

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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Official Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International



Enlarged Trade  
Union Number

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## Work of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International

**T**HE Seventh Enlarged Executive of the Communist International, which took place from November 22 to December 16th, was one of the most important conferences of representatives of Communist Parties both in respect to the dimensions and the nature of the tasks confronting it, and also by virtue of the theoretical thought and the business-like manner which were brought to bear on the solution of these tasks. It marks a new milestone in the path of the offensive fight of the international proletariat for the victory of a world "October."

The first phase of the period between revolutions through which the world Labour movement is now passing, the phase of depression, is already behind us. The situation on a world-scale is changing for the better. The efforts of the bourgeoisie to stabilise capitalism have already led to a tremendous struggle (in Great Britain) and will inevitably lead to new and still more fierce mass encounters. The defensive economic struggle of the proletariat, under conditions of the decline of capitalism, acquires the nature of a political class struggle; every determined attack of the proletariat, in one country or another, acquires an international nature. The increasing antagonisms in the imperialist camp make it possible for the proletariat of the oppressed peoples to take the lead in the national revolutionary movement and break through the imperialist front in the weakest sectors (China). The objective trend of events opens up the prospect of a new rise of the revolutionary wave. The work of the Communist Parties should be directed towards accelerating this rise of the wave, towards mobilising, organising and welding the working masses for the coming decisive struggle.

Therefore, the Seventh Plenum was, above all, confronted with the tasks of giving a differentiated analysis of the world situation, a concrete, clear estimation of the economic position and the relation of class forces in the chief groups of countries. This had to be done without allowing ourselves to be bound down by the usual erroneous formulæ, at times confused and even contradictory. This problem found its solution in the chief document of the Plenum, the Thesis on the International Situation and the tasks of the Communist International

passed by the Plenum on the basis of comrade Bukharin's printed report, which was subjected to collective discussion at the Plenary sessions and in the political commissions. A study of this document is the best cure both for an under-estimation of revolutionary possibilities and consequently of the obligations of the present transition period, and also for the super-human attempts of the ultra-Lefts to obliterate by a stroke of the pen the partial stabilisation of capitalism from the international theatre of the class struggle.

The second task confronting the Plenum consisted in submitting to the same concrete examination those general slogans ("To the masses," "The united front," "Unity of the trade union movement," "Lead the national revolutionary and other movements"), which formerly were applied and were bound to be applied in the form of algebraic formulæ. The first class-encounters which have taken place during the new rise have already provided varied and exceedingly rich experiences and serve as a basis for deciphering our general slogans. Numerical denominations can now be introduced into the algebraic formulæ, in accordance with the class correlation of forces of the given country and of the given stage of its revolutionary development.

The work of summing up experience, to which comrade Lenin attached such exceptionally great importance, was a characteristic feature of the Seventh Plenum. It succeeded in executing this work not only thanks to a correct dialectic approach to the study of problems, not only because of a resolute self-criticism, not blinded by self-satisfied phrases, but also due to the fact that the experience of the heroic British Miners' struggle and the developing national revolution in China have greatly enriched the experience of the Communist International.

**T**HE experience of our British Section first of all proved what tremendous successes in leading the masses can be achieved by a Communist Party relatively weak in numbers if there be consistent application of united front tactics, and systematic persistent work in the trade unions. But having confirmed the correctness of these formulæ (although in connection with

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the British events certain of the leaders of the Russian Opposition most inclined to accept superficial impressions, questioned these tactics), this experience still sharply emphasised the fact that the effectiveness of united front tactics, as a means for unifying the broadest strata of the workers in the process of the struggle, not only does not diminish but on the contrary increases when there is a most resolute and ruthless criticism of the reformist leaders, even though they still have influence over these masses. Secondly, the work of strengthening the trade unions not only does not exclude, but inevitably presupposes explaining to the workers the political significance of all our activities as precursors of more important fights, which can only be really solved under present conditions by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

A correct combination of these elements with the application of united front tactics in a proportion corresponding to the given stage of the struggle, constitutes the art of class strategy and tactics, which is only assimilated by a Party through experience in the process of the mass revolutionary struggle. In the light of this cumulative experience, the resolution on the British question demonstrates in a clear, accurate and practical manner in which cases the Party succeeded and in which cases it failed to give its struggle the maximum intensity of revolutionary development possible under the given conditions, while at the same time keeping contact with these masses.

Most of the errors made by the C.P. of Great Britain (while the political policy has been correct in substance) were afterwards corrected, either on the initiative of the Party itself, or else with the comradely criticism and practical proposals of the E.C.C.I. Nevertheless, there could be no question of the Plenum, which set itself the task of preparing for new more resolute struggles, passing these errors by in silence, glossing them over, for the simple reason that the errors of the past are lessons for the future, and the future will bring still more serious, still more difficult struggles in which the role and responsibility of the Party and the entire International will be still greater.

The urgent tasks of the day are: the greatest possible organisational strengthening of the Party, of the Minority Movement in the trade unions, of the Left Wing in the Labour Party, Workers' Defence Corps, fractions in Co-operative organisations, and a struggle to replace the reformist leaders by revolutionary workers in all organisations. These tasks can be fulfilled with the maximum of success if there is a correct estimation of the perspective of the British revolution, its consecutive stages, the correlation of class forces participating in it, the correlation and regrouping of forces in the working class itself, an attentive observation of all manoeuvres in the camp of the capitalist enemy and of reformist opponents, while at the same time we perfect our own revolutionary counter manoeuvres.

**A**T the present moment Great Britain constitutes a prominent front in the class struggle. The least success and the least failure of the proletariat on this sector affects the whole front of the international struggle. The Plenum recognises that "it would be the grossest error to break up the Anglo-Russian Commit-

tee and thereby shift the responsibility for sabotaging the international campaign of solidarity with the British miners from the shoulders of the reformist traitors on to the shoulders of the Communists."

One of the most difficult lessons of the great struggle of the British proletariat in 1926 consisted in the fact that practically nowhere have the Communist Sections succeeded in realising in any tangible degree the instructions of the E.C.C.I. for rendering real international support to the miners' struggle. At this decisive moment, the disproportion between the ideological and political influence of the Communist Parties and the organisational reinforcement of this influence in the mass workers' organisations, above all in trade unions, has been shown very clearly. In a number of speeches at the Plenum it was pointed out that until this disproportion is surmounted, the Communist Parties will not succeed in counteracting the sabotage of the traitors of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals in the conduct of mass revolutionary campaigns.

This danger causes all the more alarm because in a number of countries, above all in Great Britain, the bourgeoisie can every day confront the working class with the fact of a new imperialist war, new intervention against the U.S.S.R., or an armed attack on the Chinese revolution. The Plenum considered the denunciation of this ominous danger, and the preparation of the masses for the transformation of such a war into a civil war, to be one of the most important tasks of the Comintern at the present moment.

**A**T the Second Congress of the Communist International, comrade Lenin in the report on behalf of the Commission on National and Colonial questions said:

"The Communist International should establish and reinforce theoretically the conception that with the aid of the proletariat of the most advanced countries, the backward countries can adopt the Soviet order and through definite stages of development pass on to Communism, evading the capitalist stages of development.

"It is impossible to point out in advance what measures are necessary for this. Practical experience will teach us."

Only the Seventh Enlarged Executive approached the solution of this task which Lenin put before the Comintern. This, of course, is no mere chance. Comrade Lenin in the same speech several times pointed out that for a correct approach to this question practical experience is necessary. "Our experience in this field for the time being is not very great," said comrade Lenin, "but gradually we are beginning to accumulate more and more material." The Chinese revolution of 1926-27 has enriched Communist experience by the material of which Lenin spoke, and the leading organ of the Comintern without delay drew all the necessary practical and theoretical conclusions from this experience.

The thesis on the situation in China passed by the Plenum on the report of comrade Tang-Ping-Tshan not only contains a detailed programme of action for the Chinese Communist Party on the working class and peasant questions, but also gives the general perspectives of the Chinese revolution, characterising its transformation from one stage to another and defining the disposition of the motive forces at the respective stages. The

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general tactical policy of the proletariat at the present stage consists of utilising in the interest of the national revolutionary struggle all the forces which are still capable of playing a definite role.

At the present time the national revolutionary movement in China is entering on a phase where the bourgeoisie is already losing its relatively progressive role, when the alliance of the proletariat, the peasants, and the urban petty bourgeoisie is becoming the only motive force. The correct application of the united front tactic means, while not declining the utilisation of those strata of the bourgeoisie which are still capable of participating in the national revolutionary movement and not driving them prematurely into the camp of our opponents, at the same time to realise the inevitability of their imminent, even if gradual retreat from the revolution. This means that the proletariat must steer resolutely and without vacillations for the development of the agrarian revolution, setting itself the task of heading the peasants' movement.

At the same time, the Plenum considered that the fear that the accentuation of the class struggle in the countryside, at the present stage of the revolution, might cause a weakening of the united anti-imperialist front, was quite unfounded. On the contrary, the experience of the peasant movement in Honan at the beginning of 1925, when it took up a position hostile to the Second People's Army, shows that the refusal to put the demands of the peasants in the centre of the programme of the national movement for freedom might have caused the failure of the revolution.

The theses defined the future revolutionary power of China as the anti-militarist democratic dictatorship of the proletariat, peasantry and other exploited classes. This transition power must be gradually effected by the appropriate radical reforms—nationalisation of the land, railways, concessions, factories, mines, banks, and enterprises belonging to foreign capital. In order to urge the Kuomintang Government of Canton along the path of consistent revolutionary struggle, Communists must enter into the Government, supporting the revolutionary wing in its struggle against the wavering and Right Wing elements. The peasantry must be guaranteed a chance to build up organs of local government. The army must play an increasing role as one of the most important factors strengthening the alliance of the working class with the peasantry and strengthening the leading role of the proletariat in this alliance.

With the introduction of this programme consideration should be given to the need to preserve the stronghold of the Canton Government and the National Army and their uninterrupted development and reinforcement. This is what determines the necessity of gradualness in conducting agrarian reforms on the territory of the Kuomintang Government.

The revolution makes it incumbent upon the young and numerically weak Chinese proletariat to conduct a very complicated manœuvre, both in respect to a whole universe of imperialist robbers, and also in directing all the forces participating in the revolutionary struggle. The success of this manœuvre pre-supposes an accurate calculation of forces, an accurate reckoning of the classes, making it possible on the one hand to bring the revo-

lution up to a higher stage in time and without delay, and on the other hand averting the mistake of artificially forcing it, of jumping over intermediary links.

The Chinese proletariat can solve this most important task, which is without example in history, only by supplementing its weak numbers with the strength of its own mass organisations and by assimilating the experience of the struggle of the entire international proletariat as quickly as it possibly can. The growth of the theoretical and organisational strength of the Communist Party and the international proletariat is a necessary condition in China, in order that the national revolutionary movement in China may take a non-capitalist path of development, thereby dealing a fatal blow to imperialism in the East.

**T**HE Plenum used the same principle of concentration in drawing up the decisions on the point of the agenda dealing with the work of Communists in the trade unions. While not dwelling in detail on this question (the reader will find a special article on this subject), it is necessary to emphasise that in the resolution on the activity of the Executive Committee, the Plenum confirmed the correctness of the E.C.C.I. policy which made the most important question of international and national trade union unity the chief item of its work. Experience has shown that this struggle for unity can only be conducted successfully if our influence increases and our organisational positions are strengthened within the trade union movement. This demands an increase in the membership of the Red trade unions as well as more energetic, consistent and systematic work of the Communists in the reformist trade unions, a better and more flexible organisation of Communist fractions, greater compactness of the trade union oppositions under our influence, and finally, wider contact with the masses with indefinite Left tendencies.

The distribution of forces in accordance with the given situation, the distribution of attention amongst the various branches of trade union work, the choice of ways and means most suitable for the various forms of work is guided by the political direction of the various Sections. The Plenum brought these questions before the Sections in a sufficiently clear and concrete manner, pointing out not only certain successes and achievements but also the inadequacy of these successes, and the fact that these achievements had not been followed up in various countries of Europe and America.

**A** SHARP dissonance was introduced into the work of the Plenum by the speeches of the Opposition leaders. What aim did they pursue? They wanted to air their views which had been unanimously condemned as a Social-Democratic deviation by the Fifteenth Conference of the Soviet C.P. But the delegates to the Plenum were in good time provided with "material on the Russian question" in all languages, containing besides the speeches of representatives of the majority, also verbatim reports of the speeches of comrades Kamenev, Zinoviev and Trotsky at the Fifteenth Conference.

The leaders of the Opposition justified their anti-Party speeches at the Plenum by saying that the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. had not deprived them of the right to speak at the Plenum in exposition of their views. When a year ago comrade Zinoviev made a co-

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report at the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., he also referred to his formal right and to the "loyal nature" of this action. Experience however proved something quite different. The leaders of the Opposition were themselves compelled to admit on October 16 that they had gone to the length of the most acute forms of fractional struggle which have already been utilised by a "third force," i.e., the open enemies of the proletarian dictatorship. There is consequently every ground for taking up a cautious attitude both towards comrade Zinoviev himself and to his actions.

The Opposition orators endeavoured to assure the Plenum that their object was not to make an appeal. If they wanted to say by this that they did not direct this appeal to the Plenum, then perhaps this assertion is not so far from the truth. Being in a position to follow the decisions of the Sections and the work of the Plenum, the Oppositionists could not really have doubted but that their accusations against the C.P.S.U. would be rejected by the Plenum with the same unanimity as they were rejected in all the organisations of the C.P.S.U., from the factory nuclei right up to the Party Conference. But does this not mean that this appeal of the Opposition was not made to the Sections as a whole, but to those Opposition and opportunist groupings which exist within the various sections, and perhaps even to those who are outside the Sections? At any rate, Ruth Fischer stated at the Commission of the E.C.C.I. that on the "Russian question" she entirely shared the viewpoint of the "Leningrad" Opposition. And, of course, Maslov, who considers it is less dangerous for himself to practice "ultra-Left" slander against the Soviet regime under the protection of the Prussian police than to give explanations to the International Control Commission about his own moral and political attacks, Maslov adhered to the viewpoint of Ruth Fischer on this question. . . .

**B**UT it is an ill-wind that blows nobody any good. The anti-Party action of the individual leaders helped to get the Right danger in the C.P.S.U. clearly illustrated on the tribune. The sessions of the Plenum were not only turned into a demonstration of the solidarity of all Comintern Sections with the C.P.S.U. and its Leninist leadership, but displayed what a thorough acquaintance the representatives of all Parties have with the content of the Russian discussion and with its central problem as to the possibility of constructing Socialism in the Union of Socialist Republics. If one compares the speeches of Party representatives at the

Fifth Congress of the Comintern concerning Trotskyism, with the speeches made at the Seventh Plenum on this same subject, Trotskyism reappearing under the thin disguise of the new Opposition, one can convince oneself of how the theoretical level of all Sections of the Comintern has grown, how their knowledge of Leninism has increased, and how it is no longer possible to terrorise Communists with quotations from Marx and Lenin chosen irregularly and at random.

When the Opposition appeared at the Moscow and Leningrad factories, thinking to take the rank and file Party members unawares, and deluged them with the demagogical premises of "billions" on the part of the super-industrialist, Zinoviev, they encountered an unanimous repulse. And they met with this same unanimous repulse in the highest organ of International Communism—the Seventh Plenum, where they put forward the super-internationalist, Trotsky, who prophesied about it being inevitable that Soviet economy should dissolve into capitalist economy. For no super-revolutionary phraseology, no expressive repartee was capable of eluding comrade Tang-Ping-Tshan's calm and simple question to comrade Zinoviev as to whether the latter, with his pretences of 100 per cent. Leftism, intended to gladden the Chinese revolution by sending it as a present the lawful offspring of the new Opposition bloc—the scoundrel Souvarine.

Comrade Semard quite correctly characterised the general mood, when, in closing the Plenum, he pointed out that the Comintern had stated loud enough for even the deafest of the Opposition to hear that the unity of the C.P.S.U. should be conserved at all costs and that all Sections of the Comintern are against the Opposition bloc, are on the side of the C.P.S.U., on the side of unity of the Leninist Party and the victory of the Revolution.

The Seventh Plenum showed that our Sections are growing and becoming strengthened, that their influence over the working masses is extending, that their leading role in the decisive battles is assured. In face of such incontestable facts, the panicky prophesies about a crisis in the Comintern and the dangers threatening its unity seemed pitiful, childish lispings. The Communist International as the Seventh Plenum has shown, is growing, becoming strengthened and sweeping away the husks in the form of such Right renegades as Souvarine and Wynkoop, and ultra-Left "mysterious strangers" of the Maslov and Ruth Fischer sort. The Comintern is resolutely, persistently and with assurance proceeding along the path towards the conquest of the masses, along the path to the mass revolutionary struggle, forward to the world October.



# New Battles on the Way

“A British Communist”

**T**HE defeat of the miners ushers in a period of more acute class struggle than ever before in Great Britain. In that period it is the capitalists who will be on the offensive.

