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## CONTENTS

**D. Manuilsky: The War against the Working Class — Preparation for War.**

### Politics.

Josef Eröss: The Great Strike Wave in Hungary.

Michel Hollay: The Campaign against Communism and the Soviet Union in France.

### Plenum of the C. C. and C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U.

A. I. Rykov: The Joint Plenum of the C. C. and the C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U. (Conclusion).

Resolution of the Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. on the Results of the Plenum of the C. C. and the C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U.

### The Labour Movement.

Giovanni Germanetto: The I. F. T. U. Congress in Paris, and After.

### For the Unity of the Trade Movement.

The All-Union Council of Trade Unions to the British Trades Union Congress.

The Disruptive Tactics of the British General Council.

### Workers' Delegations in the Soviet Union.

L. Trotzky: The Soviet Union and the United States of America.

The "Pravda" on Trotzky's Interview.

### Ten Years Ago.

Counter-Revolutionary Advance.

Kornilov Disregards the Provisional Government.

N. Lenin: Letter to the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.

Chronicle of Events.

# The War against the Working Class — Preparation for War.

## On the Trial of Sacco and Vanzetti.

By D. Manuilsky.

Moscow, August 28th 1927.

When these lines meet the eyes of the Western reader, the storm of indignation which the condemnation of Sacco and Vanzetti aroused among the working masses of the whole world will, in all probability, have subsided for a short time. The wave of mass indignation which rose so fiercely in the July days in Vienna, which was repeated in Leipzig, Geneva and Paris, is retiring from the surface into the workers' quarters. The proletariat is going back to the workshops with compressed lips, with suppressed rage. The bourgeoisie has this time emerged as victor from this class collision. It is taking advantage of this victory in order to extend still further the apparatus of class suppression, to crush down the working class still more. Its corrupt press is everywhere trying to prove that an international conspiracy is being organised from Moscow against the bourgeois order. Hundreds of workers are being flung into prison; in a number of countries huge trials similar to that of the Sacco and Vanzetti trial are being instituted.

A new campaign of incitement has been launched against the Communists of all countries. Nevertheless the events which have recently taken place in the great centres of Europe demand the closest attention on the part of the Communist Parties of all countries. Behind the partial and relative stabi-

lisation of capitalism (not among the least important causes of which was the weakness of the proletariat in face of the offensive of capital), these events prove the great change which is taking place at the present time in the mood and sentiments of the working masses. When we consider these events in the light of the great class struggles of the Chinese revolution and of the English general strike, then we see how much inflammable material has accumulated in post-war Europe. Vienna, Geneva and Paris are a serious warning to the capitalist class of Europe which is playing with fire; they are a sharp reminder to the inciters of international counter-revolution against the Chinese revolution and against the Soviet Union. If the fact that American capital has brought two workers to the electric chair sufficed to drive the masses of the European proletariat into such tempestuous movements, what forms and what extent would this movement be bound to assume were the capitalist world to commence the insane attempt of a fresh wholesale massacre of millions of workers: a war against the Soviet Union, which is regarded by the class conscious workers of the whole world as the point of support in their fight against capital.

One must openly say that there has been no international campaign in the last few years which so stirred up the working masses of the whole world as the campaign on behalf

of Sacco and Vanzetti. Its intensity can only be compared with that campaign which the international proletariat conducted in the year 1920 under the slogan of defence of the Soviet Union.

Many Western bourgeois papers compared this campaign for Sacco and Vanzetti with the famous Dreyfus trial. This, however, is a too superficial and unconvincing comparison. The Dreyfus trial was the last sign of life of French bourgeois radicalism; its opposition to the clerical reaction, to the undivided rule of military cliques. After this last effort "democracy" became completely bound up with capitalist reaction. After a time French petty bourgeois radicalism capitulated to the church, to militarism and other constituent parts of the capitalist order. The Dreyfus trial was an episode in French political life; it could not achieve that international importance which the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti achieved. The class character of the Sacco and Vanzetti trial was quite other than that of the Dreyfus trial. It was not a collision between various fractions of the bourgeoisie in the national arena. It was a class collision between the proletariat and capital in the international arena. It was not a mere chance that the Sacco and Vanzetti frame-up occurred in the most powerful capitalist country, in the country where the bourgeoisie still feels itself to be firmly seated in the saddle, in the country which, by its technical development, determined the issue of the world war, the country where there originated the ready made Dawes plan and to which are directed the hungry glances of all the financially bankrupt, poverty-stricken "independent" States which arose after the war.

It was not a matter of chance that, in contradistinction to the Dreyfus trial, there stood at the head of the protest movement in the Sacco and Vanzetti trial not the petty bourgeoisie, but the working class, the class of the future and not the class of the past. Thus we see that the indignation of the working class in Europe at the torture and murder of Sacco and Vanzetti is not a belated echo of the past, but a new wave of proletarian revolution, even though it still assumes unclear and sentimental forms. What immediately strikes one both in the Vienna events and partly also in the Paris events is that the outward impetus to this movement was given by facts which are more or less everyday occurrences in the chronicles of bourgeois justice. In hundreds of trials which have taken place in recent times in a number of countries, fascist murder has been systematically justified by class justice. On the other hand, the physical annihilation of champions of the working class has likewise been justified in a number of capitalist countries. The American electric chair, which mechanises legal murder, is only a nauseating expression of class society which is conducting an inexorable fight against the proletariat.

The whole criminal code of the bourgeoisie is so built up that all acts of repression against the lowest social strata are justified and those crimes in which the representatives of the ruling class are involved are privileged. The intentional bankruptcies of those who speculate on the misfortunes of the people, the defrauders in the ranks of the gilded youth, the embezzlers — all these after coming into conflict with the criminal law, again come to the surface of social life and remain respected members of bourgeois society. Has one ever heard that Barmat or Stinnes in Germany, that Sinclair in the United States of America were to be placed in the electric chair? The hand of bourgeois Nemesis hangs down helplessly when it should punish the "newly rich" who have acquired wealth through the war or by the inflation period during the occupation of the Ruhr district. "Godlike justice" is blind and deaf when she should direct her sword against the heads of those who, by means of a complicated social mechanism, pocketed all the profits of the devastating war and plundered the working masses of all countries. The ruined middle classes of Germany or France who have lost their meagre savings, the completely impoverished millions — these are the result of the legal theft which remains unpunished by every bourgeois criminal code.

The "good-for-nothings" of the "Vorwärts" and "Populaire" deliberately obscure this class character of bourgeois justice when they endeavour to draw a parallel between the condemnation of the two workers Sacco and Vanzetti and the shooting of parasites, speculators and counter-revolutionary conspirators in the Soviet Union. They will not succeed with such rascally

methods in confusing the European workers. Millions of workers are fully aware that, at the time of capitalist encirclement of Soviet Russia, at the time of international capitalist reaction, which is endeavouring to organise a fresh series of conspiracies and terrorist murders within the Soviet Union, at a time when the friends of the "Vorwärts" and the "Populaire", the Russian Mensheviks are prepared to move heaven and earth in order to achieve the restoration of the capitalist order in the Soviet Union, the first proletarian State in the world is only fulfilling its elementary duty towards the international proletariat when it defends with all possible means the achievements of the great October Revolution.

One of the greatest proletarian achievements is that there exists in Soviet Russia prisons for the Barmats and Sinclairs and their agents; that the hand of proletarian justice punishes without mercy the bourgeois scoundrels, the aristocratic thieves, the embezzlers, the robbers of the wealth of the people. With a thoroughness unparalleled in history the proletariat is cleansing the Augean stables of the robbery and treachery which the old Tsarist regime left as a legacy to the young workers' power. The moral conscience of the international proletariat has already recognised this proletarian justice, which is in accordance with the workers' elementary conceptions of honour, — this justice which defends the interests of millions of workers against a handful of exploiters. This justice needs no justification.

The very existence of a proletarian State which gives the international proletariat an example of such proletarian class justice enables the working masses of the West to compare by concrete examples this justice with the justice of the bourgeoisie of their own countries. The justice of the Soviet Union must enhance in them the sensitiveness and the reaction to every social injustice.

In the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti this social injustice appeared in its most undisguised, flagrant and cynical form. Two simple workers had to be executed in order to preserve the authority of the bourgeois State. The "radical" Senator Borah gave specially clear expression to this simple philosophy of the American bourgeoisie: whether Sacco and Vanzetti are guilty or innocent is a matter for itself, but the American bourgeoisie cannot give way to the pressure of the working masses abroad. Sacco and Vanzetti had to die because the prestige of the trans-Atlantic plutocracy was at stake. The masses, by means of the particularly striking concrete example of the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, received a clear political lesson which told them much more than the events of international high politics: the diplomatic intrigues and rascally combinations of Chamberlain; the problem of the evacuation of the Rhineland; the problem of international debts etc. The war preparations of the capitalist countries are surrounded with the deepest diplomatic secrets which are impenetrable to the untrained gaze of the average worker who does not know the finesse of international diplomacy.

We have to admit with regret that our Communist press abroad has, up to now, done too little to expose the secret threads of war which are pulled by the hands of English capital. Such facts as the recent English military manoeuvres, which bear witness to a colossal mechanisation of mass slaughter in the English army, were not sufficiently dealt with in the press. Such events as the visit of the English Minister of War to India for the purpose of reorganising the Indian military forces in the districts lying near the Central Asiatic frontiers of the Soviet Union were not sufficiently made a subject of propaganda. One cannot doubt that when a war against the Soviet Union is conjured up out of the ground, when it appears in palpable form before the masses of the European working class, it will call forth such a movement as the capitalist governments will hardly be able to master. But it has often happened in history that revolutionary mass movements have proceeded from events which apparently had no outer connection with the fundamental problems of the revolutionary epoch. These movements begin with partial demands and only later develop into great questions of the epoch. The February Revolution in Russia in the year 1917 began in the bread queues; in a few days it had proceeded to the overthrow of autocracy and the creation of the Soviets.

But the Russian revolutionaries did very much in those days to make clear to the broadest masses of the workers and peasants the connection between the slogans for bread and the

fundamental slogans of the revolution. The masses often come to revolution in their own way; they react energetically to facts which to the experienced politicians appear as episodes of the social and political order in question. The task of the experienced politicians and agitators consists in feeling at every moment this main nerve of the mood of the masses. They must know how to formulate the simple demands understood by the masses in slogans calculated to draw into the movement not only the working class and the peasantry, but also other sections of the population. They must know how to create the conditions for an action and a united front of the broadest masses, in the atmosphere of sympathy which, in addition to the non-party proletarian masses, will attract to the slogans of the party other groups of workers also. The proletarian revolution will not be the affair of the isolated working class. It draws along with it all those who are suffering under the present regime, all the exploited and oppressed.

The force of the Sacco and Vanzetti campaign consists precisely in the fact that in a number of countries, in addition to the proletariat, petty bourgeois sections were drawn into it. But therein lies not only the force but also a certain ideological weakness of this campaign. The petty-bourgeoisie has adapted its press to this campaign. In the indignation of these groups of the population of Europe there found expression that instinctive fear of the impoverished European petty bourgeoisie, at the political and financial power of American capital. The sentence on Sacco and Vanzetti is the language in which Fuller, Dawes and Rockefeller address politically and economically prostrate Europe. To the petty bourgeois mass this sentence appears as something peculiar to the bourgeoisie State in which the dollar has absolute rule. The bourgeois so-called radical press ignored the power of the dollar of their own bourgeoisie, and preferred to attack the foreign dollar-bourgeoisie. And the first task confronting the Communist Parties is to oppose to this narrow standpoint of European petty bourgeois radicalism the class standpoint of the proletariat.

Especially now, when in spite of all the protests of the working class the foul murder has been carried out, when the ashes of their two brothers are being cast in the face of the working masses of the whole world, the Communist Parties must conduct a specially persistent campaign of enlightenment on the significance of the Sacco and Vanzetti affair. The actual murderer of Sacco and Vanzetti is not Fuller alone, but the **entire international capitalist class**. In every capitalist country dozens of Fullers scorn the working masses daily. In every capitalist country dozens of Saccos and Vanzettis are pining in prison. To fight against the condemnation of Sacco and Vanzetti means to fight in order that the prisons shall be opened. The electric current with which the American capitalist reaction murdered the two proletarians, is now **circulating through the whole world**. This current is an international current. The guns of the English, American and French dreadnoughts are trained on 400 million Chinese workers and peasants who are fighting for their emancipation. The hand of English capital, supported on all sides by the entire international bourgeoisie, is directed against the frontiers of the Soviet Union. It is establishing power-stations for the coming war in Poland, in the Baltic Countries, in Roumania, in the Balkans, in Central Asia, in the Near and Far East. The current that killed Sacco and Vanzetti is a symptom of the offensive of capital on all fronts following on the crushing of the English miners' struggle and the blows which world capital is directing against the Chinese revolution.

The murder of Sacco and Vanzetti is the same as the annihilation of the achievements of the English trade unions; it is the same as that new barbarous military law in France; as the bourgeois Bloc in Germany; as the orgies of fascism in Italy; as the bestial Pilsudski government in Poland; as the white terror in the Balkans. He that really wishes to fight against such vile acts as the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti **must strike at his class enemy at home**. One cannot artificially separate the Sacco and Vanzetti affair from the whole social system from which it has arisen. By the various actions of the Communist Parties the class consciousness of the masses must develop up to an understanding of the social mechanism which creates the prerequisites for such trials. We must not foster the illusion which the petty bourgeois radicals are spreading as to "injustice", "inhumanity". These petty-bourgeois radicals speak of a Yankee who has grown fat at the cost of the decline of Europe; we,

however, must expose to the masses the class character of their bourgeois State and its connection with international capital. If the working masses do not yet grasp the inner connection between the Sacco and Vanzetti trial and the war preparations of the capitalist States, it is the business of the Communist Parties patiently and persistently to explain to them this connection. They must show that the inner war against the working class is the preparation for war abroad. Sacco and Vanzetti are the victims of the first attempts to commence a war. If the West European proletariat, which is separated by many hundreds of miles from the Far East does not feel so passionately the executions of Chinese Communists, workers and peasants, then it is the duty of the Communist Parties to make good this failing by lively and untiring agitation. The blood of the yellow Chinese proletarians who are now being executed by the newly fledged Chinese counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie has the same claim on the solidarity of the world proletariat as the blood of the white proletarians, Sacco and Vanzetti. Millions of workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, for whom world capital is preparing the electric chair of counter-revolution in the shape of a war, have no less claim to the protection of the world proletariat than Sacco and Vanzetti.

The revolutionary solidarity which the European proletariat displayed recently in the most important proletarian centres of Europe will endure. It will meet the capitalist reaction with still greater force than it has ever done before. It is the best guarantee against war. Against the current of capitalist reaction there runs the current of proletarian solidarity and revolutionary struggle.

## POLITICS

### The Great Strike Wave in Hungary.

By Josef Eröss.

In the Hungary of Horthy-Bethlen in the last two months one strike wave has followed another. It is not in the interest of the Hungarian bourgeoisie and the social democracy to publish any strike statistics, hence we have only approximate data regarding the number of workers who have participated in the wages struggles. On the basis of these data, however, it can be stated that about two-thirds of the industrial workers, among them being more than half of the workers of Budapest, have taken part in the strike wave which has lasted for two months. On the 29th of August the government and the social democratic trade union bureaucracy succeeded by means of their combined forces in stiling the wage struggle of about 20,000 metal workers in the big factories with a so-called partial success. But this by no means meant the end of the wave of strikes. In all branches of industry wage struggles are either proceeding or are in course of preparation. These wages conflicts in Hungary have, in the given historical circumstances, a great political significance. They are bound to have political effects in the further revolutionising of the labour movement and the political and organisatory consolidation of the revolutionary elements.

Since the Spring there has been a definite improvement in business conditions in Hungary. With the beginning of building activity — partly as a result of the increasing outlay of capital on the part of the State and partly as a result of the inflow of foreign credits — work set in in all branches of industry connected with the building trade. The heavy industry and the machine industry were successfully consolidated on a basis far below the pre-war level. At the beginning of Spring unemployment decreased considerably. The improvement in business conditions brought with it a certain revival of the trade union movement. It is true a portion of the working class left the trade unions, but there commenced, under the leadership of old trade union members who had either been repelled from the trade unions by the repeated treachery of the trade union bureaucracy and of the social democratic party or had been expelled from the trade unions, negotiations for organising wage struggles. The tremendous deterioration of the standard of living of the working class formed a suitable ground for such beginnings. The following data give some idea as to the decline of the standard of living:

Before the war a worker earned in a week a sum corresponding to 182.4 kilograms of bread; today he earns in a week the equivalent of 78.4 kilograms. In pre-war times a worker had to work 1½ hours in order to be able to purchase 1 kilogram of pork; today he has to work 3.3 hours. Before the war he had to work 70 hours in order to obtain a suit; today he has to work 133 hours.

A director of the National Federation of Manufacturers states that in the year 1914 the average weekly wage amounted to 32.50 gold crowns, in 1925 to 16.38 gold crowns. According to official figures, in the year 1913 there was paid out 437 million gold crowns in wages, that is a quarter of the value produced, in the year 1925 there was paid out only 282 million gold crowns, that is one sixth of the value produced.

In spite of the improvement in business conditions and the low standard of living of the working class, which has fallen to the lowest level, the trade union bureaucracy and the social democratic party did everything possible in order that wage disputes should not develop into open strikes. They exerted a particularly strong pressure on the workers in the metal factories in order to hold them back from strikes.

### The Development of the Strike Movement.

The strike movement began in the wood-working industries. The workers in these undertakings succeeded in getting the small employers to conclude a collective treaty with them, whereupon the greater part of the big industrialists also capitulated. The increased wages obtained in Budapest and the provinces often amounted to 15%.

The building workers' union, which is completely crippled, was not able to do anything to improve the position of the working class. All the active lower functionaries had been expelled from the union. It was under the leadership of these expelled elements that the strike movement began everywhere. In spite of the fact that the bureaucracy strove in every locality to check this movement, in many places the building workers achieved partial successes.

A wage movement is also taking place among the leather workers; the food and clothing workers also are contemplating a wage movement.

The most important events are the strikes of the miners and metal workers. With the latter the wage movements commenced at the end of July. The wage movement of the miners started at Pécs. The authorities prohibited all meetings of the strikers, at the same time the trade union bureaucracy endeavoured to persuade the miners first to go back to the pits, and then to continue negotiations with the employers. The miners have resumed work, the strike has been frustrated.

