that five years ago the spontaneous rise of the working class was stronger than now. Then we had only just finished the first imperialist war, all Europe was reduced to ashes, a cry of despair and revolt was wrung from the heart of every worker; the bourgeoisie wavered, and lost its head. It seemed to us that within a short space of one or two years we should be able to overthrow the bourgeoisie in a number of capitalist countries. And this would have been possible had it not been for the treachery of the Social-Democrats. They were the saviours of the bourgeoisie.

However, appraising that moment now, we must recognise the fact that in the spontaneous development of the working masses lay both their strength and their weakness. That the main strength of revolutions lie in that very spontaneity we know from historical examples. However, we are also aware that it would be impossible to attain victory depending on that one element alone. Spontaneity is like the sea, in which the flood tide is inevitably followed by the ebb. The actual victory of the proletarian revolution is only assured when it is built on an iron foundation—the foundation of a solid proletarian organisation.

Therefore, we have not ceased building up our international Communist organisation, and for the first five years we have marched forward on that road with incredible speed. While several decades were required for the formation of our Russian Communist Party, we have been able during these five years to cover all of Europe and a considerable portion of other continents with Communist Parties.

When Comrade Lenin made his speech greeting the first anniversary of the Comintern we were much weaker both in

the Soviet Republic and internationally. The Comintern was then made up of only our first, hastily organised groups, but none the less, how great was Vladimir Ilyitch's faith in ultimate victory! He was not an orator fond of exaggeration, of raising undue hopes. But his speech cannot be characterised otherwise than as a hymn of victory, penetrated with a deep faith in success. Vladimir Ilyitch considered that the Communist International had attained a very great victory in the mere fact that it existed, that it acted as an international organisation and had behind it entire parties in a number of countries. Under the influence of Comrade Lenin the Communist International was transformed in the course of five years from a small international organisation of propagandists, a small Communist association, into a powerful developing proletarian organisation. To be sure, we cannot say that to-day we have a complete, united International Communist Party. That would be boasting, but without boasting we can state that we are well on the road to accomplishing this. When Vladimir Ilyitch celebrated his fiftieth birthday in Moscow he made a short speech in which he said: "Comrades! We are at the zenith of our work, we have had extraordinary successes, we have won great victories, but I warn you that you must not become a conceited party. There is no more disgusting and shameful a spectacle than a conceited person, or a party which has become conceited."

The Comintern has set itself the task of creating a single international Communist Party. We have not accomplished this yet. There are countries in which we are an integral part of the working masses, and where we shall soon have a majority of the workers. In other countries we have parties which are going astray on the idea of centrism, where we are going through a succession of crises and relapses. In a number of countries we have parties hardened by combat. And in the East we have the beginnings of a powerful movement for liberation. A book by Comrade Tieval entitled "Five Years of the Comintern, in Decisions and Figures" will soon appear. I recommend your attention to this excellent book which describes this process in vivid figures.

Certain naive persons count up the number of members in the parties of the Second International, and draw the conclusion that the Third International is no stronger than the second. The root of the matter, however, is not in the numbers in the parties, but whether their development is in

agreement with historical development or in opposition to it. Consider, for instance, the S.R. Party. Formerly it had a membership of several millions in Russia, while our party after the February revolution numbered scarcely forty thousand members in the whole country, and there was a time when there were only a few hundred of us. But we knew that we were working for the future, and that the future would make of us a world-wide party of many millions of members, while nothing would remain of the S.R.'s. The Social-Democrats to-day are still strong in those countries where capitalism is strong, but capitalism is on the decline and, consequently, the Second International also will have sung its swan song.

*Relations to the Peasantry.*

We have borrowed a great deal from the First International, but there were two things which we could not get from this source: namely, our views on the peasantry and on the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of the East, because these two questions could not, for historical reasons, have come before the First International for consideration.

I consider the greatest event of the year 1923 to have been the formation of the Peasants' International. This event has only become possible now that the sun of capitalism is beginning to set, now that we see before us, in the words of Comrade Lenin, the beginning of the decay of capitalism. When capitalism was on the upgrade, when it was developing and fattening, then it was able to create and did create a strata of rich peasantry on which it relied, and to whom it threw scraps from its own rich table. But from the moment that capitalism entered on the period of its decay, particularly after the war of 1914-18, it could give nothing to the peasantry except new wars and sufferings. We have an example of this even in such a rich peasant country as France. During the first imperialist war an insignificant number of the French peasantry grew rich, and accumulated a large amount of paper money, but now that wealth has become ephemeral, because the money is falling in value. The French franc is undergoing the same fate as the German mark. In addition to this a great part of the French peasants learned during the time of the war to hate the bourgeoisie, and in the French villages you will find a class of young peasants who regard Soviet Russia with real sympathy.

The first International could not set itself the problem

of the union of the working class and the peasantry. True, Marx uttered prophetic words regarding the united struggle of the working class and the peasants, but, comrades, that was merely a stray spark from the forge of his genius.

After the first imperialist war the peasants of the whole world had gone through a radical transformation, they became the natural allies of the working class, and at the Peasants' International they became a political factor.

Comrade Lenin, already at that time very ill, displayed the greatest interest in the first international conference of peasants in Moscow in 1923. He insisted on having read to him all the material relating to the conference. We were not able to converse with him on this matter, but we are convinced that he, as well as practically all the other members of the Central Committee of our Party, regarded this as an event of the greatest significance, which would render the Third International invincible.

