

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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Official Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International



## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

### The Uprising in Java and Sumatra

A description in detail of the results and lessons of the great rising in the Dutch East Indies—the first published in English

Kjai Samin

### Chiang Kai Shek

### The Trade Union Bill

J. T. Murphy

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## CONTENTS

THE CRISIS IN THE CHINESE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT Editorial ... ..	138	THE UPRISING IN JAVA AND SUMATRA Kjai Samin ... ..	147
SCAB LEGISLATION OF THE BRITISH TORIES J. T. Murphy ... ..	142	ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMMEDIATE TASKS IN ORGANISATION O. Piatnitsky ... ..	152
WHERE IS MONATTE GOING? J. Duret ... ..	145	THE CONFERENCE OF THE CZECHO-SLOVAK- IAN COMMUNIST PARTY A. Wille ... ..	158

## The Crisis in the Chinese Nationalist Movement

**E**VENTS of the greatest historic importance have taken place in China. General Chiang Kai Shek, Commander-in-Chief of the National Armies, has completely capitulated to the imperialists and brought about a counter-revolutionary coup d'état. Only a few days previously, on the occasion of the raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking, General Chiang Kai Shek had sent the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, comrade Tchyornykh, a telegram expressing his indignation at this "unprecedented insult." It had been inflicted on the Soviet Embassy by the Chinese police "obviously under the direction of the imperialist Powers, who fear that their feudal influence is now coming to an end."

And at the same time he was organising a Conference of Kuomintang Right Wingers in Nanking in order to split the Party and was withdrawing from Shanghai the divisions that were faithful to the Revolution. After this, Chiang's henchman, Pei Tsun Shi, who had previously been in conflict with certain foreign consulates, now secured the assistance of the imperialist forces in disarming the workers' detachments. He opened fire on three workers' demonstrations at the head of which women and children were marching. The result was 100 killed and 500 wounded. Obviously at a signal from a common centre, workers' demonstrations were simultaneously dispersed by rifle fire in Nanking, while arrests of Communists were made in Hanchow and Fuchow. The leader of the National Army thus became the executioner of the workers. The treachery of Chiang Kai Shek is not the crime of an isolated individual. Chiang was bound by many ties to the Chinese big bourgeoisie. He was carrying out its will.

The Communist International foresaw that the Chinese big bourgeoisie would go over to the side of the counter-revolution. In December, 1926, the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. placed on record that the class antagonisms in China were becoming sharper; that the workers and peasants were moving to the Left; that the bourgeoisie, terrified at the growing movement of the workers and peasants, were beginning to make a sharp swing to the Right; that at the same time an increasing differentiation had begun in the Kuomintang and the

National Government, and that the struggle was becoming accentuated. In face of these facts, the Plenum pointed out that the Chinese Revolution was on the threshold of a new, third stage of its development, which will be marked by the organisation of a more revolutionary alliance of three classes—the proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie "with the withdrawal of a large section of the capitalist big bourgeoisie" from the united anti-imperialist front. We thus see that the Comintern foretold that the capitalist bourgeoisie would go over into the counter-revolutionary camp in the approaching third stage of the Revolution: no exact dates were given, which, of course, would have been impossible.

It was also no surprise for the Comintern that Chiang Kai Shek could at the critical moment lead the counter-revolution and realise the desires of the recanting bourgeoisie. The Comintern and the Chinese Communist Party had not forgotten that Chiang Kai Shek had already once attempted to bring off a counter-revolutionary coup d'état, in March, 1926. But in so far as after these attempts he none the less took part in the revolutionary advance to the North, the Communists, not being strong enough to remove him immediately, tried to gain time. Time indeed worked in their favour in view of the rapid growth of the workers' and peasants' movement. The Communists used this time to create in the army organisational guarantees against Chiang's dictatorial proclivities, at the same time criticising and denouncing him to the masses every time he tried to swing the helm to the Right.

**W**E will cite two facts as an example. On February 26th, 1927, the Hupeh regional committee of the Chinese Communist Party published a manifesto appealing for support for the Shanghai insurrectionaries and ending with the words: "Compromise with the imperialists is treachery to the country and the Revolution." We also read in this manifesto: "The leader of the Chinese proletariat, the Communist Party, having continually warned the masses, calls upon all workers to organise to defend themselves against the danger. Hostile allies are on the territory of the National

**Chinese Nationalist Movement**—continued

Government. Organise social resistance to the enemies of the Revolution! Comrades, military leaders and soldiers—help! Whoever is unable to subject his personal interests to the cause of the revolution and strives for personal dictatorship, trying to seek compromise with the Northern militarists or the imperialists, whoever does this is an enemy of the Revolution against whom a determined struggle must be started. If this is not done the Revolution will be menaced both from without and from within; the whole world is watching the rising."

It was clear to everyone to whom the manifesto was referring, when speaking of strivings for personal dictatorship and attempts to seek compromise with the militarists and imperialists.

The second point we will cite is the meeting of 100,000 people held at Changsha on March 14th, to protest against Chiang Kai Shek. Here everything was made as clear as a pikestaff. The Kuomintang Left Wing leaders who spoke said:

"The military dictatorship of Chiang Kai Shek is usurping the power of the National Government and the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai Shek is conducting negotiations with the Japanese imperialists and the Mukden militarists. He is intentionally delaying the advance on Shanghai, thereby indirectly supporting the enemy and further suppression of the workers."

Those present at the meeting cried out: "We are against the military dictatorship of Chiang Kai Shek! Down with the reactionary Chang Chung Chang! We will maintain the alliance with Soviet Russia and the Communist Party! We are in favour of a Workers' and Peasants' policy!" A telegram of warning was sent to Chiang Kai Shek. Another was sent to the Executive of the Kuomintang with the demand to wage a struggle against the reactionary clique and to realise the demands of the workers and peasants.

**T**HE resolution of the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. stated that the Chinese Revolution stood on the threshold of a new, third stage. The problem in question was as to how the Chinese Communist Party could best accomplish this difficult part of the Revolution.

Two ways were open: one was to leave the Kuomintang and counterpose the proletariat to a national revolutionary movement headed by an unreliable Government and General Staff. This would have meant limiting the tasks of the proletariat to purely trade union functions.

The other way was a proposed proletarian uprising against the National Government and General Staff. Here the proletariat would have simultaneously lost influence inside the Kuomintang and amongst the entire mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie who side with the Kuomintang. The petty bourgeoisie would have been driven headlong into the arms of the big bourgeoisie, which would have assured the defeat of the proletariat at the time of sharp revolutionary conflict. Objectively this course would have greatly facilitated the task of the growing counter-revolution.

The Seventh Plenum, therefore, decisively rejected this method, and chose another, which was to strengthen the Left Wing of the Kuomintang and place it on a stronger working class and peasant basis. The workers'

and peasants' movement was to be extended, their demands formulated while the Communists and Kuomintang Left-Wingers were gradually to win influential positions in the Government and in the army.

This course enabled the Chinese Communist Party to push forward the Revolution not only from below, but also from above, at the same time enabling it to marshal its forces in the event of a direct collision with the bourgeoisie that had deserted to the counter-revolutionary camp.

The Chinese Communist Party, after a thorough study of the question, totally agreed with the Comintern point of view, and within a short time achieved such success in the way of winning the leadership of the liberation movement, that the greatest alarm was evoked in the enemy camp. This is fairly unanimously testified in the bourgeois press. A bourgeois journalist, E. Sokolski, in an article in the "North China Daily News," alluding to the demoralisation in Chang Tso Lin's camp, went on to point out that

"Chiang Kai Shek's position, however, is still more dangerous. He is up against the Communist Party of China which aims at wiping out his influence not only in the Kuomintang and in the National Government, but throughout the whole of China. . . . The Communists occupy posts on all committees and in all commanding positions. The newly organised Revolutionary Military Council hands over to this group full control over Chiang Kai Shek's army and all departments of the Government. If this apparatus is strengthened it will be invincible and the whole world will have to send armed forces against it."

This journalist may not have been correct in his facts when he talked only of the Communists, without referring to the Kuomintang Left Wingers. But it is a fact that Chiang Kai Shek was compelled, even if only temporarily to issue a declaration in which he stated that the Military Command undertook to obey the National Government and Kuomintang.

**T**HE Communists did not for one moment believe in the sincerity of this declaration. But it seriously alarmed the bourgeoisie. The Japanese journalist, Vashio, wrote in the "Japan Advertiser":

"The establishment of the control of the democratic committee over the Military Command seems to be a reasonable measure, but it is only a formality. In reality Soo Cheng [Leader of Left Wing Kuomintang—Ed.] together with Tang Shin Shei have organised the military forces to counterbalance Chiang Kai Shek." Further the author endeavours to convince the Kuomintangites in favour of a military dictatorship: "Democracy cannot exist without dictatorship. The democratic revolution can best be brought about only through a dictatorship. And it would be best to give Chiang Kai Shek or someone else the supreme command."

These words are highly instructive. Dictatorship is a very useful thing. It is simply a question as to which class this dictatorship belongs to. Is it to be the dictatorship of a revolutionary class or alliance of revolutionary classes, or is it to be the dictatorship of a counter-revolutionary class, or finally the personal dictatorship of a Bonapartist objectively serving this class? The bourgeois writer skilfully eludes all these delicate questions for obvious reasons.

**Chinese Nationalist Movement—continued**

The bourgeoisie raves and fumes against a dictatorship when it is in the hands of the proletariat, but it wholly approves the military dictatorship of a Bonapartist prepared to call it a "revolutionary dictatorship" in order to fool the masses. The growth of influence of the Chinese Communist Party is particularly strikingly expressed in the fact that at the time of the counter-revolutionary coup d'état the majority of the Kuomintang and the old National Government were on the same side as the Communists. Had it not been so, Chiang Kai Shek would not have begun to organise another Government in opposition to it.\*

**T**HIS strengthening of the Communist Party's position at the centre simultaneously with the extension and strengthening of the workers' and peasants' organisations is already reflected in the position of the working and peasant masses in the localities. This, likewise, is confirmed by the bourgeois press. The "Pekin and Tientsin Times" of March 25th, for example, prints letters describing the situation in the town of Cheoyan in Kwantung Province. In these letters we read the following: "In Cheoyan there still remains a governor, but this is an empty title. In actuality administration is in the hands of workers' Soviets and other unions, of which the peasants' unions are the most powerful, which direct their affairs quite independently. Their representatives sit on the courts and decide cases concerning their members. They issue official decrees. They submit to no one and recognise no one."

The bourgeois correspondent is compelled to admit that the peasants do not get on badly without the tutelage of the bureaucracy: "Of course," he writes, "from the point of view of the State, such a situation is anarchy, but the life of the people is running fairly smoothly, and the peasant movement has improved the position of the peasantry. Formerly the peasants had no rights whatsoever, but now they have rights, and, of course, enthusiastically support the movement. As the peasants in general are very industrious and observe order, we may assume that not much harm will come from this. The peasant movement does not cause strikes nor hinder trade." It would seem that everything in the garden is lovely! But the bourgeois correspondent cannot for the life of him be reconciled with such a situation and says: "Nevertheless, this movement is fraught with dangers for the State and is an element of anarchy." From the bourgeois standpoint the Chinese people is a dog which loves being whipped.

We thus see that the fight which the Communist Party is carrying on to win the working class leadership of the Nationalist movement has already begun to bear certain fruits. Now, of course, after the counter-revolutionary coup d'état, these results have been temporarily destroyed in a number of provinces. If the Chinese Communists had heeded the advice of the ultra-Left people who favoured a boycott of the Kuomintang they would have found themselves isolated at the critical moment in the regrouping of forces. Now, however, at a time of acute crisis in the national revolutionary move-

ment, the Communists have the broad masses behind them, thanks to the correct line they have taken. This also the well-informed Japanese bourgeois press was bound to admit. The Japanese paper "Nichi-Nichi" writes in its leading article after the Chiang Kai Shek coup d'état as follows: "Chiang Kai Shek has now definitely broken with Wuhan; but we doubt whether it will be so easy to smash Communist influence in China completely, as it has struck deep roots among the working masses, and the people in general."

**W**HAT is the immediate objective pursued by the Chinese Communist Party in trying to win working class leadership in the Chinese Revolution? Have they thought that China is already confronted with the problem of establishing a purely proletarian dictatorship? By no means. The Comintern correctly estimated the relation of class forces in China, the degree of economic development of the country and the international situation. Hence, the resolution of the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. described the approaching stage of the revolution as the "democratic" dictatorship of the proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie under working class leadership; the future power is described as an anti-imperialist revolutionary government, an alliance of these three classes. The immediate aim of the revolution in China, according to the Comintern, is not a socialist insurrection, but the completion of the national revolution, with the blade directed against the imperialists.