In Győr there commenced a partial strike among the workers in the waggon factory. Here the authorities and the trade union bureaucrats employed the same methods as in Pécs. The negotiations ended in the management refusing to fulfill the demands of the workers; the strike remained without result.

At the end of July 1200 building workers and workers in the light metal industry in Budapest went on strike. Upon the "promise" of the employers, the trade union bureaucracy also forced these workers back to work. Thereupon the employers, instead of the 20% wage increase, proposed to the workers a 5% increase. The strike broke out afresh and, in spite of the bureaucracy, ended with a partial success, 5, 10 and 15% wage increases being granted.

The wage struggles of the big metal works commenced with the lock-out of 4500 workers from an electricity work. Thereupon 7000 workers employed in the Manfred Weiss Factory went on strike. They were followed by the workers in the other iron works, and in the second half of August there were about 20,000 metal workers on strike. These strike movements, in which the workers demanded a wage increase of 5, 10 and 15% according to their respective branches of industry, have all been carried through in face of the greatest sabotage on the part of the trade union bureaucracy. As the authorities did not succeed in bringing about an agreement between the workers and the employers, and as the employers refused to grant the demands of the workers, the bureaucrats of the metal workers' union persuaded the workers to resume work during the course of the negotiations. After long inner struggles the workers returned to work, with the reservation that if the negotiations did not lead to any result within 48 hours they would again down

tools. This is what happened. Work was stopped and negotiations were again taken up separately for each factory. The result was that the employers proposed a wage increase of 5% to the lowest paid workers, so that the wage increase only applied to about 70% of the strikers. Following this result, which can hardly be called a partial success, the greater part of the workers resumed work on the 30th of August, after the trade union bureaucrats had declared that they would not pay out a penny more strike pay should the strike be continued.

### The Strike Tactics of the Social Democracy.

The social democratic trade union bureaucracy used all its endeavours to confine this movement to single workshops in the factories, or at least to single factories. When they did not succeed in this they strove to limit the demands of the workers to the wages tariff. They prevented the setting up of such demands which aimed at consolidating the position of the trade union in relation to the employers. The social democratic party and the trade union bureaucracy wanted at all costs to set up a Chinese wall between strikes and politics.

The main demand of the social democratic press during the wave of strikes was an "impartial" official arbitration. The social democratic press adopted an outspoken fascist tone. It openly attempted to persuade the workers that they must have confidence in the government and in the representative of the government at the negotiations, a certain Andreika. This Andreika was for many years the head of the political police. He not only flung workers into prison, but even forced them to act as spies. When the police took possession of the premises of the metal workers union, the central organ of the social democracy, in order to pacify the infuriated workers, wrote as follows:

"It is obvious that the police presidium knew nothing of this act, and it is probable that the occupation of the trade union premises is to be ascribed to the excessive zeal of a young police officer."

The social democratic press maintained silence regarding the government declarations against the strike, and even falsified them in its favour in order to persuade the workers that the government and the police are not on the side of the employers but on the side of the workers.

The attitude of the trade union bureaucracy in respect to strike pay was perfectly in accordance with this fascist "labour policy". The majority of the workers on strike do not belong to any trade union. The trade union bureaucracy declared right at the beginning of the strike, that the strike funds are not even sufficient for the organised workers, while it was quite out of question to grant strike pay to the unorganised workers. The trade union opposition demanded that the whole of the working class be called upon to contribute to collections for the benefit of the strikers. This proposal was flatly rejected by the trade union bureaucracy. The Union of the Russian metal workers and the International Propaganda Committee of the Metal Workers sent a telegram expressing their sympathy and informed the strikers that they wished to give expression to their solidarity by means of financial help. This telegram was held up by the trade union bureaucracy and the government and kept back from the workers. It was not until after the end of the strike that the telegram became known; and even then the government and the social democratic party would not permit the telegram to be published in the press.

During the strike the trade union opposition showed a broad organisational and agitational activity. They succeeded in preventing the trade union bureaucracy from holding negotiations with the employers behind closed doors. When the workers were sent back to the factories during the negotiations, it was only thanks to the energetic action of the opposition that the workers again downed tools. In spite of the help of the police, in most of the factories the strike was only called off by a majority of a few votes.

Great bitterness has been aroused among the workers owing to the prevention of support being received from the international and Russian working class. The Communists will have to exert all their forces in order to prevent a split in the trade unions.



### Strikes and Politics.

This strike movement and the attitude of the government, as well as of the social democratic party, in the question of the strike is closely bound up with the plans of the fascist labour policy of the government and the capitulation of the social democracy to this policy.

The Bethlen government is preparing a trade union law, to be introduced in the Autumn, aiming at penalising strike movements.

The Bethlen government is preparing to participate in the Anti-Soviet war by endeavouring to place the trade unions upon a "national foundation". The first plan of the government was to set up national trade unions which should have the support of the State. The social democratic trade union and party bureaucracy replied to this plan by declaring that they themselves were prepared, for the time of preparation of the war and during itself, to place the entire trade union movement upon the basis of "national unity". From this there ensued the tactics of keeping the workers at all costs in the factories during the period of negotiations, in accordance with the spirit of the contemplated strike law. It was for the same reason that the social democracy itself set up the demand for an "impartial" compulsory arbitration.

The work of the trade union opposition is directed in the first place against these social-fascist efforts. Already during the strike movement the workers protested against this social fascism. Everywhere the demand arose that the strike movement be extended with the object of overthrowing the Horthy-Bethlen government. As against the vacillations of the left social democracy, which represented the standpoint that such a big strike movement in Hungary possesses a political significance in itself, the trade union Left expressed the standpoint that no matter how much this strike constitutes a political fact, it can have a political effect only if the will of the working class increases this strike wave at least to an action against the fascist trade union law.

The strike wave is by no means approaching an end. Both the development of the economic situation and the mood of the working class go to indicate that it will still continue and assume larger dimensions.

## The Campaign against Communism and the Soviet Union in France.

By Michel HOLLAY (Paris).

Since the powerful protest action throughout the whole of France against the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti, which reached its highest point in the Paris street fights on the 23rd of August, the incitement against the C. P. of France and against the Soviet Union has attained a pitch never previously reached. The inhuman police and the class courts are raging brutally against the French proletariat. Foreign revolutionary workers are being expelled wholesale from the country.

The result of this class struggle, which has become more and more acute in the last few months, and the present measures enable one to recognise the objects at which the French bourgeoisie is aiming. Fifteen of the most prominent leaders of the Communist Party of France, of the Young Communist League of France and the C. G. T. U., i. e. Comrades Cachin, Semard, Doriot, Bernard, Thorez, Marty, Monmousseau, Berrard, Raynaud, Belanger, Chasseigne, Gilbert, Midol, Bonnefons and Barbé are now in prison. 21 workers have been sentenced in all to 359 months imprisonment, 6 comrades in the so-called "espionage case" to 196 months, 9 sailors to 485 months, 9 soldiers to 618 months, 12 reservists to 196 months etc. In the last few months there have been imposed altogether 1967 months of imprisonment as well as enormous fines. And the wave of suppression is rising still higher.

The French working class is now passing through the most tremendous period of storm since the existence of the Communist Party. The tremendous advance of the C. P. of France, which found expression at the recent bye-elections; the leading positions occupied by the revolutionary organisations in the powerful Sacco and Vanzetti protest movement; the tremendous demonstrations of reservists in the barracks of France, all this has driven the French bourgeoisie, which is still hard pressed with serious economic and financial anxieties, into a state of hysteria. The reactionary press is attempting to rouse all the

chauvinistic instincts of the masses in order to make them serviceable to the aims of French imperialism, which are: destruction of the revolutionary organisations and gagging of their press; formation of an election bloc, welded together in an anti-Communist campaign; suppression of the working class and preparation for a breach with the Soviet Union. All the reactionary forces are working simultaneously at preparation for war against the Soviet Union. The anti-Soviet declarations of Marshal Foch are in harmony with the "exposures" of the "Matin", with the cannonade of slander and abuse against Communism on the part of the semi-fascist "ECHO de Paris", "Figaro", "Avenir", "La Liberté" etc. The "Temps", which is closely connected with Right government circles, is playing the leading role in this fight. Thus the "Temps", in its home-political leading article of 23rd August, writes:

"Is the C. P. of France a Party? No, it is much rather a foreign army which has pitched its camp on our soil... If, however, Communism is the "enemy", how can we tolerate its leaders in an Embassy?"

On the 26th of August its hints become plainer:

"We must raise against it (the Soviet Union) not only a thin pasteboard shield, but energetically surround it with a barbed wire fence and 'cold-bloodedly' destroy it."

In its leading article of 27th August the "Temps" again demanded a breach with the Soviet Union, the prohibition of the C. P. of France, and the abolition of the political prisoners' regime for the imprisoned Communists.

These demands on the government of "national unity" were immediately followed by acts. Comrade André Marty, who from his prison cell addressed a letter to Marshal Foch in reply to the latter's war-cry, was taken from the political prison and placed among common criminals and thieves. The same fate threatens all our imprisoned comrades. It is the first blow at the political prison regime for Communists, the first blow at their most elementary political rights. Attempts are already being made to deprive them of their liberty of meetings: on the command of the government, the proprietors of all the great meeting halls in Paris have refused to let their premises to the C. P. of France.

But that is not all. On the 30th of August the press chief of the Soviet agency "Tass", Broune, was expelled from France by the Minister for the Interior, Sarraut, for having spread "biased reports" (in regard to the Sacco and Vanzetti demonstrations). That is not only an indirect blow at the Soviet Union, but an attempt to muzzle the international press.

How far will the French government go in its terroristic measures? Are we on the eve of a breach with the Soviet Union? We do not think so. The working class of France is still very strong, its revolutionary organisations are still unbroken, the French bourgeoisie is still too disunited. Nevertheless, it is clear that the English diehards have found fellow-spirits in imperialist and militarist France, and that important and influential bourgeois circles are endeavouring to prepare the ground for a breach and a war with Soviet Russia. This aim is to be reached by the formation of an election bloc of all "parties of national unity" for the elections which are to take place in the spring of 1928. The object of this new "Sacred Union" is to support the present Poincaré-Briand-Painlevé-Herriot government, in order that the latter shall complete its work of restoring finances at the cost of the working and peasant masses and prepare and realise its foreign political aims, which it is at present concealing by means of the fight against Communism in France. Up to the present this election bloc, the most eager advocate of which is the Right wing radical-socialist deputy Bouillon Lafont, has not yet come about. Lafont's party, the radical socialist party, still appears to be inclined to form a new Left Bloc with the socialists.

Be that as it may, the present government of the Left and Right parties has already shown by its measures up to now that even without a formal election bloc, without an "armistice" between the bourgeois parties, there exists an actual agreement against Communism, and that the French bourgeoisie is following more and more in the wake of the English. This is to be seen from the decision of the government to hold a national festival on the 19th of September in honour of the murderers of Sacco and Vanzetti, the fascists of the American Legion, although this action is an insolent provocation of the whole working class and of broad circles of the petty bourgeois intelligentsia of France.

## Plenum of the C. C. and C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U.

### The Joint Plenum of the C. C. and the C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U.

By A. I. Rykov.

(Conclusion.)

#### On the Convocation of the Party Conference.

Before dealing with the question of the opposition, I must say a few words on point 5 of the agenda of the Plenum — the convocation of the Party Conference. This point we had accepted before the passing of the resolution on the opposition, and before the division on the publication of the declaration of the opposition. The opposition proposed its own agenda for the Party Conference, as follows: 1. the results of the past decade, 2. a special item on unity, and 3. a special item on the prospects of international revolution.

We rejected all these propositions of the opposition, since by our agenda these questions were dealt with exhaustingly and further because it contains a special point on work in the village. The report of the C. C. and our E. C. C. I. delegation is to deal in detail with the most important questions of our home and foreign politics. The conversion of the Party Conference into an anniversary celebration has not been found necessary. We refused to raise the question of Party unity, in the first place because it is dealt with in the report of the C. C., and secondly because its solution must now be accomplished by the unity of our political line and the cessation of the splitting policy of the opposition. We further rejected the suggestion of the opposition with regard to the length of the term of preliminary discussion before the Conference. According to the decision of the X. Party Conference, and the statutes, the agenda of the Party Conference are to be published no later than one and a half months before the Conference, and the theses of the reporters not later than one month before. The opposition demands that the discussion be opened long before the Party Conference. We rejected this proposition, for we do not see what purpose would be served by plunging our Party into long months of discussion fever, perhaps on the question whether Clemenceau's methods are permissible or not in our country in connection with the war danger. This would be an unallowable and unpardonable luxury. Therefore we have restricted ourselves to resolving that the decisions of the X. Party Conference and of the Party statutes on the convocation of the Party Conference are to be observed.

The opposition has the right to draw up its counter-theses. We are bound to publish these theses, to issue a discussion paper, and to do everything provided by the statutes and decisions of the Party. Every comrade wishing to discuss the Party policy within legal confines, and without an illegal organisation, is given every opportunity of doing so. Not one decision of the Party with respect to the preparations of Party Conferences will be violated. But we shall not consent to subjecting the Party to discussion fever during the whole of the three months before the Conference. This would be especially inadmissible in view of the international situation.

#### The Question of the Opposition.

As already mentioned at the beginning of this report, the question of the opposition was intended to be discussed as fourth item of the agenda. In reality this question was discussed during the whole Conference. (Interjection: 12 days!) Yes, about that. The opposition endeavoured to raise all the fundamental questions of our policy, including the question of the building up of socialism in the Soviet Union. At the Plenum I declared to the comrades of the C. C.: I, for my part, shall not speak on this question either in the Plenum, nor in the nuclei, nor in any other place, for it has been discussed often enough in every nucleus, the XIV. Party Conference passed a decision on it, and this decision was supported by the whole Party. I even observed that I was afraid that anyone trying to raise this question in the nuclei would be thrown out. (Interjection: "Hear! Hear!") (Applause.)

#### Why the question of the Opposition has been raised.

The formal reason for placing the question of Trotzky and Zinoviev on the agenda of the Joint Plenum is known to you: The Presidium of the C. C. C. proposed that the Joint Plenum should raise the question of the expulsion of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev from the C. C., in connection with Zinoviev's speech at the "Press Day", when he criticised the central organ of the Party, the "Pravda", and the C. C., at a meeting of non-Party persons, and in connection with the public political demonstration at the Yaroslavl station. This was the formal aspect of the question. Its essence is the fact that the differences of opinion between the Party and the opposition, in a number of fundamental questions of Party policy, have deepened steadily since the XIV. Party Conference. At the present time the "ideological scissors" between the Party and the opposition has become so wide that the C. C. C. was compelled in view of the splitting efforts of the opposition to propose to the Plenum the expulsion of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev from the C. C.

#### The History of the Opposition since the XIV. Party Conference.

Before describing what occurred at the Plenum itself, I should like to make a brief chronological survey of the actions of the opposition since the time of the new united opposition. As is known the new opposition was formed at the XIV. Party Conference, with Zinoviev and Kamenev at the head. The Party Conference (in December 1925) was obliged to point out, in its resolution on the report of the C. C., the fundamental erroneousness of the standpoint of the new opposition with reference to our relations to the peasantry, to the rôle of the co-operatives, the possibility of building up socialism in our country, and the character of our state industry; it pointed out that this standpoint deviates from the Leninist theory and from the practice of our Party. The Party Conference recognised that the views of the opposition:

"which make a conscious relationship impossible between the masses and socialist construction in general, and socialist industry in particular, are solely calculated to hamper the growth of the socialist elements of economics, and to facilitate the struggle of private capital against these socialist elements. The Party Conference therefore considers it necessary to undertake a broad-scaled enlightenment work in order to overcome these misrepresentations of Leninism." (Resolution of the XIV. Party Conference on the report of the C. C.)

After the XIV. Party Conference the opposition continued its attacks on the Central Committee of the Party, exploited for this purpose every difficulty encountered by the working class of the Soviet Union in its struggle for socialism, and tried again and again to force the Party to open discussion. The opposition soon began a fractional struggle along the whole line, and proceeded to form illegal oppositional organisations. The new opposition led by Comrade Zinoviev and Kamenev went over to Comrade Trotzky. Comrade Zinoviev solemnly declared that he now regards his whole former estimate of Trotzkyism and the fight against Comrade Trotzky as an error, and would be glad, so to speak, if he could take it back. We found ourselves faced by an amalgamation of two oppositional groups, as Comrade Kamenev expressed it at the Plenum, "in one current". In order to extend its position in the Party, the opposition began to strive for the legalisation of its fraction.

It is characteristic that one of the first unanimous actions of the opposition was its standpoint during the discussion on the question of the expulsion of Ossovsky from the Party. Ossovsky was expelled from the Party because he considered the organisation of a second Party to be possible under present conditions, under the dictatorship of the proletariat. According to his theory, the Party is degenerate, petty bourgeois, and must be purged of bourgeois influence by the legalisation of a second political party. Comrade Trotzky and other comrades took sides with Ossovsky and voted against his expulsion.

After the "new opposition" had adopted the platform of Trotzkyism, in the autumn of 1926, a fresh oppositional attack on the Party began. Almost all the nuclei in Leningrad and Moscow were chosen as the battle ground for these attacks. The leaders of the opposition strove to win over the masses

by action in the subordinate nuclei. Moscow will remember their action in the "Avioprobor" nucleus, and Leningrad in the nuclei of the "Red Putilov Works" and other factories. But to its great astonishment the opposition suffered complete defeat. The leaders of the opposition were able to judge what hold they had on the masses, and how far they had drifted from the Party. The Central Committee hoped that the opposition would realise its errors after this crushing defeat and accept the consequences. At the first moment this appeared extremely possible.

### The Declaration of 16th October.

The first stage of the struggle of the opposition with the Party ended with the document of 16th October. As a similar new document from the opposition now lies before us, it will be useful to recall at least the most essential points of the document of 16th October. At that time the opposition made the following declaration in the questions of fractions:

"We categorically reject the theory and practice of the freedom to form fractions and groups, and acknowledge that such a theory and practice contradict the principles of Leninism and the Party decisions on the impermissibility of fractional activity. We consider it our duty to carry out the decisions of the Party in this respect (this was autumn 1926. A R.) We declare that we renounce decisively the fractional methods of defending our view, as these methods endanger the Party, and call upon all comrades sharing our views to follow our example. We appeal for the immediate dissolution of all the fractional groups which have formed around the views of the opposition."