We laid the foundation of an international union of the peasantry, and this international conference of peasants met with the warmest response in many countries. The Communist International is exerting itself to the utmost to secure the successful development of the Peasants' International.

### *The National Colonial Question.*

Our second gain, enriching us in comparison with the First International, is the national question. The formation of the Union of Socialist Republics proved that we had solved the national question. Marx taught the English workers that no people could be free who oppressed other peoples, and that therefore the English workers must help the Irish workers and peasants in their struggle for liberation. But Marx, under the conditions of the historical situation existing at that time, could not formulate the complete theory of the national question which was formulated by Lenin. We are living in an epoch of imperialism which represents the last stage of declining capitalism. Capitalism is declining, its star is waning, it is compelled to rush from one military adventure to another. Therefore the question of the colonial and semi-colonial countries must now be regarded in an entirely different light. Due to this fact a rebellious spirit is growing in the colonies. And that which was in Marx a mere flash of genius, is being transformed into reality under the guidance of Lenin. Such congresses as the Baku Congress of Eastern peoples, or the Moscow



Congress of the Peoples of the Far East, are of the most enormous significance. And the events of recent days show that revolutionary lightning is flashing in the East. In Egypt the workers have seized factories, in India a revival of the movement is to be observed, in China the death of Vladimir Ilyitch awoke a tremendous response. In Japan, under our very eyes, we see the growth of a great revolutionary movement which will become an important factor before many years. It is not necessary to be a prophet in order to foretell that the breaking out of a powerful revolutionary movement in the East is very probable.

Consequently, the Comintern is applying itself with decision to the fulfilment of the basic problems in its programme and regulations. The most fundamental of these problems consists in liberating, strengthening and uniting the workers and peasants of the whole world irrespective of the colour of their skin. And no power in the world can prevent us from carrying out this task.

*For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!*

We see that history develops paradoxically. The proletariat took power in their hands for the first time not in an industrial country, but in an agrarian country like our own. Next we behold two Communist republics in Hungary and in Bavaria—again in agrarian countries. But it was no more a matter of chance that they were beaten than it was a matter of chance that the conflagration was started by us. We must now be prepared for two eventualities. One eventuality is that the revolution will spread over all Europe through Germany. The other is that through the awakening of the colonial and semi-colonial countries in the East, the movement will penetrate into the bourgeois countries of Europe. When the Second International was founded there was a clean division between its supporters and opponents within the international working class—those who were for parliamentarism and those who were against it. We have now progressed so far beyond that it seems as if not 60 years, but six centuries have passed. Now, during the epoch of the Communist International, there is also a clean division—those who are for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and those who are against it. Comrade Lenin once said: “*Dictatura Proletariata*—those two Latin words have been translated into the native tongue of every nationality in the world.” For the present we have a dictatorship of the proletariat in only one-sixth of the globe, but we are sure that within the next

decade of the Comintern's existence it will no longer be one-sixth, but one-half of the earth's surface.

Comparing these prospects for the future with the condition of affairs at the present moment, we cannot help but recognise that the successes we have attained during five years are far from sufficient. In the West reigns white terror, Fascism. We can even establish the following law: the stronger any particular Communist Party grows, the more likely that it must become illegal. For just as soon as a Communist party becomes really strong, the bourgeoisie will inevitably drive it underground.

We knew, however, through experience, that real Communist parties can be hammered out underground. Only the blind bourgeoisie do not understand this. They do not know that our powerful Russian Communist Party was organised and strengthened in prisons and in exile. And those workers whom the bourgeoisie hangmen are now torturing in Bulgaria, in Rumania, and in the prisons of Italy will become hardened revolutionists with wills of steel and filled with the flaming hatred of the proletarian class for the bourgeoisie and the gilded Social-Democrats. From their ranks will come the best builders of the Comintern.

For these five years our Russian Communist Party has directed the Comintern, and we, without hypocritical modesty, may say that our party has a right to be proud of the work it has done. Comrade Lenin said that the time would come when we would be one of the most backward countries, and then the direction would pass over to the more developed industrial proletariat. We are only in Moscow temporarily. We would wish that it might be for an even shorter period, that we might transfer the general headquarters of the world proletariat to one of those countries where the red and yellow flag is unfurled, so that the next five years might move faster than the first five years.

Vladimir Ilyitch guided our country and the Comintern over the most difficult places, during the most difficult period. We are still faced at the present time with a succession of complex problems, but Vladimir Ilyitch has pointed the way to the solution of all of the most basic of these. He is the powerful searchlight illuminating our road.

On the very day that Denikin was marching on Orel, Lenin found time to carry on conversations with workers who

had come from the most distant countries. At the Fourth Congress of the Comintern Vladimir Ilyitch made a report, notwithstanding that he was sick, and that his closest friends advised against it. It is not surprising, therefore, that the spirit of Lenin is incarnate in the Comintern.

The whole Comintern proudly considers him its leader, and I am convinced that every section of the Comintern, and every member of the Comintern will unfalteringly follow the course pointed out by Lenin, doing everything that is demanded of him, ready to give up his life in the struggle for the Communist International in the spirit in which Vladimir Ilyitch has taught us.

G. ZINOVIEV.

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