But the experience of the last seven months, and the continuing process of decline of British imperialism, render it certain that all the lessons of the late struggles will be learned by the workers, and that it is they who will emerge victorious in the long run, not the capitalists. The time has gone by when the workers saw in a general capitalist offensive merely a series of unconnected attacks on wages and hours. More and more experience has taught and will teach them that these attacks are only part of a political struggle, in which the workers can conquer only through the seizure of power. In this sense, the outlook before the working class is radically different from that following the previous defeat of the miners in 1921.

## The Miners

Despite appearances, to no section of the workers does this apply with greater truth than to the miners. Undoubtedly the results of the capitulation decided by the miners' conferences have begun to make themselves felt. The owners are not content with having split the miners' rank by agreements terminating at varying dates during the next five years. They are not content with establishing 7½ hours here, an 8-hour day there, a 49-hour week in a third district: or with laying down different percentage additions on district basic rates, all with the object of setting miner against miner, district against district. The mineowners have now begun an attack on working conditions which hitherto had never been challenged. In Yorkshire, the 20 minutes break for meals; in South Wales, local attacks on the bonuses granted to night workers: elsewhere attacks on other forms of privileges which had been enjoyed by the miners undisturbed for generations.

And yet neither the original capitulation nor these latest attacks, nor yet the open co-operation of trade union officials with the capitalists in setting up rival “company unions,” has produced in the miners the same disillusionment as followed the great betrayal of 1921. It is most characteristic that, instead of the miners in the Midlands who returned to work earliest—some of them four months ago—following the lead of the treacherous Spēncer, or his equally treacherous rival, Varley, who were responsible for the collapse, their one concern, revealed in all workers' letters and reports from the district, is to “clear out the traitors.” The membership of the Communist Party in this district is increasing as rapidly as ever: the workers are looking to and swearing by Cook.

## A Leader Loyal to the Workers

What is the reason for the change? It is that in 1926 the workers have not been faced with an unbroken front of treachery on the part of their trade union and political leaders, as they were in 1921. The refusal of Cook to acquiesce in the treachery of the General Council and the cowardly surrender of the miners' leaders has

afforded the miners an example for the first time in the history of their own or the general British trade union movement, of a leader who (on the whole and despite any waverings) remained loyal to their cause and did not hesitate to place that loyalty in front of loyalty to colleagues. But more important still, the day-to-day fight of the Communist Party, not only nationally, but in the lodges and districts, in the towns and villages of the mining areas, for the miners and against the coalowners, the capitalist government, the reformist bloc of treachery that extends from Thomas to George Lansbury, has revealed to the miners the possibility of a new political leadership totally unlike anything which they have had at the hands of the Labour Party, the I.L.P. or the other reformist parties. The miners have literally had a new vision, and this new vision has radically altered the outlook.

What symptoms have we of new lines of development amongst the miners? Instead of talk of leaving the union, as was the case in 1921, from all parts of Great Britain come reports that the watchword of a single miners' union for Great Britain, launched by the Party and taken up by the Minority Movement and by A. J. Cook, is finding an enthusiastic response from the rank and file. Disgust with the passivity and the sabotage of the Mineworkers' International is as great as it was in 1921: but everywhere the miners are talking, not merely of breaking up the old international, but of the new Anglo-Russian Miners' Committee which is to sow the seeds of a new, fighting miners' international. It is along these lines—the systematic changing of the leadership, re-organisation of the Federation as a national union, the building up of a real International—that the active elements in the miners' ranks, led by the Communist Party are working, and there is every ground for believing that they will have the masses with them.

## The Outlook for the Workers

Very few people in the British Labour Movement are now under any illusions about the likelihood—which the Communist Party foretold a year ago—of the defeat of the miners being followed by wholesale attacks on the standard of living of the workers in other industries. Even the Coal Commission, nine months ago, was used by the railway and transport employers as a sounding board for their campaign for reductions in overhead charges, first and foremost at the workers' expense. In these times of declining British trade, the former “sheltered industries—railways and transport—are sheltered no longer. The transport workers have already been attacked, through that section which is engaged on the loading of coal: but an elaborate report of the port employers has been issued to prepare the way for an attack on the other workers engaged in and about the docks. The railwaymen have not had applied to them yet the provisions of the wages board adopted by the N.U.R. last spring, because the companies have been deliberately waiting until after the mining lock-out: but the application cannot now be long delayed. The growing competition in Central Europe and in the Colonies with such

### New Battles on the Way—continued

industries as engineering, shipbuilding, textiles, etc., is prompting the employers in these industries too to raise once more the question of reducing "the cost of production," which means, once the miners have been beaten, nothing but an attack on wages and hours.

### Political Attacks

But it is not only economic attacks, it is political attacks which the working class has to expect. The withdrawal of the right to conduct independent strike ballots, the abolition of the right of peaceful picketing, the withdrawal of the immunity from prosecution for damages caused by a strike—this is the programme of anti-trade union legislation projected by the Conservative Party. The reformation of the House of Lords and its reconstruction as an impregnable citadel of reaction, to which the capitalist class can constitutionally retreat in the event of a Labour majority in the House of Commons, the abolition of the political levy in the trade unions which is the financial basis of the Labour Party, the withdrawal of the vote from the unemployed, the prohibition of the receipt of financial assistance from abroad and of the entry into Great Britain of "foreign agitators"—this is the programme of political "reforms" laid down by the Tory Conference at Scarborough. Side by side with these parliamentary attacks, the capitalist class is obviously preparing for several extra-parliamentary measures, such as further repressions against the Communist Party, the establishment of an increased special constabulary to act as a permanent buttress of the Constitution, the extension and strengthening of the Fascist movement, and so on. We can, without exaggeration, say that the capitalists have learned a valuable lesson from the spectacle of the revival of the trade union movement after the disastrous defeats of 1921-22, and are determined to create such conditions as will prevent such a revival after the economic attacks of 1926-27.

But the workers have learned some lessons, too. What is the biggest difference, so far as the working class movement is concerned, when we compare 1921 and 1926? It is, above all, the existence of a growing Communist Party which is very active amongst the masses, and of an influential Minority Movement. In 1921, our Party was barely six months old when the great attack broke: it was only in the process of the great struggles of 1921 to 1922 that it learned by bitter experience the need for, and the way of, practical day to day work in the trade unions and in the factories. Our Party during the whole of that period was still strongly under the influence of sectarian traditions. In 1926 the picture is different. Our Party has become a political factor, and more and more is recognised as the only Party fighting for the workers. It has taken the lead in building up the Minority Movement, which, for all its organisational immaturity and weakness, can nevertheless at its conferences unite the delegates of nearly a million workers and give them a revolutionary programme of action.

### The Party's Work

That is why, for example, the more and more open intervention of British imperialism in China has been met with a widespread formation of "Hands off China"

Committees in every large industrial centre, primarily under the auspices of the Trades Councils. That is why the Party's campaign for changing the leaders, not merely in the shape of the exposure of this or that reformist, but in the shape of a determined fight for reporting of delegates to trade union conferences, Labour Party conferences, etc. to their electors, is having a marked effect in the Labour movement. That is why the disruptive tactics of the Labour Party leadership have not prevented the election of Left Wing candidates—the official nominees of their local Labour movement, but "unofficial" so far as the head office of the Labour Party is concerned—at the municipal elections. That is why the defeat of the miners and the betrayal of the General Strike have not given rise to a tendency to desert the unions, as in 1921, but on the contrary have strengthened the movement for greater unity between the unions and better organisation for fighting purposes: witness the repeated decisions of the Woodworkers' Union not to secede from the Building Trades Federation, despite the determined efforts of the leaders to bring this about. That is why, finally, the real Left Wing movement in the Labour Party—that in which the Communists are taking the lead—is going ahead, as evidenced by the steady increase in circulation of the "Sunday Worker" and the growth of the Left Wing groups in the localities, while the sham Lefts grouped around Lansbury are losing influence and have been forced by this fact to attempt a revision of the programme in a more "Left" direction.

Greater class consciousness amongst the masses, the strengthening of the desire for militant leadership, the strengthening of the revolutionary oppositions within the trade unions and the Labour Party, the strengthening of the Communist Party with every new capitalist attack that proves to the workers the correctness of the Communist policy—this is the outlook for 1927, in view of the continued decline of capitalism in Britain and the increased pressure upon the working class.

### The Outlook for the Bourgeoisie

The defeat of the miners brings to the British capitalists more than the hope of succeeding in a number of sectional attacks on various classes of workers. It brings them the hope of rationalisation and stabilisation on a large-scale at the workers' expense. It brings them the hope of being able to compete once more industrially with the powerful rivals which have emerged since the war, and of a revival in trade similar to that which for close on a year followed the successful capitalist offensive of 1921-22. The defeat of the miners, further, to a certain extent unties the hands of British imperialism in China: more, it will undoubtedly encourage them to greater liberties with the Soviet Government, in whose defence the miners have always been the vanguard of the workers' army. Out of the defeat of the miners, the British imperialists hope to draw new strength for combatting the centrifugal tendencies within the British Empire. Undoubtedly all these hopes are not entirely groundless.

But the experience of 1922-23 is none too hopeful for the capitalists. In the first place, even a temporary revival in trade, since the war, has brought with it invariably a revival in the strength and determination of the Labour movement, which at once places in jeopardy the very basis of improved trade. Although heroic

### **New Battles on the Way—continued**

efforts have been made since 1923 to prevent any such untoward events as the invasion of the Ruhr and the subsequent economic dislocation, there is still the constant flow of cheap German reparation goods into European markets, the attempt to regulate this flow directly against the interests of Great Britain by the formation of Continental cartels, the ever-present danger that the temporary stabilisation of Great Britain may precipitate new crises in Central and Eastern Europe.

### **The Effect of China**

The revolution in China and the awakening of the Chinese proletariat to the part which it can play in leading the masses in the struggle for liberation have gone so far that the defeat of the national revolutionary movement, the crushing of the Canton Government, and the consequent temporary making safe of China for capitalism, are scarcely possible. The decay of the Empire cannot be arrested, although it may be delayed, by the deliberate de-industrialisation of Great Britain in the interests of British finance capital and the Dominion bourgeoisie, on the lines advocated by Sir Alfred Mond. And the British capitalist class, in the face of American competition throughout the world, political and economic, in the face of Japanese competition in China, in the face of the developing revolutionary influence of the U.S.S.R. is still menaced by the possibility of finding itself, at some sudden turn in the world situation, faced with the alternatives, either of fighting when it can, or postponing the fight until it is too weak.

Therefore, the difficulties facing the bourgeoisie are not likely to be decreased during the coming year. The process of the disintegration of the Liberal Party, of the consolidation of all the forces of reaction openly under the banner of a single class Party, is bound to proceed more rapidly than ever. This, coupled with the economic and political offensive against the working class, is bound to undermine more and more the time-honoured traditions of British liberty and democracy, of the classless State and a super-class parliament, which have served so well and so long to deceive, mystify and enslave British Labour.

The prospects of the political education of the working class which are thereby opened upon cannot augur well for British capitalism: for even a temporary improvement in conditions, were that possible, cannot wipe such lessons out of the memory of the working class. The British capitalist class is still menaced by a situation becoming more and more objectively revolutionary.

### **The Outlook for the Communist Party**

There can be no question about the increasing severity of the tests which will be imposed on our Party in Great Britain during the coming months. The bourgeoisie is well aware of the growing influence of our Party amongst the miners, and of the increasingly decisive part it played at several critical moments of the struggle (notably the rejection of the Bishop's Memorandum in September, the adoption of measures for intensifying the struggle in October, and the rejection of the Government's terms in November). The bourgeoisie is equally aware that there are other industries in which it will only

require the practical proof of a capitalist attack to convince the workers that the Communists are their only friends. The bourgeoisie knows of the tremendous additional strength which our Party derives from its organic connection with the Communist International. The bourgeoisie knows, finally, that in its struggle against revolting China and the Colonial masses generally it has a serious adversary, not to be measured by mere numbers, in the existence of a determined opponent within the heart of the British working class. Therefore, our Party does not conceal from itself the prospect of still more violent attacks, legal and extra-legal, of the possibility of the threat of illegality to which it was exposed under the Emergency Powers Act becoming confirmed by some decision of the Courts, and of the increasing burden and complexity of its revolutionary duties giving rise to errors and seeking out the weak spots in its ranks.

Nevertheless, our Party in Britain has reason to be confident that, by bending all its energies to the struggle, it can weather the storm and emerge more powerful than before. The slogan of "Double the membership!" which was issued by the Sixth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. has been amply fulfilled by the time of the Seventh Plenum: our Party will realise that this is due to the combination of revolutionary principles and frankness with day to day work amongst the miners for immediate issues. Carrying out this campaign equally amongst the workers in other industries, our Party can be confident that every new attack will bring it new thousands of members.

### **What Must the Party Do?**

The utter and complete bankruptcy of every political group in the Labour movement, from extreme Right to sham Left, under the rigid and merciless examination of the seven months' struggle of the miners' leaves the Party with no serious competitors in the struggle for the changing of the old leadership of the masses, providing always that it is even more unsparing in its criticism and exposure of opportunism in all its shades. Provided, too, that it learns the lessons of the mistakes which the Comintern helped it to correct, namely, the necessity of seizing on every opportunity to widen the political outlook of the masses and prove to them the correctness of its programme.

What are the main tasks which this experience and these prospects dictate to our Party in Britain, and which have been summed up for it at the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I.?

First in order of pressing necessity is the task of binding the six or seven thousand new Party members, overwhelmingly miners, who have been won for the Party during the last six months, close to the ranks of the Communist International by providing them with elementary political education and guiding their energies to elementary Party tasks such as fraction work in their unions and the Labour Party, building up of the Minority Movement and the Left Wing, and the sale of the Party paper. Secondly, to strengthen the work of the whole Party in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly concentrating on the organisational strengthening of the Minority Movement and paying greater attention to fields of work hitherto neglected notably the textile industry, the agricultural workers and

**New Battles on the Way**—continued

the working women. Thirdly, to intensify its campaign against reformism in all its shapes and varieties, utilising the struggle not only for the immediate objects of fighting the reformists, or of fighting capitalist reaction, but of systematically contrasting at every step the programme of reformism with the Communist programme. Fourthly, a special necessity in view of the increasing war danger, which will bring the British working class face to face with the question of power much more acutely than ever before—our British Party must conduct a propaganda campaign against the war danger, at the same time paying much greater attention to anti-militarist work in all its forms, to the campaign for solidarity with the Russian workers as the first step towards a united and militant trade union international, and to the organisation of a mass Workers' Defence Corps, the sole guarantee against the menace of Fascism, and the pledge that the workers will not be caught unawares by any

crisis in the class struggle. Finally, in the present phase of the Chinese struggle, in view of the possibility that the heroic fight of Canton may rouse the spirit of revolt in India and other parts of the British Empire, our Party in Britain must give greater attention than hitherto to Colonial work, doing its utmost to explain to the workers the practical need for an alliance in combat against imperialism with the Colonial peoples.

The period immediately opening is one of the greater and greater struggles, literally stepping stones to the struggle for the conquest of power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Fortified by a consciousness of its historic destiny, confident in itself and in the working class, our Party will utilise the lessons of the last seven months to prove to the British workers, by word and deed, that under its leadership they can overthrow the capitalists, set up a working class State, and proceed with the construction of Socialism in a second country, thereby determining the fate of capitalism all over the world.

## Pandora's Box in Lithuania

**W**HEN we discuss "stabilisation" we are apt to neglect the political side of the question, although it is political life which shows most clearly how strongly bourgeois society is in the grip of this fever. One of the most striking symptoms of this fever is undoubtedly the so-called "parliamentary crisis" which the majority of bourgeois States are now experiencing. Even little Lithuania, which has hardly had time to get used to democracy, and parliamentarism, has already experienced a most serious crisis in this field.

These crises in the past have been episodes in a struggle between an autocratic power and the supreme representative institution of the bourgeoisie. The present parliamentary and constitutional crises are of a different nature. The institution of parliament itself does not seem to be affected. But the principle of parliamentarianism is trampled under foot unceremoniously; the executive power, i.e., the government, elected according to the rules of parliamentary representation is overthrown by armed force.

These infringements of the constitution are much worse than the former; parliament is openly reduced to the role of a figleaf which covers the nakedness of armed dictatorship, and even then covers it badly. Bourgeois parliamentarism, which should express the concentrated political will of the bourgeois class, is transformed into fiction; without changing its composition, it sanctions one executive power or another which is set up in exactly the same way, irrespective of the ways and means whereby this power is obtained. Constitutional legality ceases to exist and is replaced by the mailed fist, meagrely covered by a transparent parliamentary glove.