Another factor which must be mentioned, in order to compare it with the present document, is the declaration of the opposition on the Ultra-Left and expelled members. In the document of 16th October we read:

"We condemn decidedly such criticism of the Comintern or of the Party as partakes of the nature of agitation weakening the position of the Comintern as a fighting organisation of the international proletariat, of the C. P. S. U. as the outpost of the Comintern, or of the Soviet Union as the first state of the proletarian dictatorship... We hold every direct or indirect fractionism among any groups or separate sections of the Comintern against the line of the Comintern, to be absolute impermissible, whether it be the Souvarine group in France, the Maslow-Ruth Fischer, Urbahns, and Weber group in Germany, the Bordiga group in Italy, or any other group, whatever their attitude towards our views may be. We consider it to be particularly unallowable to lend any support to persons already expelled from the Party and from the Comintern, such as Maslov and Ruth Fischer."

These definite declarations should have liquidated the anti-Party action of the opposition. And after this declaration the opposition did actually remain quiescent for a time, and there was a brief calm in the Party. But soon the opposition advanced for a sharper attack than ever before on the Party and the Comintern; the situation thus arising is much more critical, in respect to the nearness of the opposition to splitting from the Party, than the situation in the autumn of last year, before the declaration of the opposition on 16th October.

### The New Phase of Oppositional Criticism.

The opposition has exploited the difficulties in the development of the Chinese revolution, it has attempted to throw the blame for these difficulties on to the leaders of the E. C. C. I., and has commenced an attack on the Comintern. At the same time Comrade Trotzky used the opportunity given him by the E. C. C. I. Plenum to make an attack on the C. C. of the C. P. S. U., and declared that in the opinion of the opposition the "Party regime" is the chief danger of the threatening war, that is, that the present leadership of the Party does not guarantee us the victory. At the session of the Presidium of the C. C. C. he repeated the declaration that "the course of the Party is the greatest danger. It throttles revolutionary self-defence and perpetuates the course to the Right". Comrade Trotzky once more repeated his grave accusations against the Central Committee, to the effect that the

way it leads the Party is not in the interests of the working class nor of the revolution.

On the basis of these accusations the opposition drew up a declaration signed by 83 members, and addressed this to the Polit Bureau. Immediately after this declaration there began a remarkable campaign of petitions in the nuclei over the whole territory of the Soviet Union.

The opposition launched a fresh attempt at winning over the members of the Party.

What have been the results of this petition campaign? I believe this petition campaign has brought the opposition fresh defeat. In our Party, which has more than one million members, there cannot but be few thousand who are dissatisfied with the policy of the C. C., and there are sure to be a certain number of vacillating and mistrustful comrades inclining to this or that deviation, etc. But in the course of a three months campaign the opposition has only mustered about 1500 signatures. What estimate are we to form of this petition? If this petition with its 1500 signatures is a petition from the opposition leaders, then it is very much; but if this is the result of an application to all the members of the Party, then it is very little. As a matter of fact the opposition has left no stone unturned to collect the largest possible number of signatures. We have already received a large number of declarations in which comrades withdraw their signatures, simply because they were misled at the time of signing, and were often not aware of what they were signing. In such circumstances 1500 signatures signify the complete defeat of this campaign of the opposition. In spite of its sharp attacks on the C. C. — or perhaps because of it — the opposition failed to obtain any noteworthy number of signatures.

But what is the actual meaning of this petition campaign? It means that the opposition has been trying, with the help of this campaign, to form a political group within our Party, to organise this group on the platform of this petition, and to exert pressure as an organised unit on the C. C. and on the whole policy of the Party.

Meanwhile the opposition has been organising the illegal printing of pamphlets and other material. At the same time the opposition has maintained its connections with that group of renegades expelled from the Comintern and from the Communist Party, with whom the opposition undertook in its declaration of October 16th to have nothing more to do.

All this taken together shows that before this last Plenum, the opposition renewed its attempts to organise its fraction, and even to establish connections with elements expelled from the Comintern. However the opposition may wish to deny this, it is bound to admit the fact. The road which they tread is the road to the second party. This is the logical termination of all the recent actions of the opposition.

### The Opposition has failed to keep its Promises.

How has the opposition fulfilled the obligations undertaken in its declaration of 16th October? On 16th October the opposition declared that it broke off all organisatory connection with Ruth Fischer, Maslov and their group; but at the end of October 1926 Urbahns writes literally as follows in his periodical:

"We take the appended verbatim enumeration of the separate point of the above-mentioned deviation from the proletarian line, from a detailed description of the differences and standpoint of the opposition received by us, a few days ago (!) from one of the "Russian" opposition." (!) (The deviation here referred is that of the Central Committee from the proletarian line. A R.)

After this this same periodical published documents of the Russian opposition at the E. C. C. I. Plenum, which it received from the same source. Among these were declarations of Comrades Trotzky and Vuyovitsch and Comrade Trotzky's article: "The fight for peace and the Anglo-Russian Committee." At the same time it is openly stated that a number of other oppositional documents will be published in the near future, and that since it is most important for the masse to read these, the periodical is reduced in price, and the workers called upon to become subscribers. (Laughter.)

Recently the document of the "83", which was directed to the Polit Bureau of the C. C. as a confidential document, and

which has been disseminated illegally and semi-illegally in the State of the proletarian dictatorship, has been openly published as a leaflet by the same Maslov Urbahns group which is supported by our opposition. This leaflet has appeared in Germany, the press freedom of a state under bourgeois dictatorship being exploited for the purpose.

In this manner the opposition treads underfoot its own declaration of 16th October.

Another fact. The opposition declared that it categorically rejects the organisation of fractions and groups. But is the petition campaign not the beginning of a fraction? And is the illegal publication and distribution of their own literature not fractional activity? And the acceptance by Comrades **Zinoviev** and **Kamenev** of the standpoint of **Trotskyism**, their subordination to **Trotskyist** ideology, their acknowledgement that all the decisions of their fraction centre are binding on them, — what is this but the organisation of a new **Trotskyist** party? But the most downright anti-Party action on the part of the opposition, one which in my opinion proves that this new fraction is trying to combat the Party and the Central Committee, and is following the path of a Party split, was the demonstration at **Jaroslavl** station. At first the representatives of the opposition declined categorically to see anything of an anti-Party nature in this demonstration. They only came, so they said, to accompany Comrade **Smilga** as friends. But, as Comrade **Ordschonikidse** asked at the Plenum of the C. C., since when have Comrades **Trotsky** and **Zinoviev** been in the habit of carrying Comrade **Smilga** on their shoulders to the carriage — they did not do this formerly (prolonged laughter). And when Comrade **Ordschonikidse** showed how they made use of their fractional organs for the farewell celebrations, and that the main slogan of the farewell meeting called by the opposition for their oppositional friend **Smilga** was the protest against the C. C., then the opposition was obliged to admit that the "incident at the station" was an open demonstration against the Party, and that elements of a "fractional character" really exist.

The course pursued by the opposition, between the period preceding the declaration of 16th October and the last C. C. Plenum, may be described approximately as follows: **From the forest to the railway station**. At that time the broadest expression of fractional machination was: "**Lashevitch** in the forest". Now it is the open political demonstration at the station of **Jaroslavl**: "**Smilga** on the shoulders of **Zinoviev** and **Trotsky**". These are the chief milestones on the road.

#### The Distribution of the Forces of the Opposition.

I draw this comparison, in order to show the changes observable in the relations of the opposition to the Party at the time of the C. C. Plenum. There is no doubt that **Zinoviev**, **Kamenev** and others have become as **Trotskyist** as **Trotsky** himself. Of late we may observe diffident efforts on the part of the "left" group of the opposition (**Sapronov**, **Smirnov**) to withdraw from the opposition. It must, however, be stated at once that the opposition represented by Comrades **Trotsky**, **Zinoviev** and **Kamenev**, has refused, in spite of the definite proposals made by the participants in the Plenum, to withdraw from the "platform of the Fifteen". It did not speak one word on this subject at the Plenum. Whether our oppositional comrades wish it or not, the resulting distribution of oppositional "forces" is as follows: In the centre, as conductor of the band, stands Comrade **Trotsky**, aided by Comrades **Zinoviev**, **Kamenev**, and others. On the "Left" we see the group around **Sapronov** and **W. Smirnov**, to which the opposition holds fast, and on the "Right" an insignificant and unimportant buffer group, for whose documents the opposition itself has collected the signatures, duplicated and distributed the documents. It did not matter on what lines or on the basis of what "platform" the attack was made; the chief thing was that it was directed against the Central Committee.

#### The Group of the Fifteen.

Before I pass on to the main opposition (**Trotsky**, **Zinoviev**), I should like to touch upon the "document of the 15" (**Smirnov-Sapronov**). This document was sent in to the C. C.

Since the oppositional comrades have accused us of misrepresenting their views, I must abuse your patience and add verbatim quotations from their document.

Now a few passages from the "document of the 15". The following refers to the G. P. U.

"Even the work of the G. P. U., the successor of the **Cheka**, which had to fulfil a decisive task in the struggle against counter-revolution, and has accomplished this task excellently, is now leaving the path of defence of the proletarian revolution, and succumbing to the general atmosphere of bureaucratism. Instead of fighting political and economic counter-revolution, it is beginning to devote its energies more and more to combating the justified dissatisfaction of the workers, caused by bureaucratic and petty bourgeois aberrations and even to combating the inner Party opposition."

The following slanderous expressions are used with reference to the Red Army:

"A particularly dangerous position arises in the Red Army. In spite of the demands of the Party programme with regard to the necessity of "class unitedness", and of the closes possible connection between the military formations and the factories, trade unions, and organisations of the poor peasantry, as also with regard to the supplementing of the leading staff — the subordinate officers at least to begin with — by class-conscious workers and peasants, we find the staff in command of the Red Army to consist chiefly of former officers and men from the well-to-do peasant class. The restrictions preventing non-workers from joining the army are being removed. In the territorial formations, especially the cavalry, the well-to-do peasant dominates, and the subordinate officers are recruited from the kulak class. With respect to the Communist Red commanders, the influence of the bureaucratism of the Party and the loosening of connections between the Party and the workers must be felt. The influence of the Party on the workers is diminishing. Under such circumstances the Red Army threatens to become a suitable instrument for Bonapartist adventures." Bureaucracy is dealt with in the following terms:

"During the last three years the incorrect policy of the C. C. has frequently intensified the negative aspects of the apparatus, the influence of the petty bourgeois has increased, the kulak has been given political rights (entry to the Soviets). The "bureaucratic distortions" have reached a point at which symptoms of petty bourgeois degeneration are evident."

The document contains the following exposition (given with the learned air of "students" of Marx) on the State:

"The continuation of this policy (that is, the policy of the Party. A. R.) threatens to convert the power of the proletarian dictatorship, which is falling further and further away from the class which created it, and yet fails to express completely the interests of any other class, into a power standing above the classes, vacillating to and from between the classes, and tacking in this or that direction according to the comparative pressure exercised by this or that class; the continuation of this policy threatens to convert the power of the proletarian dictatorship — to use Engels' words — into a power maintaining for a time a certain independence of both classes, in its capacity of intermediary between them."

A few passages must be quoted on our economic and general policy:

"Since October 1925 the rise in wages has come to a standstill, and there is even a sinking tendency, whilst the productivity of labour during this period has increased by more than 15 per cent. At the same time the administrative pressure of the economic organs on the workers has increased, and the powers of the administration have been greatly extended. All this leads to a growing discontent among the workers."

A second passage:

"That the capitalist elements have grown more quickly than the socialist during the last few years is not due to the objective impossibility of the building up of socialism, but to the policy of the C. C., which gives way steadily before the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie." And finally, as last quotation:

"The liquidation of inner Party democracy, and at the same time of the proletarian democracy in 1923, was merely a pretext for the development of the peasant and large peasant democracy. The policy of the C. C. not only fetters the activities of the proletariat, but unfetters at the same time those of the non-proletarian classes."

I have not the intention of criticising this whole bouquet of quotations at this meeting. Their anti-Party and anti-Soviet tendency is self evident. These absurd assertions (on the G. P. U., the Red Army, the state "standing above the classes (?), the "kulak democracy", etc.) contain as little truth as the old worn out assertions, hostile to the working class and the proletarian dictatorship, with which the customary "teachings" (accompanied again by quotations from Engels!) and ignorant chatter of the Menshevik ink slingers, on the advantages of democracy and the necessity of the speedy downfall of the Soviet power, are filled.

I have quoted these passages solely for the purpose of showing the real countenance of that "Left" wing of the opposition from which the leaders of the opposition did not wish to withdraw, despite the urgent demand of many members of the C. C. and the C. C. C.

### Comrade Trotsky's latest Revelations.

Allow me to draw your attention to the political ideology of the "central figure" of the opposition, Comrade Trotsky, which found clear expression shortly after the demonstration at Yaroslavl station, where the "friendly" farewell to Comrade Smilga was participated in by the Nep bourgeoisie and various other bourgeois and Philistine elements accidentally present.

In order to avert the usual accusations of the opposition, I am again obliged to resort to verbatim quotations from the declarations of the opposition. Most characteristic is a declaration of Comrade Trotsky in the C. C. C., as follows:

"Many people were guillotined during the great French revolution. We, too, have shot not a few people. But in the French revolution there were two chapters, one going so (pointing upwards), and one so (pointing downwards). This must be understood. When the chapter went upwards the French Jacobins, the Bolsheviki of that time, guillotined the White Guardists and Girondists. We too have experienced such a great chapter, during which we, the oppositionals, were the executioners. Then another chapter followed in France, and the French Ustryalovians and semi-Ustryalovians, the Thermidorians from the ranks of the Right Jacobins, began to guillotine the Left Jacobins, the Bolsheviki of that time. I should like Comrade Solz to think out his analogy to its logical end (this refers to a conversation between Comrade Solz and a comrade of the opposition. Ed.), and to make up his mind clearly as to the chapter according to which he intends to shoot us... When we shot our enemies, we knew perfectly well the chapter justifying us. But do you, Comrade Solz, comprehend clearly the chapter according to which you intend to shoot us (at present in the form of organisatory measures)?

I am afraid, Comrade Solz, that you intend shooting us in accordance with the semi-Ustryalovian that is Thermidorian chapter.

Does not the "Pravda" article: "The Path of the Opposition" strike a similar note? Those who have read the last "Pravda" leading article must have noticed its smell. This smell of the "second chapter" goes into the nose, and it is a smell of a semi-Ustryalovism forcing its way with the aid of our official Party institutions (the "Pravda"), and disarming the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat at a moment when the Party regime suppresses all who criticise the Party line as Comrade Zinoviev and Trotsky have done."

The Thermidor question has thus been stated with such clearness by Comrade Trotsky that no comment is necessary. Another passage from this same speech of Comrade Trotsky:

"During this last period the proletariat has shrunk politically, whilst the other classes are developing. In my opinion all those who fail to grasp this should be made

to withdraw at once from our leading institutions. And this shrinkage and this expansion are observable everywhere... The non-proletarian classes expand everywhere in material spheres — this you may see in the streets, in the shops, trams, and houses —, and at the same time the proletariat shrinks also politically in its totality, and the Party regime promotes this class shrinkage of the proletariat."

Similar assertions may be met with in no small numbers, and not only in Comrade Trotsky's utterances.

I have here a number of passages from articles and speeches of Comrade Zinoviev. These all show that the opposition tries to substantiate its splitting policy by the theory that we allegedly are passing through the "second chapter" of revolution, the chapter of Thermidor, that is, the chapter of the liquidation of the proletarian dictatorship and the formation of a bourgeois power. It is only in the light of this idea that the notorious "thesis" of Comrade Trotsky on Clemenceau becomes comprehensible. Trotsky formulates this as follows:

"At the beginning of the imperialist war the French bourgeoisie was led by a government without sail or rudder. The Clemenceau group was in opposition to this government. In spite of the war and the war censorship, despite even the fact that the Germans were only 80 kilometres from Paris (Clémenceau said: "just for this reason"), he commenced an energetic struggle against petty bourgeois incompetence and irresolution — and for imperialist cruelty and ruthlessness. Clémenceau did not betray his class, the bourgeoisie; on the contrary, he served it more faithfully, steadfastly, energetically, and cleverly than Viviani, Painlevé, and the others. The further course of events proved it. The Clémenceau group came into power, and secured the victory to the French bourgeoisie by means of a more consistent robber imperialist policy. Did not the newspapers of that time designate Clémenceau a defeatist? Of course they did, fools and slanderers accompany every class. But they have not always the opportunity of playing an important rôle."

The final sentence is obviously intended to indicate that "fools" and "slanderers" do actually play an important rôle in our country. From this "thesis" of Comrade Trotsky arises the platform of the opposition with regard to the burning question of home defence. Our defensive capacity does not depend on the power of the army alone, but at the same time from conditions in the whole country, where the working class and the Communist Party play a decisive part.

In connection with the war danger the Clémenceau thesis is thrown up as a method of securing the defensive powers of the country, and a change of Party leaders is demanded. In this connection we must understand the raising of those questions scattered so frequently in the oppositional articles and speeches on war: What are the aims of the war, in whose interest will it be carried on, what is the standpoint of the poor population to war, etc., etc.? We find the oppositional viewpoint to be "conditional defence", and the opportunity taken for a direct attack upon the Party, which not even stops short at open street action. The exploitation of the war danger for an attack on the Party may be seen, for instance, in the following sentence of Zinoviev:

"The attitude towards the "opposition" is the question of the moment. The whole of the truly "big" bourgeois press is occupied with it (see for instance Lloyd George's latest article). Neither Chamberlain nor MacDonald believes that we (the opposition) is "disorganising the hinterland" or "speculating" on the difficulties. But they are well aware that the fresh blows dealt to the opposition weaken our Party. They draw their conclusions, and are anxious to accelerate the attack."

Here Zinoviev says: If we fight more energetically against the Party splitters, against the slanderers of the Party and all the unheard of actions of the opposition, then we accelerate the attack of the bourgeois States upon us. We read further, in the same document:

"The dates of the war therefore depend to a great extent upon ourselves, our unity, determination, firmness, competence."



And this says Comrade Zinoviev, after proposing that the term "probability" of war be replaced by "inevitableness!"

