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## CONTENTS

### A Year of the Labour Government.

*General.*

#### Pan-Europe

By A. DE VRIES

#### Franco-Italian Conflict

By G. MÜLLER

#### Workers' Counter - Offensive in the Woollen Textile Industry

By J. R. CAMPBELL

#### The German Proletariat faces New Struggles

By H. REMMELE

#### A Social Democratic Theory that Needs Denouncing

By I. MINGULIN

*Towards 5th Profintern Congress.*

#### The Fight for the Majority of the Working Class

By E. HERKERT

*Comintern.*

#### Italy and the Immediate Tasks of the Italian Party

By GARLANDI

## A YEAR OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

MR. MACDONALD has celebrated the first anniversary of his second Prime Ministership with a partial crisis in the Labour Government, with several blood baths in India and with the suppression of the woollen workers' strike. It has never been an unusual thing in Great Britain to be Prime Minister for a second time, to organise blood baths in India or to suppress the strike movements of the working class. MacDonald is Prime Minister only for the second time; Lord Palmerston, the most typical representative of rising British capitalism, was Prime Minister many more times; only international developments, the decay of British imperialism and the British working class, can prevent Mr. MacDonald from beating Palmerston's record. In 1853 Marx wrote as follows on the relation between Palmerston and the British public:—

"Ruggiero was more and more captivated by Alcine's false charm, although he knew that behind her was hidden an old hag—toothless, eyeless, tasteless, devoid of any attraction—and the knight fell more and more in love with her, although he knew that she had transformed all her former admirers into asses and other animals. The English public is a new Ruggiero, and Palmerston a new Alcine."

Mr. MacDonald, the latest Alcine, first occupied the Ministerial chair on 1st January, 1924. In a short time, up to 5th November, 1924, when he was overthrown, he succeeded in changing his admirers into asses. Never-

theless, he has again succeeded, "by his false charm," in winning to himself still greater numbers of English Ruggieros. After an election victory in which the programme of the Labour Party was watered down to an election programme, "Labour and the Nation" was again diluted in His Majesty the King's speech from the throne. But justice requires us to state that Mr. MacDonald has not by any means changed all his admirers into asses; the imperialist bourgeoisie of Great Britain, which a year ago transferred the management of its business to the Labour Party, has not got everything that it expected from its business manager, Mr. MacDonald, for it was, in fact, unobtainable; still, it has no cause to feel itself in the situation of an admirer who has been changed into an ass. On the other hand, the working class electors of the Labour Party have every reason to reflect whether they do not represent those Ruggieros who were threatened with the fate of Alcine's former admirers, or whom that fate had already overtaken.

The British bourgeoisie has perhaps some reason to be disillusioned in Mr. MacDonald, for, in spite of all his efforts, he has been less successful in preventing the disintegration of the Empire than he promised to be in the election programme and after the elections. The growing world crisis of capitalist economy has certainly aggravated MacDonald's position as business manager of the most parasitic of all capitalisms. The markets, which had already grown too narrow for the capital and commodity export of British capitalism, have been still more limited by the crisis. American capitalism is younger and more capable of resistance, and it could therefore withstand the effects of the economic crisis better than English capitalism. The crisis has caused American capitalism to penetrate more than formerly into the British colonies, Dominions and spheres of influence, with the export of capital and commodities. Even Japanese capitalism, and particularly the Japanese textile industry, has been able in the past year, not only to maintain the positions in India and China which it has won from the English, but even to strengthen and extend them. The howling of the two Press lords, Rothermere and Beaverbrook, for imperial protection, and

the similar demands of Mr. Baldwin, the Conservative leader, have aroused nothing but derisive laughter in the Dominions. America has made great advances in the British dominions and in the spheres of influence formerly controlled by British capitalism; not only in Canada and India, but also in Arabia, Egypt, and particularly in Latin America.

Nor has Mr. MacDonald succeeded in fulfilling the hope that he and his party would be able to crush the national revolutionary movement in the colonies by other means than those employed by his predecessors, the Tories. Egypt, it is true, has been "pacified" without "undue employment" of armed force; but in Palestine all the weapons of the British colonial army, and the bloodiest suppression were necessary in order to establish at least the "peace" of the graveyard. Even that peace has not been attained in India. Peshawar, Rangoon and other towns and districts where the recent massacres are quite comparable to the old ones carried out by the various Kitcheners of the day, indicate, not the success of the Labour colonial policy, but only its development along a peculiar but unmistakable road of social fascism.