The little "revolution" in Lithuania, just like the Polish coup d'état, shows how unconcerned bourgeois society is for the overthrow of its political idols. A handful of officers of the former Tsarist army, headed by

two adventurists well known to every one, one fine night arrest the members of the Government, surround the parliament building with their soldiers, and compel the President of the Republic and the representatives of the people to sanction a change of government brought about by force. The President of the Republic does not risk saying that he would prefer death from a pistol shot to subjection to such an act of violence; and amongst the national representatives there is not a single Mirabeau to call upon those present not to disperse but to offer resistance to brutal force.

The whole business ends in a couple of hours, and by the morning the new self-appointed government is already issuing a manifesto and giving interviews to newspapers and reporters.

### A Drab Revolution

In the present case even the workers did not offer any resistance; their leaders were re-arrested at the same time as the ministers, and all their organisations were closed down. The Fascist revolution of Mussolini displayed certain dramatic features, but the Lithuanian imitation was enacted in the most commonplace setting. Bourgeois parliamentarism does not even die beautifully. It liquidates itself eagerly because bourgeois society sees no other way out of the cul de sac into which it has fallen owing to the situation which has arisen since the war. On the one hand complete economic ruin, on the other hand a working class which will not allow stabilisation to take place at its own expense and endeavours to take the helm of State into its own hands. Bourgeois society needs a dictatorship, but nevertheless, such a dictatorship as would allow a certain possibility of control. Hence the specific form of the peculiar Cæsarism which is growing up under our eyes.

In Lithuania there has been no revolutionary movement of the proletariat. The small Communist Party

**Pandora's Box in Lithuania**—continued

has been driven underground and even the Social-Democrats did not show energy of any consequence. The country has been primarily peasant, half-kulak, and could remain in the present position for some years to come. Nevertheless there was a working class in the towns, organised in trade unions; and the very existence of the latter worried the bourgeoisie. The organised workers offered resistance to capitalist pressure and listened to the muzzled voice of the Communists. The democratic and petty bourgeois government of Slazhevitch was capable neither of taming nor of suppressing the workers. It twisted and turned from side to side, first retreating, then attacking; first supporting reaction then fighting it; it was cowardly, like all the petty bourgeois governments of our days. The People's Party itself, to which Slazhevitch belonged, sharply condemned the hesitation of the government at the December Congress of the Party and demanded decisive repression against Fascism which was beginning to raise its head more and more shamelessly. But this demand still more confused the unfortunate cabinet; it continued to hesitate. The Fascists then decided to take the initiative in the struggle; as a result the December 17th coup d'état took place.

**How Cowards Reach Power**

It is characteristic that it was carried out not by the political Fascists led by Smetona and Voldemaras, but by a profligate and drunken band of officers under the command of Colonel Glovatsky and Major Plekhovitchius. The former undoubtedly were fully cognisant of the plot, but did not want to undertake the technique of the rising, not being sure of success, and apparently not sure of the confidence of the troops. However, they did not hesitate to take power, when it was handed to them on the point of the officer's swords. Smetona took the President's chair, while Voldemaras became the head of the government with a supplementary portfolio as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

They were not able to form a cabinet solely from among their own people; they took the main portfolios for military and home affairs, as well as for foreign affairs; they had to divide up the remainder between the "Christian Democrats" and the kulak "Farmers' Party." The former were the same people who, in 1920 overthrew this same Smetona, who at that time was President of the Republic, and they ruled the country from that time right up to May of the present year, when the voters refused confidence in them at the time of the Sejm elections. Thus Smetona had to share power with his own opponents because the officers wanted this. The other partners of the Smetona Fascists are the rich farmers who are only a little further to the Left than the Christian Democrats.

**Essence of the Bourgeoisie**

But this hodge-podge of Parties and tendencies in the government is in itself symptomatic. The cabinet symbolises the concentration of all the reactionary forces of the internal front. For the sake of this concentration old political enmities have been forgotten, as is the case in all social crises of bourgeois society. The new cabinet indeed thus defined the main point in its programme struggle against "Bolshevism," i.e., against the working class.

Objectively, however, the fundamental question of Lithuanian State life is by no means the Communist danger, but an external danger. And on this point also the new government is in hopeless contradiction with itself. Smetona and his colleagues are nationalists who will not allow any compromise; they are in favour of the complete independence of Lithuania and will not entertain any deals with a Poland which has deprived them of Vilna. Realising the weakness of their own small fatherland, they are seeking support in the Soviet Union and in Germany; they calculate that with friendly relations with these two powerful neighbours, Lithuania will be able to develop not only economically, but also preserve her independence in spite of Polish designs. The Christian Democrats, on the contrary, consider that Lithuanian nationality can be preserved only at the cost of Lithuanian State independence, and are ready to agree to any deal with Poland, even to the extent of restoring the old union.

During the last few years of their rule, the Christian Democrats conducted secret negotiations with Poland for the purpose of settling the disputed question of Vilna in such a manner as to give Vilna autonomy, but within the confines of Lithuania. The Poles were ready to give Vilna autonomy within Poland. The negotiations broke off at this point, because the Christian Democrats quit the government. There is no doubt that if they had remained in power a little longer they would have found some patched up compromise on the Vilna question and the road would then have been open for negotiations with Poland.

The main links connecting the Christian Democrats with Poland are the "Ksends" (Catholic priests), servants of the same Vatican which rules in Poland. The majority of the Christian Democratic Party are themselves actually priests, hence the hatred of this Party for the Soviet Union and, to a certain extent, even for Germany. They have a strong influence over the peasantry, especially over the rich peasants, as a result of which the "Farmers' League" also shares to a considerable degree the same Polophile viewpoint. The latter Party is also headed by Catholic priests the most famous of whom is Mgr. Bolokaitis, the Lithuanian Stinnes.

**A Split Likely?**

What external political policy can these varied elements have in common? As we have said, the question of foreign political orientation is the main problem of the Lithuanian State power. Voldemaras, the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, has openly stated that he will conduct a policy of rapprochement with the U.S.S.R. There is little probability of the Christian Democrats submitting to his programme. It is more likely that a split will take place on this point, and both the component Parties of the government bloc will come to blows. The possibility of a second interference by the officers, who are also divided into two camps in their attitude toward Poland, is also not out of the question.

The danger of such a rupture is evident, for there is no doubt that the Christian Democrats will find active support among their Polish friends. It is well known in diplomatic circles that immediately after the coup d'état the Polish foreign minister, Zalesky, summoned the foreign representatives and informed them of the unconditional intention and desire of the Polish government to preserve the strictest neutrality in face of the Lithuanian

**Pandora's Box in Lithuania**—continued

events, but in diplomatic language the words "intention" and "desire" have a special nuance; they mean that the present government reserves for itself freedom of action in the event of circumstances proving to be more pressing than all intentions and all desires.

"Ultra vires nemo posse" (Nobody can act beyond his strength). This maxim of Roman law is the favourite excuse of diplomacy when it breaks its word. During the whole summer the Poles have been making preparations for an attack upon Lithuania. There was quite unambiguous talk about Poland utilising the first opportunity to repeat its Vilna exploit on a larger scale, by organising a fake rising of the Polish population or staging some Communist "putsch." The plan became widely known, and its execution had to be postponed.

But since the new Lithuanian Government has already officially begun to talk of the Bolshevik danger, it is quite clear that the Poles, aided by the Christian Democrats, can create the fiction of a Communist rising and under pretext of their own safety bring about the long dreamed-of occupation in Lithuania.

There lies the main danger arising as a result of the revolution in Lithuania; for the seizure of the country by Poland is also a tremendous danger for the U.S.S.R. There will be new pressure on the Western frontier on the part of an enemy which has open design for expansion across the Bug and the Dnieper. In spite of the external calm that has succeeded the coup d'état both in Lithuania itself and among her neighbours, we must not deceive ourselves as to the stability of this revolution, but should rather await new storms, from the unstable situation in Lithuania which will arise like the bees from Pandora's box.

# Immediate Tasks in the Trade Union Movement

G. Smoliansky

**T**HERE is no doubt that never before in the history of the Comintern has the concrete work of the Communist Parties in the trade unions been studied so widely and in such detail, as it has been by the Trade Union Commission at the Seventh Enlarged Executive of the Communist International. The trade union question and trade union work are now the centre of attention of the Communist International. The question of trade union work is closely bound up with the question of unity and with the question of struggle for the leadership of the masses. We are living in an epoch of preparatory work, of organising the revolution, i.e., organising the masses and leading them. That is why the problem of mutual relations between the Party and the unions, the problem of concrete organic work of the Communists in the trade unions, now becomes so vital.

Since the time of the Fifth Congress—at the Fifth and the Sixth Enlarged Executives, and in the Open Letter to the German Communist Party—the slogan had been issued: "75 per cent. of work to be devoted to the trade unions!" But it was just during this period that the Communist Parties were experiencing a number of crises which prevented this slogan from being realised. The "ultra-Left" fever, which shook the most powerful West European Section, isolated the Communists to a certain extent from the trade union masses. On the other hand, the Right Wingers who wanted to dissolve the Party very often found support in the trade union sector of the Party, where Bolshevik training was weakest of all and where a particular kind of "tradition" has been formed.

Such, for instance, was the case in Sweden at the time of the renegade activities of Hoeglund, who led away nearly the whole active Party membership in the trade unions. Particularly now, when the Communist Parties are faced with the question of winning the

masses, the application of united front tactics becomes a really vital and urgent matter.

The starting point for this consists not only in overcoming "ultra-Left" and Right deviations, but above all in tackling the problems presented by the new processes which are taking place inside the capitalist system and the Labour movement. Capitalist rationalisation and its consequences—continually increasing exploitation, mass unemployment, the replacement of male labour by female labour and skilled labour by unskilled labour—these things confront the working class with the task of unity in its full sense: unity of the employed workers with the unemployed so that the latter do not become a reservoir for Anarcho-Syndicalism and blacklegging; unity of the workers on an industrial scale (fight against sectionalism); unity of various strata within the proletariat; and finally, the most important problem of all—international unity.

## Growing—In Two Directions

It is not an accident that side by side with the new processes of capitalism a tremendous differentiation is also taking place within the Labour movement. If we look at the trade union chart of the world, the first thing we have to record is the undoubted growth of the trade unions during the past year. The Amsterdamites are now raising a great deal of noise about this. But what they keep silent about is the fact that this growth and consolidation is taking place not in a uniform upward line, but in two different, quite opposed, directions: on the one hand there is an increasing levelling and consolidation to the Right amongst the leadership of the reformist trade union movement, while on the other hand there is a consolidation of the masses to the Left from below.

The Right Wing leaders of the Amsterdam International, in the words of Leon Jouhaux in the last issue

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of the Amsterdam Journal ("International Labour Movement"), No. 4, announced themselves as direct agents of capitalist stabilisation. With the same unprecedented cynicism the hard-boiled bureaucrat Sassenbach, second secretary of the "International," declares war against unity in the same issue of the journal. The conduct of the leaders of the General Council during the General Strike and miners' lockout threw the "British opposition"—Purcell and Hicks—into the arms of Sassenbach and Jouhaux. Another form of "Left movement from above," the so-called "industrial opposition" (representatives of a considerable section of the industrial internationals) has also petered out.

The "Leader" of the International Federation of Chemical Workers, the most reactionary of all industrial internationals, Stenhuis, (the most noteworthy event in whose life was the "revolutionary" speech he made at the last Congress of the Dutch Social-Democratic Party) demands that Fimmen disperses all the unity committees in Holland. And even Fimmen, defending himself against Stenhuis's attacks, gives arguments remarkable for their clearness! "We not only stand by the side of our Right friends (i.e., by the side of Stenhuis) we stand in front of them and receive many of the blows meant for them." (Article by Fimmen on "The Communists and Ourselves.") In a whole number of other questions of the class struggle of primary importance, Fimmen's position has proved to be extremely confused and ambiguous; for example, on the question of the rising in the Dutch Indies, Fimmen, who had gained a reputation by his defence of international solidarity, found it impossible to fight against imperialism "only in one country." Thus the evolution on this sector of reformism is clearly from discord to unity.

**Left Wing Divisions**

On another sector of reformism we observe a different picture. The most characteristic fact of the past year is not only the general growth and consolidation of the Left wing, but also its differentiation. In Great Britain we have a classic example of a powerful crystallisation of the Left Wing movement from below, grouped more and more around the Minority Movement. And on the contrary, we had in other countries splits and the parallel existence of various Left Wing groups (Belgium, Holland), a jealously sectarian attitude of the Communist Parties towards the unity committees, and even attempts of our enemies to drag the agents of bourgeois reformism into our ranks under the flag of unity. Such was the case in Bulgaria, where the brother of Tsankov, who together with Dr. Kazassov leads the Right Opposition in the Social-Democratic Party, tried to form a new trade union federation under the unity slogan. In Egypt the supporters of Zaghlul Pasha also smashed the confederation of Labour under the flag of unity. In Palestine the "Left" Poale Zionists with the silent approval of the Right Wingers, are endeavouring to form a "Left Wing," the only task of which is to smash the Communists.

But all this should not obscure the main fact that we have entered into a new phase of the struggle for unity which is characterised by the shifting of the centre of gravity of the struggle for unity downwards into the

factories. The almost universal success of the unity committees, "Friends of Unity," proletarian unity committees, etc., goes to show that it is just this form (which by the way, should also be the basis of the struggle for factory committees where they do not yet exist) is the most appropriate for the present stage of development.

There is no need to mention the tremendous movement evoked by the workers' delegation to the U.S.S.R. organised almost exclusively from below. The first German delegation alone held more than a thousand meetings attended by half a million workers. The second delegation had by November 12th already held 606 meetings, of which 30 were convened by Social-Democratic workers. In Czecho-Slovakia, in Karlsbad, where the Social-Democratic workers were expelled from their unions for taking a journey to the U.S.S.R., we won this German Social-Democratic centre.

**A Double Process**

Of course the growth of the trade unions nourishes the reformist leadership also. It could not be otherwise. But the dialectic of development consists of this consolidation with, at the same time, a reverse process at the opposite pole, the tempo of which is more rapid, more powerful than the first and must inevitably lead to the shell of reformist leadership being outgrown by the Leftward moving masses, when the usurpers of the Labour movement "begin to usurp."

What should the Communist Party do under such conditions?

It is clear that the first and main task is organisational penetration into the factories and trade unions. For this the Party demands:

- (a) That all workers who are Party members should go into the trade unions;
- (b) Active organic work of the Communists in the trade union movement;
- (c) Strong Party organisations, i.e., live Communist fractions in the trade unions.

How have the Parties coped with this task?

There is no doubt whatsoever that we have had definite successes in trade union work in almost all the large Sections of the Comintern. It is true that the extent of these successes varies, but successes are to be registered everywhere. This does not mean, however, that we should gloss over the weak factors in our work. And indeed there have been errors, not only organisational, but also of a political nature. In order to draw correct conclusions from sound self-criticism, we should take these attainments and defects in their dynamic and not in a static sense (not in the "absolute" sense like figures in mathematics), not as successes and defects, "in themselves," but as tendencies and in line with the entire position of Party work in the trade unions. In appreciating matters in this way, certain of the defects prove to be difficulties of growth while certain achievements prove to be fairly big lapses.

**Our Biggest Success**

What was the biggest success of the Party during the last year? It lay in the fact that as a result of our work we everywhere aroused the attention of the masses to the question of unity. Our propaganda in a number of countries led to the formation of committees of unity which brought considerable masses of reformist workers into

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the movement. On the whole our agitational work was the most successful part of our activity. But we did not succeed in organisationally reinforcing our agitational successes.

The main defect of our work lay in the disproportion between the tempo of our agitational and political successes and the organisational strengthening of our influence by the Party. Let us deal with the first question—the attraction of Party members into the trade unions. There is certainly a move forward, but the speed of this move is inadequate. In Germany, where the successes are greatest, 60 per cent. of the Party members were in the trade unions in July, 1926, and 70 per cent. in October. If we deduct 7 to 8 per cent. of the members ineligible for trade union membership (housewives, etc.), there nevertheless remain 20 per cent. of the working class members of our Party not organised in the trade unions. It is true we should speak here more of difficulties of growth; account must be taken of the tremendous unemployment amongst Party members and the anti-trade union work of the ultra-Lefts. But nevertheless, the fact remains a fact.

**Communists as Union Leaders**

In other countries this movement of Party members in the trade unions is taking place still more slowly. In Great Britain the percentage has even decreased (70 per cent.) although for specific “independent” reasons, for instance, during the miners’ lock-out, a considerable mass of miners’ wives who have no access to the trade unions joined our Party.

Another question is that of the leading groups of Communist trade unionists. In many local trade union organisations, for example in Germany, there are Communist or oppositional majorities. Communists are often faced with a tragic situation: they have no one to put forward for official positions. The Communist trade union workers are first of all agitators and Party propagandists in the trade unions, and least of all trade union workers. And of those who are trade union workers, still fewer have received any real Bolshevik training. Therefore, the most urgent task of the Communist Party is to form and extend a team of active Communist trade union workers who will be able to conduct organic work in the trade unions, and at the same time will not lose revolutionary perspectives, and will be able to link up their work with the great final tasks of the proletarian revolution.

