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TEN CENTS

MAY DAY, 1931, ON THE CREST OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAVE

(Preliminary Review).

WE are not yet in possession of complete information concerning this year's First of May. However, we can already say with confidence that the May Day demonstrations of the international proletariat in 1931 reached a higher level than that of last year, both from the point of view of numbers, of revolutionary content, and of organised leadership of the movement by our parties.

May First, 1931, reflected all the depth of the economic crisis, embracing without exception all capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries. It reflected the sturdy growth of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., showing, as it does, to the world proletariat and toiling peasantry their only way out of the crisis; lastly, it reflected the universal development of the upward revolutionary drive, and more important still, the successful efforts of our Communist Parties to overcome their backwardness and to advance, *not along the line of least resistance, but along the line of greatest revolutionary effect.*

We found this expressed in the fact that we had good May Day demonstrations in places where Fascism and White Terror rage beyond all bounds (for instance, Shanghai). It was reflected in the fact that in Germany, where under conditions of the deepest economic crisis, it is easier to call the workers on to the streets than out to strike; mass strikes took place this year (in Silesia). It was expressed in the fact that in France, where, on the contrary, thanks to the enormous growth of militarism, it is easier to call strikes than to make street demonstrations; this year, unlike last year, the proletariat partly won the streets for itself, not only in several industrial centres, but in Paris itself. We find this again in Poland, where our Communist Party was able, in several places, to bring the peasantry into militant demonstrations. Further, in Spain our young Communist Party, despite the attempts of the Zamana Republican Government to transform May Day into an idyllic national holiday, was able that day to fire the demonstrations of the proletariat with a militant revolutionary class spirit. In several countries our Communist Parties managed, not only to counteract the miserable Social Democratic demonstrations by militant Communist demonstrations, but were able at the same time, in several instances, to draw into the demonstrations, under our banner, a considerable group of Social Democratic workers, particularly

the youth; and this without weakening, but strengthening the struggle against Social Democracy by the skilful adoption of the united front tactic. Our Communist Parties, to a larger extent than before, were able to demonstrate the international solidarity of the proletariat, giving May Day the character of a demonstration in support of the U.S.S.R., the Chinese Revolution, the Spanish Revolution and so on.

* * *

The May Day celebrations were finest in the U.S.S.R., with its shock brigade of the international revolutionary proletariat. In Moscow 1,900,000 demonstrated, in Leningrad 1,300,000. This was a demonstration of the unswerving determination of the proletariat to finish the construction of the Socialist foundation of the Soviet Union this year. These were demonstrations of shock-brigades and Socialist competition, in which innumerable factories were able to report the successful conclusion of the Five-Year Plan in two years, the abolition of absenteeism from work, increased observation of labour discipline, of heroism on the field of labour, of a new steady influx of peasants into the collective farms, successes on the spring sowing front in the great Soviet farms, and so on and so forth.

But the May Day celebrations in the U.S.S.R. this year are not characterised by this alone. The workers of the U.S.S.R. know full well that the danger of intervention has become an *immediate danger* to them and to the world proletariat; and on May First they demonstrated their readiness to rise up and defend the Soviet Union with the same supreme faith, the same heroism with which they are now finishing the construction of the foundations of Socialist economy. The First of May parade in Moscow showed this. Unlike all past military parades, the last one on May First demonstrated our achievements in the work of *mechanising* the army. Unlike all previous years, this year three generations of workers, armed workers, young Communists, and Pioneers, participated—manifesting fine military training, and their readiness, shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army, to fight faithfully against counter-revolutionary intervention.

* * *

Of the capitalist countries, *Germany* held the first place on May Day. By the unanimous testimony of eye-witnesses, the German May Day demonstrations, particularly in Berlin, ex-

ceeded in magnitude all that we have witnessed for several years. In Berlin, in the Lustgarten, two demonstrations took place: in the morning that of the Social Democrats, and in the afternoon that of the Communists. A comparison of these two demonstrations showed clearly that they represented two worlds: the first, that of dying capitalism in the shape of its chief pillar of society; the second, that of the ever-increasing advance of Communism. The difference between these two demonstrations was not only marked by the fact that the two hundred thousand strong demonstration under the banner of Communism was larger than that of the Social Democrats. It was even more apparent in the character of the demonstrations. Even the bourgeois press had to admit that there was a lack of young people in the Social Democratic demonstration. It was not merely a demonstration of the aged, but an aged demonstration of a lifeless bureaucracy. Unlike it, the Communist demonstration, in which three generations of workers—adult workers, young Communists and Pioneers—took part, was a sturdy militant advance. In the workers' columns, advancing towards the Lustgarten in fifty different contingents, blazed forth hundreds of red banners and striking effigies with fighting slogans:—

"In Germany starvation and unemployment; in Soviet Russia bread and work!"

"Lenin leads the way!"

"Ruhr workers, down with Thyssen and Krupp!"

"Berlin metalworkers, down with Siemens and Börsig!"

"Long live Soviet Spain!"

"Throw 'Vorwærts' in the dustbin! Buy the 'Rote Fahne'!"

"Defend the Soviet Republic!"

"The Five-Year Plan paves the path to World Socialism!"

On the square at the Lustgarten, Comrade Thälmann spoke. He declared:—

"On the First of May, 1929, when some of you fought on the barricades at Wedding and Neuköln, we told you the hour had not yet come. Now we say the hour may soon come when the standard for battle will be raised; and we shall then know what to do!"

He concluded his speech with a call to arms for the "great struggle for free Socialist Soviet Germany"; he finished with a cheer for the Soviet Government of Russian Workers and Peasants, for the Indian, Chinese and Spanish revolutions. After Comrade Thälmann had finished, a hundred thousand voices pronounced the revolutionary oath.

The German Social-Fascist police, after their experiences in 1929, after the Wedding barri-

ades, were compelled this year, as last, to give permission for the Communist demonstrations. But our columns were accompanied by police lorries, which made it their business to cut into the crowd and seize the more revolutionary posters, including those with drawings of the heads of murdered workers.

The bourgeois press, comparing the Social Democratic and Communist demonstrations, regretfully laid on record that the former ones were helpless against the onslaught of Communism. "Der Deutsche" wrote:—

"Who will be the victor in the struggle for sovereignty in the awe-inspiring kingdom of Socialism? Judging by the picture of Berlin yesterday the decision is very much inclined to be in favour of Communism. There the youth is most strongly represented. The youth with a will to fight and full of fury and hatred. Fanatical fighters. People who hate most are always the most fiery fighters." The "Frankfurter Nachrichten" wrote in the same strain:—

"The picture of such a peaceful—one might say almost joyless—demonstration of the Social Democracy was changed radically in the afternoon. Beginning at two o'clock, strong detachments of Communists stretched along the streets of the east and north sections of the town. Sharp rhythmical music everywhere, blood-red banners with gold sickles and hammers. . . . The young Communist workers, accompanied in the march by children of 10 and 12 years, with raised closed fists, the agit-prop group of Young Communist women, all the Communist sports associations, and the nuclei of the Red trade union opposition—all the German Communist Party organisations were represented. . . . Though it was comforting to know that the First of May in Berlin passed without bloodshed, nevertheless, the *strong participation of workers* in the Communist procession must give all responsible persons food for serious thought. . . ."

The demonstrations in other industrial centres of Germany took place in the same spirit. In Hamburg, eighty thousand workers demonstrated. The demonstration was of a clearly international character, for sailors of all nations from the boats in the harbour took part, carrying banners and effigies in all languages. In the Ruhr, the demonstration bore the stamp of preparations for the coming great economic struggle. Here also the demonstration was one of international solidarity. A strong delegation of Dutch, French and Belgian sailors were among the 25,000 strong demonstration in Duisberg; together with the German crews of the Rhine ships they marched under red *Potemkin* banners. In Bavaria, despite the restrictions, big demonstrations were held, and in Nuremberg and Munich they came into conflict with the police. When the revolutionary procession approached the square where the Social Democrats were demonstrating, the police

with drawn swords and revolvers in hand rushed our demonstrators, who retaliated with a shower of stones, wounding seven policemen (according to the bourgeois press statement). In Fascist Thuringia also, 50,000 workers demonstrated. In a hundred towns of the Lower Rhine, there were powerful demonstrations and the red flag with the Soviet star was to be found flying over many factories. Huge demonstrations took place in Saxony. In Leipzig, 18,000 workers demonstrated. In Upper Silesia, Hindenburg and Gleiwitz, all the big factories and mines struck 100 per cent.

It was significant of this year's May Day demonstrations in Germany, that in Berlin and other towns in many cases *groups of young Social Democrats and members of the Social Democratic Reichsbanner Union demonstrated under our flag.*

In *Austria*, our small Communist Party was able this year to bring tens of thousands of workers out on the streets. Here again the number of workers under the Communist banner was considerably greater than last year. Here again it was significant that many Social Democratic workers demonstrated under our banners. *In our Vienna demonstration a large group of women Social Democrats from Floridorf and a group of revolutionary members of the Socialist youth participated.* In Lunz, a detachment of the Social Democratic Schutzbund marched in our procession and towards the end of the demonstration hundreds of other members joined in the march. Communist demonstrations and slogans everywhere were heartily greeted by the Social Democratic and non-party workers. There were fifty-one demonstrations throughout Austria besides that in Vienna. On an average *there were twice as many participators as last year.* In Judenburg, there were bloody conflicts between the demonstrators and the police, because the latter wanted to clear the square of Communist demonstrators to make way for the Social Democrats' procession.

In *Czecho-Slovakia* also, our demonstrations went off with a better spirit than last year. In Prague, they were considerably larger than last year and more forceful than those of the Social Democratic and National Socialist demonstrations. At the head of our procession there rode a detachment of 300 Red cyclists. *In Brun many National Socialist and Social Democratic workers left their own demonstrations and joined ours.* In Reichenberg, despite the heavy downpour of rain, 3,500 marched in our procession and 5,500 took part in the demonstration, whereas only 600 participated in the Social Democratic demonstra-

tion. In Aussig, all our processions were twice as large as last year.

In *France*, as we have indicated, the demonstrations were more militant than last year. The police took emergency measures to prevent them, especially in Paris. A raid was made on "l'Humanité" and the May Day number came out with large white blanks of censored material, just as was the case during the Great War. On the eve and during the day of May First, 1,500 were arrested in Paris alone. The whole city was flooded with police and the Republican mobile guard, who occupied all squares and boulevards and surrounded the factories. There were 35,000 police and gendarmes all told. The regular troops alone were not to be found in Paris. Apparently the French Government does not consider them sufficiently trustworthy. In Paris and other towns not only were our demonstrations prohibited, but measures were taken to prevent all our big meetings in closed halls. The Communists were refused the use, in Paris, of the "Winter Circus" for a meeting, whereas the Socialists were previously offered the enormous hall of the Trocadéro.

But these measures could not prevent our May Day demonstrations. In France, as last year, numerous mass strikes took place. In Paris 90-95 per cent. of the metalworkers came out; in Lyons, all the metal industries stood still; in Havre, 50 per cent. of the metalworkers and 100 per cent. of the dockers stopped work; in Halluin the workers in all factories struck work. Even in the building, chemical and bootmaking industries, the strikes were 100 per cent. The whole of the textile industry in Paris and Northern France came out. Eighty per cent. of the total workers in the ports downed tools. Many factories as, for instance, the enormous Citroën works, were closed down by the owners themselves to prevent demonstrations; but this was entirely useless.