The Clémenceau thesis, combined with the Thermidor thesis, gave the Plenum every right to point out in its resolution the "conditional will to defence" of the opposition, the import of which is: Since the present C. C. does not guarantee the protection of the proletariat and the country from military attack, it is necessary in the interests of defence, and as prerequisite for this defence, to change the policy of the C. C. and place the power in the hands of the opposition (à la Clémenceau). It was not by accident that Comrade Trotzky let slip the following remark at the Plenum:

"We shall drive out the Thermidorians, and we shall defend the Fatherland."

The aggravation of ideological differences involves corresponding organisatory action. The extreme organisatory measures of the opposition have further forced it to bring its ideological differences with the Party to a climax, and to lay down principles substantiating such "theses" as that on Clémenceau. This last point is the most dangerous of all in the political ideology of the opposition, for it tends to disarm the Party, to disarm the proletariat, and to transform the adherents of the opposition into "conditional defenders" of the proletarian state, by placing as the prerequisite of victory, the fight against 99.9% of our Party into the forefront. Up to now there has not been one single Party organisation or nucleus found ready to support the opposition.

#### The Consistency of our Opposition.

When we are concerned with such questions as the Thermidor and Clémenceau theses, which are the sharpest weapon employed by the opposition in criticising the political line of the C. C., the other points of difference (the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee, of the Chinese revolution) are comparatively insignificant. Of course the opposition attempted again at the Plenum of reopening fire upon the positions of the C. C. in the questions of the Anglo-Russian Committee and of the Chinese revolution. In order to demonstrate the consistency of the opposition, and especially of Comrade Zinoviev, in the question of the Anglo-Russian Committee, I may remind you of the importance attached formerly by Comrade Zinoviev to the Anglo-Russian Committee. The following are his words at the XIV. Party Conference:

"We do not in the least underestimate the importance of the rapprochement between our trade unions and the English Left. I recognise that this movement is of immense importance all along the line. It is one of the securest guarantees of peace, one of the securest guarantees against intervention, a guarantee that in the course of time we shall render reformism harmless in Europe. I do not hesitate to repeat that the rapprochement between our trade unions and the English Left is of vast and world historical importance, and I shall support this movement."

None of us maintained (like Zinoviev did) that the Anglo-Russian Committee (with Purcell, Citrine, and others) guarantees us peace, that the Anglo-Russian Committee is a guarantee against intervention, and that with its help we shall render reformism in Europe harmless. Such absurd exaggerations never occurred to any one of us. It may also be observed that the principles of our whole policy, both with regard to the Anglo-Russian Committee and in the Chinese question, were laid down in collaboration with the opposition, and to a great extent by the opposition itself. The Anglo-Russian Committee was created with the closest co-operation of Comrade Zinoviev, if not on his initiative, and now he wants to destroy it. It must be remembered that the most important directions issued in the Chinese question (for instance with reference to the bloc with the Kuomintang) were elaborated at the time with the active participation of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev.

I have not brought up these questions of the Anglo-Russian Committee and of the Chinese revolution, which have been settled at former discussions, for the purpose of reopening a discussion on them, but solely to show the complete inconsistency between the present declarations of Comrade Zinoviev and other comrades, and their declarations and speeches of yesterday. Lack of time prevents me from discussing in detail

these questions, which have been frequently debated and decided by the Party.

#### The Ideological Roots of the Combined Opposition.

What is the actual question? Why does the opposition defend so tenaciously assertions long proved to be false, to be in flat contradiction to actual experience and reality? Why does the opposition regard the period of intense socialist construction, of growing strength of the proletariat, of firmer establishment of the alliance between proletariat and peasantry, of increased preponderance of the socialist elements in our economics, of growing industry, of large building undertakings, of the supplanting of private capital in commerce, of growing co-operatives, of higher wages, of improvement in the position of the peasantry, of immense cultural progress — why does it regard this period as a period of Thermidor? Perhaps because the kulak has become somewhat stronger at the same time? But his growth cannot be compared with ours. Perhaps because the proletariat has many great difficulties to overcome in the building up of socialism, and is bound to encounter failure and defeat in some cases? Despite all difficulties, and despite the faults in our creative socialist work, the proletariat has so far been able to record unexampled progress. Experience, actual practice — the best tests for any theory — fully confirm the rightness of the Party policy.

In my opinion we cannot grasp the standpoint of the opposition unless we take into account that Trotzkyism, which has been condemned so often by the Party and the Comintern, and whose harmfulness was pointed out at such length and with so much circumstance not so long ago by Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev, has now become the ruling ideology of the whole opposition. The pivot of this ideology is the assumption that the great mass of the peasantry is still unfamiliar with and hostile to constructive socialism; that the technical, economic, cultural and other backwardness of our country prevents it from possessing the prerequisites for the organisation of a socialist state of society; that we are lacking in forces enabling us to secure the stability of the proletarian dictatorship for any long period, since the proletariat possesses but an insignificant specific weight in our country, where the petty bourgeois and peasant elements predominate. This is the basis of the assumption that the class degeneration of our state power is inevitable. And it is the basis of the lack of faith in the permanency of the dictatorship, and in the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country. Trotzkyism has become the ideological revelation for all the varying currents and shades represented in the opposition.

It must, however, be observed that Trotzkyism considers itself to be something different. It wishes to present itself ideologically as Leninism. We have believed hitherto that Trotzky ceased to be a Menshevist when he entered our Party. Trotzky appears to believe that he ceased to be a Menshevist as early as 1904.

"If" — he observed in the C. C. C. — "Menshevism is viewed as a political class line — and this is the only way in which it can be viewed — then I was no longer a Menshevist after the middle of 1904. I broke with Menshevism organisatorically and politically as soon as it became a political group in the question of relations to the liberal bourgeoisie, since the article by Vera Sasulitsch and Axelrod, since their plan of a Zemstvo campaign. I never agreed with Menshevism in the question of the rôle played by the separate classes in the revolution. And this was the main question.

This assertion is made in spite of the fact that in 1904 Lenin combated Trotzkyism as a variety of Menshevism, and in spite of the fact that Trotzky, who joined the so-called August bloc in company with the liquidators, supported the liquidatory tendency which was the expression of bourgeois influence on the proletariat.

#### The economic "prophecies" of the Opposition.

These are the leading factors of the principles on which the political line of the opposition has been based of late. This does not, of course, exhaust the points upon which the opposition has attempted to attack the C. C. It has raised contentions in a number of other questions. In particular it has raised objections to the resolution on economic policy.

When criticising the draft resolution on this question the opposition had not the courage to advance an economic substantiation of its Thermidor thesis, although it was its duty to do so. The bourgeois degeneration of our State cannot be proved by inapt analogies with the French revolution, but only by the analysis of the economic possibilities and of the economic processes taking place in our country. The ideological bankruptcy of the opposition was painfully evident in the fact that it was impossible for it to find an economic substantiation of its Thermidor platform. Hence it has been forced to confine itself to separate attacks against separate points of our economic resolution.

I shall now turn to that part of the resolution which condemns the economic views of the opposition. Comrade Pyatakoff raised objections to the resolution, and declared that the views ascribed in it to the opposition had been invented by us. We reproach the opposition, for instance, with having prophesied a crisis for the current year. Is this so, or is it not? I have a whole bundle of quotations here which justify this reproach. Comrade Radek, for instance, in the discussion of the Communist Academy on the control figures for 1926/27 (September 1926), made the following categorical declaration:

"What will Comrade Bucharin have to say six months later, when it will no longer be possible to conceal from the Party and the workers that the revolution is faced with great difficulties?"

Comrade Smilga's forecasts are more cautious. At this same discussion he observed:

"You have scarcely reason to maintain that the present economic status (on the threshold of the economic year 1926/27. A. R.) guarantees further steady development for a whole year."

The tone adopted here by Comrades Radek and Smilga fully corresponds to the pessimistic prognosis advanced by Kamenev and Trotzky at the April Plenum of the C. C. in 1926.

Kamenev... "The economic period on which we are entering, given favourable harvest results and taking into account the general growth of economics, is likely to aggravate the above-described difficulties (goods shortage, higher prices, export difficulties, lessened imports)..."

Trotzky... "All signs go to show that our industry will meet the harvest of 1925 without any reserve stores whatever. This can lead to a reproduction of the present difficulties (this refers to the effects of the crisis of 1925/26. A. R.) on a larger scale."

### The Opposition on the Price Policy.

The views of the opposition on our price policy are especially characteristic. The opposition now declares categorically that it was in favour of the price reduction, and regards any assertion to the contrary as a slander. But let us glance at a passage from an article by Comrade Preobraschensky in No. 6 of the "Bolshevik", 1926:

"We must balance our payments account in the interests of state economics, replace its losses, and secure it against future losses. Two main methods of accomplishing this may be proposed: 1. Increased taxation of private undertakings, the most difficult method, and 2. Increase of the factory prices demanded by the trusts for those articles of mass consumption of which there is the greatest shortage, and which form the greatest source of enrichment for private capital. However undesirable this last means may be, it forms the sole loophole of escape, if we are determined to restrict the accumulation of private capital and stem the inflow of values from state industry into private economics."

At the July Plenum of the C. C. in 1926 Pyatakoff declared:

"There is an enormous difference between our wholesale and retail prices. Hence it is of first importance to cause this difference to yield a partial advantage to state industry, instead of letting it flow into the coffers of private capital\*). The workers' industries can be thereby expanded,

\*) A very great achievement won since this speech was made is the supplanting of the private trader in commerce, as also the lessened accumulation of private trade and the increased taxation on private capital.

and the basis formed for the reduction of retail and factory prices. If it is necessary and possible, why should we not execute a manoeuvre, why should we not raise the factory prices of those goods of which there is a shortage, and which are supplied to the private merchant; why should we not help ourselves in this way for a time, and then reduce both retail and wholesale prices on the basis of the increased production?"

At the beginning of 1927, when the first results of the price reduction policy of the Party began to be felt, the opposition still maintained the impossibility of a price reduction, and even prophesied an unavoidable rise in prices under the given conditions. It has no longer the courage to defend openly the policy of higher prices, but it continues to doubt the efficacy of the methods of price reduction employed by the Party; it regards these methods as doubtful or as obviously unsuitable. This is an actual attempt at justification of the given price level, which is unacceptable for national economics, and of the policy of high prices.

In February 1927 Smilga declared:

"Dozens of decisions have been come to on the reduction of retail prices. There is so much written on this subject every day that we are quite dizzy with it, but nothing positive is achieved. Something appears to hinder this price reduction pretty effectively. The matter only requires careful examination to become clear. The factors running counter to price reduction must first be discovered and removed. We understand the matter as follows: At a time of extreme goods shortage the co-operative is not able to make any considerable price reduction as compared with the private dealer."

The import of this sentence becomes evident when we remember what Comrade Smilga wrote in a document in May 1926. Here Comrade Smilga wrote:

"We must maintain a critical attitude towards the campaign of price reduction being carried on at present by the Party and the administrative organs."

During the discussion at the February Plenum of the C. C. in 1927 Comrade Trotzky concluded his speech, before the vote was taken, as follows:

"The price question is taken by itself, instead of in its connection with the question of the financial prospects of capital investment and of industrial development on the whole; it is isolated from the main question."

Another reservation made by Comrade Trotzky, when pointing out the necessity of price reduction, was as follows:

"We shall all learn how the cost and selling prices can and must be reduced, and on what lines this reduction should not be attempted..."

The method chosen by the Party he appears to regard as precisely one of those which should not be attempted. And now, finally, permit me to read a document which I read already at the Plenum of the C. C. This document is "familiar" in tone. It contains "directions" sent by a Moscow oppositional comrade to a Leningrad comrade, and "explains" the vote of the opposition for the resolution on price reduction. The letter reads:

"Cheerio, friend Nicolai! How are you getting on? Comrade Mussatov will tell you some important details of our Moscow life. In general he is not particularly well informed, but still he can tell you something. Here we are steering towards a clearer demarcation from our Left allies. The differences with them have entered a new phase. They decline all manoeuvre tactics; but without such tactics it is impossible to legalise our fundamental line in the Party. In this way they reject the attempt at legal action. During the execution of the last 'manoeuvre' (the vote for the reduction of the factory prices) some errors were admitted, which Comrade Mussatov will tell you about. Our 'left opponents' tried to exploit these errors, but without success. Comrade Mussatov will tell you about these errors and what to think of them. In Petrograd you must steer for the rapprochement. This is the political task of the moment. This rapprochement course must, however, be supplemented by 'fire' to the right, that is, to conduct in the ranks of the

bloc a determined fight against the liquidatory tendencies and ideas (Salutzky, Nikolayeva etc.)”

This document is extremely typical and interesting, not only because it draws the veil from the inner fractional groupings and “factual” questions of the opposition, but because it reveals the fact that the vote for price reduction at the Plenum was only a manoeuvre.

Without dwelling longer on the other views of the opposition with respect to economic policy (the kulak as “regulator”, unemployment, proposal for the forced requisition of surplus grain, etc.), I now come to the estimate to be formed of the decisions of the Plenum on the fourth item of the agenda (the opposition).

#### The 4th Item of the Agenda.

The resolution proposed to the Joint Plenum by the Presidium of the C. C. C. was discussed at a great number of Party meetings, and I know of no single suggestion for the moderating of this resolution. There was no single organisation which expressed disapproval of the expulsion of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev from the C. C. On the other hand I know of decisions come to at Party meetings where this measure was considered inadequate. And yet the Joint Plenum confined itself to a severe reprimand, and permitted Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev to remain in the C. C.

In order to explain why the Plenum considered this measure inadvisable in the interests of Party unity, I must briefly recapitulate the discussion on this question.

Comrade Ordschonikidse delivered a report in which three conditions were proposed to the Opposition, and the decision on the expulsion made dependent on the fulfilment of these conditions. These three conditions are as follows:

The first condition:

“The semi-defeatist theory of Comrade Trotzky on the war danger (Comrade Trotzky’s Clemenceau thesis) is to be renounced, unconditional and unreserved defence of our socialist Fatherland against imperialism to be advocated, and the oppositional slander of a Thermidoric degeneration of our Party and Soviet leaders condemned.”

The second condition:

“The splitting policy in the Comintern is to be abandoned, the party formed by Maslov and Ruth Fischer, who have been expelled from the Party, is to be condemned, every connection broken off with this anti-Leninist and schismatic party, and all the decisions of the Communist International carried out.”

And, finally, the last condition:

“The splitting policy in the C. P. S. U. is to be given up, the attempt at forming a second party condemned, the fraction disbanded, and the pledge undertaken to carry out all the decisions of the C. P. S. U. and the Central Committee.”

You will observe that these conditions are perfectly elementary, and their non fulfilment would make continued membership in our Party impossible. The unconditional recognition of the defence of our State, abandonment of the assertion that we are carrying on a “Thermidor” policy, renouncement of co-operation with the Ruth Fischer and Maslov group — these are the minimum conditions for co-operation within our Party. It must be borne in mind that the Urbahns group has already organised an independent party, with its own press, its own Reichstag fraction, its own organisations in the provinces. And Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev contribute to its organs; their documents and articles are published by the press of the Ultra-Left. Therefore Comrade Ordschonikidse acted correctly in declaring:

“These are the conditions the acceptance of which can induce us to withdraw our motion for your expulsion from the Central Committee.”

The question of the expulsion of Comrades Zinoviev and Trotzky from the Central Committee is not merely a question of whether this or that person remains in the C. C. At the present time we are concerned with **who** is expelled, and **why**. This is a question of incomparably greater significance. At the last Joint Plenum we had the choice of either making a demonstration towards shattering the opposition and intensifying not

only the political fight against it, but the organisatory (the expulsion of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev from the C. C. would have been such a demonstration on the part of the C. C.), or of making a fresh attempt, in the interests of Party Unity and to prevent the splitting off of the opposition from the C. P. S. U., to retain the opposition within the confines of the Party, on its undertaking to abandon the gross slanders (Thermidor), the declarations, unpermissible for those in the Party (the Clemenceau thesis), and the unallowable actions (organisation of a fraction and connection with persons expelled from the Party (Maslov etc.).

#### The Opposition “Tacks”.

Comrade Zinoviev’s first reply to Comrade Ordschonikidse’s proposal gave no direct and definite answer, but advanced counter conditions. In reply to the demand for the disbanding of the fractions, Comrade Zinoviev only declared willingness to abstain from a further collection of signatures for the fractional documents. He replied to the demand for cessation of the splitting policy in the Comintern with the proposal that the expelled Urbahns group should be re-admitted to the Comintern. As a reply to the demand that the splitting policy in the C. P. S. U. be abandoned, Comrade Zinoviev advanced the counter-demand of re-admittance of oppositionals expelled for actions detrimental to the Party, and the re-instatement of various oppositionals in the towns where they worked formerly. These conditions did not in any way satisfy the demands of the Plenum, and showed that the opposition is determined to continue to combat the Party. The fact that an entirely insignificant group of Party members imposes conditions on the whole Party, shows in itself that the opposition has forgotten the elementary rule that the Party cannot recognise any demands from a group which regards itself as a party with equal rights, even though this group may comprise a few hundred Party members.

The Commission elaborating the resolution on the question of the expulsion of Comrades Zinoviev and Trotzky from the C. C. requested the opposition to send a definite written reply, stating whether it accepted our conditions or not. As a reply we received a brief communication from Comrade Zinoviev, written by hand, and difficult to understand. Meanwhile the Secretariat of the C. C. received the corrected stenograph of Comrade Zinoviev’s second speech on the fourth item of the agenda. At the session of the Joint Plenum of the C. C. and the C. C. C. we all heard the declaration of Comrade Zinoviev, that his first speech, and not the points adduced by Comrade Ordschonikidse, could be taken as a basis for the declaration of the opposition. In the corrected stenograph of Comrade Zinoviev’s second speech, which was returned to the Secretariat, the sense was altered, and it was stated that Comrade Ordschonikidse’s points could be taken as the basis of the declaration.

The Commission then requested the opposition to send in the text of its declaration, and at last this was done. This declaration appeared after the vote in the Plenum, which accepted the proposal of the C. C. C. as a basis. In the newspapers there was printed the last part of this declaration, in which the opposition lays its demands before the Plenum.