Finally, the most important question is that of work of the Communist fractions. Here we come face to face with the problem of the mutual relations of the Party and the trade unions. And it is here that we have the greatest deviations from a Leninist presentation of this problem.

**Fraction Work**

A common weakness of nearly all sections is the poor quality of Communist fraction work. The ice was broken with great difficulty. Nominally, the establishment of Communist fractions is in full swing. In the German metal workers’ union there are 300 fractions, in the chemical industry 87, in the textile, 60. Even the trade union department of the Workers’ (Communist)

Party of America records 300 fractions. But what sort of fractions are they in practice, as vanguards of the unions in everyday life? There is no doubt whatsoever that here quantity has not yet been turned into quality.

However, while in countries with a united trade union movement fraction work is a question of to what extent the Party spreads its organisational ramifications, to what extent it succeeds in approaching the masses, this question has up to now had quite a different significance in countries where the trade union movement is split, and where there are independent revolutionary trade unions. Here we still often encounter a lack of political understanding of the significance of Communist fractions, and confused ideas as to the mutual relations between Party and trade unions. In these countries the trade unions as a rule are numerically stronger than the Party. And this “objective” (numerical) correlation of forces often leads to an under-estimation of the role of the Party as the vanguard of the working class, as the leader of the trade union movement.

**Sectarian Self-Sufficiency**

A classic example in this respect is Holland. The revolutionary trade union federation (N.A.S.), is much stronger and older than the Party. This syndicalist organisation was formed even before the reformist federation, or even the Social Democratic Party. Brought up on syndicalist traditions, this organisation is “self-contained” and often apt to take upon its own “complete” shoulders Party political functions. It is not surprising that even the Communists in the N.A.S. get indignant at the mere sound of the word “Communist fractions.” They contend that Communist fractions are not necessary in the N.A.S. because the organisation itself is revolutionary: they are not necessary in the reformist unions, because if any revolutionary elements do appear in the reformist unions, they should immediately go over to the N.A.S. Need one add that the N.A.S. is conducting a war of destruction against the unity committees in reformist unions because they are reformist, or that the numerical strength of the organisation has remained stagnant for several years at a stretch? The N.A.S. has unions with a handful of members (Agricultural Workers’ Union—17 members, Employees’ Union—54, etc.), but for considerations of “completeness” they are preserved in order to have a “full set” of industrial sections. Is this not a classic example of sectarianism and syndicalist routinism?

But even in such a big Party as the French, which has such a powerful base in the Unity Federation of Labour (C.G.T.U.), we sometimes still see inadequate comprehension of the political significance of Communist fractions. During the past year the Party has made considerable advances towards the reformist workers (proletarian unity committees, mixed committees, etc.), and also in its trade union work. As recently as 1922 at St. Etienne the Executive Committee was almost completely in the hands of Anarcho-Syndicalists; now it is entirely composed of Communists but for two or three members.

**Perplexities in France**

Yet sometimes the French comrades ask in perplexity: “Why was it necessary to form Communist fractions at the recent Railwaymen’s Congress at de Splais,

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when out of the 150 delegates, 135 were Communists?" That is precisely the whole gist of the question. It is precisely here that we see the inadequate comprehension of the political importance of organised Party leadership. This is reflected in the general work. What is the main defect of the work in France? It is that the Party and the Unity Federation, although they are the only organisations conducting a real class struggle, do not get hold of the leadership until the movement has already spontaneously broken out from below. There is no organised preparation of the movement. And this is most easily accomplished with a firm and organised leadership by the Party.

Another weak side is the numerical and social composition of the Unity Federation. It is true that the C.G.T.U. compares favourably with the reformist federation, in regard to its industrial basis: the reformists are only strong in the mining districts. Even our class enemies have been compelled to recognise this. In the "Bulletin du Comité des Forges" of 18-11-26, it is stated with regret that "whereas the employees used to join the C.G.T. they are more and more leaving it, and now it is the C.G.T.U. which leads the Labour movement in the industrial centres." But the organic defect of the C.G.T.U. is the fact that it contains mainly, strange though it may seem, the skilled workers and does not devote all its energy to winning the tremendous mass of unskilled workers. Hence the fluidity in the composition of the Unitarian unions and their feeble numerical growth. Hence also the social source of the inadequate preliminary organisational preparation of activities.

**Fascism and the Unions**

Of the same order is the question brought up by certain comrades as to the formation of new organisations in Fascist Italy, where the Labour confederation has been definitely smashed by the Fascists and its leaders have abandoned the struggle. One could not imagine a more abstract scheme than such a proposal—though it be "in view of a rise of the revolutionary wave." The Party cannot mechanically, "on its own" form a mass movement, but should win the leadership in the historical forms of broad class organisation. The Party quite correctly rejected this abstract scheme, for to have accepted it would have meant really building castles in the air over the quicksands of the Fascist desert.

That new organisations do not spring up all at once and that traditions in the Labour movement and political experience play a tremendous role, we can see from the evolution which the trade union movement has experienced in other countries of police terror—in the Balkans. The trade unions have held out exactly in those

countries where there has been such political training. In Bulgaria, where there is twenty year's tradition of struggle against reformism, where the trade union movement has developed under the absolute political influence of the Party, there, in spite of the fierce orgy of terror after the Tsankoff coup d'état, the trade unions very rapidly began to set themselves right and restore their power. In Yugoslavia, on the contrary, the trade union movement is being resuscitated with the greatest difficulty of all; it was smashed there by the emergency laws of 1920. Here it is characteristic that restoration is taking place more rapidly in Slovenia, Voevodina, and Croatia, where were separated from Austria and where the Labour movement has been most developed. The same thing in Roumania, where the best resistance to the White Terror was made in Transylvania and the Banat. The trade union movement in Italy was smashed so easily by the Fascists, not because there was no tradition there, but because the traditions were of a syndicalist nature, there was no political training and inadequate organisational penetration of the trade unions among the masses and in the factories.

**The Struggle for Unity**

In conclusion we must say a few words about deviations in the struggle for unity. The struggle for unity is neither a manœuvre nor a dogma. It is the struggle for the organisation of the proletarian revolution, the struggle to win the majority of the working class and to lead them. It is indeed just a manœuvre as far as the reformists are concerned—in order to split our ranks and liquidate the Red trade union movement. It is just because they are against the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat that they are against the united front and issue slogans like "without organisational unity there can be no united front." At the same time they are not averse to "manœuvring" and uniting "on a separate basis"—in cases when they have absolute certainty in their strength and their chance of swallowing up the revolutionary minority. This does not mean that the comrades who feel sceptical about unity, taking it mainly as an agitational slogan, are correct. This would in the first place mean restricting ourselves to criticism of the reformists and making this criticism inaccessible to the broad masses. But at the same time unity is not a dogma, a fetish. The slogan—unity for unity's sake, unity at all costs—would inevitably lead to tendencies in our ranks to dissolve the Communist Parties, would not bring us nearer to our goal of winning the masses, but would remove us from it. Unity is good, necessary and useful for the working class, if it helps the organisation of the proletarian class struggle, if it increases the fighting capacity of the workers for the organisation of the proletarian revolution.

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# The Labour Lieutenants of American Imperialism

Jay Lovestone

**P**OLITICALLY, the American Labour movement is to-day more backward than that of any of the big capitalist countries. Even the yellow Amsterdam and Second Internationals are too red, too militant for the American Federation of Labour.

In the main, the officialdom of the American trade union movement functions brazenly and aggressively as an agency of American imperialism at its worst. Our Labour leaders are, with too few exceptions, primarily serving as Labour lieutenants of American imperialism in the ranks of the organised and unorganised workers. On the whole, these trade union officials react swiftly and decisively to the needs and demands of the Yankee imperialists.

## Setting the Pace for Reaction

Indeed, those Labour leaders of whom Engels spoke as lieutenants of capital in the ranks of the English workers, compared with many of the bureaucrats now infesting the American trade union movement, were indomitable militants. This is going some! Yes. Altogether too often is it true that our American Labour leaders pursue a policy far more reactionary than that pursued by some groups of powerful capitalists.

It is under such a leadership that our unions are tragically powerless. It is under such a leadership that at most three and a half out of more than twenty million industrial workers are organised. It is this leadership which is sabotaging all efforts to organise the unorganised, to build a Labour Party, and is expelling the Communists and other militant workers from the trade unions. It is this trade union officialdom, conspicuously exemplified by such notorious corruptionists as John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers of America; Matthew Woll, President of the Photo Engravers' Union of North America and Major Berry, President of the International Printing Pressmen's and Assistants' Union of North America, that is calling a national conference to fight Communism in the American trade union movement.

What type of man is to be found in the official American trade union movement? How close are they to the rank and file of their unions? What is the attitude of these officers to the workers? To the employers? To the Government? What are their salaries? What are their interests in life? What are they after, as we say in America?

In the answer to these and similar questions we will find an accurate, though uninspiring, picture of an important phase of the American Labour movement. Here we will find a cancer on the very body-politic of the American working class.

## Introducing our Labour Leaders

The great majority of the American trade union officials from the petty business agent up to the "Grand International President," feel contempt for the workers,

whom they consider below them. These Labour lieutenants of Wall Street feel themselves closer to the employers than to the workers; especially is this true when they hold high positions in the trade union movement.

These trade union officers are now American Labour's window on Wall Street. They model themselves on the bourgeois politicians, they ape the gang leader in their treatment of the workers in their organisations making complaints or seeking redress of grievances. These bureaucrats are developing a most destructive cynicism in their attitude towards their own work in the Labour movement.

They live comfortably, get very high wages and consequently develop a barrier, oftentimes insurmountable, between themselves and the rank and file of the workers. Even the average lower trade union officer has an income ranging from two to three hundred per cent. greater than the workers of the craft in which the union he leads is found. In the stronger unions the local business agents, handling mainly immediate shop grievances and regulating on the whole the every day relations between employer and worker, average a minimum of sixty to seventy dollars weekly. Here we are speaking of the business agent of the unions of skilled workers. Yet the average skilled worker, counting the loss of wages through irregularity of employment, does not throughout the year make more than about thirty-five dollars weekly.

The salaries of the presidents—international presidents as they are called—of the American trade unions range from three to twenty-five thousand dollars plus all kinds of emoluments annually. In the well organised crafts, the salaries of the international presidents of the unions run from seventy-five hundred to ten thousand dollars per year.

## The High Cost of American Labour Leadership

The high-priced bureaucrats give two main arguments for their exorbitant wage demands upon the unions they run and ruin. These are:

(1) The trade union officer sells his labour power just as well and as much as any other worker does. Labour power is a commodity. The trade union leaders are highly skilled individuals. They place their commodity for sale in the labour market. The union must bid against the employers for the purchase of this commodity, for the hiring of these "able men." Naturally, when bid meets bid—when a labour union must compete against an employer or groups of employers for the "services" of this highly skilled gentry, the price of this commodity goes up. Ergo: the salaries of the trade union officers of the powerful unions go sky-rocketing.

Herein is to be found a basic cause for the frequency with which trade union leaders are often simultaneously subsidised by the capitalists and paid by the unions for "services rendered." Only a few months ago it was shown that Frank Farrington, President of Dis-

**Labour Lieutenants**—continued

trict 12, Illinois, of the United Mine Workers of America, was on the pay roll of the Peabody Coal Company, one of the biggest and most vicious union-hating coal operators in the country, at the salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year while he was drawing pay from the miners' union.

Reactionary Labour officials defeated in union elections often get on the pay roll of a corporation in the industry of the union which repudiated them. But the Labour movement is on the whole so backward, so deficient in class consciousness, that it seldom attaches odium to such a going over to the capitalist class under these circumstances. A trade union official of this type will often openly admit that he is "in it for what he can get out of it."

**" Across the Table "**

(2) The second reason given for the big salaries exacted by the Labour lieutenants from the trade unions is that the Labour union representatives must live and feel on a parity with the men, with the wealthy employers, "across the table" in negotiations! These leaders maintain that in order to get the best contracts for their unions with the bosses they must live on a swell scale, live in the same hotels with the employers and dress and act like them in every other way possible. These union officials consistently exhibit a strong desire to be on the best personal terms with the exploiters. They consider it an achievement and a significant mark of their skill as labour leaders if they can be on such intimate terms with the bosses as to call them by their first names.

Of course, the international presidents usually consider the "across the table" method as the most effective and the only way of conducting a struggle against the capitalists. They detest action by the workers themselves, such as effective mass picketing, demonstrations and huge protests against government strike-breaking or intolerable working and living conditions. It must be said, however, that the high-priced Labour leaders of some of the unions often resort to hiring professional gangsters to beat up scabs. The use of professional gangsters has also been resorted to with too great frequency to exterminate militants in the trade unions, to conduct a savage warfare of violence against Communists. This practice is especially characteristic of certain so-called Socialist trade union officials in some of the needle trades unions.

**A Labour Convention Auction.**

Let me present a highly illuminating case which will illustrate the characteristics and attitudes of the aristocrats among the high-priced leaders of the American trade union movement. At the last convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, one of the oldest and most powerful trade unions in the United States, William B. Prenter, now Grand International President of this organisation, in discussing the report of the Committee on salaries protested against the recommendation that his salary be limited to twenty-five thousand dollars a year, and said:

"You have elected me for a term of three years. The Brotherhood of the Locomotive Engineers' Co-operative National Bank in Cleveland has elected me their

First Vice-President and Cashier. I am holding various positions in your financial interests. I am the Secretary-Treasurer of your Holding Company, a Brotherhood Corporation. I am the Secretary-Treasurer of your Investment Company, a corporation controlled by the Brotherhoods and owned by the stockholders of the general public and others. I am the President of your Nottingham Savings Bank, owned and controlled by the Holding Company. I am a Director and Vice-President of your Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Trust Company of New York. I am the Vice-President of the Locomotive Engineers National Bank of Boston, Massachusetts, owned by the Brotherhood. I am a Director and sit on the Executive Board of the Empire Trust Company. I am a Trustee for the interests of the Investment Company, the Holding Company, and the Brotherhood, in all your other activities in the Transportation Brotherhood Bank of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the bank in Birmingham, Alabama. And I would much prefer that you would designate what you want to pay me as Treasurer for your Brotherhood, your Insurance and Pension Department, and let me make whatever arrangements I want for the duties that I am required to perform in connection with your other interests.

"The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Co-operative National Bank has several vice-presidents with salaries ranging from six to ten thousand dollars and you expect me to go into that bank and resume the responsibilities of its Cashier and on a salary of five thousand dollars a year.

"I will not do it. If I am not worth more than that to these institutions, they haven't got the right man, and I am not wedded to the job."

**Twenty-five Thousand Not Enough**

Mr. Prenter objected to being paid a flat salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year for all his offices lumped. He wants to be paid handsomely for all the above-mentioned titles, individually and separately. When he was asked by one of the Convention delegates how he found the time to do all this work, he answered: "Mostly by working twenty-four hours a day." Prenter continued:

"You fellows expect me to sit across the table from fellows making twenty-five thousand dollars a year. It can't be done unless I get enough money to command their respect and keep my own self-respect. . . . If I'm good enough to represent your interests with twenty-five thousands dollars a year men, then I am good enough to make as near that sum as the union can afford."

A delegate, Ferguson by name, with a sense of humour and with some sense of duty to his organisation then said:

"Brother Prenter no doubt is worth may be to this organisation a hundred thousand dollars a year, but when he gets up there and tells us his duties and responsibilities and the different offices he holds, it seems to me that Brother Prenter is overtaxed with responsibilities. He has been elected or has been appointed to more positions than it is humanly possible for one man to fill . . . . When you stop to think a bit, what are you paying these brothers (grand officers) to-day? If you look at it in that light—I haven't figured it up, but it is in the neighbourhood of thirty dollars a day. That is a pretty good salary, when you stop to consider what the men are receiving who are paying for it. . . ."

**Labour Lieutenants—continued**

But then a delegate by the name of Burke rose to the defence of Prenter by saying:

"You certainly are not going to make your chief executives sit across the table from men in the railroad organisations who are getting a higher salary? You certainly are not going to take the pep right out of your new assistant grand chief by making him sit across the table from a man who is getting three or four thousand dollars more a year? Certainly you don't mean that? . . ."

Then Mr. Stone (now deceased) who was formerly Grand Chief, spoke up and addressed the delegates:

"You want the highest pay in the world for yourselves and you are the cheapest lot of men in the world to work for when it comes down to salaries. You put these men across the table against fifty-thousand dollar, seventy-five thousand dollar and a hundred thousand dollar a year men to represent what? To represent you. You expect them to get results and you expect them to win out. You put them up against the keenest, shrewdest and brainiest lot of men in the world who draw the best salaries in the world."

This talk got under the skin of a rank and file delegate, Miehke, who leaped to his feet and declared:

"I would like to see every Grand officer we have paid a decent salary, but I can't see anything in the argument produced by you Brothers when you talk about being paid 15,000 dollars, or 25,000 dollars, and talking across the table to men getting 100,000 dollars or 125,000 dollars. I have been paid 150 dollars (monthly) and in some cases less, the last twenty-five years, and I have been talking across the table to superintendents who were getting three times as much as I was. If you are going to raise the salaries of the Grand Officers so they can talk across the table with some Vice-President, let's do that for the rank and file back home, too."