#### NO INTERNATIONAL PEACE

The failure to bring about the "internal pacification" of the British Empire is supplemented by the complete crash of MacDonald and his Party in the matter of "international peace." The re-establishment of diplomatic and trading relations with the Soviet Union was far from being the work of the Labour Party alone. The speed with which relations were established was dictated partly by the Liberals, partly by the Tories. The former wished to hasten the process, the latter to delay it, and MacDonald fluctuated between the two parties, like the tomb of Mohammed between heaven and earth. But even since diplomatic and trading relations were established, the MacDonald Government has not ceased to carry on the imperialist war preparations against the Soviet Union, just as his predecessors did, and its commercial policy towards the Soviet Union is no less narrow-minded than that of any former government. The construction of the Singapore base, the armed fortress of British imperialism in the East, was continued by MacDonald. The

"pacifist" character of the London Naval Disarmament Conference changed as completely and abruptly as was expected by those who realised that the continuity of British foreign policy would be as carefully preserved by MacDonald as by any government of the two older parties. The pacifist wave which was expected from the MacDonald Government, and which was prophesied by continental social democracy, failed to appear.

In its place, the reverse is to be observed. In spite of a few lukewarm phrases uttered by Mr. Henderson on the subject of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, British imperialists organised the international crusade against the Soviet Union. Recently, Mr. MacDonald has withdrawn completely from international pacifist activities, as if, with the speeding up of war preparations, he were not allowed to dampen the "warlike spirit" of the peoples. It was no other than MacDonald's colleague Herr Vandervelde, who expressed his sorrowful disappointment in the results of the Labour Government's pacifist activity.

But the working class electors, and indeed all the 8,300,000 voters who gave the Labour Party 289 seats in Parliament, have every reason to reflect thoroughly on the extent to which the internal policy of the Labour Government during the past year has succeeded in bringing about the "internal stabilisation" of the country.

In its famous programme, "Labour and the Nation," the Labour Party criticised the Conservatives because (in spite of the daily assistance of the Labour Party) they had not succeeded in effecting the stabilisation of British economy. The programme declares that the stabilisation of the Conservative Party is worse than a crisis, that it is nothing but:

"the stability of aimlessness, of torpor and, should it continue, of decay. It (*i.e.*, the Conservative Party) has stabilised luxury and squalor, private waste and public parsimony, idleness and the disorganisation of productive industry, an expenditure upon armaments which, in spite of trifling reductions, is still extravagant, and a not less extravagant economy upon the services which fortify the health and enrich the spirit of the whole community. . . The only detail it has forgotten to

stabilise is a civilised standard of life for the workers of Great Britain."

Let us leave the luxury and squalor to the Methodist preachers of the Labour Party. The figures showing the decrease in the number of workers employed in heavy industry and the increase in those engaged in luxury trades, prove that luxury and squalor have diminished just as little under the Labour Government as during the time of Conservative stabilisation. If private waste has not decreased, nor has public parsimony. We need only refer to Mr. Snowden's budget, which even Liberal politicians described as parsimonious and "insufficiently social." Just before the anniversary of the Labour Government the right-hand man of the Lord Privy Seal and railway leader, his assistant in "fighting unemployment" resigned from the Government. This one-time Conservative, the Labour M.P., Sir Oswald Mosley, gave as an explanation of his action his opinion that the policy of the MacDonald Government on the problem of unemployment was aimless and Conservative, and that Mr. Thomas was much too subservient to the big banks. Throughout the period of the second Labour Government unemployment has steadily increased. When Baldwin handed over the management of British capitalism to the Labour Government, the number of unemployed was little over one million. In January of this year the figure reached 1,470,000, in February 1,508,000, in March 1,560,000, in April 1,605,000 and at the time of the Government's anniversary 1,770,000. But "the stabilisation of a civilised standard of life for the workers of Great Britain" has been promoted by the Labour Government by other methods. The Court of Arbitration appointed by the Government awarded a 9½ per cent. wage cut to the workers in the cotton textile industry, while the intensity of labour in the mills was increased.