In these demands the opposition proposed, in the name of the Joint Plenum, to condemn the Agitprop pamphlet of the Moscow Committee on: “War and war danger”, as also some article in an Ivanovo-Vosnessensk newspaper and an article in the “Leningrad Pravda”, to desist from expulsions from the Party and the reprisals against oppositional Comrades, to re-admit the expelled to the Party, and to guarantee preparations for the Party Conference on such lines that it will be possible to publish the theses and counter theses two months before the Conference, and to begin the discussion on questions of the Party Conference etc. The Plenum of the C. C. replied that the Party, represented by the Joint Plenum, has the right to impose conditions on an opposition, but that no C. C., not even a Thermidorian (laughter) would tolerate conditions from an opposition. If you want to work, then do so; if you do not want to, then don’t. But we cannot adopt the standpoint of a coalition and a compromise with the opposition. To this the opposition replied that it imposed no conditions, but merely communicated its wishes (laughter), and requested that these be published in the press since they form a homogeneous whole in combination with the declaration.

As the members of the Plenum had read neither the pamphlet mentioned, nor the articles, and could not decide such questions, it was suggested to the opposition that it should write down its "wishes" and send them in to the Polit Bureau or the C. C. C. for examination. Important questions of principle in Party politics cannot, however be identified with mistakes made by this or that press organ (even admitted that such mistakes have been made). At the Plenum the opposition was asked whether it agreed to sheet 3 (the "wishes") being separated from the rest of the declaration, added to the stenograph, and sent for examination to the Political Bureau or the C. C. C.; but the opposition declined this proposition. Thereupon the Plenum resolved to take cognisance of the declaration of the opposition, and to publish in the press only that which you were able to read in the "Pravda" yesterday.

I retail all this in order to show what concessions have been made by the Joint Plenum of the C. C. and the C. C. C. at this extremely critical juncture, for the sake of Party unity. The opposition has speculated, always and everywhere, on its expulsion or arrest. It has appealed to the pity of separate members of the C. C. — such good fellows expelled so suddenly — in order to gain fresh adherents.

The whole work done by the last Plenum has shown to the entire Party and the whole working class, with perfect clearness, the splitting tendency of the opposition, which has forced the last Plenum to discuss inner Party occurrences entirely unexampled in the history of the Party.

We were prepared to remove from the agenda the question of the expulsion of Comrades Zinoviev and Trotzky from the C. C., and accepted their declaration, despite its entire inadequacy. The declaration of the opposition accompanies every point with reservations showing that the opposition is only awaiting the next opportunity for a renewed attack on the Party and the C. C.

At the Plenum the opposition could not even make up its mind to condemn Comrade Trotzky's thesis on Clémenceau, for fear of offending comrade Trotzky. For I can scarcely believe that all the members of the opposition are agreed with the unsound diplomatic criticism of Comrade Trotzky's Clémenceau thesis contained in the declaration.

The declaration of the opposition states regarding the question of the schismatic policy in the Comintern:

"We admit that in Germany the Communist movement is threatened with a definite split and the formation of two parties. Whilst submitting to the decisions of the Comintern on the inadmissibility of organisatory relations with the expelled Urbahns Maslov group... we shall strive for their re-admittance into the Comintern."

The declaration does not even state that the opposition renounces the support of that group which has split one of the best international parties, the German C. P. a group which has gone so far that its leader, Ruth Fischer, defended the activities of the opposition openly in the Reichstag, before the whole bourgeoisie, and took sides against the majority of our Party and the C. C. The declaration of the opposition is confined to a statement that it "submits to the decisions of the Comintern and dissolves the organisatory connection". Not because it is convinced, but because it "submits to the decisions of the Comintern on the inadmissibility of organisatory relations with the expelled Urbahns Maslov group". For this reason it dissolves the organisatory connection, but it retains others, and it retains the possibility of the political support of this petty bourgeois renegade group in its fight against the decisions of the E. C. C. I. and against the C. P. G.

In the question of the splitting policy the opposition again left itself a back door open. We read in its declaration:

"We are just as decidedly prepared to do our utmost for the extermination of all fractional elements which have sprung into existence in consequence of our being forced, by the inner Party regime, to refute the false views in the Party as to our real opinions, which were being falsely interpreted in the press\* read all over the country."

I have read only a few passages from all that has been written and spoken by the opposition of late. I must admit, however, that I have not been able to read much of what it has written. I have not had the time to read it, and I shall not read it. On the Chinese question alone it sent 500 pages to the

Comintern. (Laughter.) I am not so leisured that I can wade through all this fractional, schismatic (ahem!) literature. (Applause.)

With regard to the dissolution of the fraction the opposition declares itself ready to do its utmost for the extermination of all fractional elements. It is ready to do its utmost, but whether it will do anything at all is another matter. Compare the declaration of 16th October: "We call upon you to disband, to cease..." And now: "We are prepared to do our utmost for the extermination of all fractional elements which have sprung into existence in consequence of our being forced by the inner Party regime..." They — Trotzky and Zinoviev — members of the C. C., were forced to make a veiled political demonstration among non-Party elements at a railway station. And we, I — Rykov, Stalin, Bukharin, etc. are to blame. Is this to be tolerated? The Party must observe closely whether the opposition fulfils the obligations undertaken in the declaration. The Party has been deceived once. The Party must not permit this a second time, and a second deception on the part of the opposition will be met by more energetic measures. Should this occur, it is difficult to suppose that joint work with the opposition in the Central Committee, or within the Party, could ever again be possible. (Applause.)

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The opposition stands on the edge of the abyss. Expulsion from the Party means the loss of the possibility of political activity for the expelled. The matter is extremely serious. A political functionary of the Soviet Union who breaks with the Communist Party is transformed, from the standpoint of the proletarian struggle, into a "dead soul". For we cannot tolerate the existence of a second party. To Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev expulsion from our Party would mean political death (hear, hear!). Therefore the decision of the Plenum of the C. C. on the conduct of Comrades Trotzky and Zinoviev has had to be made perfectly clear. We have made one more attempt, openly before the whole Party and the whole country, to retain the opposition within the confines of Party legality. The opposition renounces in its declaration the greater part of the maliciously slanderous assertions about "Thermidor" and "degeneration", in which no thinking member of the opposition can believe. But such slogans as that referring to Clémenceau, or the accusation of Thermidorian degeneration, of kulak influence, etc., raise a storm of indignation among the members of the Party, who demand that the pernicious activities of the opposition shall cease. The opposition is usually extremely offended at the severe terms applied by the Party members to this or that action of the opposition. No doubt quite unnecessary exaggerations are sometimes made, incautious expressions are used, and even actual misrepresentations. Such misrepresentations are possible in this or that newspaper or pamphlet. What is unreasonable in the complaints of the opposition is its belief that Zinoviev carries as much weight as the whole Comintern, or Trotzky as much as the whole Communist Party. It does not realise that its attitude is an affront to the Communist Party, the backbone of the revolution. (Applause.)

Whether Zinoviev remains or not, whether Rykov remains or not, the Communist Party will remain. The October revolution will survive us, and those who compare their own persons with the whole working class or with the whole Comintern have lost all sense of proportion.

Our differences are already enticing hostile forces. The resolution of the Plenum on the opposition states that the opposition, whether it wills it or not, inevitably represents a centre of attraction for all anti-proletarian and anti-Communist elements. At the demonstration at Yaroslavl station the leaders of the opposition were in the midst of elements with other class interests; and the political fight against the C. C. and against the Party attracts all those forces anxious to combat our Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In order to substantiate these assertions by facts, I shall here read an extract from a leading article of the Menshevik "Socialist Messenger". This article refers to the Smilga demonstration. The Mensheviks compare this demonstration with the first demonstration made against despotism before the Kasan cathedral in St. Petersburg. They regard the Yaroslavl station episode as an event of historical importance. For the following reasons:

"The Communist opposition is not only stronger" — states the Menshevik leading article — "but as soon as the lockgates are opened, social activity rushes through, and in addition to communist fractions, other social movements, especially social democracy, rise against them and at their expense.

Therefore the Russian social democrats would warmly welcome such a legalisation of the opposition, although they have nothing in common with the positive programme of the opposition. They would welcome the legality of political struggle, the open self-liquidation of the dictatorship, and the transition to new political forms, through which a field would be opened up for a broad labour movement." ("Socialist Messenger", No. 13, 2nd July 1927.)

These people understand very well what is at stake. They are already on the alert, they are awaiting the possibility of an attack on the dictatorship, of the working class.

The unusual importance of the question of Party unity has caused the Joint Plenum to show once again that the Party gives the opposition every opportunity of treading the ground of legality, and of renouncing actions which might plunge Trotsky or Zinoviev sooner or later into the abyss.

The declaration of the opposition shows that although it has abandoned its monstrous and unheard of accusations against the Party, it has not broken entirely with that harmful political ideology, condemned by the Party, which has lent wings to its fight against the C. C. This forces the Party to exert every effort, and to give every aid to the opposition in dissolving its fractions and turning its back on its errors. For this purpose it is necessary that the ideology of the opposition should be thoroughly exposed in all nuclei and organisations, and Trotskyism prevented from supplanting Lenin's teachings (enthusiastic applause). And secondly it is necessary to carry out unconditionally that decision contained in the resolutions of the X. Party Conference on the cessation of all fractional work and the dissolution of all fractional groups. All those who fail to carry out this decision will have to be expelled from the ranks of the Party. (Prolonged and enthusiastic applause.)

## **Resolution of the Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. on the Results of the Plenum of the C. C. and C. C. C. of the C. P. S. U.**

Moscow, 1st September 1927.

The Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International has adopted a resolution upon the results of the joint plenary session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The resolution declares that the Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. approves without reservation of the decisions of the joint plenary session.

The differences of opinion in the C. P. of the Soviet Union had long ago become matters of international significance. The international bourgeoisie and the social democracy were utilising the actions of the Trotsky opposition in their struggle against the Soviet Union and against communism. The few supporters of the Opposition in other countries are attempting, under the banner of the oppositional platform, to split the Comintern sections. Finally, the internal situation of the C. P. of the Soviet Union as the leading party of the Comintern is of the greatest significance for the whole international communist movement. Therefore the Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. appeals to all sections of the Y. C. I. to study the decisions of the joint plenary session zealously and to support the Leninist line of the Bolshevik Party.

The acid test of the platform of the opposition which has re-considered its speeches concerning the Thermidor, was the question of the future war of world imperialism against the Soviet Union. By accusing the party leadership of degeneration and of the wish to conduct the coming war in alliance with the new bourgeoisie in town and country, the opposition questions the proletarian character of the coming war on the side of the Soviet Union. In face of the danger of war, the opposition does not emphasise the unconditional defence of the So-

viet Union and the consequent unification of the forces of the Party and the proletariat, but it deepens the fractional struggle for power, in the Party and in the Soviet State. In this way the opposition began to undermine the most fundamental and lasting factor in the international policy of the revolutionary proletariat, i. e. the necessity of an unconditional and unreserved defence of the existing proletarian dictatorship. Thus, the Trotsky fraction was bound to suffer an ideological collapse as was seen at the joint plenary session.

The oppositional platform was also beaten at the joint plenary session by concrete facts from the economic situation of the Soviet Union. Elementary truths of Marxism demanded from the Opposition that it attempted to justify its theses of the growing degeneration of the policy of the C. P. of the Soviet Union, by an analysis of the economic development of the Soviet Union. But at the plenary session the Opposition made no serious attempt to prove its unfounded statements, for at the time of the session it was made absolutely clear that the process of displacing private capital by State and co-operative activities was being continued and that the specific gravity of the socialist industry in the national economic system as a whole is continuously increasing, that the wages of the proletariat have considerably increased in the last year etc.

The Presidium is indignant at the accusation of the Opposition concerning the degeneration of the proletarian dictatorship, an accusation which has been taken up by all the enemies of the Soviet Union, and appeals to all the sections of the Y. C. I. to expose this calumny and to instruct the masses concerning the necessity of the unreserved defence of the Soviet Union as the country of socialist reconstruction, as the arsenal of the world revolution.

The Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. shares the opinion of the plenary session concerning the fundamental tactical questions of the Chinese revolution, in particular with regard to the possibility and the necessity of a bloc with the national bourgeoisie and believes that the Opposition is distorting the lessons of Lenin concerning the bourgeois-democratic revolutions in the colonial countries.

The Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. condemns the organisational policy of the Opposition which shakes the regime of the proletarian dictatorship and the unity of the C. P. of the Soviet Union and of the Comintern. The appeal to the non-party members and the support of the enemies of the Comintern Maslow and Ruth Fischer by the Opposition is the negation of all the organisational principles of bolshevism. As an act of self-defence, a decisive struggle must be carried out against the fractional activity of the Opposition both in the C. P. of the Soviet Union and in all other sections of the Comintern. In this struggle the interests of communism must be placed higher than the personal sympathies for individual leaders, higher than the sentimental historical memories of past services.

The Opposition, ideologically defeated and surrounded by the indignation of the Party masses, made a declaration at the plenary session in which it abandoned its accusations of Thermidorism, its relations with the German renegades and its fractional activity. If the Opposition were to keep these promises, then the differences of opinion would, it is true, not disappear, but could be overcome through normal Party channels. For this reason the joint plenary session of the C. C. and the C. C. C. of the C. P. of the U. S. S. R. has decided to withdraw its decision to expel comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev from the C. C. and limited itself to a severe reprimand, thus making a last attempt to retain the leaders of the Opposition in active political life.

Whilst approving of the decision of the plenary session, the Presidium of the E. C. of the Y. C. I. expresses its apprehension concerning the honesty of the declaration of the Opposition having regard to the experiences in connection with the "peaceful declaration" of the Opposition which was turned into a scrap of paper by the Opposition itself. The future will show whether the Opposition keeps its promises and furthers the unification of the Party in face of the threatening danger of war. The immediate task of the Y. C. I. is to expose the oppositional platform and to keep on the watch in connection with the fractional activity of the Opposition.



## THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

### The I. F. T. U. Congress in Paris, and After.

By Giovanni Germanetto.

#### Italian Workers and the Amsterdam Bureaucrats.

The reception accorded the bureaucrats of the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions by the French Government was very cordial and friendly.

The few banners of the Workers' Unions, as if ashamed, stood in a corner of the hall, where 200 well dressed gentlemen sat, with an appearance of listening to the speakers. The Congress livened up somewhat only when unity was discussed, when Brown had a bout with Oudegeest and when everybody was smitten with a desire to point out the mistakes of others.

It is not at all difficult to realise what reception the two Italian workers got who had crossed the border illegally and who had arrived at the Congress to defend their right of representing the General Confederation of Labour and the Proletariat. These men had come to show that Buozzi, Bensi and Sartelli, the officials who had decamped to Paris some months ago, had no mandate to represent the workers of Italy, although their Amsterdam friends had immediately made a decision to consider them the lawful representatives of the Italian proletariat.

These workers came to tell the Congress how activities could be carried on against fascism; they wanted to relate the heroic actions of the Italian workers in their struggle; they wanted to speak about the papers being issued secretly, on the trade unions organised illegally at the factories, about the meetings held outside the towns at night, on the dissatisfaction and the strikes, on the deportations and tortures suffered daily by the workers. But how could such questions interest the Amsterdam bureaucrats, how could they turn their attention to the revolutionary struggle of workers who would not submit to a bitter dictatorship, when among them were friends of Primo de Rivera and Zankov?

All protests were therefore in vain. Neither the Congress Presidium, nor the Mandate Commission consented to examine this question. The International Federation Council had already once decided that the Italian Confederation was in Paris, that its leaders were two or three former officials who had run away and deserted the Italian workers at a critical moment, and that this decision could not be changed. If the Italian workers, instead, wanted the Confederation to be in Italy, if during the past few months they have shown that it is possible to maintain trade union locals in the factories and villages in spite of the fascist terror, that it is possible to publish and distribute papers, appeals and pamphlets and to organise strikes then the worse for them. The Amsterdam bureaucrats have decided that all this is impossible in Italy, and that settles the question!

Briefly, the circumstances were as follows: In February last the majority of the former leaders of the Italian Confederation went over to the Fascists, having first announced the liquidation of the Confederation. A few days afterwards a meeting of all the organisations still in existence decided by an undivided vote of representatives of all shades of working class opinion to repeal this decision and to take all measures to enable the Confederation to exist and function in Italy. About the same time two members of the former Executive Committee who were in Paris declared that the Confederation headquarters would now be in Paris and announced themselves to be the lifelong leaders of the Confederation. The Amsterdam International Council thereupon recognised these gentlemen as the lawful representatives of the Italian Proletariat! Who in fact should lead the Italian Confederation, and where in reality is the Confederation? There can be no doubt whatever on this question: the leadership belongs to the organisations in Italy to-day.

Strictly considered, how can there be any wavering between a small group of former leaders, now in Paris, having no possibility and, moreover, who are unable to set up contact with the masses, and those workers who during the past few

months have led the masses of Italy out of submissive passivity, who have roused the working class to take up the struggle anew?

But even the negotiations after the Congress were fruitless. The prejudiced resistance of the Amsterdamites could not be surmounted. In effect they said: these officials are the leaders and have the last word in the matter and must remain in Paris, while the others, well, they can submit or allow themselves to be exiled!

A profound change had taken place in the leadership of the Confederation. It was transformed into a bureaucratic institution at the beck and call of all the small fry in the police service. To-day, however, this organisation has become deeply rooted in the factories. Previously it sabotaged every movement, to-day it is the very spirit of rebellion. It was a handmaid of Fascism and a reserve for the bourgeoisie. To-day this organisation is organising for the revolution. It is, therefore, the only organisation of the Italian proletariat that has set up a united front. It embraces all shades of opinion from catholics to communists, including the small groups of social-democrats and maximalists that had escaped the terror. In short, all the workers of Italy are united in the Confederation.

But Buozzi's insolence once again appeared when he spoke at the Amsterdam International Congress. He always characterised the work of the General Confederation of Labour of Italy as a Communist bluff — although Villani, the former reformist Secretary of the Confederation who remained in the Provisional Executive Committee (Comitato Direttivo) of the General Confederation of Labour with the Communists, was sentenced to five years' exile for this crime; although Pagani, a maximalist member of the Provisional Executive Committee (Comitato Direttivo) and member of the Italian G. C. L. delegation to the Amsterdam Congress, was arrested in crossing the border and sentenced to four years' imprisonment; and although four maximalists and other communist workers and reformists were arrested in Tourine accused of re-establishing the local Labour Board. In spite of this Buozzi described all this work, but of course forgot to mention that it was communist workers and revolutionaries who had carried it out. In their report to the Amsterdam International the Italian G. C. L. also pointed out that activities in Italy are possible in spite of what the Amsterdamites say.