In the process of its accomplishment this national revolution will begin to grow into a socialist revolution. Only in so far as the actual accomplishment of the national fight against imperialist aggression in China already presupposes the creation of a new breach in the decaying capitalist system, and only in so far as this at the same time signifies the nationalisation of the big foreign enterprises in China, would this struggle, in the opinion of the E.C.C.I. Plenum, assure a non-capitalistic (socialistic) development to China.

Had the Chinese Communist Party over-estimated the degree of capitalistic development of China, and under-estimated the yoke of imperialism over China; had the Chinese C.P. neglected all the peculiarities of the Chinese revolution, the imperialists would only have been too glad, for it would have doomed the Chinese proletariat to impotence. But the Chinese Communists took a different course. While struggling against the bourgeoisie for the socialist path of development in China, the Communists make their next aim that of completing the national emancipation of China from the imperialist yoke.

For this they are mobilising the broad masses of toilers, particularly the peasants, at the same time mustering the forces of the working class in order to move on to the following stage, which is the proletarian revolution.

This attracts sympathy for their policy, on the part of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. Proceeding along this path, which is the only correct road to Socialism, the Chinese Communist Party has gradually won for itself leadership in the national liberation movement, directing it into an irreconcilable struggle against imperialism. And it is this that has caused so much alarm in the imperialist camp. It was

\* The Nationalist Government has now declared Chiang Kai Shek to be a traitor, and is preparing military operations to suppress him.

**Chinese Nationalist Movement**—continued

this that incited them, after the victorious rising of the Shanghai workers, to commence open intervention in China, at the same time trying to win the Chinese bourgeoisie over to their side. The latter, like any bourgeoisie, is ready to betray the interests of its country directly there is the slightest sign of the revolution threatening their purse. It is indeed the rapid growth of influence of the Communist Party amongst the Chinese masses, thanks to the correctness of the Party's policy, that has made the imperialists close their ranks, and start feverish preparations to smash the Chinese Revolution. Hence the bombardment of Nanking and the provocative raid on the Soviet Embassy.

**B**UT in order to start a new world war against revolutionary China, and its ally, the U.S.S.R., in order to plunge humanity once more into such a bloodbath as resulted from the 1914 slaughter, the imperialists must make sure of their lines of communication in the rear; they must at least attempt to deceive their own workers and peasants at home, must adopt the mask of "liberators," just as they did in 1914. With this object the imperialists were compelled to take up the cudgels in China, on behalf of some "national hero" whom they pretend they want to protect from the Bolshevik "barbarians"—out of love for the Chinese people. The person best able to fill this role of a "national hero" persecuted by the Bolsheviks, was Chiang Kai Shek, who had won himself laurels in the Northern advance.

For this reason, the imperialists, simultaneously with their bloody, militarist antics at Nanking, started to increase their diplomatic game with Chiang Kai Shek courting him in every way until he sold out to them. Chiang Kai Shek, having stained himself with the blood of the Chinese workers, placed himself in the same boat as the imperialists against whom he had just been fighting. This is frankly admitted by the imperialist press. The leading article of the Japanese paper "Nichi-Nichi" which we quoted above, states: "In our opinion there is no great difference between the North and the South, in particular between Chiang Kai Shek and Sun Chuan Fang in so far as they both have the same aim—the removal of Russian influence, and the fight against Communism."

Chiang Kai Shek has indeed identified himself with the Northern militarists, but he is even more dangerous than they are, because he is the internal enemy of the Revolution, because hitherto he conducted the national revolutionary war.

Chiang Kai Shek has turned traitor to his people; inside the Kuomintang he has so far only brought over to his side a handful of Right Wingers. He has betrayed the banner of Sun Yat Sen and is now organising a new government in Nanking opposed to the Wuhan National Government to which he quite recently swore his allegiance. The workers' blood spilled by his satellite in Shanghai has constituted an impassible gulf between him and the masses of the people.

**I**N spite of all these facts, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the bourgeois press of the whole world is preparing the ground for a criminal war. The capitalist scribes of all lands will unanimously declare

that Chiang Kai Shek has remained true to the national cause in China, that it is he who is really bearing Sun Yat Sen's banner, and that it is precisely the section of Kuomintang that has split away and followed him, which is the real Kuomintang. They will cry out that the people who now call themselves members of the Revolutionary Kuomintang are only the puppets of the Moscow conspirators.

The imperialist robbers now intend to drown the Chinese people in torrents of falsehood and blood because they have dared to rise up in order to throw off the chains of imperialist slavery. At the same time they also want to drown the world proletarian revolution in torrents of falsehood and blood in order to draw the noose tighter round the neck of their own workers at home.

But they will not succeed in this. For huge masses of Chinese workers and peasants have awakened for the struggle and have nothing joyful to expect from a capitalist "Kemalist" course of development in China complicated by the great economic aggression of foreign capital within the country.

The imperialists will not succeed in their plans because the world proletariat has not forgotten the horrors and pain brought it by the "war of liberation" of 1914. As long as the workers have been weighed down by the oppression of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, they have for the most part tolerated things with clenched teeth and suppressed anger, and simply defended themselves. Only the proletarian vanguard—the Communist workers—have seriously fought to turn the defensive movement into an offensive. But when imperialism itself having let loose the elements of war, destroys the equilibrium of the capitalist system, the workers of the world will remember all they have suffered since that accursed year 1914, and they will muster their forces to throw off the chains of capitalism once and for all.

But it would be criminal to wait for this aim to be achieved at the cost of a second world war. In view of the clearly approaching danger of war, the workers of all countries must get ready to act. Throughout the whole world the cry must resound: "Hands off China and the U.S.S.R.! Down with the imperialist executioners of the Chinese people and the instigators of a new world war; down with Chiang Kai Shek! Down with the traitors to the Chinese revolution who have shot down Chinese workers! Long live the workers of Shanghai! Long live the Revolutionary Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party! A world-wide fight must commence against the transportation of arms and troops to China, a world-wide campaign must be commenced against war! The workers must at the same time prepare so that if this war nevertheless does break out, it can be transformed into a revolutionary class-struggle."

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# Scab Legislation of the British Tories

J. T. Murphy

**T**HE long expected trade union legislation has arrived. Following quickly upon the attacks on the unemployed workers through the Blanesburgh Report and the projected legislation for crippling the Boards of Guardians, and handing the administration of Poor Law Relief over to the Tory County Councils, the Trade Union Bill completes the frontal attack upon the working class.

The moment has been most opportunely chosen. After the Government had succeeded in crippling the trade unions through the complete bankruptcy of the trade union and Labour leadership in the General Strike, it recognised that the way was clear to embody its class gains in legislative measures which would be difficult to remove. It had already reduced the Labour opposition in Parliament to a nominal opposition, but suspended the launching of its legislative enactments pending the complete acquiescence of the Labour leadership in its foreign policy.

After the declaration of the Government concerning its China policy in December the Labour Party leadership endorsed it with very few reservations which were only of a sentimental pacifist character serving as a smoke screen for the Government's real intentions. When the Government issued its note to Soviet Russia it met with very little opposition from the Labour Party leadership. Indeed, that leadership said that the note should have been sent earlier and should have been stronger, whilst the leading front bench members engaged in a most vitriolic attack upon the Soviet Union in the columns of the bourgeois press. Whilst the Government observed that there was a strong mass opposition it felt convinced that the leadership of the trade unions and the Labour Party still had a powerful grip upon the apparatus and could withstand the mass pressure from within these organisations.

## The Campaign for a Split

Indeed, during the months since the termination of the miners' struggle the Government has been witness to the development of the offensive against the revolutionaries in the Labour movement; to a vigorous application of the Liverpool Resolutions against the Communists; to the splitting of the Labour Party itself by the expulsion of local Labour Parties which refused to apply those decisions; to the endorsement of the General Council's betrayal of the miners by the special conference of the Trade Union Executives; to the General Council itself adopting an expulsion policy towards the Minority Movement; to the fact that, however strong the feeling amongst the rank and file of the Labour movement against the policy of the leadership with regard to intervention in China, not a single boat had been held up, nor a single strike effected in any munition factory. In these circumstances it had every reason to believe that the introduction of its legislation at this juncture would play the role of side-tracking attention from its imperialist policy in relation to the Chinese

Revolution and would keep the Labour movement occupied with what it would be pleased to call its own "domestic affairs."

But the Government has made miscalculations before. It underestimated the working class after the General Strike. It is not too much to hope, indeed, we are convinced that it has underestimated them on this occasion. Its truculence and impudence to the working class cannot help but rouse the anger and hatred of the workers. It has gone so far in its proposals that the most liberal exponents have got to denounce the proposals as the most blatant class legislation that has been introduced during many generations.

In its anxiety to prevent the recurrence of the General Strike the Government has found it necessary to attempt to restrict all mass activities and to push trade unionism back to the early years of the nineteenth century. Clause 1 of the new Trade Union Bill prohibits strikes "having any object besides the furtherance of a trade dispute within the trade or industry in which the strikers are engaged, if it is designed or calculated to coerce the Government, or intimidate the community, or any substantial portion of the community." Agitation for or organisation of such strikes can be punished up to two years imprisonment. No money can be spent in furtherance or support of such strikes. In its efforts to prevent the recurrence of the general strike the Government is most hopelessly confused in its attempts to define an industry or trade. It has found, as even the Labour people will find who attempt to set limits to strike action, the impossibility of setting these limits without completely repudiating all strike action. The Government attempted no such definitions, but has blundered ahead in such a way that its actual proposals, in the hands of the courts, brings every strike within their province and prohibits them all. It has discovered that there is no boundary between the interests of one worker and another; that because of this fact any strike has within it the potentialities of a general strike. Fearful of the general strike and its potentialities it has most logically hit back at every strike. This is the logical position of all those who attempt to repudiate the general strike, and already it must be observed that the Labour opposition leaders have given sufficient material in the denunciation of the general strike to provide the Tories with all their shots when debating this issue. Let the Labour leaders take notice that if they attempt to do what the Tories have failed to do, in the definition of trade and industry frontiers, they will be made to look ridiculous.

## Protection of Scabbing

Clause 2 of the Bill prohibits unions taking disciplinary action against any members who blackleg during what the courts may define as an "illegal strike." It says that "there shall be no expulsion or fine or deprivation of rights to benefit, or any other disability, enforced against a man who refuses to take part in an

**Scab Legislation of Tories—continued**

illegal strike." If he is punished in any such way the courts can order him to be compensated from the union funds instead of being reinstated. This amounts to the legal protection of blacklegging.

Clause 3 prohibits picketing in all forms. It says that "it is unlawful for one or more persons to attend at or near a house, or place, where the person resides or works, or happens to be, for the purpose of obtaining or communicating information or inducing any one to leave work, if they attend in such numbers or otherwise as to be calculated to intimidate any person." The Bill defines intimidation as "apprehension of injury," not only of material or physical injury but of boycott or loss of any kind or exposure to hatred, ridicule or contempt. It must be observed that the employers cannot only scoff at the workers, boycott the workers, dismiss the workers, combine against the workers and put them in the courts. They are entirely immune from any persecution under this Act whether they combine on a large or small scale, whether they lock out the workers in hundreds or thousands, or ten of thousands, whether they rig the markets or take any other line of class action against the workers—they are immune.

**Finance and Civil Servants**

Clause 4 of the Act alters the method of the collecting of the political levy. Instead of a man sending in a written declaration of his unwillingness to contribute even after a ballot majority is declared in favour of political levy, a man has now, according to this Act, to send in a special form declaring his desire to so contribute. This Clause aims at crippling the Labour Party financially. The Government knows full well that the Labour Party is primarily dependent upon the trade unions for funds and, therefore, it proposes to prohibit the unions participating in political activities as a corollary to the fettering of all mass actions. This Bill will have the effect of transforming the Labour Party from a body composed of mass affiliations to a party composed of individual subscribers to their policy.

Clause 5 prohibits civil servants from being members of the trade unions which include other than civil servants, and disaffiliates the postmen, civil servants, etc., from affiliation to the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party. At one blow it will split many thousands of workers from the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party and bring them under the state military discipline, which means that higher civil servants can participate in politics but the rank and file will be subject to the same conditions as the rank and file of the army.