**What Price Labour Leaders?**

We have quoted at length from the confidential minutes of the last convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in order to give an accurate picture of the type of leadership now dominating some of the strongest trade unions in America. Let us proceed to tabulate the salaries of the officers of some of the leading trade unions of the United States:

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers: President \$25,000; First Vice-President \$15,000; Grand Chief Engineer \$13,000.

American Federation of Musicians: President \$12,000; Secretary \$7,500.

Painters, Paperhangers and Interior Decorators: President \$6,000; Secretary \$6,000.

Carpenters and Joiners: President \$7,500.

Bricklayers and Masons: President \$10,000; Secretary \$10,000.

Structural Iron Workers: President \$7,500; Secretary \$6,000.

Order of Railway Conductors: President \$12,000; Secretary \$8,000; Vice-Presidents (7) \$6,000; Senior Vice-President \$8,000.

Stage Employees: President \$6,000.

Maintenance of Way Men (Railroads): President \$14,000; Secretary \$9,000.

Locomotive Firemen: President \$12,000; Secretary \$10,000.

Street Car Railway men: President \$6,000.

Railroad Trainmen: President \$14,000.

Railway Clerks: President \$10,000.

Machinists: President \$7,500; Secretary \$6,500.

Railway Carmen: President \$7,400.

Teamsters and Truckdrivers: President \$15,000; Secretary \$15,000; Auditor \$15,000; Vice-Presidents (7) \$10,000; Trustees (3) \$10,000; Organisers \$10,000.

Barbers: President \$7,000.

United Mine Workers: President \$8,000; Vice-President \$7,000.

Electrical Workers: President \$7,000; Secretary \$6,500.

We must reckon with the fact that some of these trade union officials get in addition to their regular salaries as high as \$19 a day for living expenses when they are travelling. Some of them are allowed regularly throughout the year \$5.00 a day in addition to their salary for incidental expenses. Many of them are corrupt and make plenty of money through betraying the workers in their struggles. Many of them draw additional salaries as officers of labour banks and trade union financial institutions. A large number of them own substantial blocs of stock and securities in big corporations.

**The Price the Workers Pay**

The American trade unionists are paying annually a hundred million dollars to their organisations. Most of this huge sum goes towards the payment of wages and salaries of officers. At best, what the organised workers receive in return, nowadays, is the maintenance of the status quo. For some unions even this cannot be said about their leadership.

A number of the unions have their executive committees divided into various departments. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, for instance, has an Insurance and Pension Department, an Investment Department, and the lowest of the departments is the labour, or trade union department. This is one of the most powerful American labour unions!

The workers in the aristocracy of Labour, the highly skilled workers, are getting a few crumbs from the wealth-laden tables of the American imperialists now enjoying world hegemony. The greatest beneficiaries of American imperialism in the ranks of the Labour organisations are the International Officers of the unions of highly skilled workers, the leaders of the organisations of the aristocracy of the American working class.

**Not "One Reactionary Mass"**

There is a great gap between the imperialist prowess of the United States and the imperialist strength of the other leading capitalist national groups. There is likewise a gap between the extent to which the trade union bureaucracy of some of the less powerful capitalist countries has been corrupted and the debauching of the reactionary high trade union officialdom of the American trade union movement. There is a positive and direct relationship between these gaps.

But let no one make the mistake of viewing as one homogenous mass the entire American Labour aristocracy. Let no one make the mistake of viewing as a

(Contd. at foot of col. 1, p. 18.)

# Certain Lessons of the "British Campaign"

**T**HE international relief campaign on behalf of the British strike was actually the first big international campaign of the Sections of the Communist International. Therefore it is extremely important to sum up certain results of this campaign, although the campaign is still in progress.

Before making any criticism it should be pointed out in the first place that there can be no comparison between the relief campaign carried out by the Comintern Sections, and the organisations under their control, and the reformists' campaign. The reformists, who have an apparatus and resources ten times exceeding those of the Communist Parties, actually gave far less material support. Here, just as with other forms of aid (the call for an embargo on coal, sympathetic strikes, moral support, etc.), the reformist role was that of open strike-breakers.

Further, the campaign of the Comintern Sections had systematic international leadership. A glance through "Inprecorr" will suffice to show the existence of a systematic political leadership on the part of the E.C.C.I. and its organs.

With these preliminary remarks let us turn to the substance of the question. Generally speaking the main defects of the "British campaign" may be summed up as follows:

The majority of the Sections proved to be inadequately prepared for the General Strike and hence did not sufficiently prepare the masses for it. If we follow the press of the Comintern Sections during the month preceding the General Strike, we see that the preliminary explanatory work was inadequate. The material published was of a purely informative nature and was in general incomplete. With but few exceptions there was practically no analysis of the historical economic roots of the coal conflict; no analysis of the international significance of the impending conflict was given in our press. This may be explained by the fact that our Sections themselves inadequately interpreted the perspectives of the General Strike, inadequately grasped the internal significance of the British coal conflict.

(Continued from p. 17.)

homogeneous group even the entire American trade union officialdom. Already there are the bases for serious differentiations and divisions even in the ranks of the trade union officialdom. The bases for these differences, of course, are deeply rooted in the economic conditions of the country—in each instance specifically in the economic status of the particular industry in which the union happens to be found, in the extent of skill of the workers unionised, etc.

The American Communists correctly view this corruption of trade union officialdom and the slight benefits to the several millions of skilled workers as a result of the strength of Yankee imperialism to-day, but only as a temporary condition. The American Communists are also beginning to react in a realistic manner to the potential and existing differences not only in the American working class as a whole, but also in the various sections of the working class and in the trade union leadership.

## Sections Unprepared

Right up to the time of the strike, the Sections did not succeed in developing an active campaign for the mobilisation of the international proletariat for the coming conflict. All this found expression, for instance, in the fact that in the first of May manifestoes of the Czecho-Slovak and German Communist Parties slogans of solidarity, with the British miners were omitted, whereas about two weeks earlier the first of May theses of the Agitprop and the first of May Manifesto of the E.C.C.I. had a special point on the coming conflict in England, and a week before the strike a special manifesto of the E.C.C.I. was published explaining in detail the meaning of the conflict and the tasks connected therewith.

The unpreparedness of the Sections for the strike was revealed to its full extent in the days of the General Strike itself. The Sections were incapable of mobilising the masses of the continental proletariat during the decisive days of the strike. The Sections did not succeed in rousing up the masses in accordance with the influence they enjoy among the masses, for there had not been sufficient explanatory work conducted among the masses prior to the General Strike.

By the time our Sections had begun moving, the reformists of the General Council had scotched the strike. It is worthy of mention that some papers only appeared on May 4th. Only on this day could the Party masses get in touch with the broad masses of non-Party workers. From this, of course, the conclusion should not be drawn that the strike would not have been scotched if the Sections had succeeded in arousing the deeper strata of the continental proletariat. The strike would have been smashed in any case, but the conditions of its breakup might have been less advantageous for the Thomases.

## Surrender Not Expected

The second conclusion that may be drawn in analysing the "British campaign" is that for the majority of Sections, the calling off of the General Strike was rather unexpected. There was undoubtedly an under-estimation of the influence of the Right Wing leaders of the General Council, and a certain under-estimation of the vacillation of the "Left Wingers." That is what mainly explains why the calling off of the General Strike was unexpected for the majority of the Sections. Some Sections (the French and American) at first could not even understand the significance of the cessation of the strike and for the first moments estimated this as a certain victory for the workers.

An under-estimation of the vacillation of the Lefts prevailed also during the first days after the calling off of the General Strike. At first the main fire was directed against the Right Wing leaders. The theses of the E.C.C.I. introduced a definite clarity on this question and it may be said with regard to the continental Sections, that from this moment they established a correct proportion in their criticisms of the Right and "Left" leaders of the General Council.

The fact that the stoppage of the General Strike was rather unexpected for the Sections, explains a cer-

**Certain Lessons**—continued

tain disorientation during the first days after the stoppage of the strike, The fact of the "sudden" ending of the General Strike, for a certain moment caused an enfeeblement of the campaign of the Sections, an enfeeblement which can be explained by an under-estimation of the possibility of the British miners continuing the struggle alone. The first weeks after the stoppage of the General Strike are characteristic for the majority of the Sections as the weeks when least activity was displayed for the "British campaign."

**Abstract Internationalism**

The third and most instructive conclusion is that the Sections did not succeed in linking the "British campaign" up organically with those campaigns they conducted within the countries, and that the sections were not sufficiently active in explaining to the masses the profound connection of the destiny of their class struggle with the outcome of the British miners' struggle.

An analysis of the "British campaign," carried out by the Comintern sections, shows that the international nature of the British strike was spoken of in too abstract a manner. This abstractedness is best of all characterised by the fact that the Sections did not link up their main campaigns (in Czecho-Slovakia against the customs tariffs, in Germany for the workers' congress, in France against the capitalist methods of stabilising the currency, etc.) with the relief campaign for the British miners. If, for example, we follow the press of the Sections, we are struck by the following: while they are developing their own campaigns, the Sections reduced the "British campaign" to the minimum; and on the contrary, the relief campaign for the miners becomes a little more active after the Sections had done their main work on the "internal campaigns." That is why in the "British campaign" there were "failures" during two or three weeks, when the press of the Sections confined itself to small notes on the last pages.

The inadequacy of the campaign in the various Sections has, of course, also objective causes, the chief of which is the industrial boom in Continental countries during the strike. But the relief campaign to the miners was superficial just in that the Sections did not succeed in explaining to the masses the pyrrhic nature of this boom, did not succeed in showing that this temporary boom would be replaced after the end of the strike, in the event of its defeat, by a new crisis, a new attack on the working classes in the Continental countries. As the vanguard of the masses it was the duty of the Continental Sections to present a broader horizon and show the masses that they would in the near future have to pay dearly for their trust in the reformists, who had preached the short-sighted theory of "charity begins at home." This explanatory work was undoubtedly unsatisfactory. In those cases where the nationalism of the reformists was denounced, this was done in energetic tones, but without any basis, without figures and facts, without a fundamental analysis of the coming perspectives.

The fourth conclusion concerns the question of the united front. With few exceptions (Czecho-Slovakia, for instance), the Sections mainly applied the united front tactics as tactics of the united front from above. The Sections applied to the Social-Democrats, the revolu-

tionary trade unions and the reformist unions with proposals for joint activities, but very often (particularly in France), these proposals were not accompanied by due explanatory work, they were not strengthened by an extensive campaign in the factories, were not supplemented by energetic work for the formation of a united front from below. The majority of Sections used the press and meetings as methods of pressure. There was no systematic work for the creation of a united front in the factories in order to organise solidarity with the miners. In this connection, the lower Party active workers were not sufficiently prepared for wide explanatory work in the localities. The transmission belts of the Party—the mass organisations—were also inadequately utilised.

**In the Factories**

"The British campaign" thus revealed one of the chief defects of the majority of the Sections—an inability to link up various forms of united front tactics. The inadequacy of work in the factories had a certain influence on the volume of the entire campaign, in particular the dimensions of the monetary collections. This factor was most clearly shown in France, where the collections made by the Party and the Unitary Trade Unions were obviously inadequate as compared with the influence which these organisations have over the masses. (According to "Humanité" 160,000 francs were collected in August, i.e., £1,500). The reverse case is also characteristic: in Czecho-Slovakia, where work in the factories during the days of the "British campaign" was given relatively great attention, the collections of the Party and the revolutionary trade unions were more successful than in other Sections.

If we generalise the results of the campaigns for material assistance to the miners, we find them to be quite inadequate. The instructions of the R.I.L.U. with regard to the levy of 1 per cent. not only remained a dead letter among all the Sections, but were not even brought up for mass discussion. In France, for instance, only in October did "Humanité" begin to popularise this slogan in a more systematic manner. The collections made by the Sections were inadequate, even from the point of view of organisational inclusion of the masses. This was particularly striking in France, where the Unitarian trade unions contain half a million workers and employees and where unemployment is negligible.

**The Russian Example**

The main conclusion may be formulated in the following words: There is a defect in the creation of a united front from below, which has been manifested in the inadequacy of explanatory work in the factories and still greater inadequacy of organisational work in them for aid to the British miners. The reflection of all this is the inadequacy of the collections made by the Sections and the organisations under their control.

A fifth conclusion can be drawn in connection with the poor utilisation the Sections have made of the tremendous work affected by the Russian workers in rendering aid to the British miners, also the criticism of the General Council by the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions and the attacks on the U.S.S.R. by the British and other bourgeoisies for having rendered fraternal aid to the miners. The press of the Parties in the

**Certain Lessons**—continued

majority of cases confined itself to brief informative notes, did not succeed in dealing with these questions, from the viewpoint of principle and did not utilise the materials on these questions which they had at their disposal.

The fact of the tremendous aid on the part of the Russian workers was not sufficiently connected up with the question as to the importance of the country of proletarian dictatorship in the struggle of the proletariat of other countries. The press has not used the "British campaign" in the U.S.S.R. to explain the difference in the conditions under which the international solidarity of the proletariat can be realised in the countries of capitalism and in the U.S.S.R. The Party press has insufficiently utilised the exemplary campaign of aid carried out in the U.S.S.R. in order to refute the Social-Democratic and ultra-Left ravings about the degeneration of the U.S.S.R. and the C.P.S.U.

**Theoretical Lessons**

The last conclusion concerns the question as to what extent the Comintern Sections utilised the lessons of the British strike in order to determine how correct are the Leninist strategy and tactics of the Comintern. It must be openly stated: the ideological work of the Sections has been extremely unsatisfactory. The theoretical organs of the Party and the daily press have not coped with the tasks of making clear the lessons of the British strike. Many papers did not even print in full the thesis of the E.C.C.I., leaving out the theoretical part!

The problem of the General Strike as a method of struggle of the proletariat, the problem of transforming the economic struggle into a political struggle, the General Strike into an open civil war, the problem of democracy, the problem of the decay of capitalism, the

problem of the approach of new class struggles, etc.—all these problems were not placed before the masses of the Continental proletariat by the Comintern Sections. The most that was done was to publish one or two articles during the first days of the strike in which these problems were casually referred to in a succinct manner. Meanwhile, the British strike sowed great doubts amongst the Social-Democratic masses as to the correctness of a number of Social-Democratic axioms, Social-Democratic teachings, in particular the Social-Democratic teachings concerning democracy (a reflection of these doubts was, for example, the article by Max Adler on Democracy).

**Hindrances to Winning Masses**

The Comintern Sections and, above all, the Party press failed to conduct systematic explanatory work which undoubtedly would have hastened the process of ideological opposition within the Social-Democratic ranks. Of course, in this field, as in all remaining fields of the "British campaign," the activity of the Parties varied. The American and German Sections, for instance, did a little more in the ideological field than others. The French Party, however, was one of the most backward in this field. In this respect "Humanité" reflected the weakness of the Party. "Humanité" did not pay due attention, not only to questions of principle, which arose in connection with the British strike, but even such concrete political questions as the Trades Union Congress, the Minority Conference, etc., which were only dealt with in "Humanité" on page 3 in small print. On the front page of "Humanité" there were sensational reports on family tragedies, photographs of Spanish princes, and information as to which one of them the King would hand over the throne, etc.

If we sum up the results of the "British campaign" we must say that it has only demonstrated how the existing weakness of ideological work within our Parties reflects on the work of winning the masses.

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# The Dutch T.U. Movement and the Tasks of the C.P. of Holland

L. De Visser

**T**HE Dutch trade union movement is unusually disjointed. The seven central organisations had the following membership on January 1st, 1926: the reformist central organisation (N.V.V.) 192,000 members; the revolutionary central organisation (N.A.S.) 14,000; the Catholic central organisation 92,000; the Christian (Calvinist) central organisation 49,000; the neutral central organisation (A.N.V.) 21,500; the central organisation of the brain workers 17,200; the anarcho-syndicalist central organisation (N.S.V.) 5,500. In addition, there are a number of small organisations with a total membership of 100,000 not attached to any trade union central body.

All of these centres have their own ideology; they have existed for decades, fight bitterly amongst themselves, and only in isolated cases work together against the employers. Naturally in a trade union movement of this kind, dominated by old traditions and traditions of enmities, the realisation of unity is a necessary as well as a difficult task. But it has only been in recent years, during the successful offensive of the employers against the divided trade union movement that propaganda in favour of unity has found a response among the masses.

As late as 1921 the congress of the N.A.S. (revolutionary) rejected "on principle" all co-operation with the reformist trade unions, except temporary agreements during strikes. Only a few months ago Stenhuis, President of the N.V.V. (reformist), declared that there could never be unity between the N.A.S. and the N.V.V.; that the N.A.S. would remain a collection of all "adventurist" "Moscovite" "quasi-revolutionary" elements.