Of late, since the attempt in Bologna up to the present time, there have been a whole series of movements and strikes which are continuing to-day.

As a result of restoring the value of the lira, the economic position of the workers is daily growing grimmer.

The agrarians in their polemics with the industrialists — although they join hands to oppress the workers and peasants — write that "despite the whole deception of the statistics, the wages of the workers have in reality come down".

"Il Popolo d'Italia" writing on the tremendous profits reaped by the employers as a result of rehabilitating the lira, states that this was not the result of speculation, but was the premium received for the confidence shown in restoring the lira, which had been desired by the Duce.

The debt of "Snia-Viscosa" of 1,400,000 pounds sterling stood 151,102,000 lira, when the pound sterling was quoted at 107 lira. However, to-day when the exchange has fallen to 89.25 lira to the pound sterling, the debt has decreased to 124,950,000 lira and thus, a profit of 21,152,000 lira had been reaped.

This premium, however, will be paid by the workers!

In face of this economic position, in face of the struggle renewed by the Italian G. C. L., Amsterdam declares that the General Confederation of Labour, that is leading the Italian workers in their struggle to-day, is powerless. Amsterdam turns down the representatives of the Italian proletariat that have come from Italy, and in their place uphold as true representatives, individuals who first turned the Confederation into a bureaucratic institution and then deserted it.

## FOR THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

### The All-Union Council of Trade Unions to the British Trades Union Congress.

Moscow, 2nd September, 1927.

To-day there was held an extraordinary plenary session of the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions which dealt with the question of the **Anglo-Russian Unity Committee**.

The plenary session listened to a report of its secretary Comrade **Dogadov**, who pointed out that the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions had received an invitation to attend the **Trades Union Congress in Edinburgh**. However, it was not possible to send a delegation to the congress as the British authorities refused to give the delegates visas. For this reason the Central Council would be compelled to limit itself to sending a declaration by telegraph instead of taking fraternal part in the Congress.

The text of this declaration was unanimously approved of by the members of the Central Council. The declaration greets the British proletariat which is exposed at the present moment to heavy blows on the part of the reaction, and points out that the proletariat of the Soviet Union has followed with close attention the struggle of the British workers in the past year. Together with the British miners the proletariat of the Soviet Union had experienced the horror of severe defeat which followed upon the treachery of the General Council, as shown both by the betrayal on the 12th May and the sabotage of the heroic struggle of the miners which followed. The new terrible Bill, which became law solely owing to the defeat of the miners and the constant and deliberate sabotage of the struggle against this Bill by the liberal leaders of the Labour Party and the reformist leaders of the General Council, has destroyed everything which the British workers have won in the course of a century, and represents a victory of the conservative government not only over the workers of Great Britain, but over the workers of the whole world. The defeat of the miners and the Strike Breakers Charter have given the government of the bankers and landowners free play for their brutal war against China and for the preparation of a bloody war against the **Soviet Union**.

Despite all these blows which are falling upon the workers of Great Britain and the workers of the whole world, we maintain our belief in the creative forces of the British proletariat. The power and the discipline of the British workers was shown in the famous nine days of the general strike. Those nine days showed the world exemplary class solidarity and iron proletarian discipline. On the ninth day there was revealed the tragic situation of the army at whose head was the traitor **Thomas** and his assistants of the type of **Purcell** and **Hicks**, who are now united with the leaders of the Labour Party in giving the workers the illusion that a parliamentary government can solve all the problems of the working class with ease. They ignore the activity of the bourgeoisie and disarm the working class in the present struggle. They promise the workers an easy victory through the ballot, and thus mislead the workers and prepare the way for new defeats.

We are firmly convinced that the present Congress will draw all the consequences from the lessons of the last past year. We believe that the **first and most urgent task** is to bring the **capitalist offensive** in Great Britain itself to a standstill, the blows of which at the working conditions of the English proletariat are becoming more cynical every day.

The **second task** is the struggle against predatory British imperialism, which is not satisfied with its fight against the British working class, but which is carrying on a hangman's war in China and which suppresses and throttles all the peoples of its Empire.

The third task is the struggle against new imperialist war which is directed against the first socialist State and which is being openly prepared before the eyes of the world. The solution of these tasks demands above all that the old and bankrupt leaders be replaced by new, courageous and honest leaders from the working class, who will be able to lead the struggle of the proletariat against its enemies.

The efforts of the British workers alone, however, even with honest and courageous leaders at their head, will not be sufficient; the united efforts of the workers of the world together with the oppressed peoples are necessary.

The last congress of the **International Federation of Trades Unions** proved that this international is led by a clique of venal careerists and lackeys of capitalism and imperialism who place their own interests before the interests of the proletariat.

A fighting international is necessary in order to unite the trades unions of the whole world for the struggle against capitalism and imperialism. We believed and still believe that the **Anglo-Russian Committee**, which was formed by the efforts of the British and Russian workers, could be made one of the instruments for uniting not only the workers of Great Britain and the Soviet Union, but also the workers of the whole world. However, the leaders of the General Council have sabotaged this instrument of the class struggle just as they have sabotaged all the other weapons in the arsenal of the workers. They went the way of the Baldwin government and not the way of the workers struggle. Before the breaking off of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union, **Baldwin** made absolutely unfounded accusations against the labour unions of the U. S. S. R. as a preliminary to the diplomatic breach. The attitude of the leaders of the General Council is not an attitude of working class solidarity, but an attitude of alliance between the General Council and the conservative government.

The declaration concludes with the statement that the workers of the Soviet Union, who are now preparing to celebrate the tenth anniversary of their seizure of power, will always be ready and willing to fight in common with the British workers against the common foe, above all against the terrible war which is being kindled by the British government and which in its cruelty and extent will far surpass the imperialist world war.

After the adoption of the text of the declaration to the Trades Union Congress, Comrade **Dogadov** read the voluminous correspondence which has been exchanged between the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions and the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress concerning the convening of the **Anglo-Russian Committee**.

### The Disruptive Tactics of the British General Council.

The "Pravda" on the Correspondence between the A. U. C. T. U. and the General Council of the T. U. C.

Moscow, 3rd September 1927.

The leading article of the "Pravda" this morning deals with the correspondence, which has just been published here, between the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions and the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress upon the question of the convening of the **Anglo-Russian Committee**. It refers in particular to the declaration of the British General Council of the 13th July 1927. This declaration cannot be interpreted in any other way than as a new and deliberate step to break up the **Anglo-Russian Committee**. The leaders of the General Council demand as a condition for the continued existence of the Anglo-Russian Committee, that the representatives of the Soviet Unions abandon their right to criticise the opportunism of the leaders of the General Council. Of course, the reformists know perfectly well that the Soviet Labour Unions, which have been built up in the spirit of free criticism and in the struggle against opportunism, will never accept this "condition" of the leaders of the General Council. The statutes of the

Anglo-Russian Committee contain no mention of any prohibition for the one party to criticise the actions of the other when it considers these actions as incorrect or indeed treacherous to the international proletariat, as have been the actions of the leaders of the General Council on a number of occasions in the past period. This appeal of the British General Council to the Statutes only plays the role of an unworthy means to avoid answering the basic criticism which the Central Council has offered continuously upon the activities of the General Council. The appeal to the Statutes is the typical opportunist method of covering up the great political questions, the question of the danger of war, China, the British General Strike, the Anti-Trades Union Bill etc., with petty organisational quarrels.

The declaration of the General Council, despite the almost ultimatory tone given to it by its authors, is practically a political capitulation of the General Council to the Soviet Labour Unions, for it was dictated by fear of the revolutionary criticism of the latter. In a number of cases the British General Council has betrayed the international revolutionary movement on its chief fronts and proved itself to be a peculiar and scarcely veiled agency of the British bourgeoisie, the same bourgeoisie which stands at the head of the international and European reaction.

In the published declaration of the General Council, those points are particularly astounding and hypocritical which deal with the working class of the Soviet Union and the preparations for war against the Soviet Union. The height of the "struggle" of the British General Council was reached when it despatched a "letter" to one of the diehard ministers and when it adopted a declaration of a very moderate and loyal character towards the British bourgeoisie. The leaders of the General Council, who term the attitude of the Soviet Labour Unions as "an unwarrantable interference in the internal affairs of the British Unions" and demand "politeness", adopted a pharisaical resolution in connection with the execution of white-guardist officers and British spies who had carried out attempts on the leaders of the workers in the Soviet Union, on comrades like Tomsky, who are then faced with demands such as that of "politeness" towards the leaders of the General Council. The Soviet Labour Unions regard the Anglo-Russian Committee as a means for a real friendship between the workers of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union. Therefore they are in favour of the maintenance of this committee upon condition that its activity for the class struggle and the main aims of the international working class movement is strengthened and that freedom is guaranteed to criticise errors, that the truth about the treachery of this or that leader of the workers is not concealed.

"For us", declares the "Pravda". "It is nothing new to receive 'ultimatums' from Great Britain. This time the ultimatum is not sent to us from the British bourgeoisie, but from the British reformists. It is obvious that the example of ultimatums to the Soviet Union and the tendency to break off relations with the Soviet State and its working class in the present international situation has a contagious effect. Of course the British reformists are quite capable under certain circumstances of breaking up the Anglo-Russian Committee, but the full responsibility for this break-up will then fall upon their shoulders. There is not the faintest doubt but that the British workers will see who is responsible for the breach and that they will suitably requite those who break with the working class of the Soviet Union at a time when the imperialists are preparing a war against the Soviet Union and thus facilitate the black work of these war mongers."

"The workers of the Soviet Union", concludes the article. "will find ways and means of creating a united front with the British workers without the General Council, against the bourgeoisie and against the reformists."

## WORKERS' DELEGATIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION

### The Soviet Union and the United States of America.

By L. Trotsky.

Below we publish the report of the conversation between Comrade Trotsky and the American delegation, which took place on August 19th, 1927. This delegation consisted of 26 American workers, teachers, journalists etc., who do not adopt the communist standpoint, but the standpoint of the petty bourgeoisie. Ed.

In the questionnaire, which you have just handed to me, I see that there are a number of points which touch upon the internal life of our Party; and in particular, upon our differences of opinion. It is a custom among us Bolsheviks to express our minds on these questions within our Party. I would request you not to assume from my words that I am prepared to express myself freely to foreign guests upon any question which may interest them; I should prefer first of all to put before people who are not members of our Party the thoughts and considerations which might prevail upon them to enter our Party, and then to take stock of internal differences of opinion. I shall revert to this question in conjunction with the danger of war.

I will begin with the seventh question. It runs:

"Can it be said that the country of the Soviets represents a democracy, or must it be said that the dictatorship of a class or a portion of this class — the Communist Party — rules here?"

Whether or not one calls Soviet Russia the land of democracy depends upon the significance one attaches to the conception of democracy. I can quite understand that from the standpoint of existing American democracy our Soviet Union can be denied the right to call itself a democracy. But I reserve the right to deny from our standpoint that the United States constitutes a democracy. I might place alongside Question 7 a Question 7a: "Can it be said that the United States constitute a democracy or is the United States a country which is administered by the dictatorship of big banks, trusts, etc?" To this question I should like to propose the following answer: In the United States there rules under the cloak of the outward forms of a political democracy the dictatorship of the most highly concentrated capital. Where a privileged minority rules the exploited majority, the minority is concerned to cloak and disguise its rulership with various mystifications of religion, of hereditary monarchy or of political democracy. The Soviet system is the dictatorship of the working class, which is not at all concerned to deceive the others concerning the character of its dictatorship, and, in consequence, it does not make use of camouflage.

A further and equally profound difference between the dictatorship of the working class, which is led by its vanguard, r. e. the Party, and the dictatorship of feudal lords or of capitalists is that the feudal lords and capitalists try to maintain their dictatorship for ever, while the Communist Party regards the dictatorship of the proletariat as transitory, as a regime of the transition period. The object of revolutionary dictatorship is the creation of an order of society which will no longer need any state force at all, because it will be based upon the solidarity of the producers freed from exploitation and from class barriers of every kind.

Now for the eighth question:

"How is it that in the Soviet Union there is not freedom of the Press and of speech for all, including the opponents of the Soviet regime?"

In order to answer this question one must here, too, be clear as to what is to be understood by freedom of speech and the right to hold meetings. Everybody has the right to fly,

but if one has not an aeroplane one will hardly succeed in making use of this right.

In any democratic country the workers have a right to their own press, they have the right to hold meetings, and so forth. But the press needs printing-works and paper; for meetings, rooms are necessary and leisure. But the printing-works and buildings do not belong to the workers but to the bourgeoisie. The journalists come from the bourgeois class or, in case they rise from the working class, are re-educated in the sense of bourgeois interests. In America freedom of the press for the worker amounts to the right to buy for two cents a newspaper produced by bourgeois journalists in the interests of capitalists. In present-day America there is no other freedom of the press. Such freedom does not exist in our country. We have taken away from the bourgeoisie the printing-works, supplies of paper and the paper factories. We have placed these material instruments of "freedom of speech" in the service of workers' and people's education. We have, therefore, made tremendous advance from the regime of bourgeois democracy, which gives people the right to fly but deprives them of aeroplanes.

You ask: Can it not happen under the Soviet regime that the people become dissatisfied and then have no channels through which to express their dissatisfaction?

Naturally, the possibility of dissatisfaction or the existence of dissatisfaction cannot be denied. As long as there is misery and privation, as long as class differences exist — these still prevail in our country — dissatisfaction is inevitable. This dissatisfaction is a force which urges us forward. Can it find expression among us? We assert that, in spite of all the shortcomings of the Soviet system, this system, as it affords the working masses through the medium of our Party incomparably more complete and immediate possibilities for the expression of feelings and interests than the utterly artificial and deceitful system of bourgeois democracy. In this connection we have a very recent example, which must give food for thought to all Democrats, not the professionals, but to Democrats from conviction.

Austria, as is well known, represents democracy, and, moreover, is a democracy constructed quite recently in accordance with the best international traditions and with the immediate participation of American observers and instructors. And what is the result? A short while ago the Austrian workers, in spite of "freedom" of the Press, the right to hold meetings, could find no other means of expression than an insurrection in Vienna. You must admit that our workers do not resort to such methods of expressing their opinions. The reason for this is that the State system of the Soviets, in contrast to bourgeois democracy, affords the workers immeasurably greater possibility of exercising direct influence in State and public affairs.

The tenth question:

"Can it be said that the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is directed towards the East and not towards the West?"

I do not believe that the general direction of our foreign policy can be formulated in this manner. There are periods during which our attention and our endeavours are claimed to a greater extent by the East than by the West, but the reverse is also the case at times. We must defend our western and eastern frontiers and also, at the same time, our northern and southern frontiers. During the occupation of the Ruhr and during the general strike in England we were more interested in the West. The events of the Chinese revolution attracted the greater part of our attention towards the East. In general, the fate of our country is intimately connected with the movement of the working class throughout the world and with the movement of the oppressed peoples in the colonies and protectorates, i. e. with revolution both in the West and in the East.

"What prevents the Government of the United States from recognising the Soviet Union and what can be done to remove obstruction to such recognition?"

I should prefer to hear from our honoured guests the answer to this question. (Laughter.) In my opinion the chief obstacle is the contrast between our social systems. The United

States is the most complete and strongest expression of the capitalist system, while we are the first attempt, so far made, to construct a socialistic system; we are so to speak, a rough working model. Those who control the course of the United States do not look kindly upon the coming successors of the capitalist regime. It will be difficult to remove the chief obstruction, because no country has any intention of changing its regime voluntarily. But, in spite of this, much can be done towards improving mutual relations. First of all, it should be reported in America that we are not quite so bad as we are there thought to be — that would mean some slight progress. It must also be stated clearly that, though we oppose the principle of private property, we take existing circumstances into account, and when we contract with capitalists, we fulfil our obligations scrupulously.

Why do people accuse us of carrying on illicit propaganda? Because capitalist governments cannot tolerate the existence of a government which gives expression to non-capitalistic ideas. Our present conversation might serve as an example. We are at present in a government office. A sheet containing about 20 questions has been handed to me, and practically every one of these questions might be represented by a person of ill will as an attempt to overthrow the Soviet system. But it will not occur to any of our newspapers to accuse our worthy guests of carrying on illicit propaganda. Now just imagine a delegation from the Soviet Union putting in a State department in Washington 20 similar questions to an official of the United States, thereby giving utterance to doubt concerning the pillars of American public and State administration. You will readily see that such a thing would be impossible.

Please do not regard my words as conveying any reproach concerning the questions which you have put to me. They are by no means intended to do so. On the contrary, I am grateful that the questions have been asked frankly and directly. It is possible for this reason to answer them with equal frankness. I only wished to indicate that, if such questions were put by us, they would inevitably be regarded by a capitalist State as an attempt at illicit "propaganda".

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth questions relate to the investment of foreign capital in this country. You have already received explicit information in writing on this point. We will, therefore, confine ourselves to consideration of the respective principles.

So far, foreign concessions, including those granted to America, have played but an insignificant role in our economic life. There are several reasons for this. The first reason is that our whole social system has existed only ten years, whereof the first few were years of civil war. The second reason has already been mentioned, namely, mutual distrust engendered by the contrast between our social systems. The third reason is the extreme disorganisation of the world market and the extreme instability of international and national economic conditions. When in Germany huge firms like the Stinnes' Company collapsed, the matter is regarded as quite in order. When hundreds of big firms recently collapsed in Japan, the event was regarded as a normal phenomenon. If, however, a foreign concession holder in our country does not happen to make a three-fold profit right away, the fact serves very well as proof of lack of vitality in the economic system of the Soviet Union.

The fifteenth question:

"What are the tasks of the Soviet Government in the matter of foreign policy?"

Our first task is the **preservation and prolongation of peace**. We believe that we share this task with the working masses of the whole world. If anybody asserts in the bourgeois press that a portion of our Party desires peace, while the other portion wants war, we would advise you not to give credence to the imputation. The effort to maintain peace is founded upon the principles of our system as a workers' and peasants' State and is to us a law of social and cultural self-preservation.

The sixteenth question is:

"Can the Soviet Union catch up with the progressive capitalist countries, and within how long?"