#### PAY BACK

The Labour Government is the government of rationalisation of the productive industries. It is making the present generation of English workers pay back to the last farthing everything that their predecessors enjoyed in virtue of the former monopolist position of

British national economy and of the super profits due to that position, in which they shared. The Labour Government has, of course, been unable to do anything to prevent the parasitic decay of British imperialism. But in order to make this process and its consequences less painful to the bourgeoisie, it is allowing the workers to pay the entire cost of rationalisation. In the mining industry hours of labour have remained the same as under the Conservative Government; in some districts hours have even been increased. Wages are continually falling, and the struggle of the workers to maintain their present standard is sabotaged by the whole system of labourism — trade unions, party, co-operatives, government. Mondism has been developed still further; every militant activity on the part of the working class is either crushed at the outset or during the course of the struggle which has broken out against the will of the trade union leaders.

In spite of rationalisation, the balance of trade shows that British industry not only cannot win back its position on the world market, but that it cannot maintain even the position it now occupies. During the Labour Government the imports of cotton and wool have fallen, while the import figures for steel and iron have risen. As to export figures, the export of coal could only be maintained at the old level thanks to the fact that the Labour Government, in all questions affecting the working class, has refrained from touching anything which it promised to change. Under the Labour Government the English working class is paying the full cost of rationalising a decaying industry. Thus the famous "civilised stand of life of the workers of Great Britain" was not stabilised by the Labour Government, but it will be stabilised at a considerably lower level. This is true not only of the working class as a whole, but also of the workers in employment. The Labour Government's arbitrator in the textile dispute effectively disposed of any illusions on the subject of a fall in the standard of life by rationalisation and growing unemployment being merely a temporary factor. No. The Labour Government, as attorney for the capitalist Shylock, has demanded from the working class the pound of flesh in payment for

the old debts of the once aristocratic working class of Great Britain; more, it has allowed the pound of flesh to be cut from the workers by the sharp and rationalised knife of capitalist exploitation, as compensation for the crumbs which the fathers of the present workers received in the past out of the enormous colonial profits of the export industries.

Bradford alone showed that industrial peace cannot be established by the Labour Government to the extent that was expected of it by the bourgeoisie. Together with the unemployment problem, this is the deepest cause of the ferment within the Labour Party, which led to a minor governmental crisis and gave rise to the left manoeuvres, not only of Mr. Maxton, but also of the most reactionary trade union leaders, who put forward a "demand" for the revision of the Tory anti-Trade Union Law. The leftness of Maxton and company has as little value as the manoeuvres of the trade union bureaucrats. Both, however, are symptomatic. They are a sign of fermentation within the British working class and of the further development of the revolutionary movement in the colonies. They are the reverse side of the picture offered by the rapid social fascist development of the Labour Party in its second period of office. Both to the right and left renegades, the Labour Party served as proof that the Communist International was wrong when it pointed out the development of social democracy into social fascism. "In England there are not murders of the workers every day, as there are in Germany." "In England the Labour Party is even opposed to participation in a Liberal Government." "It is trying to achieve power alone, etc., etc." It was stated that Mondism was nothing but an insular edition of continental "community of interests," that it was not directed towards strike-breaking, such as is practised by the reformists in Germany, France and elsewhere.

We may leave the example of Bradford, and of the numerous local trade union branches which have been expelled from the union, wholly aside. No thoughtful and militant worker will doubt that the actions of the British trade unions and Labour Party show a direct development towards strike-breaking, and that, in economic disputes, the goal has

already been reached. If it is felt that a Zörgiebel is lacking to make the picture of the social fascist nature of the developments taking place within the Labour Party complete, let us turn our eyes to India and read the statements of Mr. Benn, Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Labour Government. To his own question: What is the duty of a government in a case such as India? Mr. Benn replied that the duty of a government is to govern. When the "left" Brown put the question, what is the duty of a Labour Government, Benn, to the general applause of Parliament, answered as clearly as any Severing or Zörgiebel could be expected to do: the duty of a Labour Government is also to govern.

## AFTER US—YOU

Of course, this does not refer only to India. It merely shows the peculiarities of social fascist development within the social democracy of a colonial empire. It only means that before the methods of government being used in India are applied to the motherland, the dying colonial slaves, the corpses of the Indian workers and peasants cry out to the working class electors of London, Bradford and South Wales: "*De te fabula narratur*—after us, you too will be changed into the corpses of workers, you electors of MacDonald, should you really try to make your standard of life civilised."