We are thus faced in this legislative offensive against the working class of Great Britain with one of the heaviest attacks ever made upon the Labour movement. And Labour is already in difficulties with regard to mobilising an opposition. The Blanesburgh Report, for example, was signed by Bondfield and Hodges of the Labour Party, whilst the proposed Poor Law legislation has met with very faint-hearted opposition. On these measures the Labour Party and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress have been singularly inactive. Nay worse, while the offensive was de-

veloping against the unemployed workers the General Council broke up the Joint Committee of the General Council and the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement. Whatever criticism has been made on any phase of the legislation has been criticism based upon liberalism and not a class answer to a class attack.

The Trade Union Bill, however, has had a much deeper effect so far as activity is concerned. A special conference of Trade Union Executives was held, uselessly, on April 29th, and it is proposed to launch a tremendous campaign of agitation against the Bill. But it is necessary to observe that the class attack of the Government does not inspire a class answer from the labour leaders. Citrine, for example, the secretary of the Trades Union Congress bewails the fact that the trade unions have not found their "rightful place in the body politic." And as if to show that the role of trade unionism is that of a good boy in capitalist society he quotes approvingly the testimony of Lord Balfour in 1906. In the April number of the "Labour Magazine" he quotes him as follows:—"The general effect of trade union organisation has been beneficial and it has greatly diminished terrorism. I believe that years ago labour disputes were far more prolific in this deplorable sense of personal terrorism than are the organised efforts of the trade unions led by able and responsible persons." (For example, such as Citrine!) Bevin describes the Bill as "contrary to the British sense of equity and fair play," and as interfering with "our efforts to meet the employers on equal ground."

MacDonald, prior to his trip to America to attend to the much overlooked necessity for him "to make provision for an income," declares "the issues involved (by this Bill) include all those sentiments of equity, of good feeling, and a sense of common kinship which must be preserved if democracy is to work smoothly and rationally. And I hope that neither friend nor foe will misunderstand the meaning of the conflict."

**Very Bold Words**

The I.L.P. issues a "call to arms" (loud laughter, imagine the I.L.P. in arms!) It says "Toryism has thrown down the gauntlet, all the hardly won rights of Labour are in danger. If capitalism has its way the workers will be robbed of their right to strike, spoiled of their funds, thwarted of their imminent political triumph. . . Labour takes up the gage of battle. We take our stand on the inalienable rights of all workers to withhold their labour when conditions demand. We defend Labour's claim to manage its own affairs, to control its own funds, to spend them as it likes. This is no kid glove business. There is no question of turning a bad Bill into a good one. . . Sectional differences must disappear. Labour must stand absolutely united, determined to defeat this iniquitous measure, determined to bring this hated Government to the ground."

I am confident that these bold, bold words don't mean anything. It is doubtful, very, very doubtful indeed if the I.L.P. will consider its appeal for the "abolition of sectionalism" to mean that it will cease its campaign for the expulsion of the Communist Party from the Labour Party, or if when it calls for "unity of action" it will agree to a united front with the Com-

**Scab Legislation of Tories**—continued

munist Party "to bring this hated Government to the ground." Its talk of uniting all forces against the Bill is so much blather. Even on the question of war on the Chinese revolution it refused to associate with the Communists, who wanted action to stop troops going to China, refused even joint campaigns for this purpose in spite of its boasted opposition to war. However, much it may hate the Government, however much it hates war, it apparently hates the Communists more. We question the sincerity of its declarations. If it were in the least sincere in its demand for the cessation of sectionalism it would insist that its members on the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, and in the trade union bureaucracy in general, shall cease the attack upon the Minority Movement. If its warlike manifesto meant anything at all the I.L.P. would take its stand immediately and decisively on the class war front. But this it will not do. It will use many phrases of class war, but offer concretely nothing but liberalism in the face of the latest attack. This was its fate in the General Strike. This was its fate in the 7 months' miners' struggle. This is the fate even on the question of war and the imperialist intervention against the Chinese Revolution.

**Have Denounced Strikes**

What this will mean as the struggle proceeds is clear already. The I.L.P. is the leader of the Labour Party and it must not be forgotten that the Government has not yet said all it has to say on the Bill. Therefore, we can say with certainty that so long as the I.L.P. and the Labour Party leaders and the trade union bureaucracy approach the issues raised by this Bill from a liberal angle, and seek to make the trade unions a recognised constitutional part of capitalistic society instead of an instrument for the fight against society, for the conquest of capitalist society, the Government spokesmen can strip their arguments to pieces. Any attempt to defend the right to strike which precludes the sympathetic strike and the general strike, inevitably entangles the Labour Party in the same dilemma as the Tories.

In this regard we cannot forget that all the leaders of the Labour Party including the leading members of the Independent Labour Party have denounced strikes. MacDonald, Snowden, Clynes, Thomas, Henderson—everyone of these have made sufficient public statements and written sufficient denunciations of the General Strike and strikes in general, that their own arguments will inevitably be used to justify the Government's proposal. When that attack comes the Government will denounce the defenders of strike action as supporters of the Communists and declare that their aim is to stop the spread of Communism, to preserve the constitution, etc. In their anxiety to defend the constitution the Labour Party leaders will attack the Communists too, and in their anxiety to prove that they are not Communists the Government will trick them and the workers will lose because the Communists and the interests of the workers are inseparable.

Instead of a real opposition to the class attack of the Government, the great danger which lies before the British working-class movement is not only that this

agitation may be utilised as a diversion from the war plans of the Government, but that the fight will be a sham fight instead of a real one. This will be no real fight if it does not concentrate all forces upon bringing down the Government, if it does not unite the campaign against the trade union legislation with a fight against the Government's imperialist war on China. When the special trade union conference deals only with propaganda against this Bill and does not utilise its opportunities to mobilise action in defence of the Chinese Revolution then it is necessary to say quite clearly that the British Reformist Labour leadership is once more betraying the interests of the working class.

**Unity or Expulsion?**

If the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party and the I.L.P. do not in the face of this attack of the Government drop their splitting tactics in relation to the Communist Party and the Minority Movement then all their talk of working-class unity is so much cant. If the I.L.P. and the Labour Party mean business when they talk of united action they will instruct their members to drop the expulsion policy in relation to the Communists. If the General Council means anything in its appeal for unity and the closing of the ranks in the face of the common enemy, then it will drop its policy of expulsion and isolation of the Minority Movement.

The Communist Party and the Minority Movement are not in the least uncertain in their policy on this legislation. They anticipated the legislation, they warned the workers of its coming, they sought to prepare the workers for action against it; they have shown the fundamental unity of this attack upon the British workers with the Government's attack upon the Chinese Revolution. In all their publications and in the scores of conferences they have convened these issues have been made clear. They have warned the workers of the dangers of the liberalising of the Labour Party. They have warned the workers of Liberal criticism of the Tory policy in relation to the war on China. They now seek to mobilise the workers on these issues on the basis of class resistance and again they will prove the only consistent custodians of the interests of the workers. They will fight not only to bring the Government down but to show also that until it is superseded by a class government of workers, prepared to give the final answer to the class suppression of the bourgeoisie, there will be and can be no end to the degradations which the bourgeoisie will impose upon the workers.

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# Where is Monatte Going?

J. Duret

THE last numbers of the "Revolution Prolétarienne" show that Monatte and his consorts are changing more and more into vulgar slanderers and enemies of the Russian revolution.

Only a short while ago they were skirmishers: they were in favour of the Russian "opposition"; they threw "darts" at the majority of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Now it is the very principles of the proletarian dictatorship that are attacked. Now the attempt is made systematically to discredit the Russian revolution and the international Communist movement.

Recent issues of this journal are for the most part devoted to the Russian question; reading them one would think that the paper was at least one of Kerensky's or of Miliukov's. We shall quote only the most characteristic passages.

In No. 26, Louzon publishes an article under the demagogic title of "For Equal Work, Equal Pay!" He explains that a labourer ought to get the same salary as a professor or the director of a "trust." He concludes by saying that the Bolsheviks who boast themselves Marxists, are denying the very essence of Socialism, and that they provide a new justification for Lenin's remark that "as soon as a great revolutionary is dead the bourgeoisie (this may be either the traditional bourgeoisie or a bourgeoisie just being formed) exploits his glory, claiming to follow him, but at the same time falsifying his teachings."

Would it be worth while, perhaps, explaining to Louzon that under the conditions of the New Economic Policy, in a society where Socialism is only being built up (not Socialist society) it is impossible to give the labourer the same wage as the director of a "trust"? Louzon has the courage and the stupidity to insinuate that these wage differences are desired by the Communists; by this he shows that he completely fails to understand the concrete, actual paths of the construction of Socialism.

We cannot give Louzon, in these pages, a course of lessons on the political economy of the Soviet Union; all the more since these things have been said and written thousands of times. Either Louzon is just acting as a demagogue, or else his head is most remarkably wooden.

In No. 27 a long article is published on the Seventh Congress of the Russian trade unions, by N. L. (probably Nicholas Lazarevitch). "Choice" quotations from the Russian press fill much of this article, twisted and cleverly put together so that a worker reading it may get the worst possible impression of Russian affairs. The author ends up by saying:

"Of course, in so far as the Russian trade union movement wishes to carry through its proper work, it will be forced to come up against the State apparatus of the Council of People's Economy and of the Communist Party. In resisting these, it will be led naturally to take up an attitude of opposition to them. It has not yet reached this stage; perhaps it is still far from it; but it is certain that this stage will come."

So the prospect that N. L. holds out is one of inevitable rupture between the unions and the Bolshevik party: which means that the Communists do not in the least represent the workers and the latter, sooner or later, will rid themselves of the C.P.

But the tit-bit, without any question, is provided by the article in No. 30, headed, "Letter from Russia."

The writer acknowledges the revival of Russian industry, but declares that "this revival is happening thanks to a terrific exploitation of the working class." He completely backs up Souvarine about the immorality of the Party and in the country generally, but thanks to a logic all his own he gets indignant when the Soviet Government suppresses evildoers and bandits; thus he calls it a "crime" that those guilty of the sordid case of rape on Schubarevsky Avenue should have been executed.

He has no illusions about the opposition within the Russian party: "to get popularity they have talked about democracy within the party; but no one can believe this from the mouth of proven tyrants such as Trotsky, Zinoviev and their gang."

After having declared that the revolution is quite dead and buried, he finishes up as follows:

"What remains? Loyalty towards the government (as everywhere, of course, the revolutionaries are in a tiny minority); patriotism towards Russia; and some sort of reformism which gives people hope that little by little they will be better off.

"Forecasts: materially progress is being made towards Americanisation, towards a big development of natural resources; socially, towards a State based on three aristocracies—the intellectuals, the rich peasants, and the very highly skilled workers who make the masses work (the masses getting some profit out of the general progress, but very little)."

What Louzon and N. L. only insinuated, the writer of this "letter from Russia" says straight out.

The economic revival of Russia is due to an incredible exploitation of the working class; it is not the proletariat that is in power but an aristocracy of intellectuals, of "kulaks," and of a small number of Labour aristocrats. That is how Monatte's friends try to picture the Soviet Union.

Is it worth while to try and refute all these lies? Any worker who knows no matter how little about the situation in the Soviet Union, will reject them with contempt. On the other hand any Menshevik, any bourgeois scribbler, will welcome them with joy. What worker does not know of the active work of the masses of workers in the U.S.S.R. to get ahead with the only Socialist industry in the world? Who is unaware of the increase, more and more marked, of the interest and activity of the working class of the U.S.S.R., proved in a striking manner by the recent elections to the Soviets? Who does not know that the material position of the workers is constantly improving, that during these last years wages have gone up by 10 to 15 per cent. per year?

**Where is Monatte Going?**—continued

Finally, who is ignorant of the fact that the C.P. of the Soviet Union is organising the struggle of the working masses against the bureaucratic methods and personnel which exist still in the government machinery of the Soviets, creating an army of worker-correspondents, putting forward rank and file workers for the responsible posts in the management of State enterprises and institutions?

Monatte wants to hide all this from the workers of France. The evil sneers, the mean and nauseating slanders of Souvarine; the lucubrations of a near-Anarchist, bitter and limited (and above all a petty bourgeois of the purest water) such as the "Letter from Russia" of No. 30—this is all that Monatte finds to give about the Soviet Union.

A paper that adopts the attitude of the "Revolution Prolétarienne" is not up against "some Communists," but against the very principles of Communism, and falls into line completely with the most disgusting reformists.