That we are making progress is proved by facts. We have no doubt that we shall continue to make progress. That portion of the national income which formerly went to the monarchy,

the nobility and the bourgeoisie can now be used mainly for the development of productive forces and for raising the material and cultural level of the working masses. The centralised economic management creates gigantic advantages. Can we catch up technically and culturally with the capitalistic countries and within what period? This question cannot be answered off hand, especially in regard to the matter of time. The distance between us and the leading capitalist States is still very considerable. Our task consists of the proper exploitation, in the first place, of the means we have at home and then of sources of help abroad, which the international capital and goods market — not, of course, gratis — can open to us, thereby year by year reducing this distance. Before answering the question of how long it will take us to catch up with the capitalistic countries, one should know what is going to happen to these countries in the meanwhile.

They are not halting at a particular spot and waiting for us to overtake them. At the moment, capitalist countries in Europe have about reached their economic level of pre-war times. At the same time, the fight for sales markets and sources of raw material has again broken out in a more acute form, i. e. the same fight as thirteen years ago led to the imperialist war. In the capitalist countries further promotion of the productive forces will automatically entail a fresh war, and the new war will bring about revolution, first of all in Europe — the United States still have a respite. In general, the coming epoch will be an epoch of tremendous economic and social upheavals. It is difficult to predict at what technical and cultural level the capitalist countries will come to a halt. One thing, however, can be said: Successful revolution, say in Germany or in England or still more throughout Europe, will in conjunction with our Soviet system and our natural wealth extraordinarily accelerate in this country, as also in Germany and England and the whole of Europe, the development of productive forces on a new, socialistic basis. Such a development of events would naturally hasten the revolution in the United States and shorten the respite which history has granted to it.

This result will be all the more surely and completely achieved as we progress more successfully in the course of socialist development, without waiting passively for the proletarian revolution in Europe and still less with folded arms for our recognition by capitalist America. To this task — our advance along the path of socialistic construction by the use of our own resources — our greatest efforts are devoted.

Under Point 17 you ask: Might one say that the living church works hand in hand with the government?

I very much doubt that that can be said. The Soviet Government does not need the support of a church; on the contrary, it is trying to liberate the workers from every religious influence. As far as the so-called "living church" is concerned, the nature of my occupation and of my intellectual interests deprives me of the opportunity of observing it.

The eighteenth question:

"What is the most important task in matters of economy?"

The Americanisation of our technics by reinforcing the foundation of Socialism and promoting the welfare of the masses. We should, however, raise no objection to the sovietisation of technics in America. If American technics were conjoined to the social system of the Soviets, the result would be a colossal growth of the cultural power of humanity in general.

Nineteenth question:

"What is the most important achievement of Communism in the Soviet Union since 1921?"

During the period since 1921 we have reconstructed our industry and in production as a whole we have about reached pre-war level. Socialism has thereby proved for the first time in the history of mankind its capacity to increase the productive forces of a country. This question is dealt with in a book of mine which has also been published in America, namely, "Towards Socialism or towards Capitalism?"

In conjunction with the question of danger of war I would revert to the question of the differences of opinion within our Party. The fact of these differences of opinion naturally effects public opinion differently in the various classes and various countries. The Press makes a sensation out of it. The American Press is one of the most prominent in this regard, if not quite

the most prominent. You know this better than I. We can only advise you to take the reports of your Press with a grain of salt. In the first place, we would ask you to convince yourselves during your stay with us that it is a matter of differences of opinion within the same Party as was welded together by the prelude to the illegal fight, by the fights of the October Revolution, by the civil war, by socialistic constructive work and by iron internal discipline. It is not likely that such results will emerge from these differences of opinion as our enemies hope for or might hope for. What separates us is incomparably smaller than that which unites us. Several of the newspapers abroad, which are most opposed to us, or most calumnious or most misled in regard to us, have even tried in one way or another to link up the perspective of war with the struggle within our Party. Such reflections or hopes are fundamentally false; they are a mixture of deceit and stupidity. Our Party, as I have already said, is united in its endeavour to maintain peace. If, however, we are attacked for the purpose of preventing the carrying out of Socialistic construction and our cultural development, our Party will fight with the same unanimous enthusiasm as characterised it at the barricades in 1917 and during the civil war of the succeeding years in order to preserve the achievements of the October Revolution. We are still the same revolutionaries who raised the standard of revolt against absolutism, against the bourgeoisie, against war. And if our enemies believe that in the government offices we have since that time become dull-witted and lazy, they will soon discover that they are greatly mistaken.

A supplementary question:

"Quite apart from any question of internal party policy, we are so greatly interested in the securing of better relations with Russia that we should like to know whether the day has not arrived on which Soviet Russia may allow freedom of opinion not only to workers but also to those who are not in agreement with the policy of the Government?"

We would sign such an undertaking to-day, if those here present would sign a parallel undertaking to the effect that throughout the world our enemies, who have at their disposal immense material means, would not interfere in our internal life for the purpose of helping the exploiting classes to overthrow the Soviet system and bring the country back into the path of Capitalism.

When, about the middle of the last century, the American Radicals were fighting against the slave-owners in the Southern States for the abolition of slavery, there were, not only in the South but also in the Northern States, very few so-called democratic "liberties". I have read in old American books that in the Northern States supporters of slavery who in public places, aye, even in beerhouses, claimed freedom of speech and freedom of opinion often went home with numerous bruises on their bodies, and I must say that your complaints concerning the violation of freedom of speech to-day arouses in me very little sympathetic response. As far as the Southern "Democrats" are concerned, it was not an infrequent occurrence that they tarred and feathered the opponents of slavery. The abolition of negro slavery, i. e. its substitution by "wage-slavery", was not achieved by "free" exchange of opinion but by civil war. We are now fighting for the abolition of wage-slavery, for the destruction of Capitalism. This question is much more important and difficult than the abolition of the slavery of a few million negroes. The whole of humanity is divided into two main camps: on the one hand, the revolutionary proletariat; on the other, the imperialistic bourgeoisie. Those who hover between will, when the critical moment comes, join the one camp or the other. The fight does not cease for a single day. It is not a question of abstract freedom — abstract opinions — it is a question whether this country shall be socialist or capitalist. And I must tell you in all frankness that we are disposed to reward with genuine proletarian punches whoever tries to divert us into the path of Capitalism. If people in America say that we violate freedom, we answer that in doing so we resemble the actual fathers of American freedom. History has invented no other means of getting humanity forward. Human society, torn as it is by class antagonisms, is not a debating club. In the fight each class avails itself of every means of persuasion and compulsion. We are the pioneers of a new



order of society. Our enemies are incomparably more numerous, richer and better equipped than we. They waylay us at every step. They have invented clever tricks whereby to deceive the masses, and call these tricks rules of democracy. Whenever there is a question of fundamental matters, of the protection of property, they themselves never respect these rules. In the athletic ring one can afford to wrestle in accordance with the established rules. But when it comes to a question of danger to human life, or when a man is defending that which he cherishes most highly, he will bite, crutch, butt and kick without the slightest regard for the rules of the ring — and he is right. In order to achieve the ends for which they are fighting our enemies need this so-called "democratic freedom". We will not give it to them. We shall steadfastly defend with every means of persuasion and compulsion at our disposal the dictatorship of the proletariat as the sole path to the new and actually free order of society.

If, however, our friends now present or absent would promise to do away with the dominion of the banks, trusts, armies, dreadnoughts, aeroplanes — on land, on the water and in the air — on the same day we would promise to grant complete and unrestricted freedom to all parties and all persuasions.

And now for another question which was not included in the original list and which — as also the critical interjections of the president of the delegation — relate to the communist Parties in England and America. It has here been said that in America there exists no hostility towards Communism "as such" but a hostility towards Communists, because they allegedly, in contrast to the Communists of the Soviet Union, do not work creatively but destructively. I am afraid that we could not arrive at agreement on this point. Before we had seized power, we Russian Communists were also accused of destructive tendencies and the same accusation is made even to-day. The complaints about the "wrong methods" of the British and American Communists I receive with civility in accordance with the rules of hospitality; but I must say that, as a Communist, I regard myself as a member of the International Communist Party, and all reproaches levelled at the American or English Communists affect every Communist and, therefore, me, too. If among us, among the Russian, English or American Communists "bad" morals and usages prevail and offend certain people, well — we shall be prepared to turn over a new leaf in the course of time, and in any event we shall not be tardier in doing so than our class-enemies.

I think I have now exhausted the list of questions. If the answers do not satisfy you, the circumstance is in part attributable to the fact that the questions you put were extremely difficult ones.

## The "Pravda" ou Trotzky's Interview.

The "Pravda" of 24th August contained the following editorial comments on the foregoing interview of Comrade Trotzky. Ed.

As Comrade Trotzky in the interview published above deviates essentially from the Leninist views of the Party on some of the most important questions of the international struggle of the proletariat, the Redaction of the "Pravda" is compelled to make a few remarks.

### Does "Democracy" exist in Soviet Russia, or does it not?

To the important question thus formulated by the American delegation Comrade Trotzky has failed to give the correct Leninist answer. Instead of emphasising the fact that with us, against bourgeois democracy, there exists proletarian democracy as the highest form of Democracy, Comrade Trotzky has deviated from the class conception of Democracy to the incorrect comparison of "Democracy in general" with "Dictatorship in general" contained in the formulation of the question by the delegation. Comrade Trotzky finally led back the question of Democracy as a "mask" which the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie needs, but which the dictatorship of the proletariat does not need. He thereby completely overlooks the proletarian democracy which is based on the dictatorship of

the proletariat. He seeks to erase from history a fact of the very greatest importance, namely, the unparalleled development of Democracy under the Soviet Regime.

Let us compare the "answers" of Comrade Trotzky with that which Lenin said on Democracy in the Soviet Union. In his "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" of December 1917, Lenin wrote:

From the first days of the Revolution of 1917 the revolutionary Social Democracy repeatedly emphasised when putting forward the demand for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, that the Republic of the Soviets represents a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

For the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist system, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the republic of the Workers' Soldiers' and Peasants' deputies is (in comparison with the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly as the crown of the whole) not only a form of a higher type of democratic institution, but also the only form best securing the relatively most painless transition to socialism". (Lenin, Vol. 15, page 50 — Russian edition. Thick type by the "Pravda".)

In the Brochure "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky" (1918), Comrade Lenin said:

Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy. The Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic."

Only the most conscious sycophant of the bourgeoisie, or a politically dead man who does not see real life behind the dingy, dusty bourgeois books, who is filled through and through with bourgeois prejudices and thereby becomes objectively the lackey of the bourgeoisie, could fail to see that.

Only a man who is incapable of putting the question from the standpoint of the oppressed classes could fail to observe that..."

Lenin then speaks of the political relationships in the bourgeois countries:

"We are governed (and our State is "determined") by bourgeois-minded officials, bourgeois parliamentarians and bourgeois judges. That is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth which is recognised by thousands and millions of members of the suppressed classes in the bourgeois countries — including the democratic countries — as a result of their everyday experiences.

In Russia, on the other hand, the bureaucratic apparatus is completely shattered, not one stone has remained upon another. The old judges and the bourgeois Parliament have been driven out. A much more accessible representation has been granted to the workers and peasants: their Soviets have replaced the officials or their Soviets have been placed over the officials, and their Soviets elect the judges. This fact alone suffices to enable all suppressed classes to recognise the Soviet government, i. e. the given form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois Republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth which is plain and obvious to every worker, because he has "forgotten" to put the question thus: democracy for which class? He judges the matter from the standpoint of "pure" democracy (that is classless? or democracy standing above the classes?). He argues like Shylock: a pound of flesh, nothing more. Equality for all citizens — without this there is no democracy (Lenin, Volume 15, pages 462—463.)

In the "Theses on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat" (First Congress of the C. I. in 1919) Lenin wrote:

"It is precisely those masses who, even in the most democratic bourgeois Republics, were equal according to the law but with the help of various shifts and tricks were kept away from participation in political life and from making use of democratic rights and liberties, are at present (under the Soviet regime. Ed.) drawn into permanent, unhindered and at the same time decisive participation in the democratic administration of the State". (Lenin, volume 16, page 44 — Russian edition).

Lenin speaks of the "democratic administration of the State" by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Comrade Trotzky, however, "replies" to the American delegation, that "democracy" can serve only as a "mask" of the bourgeoisie. Comrade Trotzky does not approach the question of democracy from the class standpoint; he remains on the level of those considerations on "democracy in general" which Comrade Lenin chastised on several occasions.

2. Comrade Trotzky, who in his answer to the American delegation (and also apparently towards himself) has not theoretically cleared up the question of proletarian democracy in the Soviet Union, has naturally given an entirely incorrect and distorted picture of the actual political conditions in the Soviet Union.

In the first place, Comrade Trotzky gave a quite inadequate answer to the following question of the American delegation: "Is the day approaching when Soviet Russia will grant the workers, as well as those who are not in agreement with the policy of the government, freedom of opinion in public life?"

Comrade Trotzky dealt only with the question of the bourgeois parties and passed over in complete silence the indirect assertion, that in the Soviet Union there exists no "freedom of opinion" for the workers, as formulated in the question of the delegation. Comrade Trotzky, who passed over this aspect of the matter, thereby gave the enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat occasion to continue to spread the malicious calumny which obviously to some extent caused uneasiness even to the members of American delegation who put such a question.

In our opinion the facts of Soviet reality will convince these members of the delegation that the assertion, that the workers in the Soviet Union have no "freedom of opinion" is a slanderous invention. With us more than 60 millions of the working population, from the age of 18 and without distinction of sex or nationality, have the right to participate in the Soviet elections. Of this number over 50%, that is over 30 millions workers and peasants, took active part in the campaign at the last election. Our elections do not consist in the electors simply dropping a voting paper into the ballot box; with us the electors take an active part in the meetings, at which the reports on the activity of the Soviets are delivered and discussed, at which their activity is subjected to an all-round criticism, at which the electors take part by making practical proposals for improving the work of the Soviet, for correcting failures and shortcomings and at which they discuss the candidatures of persons put forward on the lists. Over 30 million workers and peasants made use of their election rights at the last Soviet elections at such meetings on the basis of the proletarian democracy. The numbers of those actively participating in the elections is increasing every year. There is no bourgeois country that can show anything like it.

In our country there are ten millions workers and employees organised in the trade unions. That is a number that has not been reached by the trade union movement in any bourgeois country. The percentage of organised workers and employees with us is the highest — it amounts on the average to 90%. During the trade union elections and on the occasion of the regular reports of the trade union organs, the members express their opinions quite freely and thereby realise proletarian democracy.

Without doubt, for the bourgeois and anti-proletarian parties, the advocates of the overthrow of the power of the workers and the re-establishment of capitalism there exists with us no "freedom of opinion". That, however, has nothing whatever to do with the freedom of opinion of the workers. For this reason there exists in our country a proletarian and not a bourgeois democracy; a democracy for the poor and not for the rich; for the workers and toilers in town and country and not for the capitalists and big landowners.

Secondly, Comrade Trotzky declares that under the regime of the Soviet Union "discontent" is the driving force. In the general formulation in which Comrade Trotzky clothed this principle ("so long as class antagonisms exist — discontent is unavoidable", it is obviously therefore a "discontent" of the classes) it only applies to the capitalist countries, in which revolutionary discontent, the class discontent of the toiling masses with the bourgeois regime is actually a driving force. In the country in which the power is in the hands of the proletariat, class discontent with the existing power is

expressed in the first place by the bourgeoisie, which conceals itself behind such conceptions as "the people", "democracy", "Constituent Assembly", and which in the fight against the dictatorship of the proletariat frequently makes use of the immediate help of foreign capital (as we remember in the years of intervention). From the standpoint of the proletariat this counter-revolutionary discontent can by no means be recognised as a driving force. But this is what can be inferred from Comrade Trotzky's words. Precisely in the same way, this "discontent" with the Soviet regime was no forward driving force in the period of acute struggle (in the years of the civil war) in which various vacillating sections of the working class were under the influence of the bourgeoisie. In the days of the Kronstadt revolt such vacillations were even a direct menace to the Soviet power. They threatened the country with "retrogression"; they in no way meant "progress".

It is very remarkable that Comrade Trotzky, in his utterances regarding the "incomparably more complete and more immediate possibility under the Soviet regime of the working masses giving expression to their feelings and interests", considered it necessary to link up this principle not with the question of the advantages of proletarian as compared with bourgeois democracy, but rather with the question of "discontent" under the Soviet regime, whereby he passes over in complete silence the enormous social advance of the working and peasant masses, their active and many-sided participation in socialist construction, which is certainly not rooted in "discontent" but in complete support of the Soviet State as the only socialist State (Comrade Trotzky, in his interview, preferred not to speak of the socialist character of our State, but only of the "non-capitalist" (!) tendency of our government).

The replies of Comrade Trotzky can, in the last resort, mislead the American delegation and also others, both as regards Soviet reality and the views of our Party regarding this reality.

3. We cannot avoid calling attention to the fact that Comrade Trotzky, while veiling the true democratic character of the proletarian dictatorship, at the same time permits a superfluous beautifying of bourgeois democracy insofar as he maintains, without the necessary reservations, that the "workers in any democratic State have the right to their own press, to hold meetings etc."

This assertion is contrary to the facts. Everybody knows that in the most "democratic" countries (for example in America, where just recently the "democratic" bourgeois court caused the workers and Sacco and Vanzetti to be executed) the revolutionary workers are systematically persecuted (arrested, punished etc.) for propagating their views.

It is impossible to understand how Comrade Trotzky could "forget" these political "attractions" of bourgeois democracy and content himself with merely pointing to the purely economic relations which under capitalism prevent the workers from making use of the liberty of the press which is alleged to exist.

4. Moreover, in our opinion the answer of Comrade Trotzky to the question: "Can the Soviet Union Catch up to the capitalist States which are marching at the head?" is completely incorrect. The question was formulated in such a manner as to render absolutely necessary a distinction: there are spheres in which we have already long overtaken the capitalist States (the Soviet power as a form of a proletarian dictatorship, as the highest type of democracy; the successes of the socialist methods of economy, which subordinate national economy as a whole to the interests of the proletariat and the working masses). Comrade Trotzky did not say a word regarding this. Even assuming that the questions of the American delegation referred only to the technique of the Soviet industry, Comrade Trotzky's answer was likewise incorrect, for he did not openly say that in this field also we are catching up to and can catch up to the capitalist world, provided that our development is not interrupted by the intervention of the foreign imperialists. The guarantees for this are the advantages of the socialist planned economy, which capitalism has not and cannot have at its disposal.