Nevertheless, a change has taken place in the past few years. Signs are increasing which indicate that among the masses of the various organisations, above all among the workers in the revolutionary, reformist and neutral organisations, the idea of trade union unity is finding more and more support. This idea is also making headway among individual trade union leaders; they are beginning to see that together with a change in the methods of struggle trade union unity is necessary.

The development towards the Left in the reformist organisation is, however, still weak. Organisationally, it is carried on above all from the Communist fractions which are as yet weak. For example, the distribution of Fimmen's organ "De Eenheid" is carried out chiefly by Communists.

## The Revolutionary Trade Unions (N.A.S.)

The revolutionary trade union central organisation (N.A.S.), which has existed since 1893, has developed an ideology of its own in the course of its many years' struggle against the reformist and Christian trade unions. This ideology still places great difficulties in the way of carrying out a Communist trade union policy, al-

though it has been influenced very strongly by the events of the Russian Revolution and the revolutionary struggles in Central Europe, and has been adapted to the times in a revolutionary sense.

In 1921 the Communist Party of Holland abandoned its ultra-Left trade union policy, based exclusively on the N.A.S.; it attempted instead to unify the struggle and the organisation of the divided trade union movement. However, it did this mechanically and without regard for the traditions of the N.A.S. which are decades old. As a result it not only did not succeed in winning over the revolutionary trade unions, but actually came into open conflict with the N.A.S. After the struggle over affiliation to the R.I.L.U., the Anarcho-Syndicalist wing of the N.A.S. split off.

## Difficulties in Our Work

In May, 1925, the old leadership of the Dutch C.P. was changed; it was only then that the sharp contradictions between the C.P. and the N.A.S. could be gradually overcome. But even now the distrust of N.A.S. workers for the Party which developed during 1920-25 creates great difficulties for the Party in carrying out the united front tactics of co-operation with Fimmen and the Left Wing of the reformist unions.

At the congress of the N.A.S. which took place at the end of December in Amsterdam affiliation to the R.I.L.U. was finally decided upon. The congress adopted the resolutions proposed by the R.I.L.U. on the united front tactics and on co-operation with the Left Wing of the reformist unions; there were only a few votes against these resolutions. Nevertheless, there are still a number of difficulties in the N.A.S. which must be overcome.

On the other hand, during the British strike the N.A.S. did all in its power to facilitate the active solidarity of the Dutch workers. In this connection, however, it is worth while noting that even now the leadership of the N.A.S. seeks to avoid co-operation with the C.P. and thus impairs the pressure of Left Wing workers on the reformist leaders. It is the task of the C.P. through its fractions in the N.A.S. to overcome the existing difficulties and vaguenesses, and to achieve co-operation of the N.A.S. with the Left Wing workers in the reformist trade unions.

This task of the Party was made difficult during the past few months by the fact that the leading Communists on the N.A.S. Executive and on the executives of the federations evaded all co-operation with the Party Central Committee; they failed to attend meetings of the Central Committee, and trade union committees; they evaded participating in the fraction work of the Party; they are attempting to carry out a policy in the N.A.S. which is completely "independent" of the Party and is in contradiction to the trade union policy of the Party.

**The Dutch T.U. Movement**—continued**The Reformist Trade Unions (N.V.V.).**

The objective conditions for successful opposition work exist in the reformist trade unions (N.V.V.). During the past few years the reformist leaders have attempted to throttle every movement of the workers. All strikes against the capitalist offensive have been lost. The reformist tactics began to meet with resistance amongst the masses. After the members discovered in practice that the tactics of purely economic strikes led to nothing, they were more and more inclined towards the Left. Stenhuis expressed the will of the masses when he proposed at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Labour Party (S.D.A.P.), that the methods of the trade union and proletarian struggle should be changed.

After the Right leaders had carried out a sharp campaign against Stenhuis, he capitulated completely at the congress of the N.V.V. held in October. Stenhuis declared that in the future he would place himself at the disposal of the executive of the N.V.V. on the basis of the resolution passed by this executive on May 20, which declares that no change of any kind is necessary in the tactic pursued hitherto by the N.V.V.

Nevertheless, the reports of the British, Belgian and German Labour delegations which visited the U.S.S.R. the international activity of Fimmen, the publication of his organ "De Eenheid" ("Unity"), have helped to turn part of the reformist workers against their leaders.

In the course of this year "unity committees" have been formed in a number of towns (32). These committees were originally intended by Fimmen and Schmidt (editors of "De Eenheid") to be loose groups for the circulation of "De Eenheid." However, under the influence of the British miners' strike and the rapid development towards the Right of the Dutch Social-Democracy (its preparations for a coalition with the Catholics) these groups are on the way to becoming fighting organs—a Minority Movement in the reformist trade unions.

**Making Unity Real**

The Communist Party of Holland has instructed its fractions in the committees to hasten the transformation of these committees systematically. By September it had succeeded in making over half of the 32 committees move in this direction.

The practical activity of the committees has already been noticeable at meetings of the reformist trade unions. Resolutions were brought in favouring support for the British miners, for unity negotiations between the reformist and the revolutionary trade unions, for sending a Dutch Labour delegation to the U.S.S.R., etc.

The reformist leaders, including Stenhuis, are already conducting a sharp campaign against the committees; their press demands that the committees be liquidated and that the organ of Fimmen and Schmidt be suspended; they have demanded that all fraction builders should be expelled from the trade unions. Several expulsions have already taken place.

Late in September the organ of the N.V.V. "de Stryd" published a circular letter issued by the trade union commission of the C.P. which contained directions

for the work of the Communist fractions in the unity committees. The fractions were instructed to transform the committees into organs of a Minority Movement in the reformist trade unions. "De Stryd" demanded categorically that Fimmen and Schmidt should liquidate the unity committees and suspend the publication of "de Eenheid."

The following issue of "De Eenheid" replied that the publication and the committees would not be liquidated; but at the same time attacked the C.P. and its fraction work in the reformist trade unions, and in the unity committees.

On October 3 there took place in Amsterdam a conference of the "Unity Committees." This conference was called by Fimmen and Schmidt.

Those who called the conference together intended a clear break with the Communists. Schmidt made a sharp speech against the C.P.; he denied that it had any right to exist. The resolution proposed, which did not clearly take up the practical daily demands of the Dutch workers, was meant to provoke the revolutionary trade unions. The resolution was adopted by a very small majority, after a sharp discussion in which Schmidt threatened to resign. A few months previously Fimmen maintained the point of view that the individual N.A.S. organisations should not be dissolved and merged into the reformist organisations; but that the unity should take place between both central bodies. The resolution, on the other hand, contains a passage on the dissolution of the N.A.S. federations and their merging into the reformist trade unions. The discussion was not carried to the end. It is to be continued in a second conference which will be called after Fimmen's return from his trip to Mexico.

**An Attempt to Split**

The resolution read as follows:

"The comrades grouped around 'de Eenheid' pursue the following aims:

"(1) To strengthen and revolutionise the 'modern' (reformist) Labour movement (i.e., the reformist trade unions and the S.D.A.P.—L. de D.) which in Holland considers itself a movement offering the best possibility of bringing the working class to power. To fight systematically against every tendency which leads to a split in the trade union movement.

"(2) Organisational unity of the trade union movement: (a) International first of all with the Russian trade unions. Acceptance of these organisations in the vocational trade union secretariats. Amalgamation of the International Federation of Trade Unions with the R.I.L.U. (b) National: with as many workers as possible; at any rate with all workers who maintain the point of view of the class struggle; i.e., in Holland, amalgamation of the N.V.V. and the N.A.S., under present conditions can only mean the dissolution of the N.A.S. organisations to merge into the organisations of the N.V.V.

"(3) Constant and consistent educational work among the workers regarding the international class struggle and international solidarity; conscious organisational and theoretical preparation

**The Dutch T.U. Movement—continued**

for national and international mass action. Unconditional rejection of all co-operation—national and international—with the bourgeoisie, i.e., opposition to all alliance and coalition policies and preparations for such policies.

“(4) Complete right of the members in the trade unions to vote on all questions of principles, tactics and organisation.

“(5) Struggle against Fascism and defence of the Russian Revolution.

“(6) Support for the Eastern peoples in their struggle for complete political and economic emancipation from oppressive foreign powers, the Dutch included.”

**Aimed at Communists**

The first point of the resolution, which assumes the reformist trade unions and the Social-Democratic Labour Party as the basis of the Labour movement, was drafted with a view to breaking with the Communists. The second point—the dissolution of the N.A.S. federations into the reformist trade unions—was intended as a complete break with the N.A.S. The discussion on the sixth point showed that Fimmen and Schmidt maintained the reformist point of view on the question of Indonesia, which is of overwhelming importance for the Dutch working class. Fimmen stated that this point in the resolution did not mean a demand for the liberation of Indonesia from Holland. Fimmen said in part:

“In the Eastern question we cannot unconditionally support the slogan: ‘Indonesia free from Holland.’ This slogan is too general; oppression by another world power could be much worse than that of the Netherlands. We must help the Indonesian working class to free itself from the grip of international capitalism.”

On this point, then, Fimmen adopts the same attitude as the Dutch Right Wing reformists, who also consider the Dutch oppression of Indonesia as the lesser of two evils, and under this excuse support Dutch imperialism.

The Communist fraction at the conference was faced with the difficult task of preventing the split intended by Fimmen and Schmidt; they did in fact succeed in preventing the isolation of the Communists from the committees which, despite all their weaknesses and defects, represent the beginning of an organised Minority Movement.

**A Discussion**

Unfortunately, it must be stated that the leaders of the N.A.S. fell for the provocation of Schmidt which he intended in his speech, his articles in “de Eenheid” and several passages in the resolution. They demanded a sharp struggle against Fimmen and Schmidt and a break with them, as well as the exodus of the Communists from the unity committees.

Following the conference a discussion was started in the “Tribune” (the Party paper) in which a number of comrades organised in the N.A.S. took up this attitude. Several comrades intensified the question by

demanding that the C.P. must now choose between Fimmen and Schmidt and the alliance with the N.A.S.

The majority of the comrades and the editors of the paper maintained that the Communists should now intensify their work in the unity committees, win a majority in them and build them up into a fighting minority movement in the reformist trade unions.

The “Tribune” states that Schmidt and Fimmen as vacillating Left Wing Social-Democrats have retreated before the growing influence of the Communists in the committees and before the threats of the Right reformists. Their paper “de Eenheid” attacked sharply the attitude of the British and Dutch Right Wingers, and called for the support of the British miners. But at the same time it turned down a united action of support in favour of the British miners jointly with the C.P. and the N.A.S.; it also smoothed over the attitude of the Left members of the British General Council; it refused to do anything to prepare for stopping the transport of coal through Dutch ports. Its editorial staff had no clear line regarding the daily struggle of the Dutch workers and wrote nothing regarding the treacherous attitude of the reformist leaders in the Hamburg and Dunkirk dock strikes; they also wrote nothing about the sabotage of trade union unity in Bulgaria, although the “Tribune” continually demanded that they should express their attitude on this question. Instead, the last issue of the paper published a long criticism directed against the Communists. Nevertheless it would be a fatal error—wrote the “Tribune”—if the Communists left the Unity committees. Quite the contrary, now that the swing to the Right of Stenhuis has created a favourable situation for us to win influence in the reformist trade unions, the Communists should increase their work in the committees and attempt to transform them into fighting organs of the Minority Movement.

**The Party's Decision**

The Central Committee of the C.P. took up its position on this question on October 16th. The following resolution was adopted:

“The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Holland adopts the following decision regarding the conference of unity committees held on October 3rd, and the manner and form in which the organ ‘De Eenheid’ is edited:

“(1) Despite the intention of the editors of the ‘Eenheid’ to push them out of the committees, it is the duty of the comrades organised in the N.V.V. to increase their work in the committees.

“(2) A sharp but pointed critique must be carried on in order to convince the workers of the N.V.V. that the form and manner in which ‘de Eenheid’ is being edited is injurious to revolutionisation and unity.

“(3) That this criticism should be carried on in the ‘Tribune’ as well as in other Party organs, and in the unity committees by the comrades themselves.

“(4) It is at present necessary, in the face of the attacks on the C.P. of Holland to stress the fact that it is the task of the ‘Eenheid’ to treat of international (British, Bulgarian, etc.), and national events and questions; and that the edi-

**The Dutch T.U. Movement—continued**

torial staff of 'de Eenheid' has completely neglected this task in the last few months."

The "Tribune" of October 23rd in an editorial article once more adopted an attitude on this question and warned the comrades in the N.A.S. against a step which would result in a conflict with the Party and the tactics of the R.I.L.U.

The paper maintained that leading comrades of the N.A.S. and members of the Party did not appear at a meeting called by the Central Committee for the discussion of this question. The "Tribune" stated with satisfaction that the discussion showed that the overwhelming majority of the comrades who expressed their opinion in the paper and in the Party organisation favoured the correct point of view of remaining in the committees and building them up.

**Centrists Capitulating**

It is no accident that the capitulation of Stenhuis coincides with the retreat of the editors of "de Eenheid" (Fimmen and Schmidt) before the Right Wingers and their dissociation from and attack upon the Communists.

Stenhuis as well as Schmidt and Fimmen were frightened by the consequences of the British miners' strike; the strike brought them face to face with tasks which would have led to a severe conflict with the Right majority.

They faced the following choice: either together with the Communists to organise the rapidly growing opposition mood among the members of the Dutch reformist trade unions into a conscious Minority Movement and to fight to a finish with the Right Wing—or to capitulate to the Right Wing, and to evade the organisation of the Minority Movement. Stenhuis as well as Schmidt and Fimmen did not dare to draw this logical conclusion from the development towards the Left which they began in 1923.

Despite their surrender to the Right Wing, however, the development towards the Left of the members of the reformist trade unions will continue. The period of incidental, cautious revolutionary speeches of isolated "Left" leaders has ended. There is now beginning the period of steady, systematic organisation of a fighting Minority Movement. The C.P. of Holland has now taken the first correct steps to organise the opposition reformist workers. It is the main task of the Party to concentrate its forces on this work.

In addition to the unity committees there are other indications of an organised Minority Movement in the reformist trade unions. Thus, for example, the Communist fraction in the Rotterdam section of the reformist railway union organised a Committee of Action comprising 200 members; this committee is publishing a weekly for the railway workers. In the Amsterdam section of the railway union a similar committee of action is being prepared by the Communist fraction.

**The Christian Trade Unions**

In 1920 the Catholic trade unions had 160,000 members; following the crisis and the lost strikes, the membership dropped to 93,000. These trade unions recruit their followers primarily from the Catholic provinces of the South, where the influence of the Socialist

movement is still weak. The Catholic trade unions do not object to strikes; they have participated in nearly all the bigger strikes of the past few years. The leaders are strongly under the influence of the Pope. However, temporarily as a stopgap against the great dissatisfaction they tolerate a certain amount of radicalisation. The democratic revolts in the Catholic State party are carried on chiefly by the Catholic workers; these recently carried out a split and founded the "Catholic People's Party." This Party succeeded in the July elections of 1925 in obtaining a seat in Parliament.

**"Christian" Scabs**

It is the task of the C.P. to penetrate into the Catholic trade unions also, and there to facilitate the swing towards the Left. If the C.P. were numerically stronger and better organised it could doubtless succeed in this. Already in putting up demands for the united front it must deal with the Catholic workers. It would, however, be a mistake if the Party made concessions to points of view emanating from N.A.S. circles, which seek to postpone the organisational unity of the N.A.S. and N.V.V. until after general trade union unity is achieved, even with the Catholic trade unions.

The Christian trade unions (Calvinists) fight only in isolated cases. Most often they act as strike-breakers. They are composed of backward workers from the small factories, but they also contain the workers in the big fisheries—workers who come mostly from the fishing villages. There are some connections with these workers through the Transport Workers' Federation of the N.A.S.

The Anarcho-Syndicalist unions which split off from the N.A.S. in 1923, with a membership of 9,000, have now dropped to a membership of only about 5,000. There is a sharp contradiction between the extreme Anarchist elements and those who are more inclined towards reformism. There is a possibility of a new split and the return of a part of the cigar workers, the textile and metal workers into the N.A.S. The existence of this central organisation gave part of the N.A.S. leaders the chance to avoid a close alliance with the C.P. on the grounds that N.A.S. workers might desert to the Anarcho-Syndicalists. Under the same pretext they evaded all propaganda for the organisational unity of the N.A.S. and the N.V.V. and created difficulties for Fimmen's organisation.

The "neutral" central organisation (A.N.V.), which is under the influence of the bourgeois democrats, is practically on the point of dissolution. By means of fractions within the neutral trade unions, the Social-Democrats and reformist unions first put forward the idea of the amalgamation of the neutral and the reformist central organisations, and after the failure of these unity negotiations, they took over part of the neutral trade unions.