Unlike last year all the demonstrations arranged by the Party in Paris and other towns took place, despite the emergency measures of the police. In Paris, already on the evening before May Day, demonstrations took place in the suburbs, in Clichy, in Saint Denis, and the centre of the town at the Place of the Théâtre Français. On May First there were demonstrations round the "Winter Circus," near the Galeries Lafayette, in the environs of the Temple, in Belleville, in Clichy, on the Boulevard Haussmann, at the Place de la République. The demonstrations consisted of groups of 300-400 persons, who from time to time shouted slogans: "Long live the Soviets in Paris!"

In several places there were conflicts with the police. Numerous demonstrations took place in

the provinces. In Saint-Quentin, 1,000 demonstrated; in Halluin, 1,000 (textiles). In Henin-Lietard, 2,500. In Douai, 3,500 miners. In Lens, 2,000 miners demonstrated in spite of the police ban. In Amiens, 1,200 railway workers demonstrated. There were large demonstrations in Tours and Bordeaux round the barracks, 2,000 persons participating in the latter town; in Grenoble, 1,000 metalworkers demonstrated. In Strasbourg, 5,000 workers demonstrated; in Lille, 2,500; in Roubaix, 2,500; and in Bedouze the demonstrators unfurled the red flag in churches and schools, mines and bridges. The police attacked the workers and many were wounded. Our comrades managed to hang the red flag on the north tower of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, also in the Arras Cathedral and in St. Vincent's in Barrières de Bigorre.

In *Spain*, the Provisional Government declared May Day a national holiday in order to deprive it of its militant character. Our young Communist Party there spoilt this manœuvre of the Republican-Socialist coalition. It made the following appeal to all workers:—"May First is not a Government holiday for the bourgeoisie, but a day of militant demonstration against the bourgeoisie and its supporters. We call upon all workers on May First to demonstrate on behalf of the unemployed, for increased wages, for shorter hours, for equal pay for equal work, for political rights for women and young men, for political rights for soldiers, for the abolition of the Civil Guard, for arms for the workers, for the independence of Catalonia and the land of the Basques, for the evacuation of Morocco, for the expropriation of church lands and their transfer to Soviets of agricultural labourers and poor peasants, for the creation of a workers', soldiers' and peasants' Soviet republic."

Our Party's challenge was answered by the masses; Communist demonstrations took place on May Day in Madrid, Seville, Barcelona, Bilbao and other towns. In several places there were bloody conflicts with the police and anarcho-syndicalists. In Madrid, the anarcho-syndicalists helped to rush the Communist demonstrations, one policeman being killed, and two police and thirteen anarcho-syndicalists being wounded. In Barcelona, an enormous demonstration under the banner of the Communist Party took place. Our comrades tried to seize the palace of the Catalonian Government and to raise the red flag there. The police of the bourgeois republic and the anarcho-syndicalists attacked the demonstrators more than once. A real street fight ensued in which two police and two workers were shot and many workers and two police severely wounded. In the evening there were big hunger riots of un-

employed, who emptied the central market and many shops. In Bilbao, our demonstrations came into conflict with the police, about twenty being wounded on both sides. In reply to this attack, on May 2 our Party called out the workers in a demonstration of protest. A magnificent protest demonstration took place in which about 100,000 participated.

The so-called peaceful demonstration in Spain, in its infant Republic, which was hailed so heartily by international Social Democracy, is actually nothing but an attempt of the bourgeoisie to consolidate their forces under the Republican flag and to create a base against the revolutionary advance of the proletariat. The events of May First show that the Spanish bourgeoisie miscalculated the situation. Our Spanish Communist Party, despite its small numbers and inexperience, stands at its responsible post and, led by the Communist International, is carrying out its historic task.

* * *

In *Poland*, the police took emergency measures to paralyse the May Day demonstrations. A Committee of Public Safety was organised under the presidency of the State Commissary, Tarashevski. The police were brought out to keep order in Warsaw. They were mobilised for the period from 6 o'clock on April 30 to 8 o'clock on May 2. Warsaw was to be saved from the Red danger by 2,500 police agents. They were supplied with gas-masks and hand-grenades. Armoured cars with machine guns and mounted police were mobilised to transport those arrested. For the same purpose, trams and buses were put at the disposal of the police. On the eve of May First, mass arrests had already taken place, especially in the workers' quarter in Volia. All this was futile. Communist demonstrations took place in all parts of Warsaw. In the centre of the town on the Marshalkovski street a Communist demonstration, 1,500 strong, was headed by an orchestra of tramwaymen.

Altogether about 10,000 persons demonstrated under our banner in Warsaw, and meetings were held on the route. In one place the Communist deputy, Buzhinski, spoke. Demonstrations were held outside the Paviak prison. The Polish Socialist Party volunteers helped the police to rout the demonstrators. This is how the Polish Social Fascists demonstrated before the proletariat; this is the value of their "opposition" to Pilsudski's Fascist dictatorship. On Frontier street, members of the P.P.S. marched with placards bearing anti-Soviet slogans. The workers answered these slogans in a worthy manner, ripping them from the boards and tearing them to pieces. There were mass demonstrations also in the Dombrovski district (in Czeladzi and

Susnowitz) in the paper industry centre (Veziorn, Kutni and other places).

It was significant that the Communist Party this time succeeded in bringing the peasants and even the "Streltsi" ("sharp-shooters") into the May Day demonstrations. In the Liublinsk area, in Lubartov, the peasants had a large demonstration in which even members of the "Strelets" organisation participated. When the police attacked the demonstrators, the "Streltsi" defended the red flag side by side with the peasants. When the mass of peasants tried to rush through to the town, a fight broke out with the police which lasted an hour and a half; two peasants were killed and several wounded; many police were also severely wounded.

In *Bulgaria*, strikes and demonstrations took place with police fights everywhere. In Sofia, 25 per cent. of the bootmakers, 50 per cent. of the cabinet-makers, and 60 per cent. of the garment workers struck. In Plowdiv, 6,000 workers, mainly tobacco workers, demonstrated (1,056 workers were arrested). In Haskow, Burgas and other towns there were more demonstrations. In Sofia, on the walls near the British Embassy, the following words were painted in red: "Down with Imperialist Wars!" "Long live the U.S.S.R.," "Long live the Bulgarian Communist Party," and so on.

Powerful demonstrations in almost all the big towns were reported in the *United States*. A column of 25,000 marched in New York, ever-increasing thousands of workers joining in as the procession passed, so that when it reached Union Square the number of demonstrators had grown to 50,000. Our Party was able to muster this mass of workers to its banner, while not more than 4,000 were gathered together round the meeting of the organised Socialists. And even this meeting disbanded as soon as the Communist procession arrived. The ex-servicemen in our demonstrations carried a huge banner with the slogan: "Down with Intervention Plots against the U.S.S.R.!" In Union Square, among our other speakers, Comrade Foster addressed the crowd. When he said: "To-day we are not only celebrating May Day. We are moving forward against capitalism for the World Soviet System"—the crowd cheered lustily. In Detroit, 35,000 workers, twice as many as last year, participated; in Philadelphia, 10,000; in Cleveland, 8,000; Boston, 12,000, and so on.

We still have no information as to how the Soviet regions of *China* held their demonstrations. But we know, and this is of special importance, that the Chinese proletariat went on strike and demonstrated in the very teeth of Chiang-Kai-shek terror. On the eve of May First, in Swatow,

eighty-eight Communists were arrested and executed; on May First, in Shanghai, 100,000 workers struck, and in the suburbs in Yangtsen the workers arranged mass demonstrations with banners on which were written: "Long live the Communist Party." No force of bourgeois hell can ever vanquish such Communists!

In *India*, May First demonstrations took place on a background of ever-increasing revolutionary events: in Calcutta, the strike of 150,000 jute workers has been going on for two months. In Ajmere, a strike of 5,000 railwaymen broke out. In Burma, an armed uprising of the peasantry has broken out. According to official information, in Burma there are already 1,000 killed and 2,000 prisoners. How May Day passed in India in such a situation we cannot say. But from the scanty information which has filtered through to the press, we know that in Bombay 2,000 textile workers struck and were joined by workers from other factories. There were demonstrations and meetings with revolutionary speeches. In Karachi, a demonstration of unemployed marched through the main streets of the town.

Our information concerning the preparations and carrying through of the May Day celebrations in the various countries is not complete. It is highly probable that when we have a complete picture, we shall be able to lay on record that in many places not everything was done by our Parties that should or could have been done. At the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. the backwardness of almost all our Parties was laid on record in relation to the speed with which the situation develops. This lagging behind was very likely evinced in the May Day demonstrations. If we can say that our Parties have made very considerable achievements as compared with May Day last year, it must be remembered that the objective situation for us is now exceedingly more favourable. The Communist International and our Parties have to analyse once more in the most concrete manner all the work done on the eve of May First, and the whole leadership of the movement on May Day itself, so as to discover the weak points, to ascertain the gaps which have to be filled in, to find out the mistakes that must be corrected. But one thing is clear. We are climbing upwards and the capitalist world and its pillars of society, the Fascist and Social Fascist Parties, are rushing headlong downhill. This was confirmed again by the picture laid before us on May First.

Just prior to May First, the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. laid on record the following: For the very reason that never before has the advantage of the Socialist system over the capitalist been so strongly manifested as to-day, intervention

against the U.S.S.R. is now the immediate danger. This statement of the XI. Plenum remains in force to-day. However, already in the short period of time that has elapsed since the XI. Plenum, it has become obvious that the inner contradictions of the capitalist world are rapidly growing and deepening, making a mighty force for the launching of a united anti-Soviet front as a capitalist way out of the crisis. If the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. laid on record the existence of elements of crisis in the Versailles system, recent events show that this process has gone far ahead. The Franco-Italian agreement which had almost been concluded has been broken and, on the other hand, the Austro-German tariffs agreement has forced a considerable wedge in the Little Entente, and French militarist imperialism, which so recently held undisputed hegemony on the Continent, is now faced with the menace of being isolated; it is adopting sharp counter-measures against this (*e.g.*, efforts, by economic pressure upon Austria, to rupture the negotiations for the Austro-German tariffs agreement). These facts show what enormous obstacles stand in the path of the capitalist way out of the crisis. Capitalist

stabilisation, tottering more than ever before, is reflected also in the growing crisis of international Social Democracy, which is the chief pillar of society of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and May Day was a fresh illustration of the decline of Social Democracy and the gradual loss of its influence over the proletarian masses.

Along with this, and in diametrical opposition to it, May First demonstrated the united revolutionary front of the world proletariat, the toiling peasantry and the oppressed colonial peoples. It showed the extent to which the international solidarity of the workers has grown and strengthened, how the authority of the Communist International and its leading rôle have grown and strengthened; how, above all, the strength and authority of the Shock Brigade of the world proletariat — the U.S.S.R. — has grown and strengthened. We can look to the future with increased courage, but we must remember that it is just this favourable historic situation that impels us forward to an ever more strenuous expenditure of energy and activity, to fight against the mistake of falling behind events, to speed up our work in every sphere of activity.