We shall be answered that the "Revolution Prolétarienne" is not the organ of a party; it is a free platform where only the writer is responsible for the opinions expressed in an article. Such an explanation might perhaps have value if an article of mud-slinging had crept into a number alongside others trying to give an objective account of what is happening in Russia. But if one takes the trouble to go through the number of the "Révolution Prolétarienne," one cannot find a single word setting out objectively the immense work done in Soviet Russia, not a single line on the daily victories over a thousand difficulties, not a line on the effort put out by the working class of Russia for Socialism and the world revolution.

Whether we like it or not, a group in politics at

present will be judged by history according to the attitude adopted towards the U.S.S.R. The "Russian question" is now the best yardstick by which to measure those with whom we have to deal, to see if they are working class fighters or agents, open or secret, of the bourgeoisie. What we have said above shows which is the camp for Monatte and his consorts.

The special peculiarity of Monatte's Menshevism is a pretence at extreme Left Wing tendencies. So in No. 26 there is this quotation from Rosmer: "the Communists talk and act like Social Democrats at the same time as they are denouncing the treason of the Social Democrats." Rosmer has not taken into account that this slander will not hurt the Communists, but does touch very nearly Monatte's group! For is it not obvious from previous pages that Monatte and his consorts "talk and act like Social Democrats," without, however, accusing the latter of treachery?

We conclude: Monatte according to his own phrases has tried to create an independent journal, of which one of the main aims is to give "objective" information to the workers of France on Russian affairs; in reality he has only succeeded, over several months, in being the nursemaid of little Souvarine, even in the end going so far as to mop up the filth he spills; when he got tired of this occupation and sent Souvarine to go and stretch his neck somewhere else, the "Révolution Prolétarienne" kept all the same to the path of slinging mud systematically at the revolution and at Communism.

The "Révolution Prolétarienne" is the well into which all the bourgeois papers dip when they want some mud to throw at Soviet Russia.

This is more serious than discussing whether or no "the Communist Party can be identified with the working class." The "Révolution Prolétarienne" is on a greasy slope, and is changing more and more into the "Bourgeois Counter-revolution."

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# The Uprising in Java and Sumatra

Kjai Samin

(Continued from issue of April 15.)

SINCE 1917 the fight for better wages, the class struggle, has entered into the forefront of the national movement. Our Party was changed into a Communist Party in 1920. It was first called the Indian Social Democratic Union. The native comrades then worked in the existing national-religious mass union "Sarekat Islam." Our demands for economic improvements in the conditions of life of the working-class masses were welcomed with great approbation. The influence of our comrades increased and this led to the exclusion of our comrades from the Union by the leadership. In 1923 came the split. The Left Wing, which comprised the great majority, went with us, forming later the "Sarekat Rajat," that is, "the National Union."

Our party, which stands at the spearhead of the strike movement, won the sympathy of the masses in an ever increasing degree, and against it the Government used increasingly drastic terrorist methods. Through this the Party became the leader of the National Revolutionary Movement.

On the 13th November, the revolt broke out in West Java. It was the first time in Indonesian history that the masses entered into a struggle for political ends. The "most patient and most meek people of the earth," as the famous Dutch writer, Multatuli, called the Javanese, grasped their weapons to free themselves from oppression. What an ideological conversion must have occurred among the masses. What a mismanagement the Dutch Government must have exercised, that even the patient Javanese lost their patience!

The November rebellion in Java was followed in January by one in Sumatra. The Dutch newspapers cried that the revolts were directed and financially supported by Moscow; now the Dutch police have themselves the proofs to hand, that the revolt is organised in agreement with the masses, that the underfed, starved inhabitants of Java have given their money to buy arms in order to overthrow the Dutch government. We shall see what consequences the revolts will have on Dutch imperialism.

The comrades who led the revolt did the best that, under the extraordinarily difficult circumstances, could be done. Still, a few mistakes were made, which must be exposed in order to make possible a successful fight in the future.

## Strong Points of the Revolt

Our judgment rests on reports and articles in the Dutch press. At the moment other sources are not at our disposal. The strength of the revolt lay in the fact that before it occurred almost all sections of the population regarded the revolutionary movement without enmity. With the exception of a few corrupted elements among the natives, the revolutionary movement, wherever Communist influence was preponderant, won all sympathies. Even the Chinese, of whom in Indonesia there are nearly

a million, followed the development of the Indonesian national movement with the greatest sympathy. "Sin Po," which is accounted the most influential Chinese paper in Indonesia, and is read by many of the natives, demanded early in 1926 that the Chinese support the native national movement not only morally but also materially.

As for the plan of the revolt, this, too, was well worked out, as the Dutch newspapers themselves admit. And yet the extent of the revolt was not so great as our comrades expected. In a few districts the defeat was ignominious, of which our comrades never dreamed. In the capital, Batavia, there was no talk of a serious fight with the armed forces. After four or five days the movement in the capital was finished. In the villages of Bautam and West Sumatra, on the contrary, there were serious struggles to record. Here the fight lasted about a month.

Why was it that in the capital, where the working-class is found, the fight ended so quickly? What was the cause of the struggle being so long maintained in the villages of Bautam and later of West Sumatra? Our Party has a great influence among the population of Batavia. A few days before the outbreak of the rebellion more than 10,000 persons in Batavia handed in their membership cards of our organisation, the Sarekat Rajat, because of the threats and compulsion of the police. One can, therefore, suppose that the actual membership of the Sarekat Rajat in Batavia must be much greater. And yet from these thousands perhaps only a few hundred took part in the movement. In the villages on the other hand all the villagers took part in the movement, whole villages were deserted by the male population who had left to take part in the struggle.

## Why Did Not Revolt Spread?

Why did not the revolt spread immediately to Middle and East Java, where the discontent of the masses is not less great and our organisation has also a very powerful influence?

Many leading comrades were arrested and a few exiled some weeks before the outbreak of the rebellion. Among these comrades were, perhaps, those who had helped in the working out of the plan of revolt and had carefully studied the details of its execution. Those who are left, of whom many were still quite young, were compelled to carry through the revolt *mechanically*. This explains the fact that before the outbreak of the revolt no slogans were issued. This explains the fact that a small group of comrades occupied and held the telephone centre, instead of leaving this immediately after the destruction of telephone communications.

They knew that the occupation could not last long—not even a few hours. And yet it appears that the comrades did this. In another quarter of the town, a different group made an attempt to seize the prison, which was guarded by soldiers. All these attacks could not carry along the masses of the town population. In

**The Uprising in Java**—continued

Batavia and in other towns such as Tjiamis the movement was isolated from the broad masses of the people. The police supervision and the measures that they took in the towns were so sharp that the contact between the leadership and the masses was not close. The military and police forces were concentrated in the towns. The heavy blow which the first attack met with frightened the masses of the people and discouraged them from further struggle.

The conditions were different in the villages. There the persecution against our organisation could not be introduced so sharply. There are more or less friendly relations between the village police and the village inhabitants. The town police receive their upkeep from the Government, while the village police receive theirs partly from the taxes raised from the population.

Just as the town police is a paid tool of the State, so the position of the village police is a reflection to a certain extent of the misery or welfare of the villagers.

There is to a certain extent community of interests between village police and the villagers. This alone would be sufficient to explain that the police themselves took part in the revolutionary movement in the villages, particularly in West Sumatra, where, on account of the patriarchal conditions, the contact between villagers and police was strengthened by family relationship. In Sumatra it went even further. There many, even of the State officials, as the Dutch newspapers wrote, participated in the organisation of the uprising. A high native official even informed a leader of the rebel movement about the movement of troops. This close relationship is an indication of the isolation of the districts. The more backward a place is economically the more friendly are usually the relations between the masses of the people and the administrative officials.\* The lack of good means of communication in such places considerably favours the fighting operations of the rebels. Moreover, the presence of many forests lightens their struggle.

In North Sumatra the guerilla warfare against the Dutch military has been going on since the end of 1925, and is not yet quite finished.

**Soldiers and Police**

Our comrades reckoned on the refusal of the soldiers and police to comply with the orders of their superior officers.

There was no talk of a very extensive refusal to serve. And still we must believe that hope in this respect is well justified, since before the uprising many soldiers and police were dismissed on account of their revolutionary opinions.

In the court proceedings, the comrades declared that the police and soldiers who were in agreement with the revolt were to have secret signs, so that only those soldiers and police should be attacked who did not know the password.

That so few of these soldiers and police took part is explained by the fact that our comrades in the towns

could not carry along with them the broad masses, which was so necessary to make an impression. Still the soldiers do not seem to be entirely untouched. As a Dutch paper "Java Bode" reported, many thousands of cartridges were fired in Bautam, but the number of dead and wounded on the side of the rebels was so small that we can believe that the soldiers shot into the air. The soldiers and rebels placed themselves at a distance of from 10 to 20 metres from each other, so that the former could have massacred many if they chose. In Surabaya 14 police were arrested immediately after the outbreak of the uprising because of their revolutionary opinions.

Both in Java and Sumatra telephonic and telegraphic communications were cut through and railways lines broken up. In Middle Java tobacco sheds were set on fire.

In order to support the revolt the General Strike—at least the strike of the transport workers—was not proclaimed. Such a strike would have strengthened the whole movement. This was one of the greatest mistakes that were made.

The conditions were very favourable at the beginning. The authorities were taken completely unawares by these events. So surprised were they, that they did not know where to begin. According to the Dutch newspapers, about 600 soldiers were drafted into Bautam to fight the rebellion. The authorities did not dare to send more military forces there because they feared that rebellion might also break out in other parts of Indonesia. The Government was in the beginning in the greatest confusion and was still in doubt whether their men could be quite depended upon.

These favourable moments were allowed to slip by unused.

**A Great Mistake**

Another great mistake was that the outbreak of the revolts did not occur at the same time. In West Java it happened on the evening of the 12th-13th November. In Middle Java the first unrest broke out a few days later. Meanwhile, the leading comrades were arrested on the 13th and 14th November. Still later the rebellion broke out in Sumatra. There the uprising began only on the 2nd January, that is two months after the outbreak in Java, where the revolt was already crushed to a large extent. On account of this it was easy for the Government to send soldiers to West Sumatra. Moreover, through the defeat of the movement in Java, the soldiers became more docile to the Government.

This lack of simultaneity in the outbreak of the revolt helped the Government to win an easy victory and strengthened them morally. Our ranks became weakened and disorders were the consequence, disorders which cost us many sacrifices. When we entered into the fight, the circumstances were favorable. The Government had at its disposal only somewhat more than 30,000 soldiers and just as many police—against a population of 50 million. About 90 to 95 per cent. of these forces were natives, whom we could easily have brought under our influence, if such great mistakes had not been made in the carrying out of the plan of revolt.

As our forces received such heavy blows, the masses transferred their support. If before the revolt they were with us, later, out of fear, they went over to the soldiers

\* An official who was too devoted to the Government was frequently set aside. This was one of the most favourable factors for the organisation of the uprising.

**The Uprising in Java**—continued

against our comrades, many of whom were delivered up to the soldiers by the intimidated villagers. This occurred not only in Java but also in Sumatra.

It must be taken into account that conditions in Indonesia, particularly in Java and Sumatra, are quite different from those in Europe. There, there are no great towns, where millions of people are concentrated. The millions of Javanese are found in the villages. In our future fights we must take care that, if the fight in the towns is to end successfully, this fight must first be begun in the villages and on the plantations, in order to bring about the deconcentration of the military and police forces. By that the defence of the towns will be weakened and their taking over made more easy.

In the villages and plantations it is much easier to mobilise the masses against the organs of the State and the servants of the employing class, because there the forces of the police are quite insufficient, and it is easy to win victories at the very beginning, victories which are essential to enthuse the masses and carry them along.

**Lessons of Defeat**

We have suffered a defeat, but we must draw the lessons of this defeat. To recapitulate, we can say that the strength of the uprising consisted in :

1. The ideological preparation was good, our organisations were assured of all sympathies.
2. Our opponents were at first in doubt as to whether their instruments of power were reliable.
3. Until the last moment the Government did not know that a revolt was to break out. This shows that the Government could not—or only to a very small extent could—corrupt our forces, which is a very good omen for the future development of the revolutionary national movement.

The weak aspects of the revolt were :

1. The execution was incomplete, the cause of this being the arrest of many leading comrades before and just after the outbreak of the rebellion, so that the movement of revolt could not be quickly extended on account of the lack of leading forces.
2. The comrades issued no slogans before the uprising which would speak clearly to the masses of the people and rouse them and carry them along with the rebel movement.
3. Instead of the uprising being begun in the villages, to effect the disintegration of the soldiers and police who were concentrated in the towns, the comrades at once took up the fight against the concentrated forces in the towns, as a result of which they were beaten in their first attack, and the masses of the people were intimidated.