The words of Mr. Benn and Mr. MacDonald, in whose opinion the Labour Government in India cannot give way to the use of violence, for that would be in opposition to all the principles of democratic government and the responsibility of popular representation, are not the last words of English social fascism. They will take on a louder tone, once the English workers seriously take up the struggle for a civilised standard of life, once the English workers really go forward, not on behalf of pacifism, but against imperialism, once the English workers not only express their sympathy with the colonial revolution, but render real assistance to the national revolutionary movement, once they fight, not for a Labour Government, but for the rule of the working class.

A whole year of the Labour Government has probably opened the eyes of many British workers. They can see the old hag of social fascism hiding behind the false attraction of the modern Alcine.

It is the task of the Communist Party of Great Britain, in directing its political and organisational work to the masses in the factories, to utilise the enlightenment of the English worker which has followed from a year of Labour Government as a lever to revolutionise the proletarian masses, to guide with a firm hand the daily struggles of the workers for a civilised standard of life, to unite these struggles with the struggle for the emancipation of the colonial peoples and the fight against imperialist war, in order to become the real leading mass Party of the British working class and the strong support of the national revolutionary movement in the colonial British Empire.

"Ilich's strength lay precisely in the fact that for him the Revolution was a live thing," says N. Kinspkaya, wife and life comrade of

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General

## PAN-EUROPE

By A. DE VRIES

A YEAR ago Briand, the permanent Minister for foreign affairs of the French Republic, surprised newspaper readers by a speech delivered on 5th September to a meeting of the League of Nations at Geneva on the subject of "the United States of Europe." It did not stop there; on the 9th September the representatives of twenty-seven European states met at the "historic" breakfast table when Aristide Briand analysed his proposals in greater detail. The practical results of the much-advertised breakfast were, however, of the poorest character; the representatives of the other states did not allow themselves to be charmed into making any definite promise by Briand's eloquence, and the only result was the recommendation to the French Government to prepare a memorandum on the subject of the unification of European states, so that a "European Conference" might be held at Geneva at the same time as the next session of the League of Nations.

Then for a long time nothing more was heard of Pan-Europe. Obviously, the time of The Hague and London Conferences, where the inner-European capitalist contradictions were so powerfully revealed, was not particularly suitable for a further flow of Briand eloquence. At last, on 17th May, 1930, after a carefully-prepared press campaign, the promised memorandum was sent forth into the world—or rather into Europe, for it is intended only for the European states, including England, and not for the United States, Turkey and, of course, above all, not for the Soviet Union.

The memorandum was published at the moment that the Young Plan entered into force, the International Bank began its work and the evacuation of the Rhineland was ratified — that is, at the moment when French imperialism was hoping, by the commercialisation of the German debt, considerably to improve its financial position, to ensure for decades the enslavement of the German working masses with the assistance of the German bourgeoisie, and to make the latter the servants of its imperialist objectives.

This took place at the time that the London Naval Conference brought about a fair amount of strain in the Anglo-French alliance and accentuated Franco-Italian hostility to an extreme degree, when Mussolini aired his thoughts in the following words:—

"There is nothing more insulting for the national pride of Italy than the suspicion launched by some to the effect that our recent naval programme will not be realised. I reaffirm here that the programme will be realised ton for ton, that the 29 units of the new programme will be put upon the seas because the will of fascism is not only iron and decisive, but it also mathematical, because our will is not shaken, but rather attracted by obstacles . . . . Although words are beautiful things, machine-guns, ships, aeroplanes and cannon are still more beautiful things, for right without force is an empty word. A powerfully armed Italy puts forward the following alternative: either valuable friendship or embittered enmity."\*

Briand's memorandum was published when the economic crisis had already gripped all capitalist countries, when the figures of unemployment had reached an unprecedented height and competition on the world market had become extraordinarily severe; the crisis stops on the frontiers of the Soviet Union, which is exerting all its strength in the successful building up of Socialism.

And finally, to complete the picture: at the same time that the French note was issued, the "Pan-European Union," under the guidance of the not unknown Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, met in solemn session in Berlin.

While, however, there is not much importance to be attached to the wordiness of this pacifist Count, as serious attention must be given to the new political enterprise of the French bourgeoisie, in however ridiculous and "idealist" a form it may be expressed outwardly, as to any other imperialist beginning. What is Briand's object, and how far can he achieve it?