THE SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION

THE flames of the burning churches and monasteries in Spain, in May, strikingly revealed the Spanish Revolution as a bourgeois-democratic one. It is true, the rural districts where the most hated remnants of feudalism have survived have not yet been drawn into the revolution. In the April elections of 1930, the city voted for the republic while the rural districts voted for the monarchy. But we know, on the basis of the experience of the Russian Revolution of 1905 as well as that of other bourgeois-democratic revolutions, how quickly the peasantry orients itself politically when the sparks of a revolutionary conflagration are blown to the village from the city, and when the peasantry begin to destroy the landowners' mansions. We have already seen the first manifestation of the revolutionary fermentation of the peasantry in Andalusia which so far is the chief base of our Communist Party. They have already begun to organise Soviets in two villages near Seville. The peasantry has already begun to seize and divide land in the vicinity of Seville and Estramadura.

The objective conditions for the development and the intensification of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Spain are extraordinarily favourable. Nowhere in Europe has mediaeval feudalism, interlaced with modern monopolist capitalism, survived to such a great extent as in Spain. The Provisional Government which proclaimed the Republic has left these remnants of feudalism completely untouched. The old bloc of landowners and big capitalists has also completely retained power in Spain up till now. Its centre of gravity has only shifted to the bourgeoisie. And this bloc, which has drawn the petty-bourgeois radicals, the Socialists and the anarcho-syndicalists to collaborate politically with them, regards its Republic as a counter-revolutionary dam against the rising tide of the people's revolution. At first this bourgeois landowners' bloc, with the help of the Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists, was actually successful in sowing the seeds of illusion among the masses thanks to the substitution of the republic for the monarchy. But very quickly, within some two weeks, the illusions of the proletarian masses began to be dispelled. The counter-revolutionary dam began to break under the pressure of the revolutionary forces.

The prospects for the Spanish Revolution are very good. But if it is to develop and succeed, the proletariat must become the conscious leader of the revolution, and for this it is essential that the proletarian movement shall be headed by a really Bolshevik Communist Party. Such a Communist Party is only now being forged in Spain in the fires of the revolution.

Our young Communist Party in Spain is still very weak. It is weak in numbers and although its membership is growing rapidly, it still has not more than 3,000 members. The number of workers reached by our Party through the trade unions or the trade union opposition affiliated to the "Reconstruction Committee," which is under our leadership, is also small. The reformist unions led by Social Democracy now number 200,900 workers and the anarcho-syndicalist National Confederation of Labour, contains approximately as many, but the trade union organisations rallying around our "Reconstruction Committee" have not more than 75,000 members. Only in Andalusia, and in its chief city, Seville, is the majority of the working class under our leadership. In the industrial section of Spain, in Catalonia and in its industrial centre, Barcelona, we have a very weak trade union base.

But it is in its ideology that our Communist Party shows greatest weakness. There are many good militant revolutionary elements in the Communist Party and in its leadership but it is only making its first steps towards bolshevism. It has still many right opportunist (Social Democratic) and *anarcho-syndicalist* traditions. It has borrowed the *spirit of sectarianism* from anarcho-syndicalism.

Because of its narrow sectarianism it was unable to make contact with the working masses, to learn what disturbed them and to formulate partial economic demands of immediate significance during the tremendous strike movement which developed in 1930 before the December rising, and, therefore, trailed at the tail of the movement. Yet it was precisely Communist leadership in the economic struggles that on the eve of revolution suddenly acquire the character of revolutionary strikes, which could have helped the proletariat to become an independent class force. Communist leadership could have helped the proletariat to free itself from the influence of the petty-bourgeois radicals who in Spain showed a tendency to "make revolution" behind the backs of the workers, through purely military negotiations and a military uprising. It could have helped the proletariat to free itself from the influence of the anarcho-syndicalists who only wanted to "use" the workers for strikes of protest, ignoring the economic struggle of the proletariat.

Because of this narrow sectarianism, our Communist Party neither saw nor understood sufficiently the profound revolutionary process which was maturing in Spain in 1930. It failed to understand what inflammable material the relics of feudalism presented in the Spanish Revolution. It did not sense the hatred that had accumulated among the

masses, against the relics of feudalism. It thought that, as the party of the working class, it had to concentrate its struggle merely against the capitalist class, against whom the workers were fighting in the factories. Therefore it did not understand the nature of the maturing revolution in Spain. From the programme of the Communist International, where mention is made of three types of revolutions, it is already clear that monopolist capital in Spain is united to a very considerable degree with the remnants of feudalism, and that, therefore, Spain is faced with the problem of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, with the problem of bringing about a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

Only after this phase has been passed will Spain come to a proletarian revolution, when the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry develops into a dictatorship of the proletariat. But the leadership of our Spanish Communist Party, for the reasons given above, underestimated the significance of the remnants of feudalism in Spain, inadequately and with difficulty (and part of the leadership, not at all) mastered the idea of the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and was quite unable to explain it to the Party masses. Therefore, the Party mass slogan of the establishment of a workers' and peasants' Government in Spain was identified with the slogan of the immediate establishment of a proletarian dictatorship in the country.

This incorrect formulation by the Party deprived it of the possibility of foreseeing the course of the development of events in Spain and doomed it to play the rôle of an isolated *propagandist* group at a time when the masses were seething with revolt. When the sharpening revolutionary crisis set it face to face with the need of acting, of giving the masses military slogans, of leading them to the struggle; it was busy with propaganda not of to-day, but of the future. Only parts of the organisations showed revolutionary initiative.

The Communist Party was absolutely unable to foresee the results of the April municipal elections in Spain, the hatred of the monarchy which the city population would manifest at these elections. It is not accidental that the Communist Party was severely defeated at these elections in spite of the fact that our pre-election meetings and gatherings were extremely well attended.

When the monarchy fell on April 14 and the Provisional Government proclaimed the Republic, our Communist Party, in its central organ, *Mundo Obrero*, printed an appeal to the workers, peasants and soldiers in which it said :

"The bourgeois Republic, proclaimed on April 14, has set itself the final aim of preserving the basis of the existing régime and preventing a Socialist Revolution . . . A republic which does not give the

land to the peasants and the monopolies, banks and large enterprises to the working class is not, and cannot be, a workers' republic. . . . The Communist Party of Spain appeals to the workers, soldiers and peasants, calling on them to continue the revolutionary struggle . . . to prepare for the final overthrow of the bourgeois order and the establishment of a republic of Soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasant deputies. *Against the bourgeois republic, against the republic of the powerful capitalists.* Down with the monarchy? Yes! But at the same time, *down with the bourgeois republic.* . . . *Long live the proletarian revolution, all power to the Government of workers and peasants!*"

This appeal revealed a non-understanding of the character of the revolution which had begun, of *character of the next stage of the revolution* and of the basic strategical tasks of the Communist Party. *Under the conditions in Spain, the proletariat can mature for a proletarian revolution by passing through the stage of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.*

Instead of assuming the task of deepening and developing the revolution and stimulating a really revolutionary struggle against the monarchists and feudalists, whom the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government under the Republican flag had actually taken under its wing, instead of advancing the slogan of a really democratic republic, a republic of Soviets to carry out the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry for the ruthless annihilation of the remnants of feudalism, the Communist Party advanced the slogan : "Down with the bourgeois republic, the republic of powerful capitalists, long live the proletarian revolution!" If the Communist Party had at that moment called the workers to an armed uprising in the name of this slogan, in the name of establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat—it would have been a grave mistake, testifying to uncalled-for revolutionary impatience.

But the Communist Party did not draw this practical conclusion from its slogan. Impressed by its defeat at the municipal elections of April, 1931, it felt itself powerless and, therefore, this "left" slogan hid its complete passivity. In its appeals *after* April 14 it spoke in much more pacific propagandist tones than in its election platform before the fall of the monarchy, *before* April 14, although the situation then demanded much sharper, agitational slogans. Thus, for example, in contrast to the February election platform in which it said that the peasants and the agricultural workers must not wait for parliament to give them the land, but must take it themselves, in the appeal after the fall of the monarchy there was no *appeal* for a seizure of the land, but only *promises* that our republic (supposedly, the future proletarian one) would give the land to the peasants.

True, our Party organisation, immediately after the fall of the monarchy, carried out some revolutionary actions. It organised demonstrations before the royal palace and raised the red flag on it. It called for the confiscation of the property of the king and the arrest of Bérenguer. It called for the dispersal of the hated Civil Guard which had fired on the workers on the eve of April 14. Leading the workers' demonstrations, it went to the prisons and freed the arrested in Bilbao, Seville and Barcelona. This was fine. But these were haphazard moves made by the local Party organisations. The Party leadership did not advance militant slogans on a national scale—to organise Soviets, to arm the workers, to arrest the most objectionable monarchists, to place guards to prevent the flight of the king, to confiscate the property of the church, to call the peasants to organise committees for the seizure of land, etc.

On the second day after the fall of the monarchy, our Party advanced the slogan "down with the bourgeois republic." It thereby not only covered up its passivity and temporarily isolated itself from the masses, but also aroused hostility against itself, not only among the petty-bourgeois strata, but among the proletarian masses as well. The working masses, in the first days after the proclamation of the Republic, because of the Socialist and anarcho-syndicalist agitation, imbibed strong republican illusions. These illusions were also encouraged by certain skilful demagogic manoeuvres on the part of the Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government proclaimed the eight-hour day, which cost the capitalists nothing in view of the tremendous unemployment. It placed an embargo on the property of the king, not confiscating it, but sequestering the property until the speculations in which the king is known to have engaged in, had been investigated, and to prevent the property from being seized by the masses. It organised a fund to help the unemployed in Madrid from the money which formed the king's civil list. It promised to introduce social insurance in the future. It organised public work which gave work to some hundreds of workers while new thousands of unemployed were thrown out on the street.

No matter how pitiful and demagogic these measures were, they began to prompt the belief that the present Republic had given something. Consequently, when our Party advanced the bald slogan of "Down with the bourgeois republic," in such a setting, the Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists succeeded in a number of places in demagogically taking advantage of this to convince the working masses that the Communists were the secret agents of the monarchy. Therefore for ten or twelve days the attitude of the working masses toward the Communist Party was plainly hostile.

The working masses, however, very soon, much sooner than one might have expected, sobered down and began to discern the counter-revolutionary character of the new power. Correspondingly, their attitude to the Communists changed for the better. But our comrades, being isolated from the masses, did not at once discern this change. This was reflected in our Press. In the May 1st issue of our central organ, *Mundo Obrero*, a whole page was devoted to the peasants, and the peasant question was treated in even more moderate propagandist terms than formerly, as if the country was living through a most peaceful period. There it was said, for example, first, that until we are victorious, the agricultural workers must study the programme of concrete demands; second, that the small tenants must fight until we have obtained a victory, for a decrease of rent; third, that the small peasant, until we have obtained a victory, must organise co-operatives and savings banks for the common purchase of fertilisers, etc. *This was an opportunist programme of demands* which reflected the Social Democratic influence on the Communist Party.

It is appropriate here to compare these demands with the platform drawn up by Trotsky ("For the Spanish Revolution—Ten Instructions for a Spanish Communist."). Trotsky adheres to his former view of the "permanent revolution" and continues to deny the necessity of the stage of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. It is precisely due to his "leftism" that Trotsky has formulated a purely liberal platform for Spain which once again demonstrated that behind the "left" phrases of the renegade Trotsky, is hidden the most arrant right opportunism, or more accurately, liberalism.

Trotsky calls upon the Spanish Communists "to prepare a second revolution, the proletarian revolution," "patiently" and "unflinchingly," but does not say a single word about the need for *now* bringing about the democratic revolution, for establishing a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. What is his attitude to the present counter-revolutionary Government?