The first day after the outbreak of the revolt, the Dutch capitalist newspapers went off their heads with excitement and alarm; a few even demanded that whole villages be wiped out. Even the Dutch Social Democrats in Indonesia threw off their masks and showed themselves during and after the rebellion as the most vile lackeys of imperialism. They knew that for the

masses of the people there was no other way out than a rebellion; they knew that the policy of Dutch imperialism had so sharpened the contradictions that the result had to be a rebellion, and in spite of that they condemned the revolt and characterised it as a creation of Moscow.

As before the uprising, the Social Democrats snatched this opportunity as a favourable moment to stir up the native intelligentsia against us. They demanded of them that they should organise the masses of the people to prevent the employment of these pernicious revolutionary methods. They further demanded that the native intelligentsia should give up their policy of non co-operation, and occupy themselves politically with work in the out-and-out reactionary representative bodies.

**Corrupting the "Nationalists"**

The Social Democrats had a few successes to be noted. Their propaganda work among these politically unripe sentimental native intellectuals, who choose to call themselves rationalists, has made many of them into traitors to their people. Dr. Sutomo, the distinguished president of the Study Clubs in Surabaya, who a month before the rebellion declared at a meeting that Communism, whether among the native aristocracy or among the intellectuals who stood behind them, carried on a highly important struggle, because Nationalism lived strongly among them, this man who in 1925, withdrew from the municipal council in order to manifest his "non-co-operative" opinions and his indignation against the Dutch Government, the same man committed, after the defeat of the revolt, the greatest treachery, in that he declared before the court that the revolt was organised in agreement with the Nationalists. When he heard that the Government wished to increase the army and the police, he immediately solicited the posts of officers and police commissioners for the intellectuals, so that the natives might share the responsibility with the Dutch.

He was, however, maintained as President of the Study Club because the members were of the opinion that the part he took in the revolt did not violate the principles of the club.

**And the Intellectuals**

The Social Democrats continue to win over and corrupt the intellectuals. At the end of January, at a meeting in the premises of the Study Club in Surabaya, Stokvis, the Social Democrat, said (after having condemned the rebellion) among other things, the following :

"Supposing, however, that the Communists had, through the strength of their weapons, that is through their number, been victorious over their opponents, what would that have achieved politically? Nothing that could bring any advantage to the Indonesian peoples.

"If the Dutch sovereignty were overthrown, the consequence would be that Indonesia would be flung into the Asiatic jumble as the richest and weakest, the most coveted and the least powerful unit."

Stokvis cried to the intellectuals :

"Think of this, that with these methods [with revolutionary methods—K.S.] you strengthen the reaction and the might of the strongest. The Communist plots have achieved this, that now dozens of

**The Uprising in Java**—continued

millions will be drawn from the State Budget for increasing the army and the police, money which otherwise could be used for other purposes, which lie more in the interests of the people."

How different is the attitude of the Chinese in Indonesia! The great majority of them are born in Indonesia; they are largely small dealers and workers who mix daily with the natives. Moreover, the Chinese in Indonesia are placed legally in the same position as the natives, not with the Europeans as is the case of the Japanese and Siamese. They have the same legal standing as the natives and the police can worry them just as they can the natives.

At the foundation of the "Sarekat Islam" in 1913 there was sharp opposition between natives and Chinese, because the former considered the Chinese as the cause of all the misery of the natives. It is owing to the work of the Communist Party since 1913 that this enmity now no longer exists, and in its place there is friendship. And since then this friendship has become even closer. The Chinese newspapers and many Chinese supported our organisation not only before the rebellion, but also after; when our Party was attacked from all sides, it was the Chinese newspapers, who were not at enmity with our Party; particularly the most influential of them, "Sin Po," which a year before had urged the Chinese to support materially our movement, wrote on November 27th, 1926, *inter alia*, the following.

**A Chinese View**

"All Dutch newspapers are of the opinion that the Soviet has its hand in the great unrest in Java. They wish to put the whole—or the greatest part—of the blame on Moscow. Moscow is the instigator, Moscow supplied the weapons, etc. etc. It would be better if they sought all the causes of the revolt here in the country itself, and not put all the blame on others. Every sober judge must realise that it is unthinkable that the uprising is merely a consequence of Moscow 'agitation.'

"All great events are conditioned by many causes, and it is much more important to ascertain these than to bark at Moscow or Canton, like a dog yelping at the moon."

This friendly attitude towards the Indonesian national movement is caused by the influence of the events in China.

In the last few months hundreds of Indonesian-born Chinese have gone to Canton to work in the Cantonese army, in spite of the threats of the Dutch Government that those who have gone to Canton will not be allowed to return to Indonesia.

There are, therefore, many reasons to induce the Chinese in Indonesia to work together with the natives of Indonesia.

Of all the parties in Indonesia, it is only the Communist Party which has made any extraordinarily great sacrifice in the Indonesian movement of liberation. It is only the Communist Party which has propagated and taken up the consequences of the revolutionary fight against Dutch imperialism. It is also the Communist Party which has given the masses a clear programme and

lead. Communists have led the many strikes and brought the masses ideologically under their influence in a systematic fashion. The leaders of the other organisations have betrayed the masses.

**Will Strengthen Communism**

As, for example, Tjokroaminoto, the Chairman of the "Sarekat Islam," who shamefully betrayed those who took part in the conflicts with the police in 1919, and cringed to the court in order to get out of his punishment. The attitude of our comrades before that court also shows the masses that Communists are not frightened away by the most grave consequences, if it serves to protect the interests of the workers. The trust of the broad masses of the people in the Communists is so great that they could lead the uprising.

The conditions and methods of struggle in Indonesia, particularly in Java, bear so great a resemblance to the pre-revolutionary conditions of Russia that a Russian doctor who has lived in Java many years, called the Javanese "brown Russians without beards." The Communists led many unsuccessful strikes but in spite of that the faith of the masses in our Party was not shaken. As the unsuccessful railway strike led to a strengthening of our Party, we may well expect that the revolt in Java and Sumatra, although a failure, will not shake but strengthen the ideological influence of the Communists.

The life of the masses of the people in Indonesia, particularly in Java, is so wretched, that they will be compelled even further to fight along revolutionary lines to improve their conditions of life. According to a calculation which we quote from the "Economic and Statistical Report," the most important taxes in Indonesia, such as the import and export taxes, the duty on killing cattle, the poll tax, income tax (for natives) and other taxes and excises for 1927 will bring in 158.6 million gulden, of which 148.9 million gulden will be raised from the natives. This is an indication of the intense exploitation of the masses of the people by the Dutch Government.

**The Poll Tax**

This year the so-called poll tax, which is felt to be most unjust by the population, because the town population do not have to pay it, will be abolished. This abolition will lessen the State income by 12 million gulden. The Government is, therefore, seeking to recompense itself by increases in indirect taxation. In 1926 decreases in taxation for 1927 and 1928 were promised. The increase of the army and police force after the uprising will, however, make this reduction in taxation impossible. This means that the masses of the people will be further oppressed just as in the previous year, or perhaps even worse.

The present Governor-General of Indonesia, Dr. de Graeff, is a former Dutch Ambassador in Tokio and Washington. The appointment of a diplomat as chief of the Dutch imperialist state in Indonesia is no accident. This appointment is an indication of the fact that there are many difficult problems of foreign policy appearing in the East, which are dangerous to Dutch supremacy. Holland usually appoints diplomats to the Governor-

**The Uprising in Java**—continued

Generalship, if the problems of foreign policy are such as affect her empire, as was the case during the war. At that time Dr. Van Limburg Stirum, also a former Dutch Ambassador in Tokio, was appointed Governor-General of Indonesia. The present chief representative of Dutch imperialism, Dr. de Graeff, has, however, no luck. His gentle speeches make not the slightest impression on the masses of the people. Two months after he entered office the people of Java and Sumatra rose in revolt.

Both internal and external politics are now just as dangerous for Dutch supremacy. The Government is trying to solve the former problems by terror, by sentences of death, by extraordinarily heavy punishment and sentences of exile for the Indonesian leaders of the national movement to New Guinea. For all that the revolutionary nationalist movement of Indonesia is not crushed. The Government may be able to corrupt dissolute intellectuals, the great masses will carry on the fight. Communist influence has already found anchor in the hearts of millions.

**Situation still "Dangerous"**

That the Government officials themselves consider the present situation as extremely dangerous is shown by the interview given to the Dutch paper, "Java Bode," by Wolter beek Muller, the Chief Public Prosecutor of Indonesia, who will shortly go into retirement.

This man is Chief of the Indonesian police. He said about the Communist organisation:—"As far as the Communist movement is concerned, it was best defined by Dr. Talma [Chairman of the Sugar Syndicate in Java.—K.S.] in the National Council, 'the Communist movement is like a wave which recedes only to advance anew with greater force!' That is also my opinion. The events of last year gave us sufficient experience to justify this description."

Class distinctions have been sharpened to such an extent during these last years that rebellions must continually repeat themselves. On the one side there are the most modern big plantations, and on the other side millions of poor peasants, small merchants and coolies. The petty bourgeoisie which fights in Europe by its wavering alliance usually, as with capitalism against the revolutionary masses, is here not so strong. The "Indian Courier," the organ of the European employees in Java, wrote on April 7th of the past year as follows:

"Where such a class is absent, as is the case here, the Communist danger remains threatening, and it cannot be fought by temporary measures."

In 1924 there were signs of the formation of a powerful native petty bourgeoisie in a part of Sumatra and Borneo owing to the extraordinarily high prices received for rubber. But the Dutch capital invested in rubber, which is controlled by finance capital, does not tolerate any competition, and desires to keep all the profits of the rubber industry for itself. Thus many tricky methods are employed in order to retard the development of the native traffic in rubber.

The final destruction of the native rubber producers will not be long in coming. The power of finance capital in Indonesia is so enormous that it is able to crush any improvement in native business and will unhesitatingly do so.

The penetration of foreign capital in Indonesia was so rapid that the retransformation of classes is being brought about very rapidly in Java as well as in other islands of Indonesia. Owing to this, the appearance of a definite ideology such as the petty bourgeois in Western Europe which could retard a revolutionary movement is not possible.

That the Dutch Government understands the gravity of the position very well is clear from the fact that they are not only going to increase the army and the police, but are also deconcentrating the army in order to be able to tackle a revolt quickly, should it occur. Just as, before the revolt, the army existed more to defend the country against outside enemies, so now it will be used as a weapon against the enemy within.

**Influence of China**

As the revolution in Russia inspired that in China, so the Chinese revolution and its victory will drive forward powerfully the Indonesian national movement.

Indonesia has serious struggles before it. The Indonesian masses can emerge from these struggles only as victors if there exists in Indonesia, although illegally, a Communist Party with Marxist leaders. Our Party has imparted a revolutionary tradition to the masses of the people, which will not easily disappear. The lost prestige of Dutch supremacy will do the rest in revolutionising the masses.

For this reason also, that there is danger of war in the East, it is necessary that the rebuilding of the Communist Party in Indonesia should be immediately taken up, so that in future it will be capable of changing an imperialist war into a war for freedom against Dutch mastery.

The first stage of the revolution in Indonesia, as in China, will be the overthrow of imperialism.

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# Achievements and Immediate Tasks in Organisation

O. Piatnitsky

**D**URING 1926 all the Sections of the Communist International have brought their organisations close to the Bolshevik form of organisation and to forms enabling them to strengthen their position in factories and workshops and in mass proletarian organisations.

## Achievements

In Germany in the majority of industrial districts and the large towns (Berlin, Hamburg, Chemnitz, Leipzig, Halle, etc.), the old organisations on a residential basis have disappeared and in their place factory and street groups have been established. In these Party questions are discussed and settled and delegates are elected to the local and district conferences.

In the remaining industrial districts reorganisation is proceeding at full speed.

For the better service of the groups sub-locals and locals (in America, sections and sub-sections) have been set up, and the apparatus of the Party organs has been improved.

The work of reorganisation is approximately in the same stage in Czecho-Slovakia. In many large works, groups have been organised through which the Party exercises considerable influence upon the masses of workers. Departments and commissions have been formed in connection with local and district committees in order better to be able to assist the work of the nuclei.

The Communist Party of Great Britain, during the General Strike, in March, 1926, thanks to the excellent work of the local Party organs and to a certain extent also of the factory groups, succeeded in occupying a prominent place in the strike committees and trades councils which led the strike locally.