The United States of Europe is intended to mean the organisation of an imperialist empire which, based on the amalgamation of European states, would be the equal of the British Empire and the United States of America. This is also the picture which dangles before

\* Taken from the *London Times* report: 19.5.30.

the eyes of the believers in a Pan-Europe; but there is no doubt whatever that capitalism cannot succeed in reaching this goal, either in the political or the economic field. Never has there been so much friction in capitalist Europe as now, never has it been so torn by internal contradictions. And these contradictions, instead of being modified, are tending to become more and more rapidly acute. In Pan-Europe creditors and debtors are openly hostile to each other; the Young Plan, far from relieving the German workers of their burdens, has made those burdens heavier, more concentrated and more intolerable. National suppression, and the resistance of the national minorities which the Versailles Treaty created in every country and corner of the Continent, is leading to more bitter struggles. France and Italy are both trying to surround themselves with an army of vassal states, in preparation for the imperialist war. The economic disintegration is progressing; the "20,000 miles of new tariff barriers," which Briand's memorandum so heartily deplored, are not being removed; on the contrary, the sudden and repeated increases in German agricultural tariffs, like the defensive measures taken against American super-protectionism, will only make these contradictions more acute. The more backward states have no intention of ceasing to build up their own industry in competition with the larger states.

It is worthy of notice that economic unification, the principal aim of the Pan-Europe enthusiasts who visualise a free-trade area as extensive as that of the U.S.A., is very much in the background in the French memorandum. Real politics do not admit of such hopes, and the memorandum is content with a few extraordinarily vague terms of speech, which do not include a single obligation, and it is expressly emphasised that absolute sovereignty is to be preserved for each state. All the emphasis is laid upon the political objects of the unification, and the following paragraph is indicative of the meaning of French politics:—

"No progress in the direction of economic union can be achieved without a corresponding move towards political union, upon which the all-important question of security depends. The organic construction of Europe must, therefore, begin on the political plane. . . . The conception of political co-opera-

tion in Europe . . . could result in the establishment of a common arbitration and security system in Europe, just as the progressive extension of the policy initiated at Locarno could lead to the unification of all separate agreements and national guarantees into one common system."

It is the same old song—"security," which means the inviolability of the Versailles Treaty, of the French conquests, and the predominance of the armed power of French militarism and its vassals on the European continent. The "extension of the policy initiated at Locarno" refers to an eastern Locarno to guarantee the Polish frontier, which Germany has for long obstinately refused to consider. French imperialism wants the "unification" of Europe in order to maintain the hegemony which it won as a result of the war.

It is therefore easy to understand the general restraint with which Briand's initiative was greeted. The English press was coldly sceptical; Mussolini, just when the memorandum was published, came out with his sword-rattling speech; and even the German democratic press, the most faithful supporter of pacifist chatter, hedges its agreement about with multitudinous reservations. The positive objective of Pan-Europe, the political and economic unification of the European states, can never be achieved under capitalism. Although it is becoming more and more difficult for the productive forces to work within the state frontiers, and consequently the anxiety to tear down those barriers is constantly renewed, imperialism is quite incapable of overcoming this contradiction; imperialism, being dying capitalism, brings this contradiction to a head, by producing further disintegration and disunity ("20,000 miles of new frontiers," and everywhere a mad increase in protective tariffs).

We shall disentangle the real meaning of French diplomacy's latest step if we ask ourselves, not for what lasting purpose the European states should and must come together, but against whom their temporary unification is to be directed. There cannot be any doubt that Briand's move on the diplomatic chess-board is an answer to Mussolini. As against the Duce's sword-rattling, France is out to win middle-class sympathy by a pacifist gesture.

But, however complicated the circumstances in which it was made, this move on the part of French imperialism is directed, above and before all, against the two arch enemies: in the more distant future, against the U.S.A.; in the immediate future, against Communism and the Soviet Union.

It is true that, in his memorandum, Monsieur Briand took the trouble expressly to deny that the European Union would be directed against anybody, whoever it was—only one might answer, appropriately enough: “Methinks the gentleman doth protest too much.” There are very few who will put even the least trust in these solemn affirmations. As a result of the crisis, the struggle for world markets has become extremely acute. American industry is getting ready to make a new attack in order to increase its exports as a way out of the crisis. At the same time the tariff wall which surrounds the U.S.A. has been raised still higher, in order to protect American capital’s monopoly on the home market against all attacks. The new tariffs particularly threaten several branches of French exporting industry. In these circumstances it is obvious that European unity is intended to establish a temporary united front against the competitor which is so far superior to the European states, taken individually. Naturally enough, the American press received Briand’s proposal with un-concealed hostility.