"The Communists do not conclude any agreement whatever with the republican Socialist bloc and their parties which could limit or weaken, directly or indirectly, the freedom of the Communists to criticise and agitate."

Does that mean that an agreement which does not limit the freedom to criticise can be concluded with the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government which is already shooting down the workers? Trotsky is for the "Soviets" but, as we shall see, for such Soviets as would serve only to deceive the workers, to draw them away from revolutionary struggle. He proposes first to found only "Workers' Soviets," but says not a word about peasant Soviets. Secondly, according to Trotsky, the Soviets ought by

no means to be organs which, by dictatorial means, deal with counter-revolution.

"Workers' Soviets signify to-day the struggle for the unity of the working-class, for its autocracy. The Workers' Soviet declares strikes, supplies the unemployed with provisions, establishes connections with the soldiers in order to avert bloody clashes with them, establishes connection between the city and the village."

And that is all! Apart from that, according to Trotsky, the Soviets must be the arena for conciliation with the counter-revolutionary Socialists and anarcho-sindicalists:

"The representatives of the workers, belonging to various parties, discuss all immediate questions in the Soviets. Each group in the Workers' Soviet must enjoy absolute freedom to criticise. . . Here is the form of collaboration of the Communists, fraternally offered to the Social Democrats, syndicalists, non-party workers."

How does Trotsky propose to solve the agrarian problem now in Spain? He does not call for the formation of peasant committees for the immediate seizure of the landed estates.

"We must immediately organise a commission to work out a concrete agrarian programme."

As one drop of water resembles another, it resembles the policy of the League of Nations, which in order to set about disarmament in accordance with its "pacifist" platform, organises innumerable conferences at which the question of disarmament is discussed. Trotsky says:

"Communists must immediately work out an agrarian programme which must be based on the confiscation of the land of the privileged and wealthy classes, and, *must begin with the dynasty and the church.*"

So, when the commission is working out the programme, it must "begin" with the confiscation of the crown and church lands, but the confiscation of the landed estates must be postponed indefinitely! On the basis of such a liberal platform Trotsky could petition that the Provisional Government take him into its service, even if only as a Government adviser.

The treatment of the peasant question in *Mundo Obrero*—by a provincial worker it is true—testifies to the under-estimation of the revolutionary situation and our resultant tasks in the village, and generally to the considerable depression in the Communist Party. However, on May First it, nevertheless, again tried to go into the streets. There it appeared, that in spite of its mistakes, it was able this time to effect a contact with the working masses, and its May First demonstrations were successful. This is how it happened. The Provisional Government declared May First as a national holiday in order to give it an innocent character. Our Party decided to destroy this illusion and called the proletariat to militant demonstrations (although our Madrid organisation, which was particularly pessimistic, at first wanted to reject the demonstration thinking that the workers would not follow the Communists). Our Party's First of

May proclamation was couched in militant tones. It read: "The First of May is not a State holiday for the bourgeoisie, but a day of struggle against the bourgeoisie and its accomplices."

Further on in the appeal, the programme of our revolutionary demands, in relation to the workers, peasants, soldiers and oppressed nationalities, was summarised. This First of May summons which formulated real immediate demands, found a response in the working masses. Inspiring demonstrations were held under our flag in Madrid, Seville, Barcelona, Bilbao and other cities. A particularly powerful demonstration was held in Seville. In Barcelona 2,000 workers participated and in Bilbao 3,000. Our comrades tried to seize the palace of the Catalonian Government in Barcelona. In Madrid, as well as in Barcelona, and Bilbao, we had armed clashes with the police and the anarchists which resulted in killed and wounded on both sides.

Our Party succeeded finally in getting into contact on May First with fairly wide strata of workers, and in leading them. However, since it took an incorrect line from the very beginning, not understanding the bourgeois democratic character of the developing revolution, the striking revolutionary demonstrations which took place after May First—the burning and attacking of churches and monasteries took place spontaneously, without the leadership of the Communist Party. All the accumulated hate of the city masses for the church, which represented the most powerful force in Spain, and controlled a third of the national wealth, overflowed into these spontaneous revolutionary demonstrations. The petty bourgeois and left-radical elements joined this movement.

The special meeting of the members of the Ateneo Club, which was held in Madrid on May 13, was symptomatic of the political stratification of the city petty bourgeoisie which began at this time and of the permeation of some of it with a revolutionary spirit. At this meeting, according to several witnesses, the majority, and according to others, a significant minority, was in favour of proposing to the Government that the following measures be adopted: (1) to create a Provisional Government of *revolutionary* dictatorship for the annihilation of the nest of monarchists; (2) to compose a list of the responsible persons of the monarchist régime and arrest them; (3) to place an embargo on their personal property and on the property of the monarchists who had emigrated; (4) to disperse the gendarmerie and the secret political police; (5) to immediately effect a separation of the church from the state, with confiscation of the property of the church; (6) to nationalise the land and divide it among the peasants; (7) to prohibit the publication of monarchist newspapers; (8) to use religious buildings for factory schools; (9) to postpone the convocation of the

Constitutional Assembly of the Cortes until this programme has been carried out.

The fact that the left radical elements of the petty bourgeoisie who are gravitating towards France, elements which are undoubtedly unstable, untrustworthy, and which at a given stage of the revolution will certainly turn its back on it, can adopt such a revolutionary programme of action which can attract and bind to itself significant strata of the workers shows how greatly our Communist Party has lagged behind, and how acute is the question of the proletariat's winning the hegemony in the revolution, under the leadership of our Communist Party. Consequently, an *immediate change* in all the work of the Communist Party is essential. Such a change has already been noticed in the Party and it will surely be completed in the near future, thanks to the energetic self-criticism to which it subjects itself and to the experience which it is now accumulating. In the growing revolutionary situation, the Communist Party will quickly learn, not only on the basis of its successes, but on the basis of its mistakes as well.

What are the tasks and the programme of action which the Communist Party in Spain sets itself to-day? The Party leadership has realised that a clear and unwavering line on the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry under the hegemony of the proletariat is necessary; which only in the process of its development, can and must grow into a proletarian revolution. The first and immediate task of our Party under these conditions must be the mobilisation of the motive forces of the revolution—the proletariat and the toiling peasantry—for the destruction of the *apparatus of authority* of the old monarchist régime which has been preserved, for the suppression of the forces of counter-revolution and the restoration of the monarchy, and for the destruction of the *economic basis* of these feudal-monarchist powers.

The slogans of the day, advanced by the Communist Party in this connection, are the following:

(1) The arrest of the former monarchist ministers, the governors during Primo de Rivera's régime, the higher officials of the old order, the leaders of the church, and commanders of the army, the dissolution of the secret police, the arrest of the officials of the secret police and the arrest of the monarchist aristocrats.

(2) The disarming of the Civil Guard and the police, so hated by the proletarian masses, the arming of the workers and peasants; the struggle against the new republican militia.

(3) The expulsion of the noble, aristocratic, and monarchist officers from the army, the abolition of distinguishing marks for the officers, the abolition of the obligation to salute officers, the granting of all political rights to the soldiers, increase in soldiers' pay, the transfer of the officers' clubs to the soldiers,

the arrest of all the officers notorious for their bad treatment of the soldiers; the organisation of soldiers' committees, the destruction of all barriers separating the army from the people. Such slogans can find a wholehearted response in the army. Its temper can be judged by the fact that sailors and soldiers have already participated in the Communist demonstrations, as well as by the fact that the Government ordered that the soldiers be confined to the barracks on April 15, the day of the national celebration of the founding of the Republic.

(4) The exile of the monks and the destruction of all religious orders, the confiscation of their property as well as that of the crown and of the monarchist aristocracy who have emigrated. The sequestration of the investments of the deposits in the banks of the aristocratic monarchists and the émigrés, the adoption of measures to prevent the emigration abroad of capital owned by the aristocracy, the transfer of the houses and the apartments of the monks and the landed aristocracy to workers' organisations, workers' clubs, factory committees and unemployed councils.

(5) The establishment of funds for the unemployed out of the property confiscated from the crown, church and aristocracy.

(6) The organisation of a revolutionary court for the trial of the monarchist conspirators.

(7) The immediate seizure of the church lands; land belonging to landowners, share companies, for agricultural workers and peasants. The annihilation of all the relics of serfdom and feudalism (pasturage, hunting and other rights). The exile of the large landowners and the arrest of their stewards.

For the realisation of the agrarian revolution it is essential to call for: (a) the immediate organisation of peasant committees for the seizure of the land of the landowners, churches and banks, and their transfer to these committees of peasants and agricultural labourers; (b) the refusal to pay debts; (c) the refusal to pay taxes until the land has been divided.

In opposition to the chauvinist Spanish nationalists and as a solution of the national question in Catalonia and the Basque provinces, it is necessary to proclaim the right of nations to self-determination, including separation, and, consequently, their right to organise independent States. It is essential at the same time, in opposition to the Catalonian nationalist separatists to call for the establishment of a united front of the workers of Catalonia and the Basque provinces with the workers of all the other parts of Spain for the purpose of carrying the revolution to final victory, and to hold out the prospects of the organisation of a Union of Soviet Republics in Spain when Soviet power has been established there, realising the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

In order to realise these revolutionary tasks, it is essential to organise *Soviets* of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies. This must be the central slogan. We must realise that it is more difficult to organise Soviets in Spain than it was in Russia, in 1917, after the February Revolution, in the first place because Soviets of workers' deputies had already been organised during the Revolution of 1905; in the second place, because the February Revolution began with a victorious armed uprising, and, in the third place, because the petty bourgeois Socialists—the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries—supported the Soviets in the beginning, while in Spain the Socialists and the anarcho-syndicalists, from the very beginning of the founding of the Republic, entered into a counter-revolutionary bloc with the bourgeoisie and the landowners. The petty bourgeois Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists being well aware of the experience of the Russian Soviets, which led up to October and to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat so hated by them, together with the bourgeoisie and the landowners, certainly, from the very beginning, will desperately oppose the organisation of Soviets. In order to overcome this opposition, the Communist Party must create factory and workshop committees as organs which can grow into Soviets. At the same time, it must organise Soviets everywhere, wherever the revolutionary upsurge makes it possible. The Communist Party must appeal to all the workers, to those organised in the reformist trade unions, to those organised in the anarcho-syndicalist National Confederation of Labour, and to the unorganised workers, to form a united front in order to carry the democratic revolution to the end and to destroy all the relics of monarchy and feudalism, explaining that the Soviets must be organised precisely for this aim, as organs of the struggle against counter-revolution, the monarchists and the feudal lords. (Of course, the prospects of the transformation of the Soviets into organs of State power under the establishment of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry must be shown, as well as the later prospect of the Soviets growing into organs of the proletarian dictatorship.) This call for a united front in the struggle with counter-revolution, creates the basis for exposing to the anarcho-syndicalist and reformist workers the treachery of their leaders, now engaged in saving the relics of feudalism by a bloc with the bourgeoisie. This will simultaneously create such a drift of the working masses to the Soviets that it will break down the opposition of the bourgeoisie, the landowner, the Socialists, and the anarcho-syndicalists.