The experience of the factory groups in publishing factory newspapers was utilised during the time of the strike, since the mass of the workers were deprived of the trade union press and of that of the political parties. During the strike the factory newspapers issued by the Communist Party groups became the organs of the Trades Councils and Strike Committees.

As a result of the correct tactics adopted by the Communist Party of Great Britain and the excellent work carried out by the local party organs, the Party increased its membership by 6,000 mainly from the ranks of the miners during their heroic struggle. Pit groups also were organised in the more important districts.

Finally, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain gave an example of live and flexible leadership during the General Strike and the miners' struggle. The Central Committee became only a small leading group of comrades at the centre, the mass of the Central Committee being sent out to the country districts where each member of the Central Committee directly took part in the direction of the movement. On the whole the correct tactics adopted by the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain rendered effective aid to the work in the localities during the General Strike and the miners' strike.

The American Workers' Party has changed from a federation of 19 national central committees into a centralised Party, with a single Central Committee, with united district committees and groups to which all members belong, irrespective of their language group affiliation.

The factory groups have succeeded in carrying out successful strikes and acquiring influence in the trade unions.

The work of organising factory groups is proceeding successfully in South America (in the Argentine, Brazil, Uruguay, etc.). In those countries many such groups are working well. The Central Committees and local Party organisations have become consolidated, and considerable success in organisational work is being achieved in South America.

The organisation work of the illegal Parties is also making progress.

The Polish Communist Party has adopted a uniform type of local organisation; factory and street groups have been set up and function in all the industrial districts of Poland. Only through the existence of these factory groups and our fractions in the trade unions can the fact be explained that in spite of the terror that our Party is subjected to even in Poland proper, the majority of the Polish workers still follow the lead of our Party, which has no legal press, while the Polish Socialist Party has a press and enjoys the protection of the authorities.

During the elections in the Sick Insurance Clubs in Warsaw, on November, 1926, the "revolutionary opposition" obtained 12,554 votes, while the Polish Socialist Party and Bund combined received 11,121 votes. During the municipal elections in Prushkov, a suburb of Warsaw, on January 16, 1927, the "Lefts" secured 2,84 votes and 11 seats out of 24, while the P.P.S. got 754 votes and won only 4 seats.

## Even under Fascism

In Italy, following on the "attempt" on Mussolini, the Fascist raid on all the anti-Fascist Parties forced the leaders and the leading centres of these parties, with the exception, of course, of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, to seek refuge abroad, and their local organisations have been scattered like dust before the wind.

The position of the Communist Party of Italy, however, is altogether different. Because the local organisations of the Communist Party of Italy were reorganised on a factory group basis, the foundations of the Party remained intact, in spite of the fact that the Fascist terror was directed principally against our Party. Naturally, the membership of the Party has diminished. Only the most active elements have remained in it; but the

**Achievements and Tasks**—continued

Party organisations live: in the place of the arrested organisers, secretaries and committees, new secretaries and committees are springing up. In the place of the suppressed Party organs, illegal organs are being published. There is no power in Italy that can destroy the Communist Party of Italy, which through the factories and workshops has grafted itself right into the masses of the workers.

Until the victory of Fascism, the Communist Party of Italy was organised on a residential basis and had about 50,000 members. After the victory of Fascism, in spite of the fact that the terror at that time was not so fierce as it is now, the Communist Party of Italy lost three-fourths of its membership and for a long time was incapable of fighting against Fascism. This was due, of course, not only to the wrong organisational forms, but also to the wrong policy then adopted by the Party. But even if the policy of the Party had been free from terror, the old organisational forms would nevertheless have prevented it from carrying on the struggle.

The situation is altogether different now. Both the policy and the forms of organisation of the Party are correct and in spite of the arrest of the parliamentary fraction and of numerous active comrades throughout Italy, the Party has remained unshaken.

The old residential form of organisation is dying out and giving place to factory groups; and that Social-Democratic survival, the system of permanent Party officials (appointed for a year by the Party committees) has already gone into the limbo of the past.

In Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria, the officials decided the affairs of the Party although they had no mandate from the Party membership to do so. Now, however, town and district Party conferences are functioning properly; the delegates for these are elected by the factory and street groups.

At our first organisational conference, the French delegates and the representatives of the Young Communist International were opposed to the organisation of street groups, and for a long time abstained from organising them. Now, the Communist Parties of all countries have become convinced that it is impossible to dispense with street groups and they are now functioning in almost all countries (we will deal with the defects of the street groups later).

Prior to the International conference on organisation, the Communists in the trade unions were organised in fractions only in a few countries, and then only locally.

Now fractions exist in trade unions and other mass labour and peasant organisations in the majority of countries and the question to be stressed now is not that they must be organised but how the existing fractions should work. In this sphere also successes are to be recorded.

**Influence of our Parties**

In order to enable the reader to determine the extent of the influence of the Communist Parties and to what extent this influence is consolidated organisationally, we will quote the following statistics showing the numerical strength of certain of the large sections of the Communist International, the circulation of the Party press, influence in the trade unions and the number of votes

obtained by the Party during elections to various representative bodies (parliament, municipalities, etc.).

The Communist Party of Germany in October, 1926, had 133,849 paying members (the number of members on the register may be reckoned to be 20 to 25 per cent. higher). The circulation of the 37 daily newspapers amounted in that month to 282,702; if we take the number of members on the register, we can claim 2.1 subscribers to the Party press for every member of the Party.

During the Reichstag elections in December, 1924, the Communist Party obtained 2,708,354 votes (23.5 votes for each Party member).

In regard to the trade unions let us take the following figures: of the 1,067 local trades councils affiliated to the A.D.G.B. (General Federation of Trade Unions affiliated to Amsterdam) with a membership of 3,559,952, the Communist Party of Germany in 1925 had a majority in only 70, with a membership of 74,025. The Party did not have a majority in any single union. In the metal workers' union, out of 600 local organisations, the Communist Party controlled over 35. During the elections of delegates to the Metal Workers' Congress, in 1926, the Communist Party obtained 33 per cent. of the total vote cast. In the Miners' Union out of 300 local organisations, only 43 are under the control of the Party and during the election of delegates to the Miners' Congress of 1926, the Party obtained 40 per cent. of the votes cast.

**Membership too Small**

What are the conclusions to be drawn from these figures?

Compared with the number of votes obtained by the Party during the Reichstag elections, which indicate that the Party enjoys wide sympathy among the masses, the numerical strength of the Party is relatively small, its daily press has a relatively small circulation and the influence of the Party in the trade unions, far from corresponds to the general ideological influence it exercises and could certainly be greatly increased.

The Communist Party of France in October, 1926, had 60,000 members. Its two daily newspapers have an average circulation of 240,000 (permanent subscribers represent only a small percentage of newspaper readers in France. The newspapers of all political tendencies are maintained by street sales).

During the last parliamentary elections in 1924, the Communist Party of France obtained 940,000 votes.

The C.G.T.U. (the Red Federation affiliated to the R.I.L.U.), which is under the influence of the Party, has a membership of 450,000, which represents from 40 to 45 per cent. of all the organised workers in France (in general the percentage of organised workers in France as compared with the total strength of the working class is small. Out of the 11 million workers barely one million are organised in trade unions).

The Communist Party of France has practically no influence in the reformist trade unions.

Thus, we have four purchasers of Party newspapers per Party member, seven and five-sixths members of Red trade unions, and fifteen and two-thirds votes cast during parliamentary elections per Party member.

The Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia in 1925, had 125,000 members and eight daily newspapers (the central organ "Rude Pravo" is published twice daily),

**Achievements and Tasks—continued**

and 15 other newspapers, some of which are published twice or three times a week, whilst others are weeklies. The total circulation of all these papers is 149,500.\*

In November, 1926, the membership of the Red Trade Unions stood at 201,035, which represents only 12 per cent. of the total organised workers. But taking into consideration the influence which the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia exercises in the reformist trade unions, it may be said that the Party influences 40 per cent. of the class trade unions (in Czecho-Slovakia nearly all the political parties have their trade unions).

During the municipal elections in 1925 the Party obtained 933,711 votes (the Party at that time had 90,000 members, consequently the above figure represents 10.3 votes per Party member).

The Communist Party of Belgium in 1926 had 853 members, and the circulation of the central organ amounted to 6,500. The Party exercised influence in several trade unions.

At the municipal elections in November, 1926, the Party obtained 70,000 votes, which represents 81 votes per Party member.

**In Britain**

The Communist Party of Great Britain in October, 1926, had 12,000 members. The Party weekly has a circulation of 80,000. The "Sunday Worker," the organ of the Left Wing Movement, which is under the influence of the Party, has a circulation of 120,000.

At the special conference of the Minority Movement called at the beginning of 1927, delegates were present representing organisations with a membership of 1,080,000. The Communist Party did not put forward its own candidates at the parliamentary elections, but supported the Labour Party candidates. Several local Labour Parties put up Communists as their candidates. Only in a few constituencies did the Party put up its candidates independently.

The conclusions already drawn in connection with the Communist Party of Germany may be applied to the Parties of France, Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium, Great Britain and other Parties, concerning which we have not quoted statistics, simply because they do not differ in character from those quoted.

What strikes one immediately is the numerical weakness of the Parties when compared with the votes cast at elections (in Belgium for example) and between the circulation of the Party press and the influence in the trade unions of the British Party. This influence is far from being consolidated organisationally as yet. During the miners' fight neither the Communist Party of Great Britain, nor the Central Committee of the Minority Movement, managed to get resolutions passed by the Executives of trade unions to assist the miners, because neither the Communist Party nor the Minority Movement has a majority in any single trade union.

Although the membership of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia is steadily increasing, nevertheless it

does not correspond with the influence the Party exercises over the masses in the country, as indicated by the votes obtained at the municipal elections. Its influence in the trade unions is also inadequate, particularly in the non-class trade unions. The circulation of the Party press is very small even compared with the membership of the Party.

The situation in France is still worse. Recent campaigns have shown that the masses are following the lead of the Party. The readers of the Party press are four times more numerous than the Party membership.

**Why No Increase?**

Why does not the membership of the Party increase? Why is the circulation of the Party press relatively so small? Why does a Party like the Communist Party of Germany win influence in the trade unions so slowly in spite of the fact that the A.D.B.G. betrays the interests of the German proletariat every day? These are the questions that have to be answered.

It should be clear to everyone that if the Party conducts a proper policy, the larger the membership of the Party the greater the number of those who spread its influence and, therefore, the influence of the Party should become more widespread, presuming, of course, that the membership is not just ballast. How can the Communist Party of Great Britain consolidate its influence organisationally in the Labour Party, in the trade unions, in its co-operative societies, and numerous other organisations, when it has a membership of only 12,000? (In April, 1926, the Party had only 5,500 to 6,000 members). The organisations just enumerated have as many local branches as the Party has members (it is not a rare thing in England for only one Communist to be present at a trade union branch meeting, local Labour Party meeting, or other mass organisations, and to speak and move resolutions on all the points on the agenda).

However small a country Belgium may be, 850 members are not enough organisationally to consolidate the 70,000 voters who vote for the Party.

**Recruiting Campaigns**

The British and other Communist Parties understand this perfectly well. What is more they have conducted big recruiting campaigns and subscription campaigns for the Party press—in England, France, Germany, etc.—and in some countries have achieved fair success. Nevertheless the campaigns did not produce the required results; and what is still worse, the subscribers to the Party press are not retained and not all the new members are definitely attached to the Party organisation.

As has been stated already, the Party in Britain from April to October, 1926, recruited more than 6,000 members and increased the circulation of the Party organ to more than 80,000. But in examining the latest statistics of the Party membership according to districts we see that from August to December the London district lost 105 members, the Birmingham district 75 and Sheffield 200. It is not stated whether there has been a simultaneous decrease in the circulation of the Party press in these districts. Although certain district organisations have increased their membership during this period, and the influx of members into the Party has been due to

\* This figure includes the circulation of the weekly publications of the central organ, which is published twice daily. The evening edition of the paper is not read, however, by all those who read the morning edition.

**Achievements and Tasks**—continued

the leading role the Party played in the miners' fight, the above-mentioned losses cannot be attributed to mere accident. This is confirmed by another fact which the C.P.G.B. reports. In the Tyneside district, which is almost entirely populated by workers, of the 3,600 members of the Party, nearly 1,000 are practically outside of the Party organisation. The number of applications for membership exceeded 3,600, but a large number streamed out of the Party when their enthusiasm after the second month of the miners' struggle had died down.