**Tasks of the C.P.**

The Dutch trade union movement is not only unusually divided; it contains only a very small part of the 1,800,000 wage earners—workers, office employees, and civil servants. Since 1920 the number of workers organised in the trade unions has dropped from 676,000 to 380,000. In several industries the percentage of organised workers is relatively higher; for example, printers, 78 per cent.; railway workers, 84 per cent.;

**The Dutch T.U. Movement**—continued

tobacco workers, 83 per cent. The percentage is lower, however, among miners with 30 per cent.; metal workers, 33 per cent.; factory workers, 28 per cent.; transport workers, 30 per cent.

The task of the C.P. consists not only in striving for unity of the divided trade union movement and fighting for the leadership of the organised workers, but the Party must carry on systematic campaigns in order to draw the unorganised workers into the trade unions.

The next tasks of the C.P. in the field of trade union work may be stated as follows:

(1) To work out a programme of action, concrete daily demands, and the reorganisation of the trade unions as industrial unions with proletarian democracy; this programme to be the basis for organising a fighting Minority Movement in the reformist, neutral and Catholic unions.

(2) To put up a concrete programme for trade union unity based on a dissolution of the organisational connections between the reformist trade unions and the Social-Democratic Labour parties; to establish Labour democracy in the trade unions, and the freedom to propagate revolutionary methods of struggle.

(3) To organise a Minority Movement; to support every attempt of the workers to oppose the tactic of the reformist leaders. To co-operate with the separate

groups and alliances of Left workers in the reformist trade unions (Fimmen-Schmidt unity committees, committees of action, etc.), and to re-organise these groups into organs of a conscious minority.

(4) To organise a Communist fraction in every trade union. To work out concrete directions for fraction work in the trade unions, unity committees, committees of action, etc.

(5) To regulate correctly the relations and co-operation of the Party with the N.A.S.

(6) To build up the Communist fractions in the N.A.S. whose chief tasks must be: (a) to win over the N.A.S. workers so that the N.A.S. supports the Minority Movement in the reformist, neutral and Catholic unions, and wherever possible to co-operate with it, and to carry on such a concrete unity policy that the reformist workers realise that the N.A.S. really wishes to bring about unity on the basis of point 2 of the programme referred to above; (b) to work toward a systematic and rational building up of the N.A.S. in those factories and trades which offer possibilities.

(7) To win over the workers organised in the trade unions to active support of the struggle of the Indonesian workers and peasants, for the complete liberation of Indonesia from Dutch imperialism.

(8) To carry on propaganda in the trade unions for sending a Dutch labour delegation to the U.S.S.R.

(9) To carry out a wide campaign for the organisation of the unorganised workers in the trade unions.

# Re-Organisation of the Smaller Sections of the Communist International

M. Grollman

**D**URING the past year efforts have been made to re-organise the small Sections of the Communist International on the basis of factory groups. The accumulation of experience, of a positive and negative character, enables us to lay down the main lines along which this re-organisation has proceeded and will proceed in the future. It will help us also to define the general characteristics common to a number of Sections of the Communist International.

If we examine the social standing and the occupation of the members of these small organisations we observe that the number of Communists employed in large enterprises is very small. The number of Communists who work in groups of two or three in a single enterprise is relatively small, whereas the number of individual Communists working singly in the various enterprises is relatively large, i.e., each of these comrades may be the only Communists employed in the particular factory. These Sections have a relatively large number of members who are not employed in large factories (housewives, small artisans, clerks, representatives of the liberal professions, etc.). These facts can be illustrated by the following figures.

In Copenhagen, for example, out of four hundred members of the city organisation about two hundred and fifty are employed in factories, the rest are not so employed. Of the two hundred and fifty employed in fac-

tries, one hundred work singly and the rest work in groups of two or three in a single enterprise.

Take the Dutch Party. The Amsterdam city organisation has five hundred and thirty members of whom three hundred and thirty-five are employed in factories. Of these, one hundred work singly and the rest in groups of two or three. Both in Copenhagen and in Amsterdam, groups of five to seven members are rare. In Copenhagen there are four or five such groups, with a total membership of from forty to fifty. In Amsterdam there are only ten such groups, with a total membership of fifty to sixty.

While a certain amount of activity may be observed in the groups, and work of one kind or another is being carried on, the Communists working singly in various enterprises or in groups of two or three, i.e., the majority of the proletarian sector of our Party in these countries who are employed in industry, carry on hardly any Party work in the places where they are employed, nor do they behave as Communists and Party members. In the overwhelming majority of cases they are inactive.

The figures mentioned above and the inactivity referred to apply to Belgium, with this difference, however, that the number of members employed in industry is proportionally higher and owing to favourable political conditions they exhibit greater activity. They

**Reorganisation of Sections**—continued

also apply partly to Austria, Switzerland (not including Basle and Zurich) and a number of other sections of Communist youth.

The common feature of all the small Sections of the Communist International is the relatively low level of political development of the Party members. The principal reason for this is the almost complete absence of political activity on the part of many of our Sections; only as a result of the political activity of the Section can new groups of active and leading Party workers be brought to the front. Hardly in any of these Sections is political educational work organised sufficiently or on proper lines. The framework of Party officials consists of insignificant numbers. It is the smallest Sections that stand most in need of good leading Party workers, and it is precisely in these Sections that these Party workers are lacking.

The number of Party workers capable of conducting and leading Party work in our small Sections can be literally counted on one's fingers. Under such conditions it is quite understandable that the majority of Party members in these Sections have no experience of Party work, or if they have it is usually experience of a Social-Democratic character, inherited from the period when these members belonged to the Social-Democratic Party.

**Little "Home Politics"**

Another characteristic feature common to all the smaller Sections is the weakness of the Party apparatus and the Party leadership. They develop a minimum of initiative and system in their work. In the majority of cases there is insufficient contact between the Party centres and the subordinate organisations. Very often there is no connecting link between the Party committees and the members of the subordinate organisations. Conferences and lectures to Party workers, secretaries and members of subordinate organisations are very rarely and sporadically arranged. Therefore, it is not surprising that decisions passed by the Central Committee on any question do not go any further than the Central Committee, or else reach the members of the Party in an obviously inadequate form, i.e., either through a "circular" or through the central organ of the Party.

As for the central organs, they are not conducted in such a manner as to enable the Party members clearly to understand the particular question confronting the Party. The central organs in the majority of cases provide hardly any material for every-day agitation in the factory or the trade union; there are hardly any other sources from which this material can be obtained; and consequently the Party member is left entirely to his own resources—which means that the decisions of the Party Committee are badly carried out.

Taking all this into consideration it becomes clear that the small Sections of the Communist International lag behind the larger Sections and the process of their re-organisation is one of extreme difficulty. As a matter of fact the task that confronts the smaller Sections is that of strengthening the small number of existing groups, and creating the material conditions necessary for a thorough reorganisation, i.e., establishing additional groups and drawing the Party members work-

ing singly in various enterprises into every-day Party work. The principal pre-requisite for this is to enlarge the basis of the Party, first of all recruiting workers employed in big industry into the ranks of the Party, and also workers employed in those enterprises where one or two Communists are employed, in order to form factory groups there. Unless we extend the proletarian sector of our small sections, by recruiting into them workers employed in industry, the task of reorganisation cannot be fulfilled.

**Lack of Organisation**

The principal task of reorganisation therefore is to recruit new members for the Party. This task, of course, is of a profoundly political character. To conduct a proper policy that will be understood by the masses, that corresponds with their interests and outlines the correct prospects for the future, is the only way in which the Party can achieve successes in its recruiting work. Increased efforts of the Party towards this will only produce results in so far as a proper policy is adopted in this connection.

From this point of view, however, the situation in the smaller Sections is far from being satisfactory. In the first place up to this very day these Sections have failed to recognise that it is necessary to base themselves in their everyday work upon the industrial proletariat, and to select as the principal object of their activities the workers employed in the factories.

Secondly, the political line of the Sections in the majority of cases is still such as does not help them very much in their mass work and particularly in their recruiting work. As an example we may quote the character of the work of the Communist Party of Holland in the period from September, 1925, to May, 1926. During that time the Party in Amsterdam organised the following mass meetings: on September 9th, International Youth Day; September 15th, against the Terror in China; September 20th, in connection with the political crisis; September 23rd, on the Trade Union Movement; October 3rd, jointly with International Red Aid, against the Terror in China; October 22nd, against the Terror in Poland; November 1st; Mass Meeting organised by I.C.W.P.A.; November 5th, on the Political Crisis; November 7th and 8th, Anniversary of the Russian Revolution; November 19th, Political Crisis; January 24th, 1926, Lenin Memorial Meeting; February 22nd, against the Terror in Indonesia; March 8th, International Women's Day; March 12th, Political Crisis; March 18th, Paris Commune; April 19th, Social Democratic Party Congress; May 1st; May Day Demonstrations; May 10th, General Strike in England; May 27th, Communist Party Congress.

**New Members Needed**

Thus during these nine months the Party organised twenty-two mass meetings. In December, owing to the Christmas holidays, and in April, owing to the Easter holidays, one meeting in each month was held, but in "normal" months three meetings per month were held. Looking at it from the point of view of quantity, we must say that considerable activity was displayed, but from the point of view of quality it leaves much to be desired.

The majority of the meetings were called in con-

**Reorganisation of Sections**—continued

nection with Terror in one country or another, or meetings in connection with the international campaigns, at which the attendance of Communists was obligatory. The Party in Amsterdam did not appeal to the workers on questions of home politics more than six or seven times. It must be clear that this kind of work cannot be very attractive to the masses of workers.

Surely during these nine months there must have been cases in Holland of strikes, lock-outs, of agreements between workers and employers coming to an end, and incidents of this kind? Surely there must have been cases providing opportunities for exposing the treachery of the Social Democrats and the reformist trade union leaders to the masses. It is impossible to believe that the Amsterdam organisation could not find concrete questions of home politics in Holland to bring to the notice of the masses of the workers. Are the Amsterdam workers so content with their economic and political conditions that agitation and propaganda work by the Party on these lines would find no response among them? We think that the reply to this question will not be one that supports the manner in which the Communist Party of Holland developed its work during these nine months. We are convinced that if the Party worked on more concrete lines its effect among the Dutch workers would be considerably greater. As it is, the abstract character of the Party work could not possibly help the Party to establish permanent contact with the masses of the working class, let alone help it to recruit its forces.

Work conducted on these lines cannot result in increased membership, however much the Party may urge upon its members in the factories or upon its factory groups systematically to bring new members into the Party; as long as they follow such a political line these efforts must fail. In order to achieve palpable results the Party must draw up a concrete programme of action, and on the basis of that programme organise its work in the factories and in the trade unions, and

thereby carry on the organisational work of the Party as a whole and that of each individual member.

On the basis of this programme the Party should appeal to the masses with concrete questions and demands that arise from the masses themselves and affect their direct interests. Moreover these questions and demands should be formulated in such a manner as to rouse among the masses the sense of their contact with the Party as the leader which they should follow. Only by working on these lines can the recruiting work of the Party, conducted through meetings, groups, fractions, or the work of individual Communists, meet with any success. Only in this way can we overcome the inactivity of the rank and file member and attract into the every-day Party work the Communist groups, the Communist fractions and the individual Communists (particularly the latter).

Of course, we may continue to give these Parties directions on organisational questions, formulating them in half a dozen or a dozen points. But these recipes will not be of much use in curing the Parties of their defects, any more than the instructions they received during the course of 1925-26. Quite enough directions and instructions have been sent them but these instructions cannot be carried out as long as these Sections retain their old policies. If we want to continue our work of reorganising these Sections (and it is absolutely necessary to do so), if we want to maintain and develop the few factory groups that exist—and this is one of the fundamental tasks of these Parties—if we want to increase the activity of the Communist fractions and the individual Communists, then the small Sections must seriously revise their policy, change the character of their activities, and draw up a concrete practical programme of action. Upon this depends the whole of the future mass and recruiting work of each Party, and consequently the success of reorganising the small Sections of the Communist International upon the basis of factory groups.

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# The Purchase of Grain in the Soviet Union

P. Alexandrov

**T**HE harvest and the purchasing of grain play an important role in the economy of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and serve as an important index of the economic development of the country for the near future. Upon the extent of the harvest depends to an enormous extent the rate of development of the whole national economy. The success of the grain purchases determine the extent of the exports of grain, which in its turn determines the extent of the import of raw materials and equipment for industry, and, consequently, to a considerable degree determines the whole process of the industrialisation of the country. Upon the extent of the grain purchases also depends the supply of grain to the industrial districts and to those agrarian districts producing raw materials for industrial purposes, as for example cotton.

The harvest in the U.S.S.R. this year\* exceeds that of last year. In 1924-25 the total harvest of grain amounted to 4,356 million poods,† while by August, 1926, the quantity of grain harvested during the season 1925-26 amounted to 4,800 million poods. The rainy weather in September caused a reduction of the harvest by 146 million poods. Nevertheless, the total harvest this year will exceed that of last year by 250 to 300 million poods.

We will now examine the progress of grain purchasing in relation to the monthly plans and according to separate crops. For this purpose we will take the period up to the 25th of October, for which we have complete returns. Up to that period 107.9 per cent. of the monthly plans for monthly purchases of all grain had been realised.

The increase in the purchases as compared with last year according to the various crops is as follows: wheat, -69.6 per cent.; maize, +109.8 per cent.; oats, +54.7 per cent.; there was a reduction of rye purchases by 7.2 per cent., barley by 50.9 per cent., oil seed by 52.9 per cent. and miscellaneous by 40.7 per cent. From the beginning of the season up to October 25th of this year the proportion of wheat and oats purchases has considerably increased. The purchases of wheat and oats amounted to 39.1 per cent. and 23.1 per cent. respectively in excess of the plan, miscellaneous 13.4 per cent. in excess of the plan, while the purchasing plan for other grain was not fulfilled. The increase in the proportion of wheat in the grain purchases in the first months of this year is due entirely to the unfavourable climatic conditions (rain) that prevailed in the north-eastern districts of the Union during July and August, which delayed for a month and more the harvest of rye, barley, oil seeds and "miscellaneous" crops. In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions in the north-eastern districts, in the first months of the quarter, grain purchasing operations were concentrated in the

wheat growing districts in the northern Caucasus and in the Crimea. Only when the weather improved in September was progress made in the purchase of rye and other grains. It is worthy of mention that the purchases of wheat during the whole of the period under review were extremely successful, in spite of the fact that the harvest of wheat in the North Caucasus and the Crimea this year was less than last year (in the North Caucasus by 128 million poods and in the Crimea by 12 million poods). This was compensated by better harvests on the Volga, the central wheat belt and in Kazakstan.

The latter circumstances as well as the whole progress of the grain purchases completely upsets the panicky theory of the Opposition concerning the "strike" of the peasantry against the Communist Party and the Soviet authorities, about the growth of "Kulak"\* influence in the rural districts, and the collapse of the economic policy of the Party, etc., etc.

It is becoming perfectly clear that the failure to carry out the grain purchasing plans last year is due to the mistakes and the miscalculations made by a number of economic organs, which it must be said were at that time under the management of the leaders of the Opposition. The failure was not in the least due to a peasant "strike."

Last year allowance was not made for the peasantry's need to accumulate a certain quantity of grain following on the bad harvests of the past few years. These stocks of grain are absolutely necessary for peasant economy as some insurance against natural calamities. In addition to the mistakes made in the calculations and exaggerated plans last year, the high prices of grain that then prevailed served as a contributory factor to the partial failure of the season. The absence of a firm prices policy held out the prospect of higher prices to the peasantry, and naturally served as an inducement to the peasants to hold up their stocks. All this taken together led to the purchases lagging behind the plans, to the superfluous expenditure of State resources and finally led to the failure of the season. This year the situation has steadily changed. We see a steady and normal increase in grain purchases this year, whereas last year the increase of grain purchases was retarded and towards October actually declined. Grain purchasing prices this year are lower than last year by an average of 12 per cent., and the index of prices is practically stationary for the whole period.

An increase of agricultural prices would lead to a whole series of difficulties in the economy of the country: reduction of real wages, increase in prices of manufactured goods, fluctuation of currency, etc. It will be possible this year to carry out more successfully a policy of steady agricultural prices owing to the diminution of the disruptive role of private capital in the sphere of grain purchases. Last year, in August, private grain purchases amounted to 17 per cent. of the total purchases and in September to 22.8 per cent. This year, however, the share of private purchases amounted to 11 per

\* Written in 1926.

† 1 pood equals 36.11 lbs.; 62 poods being approximately equal to 1 ton (English). Thus 4,650 million poods equals roughly 75 million tons.

\* Kulaks are peasant exploiters.

**The Purchase of Grain**—continued

cent. and 6.4 per cent. respectively. An extremely beneficial influence upon the progress of the purchase of grain this year was exercised by the measures taken to cut down and simplify the grain purchasing apparatus, which eliminated the element of competition.