The immediate task of the Spanish Communist Party is to fight to *win the majority of the working-class*. To achieve this, the Communist Party and the trade unions affiliated to it, must first of all participate most actively in the economic struggles of

the workers, independently lead those struggles which must be conducted on the basis of partial demands, which must be drawn up in conjunction with the masses of the workers in the factories. To achieve this, it is necessary, secondly, to put forward the slogan of the *unification of the trade union movement*, on the basis of a platform of the class struggle. The Spanish Communist Party has organised its trade union organisations under the slogan of the reconstruction of the National Confederation of Labour and, accordingly the central organ of the trade unions affiliated to us is called the "Reconstruction Committee." This name—"Reconstruction Committee"—was fully justified in its day. The National Confederation of Labour was from the very beginning an organisation of anarcho-syndicalist trade unions, but during the Fascist dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, the anarcho-syndicalists, being servile opportunists, voluntarily dissolved the Confederation. Then the Communist Party took up the task of the revival and "reconstruction" of the National Confederation of Labour, but now under our leadership. And the Communist Party really succeeded in re-establishing and retaining control of the regional organisation of the National Confederation of Labour in Andalusia. But after the Rivera dictatorship fell, the anarcho-syndicalists themselves re-established, in all the other provinces, the National Confederation of Labour, previously dissolved by them. Thus, the term "the Reconstruction Committee" lost its meaning. Nevertheless, the Communist Party because of inertia has retained this name until now and has continued the struggle for the trade unions under the slogan of reconstructing the National Confederation of Labour, meaning, however, something somewhat different by the slogan: not the re-establishment of the N.C.L. but the change of the character and the leadership of the N.C.L.

This attempt to cling to the old slogans after the situation has changed, particularly, now, when the whole setting of the struggle for the trade unions has changed radically in connection with the presence of a revolutionary crisis, bears witness to the insufficient flexibility of our Spanish Communist Party. And a change is essential here. Under present conditions the Communist Party has every reason to think that it can organise the great proletarian masses, re-organising the old "Reconstruction Committee" into a committee for the unification of the trade union movement, into a committee organising a united class front of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie through trade unions; into a committee aiming to unite the class struggle of the proletariat through the trade unions, which the anarchists and reformists not only do not want to unite, but try now for counter-revolutionary reasons to paralyse it, having concluded an agreement with the employers to stop strikes until

the bourgeois Republic has been consolidated.

The Spanish Communist Party is confronted by tremendous tasks. But the very first task is the consolidation and bolshevisation of the Party itself, which can be realised, of course, only in the process of realising all the revolutionary tasks pointed out. In order to master the situation, the Spanish Communist Party must cure itself radically of its sectarianism, eradicate all the Social Democratism and anarcho-syndicalism within itself, must master the Bolshevik-Leninist method of the organisation of a revolution, understand well the character of the Spanish Revolution and its specific peculiarities. To do this, it needs drastic self-criticism, not only in the leadership of the organisation, but within the Party itself. This is combined with the extermination of anarcho-syndicalist survivals, and in the field of organisation, with the establishment of *democratic centralism* in the Party.

At the same time, our Spanish Communist Party is already organising in the "days of freedom," an illegal apparatus, because the Provisional Government will undoubtedly increase its repressive measures against the Communists, and will undoubtedly try to drive our Party underground. We need not delude ourselves. The path of the Spanish Revolution, as of any other people's revolution, will not run smoothly. The line of the revolution will undoubtedly be a zig-zag one.

The Spanish Communist Party is faced with tremendous tasks and the whole Communist International must come to its assistance. The sections of the countries bordering Spain—above all, the French Communist Party,—must come to its assistance and to the assistance of the Spanish Revolution. The French Communist Party pays much attention to the Spanish Revolution in its Press (not always, incidentally, explaining its character correctly). But this is far from enough. One must not, for instance, make

peace with such passivity as the French Communist Party displayed when the influx of white emigrants, beginning with the King of Spain, started into France. There was a time, during the great French Revolution, when the white emigrants fled from France into semi-feudal Austria. Now the picture has changed. Counter-revolutionary emigration of the whole world now flows into the French Republic. The French Communist Party has not started any movement of protest against this thing disgracing the French nation, which has such honourable revolutionary traditions. It did not organise a single protest demonstration when Alfonso XIII. fled to France. It did not organise a single protest demonstration when the hangman of the Barcelona workers, General Martinez Anido, fled to France. But the task of mobilising the sympathy of the workers for the Spanish Revolution does not belong to the French Communist Party alone. We cannot doubt that, when the wave of revolution rises higher in Spain, there will be an attempt at imperialist intervention against Spain by France, England and Italy. When in December there was an uprising in Jaco, the British fleet cruised around the shores of Spain. This is quite significant. Our sections must prepare themselves to ward off intervention opportunely, mobilising the sympathy of the proletariat for the Spanish Revolution.

Spain has, until recently, due to its backwardness, played but a small part in the international arena. But it is precisely due to the fact that it is a backward country, one of the weakest links of imperialism on the European continent, that a revolutionary crisis has come in connection with the economic crisis, sooner than in any other European capitalist country. It obliges all the sections of the Communist International to devote close attention to Spain as a new and a very important section of the front of the world proletarian revolution.

THE VIOLET REPUBLIC AND THE BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN SPAIN

By SHAVAROSH

AT the municipal elections held on April 12, 1930, the coalition of the Republican Party and its groups received in the provincial capitals and large cities 972 votes, the monarchists only 595. The majority of the votes in the rural districts were cast for the monarchists. On Tuesday morning, April 14, Alcala Zamora pleaded most persuasively with Count Romanones and the Duke of Alba to hurry the departure of King Alfonso so that they might proclaim the republic even "before evening, when the workers leave the factories, otherwise it might be too late."

In the evening the ministers of the crown handed over their portfolios to the Provisional Government.

For three days, April 14, 15 and 16, the streets of Madrid, Barcelona and other cities were filled with a motley crowd. There were carnival processions and dances. They played the guitar, serenaded, established a "sacred union" of all classes and strata under the symbolical protection of the monarchist gendarmes who had suddenly, over-night, decked themselves in the republican colour—violet. Violet banners, violet emblems, violet kerchiefs, violet ties—the emblem of the republic—everything was drowned in this colour.

Not a single gendarme, not a single secret service man, not a single hangman, not a single monarchist, not a single general—not one person of the former régime was touched.

The best known and the most conservative politicians—landowners, bankers, generals, dukes and counts, bishops and adventurers, without having lost a single hair of their heads, accepted and immediately acknowledged the republic and its provisional government. The oath of allegiance to the republic was administered by the Bérenguer brothers, one of whom had headed the government after the fall of Primo de Rivera, and by General Molla, chief of the secret service department, General Martinez Anido, executioner of the Barcelona workers and Rivera's right-hand, Antonio Valvera, commander of the Fascist military organisation, "Spanish Legionaires." The latter, vacating his office, "went over to the side of the republic with all his heart."

Cambo, the most powerful magnate of finance capital and leader of the Catalonia monarchist-imperialist party, "Liga Regionalista," on the day of the proclamation of the republic, appealed to all conservatives:

"Conservative elements, socially speaking, must not forget that unfounded attacks against the Government or the régime which it represents will only provoke a swing to the extreme left."

King Alfonso XIII., who had fled, announced through the press that he acknowledged the provisional republican Government and urged all monarchists to help this Government.

It is this, and only this side of the April events that Social-Fascists and philistines of Spain, France, and the whole world acknowledged and called the "Spanish Revolution," singing its praises as the "bloodless revolution," hailing the new republic as the "immaculate conception."

"The new régime came into the world immaculate, without a single drop of blood or a tear," wrote the Madrid *Voz*. The central organ of the Spanish Socialists, *El Socialiste* wrote: "The victory attained . . . confirms the effectiveness of the evolutionary method." The Paris Socialist organ, *Populaire*, echoed Madrid:

"A show of votes was enough to overthrow the oldest monarchy in Europe . . . This revolution is characterised by the fact that it is, to some degree, a legal revolution. It shows the incalculable value of universal suffrage."

The Berlin *Vorwärts* also announced that "the people overthrew the monarchy with the help of the vote."

The Social Fascist echo in Vienna repeated this on the pages of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*: "The Spanish revolution was born of the ballot-box . . ."

Bourgeois political agents in all countries carried on in the same vein.

For all of them the revolution had reached its climax on April 14. For all of them the revolution consisted in the formation of the Provisional Government on the basis of an agreement between the socialist leaders, the republicans, and the monarchists. The Social Fascists of the whole world hide from the workers the counter-revolutionary class secrets of the present Spanish provisional government and of those who to-day head the Republican-Monarchist coalition in Spain. They do not take into account the blood of the workers spilt before, during and after the time when the Republic was declared. The whole strike movement, the dissatisfaction of the toiling masses of the city and the village, is for them but an accessory, an ornament to this "bloodless revolution." The struggle of the oppressed nationalities in Spain does not exist for them. They have created a dam against revolution and

set up the attempt of the counter-revolutionary power, under the show of a republic, as the revolution itself.

The proletariat must see clearly where the counter-revolution in Spain is, of what social forces it consists, and just where real revolution is, wherein its roots lie and what it leads to.

During the last two decades Spain had fallen into the clutches of finance capital (national and foreign) and had been transformed into an imperial power of second rank; it continued to be a backward country with a backward economy, with many remnants of feudalism, particularly in the field of agriculture.

Latifundia, i.e., large estates of more than 1,000 hectares,* average 30 per cent. of all the territory in most of the provinces. The ownership of huge estates and a low level of agriculture are the predominant features of agriculture in Spain. The toiling peasantry are in bondage to the landowners, agents, and moneylenders. In most provinces, pre-capitalist forms of tenancy still exist, such as payment of rent in labour, in kind, and in money. The commercial character of agriculture does not lighten but rather increases the burden of the peasant. The working and living conditions of the peasant are very hard. The open use of violence by the landowners does not stop at interfering with the family life of the peasant, and the driving of the inhabitants of whole villages not only out of the village but out of the province is not an unusual phenomenon.

According to information given by the present Minister Unamuno, "some landlords evict whole villages and destroy all the buildings in order to use the land for large cattle farms."

The remnants of feudal service in the form of compulsory labour (Castile, Leon, Aragon, Navarre, Galicia, Catalonia), and the "dead hand" of the church (Catalonia), etc., have survived.

The remnants of the individualisation of economic relations between separate regions and provinces have survived. Because of the parasitic adaptation of capitalism to the remnants of feudalism, agrarian relations were complicated and involved. On the one hand, latifundia, sometimes of more than 15,000 hectares, and on the other, inconceivably small strips, microfundia (particularly in Galicia), with only a few square metres of land and frequently separated from each other by 10 kilometres.

Seventy per cent. of the population is illiterate, superstitious. The peasant masses are ruined. There are nearly three million agricultural workers, nearly two million of the poorest and poor peasants ("proprietors," half-tenants, crop sharers, etc.), nearly 100,000 big farmers, and

* A hectare is equal to about 2½ acres.—Ed.

40,000 landowners. The middle peasant does not exist to any significant degree except in some northern provinces (Aragon, Navarre, Catalonia, and parts of Levante).

In recent times financial capital has helped and continues to help the decay of the whole Spanish economy. The national economy is not in the hands of the enterprising bourgeois-capitalist classes but in the hands of the landlord-capitalists. The fusion of the interests of large-scale agriculture and those of industrial, financial and trade capital has gone far. The large landowners of Spain are also the financial magnates and the pillars of large industrial enterprises.