Recently the Communist Party of France carried out a successful recruiting campaign which produced over 5,000 new members. But as can be seen from the statement made by the chairman of the Paris district committee to the Organisation Bureau of the C.P.F., nearly 200 of the 1,000 members who joined the Party in the first days of the campaign failed to turn up to make good their applications for membership.

**Passing through the Party**

In the Berlin-Brandenburg organisation of the C.P.G., from January 1st, 1923, to October 26, 1926, 54,219 Party cards were issued. At the end of 1926 the membership of this organisation was 17,219. Consequently 37,000 members passed through the organisation (in 1925, 4,689 members—20.3 per cent.—left the Berlin-Brandenburg organisation, i.e., 1,095 more than joined the organisation. In the first half of 1926 4,760 members, or 21.7 per cent. left the organisation).

We do not think that these figures indicate a situation that is peculiar only to the above-mentioned organisations. On the contrary, we may consider it with slight variations one way or another, to be the common feature of all the legal sections of the Communist International.

What are the causes which retard the entry of revolutionary workers into some Parties (Belgium, Sweden, Norway, etc.), and of the constant fluctuation in membership of other Parties?

In Norway, Sweden and Belgium, prior to the war, Labour Parties (Social Democratic) existed to which the trade unions—and in Belgium even the co-operative societies—were affiliated as organisations. Individual membership in these Parties was insignificant.\*

After the war (in 1919) the Norwegian Social Democrats left the Norwegian Labour Party after the latter had affiliated to the Communist International. After the split in the Norwegian Labour Party in 1924, the Communist Party of Norway established its own organisation

on the basis of individual membership. The Labour Party (Tranmael) remained an organisation based on collective affiliation. In Sweden, after the war, the Left Wing broke away from the Social Democratic Party and formed the Communist Party of Sweden, which was also based on individual membership. The Swedish Social Democratic Party remained an organisation with a collective membership, to which the trade unions were affiliated.

In Belgium, the Left Wing left the Labour Party and formed the Communist Party of Belgium. The trade unions, the co-operative societies and other organisations remained in the Labour Parties (members of the C.P.B. who belong to trade unions are thereby members of the Belgian Labour Party in spite of the fact that politically they have broken with the Party).

In the afore-mentioned countries the workers are accustomed to have their trade unions (through their central bodies) affiliate to the political party and pay their dues collectively. Recently there have been cases in Belgium when members of the Communist Party have been expelled from their unions because they have stood as independent Communist candidates during municipal or parliamentary elections. This not only means losing one's job, but also losing insurance benefits because the insurance funds are under the control of the trade unions. The long-standing practice of belonging to the political party through the trade unions, which relieves them of the necessity of paying party dues individually, and the danger of being expelled from the trade unions, restrains the workers of Belgium from joining the Communist Party.

**Mistaken Policies and Tactics**

This may partly explain the difference between the small membership of the Party (850) and the relatively large vote obtained by the Belgian Party at the elections (70,000). I say "partly" advisedly, because the reasons for the fluctuation in the membership which are common to all the Communist Parties, and hamper the growth of the circulation of the Party press, apply less of course to Norway, Sweden and Belgium. In the latter countries the fear of losing their jobs is a factor which prevents the workers from joining the Party. The cause of the fluctuation in membership of the Parties in the second group of legal Communist Parties is the mistaken policy and tactics adopted on certain questions by the Parties (in such cases we lose not only members of the Party and leaders of the Party press, but also influence among the proletariat).

During the Reichstag elections in December, 1924, the German Party obtained 2,708,354 votes while the Communist candidate for the president of the Republic obtained only 1,869,553 and the fact that the Party put up a candidate of its own caused considerable dissatisfaction among the workers, who charged the Party with splitting the vote and allowing Hindenburg to be elected.

Lack of ability to conduct political campaigns, the youth and instability of the Communist Party and principally the fact that the local Party organisations functioned badly, are the most important causes of the fluctuation in membership.

As for the continuous fluctuation of the number of readers of the Party press and the difficulty encountered

\* To a certain extent England may also be included among those countries in which the political Labour movement is based upon collective membership. The British Labour Party is made up of affiliated trade union and political parties (Independent Labour Party, which has 23,000 members, the Fabian Society with 3,000 members, and the Social Democratic Party with 1,000 members. The Communist Party has been refused affiliation but members of the Party belong to it through their trade unions). Thus we have 27,000 individual members as compared with several millions of trade unionists affiliated to the Labour Party through their trade unions. The numerical weakness of the political parties which existed before the war is most striking. Evidently collective affiliation to the Labour Party hinders the growth of the membership of the Parties affiliated.

**Achievements and Tasks**—continued

in increasing its circulation, this may be explained by the causes which bring about the fluctuation in Party membership, which, of course, affect the number of readers of the Party press, and also the lack of ability, in the majority of cases, to run a paper, particularly a daily.

In France the recent recruiting campaign was conducted by the central organ of the Party, "L'Humanité" and the parliamentary fraction of the Party through the medium of mass meetings. The factory and street groups and even the sub-district and district organisations, in the majority of cases, took no part in the campaign; and in those rare cases where they did take part their work was limited to technical work, such as pasting up posters, etc. The result of this method of conducting a campaign in Paris was that 200 of the thousand who applied for membership could not be retained in the Party from the very beginning. How many were lost in this way over the whole of France?

**Planning Beforehand**

Would this have happened if the recruiting campaign had been planned beforehand by the Central Committee and preliminary work carried on by the subordinate local organisations through the factory groups, which should have been helped by "L'Humanité," the parliamentary deputies and municipal councillors and all the other active Party workers? Of course not. The applicants for membership who would have come to the Party, not merely as a result of the superficial impressions obtained at an enthusiastic mass meeting, would have been immediately taken into the Party through the factory groups, and the question which engaged the attention of the organisation bureau of the Central Committee of the C.P.F. and the Party press as to what to do with the new applicants would not have arisen (the trouble was whether to attach them for the time being to the street groups on the residential basis in order to "train them" in Party organisation, or to attach them immediately to the factory groups according to their places of employment).

During the recruiting campaign there were cases when five or six men working in the same factory applied for membership. These could immediately have been formed into a factory group in the factory where they were employed, if such did not exist there already; and if there was one already it would have been much more convenient for them to join it. No doubt this is what would have happened if the factory groups had taken part in the election campaign and in the everyday work of the Party.

In that case the factory groups would have established a reputation for themselves among the non-Party workers and would have gained experience by practice.

The workers regard the Communist Party as a leader capable of leading them in a fight. They are convinced that the Communist Party has excellently functioning Party organisations which are capable of fulfilling this task. But when they join the Party they do not find what they expect: the factory groups function badly, they are mostly engaged in internal Party disputes and differences which the new member cannot understand,

and above all not sufficient attention is paid to the new members.

Members of the French Party have called attention to this. For example comrade Villatte, in giving the reason why people leave the Party says: "Too much attention is paid by the factory groups to the internal Party squabbles, which often bear a purely personal character, instead of devoting attention to the tasks of the Party." In a report of one of the district committees comrade Delettre writes: "A number of serious comrades have left the Party because when they joined it they expected to find a well-organised, smoothly-working apparatus; instead of that they were obliged to listen to continuous chatter about organisation and discipline without practical activity."

In one of the reports of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany, dealing with the question of the fluctuation of membership, the same conclusion is drawn as that of the above-mentioned French comrade. Here is a quotation from this report: "One of the definite reasons for the newly-joined membership falling away is that up till now no attention was paid to them and they were not drawn into Party life. . . . There have been cases when newly-joined members have attended the heated meetings of the Berlin organisations and then turned their backs on the Party."

**Waste of Energy**

Of course, disputes and differences on tactics, programme and organisation cannot be avoided in a live Party, and still less in Communist Parties in capitalist countries where the process of consolidation is still going on. But this does not mean that the debates on these questions should not be organised in such a manner that the groups, district and local organisations shall not be entirely absorbed by them, but shall engage themselves in other questions of everyday activity. Is it impossible to arrange that the groups and local organisations shall function in a proper manner? Is it impossible to draw the new members into practical Party work? Is it impossible to arrange short courses for new members and to publish suitable literature for them? All this can be done with the resources which each Party possesses, if only they desire to do so.

In many localities circulation campaigns have been conducted. In Germany—in the Ruhr and on the Rhine—such campaigns have resulted in an increase in a number of subscribers to the Party press by 2,000-3,000 and more. From Czecho-Slovakia it is reported that the number of subscribers in the factories is increasing, but at the same time there are not a few cases where the circulation of the papers has declined. This is explained by the fact that the Party press as a whole is dull and monotonous, is often entirely devoted to internal Party differences and tendencies; that it does not give the information which is given copiously in the capitalist press; it does not properly describe Party life; no constant aid is given to the Party organisation; there is no summary of experiences; no reports from the factories, etc.

When in 1926 "L'Humanité" began to publish feuilletons and published sport news the circulation increased to 40-50,000.

However poor the Party may be in literary talent, more attention can be devoted to the daily Party press. The Central and district committees must devote par-

**Achievements and Tasks**—continued

ticular attention to the Party press and its defects can be removed.

We have already pointed out what influence the legal Communist Parties have in the trade unions. Here it should be observed that even in the trade unions the influence of the Communist Parties is relatively greater than their organisational influence. The tendency revealed in the following figures concerning the influence of the Communist Party of Germany in the trade unions may be taken as applicable to all the other Communist Parties in which the trade union movement has not been split. In 1926, the Communist Party of Germany obtained in referenda on various questions in the metal workers' union a majority in 80 local branches, whereas the committees are under the control of the Communists in only 35 branches. The Party obtained 40 per cent. of the total votes cast for the miners' congress, but in only 43 out of the 300 local branches are the committees under Communist control, i.e., only 13½ per cent.

In Chemnitz (Saxony) in 1926, the Communists obtained 23.3 per cent. of the votes in the communal elections, whereas the Social Democrats obtained 28.2 per cent. of the votes.

In October of the same year, during the elections to the Saxon Landtag, the Communists obtained 22.5 per cent. of the total votes cast and the Social Democrats 27.3 per cent. If we take into consideration the fact that the petty bourgeois elements vote for the Social Democrats, and that only workers vote for the Communists, then we can say that the Communists received a larger proportion of working class votes than the Social Democrats. And yet on the Chemnitz Trades Council there are only 18 Communists out of a total of 120, and not less than 80 Social Democrats, i.e., more than four times the number of Communists.

The situation is no better in the lower trade union

apparatus and with the trade union functionaries in the factories. In Chemnitz in factories employing a total of 28,010 workers the Social Democratic Party has 3,062 members and sympathisers and 164 trade union functionaries, whereas the Communist Party has 2,446 members and sympathisers and 49 trade union functionaries. All other things being equal the Social Democrats should have, for the 616 members and sympathisers which they have more than the Communists, not 115 trade union functionaries more, but only 26 or 27 more than the Communists.

This situation is due to the fact that Communists occupy themselves less with trade union questions than the Social Democrats. The class-conscious workers know that the Communists defend the interests of the proletariat than the Social Democrats, that is why they vote for the Communist Party proposals, and elect Communists to Trades Union Congresses and Conferences. But when it comes to electing members to trade union committees they hesitate to elect Communists, because they have not seen them at work. This applies to the reformist trade unions where the Communist Party has to compete with the Social Democrats and where our comrades are not so well acquainted with the current questions in the trade union movement and for that reason are unable to combat the Social Democrats (questions of wages, labour laws, instructions, etc.).

It is possible organisationally to consolidate the relatively large influence which the Communist Parties have in the working class by increasing the membership of the Party, increasing the circulation of the Party press, and above all by improving the work of the Party organisations from the groups to the Central Committee. Only when the Party organs function properly, and the Parties adopt a proper policy, will it be possible to direct the work of the members of the Party in the Party press, in the trade unions and in other mass workers' and peasants' organisations.

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# The Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party

A. Wille

**I**N Prague, on March 25th-28th, the Fourth Party Congress of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia was held. There were 273 delegates; 130 with full voting rights. The agenda dealt with the following important questions: (1) The report of the Executive, and together with this the political situation and the immediate tasks of the Party; (2) The agrarian question, and (3) The trade union question.