5. And finally, the "reserve" which Comrade Trotzky displays in his utterances on the unanimity of our Party on the question of war, is exceedingly ambiguous (and after the declaration of the 8th of August of the Opposition very significant). "What separates us (that is the Opposition from the

Party — the Redaction) is incomparably smaller (!) than that which unites us". What a statement! If in the question of defending the Soviet Union the factors dividing were greater than those uniting us, then Comrade Trotzky would find himself outside of our Party. Everybody can understand this without the statements of Comrade Trotzky. But the fact that Comrade Trotzky replies to the question of a non-Communist delegation with such extremely ambiguous phrases (while he knows at the same time that the bourgeois and the social democratic press will take advantage of his assertions against our Party) — this fact proves once again that the Opposition, in this most important question has not freed itself from those errors, the impermissibility of which is clear to every Communist.

We do not wish to deal here with the other "peculiarities" in Comrade Trotzky's "Interview", for example with the "doubts" which Comrade Trotzky expressed — owing to "alleged lack of information" (?) — regarding whether the Soviet Government in any way "goes hand in hand" with the so-called living church! It is remarkable that Comrade Trotzky has forgotten the existence of a number of organs of the Soviet government which are conducting an anti-religious propaganda.

Finally, we express our astonishment that questions put by the American delegation, which according to their very nature are quite simple for every class-conscious worker and bolshevik, could, according to the words of Comrade Trotzky, prove so "difficult" that he was not "sure of his ground" regarding them and could commit so many unpardonable errors.

## TEN YEARS AGO

### Counter-Revolutionary Advance.

#### Kornilov Marches on Petrograd.

Petrograd, 10th September, 8 o'clock P. M. (Reuter). The rails have been torn up on the railway line between Luga and Petrograd. The first division of Kornilov's troops is said to have arrived at Luga (100 versts from the capital), where there are divisions of troops faithful to the government; the so-called "wild division", under the command of Kornilov, has left Pskov and is moving towards the capital; it has reached the station of Vyritza (54 versts from Petrograd) on the Petrograd Rybinsk line, where the whole railway service has been laid idle.

#### Monarchist Preparations in the Capital.

Berne, 11th September. The Russian correspondent of the "Bund" reports: In Petrograd a monarchist organisation on a large scale has been discovered: "Holy Russia". The newspaper "Grosa", which only recently ceased to exist, was its organ, and was distributed chiefly among the troops on the Roumanian front. "Grosa" wrote openly that only the Tsar could give bread and peace to Russia. The English and the French are enemies of Russia. Peace must be concluded at once. The chief leaders of the organisation were Badmayev, the physician Protopopov, Glinka Kantschevski, former editor of the Conservative "Semschtschina", and his collaborator Slotnikov, who have all been arrested.

#### Kerensky Declares a State of Siege.

Stockholm, 9th September. (Report of Petrograd telegraph agency). Prime Minister Kerensky has issued the following proclamation:

"On 8th September the Duma member Lvov came to Petrograd and demanded from me, in the name of General Kornilov, that I should place the whole civil and military power in the hands of the generalissimo, who is to form a new government according to his own will and pleasure. The correctness of Lvov's demand was confirmed by General Kornilov himself, by means of a wire sent me by the direct telegraph between Petrograd and the army staff. As I regard this demand directed through me to the Provisional Government as an attempt on the part of certain sections of the population to exploit the difficult situation of the country for the purpose of creating conditions inconsistent with the achievements of the revolution, the provisional Government has found it necessary, for the welfare of the country and the liberties of the republican system of government,

to entrust me with the execution of urgent and imperative measures, in order to cut off at the root every attack against the supreme power and against the civil rights won by the revolution. I shall therefore take all steps required for the maintenance of liberty and of public order in the country, and shall proclaim these to the population in due time.

At the same time I command: firstly: General Kornilov has to surrender his office to General Klembovsky, commander in chief of the army of the North front holding the road to Petrograd. General Klembovsky is to take over the powers of generalissimo for the present, but to remain in Pskov. Secondly: I declare military law in the city and district of Petrograd. I call upon all citizens to co-operate in the maintenance of the necessary order for the salvation of the Fatherland, and I call upon the army and fleet to fulfil, steadily and faithfully, their duty of defending the Fatherland from the external enemy.

#### Panic in the Provisional Government.

Petrograd, 11th September. (Reuter.) In consequence of the demand of the commander in chief, Kornilov, the whole cabinet has resigned, in order to leave Kerensky complete freedom of action. All the ministers continue to fulfil the duties of their office.

Petrograd, 6th September. (Petrograd telegraph agency.) Connections have been discovered between certain grand dukes, and between persons formerly intimate with the ex-Tsar, who have now been arrested, and certain monarchist politicians. Great sums of money have been collected. Traces of this conspiracy have been found not only in Petrograd, but in Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, and even in Siberia.

### Response of the Workers.

#### Storms of Protest in the Factories.

Petrograd, 3rd September. The workers of the Petrograd Optical Works have passed a fighting resolution protesting against the slanders in the bourgeois press, accusing the army of cowardice. The resolution protests against the death sentences and arrests at the front, and in general against the imperialist leaders.

Petrograd, 3rd September. The workers of the Rosenkranz factory protest against the advance of reaction. They declare that the policy of the S. R. and Mensheviks, who are working hand in hand with capital, is "a disgrace to the history of the labour movement". The resolution closes with the words: "Long live the Bolsheviks and their war."

Petrograd, 4th September. The workers of the "Amalgamated Cable Works" have discussed the situation on the Riga front at a general factory meeting, and declare in their resolution that Riga's fall is due to the inner political situation, to the undermining work of counter-revolution, to the treachery of the "socialist" ministers, the sabotage of the S. R. and Mensheviks, etc. They demand: 1. determined fight against the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, 2. the power in the hands of the workers and poor peasantry, 3. establishment of the III. International and fight of the international proletariat for peace and for socialism.

#### Working Women's Demonstration.

Moscow, 3rd September. (Petrograd telegraph agency.) Today the women workers of the closed Red Cross undertakings demonstrated. A delegation of working women appeared in the Soviet, and demanded that the closed undertakings should be reopened, and that the women workers not given employment should receive two months compensation.

#### Further Election Victories of the Bolsheviks.

Petrograd, 5th September. The results of the elections in the Petrograd district are: the Bolsheviks received 26,781 votes, the S. R. 18,232, the Cadets 18,582; in the Peterhof district the Bolsheviks received 17,254 votes, the S. R. 1807, the Cadets 964.

#### Revolutionary Slogans on the Banners of a Marching Company.

Petrograd, 7th September. Yesterday a huge crowd formed a procession through the Lermontovsky Prospect and the Sadovaya street to the Baltic station. The procession was formed of working men and women, and carried banners with the following inscriptions: "Long live the alliance of the workers, sol-

diers, and poor peasantry." "Better death than starvation". "Peace to the cottage, war to the palace". These banners were presents to a marching battalion leaving for the front.

#### The Workers for their Press.

The "Pravda" publishes daily the list of sums received for the workers' press funds from the factory societies, the barracks, from the front, the trade union organisations, and from individual working men and women.

## Kornilov Disregards the Provisional Government.

#### Kerensky's Telegram to Kornilov.

Petrograd, 9th September. "I command you to relinquish your office at once to General Lukomsky, who will fulfil the duties for the present, with the responsibility of the head of the army, until a commander in chief has been appointed. You have to appear at Petrograd at once, Kerensky."

#### Kerensky's Telegram to Army Headquarters.

"I command all troops which are on the way to Petrograd to stop their advance and return to their former positions..."

#### Kornilov's "Reply".

Kornilov wrote on this telegraph form, with his own hand: "The command will not be carried out; the troops march on Petrograd."

#### The Generals do not know whom they shall Obey.

#### The one is afraid of Kornilov...

Petrograd, 10th September. Kerensky sent the following telegram to the commander in chief at the north front. **Klembovsky:** "The Provisional government appoints you commander in chief for the present, and commands you to remain in Pskov, continuing to act as commander in chief of the north front. I propose that you take over Kornilov's office at once, and report to me."

Upon this Klembovsky telegraphed to Kerensky that he declined to take over the office of commander in chief, since in his opinion "a change of commander would be extremely dangerous."

#### ... the other has a certain Respect for the Government.

Petrograd, 10th September. Kornilov sent the following telegram to Verchovsky, commander of the troops of the Moscow military district: "At the present threatening moment, in order to prevent civil war and bloodshed in the streets of the capital, I call upon you to submit to me and carry out my orders."

Verchovsky replied: "I was horrified to receive your telegram calling upon me to refuse obedience to the lawful government. The civil war has been begun by you, and is, as you say, the death of Russia. Our policy could have and should have been changed, but the last forces of the people should not be scattered at the moment of the collapse of the front. The officers, soldiers, and Moscow Duma have submitted to the Provisional Government, and therefore I cannot reply to you that I change my convictions like gloves. Think of the misfortune which you are bringing upon the country."

#### The Central Organ of the Bolsheviki is Prohibited...

Petrograd, 6th September. The "Proletari" has been prohibited by decree of the ministers for war and for the Interior.

#### ... because it has warned against Provocations.

Petrograd, 8th September. The "Rabotschi" writes: "We must place on record that our newspaper is prohibited every time we call upon the workers not to allow themselves to be provoked."

The "Pravda" was prohibited when we called upon the soldiers and workers, after the July days, to cease with the demonstrations.

The "Rabotschi i Soldat" was prohibited when we warned the workers, in the article: "What will the Petrograd workers do on 12th August?", not to take any part in street demonstrations on this day.

And finally the "Proletari" has been prohibited after we called upon the workers to observe calmness and restraint in connection with the breakdown of the Riga front.

What does this mean? Who is it who does not want the workers to know that the Party safeguards them from provocation?

Who is the provocateur who does not permit this?

#### The Workers Defend their Press.

Petrograd, 9th September. The day before yesterday the workers of the Vulcan factory held a meeting, at which an address was given by Comrade Slotzkin on the collapse of the Riga front. In conclusion the speaker called upon the workers to collect for the workers' press. After a short debate it was resolved unanimously (with three abstentions) to contribute one day's wages to the workers' press.

The Putilov Works have also resolved to sacrifice a day's wages for their press.

#### The Workers Safeguard the Revolution.

Petrograd, 11th September. There is great agitation in the workers' quarter. The working class is in a state of excitement. Communication is maintained with the Party and the revolutionary organs. The Petrograd proletariat shows an unexampled determination to defend the cause of revolution.

Great indignation has been roused by the report that the Central Executive Committee is again prepared to make a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and has expressed itself in favour of supporting the coalition government.

We must fraternise not with traitors, say the workers, but fight them. Since the petty bourgeois parties, the S.R. and the Mensheviki, are not capable of this fight, the workers and soldiers must take up the struggle against counter-revolution by themselves, both against the Provisional Government and against the traitor Kornilov.

#### Kronstadt under the Lead of the Bolsheviki.

The "Isvestiya" writes on 9th September. "In Kronstadt the Bolshevik Brekman was elected chairman of the Executive Committee of the Soviet, and Pokrovsky, another Bolshevik, chairman of the municipal administration."

#### The Standpoint of the Bolshevik Soviet Fraction.

Petrograd, 9th September. At the Central Executive of the Soviets the Bolsheviki declared that if the Government is really anxious to fight against counter-revolution, they are ready to join forces and form a fighting alliance with the Government. (The criticism on this standpoint will be found below in Lenin's letter to the Central Committee of the Party, Ed.)

## The Effect of the Russian Revolution Abroad.

#### Suppression of the Post Office Strike in Portugal.

Lisbon, 5th September. (Havas.) A governmental decree proclaims that the subordination of the post office and telegraph officials to military authority signifies that those who remain absent from duty longer than 48 hours will be treated as deserters.

#### Persecution of the Pacifists.

London, 4th September. (Reuter.) Morel, whose arrest has already been reported, has been sentenced to 6 months imprisonment.

#### Hunger and Peace Demonstrations in Turin.

Stockholm, 13th September. The newspaper of the Zimmerwald Committee published here reports from Italian Party sources on the vast extent of the Turin protest movement, which has claimed over 50 injured, and has led to the arrest of over 2000 persons, including all trade union and Party leaders. In order to keep the affair secret, it has not been allowed to send the "Avanti" abroad for over a week. The demonstration not only protested on account of the shortage of bread, but called for immediate peace.

## Letter to the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.\*)

By N. Lenin.

It is possible that these lines come too late, for events often develop with dizzying rapidity. But it is none the less my duty to write you the following:

Kornilov's rebellion means an extremely unexpected (at this time and in this form) and almost improbable turn of events.

Like every abrupt turn, it demands a revision and alteration of our tactics. And as is the case with every revision, the utmost care must be taken not to lose sight of our principles.

In my opinion loss of principle is evinced by those who go over to the Fatherland defenders or (like other Bolsheviki) to the bloc with the S. R., in support of the Provisional Government. Not until after the power has passed into the hands of the proletariat shall we defend the Fatherland, not until after proposals of peace, after the cancellation of the secret treaties and the connections with the banks. Not until after all this. Neither the fall of Riga nor the fall of Petrograd makes Fatherland defenders of us. We stand for the proletarian revolution and we are against war; we are no Fatherland defenders.

And at the present time we must not support the Kerensky government. This would be to desert our principles. It will be asked; but have we not to fight against Kornilov? Of course we have. But this is not the same thing; there is a limit. Some Bolsheviki exceed this limit, and succumb to compromise; they let themselves be swept away by the current.

We shall fight against Kornilov, and are fighting against him, but we do not support Kerensky. We expose his weaknesses. That is the difference. It is a somewhat subtle difference, but it is extremely essential, and must not be forgotten.

How have we to change our tactics since Kornilov's rebellion?

We must change them by changing our fighting methods against Kerensky. Our antagonism against him is not diminished by an atom, we do not take back one word which we have said against him, we do not abandon the task of overthrowing Kerensky; but we say: the right moment must be chosen; this is not the moment to overthrow Kerensky, we must conduct the fight differently against him, by enlightening the people who are fighting against Kornilov as to the weakness and vacillation of Kerensky. We have been doing this already, but now it has become the chief thing. This is the difference.

Another difference is that increased agitation for special partial demands on Kerensky becomes of greater importance: Arrest Milyukov! Arm the Petrograd workers! Call the troops from Kronstadt, Wyborg, and Helsingfors to Petrograd! Dissolve the state Duma! Arrest Rodzyanko! Decree the transference of the landed estates to the peasantry! Introduce the control of the workers over bread supplies and production! etc., etc. We must put these demands not so much to Kerensky as to the workers, soldiers, and peasants, who have been drawn into the fight against Kornilov. They must be swept farther, encouraged to demand the arrest of the generals and officers who have declared themselves in favour of Kornilov, induced to insist on the immediate transference of the land to the peasants, and made to see the necessity of the arrest of Rodzyanko and Milyukov, the dissolution of the state Duma, the prohibition of the "Ryetsch" and the other bourgeois papers. It is imperatively necessary to put this pressure on the "left" S. R.

It would be wrong to believe that we have made any retreat in the matter of conquering power by the proletariat. No. We have approached much nearer to this goal, though by roundabout ways. And our immediate agitation must not be so much direct agitation against Kornilov. Solely the development of this struggle can lead us to power, but we must speak of this as little as possible in our agitation (for we must keep in mind that events may give us the power tomorrow, and that we shall then hold it fast). I mean that this should be communicated by letter (not in the press) to the agitators, to the agitators and propagandists, and to the Party members in general. We must

fight ruthlessly against all phrases on the defence of the country, on the united revolutionary front of revolutionary democracy, on support of the Provisional Government, etc., for the simple reason that they are nothing but phrases. The time for deeds has come. The gentlemen of the S. R. and the Mensheviki have worn out these phrases long ago. The time for deeds has come. The fight against Kornilov must be conducted on revolutionary lines, the masses must be carried along with us, fired with enthusiasm (but Kerensky fears the masses and fears the people). The war against the Germans, too, demands actual deeds: we must demand peace immediately and imperatively, on the basis of definite conditions. If we do this, then we can gain either a speedy peace or the conversion of the war into a revolutionary war; otherwise all the Mensheviki and S. R. will remain the servants of imperialism.

After writing the above, I read 6 numbers of the "Rabotschy", and must say that I have found here complete agreement. I heartily welcome these excellent leading article, press reviews, and article by W. Milyutin and Volodarsky.

## Chronicle of Events.

August 31.

In telegrams to the regiments it is declared that domiciliary visitations and arbitrary actions, such as undertaken by the second machine gun regiment, are inadmissible.

September 1.

The Conference of the Railwaymen's Trade Union declares itself against the railwaymen's strike.

General Kislyakov sends telegrams to the railwaymen, warning them to remain quiet.

September 2.

The Bolshevik fraction of the Soviet sends a telegram to the Finnish Sejm, assuring the oppressed Finnish population of its solidarity.

Municipal elections in Petrograd. Results: 75 S. R., 67 Bolsheviki, 49 Cadets, 8 Internationalists, 2 People's Socialists, 2 group "Unity". Hunger riots in the streets of Moscow.

September 3.

Kornilov evacuates Riga.

September 4.

The Conference of the factory committees deals with the question of defending Petrograd against counter-revolution. Ryasnov warns the workers against panics, and points out the example by the French working class, which defended Paris heroically in a similar situation.

September 5.

The workers' section of the Petrograd Soviet (Bolshevist majority) protests against the attacks of the bourgeois press, which has been slandering and insulting the soldiers at the Riga front for days. The resolution of the workers' section is adopted by a majority of votes; the Mensheviki and S. R. abstain from voting.

September 6.

Prohibition of the "Proletari".

September 7.

A frightful shortage of food supplies is reported from many large towns, from the Donetz basin, and from the trenches.

Provocateurs spread reports of a projected Bolshevik rising between 10th and 14th September.

September 8.

Kornilov issues definite commands to his subordinates to carry out the counter-revolutionary putch in Kiev.

### Correction.

In the "Resolution of the Plenum of the Y. C. I. on the Y. W. L. of A.", published on page 1037 of our issue No. 46, the closing words in the next to the last paragraph of the section headed "The Character of the Y. W. L. of A." should read, "so long as it devotes most of the time to internal Party affairs" instead of "international Party affairs".

\*) Written beginning of September 1917.