The upper clergy of the church and the monasteries own large estates and are also members of the financial oligarchy as owners of numerous powerful industrial undertakings, metallurgical factories, railroads, steamship companies, etc.

It was on this material basis that the monarchical régime, with the large political remnants of Spanish despotism and provincialism, was erected.

The army officers played the most active political rôle all through the nineteenth century and continue to do so to-day. The officers are the chief forces of the State apparatus of Spain. To-day there are 30,000 officers. They are organised in a rigid caste system. Almost 90 per cent. of the officers are recruited from the landowning financial aristocracy. Supreme power in the provinces and large cities was in the hands of military general-governors. It was they, and not the civil power, who were the rulers.

The clergy, the church, play an equally important political rôle and represent a powerful economic force. There are 200,000 persons in this clerical army. There are more than 5,000 monasteries! There are 9,000 selected members of different religious orders who teach in the secondary schools and universities. The church owns one-third of the wealth of the whole country. It not only has a dominating place in school affairs, not only has its internal hierarchical discipline, but it reaches out its tentacles to the workers, particularly the agricultural population, organises trade unions of agricultural workers, peasant organisations, co-operatives, agricultural credit banks, etc.

In addition to the army officers and the church, there are the still numerous parasitic groups of gendarmes, police, secret service men, and petty officials.

Local government, urban and rural, is in the hands of landowners and big capitalists who rule through the "casiks." The "casiks" are the stewards or agents of the landlords, frequently of the largest landowners, bankers and even business

men—these are real hereditary local rulers. They control the municipal and parliamentary votes in their district. All local power, including the governor, obeys them. The whole Government kowtows to them. The numerous party cliques among the ruling classes in Spain reflect to some extent the system of the local rule of the "casiks."

The Spanish Government, besides, is not only a national State but a State in which the Spanish nation has a privileged position and oppresses and holds in subjection Catalonia (2.3 million inhabitants), the Basque provinces (1.58 million), and Galicia (2.1 million). Thus, out of an entire population of 23 millions, 6 millions are oppressed nationalities, not counting Spanish Morocco.

In backward, semi-feudal Spain there are some large industrial centres with a comparatively large number of factories and undertakings in which a compact mass of industrial workers is concentrated. There are about 1,200,000 industrial workers whose wages are lower than those in any European country and whose working and living conditions are of the worst.

Such was Spain before the imperialist war, when Spanish imperialism accumulated some fat and developed an appetite which remained after the war. Suddenly, just after the Armistice, the economic crisis in Spain shook the whole decayed order, which had already been considerably shaken by the mass revolutionary struggle of the Spanish proletariat which began in 1917. The Moroccan military catastrophe directly threatened the military officer caste and the Dynasty itself. The Catalonia national liberation movement revived and began to assume serious dimensions. It had its reflection in the fifteen ministerial crises between 1917 and 1922.

Alfonso XIII. and General Primo de Rivera took it upon themselves to save the social order of Spain from the oncoming bankruptcy. They carried through a military-fascist *coup d'état*, relying on the officers of the Barcelona and Saragossa garrisons. The *coup d'état* was in answer to the imperative demands of Catalonian finance capital and the monarchist party of Cambó. The aims of the fascist *coup d'état* were:

- (1) To "pacify" the country, break up the workers' organisations, stop the strike.
- (2) To prevent parliamentary interference or an investigation of the military débâcle in Morocco.
- (3) To suppress again the Catalonian national-revolutionary movement which was growing up.
- (4) To guarantee to the Catalonian finance capitalists the hegemony of Spanish imperialism.
- (5) To stop the rapid change of ministries.

Thus began the heroic attempt of the triple alliance—Alfonso XIII., General Primo de Rivera and the financial oligarchy—to accelerate the imperialist development of Spain by means of dictatorial decrees and the organised plunder of the state treasury. But they only succeeded in heaping up new antagonisms, since they tried to accelerate the seizure of all branches of the national economy by finance capital, while retaining all the economic and political remnants of feudalism.

As long as private capital could receive privileges and rob the Government, the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera enjoyed the confidence of the ruling classes in spite of its being divided into many factions. The Socialists and anarchists supported the dictatorship with particular zeal. The Socialist and trade union parties, led by a combined leadership, and the Fascist party of the dictatorship, were the only legal organisations. Primo de Rivera and the Socialists collaborated on all fronts. The anarcho-syndicalists, who headed the National Confederation of Trade Unions, which in 1919 contained almost a million organised workers, dissolved this organisation in spite of the fact that it was not proscribed by the government. But the Fascist stabilisation did not last long. In the attempt at reforms, the attempt to reduce the officers in the various arms of the service to a more common level, the dictatorship aroused the hostility of the artillery officers against it. And the attempt to change from a policy of granting subsidies to powerful financial-industrial combinations, to a policy of more open interference in the organisation and leadership of the national economy in the interests of large capital, aroused considerable numbers of the capitalists against the dictatorship.

The dissatisfaction of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie also grew at this time; the condition of the lower officialdom and the office workers grew worse. The dissatisfaction of the intelligentsia and the students began to increase in the city for economic reasons as well as because the dictatorship was giving the clergy more assistance. In the villages not only were the small, oppressed peasants dissatisfied, but also the middle and wealthy peasant, and the rural clergy. Friction rose between the upper and lower clergy on the basis of the growing contrast in their material conditions. Thus the contradictions heaped up, and the dissatisfaction against Rivera's dictatorship grew.

On the basis of all these contradictions and dissatisfactions, both left and right political currents took shape. Students' demonstrations began. There was a political revival of considerable

numbers of the city petty bourgeoisie and a number of attempts were made at theatrical revolutions, first by some generals, then by some favoured nobles, then by the soldiers of the artillery, then by the leader of the conservative party, Sanchez Serra, then the attempt at rebellion in January, 1930, and finally, after the fall of Primo de Rivera, the December attempt at an armed uprising. *Decisive and powerful blows came, however, with the approach of the economic crisis.* The crisis sharpened all the contradictions, it galvanised all antagonistic interests, classes and strata. And a new, menacing, revolutionary force—the proletariat of the city and the village—came to the foreground in the struggle. The working class, betrayed and sold by the Socialists and anarcho-sindicalists, oppressed by the capitalists, persecuted by the Rivera dictatorship, after some years of depression again lifted its head and, commencing with 1927, began to act. The strike wave which began in 1927 with 120,000 strikers, quickly grew and in the course of 1930 affected more than a million strikers. In the last four months of 1930 there were general political strikes in 56 cities and almost a hundred economic strikes besides. The strike movement and street demonstrations increased in spite of the economic depression and unemployment. *The strike movement awoke the petty bourgeoisie politically and stimulated the growth of the national-revolutionary movement of Catalonia.*

Thus we have two types of movement developing alternately or concurrently, two movements of an antagonistic character. What was the relation between these two movements? From 1926 to April 12-15 of this year the comic opera, salon conspirators were apprehensive. They slandered, blamed, and fought the strike movement and particularly the street demonstrations of the working class. But this movement, the strike struggle, relegated the adventurist conspirators to a back place. *Beginning with 1927, the Spanish workers take the leading part in the political struggle in Spain and become the pivot of political differentiation.* This forces a strategic and tactical regrouping of the salon conspirators. Fear of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and fear that the awakening petty-bourgeois masses will join this revolutionary movement, stimulates the salon conspirators to come forth with a republican platform. In 1930 the conspirators rally around the republican flag. A new series, a republican series of conspiracies, begins. In what way and by what means do these “republicans,” against their will, count on achieving their aims, and what is their attitude to the strike movement? The answer to these questions can be found in the speeches and declarations of

Alcala Zamora in the Ateneo Theatre, Madrid, in May, 1930.

The chief points of this programme were as follow: To avoid drawing the workers into political conflicts; to draw them into the “revolution” in a “friendly way” only; to bring the revolution about legally; to win the representatives of the old party over to their side and effect an alliance with them in order to form a provisional government which would carry on the elections to the Cortes; to prevent the soldiers, workers and the ultra-left elements from interfering with the republican movement at any cost.

As far back as February, 1930, Alcala Zamora, monarchist by conviction and republican by force of circumstance, a big landlord, banker and industrialist, declared: “If it is impossible to democratise the monarchy, then it is essential to try to establish the conservative republic boldly.”

Another pillar of the present Government coalition, Marcellino Domingo, exposed the character of the new conspirators:

“We have already been working together for some time with those who only yesterday were our worst enemies; the most trustworthy stays of the throne are coming over to our side.”

As long as the strike and revolutionary wave was on the upsurge, the political activity of the conspirators was limited to the making of threatening, sonorous, and high-flown phrases in their hermetically sealed salons. Toward the end of 1930, the workers’ movement subsided. There was a slackening and almost complete cessation of strikes. This galvanised the courage of the republicans. They increased their activity and, with the exception of the December events, stuck to purely parliamentary forms of struggle. This activity consisted in every possible combination of moves and bargains among the politicians.

The municipal elections of April 12, 1931, brought results which most of all surprised the republicans. The rural localities voted for the monarchists, but all the large cities gave the republicans a majority. The working masses and the poorest strata of the petty city bourgeoisie and the national minorities went spontaneously out on to the streets, demonstrated and on their own initiative proclaimed a republic. And only after this—taking into account that the initiative shown by the masses might shortly become a revolutionary torrent which would sunder the frames of legality and all the combinations of the politicians and pull down the whole existing régime—only after this did the king and the republicans come to an agreement that the former leave the country without a formal abdication of the throne and that the latter proclaim a provisional republic and form a Provisional Government. The single aim of this

was to guarantee order and direct the movement on to those rails in which the revolutionary energy and the raging passion of the masses would take on the form of an innocent street carnival.

This trick, this counter-revolutionary strategy, was successful for only three days, and not in all the cities. In Seville, the proletariat of the city, the agricultural workers of the vicinity and the city poor, fought for three days and nights, April 14 to 16, against the combined armed forces of the monarchists and the republicans. In Barcelona and in Bilbao the working masses broke the doors of the prisons, freed the prisoners, and tried to disarm the police and the civil guards. The proclamation of the republic under the violet flag—united counter-revolution—was only a temporary stop-gap, it only postponed the unavoidable outburst of revolutionary action of the wide masses and the proletariat for a few days. The proclamation of the republic, aimed at stemming the revolution, is not the end of the revolution, but a factor for its acceleration and intensification, a factor for the political differentiation and the regrouping of the forces and parties of the revolution and the counter-revolution, which rise, at the moment of an upsurge of the revolution, to a higher plane.

What classes actually, and not formally, held power after April 14?

Up to April 14, political power, the State apparatus and all its attributes, was in the hands of the landed aristocracy (temporal and spiritual) and the powerful capitalist, industrial, banking, and merchant bourgeoisie. The Bourbon dynasty headed the State. Power was enforced through the officers, church, police, gendarmes, secret service men, bureaucracy, "casikism." Those organs, which had and still have control of the armed forces, were left untouched when the republic was proclaimed. They came out for the republic and took it under their direct guardianship. The same bloc of large landowners and big bourgeoisie remained in power. The only change was that the centre of gravity in this bloc shifted to the bourgeoisie. *The reason for this was that the social basis of the ruling classes was widened since certain groups of the petty bourgeoisie and certain petty bourgeoisie parties of Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists, with a considerable following among the workers whom they betrayed, had been drawn in to collaborate with them and the monarchy which had been replaced by the republic. But the Socialists and the monarchists did not play a prominent rôle; they were only an additional weapon for effecting the transfer of the democratic trumpery by the counter-revolutionary forces rallying around the banner of the republic. The class counter-revolutionary nature of the Provi-*

sional Government was also revealed through all its policies and all its concrete measures.