The Executive report shows that the membership has increased since the Third Party Conference in 1925 from 93,000 to 138,000. In such a relatively small country this number is quite considerable. The social composition of the Party is as follows: 78.4 per cent. wage earners, 21.6 per cent. miscellaneous (the majority of these are workers' wives occupied in housekeeping). The most important groups of workers in the Party are agricultural workers 12.1 per cent., building workers 9.1 per cent., metal workers 9.4 per cent., textile workers 7.5 per cent., miners 7 per cent. There are also woodworkers, railwaymen, etc. Small peasants constitute 3.6 per cent., intellectuals 1.9 per cent. Only a quarter of the total membership carries out really regular active Party work; the remainder take part irregularly in Party work or not at all.

Still, during recent years, the Party has been most successful in carrying out political mass campaigns. During the last parliamentary elections, autumn 1925, the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia secured 933,711 votes, 41 seats in parliament and 23 in the senate. This result was generally recognised as a considerable victory. Several of the campaigns which the Party carried out for definite partial demands on the part of the workers (for example, against wage reductions, against the increased cost of living and unemployment, against reactionary tax "reforms," against the sabotage of municipal enterprises) showed clearly that the power of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia to mobilise the masses of the workers is already much greater than the influence of the reformist parties on the masses.

## Campaign against Fascism

The political struggle of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia against Fascism may be taken as an example of a correct and successfully carried out mass campaign. When last year on the 5th of July the Fascists prepared a demonstration and threatened revolution, certain comrades immediately lost all belief in the possibility of carrying out revolutionary plans against the Fascists. For instance Comrade Neurath—whilst the other comrades on the Executive were discussing what should be done to frustrate the plans of the Fascists, Comrade Neurath could only think out what the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia could do after the Fascists had revolted. The C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia carried on an energetic campaign for a general mobilisation of the masses, not only against

Fascism generally, but against certain concrete reactionary measures which the Fascists had supported (*i.e.*, against customs duties which had increased the cost of living). The pressure of this successful mass demonstration forced the Fascists to beat a retreat. Their militant demonstration which was planned on a grandiose scale shrivelled into a weak, isolated parade, to be followed by internal disintegration within their ranks.

The employers and the State organs have been positively hunting down the Communists. Thousands of them have been thrown out of work, and after the Third Party Congress, 1,196 Party members were the victims of class justice. The Party, however, found an energetic reply to this persecution. A protest movement was carried on in the factories against the prohibition of public Communist manifestations, and through the success of this mass movement the Party secured the right to act openly and freely.

A good demonstration of the influence of the C.P.C.S. was that of the 24-hour general strike of the miners, which took place on the initiative of the Communists in protest against the reduction of the insurance for miners. This protest took place two days before the Party Congress. The demonstration in Prague which was organised in this connection was also an enthusiastic manifestation for the Chinese revolution, and acted as a very imposing opening ceremony for the Party Congress.

## Business-like Congress

The work of the Party Congress was throughout of an earnest and business-like character. It was quite clearly to be felt that the delegates represented a Party and not fractions, and that they were filled with a desire to carry out practical work. The Party Congress was organisationally and technically well prepared, though somewhat weaker politically, *i.e.*, concrete problems of the movement and of Communist policy of the immediate future were not sufficiently worked through.

All reports delivered at the Congress bore the character of open, healthy self-criticism. Comrade Jilek, in the report of the Secretariat, mainly drew attention to the shortcomings which prevail in the organisational life of the Party. He gave concrete examples of these shortcomings, especially in nucleus and fraction work, and called on the Party organisations to carry on systematic work for the education of new active forces, by a proper organisation of collective work. Further, Comrade Jilek reported that the alliance in the Party leadership which had been formed at the Enlarged Executive for the liquidation of the Right opposition (Bubnik and Co.), had proved successful in practice and that the tendencies into which the Party had been divided "were growing together in Leninist Party work."

**Czecho-Slovakian C.P.—continued**

Comrade Haken, in his report on the economic and political position and the tasks of the Party, laid stress on the signs of crisis in capitalist stabilisation on a world scale and in Czecho-Slovakia in particular. He urged that from the point of view of the international duties of the Party, its task was to increase its readiness for battle in such a way that it would be capable of supporting every struggle of the proletariat. He enumerated the internal tasks of the Party thus :

- (a) That the C.P.C.S. remain a united, firm, disciplined mass organisation with a clear-sighted leadership ;
- (b) That it advance in ideological and organisational Bolshevisation and struggle against opportunism in its own ranks ;
- (c) That its tactics correspond with the objective situation, and that this be always the revolutionary tactic of the class struggle ;
- (d) That with the help of democratic centralism it should maintain absolute internal discipline ;
- (e) That it raise its capacity for action by making all the groups work more actively, by distributing duties more generally throughout the entire membership of men, women and the youth, and finally by the formation of a revolutionary active corps ;
- (f) That through theoretical training it should gain a higher level for its press, officials and entire membership.

The draft resolution, written on this point of the agenda by Comrade Smeral and adopted by the Political Bureau, draws attention among other things to the following four events which have taken place in the course of the past year in the political life of Czecho-Slovakia : (1) The exclusion of the Czech Social Democrats and National Socialists from the Government ; (2) Increase of the influence of the Czecho-Slovakian agrarian party on the Government and simultaneous extension of the capitalist nature of this party ; (3) considerable increase of Catholic clericalism ; (4) a rapprochement between the Nationalist, German and Slovakian bourgeoisie, hitherto in opposition, and the Czech ruling classes, and participation of the German and Slovakian bourgeois parties in the new Government coalition.

**Government of Reaction**

The resolution characterises the present Government as a government of extreme economic, social and cultural reaction. The class contradictions between the possessing classes on the one hand and the workers and small peasants on the other have become more intense as a result of the economic crisis and the offensive of individual capitalists and agrarians. In such a situation it is the duty of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia in its own ranks and among the masses of the workers, awakening from reformist illusions, to maintain the belief in the socialist goal and in the methods of the revolutionary struggle. Furthermore, the resolution expresses that it is the duty of the Party to strengthen the contact with the masses and to ensure that it shall not be undermined (by larger circulation of the Party press, better organisation of the youth and working women, by Com-

munists taking a leading part in the trade union movement and in all social conflicts for daily partial demands as the best representative of the workers' interests, by proper utilisation of factory councils, transforming them into fighting class organs in all trades, by a further development of the United Front in the various organisations from below, by the extension of our influence on those sections of the peasants and middle classes threatened with economic difficulties, by securing leadership and control in the national struggle for freedom of the national minorities and utilising this struggle in order to extend and intensify the anti-capitalist front generally, etc.).

**Struggle against War**

"The Party Conference calls on the Party members to exert their full power on behalf of a further intensification of socialisation in the sphere of organisational construction, of trade union tactics, of contact with the land and in the domain of the ideological and theoretical Bolshevisation of the Party membership."

The resolution strongly stresses the point that the struggle against the capitalist offensive and against political reaction must be carried out in close contact with all important events which take place on the international revolutionary front.

"The C.P.C.S. must in the coming period see that not only Communists, but the largest possible masses of Czecho-Slovakian proletariat, be always ready for the struggle against the danger of war and to support all important storm centres in the international labour movement. All the power of the workers of this state must be concentrated on frustrating the attacks of imperialism on the revolutionary movement in China. We especially feel ourselves bound in life and death with the great proletarian state of the U.S.S.R. against which the capitalist world, under the leadership of England, is preparing a criminal military intervention."

**Factory Groups Too Open**

The discussion on point one on the agenda was rather short and mainly touched on the various organisational shortcomings in Party work. Amongst other things, attention was drawn to the considerable fluctuation in membership of factory groups which was explained by the incorrect methods employed. This is oftener than not far too open, and thereby exposes Communists in factories and causes their dismissal. In the political resolution, some comrades felt that there was a certain exaggeration of the influence of foreign, especially of British imperialism, on the recent reactionary turn which bourgeois politics has taken in Czecho-Slovakia. In the commission, however, it was proved that the political resolution had been correct. It pointed out that the recent development of bourgeois policy in Czecho-Slovakia must be considered in connection with the endeavour of some of the imperialist powers, especially Great Britain, to establish a counter-revolutionary united front against the Chinese Government, the Soviet Government and the revolutionary workers in all countries. It was further pointed out that recently British

**Czecho-Slovakian C.P.**—continued

influence on bourgeois policy in Czecho-Slovakia had grown considerably, and when compared with French influence, was in the ascendant.

Comrade Bolen delivered the report on the agrarian question. Within the limits of this article it is not possible to record his interesting description of agrarian conditions in Czecho-Slovakia, which are in many respects unique, or to give details of the policy outlined in the resolution on this question. The discussion which followed showed the lively interest on the part of the delegates in this question. The speakers in the discussion unmasked the manoeuvres with which the agrarian party endeavoured to keep large masses of the agricultural population under their leadership. The agitation of the landowners against the Communists under the plea that every peasant, no matter how small his holding, will be deprived of his land, has not yet completely lost its effectiveness. But the C.P.C.S. has succeeded in many places by various methods (described in detail during the discussion) in establishing contact with the peasant masses. The participation of the Slovakian Nationalist Party in the Government makes it easier at the present moment for Communists to make advances to the disappointed Slovakian peasantry.

The greatest interest of the Party conference was concentrated on the problems of the trade union movement. This problem is a vital one for the further successful advance of the revolution in Czecho-Slovakia. The trade union movement there is divided up into five isolated unions. Amongst this number there are several reformist unions which are larger than the R.I.L.U. unions, and the total number of the membership of all the reformist organisations is naturally much larger. Given circumstances such as these, the Communist struggle for trade union unity is extremely important. But at the present moment the problems of the further development of this struggle are extremely complicated. The desire to strengthen the Red trade unions often clashes with the development of the United Front and the development of Communist fraction work in the trade unions. This is practically a dead stop. The development of the Red trade unions is rather backwards than forwards, the Communist fraction work in the reformist trade union is also weak, and the struggle for unity is without sound foundation and brings no results.

**Trade Union Work**

The general policy for the co-ordination of revolutionary trade union work in Czecho-Slovakia which was indicated by the E.C.C.I., and now adopted by the Fourth Congress of the C.P.C.S., is undoubtedly correct on general lines. But it is not sufficiently clearly formulated to be carried out in practice, especially under the leadership of the Red trade unions. The Fourth Party Congress did not succeed apparently in arriving at any decisive solution on this question, but it was cleared up considerably, and a final satisfactory conclusion is sure to be realised in the immediate future.

The report of Comrade Zapototzki on this question was very carefully drafted and contained very interesting material. He kept to the right policy both in regard

to the Red trade unions and their liquidatory tendencies and in respect of the deviations of Comrade Hais amongst other leading functionaries of the Red trade unions. These in practice aim at uniting in one Red union all semi-revolutionary workers who are dissatisfied with the tactics of the reformist leaders, regardless of the possibility of further trade union work. He further stressed the necessity of increased fraction work in reformist and also in the Red trade unions (26 per cent. of the Party members eligible are still outside the trade unions).

Comrade Hais assured the Conference that he was 90 per cent. in agreement with the resolution. He took objection, however, to the criticism of the leadership of the Red trade unions. The other speakers in the discussion mainly concentrated on criticising the tactics of Comrade Hais.

There remains still to be mentioned the great enthusiasm with which the greetings were sent to the Chinese revolutionary army and the Chinese workers, the proletariat of the Soviet Union and the C.P.S.U.

**A United Party**

Just as all resolutions at the Party Congress were adopted unanimously, so, too, the C.C. was elected unanimously. From amongst the more prominent members of the former C.C., Comrade Neurath was not re-elected. In October, 1926, he had been removed from membership of the Politbureau and Secretariat because of his fractional activity on behalf of the Russian opposition. The fractional work carried on by him and one or two other comrades remained quite isolated and found no support among the mass of the Party. The endeavour made in autumn, 1926, by certain comrades of Right tendencies to open up a discussion in the press in favour of the Russian opposition also remained an isolated one.

The Fourth Party Congress was a clear demonstration of the internal consolidation of the Party. This consolidation, of course, does not signify that during the development of the further Bolshevisation of the Party every difference and deviation is out of the question. No, the Party itself uttered a warning against the dangers both of Right and ultra-Left tendencies. But the possibility of the development of such a deviation is quite a different matter from an immediate great danger. Such a danger does not exist at the present moment in the C.P.C.S. The representative of the E.C.C.I. formulated the chief task of the C.P.C.S. as follows: To win leading positions in the immediate future in all branches of the labour movement. For the C.P.C.S. this is not impossible, but actually a concrete task. In the immediate future the accomplishment of this task chiefly depends on the correct solution and regulation of the trade union question.

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