But Briand’s chief blow is aimed at Communism, at the leftward development of the working class, and at the Soviet Union. As far as the Communist movement is concerned, the reference can be found in the memorandum itself:—

**“The proposal studied by 27 European states found its justification in the feeling of collective responsibility towards the danger which threatens European peace both from the political, as from the economic and social standpoint, on account of the general disorder in which European economy finds itself.”**

That is: unity of European capitalists against the danger of revolution.

Of course, French diplomacy denies that its memorandum is directed against the Soviet Union. But the facts speak too clearly for themselves. Let us see how the Pan-Euro-

peans, who have no need to hide their thoughts behind diplomatic phrases, express themselves in this respect. There is no need to refer to the innumerable statements on this subject by the pope of the Pan-European sect, Condanhove-Kalergi. There has appeared in Berlin a pamphlet by a “European (!) statesman of the present day,” under the title: *The Inevitable War between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers; the Annihilation of Bolshevism by United Europe*. It is an unspeakably filthy piece of work, filled with the lies and slander of the papal campaign—but it has appeared under the Pan-European banner. The European statesman writes: “We see this war approaching with inescapable certainty. Why should we wait until the Soviet Union has completely organised its military power? Would it not be more expedient, would it not better promote the world peace threatened by Communist imperialism, if the great Powers were to enter into an alliance against Soviet Russia and go forth against the enemy? There is no better and safer method of creating a united and peaceful Pan-Europe, than for all the great Powers of the Continent to unite in a common crusade against the Bolshevik danger, and rid the world of it for ever, before the whole earth breaks out into flames.”

This scribble would be of no consequence, if it were the only example of its kind; but since the time of the civil war there has never been such a flood of dirty calumny published against the Soviet Union and Communism as there is now, with the widely distributed literature of the Roman Catholic crusade, the writings of the Pole, Ossendovsky, and the expressed sentiments of the nameless European statesman.

It is the brilliant carrying out of the Five Year Plan, the building up of Socialism, the progress of production at a rate unknown to the capitalist world, which is infusing courage and confidence in their own powers with the workers of the world. For the capitalist world, writhing in the agonies of economic crisis, the existence of the Socialist workers’ state has never in the past represented as direct a threat as it does at present. That is why, all over the world, the capitalists are feverishly and uninterruptedly preparing to launch

the attack. Briand's proposal is only one new link in the long chain of provocative acts which have followed each other more and more rapidly since the beginning of the year; it follows logically, as "mental preparation" for the attack, upon the Kutepov campaign, the acquittal of the *chervonets* forgers in Berlin, the formation of white guard bands under the leadership of General Miller, Mexico's act of breaking off relations with the Soviet Union, the attack on the Soviet representation in Munich, the agreement between Germany and Poland, the campaign of slander and forgery conducted by Police Commissioner Whalen, of New York, the clerical crusade and the attempt to blow up the Soviet Embassy at Warsaw, which failed only by accident.

By her Note of 17th May, France tried to take the initiative in the offensive against the Soviet Union. On the 20th May, the *Rote Fahne* wrote: "What is new in the situation, and what provides the foundation for Briand's plan, is the fact of German-French co-operation, brought about by an increasing unity of economic interests. French and German imperialism are together taking over the leadership of the anti-Soviet bloc of European purposes. Germany as an ally in the fight against the Soviet Union—or, as the minister and millionaire Loucheur, one of Briand's closest colleagues, put it at the Pan-Europe Congress in Berlin on the 19th April: "France and Germany must stand united in their efforts at the head of the unity move-

ment." The German bourgeoisie is still coy, because so far no agreement has been reached upon the price of her co-operation. Strong forces are pushing the agreement forward, the Franco-German industrial and mining cartels. There can be no doubt that, the deeper the crisis grows, the higher the wave of working class indignation, the more feverishly will the imperialists put the finishing touches to their preparations for the attack. The war appears to them as a way out of the economic crisis. As Pilsudski said, when he received a delegation of unemployed metal workers, who described to him the desperate position: "Soon all the metal workers of Poland will have work." The matter appears to the capitalists in this fashion, that the war will result in the breakdown of Bolshevism and the opening of the wealthy Russian market, thus providing a way out of the crisis.