All the most important ministerial and other posts have been filled by people directly bound up with the interests of the large landowners and big capital, people who not so long ago were the devoted servants—by conviction or for material gain—of the monarchy. And all the ministerial posts of a so-called technical, subsidiary character have been given to the representatives of the Socialist party and other petty-bourgeois groups. The programme of the Provisional Government contains only some vague promises of petty liberal reforms.

The Provisional Government considers its republic temporary. A final decision on the nature of the future régime has been postponed until the convening of the constitutional assembly. The whole State apparatus of the old régime has been retained inviolate. The new republic has prevented the oppressed nationalities in Catalonia and the Basque country from deciding their fate freely, and is taking measures to suppress them. Besides, the Provisional Government, together with the monarchists, has been able to direct the campaign of Spanish chauvinism against the desire of these nationalities for independence. And the Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists are more zealous than the rest. The anarcho-syndicalists declared their readiness to put the weapon of the general strike at the disposal of the Madrid central power in the struggle against every attempt of Catalonia to determine its fate independently, according to its own desires.

The Provisional Government has not withdrawn the army from Morocco. On the contrary, it has stained the Moroccan soil with the blood of the workers and peasants of Morocco.

The church has not been separated from the State. On the contrary, the Socialist ministers were instructed to make their obeisances, to bow to the black cassock and ask its blessing for the republic.

Political freedom has not been granted. The new republic not only embodies the desire of the paper, *Temps*, not only includes a special paragraph in its provisional constitution on how the Government will fight against the revolutionary workers' organisations, but excels itself in repressive measures against the workers. Maura, the Minister of Internal Affairs, declared that the Government would be "adamant in wiping out whatever destructive bodies may be created, as, for example, the communist nuclei." Two days later he declared, concerning the unemployed in Andalusia, that the Government would take most energetic steps against the rabble. Action fol-

lowed words. On the day after May First, in order to prevent the workers of Barcelona from expressing their dissatisfaction and formulating their demands, police detachments, infantry, cavalry, and even artillery were placed at different strategic points to intimidate the workers and, if this did not succeed, they were to fire on them. This went on for several days, May 9, 10, 11 and 12. The Republican-Monarchist police fired upon the workers' demonstrations in Madrid, Cordova, Seville and many other cities in compliance with orders from the Government. Beginning with May 9 the whole State apparatus of violence and repression inherited from the former régime, even tanks, armoured cars, poison gas and aeroplanes were hastily mobilised by the Provisional Government and, under the direct command of monarchist generals, were employed to defend the church, the monasteries, the landowners, and the monarchist newspapers against the revolutionary outbursts of the indignant, betrayed masses.

The masses, demonstrating in the street and presenting the most elementary demands, are considered by the Government as enemies of the republic.

The coalition has not made any essential changes in the economic field, and has declared openly that it will not make any. The privileges of the landowners and all the remnants of feudalism in agriculture have been left untouched. The Government has officially announced its readiness to defend the landowners and has already adopted a number of practical measures against the peasantry.

Neither have the privileges of finance capital been destroyed. On the contrary, the Socialist Minister, De los Rios, has, in the name of the Government, put Government funds at the disposal of bankers and speculators. At the same time, the Socialists and the anarcho-syndicalists have declared that anyone who summons the workers to economic strikes after the proclamation of the republic and before its consolidation is an enemy of the nation.

All these facts quite clearly reveal the class counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional

Government. The proletariat, and to some extent the petty bourgeois masses, begin to realise this.

The May days alone showed how the revolutionary avalanche of the masses is breaking down the counter-revolutionary dam of the republican coalition. The flames of the burning cathedrals and monasteries have dimmed the violet banner of the camouflaged republic. The position of counter-revolutionary and revolutionary forces is being marked.

The masses themselves are beginning to create by revolutionary initiations their revolutionary rights in opposition to the Socialists, republicans and monarchists who are in power. And it is not accidental that the masses at first concentrate their fury against the police, the generals, the church, the Ministry of Internal Affairs—but above all against the church. Class instinct and the revolutionary intuition of the masses as well as the logic of the struggle itself drives them on to the path of a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

During the April celebrations the petty bourgeoisie determined the external aspect and the spirit of the mass parades in the streets of the large cities. The Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists succeeded in somewhat holding the movement within the frames of a legal, peaceful holiday.

In the May events it was the workers, "the blue blouses," who gave the tone, although the movement is not yet spontaneous and the rôle of the Communist Party is still weak. The workers attract the city petty bourgeoisie, the poor students, and particularly the city poor, to their side. In the meantime the Socialists and anarcho-syndicalists turn from republican phrases to counter-revolutionary deeds. In an organised way, through their armed gangs, they join the police, and with them fire on the demonstrators.

The further course of the revolution depends on the strengthening of the Communist Party, which, once it has won the leadership of the proletariat, will be able to light the fire of the revolution—and in the village to win hegemony in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS AND THE TASKS OF SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Concluding Speech of Comrade D. Manuilsky at the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

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

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

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

History has afforded us three basic factors in the course of the foundation, development and consolidation of the Communist International. The first factor was the world war. This was the primary watershed which produced a sharp division in the world labour movement, dividing it into two camps. The second factor was the proletarian revolutions: the revolutions in the U.S.S.R. and in Central Europe. With this the Communist movement grew and gathered strength. At the present moment, a third factor

is coming forward—the world economic crisis—which is bound to play a most important rôle in the consolidation of the Communist movement. And here we have been shown to have been unprepared. This is an indisputable fact which it is not permissible for Bolsheviks to blur over.

How is our backwardness expressed? Let us take, for example, February 25, the Day of International Struggle against Unemployment. We know that this was not a day of great resounding successes for the sections of the Communist International which had fixed this day at the Conference in Berlin. But did any of the representatives of the Parties attempt to analyse thoroughly all the defects in preparation for the International Day of Struggle against Unemployment? Comrades forgot about this and it ought to have been done.

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

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

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

In the report of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., emphasis is laid on those mistakes which were

committed by the Communist Parties in the question of accelerating the tempo of the revolutionary upsurge, viz.: mechanisation of the revolutionary perspective and a mechanical formulation of the question of mass political strike and of the collapse of Social Democracy, etc. At the same time, our discussions have revealed in all obviousness another more serious danger—the tendency to prolong the period of revolutionary upsurge, the tendency to underestimate the revolutionary perspectives. This is expressed in the fact that many Communists judge the present position of the Parties as if there had been no world economic crisis, as if there had been a mounting wave of revolutionary upsurge, as if history had given us much larger historical periods for the fulfilment of our tasks. Consequently, their demands on themselves, their estimations, their criteria for measuring the success of the Communist Parties, their scales of measurement in general, are all extremely modest. Hence also their dissatisfaction with criticism. It seems to them that they are presented with demands impossible to fulfil.

ON THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS

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

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

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

Finally, Lenin and Stalin spoke about political crises already in the period when the revolution

had begun, in 1917, about the first political crisis in the April days, about the second in the June days and the third in the July days.

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

"Growing out of the general crisis of capitalism and of the present economic crisis, developing on the basis of the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, these elements of the revolutionary crisis are linked up with the intensification of the extraordinary poverty and misery of the masses, with their growing revolutionary activity, with the break-up of the whole international and internal system of capitalist domination, with rapid re-grouping of class forces, with the crisis in the upper ranks of society seeking a way out of their contradictions by the road of Fascism, new imperialist wars and military intervention in the U.S.S.R." (Theses of the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I., 1931, p. 10. Modern Books, 1931).

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

In the third place, our definition of revolutionary crisis is not separated by a Chinese wall from

revolutionary upsurge. It develops on the basis of the revolutionary upsurge. Consequently, our definition is not scholastic; it embraces the dynamic revolutionary processes in all their entirety.

In the fourth place, our characterisation of revolutionary crisis includes the basic elements of the revolutionary situation. It is not that they are already apparent, but they are included for further development. This is something more than being in a latent condition, but it is still not a revolutionary situation. There is an extraordinary accentuation of the misery and poverty of the masses, there is revolutionary activity on the part of the masses, breaking out through the cracks which have been caused as a result of the crisis among the upper strata. But, at the same time, our definition of revolutionary crisis is not identical with the proposition that the upper strata are not able to rule as of old, while the lower strata do not wish to live in the old way and the question of power becomes immediate, i.e., the proposition of a revolutionary situation which represents one of the highest forms of the revolutionary crisis. While we do not make the revolutionary crisis identical with the revolutionary situation, at the same time we do not separate them by a stone wall.

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

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

In the sixth place, our definition does not place Fascism in the position of a deciding factor of the revolutionary crisis, but allocates it the modest rôle of one of the symptoms of the disorientation of the ruling classes and of their endeavour to find a way out of the position by suppression of the working class. Fascism is put within definite bounds. It was the more necessary to do this because there was much unclarity on the question of the crisis among the upper strata, of Fascism and of the revolutionary crisis. We reject the identification of the revolutionary crisis

with Fascism. The fact that the bourgeoisie is compelled to have recourse to Fascist methods of suppression of the movement of the toilers by no means signifies that the upper strata are not able to rule as of old. Fascism is not a new method of rule distinct from the whole system of bourgeois dictatorship. Whoever thinks that is a liberal.

Finally, in the seventh place, our definition of a revolutionary crisis emphasises why we have spoken precisely in connection with the revolutionary crisis of the danger of new imperialist wars and of the danger of armed intervention against the U.S.S.R. Was this accidental? No, we emphasised, as connected with the sharpening of existing contradictions, the danger of imperialist wars, and particularly the great danger of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, in order to show the dialectical character of the process of growth and development of the revolutionary crisis. In so doing, we depict the revolutionary crisis, not as some kind of one-sided process only going on at the top, but we analyse it in the dialectical interaction of the extremely sharpening class struggle. Thereby, we reject all schematic formulæ that the growth of the revolutionary crisis is connected only with the offensive of the proletariat and we subject the question of the attack and defence of the classes to the concrete analysis of the relation of forces at each given stage of the class struggle.

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

the class which in the final historical analysis is the attacking one.

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

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

We pointed out that "the Mateotti crisis" did not ripen into a revolutionary crisis precisely because the Fascist dictatorship was not shaken in its economic foundations by it. And only for that reason. But where here is to be found any putting of the political crisis in opposition as some sort of special stage preceding the revolutionary

crisis? It does not exist and Comrade Garlandi's conclusion is gratuitous.

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

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

And what is given concretely in the sense of an analysis of the class alignment of forces by the empty term political crisis as such a stage of revolutionary upsurge where there is not yet pre-

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

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

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

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

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

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

But this contrasting of the political revolutionary crisis is also fraught with mistakes of a right order. The setting up of the political crisis as some sort of special stage preceding the "real" revolutionary crisis, implies that there is thereby sanctioned so-called "transitional periods" in the Brandler sense of the words, with such transitional slogans as control over production. We remember what a Bolshevik work had to be done

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

FASCISM

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

elements for the overcoming of the crisis by the methods of getting out along capitalist lines. Fascism is both an attack and a defence on the part of capitalism.