In addition to a current price policy and the improvement in the organisation of the grain purchasing apparatus, mention should also be made of an objective factor operating in the same direction which undoubtedly exercised profound influence upon the grain purchasing operations. This factor is the shortage of manufactured goods. The shortage of goods this year affects certain categories of manufactured goods, as for example, certain sorts of textile goods, hardware, leather goods and vegetable oils. There is no shortage in other goods, in fact in certain categories there is even a certain surplus.

There is every reason to suppose that the shortage of manufactured goods this year will be considerably less than that of last year. According to certain calculations the shortage this year will amount to 200 to 250 million roubles as against 380 million roubles last year.

The successful fulfilment of the grain purchasing plans to a large measure depends upon the extent to which are able to supply manufactured goods to the peasantry at prices that are acceptable to them. On the other hand success in grain purchasing will increase exports and thus increase the State's sources of supply, accelerate the development of industry, help to abolish the shortage of goods and consequently help to reduce the prices of manufactured goods. The Communist Party has adopted the only correct economic policy. By the exertion of all its strength, and the efforts of the Soviet Government and of all organisations, it will successfully carry out the policy it has adopted.

# The German Workers Swing to the Left

H. Remmele

**I**N a recent of the "Communist International" we pointed out the strong and increasing tendencies towards the Left within the German working class. Despite the fact that one of the strongest factors in this swing to the Left, which at that time we considered to be a proof of its development, has since then decreased in effect and significance, a further increase in the development of these tendencies can be recorded.

One of the strongest factors to be noted in this development is the catastrophic economic situation and the mass employment in Germany. This factor deserves renewed clarification. The number of unemployed who received "doles" amounted in June, 1925, to less than 200,000; by December, 1925, the number had risen to over one million, and by the first quarter of this year it had risen to over two millions. From June of last year until May of this year the number of unemployed increased eleven-fold; at the same time the number of part-time workers amounted to over two millions; so that it can be said without exaggeration that more than a third, or almost one half, of all Germany's workers have been exposed to a destructive life of starvation.

During the summer months there came a turning-point in these grim statistics. On September 1st there were recorded only 1,540,000 unemployed receiving a "dole"; on September 15th the number was 1,483,000; on October 1st it was 1,394,000, and the most recent figures to hand, those of October 15th, show 1,339,000. The number of part-time workers fell in the same way, and to-day the number of overtime workers and workers employed under increased working hours should be as numerous as the part-time workers. There is no doubt that the economic situation has improved in certain respects. The number of unemployed has decreased by at least 800,000; the same thing has happened in regard to the number of part-time workers; while at the same time the number of workers working longer hours has also increased considerably.

This change in Germany's economic situation, however, by no means signifies that unemployment as a mass phenomenon will disappear in a short time, and that the old "normal condition" of the German working class will once more return. The complete re-grouping of the technical apparatus of production and the simultaneous re-grouping of capitalist forms of organisation and the limitation of markets make it certain that a permanent army of millions of unemployed will be at the service of German capitalism.

As the above figures show, this important factor in the radicalisation of the working class has now rather fallen into the background, has lost that predominating importance which we still could ascribe to it several months ago. All the more strongly stand out the other factors which are provoking and hastening the move to the Left of the working class.

In the first place the factor of "rationalisation" is now becoming stronger; this retards the process of reducing unemployment and increases the exploitation of the workers. Secondly, a subjective factor is becoming stronger and stronger. This factor—and today it is perhaps the most important—is the increasing effect that can be noted of the policy and strategy of winning over the masses of the workers to the aims and ideas of Communism, a policy laid down in the Open Letter of the Comintern to the German Party.

In order to evaluate this factor, certain figures are very instructive. The influence of the Communists among the German workers may be illustrated by the figures for votes received by Communists at elections and in the trade unions.

These statistics show that Communist influence among the German workers was strongest during the May elections of 1924. Within ten months the number of votes had dropped to one-half, while the number of votes received by the Social Democrats rose proportionately.

Similar phenomena appeared in all other fields of

### German Workers Swing to Left—continued

the Labour movement. Here for example are a few figures from the trade union movement: during the years 1921-23 we were able to send considerable fractions to the annual meetings of the trade unions and to the Trade Union Congress, but we were all but shut out during the years 1924-25; our influence in the trade unions had fallen to zero.

### Stronger in the Unions

At the Trade Union Congress of 1922 we had almost one-third of all the delegates, at the Trade Union Congress of 1925 we had only two delegates in a total of 300. At the General Assembly of the Metal Workers' Union in 1923, we had one-third of all the delegates, i.e., more than 60; at the elections of the metal workers to the Trade Union Congress of 1925 we had only one delegate.

Now there is a swing in the opposite direction. In July 1926 we received one-sixth of all the delegates to the Metal Workers' Congress, about thirty odd. Similar facts could be recorded in all other trade unions and other mass organisations of the proletariat. These figures show more clearly than anything else that the influence of the Communists on the workers is essentially effected by the policy and strategy developed and carried out by the Party.

The last few days have brought us a new indication of the steady tendency for a Left orientation of the workers. The elections to the Landtag of Saxony (Saxon parliament) held on October 31st emphasise even more strongly than the trade union elections of the summer the increasing influence of the Communists. This election brought us a vote of 342,112, as against 266,864 votes in the elections of 1922. This means an increase of 77,000 votes since 1922—and a gain of 49,000 votes over the figures for the Reichstag elections in December 1924.

All the same, even in this election we did not quite reach our figures in the May 1924 election. The votes of the Social Democrats dropped from 1,060,247 in 1924 to 856,168 this year—a drop of more than 200,000. The number of seats won by the Social Democrats dropped from 40 to 35; ours rose from 10 (actually 9) to 14.

### Party Growing

That is the numerical expression of a noticeable swing to the Left in the German working class. To these figures it may be added that up to July of this year the number of members of the Party had risen by more than 20,000, while the number of subscribers to the Party press had risen by more than 40,000, despite the mass unemployment which has taken place since the reorganisation of the Party policy and Party leadership. This rising movement in the Party organisation and Party press has continued since July; unfortunately we have not more recent figures at our disposal.

Another aspect of the Left development of the working class expresses itself in the resistance of the Social Democratic workers to the Reformist policy of their Party leaders. As recently as August 1925 the Heidelberg Party Congress of the Social Democrats could

decide almost unanimously to participate in a government coalition with the heavy industrialists of the German Volkspartei; and when this decision was reported to the workers in the Party there was practically no opposition. To-day nearly all members of the Party Executive to participate in a "Great Coalition."

Even among membership groups as far to the Right as those of Breslau, Hamburg, Hanover and Halle, there is to-day the clearest rebellion against the Reformist policy which for years has been endured and supported by the Social-Democratic workers. As we stated in No. 23 of the "Communist International" the Social Democratic workers forced their leaders to capitulate four times to the Communists during the campaign for the expropriation of the ex-royalties.

### Social Democrats' Admission

The Social Democratic press itself proves that this Left development of the working class involves more than the desperate masses of unemployed (as the Social Democratic press likes to pretend in justification of its policy). Among many other witnesses the "Leipziger Volkszeitung" had to declare after the elections in Saxony: "A large number of Social Democratic followers have gone over to the Communists." In another place the paper says: "The Communists were indisputably successful in the factories, and that was decisive for the elections." Thus Social Democracy itself declares that Communist influence among the "desperate masses" of the unemployed is not as strong as among the workers who are in the factories. This was said by Social Democrats who were in the midst of the election movement and could most accurately observe where Communist influence gained most. This is a proof that the swing to the Left, the march of the proletarian masses out of the reformist camp into the revolutionary class trenches of Communism, has involved the entire working class in all its component parts. The Left orientation of the German working class is a phenomenon which has simultaneously involved the whole class in all its parts.

The increasing influence of the Party in the trade unions, the fact that the Party is beginning to win workers in the factories for itself, can be ascribed not least to the reorganisation of the Party on the basis of factory nuclei.

The important tasks which for over a year have been placed so insistently before the German Communist Party through the policy and initiative of the Comintern are being carried out; this means the revolutionising of the working class. Our task is, between two waves of revolution, during a stage of revolutionary ebb, of the partial stabilisation of capitalism and a noticeable strengthening of bourgeois power, to prepare the coming epoch of revolution and make ready for the great revolutionary struggle, to fill the working masses with the ideology of the revolutionary class struggle, and thus consciously and with foresight organise and prepare the new revolutionary wave. That is the obvious tendency which has appeared in a strong form in the German Labour movement.

Moscow, November 12, 1926.



## “Cahiers du Bolchevisme”

“CAHIERS DU BOLCHEVISME.” September, October, November, Nos. 57—61. Published by the Communist Party of France, at 120 rue Lafayette,\* Paris.

**D**URING the past year the French Communist Party has made an effort to make the contents of its fortnightly theoretical journal more original and more French, less dependent on clippings from papers and journals of the Communist International. With the exception of articles on the problems debated in the Soviet C.P., in connection with which the “Cahiers” have given extensive extracts from Stalin and Marx on the problem of Socialist construction, nearly all the articles written during the three months enumerated have been written by French comrades.

But although this shows considerable progress with regard to contributors, which must be encouraged, one cannot say the same of the actual subjects treated. The majority of the articles by the French comrades deal with questions of foreign policy and are of an **international** order. The articles dealing with the **internal** political situation, with the more important problems of the French Labour movement in the present situation, with the slogans and activity of the Party, the trade union movement and the working class struggles, occupy too modest a place: they are superficial and rarely written by comrades who belong to the Party leadership.

During these three months all the essential problems of foreign policy have been dealt with. We might mention an article on the League of Nations and the Mediterranean problem by Meunier in No. 57; a study by Péri on the 7th Session of the League of Nations in No. 58; while in No. 59 there is an editorial by Semard on the problem of the debts to America, a study by Berlioz of the European steel trust, and an article by Leicigue on the victorious march of the Canton armies.

### Typical Issues

This last issue can be taken as the most typical example of what we reproach the “Cahiers” with, three-quarters of the journal is taken up with international questions, whereas French questions, especially questions of the Labour movement, are reduced to a three page note by Raveau on the fight of the employers against the sliding scale and a review of events which is nothing more than a calendar of political and trade union events of the fortnight.

In No. 60 there is a conscientious study by Péri of the steel cartel and the Thoiry agreements, and a note on the congress of the British Party by Bernard.

In No. 61 there is an important article by Doriot on the attitude of the C.P. in regard to the Franco-Italian conflict. This article is a resumé of a report made by him on the subject of an information meeting of the Paris district. There are certain omissions, especially concerning the Party tasks. Although the Chauvinist role of the Socialist Party is mentioned in passing, it is remarkable that amongst the

\* The “Cahiers du Bolchevisme” and other publications of the French C.P. are obtainable at the Communist Bookshop, 16, King Street, London, W.C.2. (Fortnightly, 6d.; subscription rates on application.)

eight tasks which Doriot enumerates for the Party there is no mention of the most essential task of combating the Chauvinism and social patriotism of the Social Democrats, who to-day mask themselves under anti-fascism just as in 1914 they assumed the disguise of a struggle of democracy against Hohenzollern imperialism; thus masked this attitude finds an echo even in our nuclei and journals. It is only by a methodical and fierce struggle against the social patriotism of the Social Democrats that we shall be able to eradicate these conceptions from our own ranks and make the working class understand the true nature of the war which is being prepared by Italian and French imperialism.

Amongst the international problems treated during these three months mention may also be made of the articles by Treint in No. 57 on his favourite thesis “Europe and America,” and in No. 61 on the same subject under another title (The entry of Germany into the League and the Franco-German rapprochement). Although on September 15th the Secretariat of the Party announced that there would be a reply to Treint, the journal published a second study by Treint on November 27th without a single comment or a single word of reply.

### Contradictions in Outlook

These articles contradict all other studies on the international situation. The contradiction is especially striking in the issue of November 27th where, after the article in which Doriot correctly warns the Party and the working class about the growing conflict between Italy and France, Treint calmly asserts “the growing solidarity of the European imperialist powers,” and “the tendencies of the European imperialist States to strengthen the solidarity against the common enemy, to bring this into the foreground and relegate European contradictions into the background.”

When we read such contradictory opinions on the international situation side by side we wonder why the Editorial Board does not express its own opinions, but rests content with presenting its readers with contradictory opinions of members of the Central Committee in order that they themselves make the choice.

As soon as we pass from the field of international questions to internal questions and problems of the Labour movement, we find omissions that are absolutely incomprehensible. With the exception of two leading articles by Semard in Nos. 58 and 60 respectively, which only deal with questions of internal French politics in a general manner, there is no article by members of the Party leadership on problems of the French Labour movement, on the slogans and tasks of the Party. The articles by Thorez on the Party campaign only covers organisational tasks and does not indicate the content and political significance of the campaign.

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**Cahiers du Bolchevisme**—continued

However, the editors of the "Cahiers" have attempted in these three numbers to fill this void by a "review" of events of the past fortnight, a review of internal politics and of the trade union movement. These are simple chronological statements of facts which in this form are of no great interest, but before suppressing this novelty, the Party leadership would do well to try to transform this review into a political exposition of the facts of the past fortnight in order to make readers understand the developments and to examine the activity and policy of the Party in respect to political and social events. Started in this manner this review of the fortnight's events could become an excellent means of guiding and stimulating Party activities, by giving all members a chance to get a good understanding of the political events and thereby the capacity to react to them in accordance with the instructions of the Party.

Amongst the studies on the internal situation mention can be made of two articles by Raveau, one on "An aspect of the Chateau-Regnault strike," and the other on "The struggle of the employers against the sliding scale," and his fortnightly trade union notes. These few brief notes on various subjects contain the embryo of a more systematic and searching work which must be encouraged.

An article by Le Gleo on the sliding scale contains the above mentioned article by Raveau on the same subject, statements which prove that this slogan of the Party and of the C.G.T.U. deserves serious examination.

**A Dangerous Suggestion**

These comrades separate the struggle for the sliding scale from the general slogan of an increase in wages. Le Gleo writes "The readjustment of wages is one question, the increase of wages is another and the sliding scale is a third question." He thinks it is regrettable confusion to link up these questions with each other. The problem of the sliding scale, thus isolated from the struggle to increase wages, becomes a new method of wage fixing which does away with struggles for "wage demands" and "sporadic" agitation, wages automatically following the cost of living index. Raveau says:

"The sliding scale has replaced an arbitrary method of wage demands by a scientific method of calculating wage rates; it tends to replace a disordered method of sporadic agitation by something co-ordinated."

For this scientific system to function it is sufficient that the employers and workers come to agreement on an "equitable" initial wage and on a "just" index. Le Gleo admits this is not an easy thing, as 1914 wages were already insufficient and the official index is fixed, but for him the essential thing is to recognise the "**Principle of wage variation in accordance with the variation in the cost of living.**"

These quotations suffice to show what a dangerous path our Party is treading, if by separating the question of the sliding scale from the question of wage increases it thinks this is a new method replacing the old methods of wage

demands and sporadic agitation—in other words, if it considers this to be a means of **evading the class struggle** for wage increases, by means of an accord between employers and workers with the object of automatically raising **or lowering** the workers' wages in accordance with the cost of living figure.

We may also mention a good conscientious article by Rosa Michel on capitalist rationalisation and an essay by Juin, who raises and develops a number of interesting questions.

This brief enumeration of articles discloses the omissions in the journal. There is not a word on the vital problems that were brought before the French Party by the International and the Congress of the French C.P. itself; mass trade unions, trade union unity, the role of the C.G.T.U. and of the Party in the strike period; there is nothing on the Socialist Party, its various tendencies, its policy and its internal crisis; there is nothing on the united front, on the mixed committees and the proletarian unity committees during the working class agitation of the summer and autumn.

There is nothing substantial or showing serious study on the stabilisation of the currency, the stabilisation of the franc and its repercussion on economic life, on the economic crisis, on the unemployment which is approaching and the Party's tasks in face of this situation.

**To Remedy Defects**

The same may be said of the section on "Party Life," with the exception of an article by Thorez on the Party campaign and an excellent article by Croset on the work of nuclei and concentration on the big factories. This latter article is based on Party experience and aims at making this experience known to all members. The "Party Life" column seems to be compiled haphazard. There is not sufficient account of Party experience, continual self-criticism of Party activity, or the will to make the "Cahiers" serve as a methodic guide to Party work.

How are these defects to be remedied? The first thing the editors and the Party leaders should strive for is that the journal should be a guide to the members not only on international questions, but in their everyday Communist activities in France. It should prepare them for practical tasks by clearly presenting to them the problems which have to be solved, and explaining the lead given to the Party by the Central Committee; it should make known the Party's experience, point out and analyse its failings, its set-backs and its successes. It should therefore systematically be to the fore on all questions. Every number should be prepared with a clear aim, should make the most important problems and tasks of the moment understood, should link them up with our theoretical conceptions and general tactics, and thereby stimulate the thought and activity of the Party.

As soon as this task is properly understood, the editors of "Cahiers" will themselves be able to remedy the other shortcomings re-establish equilibrium between international questions and "French" questions, and raise the ideological standards of the articles.

JULES HUMBERT-DROZ.