Comrade Remmele, polemising with the rights on the question of attack and defence of the working class, pointed out how the defence of the working class is dialectically converted into counter-attack. And what Comrade Remmele said is also correct if we apply this dialectic in regard to Fascism. It is only necessary to put concretely in a little more detail for the different countries what Comrade Remmele said.

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

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

And our tactical task consists altogether, not in merely declaring the objective parallelism of the forms of revolution and counter-revolution, but in bending this parallelism to our advantage by a tactic of unexpected blows. The one who proceeds by a tactic of unexpected blows will beat

his opponent. Consequently, to see where danger lies, not to be diverted, not to lose one's head under the influence of success, to estimate soberly one's own strength and the strength of the enemy, to be able to judge correctly, neither underestimating or overestimating one's success, not to underestimate or overestimate the forces of one's opponents — these constitute the first essential obligation for communists. Merely by tactically proclaiming a general counter-attack when blows are being delivered against us, and in a number of places very serious blows, while we retreat—from this no sort of counter-attack can be produced.

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

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

Another kind of mistake is theoretically conceivable — the "left" mistake. This position amounts to seeing in Fascism only a product of the disintegration of capitalism. The Fascist movement is seen as a peculiar kind of objective "ally" of Communism which shatters the stability of the capitalist system and undermines the mass basis of Social Democracy from the other end to the Communists. If Communists were to take up this position they would be ignoring the very important circumstance that Fascism represents a form of the attack of capitalism. They would

be calculating that the phenomenon of Fascism testifies only to the fact that capitalism was becoming weaker and the proletariat stronger. They would be ascribing to Fascism an exclusively revolutionising role. Hence, the conclusion would follow that the advent of Fascism was almost desirable; the worse the better. The growth of Fascism, they would say, prepares the victory of Communism.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Spain, we have seen also other paths of the dissolution of the dictatorship of Primo de

Rivera. It is as impossible to establish such a law as it is to assert that everywhere capitalism before it is destroyed by the proletarian revolution must pass through the stage of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship. This again would be equivalent to a mechanical formulation of the dialectical processes of the social development.

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

But, in the first place, even the monopolist phase of capitalism and the imperialist stage are not obligatory categories. Lenin repeatedly pointed out that this was a fatalistic formulation pregnant with the same dangers which in the past prior to the war led some of the German Social Democrats, extreme radicals like Paul Lensch, into the camp of the ideologues of ultra-imperialism. Lenin repeatedly fought against such fatalistic formulations. It is sufficient to refer to his struggle against Bukharin, Radek and Piatakov on the National question, i.e., against comrades who, proceeding from a fatalistic view of imperialism and schematising imperialist development, denied the possibility of national self-determination in the epoch of imperialism. The processes of the growing over of bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy into bourgeois dictatorship in the form of Fascism are unequal processes, especially on an international scale, and it would be great pessimism to believe that the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship will become the world political superstructure of capitalism before the proletarian revolution is able to put an end to capitalism as a whole. But it is just this theory which gives rise to the belief that only the proletarian revolution can hinder the growth of Fascist reaction. If we were to formulate the question in this way, we would set before the Communist Parties a demand, the fulfilment of which would depend not only on their strength but on the association of a whole series of objective factors, both internal and international.

It is impossible to demand from any Party in the Communist International that it must arrest the development of Fascism under any circumstances by the proletarian revolution. We did not demand, for example, from the Finnish comrades that there should be a revolution in answer to the Lapuan *coup d'état*. What we did demand from the Finnish communists was

active struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship, considering that thereby they could and would hinder the establishment in Finland of the Fascist form of bourgeois dictatorship. What, for example, can all sections of the Communist International demand from the German comrades in the present situation in order to hinder the establishment of Fascist dictatorship and to prepare the People's Revolution in Germany? To hinder the attack of capital against the working class, to hinder the driving of the Communist Party underground, to gain strength in the factories, independently to lead the class struggles, to strengthen and develop the independent trade union movement, to break down the mass basis of Social Democracy, to develop mass political strikes in the struggle against bourgeois dictatorship—the fulfilment of these tasks can be demanded by the sections of the Communist International from the German Communist Party, and the latter is already now doing this.

SOCIAL FASCISM AND THE THEORY OF "THE LESSER EVIL"

What is it that expresses concretely our backwardness in the question of Fascism? Firstly, in view of the narrowing economic basis of reformism and decreased manoeuvring possibilities of capital in economic spheres, we, by our passivity, allow the bourgeoisie to manoeuvre on such questions as parliamentarism, the Young Plan, the Versailles question, Protection, etc. Secondly, our backwardness in the question of Fascism is expressed by the fact that we allow Social Democracy to manoeuvre on the question of forms of bourgeois dictatorship. *And this is now its chief manoeuvre of a whole historic period.* Social Democracy endeavours to divert the masses from the main questions of the class struggle, and to turn their attention to arguments as to the forms which their exploitation should take—to questions such as which is the better form of bourgeois dictatorship: parliamentary or extra-parliamentary? The theory of the so-called "lesser evil" is at the moment the chief channel for the parliamentary illusions of the masses. Social Democracy will manoeuvre—not only to-day and to-morrow, but during a whole period, during a considerable time—on the question of its seeming struggle with Fascism, blurring by all methods the basic fact that Fascism and Social Fascism are two aspects of one and the same social bulwark of bourgeois dictatorship. To shatter these illusions of the masses—this it is which will assure the disruption of the mass basis of Social Democracy inside the working class.

How is it possible to shatter these illusions on this fundamental question? On the basis of the

day-to-day economic and political struggle against capital. Herein lies now the basic link for our struggle against Social Democracy for influence over the masses.

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

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

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

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

The Social Democrats in order to deceive the masses deliberately proclaim that the chief enemy of the working class is Fascism, in order thereby to divert attention from the question of the

struggle against the dictatorship of capitalism in general, to idealise the democratic form of the latter and to create among the workers the impression that they must struggle for the "democratic" forms of their exploitation and against the Fascist forms.

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

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

Precisely such a formulation of the question best of all permits us to expose the theory of "the lesser evil." Precisely in that the Communists in Germany struggle against the bourgeois dictatorship as their chief enemy, personified to-day by the Brüning Government, they are exposing the manoeuvre of Social Democracy

which represents the Brüning Government as "the lesser evil" in comparison to Fascism of the Hitler type. Is it not true that the whole theory of the "lesser evil" rests on the presumption that Fascism of the Hitler type represents the chief enemy? And starting with this supposition it is impossible to prove to the workers that the Brüning Government is not the lesser evil without completely and entirely identifying the Brüning Government with a possible Hitler Government. But we do not identify Brüning with Hitler or Social Fascism, supporting Brüning with Hitler Fascism.

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

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

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

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

Comrade Stalin puts the question in the same way:—

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

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

The utilisation of these two methods allows the bourgeoisie to fasten ever more strongly the fetters of bondage over the masses, speculating

on their fear of the "right" and at the same time assisting Social Democracy to come forward in the character of the champion of "democracy." This game is not a new one, it represents the continuation of the traditional policy of the bourgeois dictatorship which in the past, in accordance with concrete conditions, pushed to the fore, now its conservative and now its liberal wing, and thereby drew the masses away from the class struggle.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

but answers inspired by our basic propositions, and made accessible to the understanding of the masses, by being permeated and enriched by the facts and experiences of their struggle.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The third element in the formulation of the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis is the analysis of the concrete situation created by the crisis in each separate country, a critical examination of the paths proposed by the bourgeoisie and its parties in the search for a capitalist way out of the crisis. This means, for example, that in such a country as Austria, Communists must show to the masses that there is no salvation for decaying Austria within the limits of capitalism and the Versailles system. It means, further, that the Communists in Britain must fearlessly raise the question before the working class of the liberation of the colonies and dominions through the proletarian revolution in Great Britain as a condition for the strengthening of the British working class itself and as a condition for inspiring faith in the British proletariat and the new structure to be built by it on the part of millions of toilers of all races.

Only on the basis of such confidence, of a rapid rise in the material and cultural level of the colonial masses, of the victory of bourgeois democratic revolution and its growing over into Socialist revolution in the colonies will Socialist Britain be able to make a gigantic step forward along the path of the further development of its productive forces liquidating its long-standing unemployment and saving itself from a coming imperialist war and from destruction in this way at the hands of American imperialism. Our

Party can now go forward boldly in the name of all the toiling masses of Great Britain.

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

In France, this chief direction now for the blows of the working class, especially in connection with the ripening of pre-requisites of revolutionary crisis in Germany, is the struggle against French imperialism, the most predatory, destructive and parasitic imperialism, which appears as the leader in Europe in regard to struggle with the threat of the revolutionary movement.

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

In Czecho-Slovakia, the chief direction of our blow lies in the mobilisation of the masses for struggle against the "Austrian" level of wages and against the role of Czecho-Slovakia as the chief reservoir of war equipment for the war against the U.S.S.R. The Czech war industry, the real master of which is French capitalism, an industry which has grown up on the basis of the monstrously low living standards of the Czech proletariat and which strengthens the militarist yoke in Czecho-Slovakia, in its turn appears as one of the chief causes of the Austrian standard of wages in Czecho-Slovakia. Only in the process of developing mass struggles will the Communist Party be able to fulfil successfully its Party task at the present time, viz., the strengthening and extension of the Red Trade Unions.

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

In the U.S.A., the chief direction of our blow is for the break-up of the positions of American capitalism by means of mobilising the masses for

struggle for the realisation of social insurance at the expense of the capitalists and the bourgeois State.

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

In Spain, the direction of our attack lies along struggle for a Soviet Spain*, for democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, for the confiscation of the land of the landowners and for the 7-hour working day, under the condition of strengthening the Communist Party and the Trade Unions on the basis of their clear class delimitation from petty-bourgeois radicalism (the anarchists, republicans, Trotskyists, etc.) In the countries of Latin-America, we take up the class struggle and the struggle against foreign imperialism.

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

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

At the present moment the whole revolutionary perspective is connected with the overcoming by the Communist Parties of their backwardness, as has been correctly pointed out by a number of comrades who have spoken here. We, revolutionary Bolsheviks, Communist activists, we are against mechanical perspectives which amount to a general judgment that capitalism has no way out, that the agrarian crisis is insoluble within the limits of capitalism, that a revolutionary crisis will inevitably grow out of the crisis of capitalism. Such general prognoses are academic, they are like the speeches of a preacher about a life hereafter, for there is in them no element of concreteness, of actuality or of struggle.

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

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

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

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

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

But we cannot guarantee either the time or the extent of this breakdown; we can only mark out with a certain approximateness the weak points where this breakdown is most likely to be produced. What we can definitely know is that if capitalism is able to creep out of the present acute phase of the cyclical crisis, it will do so in a more shattered condition than after the world War of 1914-19.

The effects of the general crisis deepened by the cyclical crisis will be still more deleterious for capitalism. The "breathing space" which capitalism would obtain in this case would by no means put an end to the revolutionary upsurge. It is not to be excluded that it could hold back

for a short period the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, for example, in Germany, but that it would hardly be able to hold it back in India and China, or even in Poland. However, what we have lost in regard to the effects of the cyclical crisis, we have compensated for and shall compensate for by the growing influence of the U.S.S.R. The latter is now a revolutionary factor of decisive significance.

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

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

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

ERRATUM.

In the article in the *Communist International*, Vol. VIII., No. 10 (May 15, 1931) on the results of the XI. Plenum, the phrase "the national revolution" on p. 290 should read "the People's Revolution."

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