So the vigilance of the workers in their fight against the war danger must not slacken, nor their activities cease, even if it may appear for a time that the anti-Soviet campaign is being conducted with less energy.

The French memorandum is one further step on the road of imperialist attack, a step which implies that the greater part of the preparatory work has already been done, and that the business now on hand is the organisational unification of forces. Let the working class answer with the mobilisation of all its forces for the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and the war danger.

# THE FRANCO-ITALIAN CONFLICT

By G. MULLER

THE London Conference (on disarmament —Ed.) served as the basis for a new sharpening in Franco-Italian relations. The contradictions between French imperialism and Italian imperialism have emerged far beyond the confines of a narrow local conflict. In post-war Europe this is one of the axes of international politics. "These contradictions, to a certain degree, play the same rôle as the Franco-German conflict before the War" — writes the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (of May 16th, 1930) on this subject.

Already before the war French imperialism made Northern Africa the main base of its Colonial Empire. After the war it set itself the task of attaining imperialist hegemony on the continent. Both in Northern Africa and in the South of Europe its interests come sharply up against the interests of Italian imperialism. Italian imperialism is one of the youngest members of the capitalist family. When it arrived on the historic arena, at the end of the nineteenth century, the world was already divided up among the big robber States. That explains the struggle of Italian imperialism for its "place beneath the sun." The absence of raw material, the negligible capacity of the home market and the surplus of labour power—these are the main factors impelling Italian capitalism to a policy of expansion in quests for markets, sources of raw material and areas for emigration.

The rapid growth of industry in the northern districts of Italy during and after the war, the development of the production of artificial silk, and of the automobile industry has increased the tendency for expansion. The lack of capital, along with the absence of raw material and the technical backwardness of Italian industry is creating an extremely difficult position for capitalist Italy on the world market. It brings her sharply up against the problem of the monopolisation of sales markets and raw material sources.

Franco-Italian rivalry is developing in two main directions—in the direction of the Balkans and in the direction of Africa. It is there, in the Balkan peninsula, in Tunis, in

Tripoli, that Italian imperialism is groping in search of sales markets and raw material sources. In Africa, Italian imperialism is struggling with the French Colonial Empire, the foundations of which were laid at a time when Italy had not yet become an independent political factor, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. (Imperialist France is now celebrating with great pomp a century's occupation of Algiers.) The contradiction between Italy's African and European policy, the conflict between her "African spirit" and "European spirit" to a considerable degree explains Italy's wavering between the two blocs existing in Europe before the war. The occupation of Tunis by France in 1881 pushed Italy into the embrace of Germany and Austro-Hungary and engendered the Triple Alliance. The Balkan policy of Austro-Hungary, however, drove Italy away from the Triple Alliance and ultimately led to her entry into the war as an ally of France. The "European" spirit overcame the "African": the "two Latin sisters"—France and Italy—united in the same military-imperialistic coalition.

The victory of the "Allies" relieved Italy of Austro-Hungary. But the Versailles Treaty did not solve, and could not solve the problems of Italian imperialism. The territorial compensation received by Italy was quite out of keeping with her demands. In the Balkans, France was able to establish her dominating influence in the new states that sprung up after the war. The Adriatic Sea did not become the "Italian Sea." Italy's African Empire from the economic point of view represents an inconsiderable area. "We came away from Versailles with a mutilated victory," states Mussolini (speech at Milan, May 24th). Having suffered defeat at Versailles, Italian imperialism puts forward the demand for a new division of the world. This demand is directly mainly against France, for it is precisely French imperialism, the "great victor of Versailles," which from all sides is squeezing out the expansionist pressure of Imperialist Italy.

Let us examine the basic problems which go to comprise the Franco-Italian antagonism.

#### TUNIS

First of all Tunis. At the time of its occupation by French troops there were already 10,000 Italians near the boundary of the town of Tunis. André Seyns, "The Italians in Tunis," *International Economic Review*, July, 1927, p. 69.)

Tunis, with its rich deposits of phosphates and other minerals (iron, lead, manganese), with its proximity to Sicily, has always been an object of desire on the part of Italian imperialism. The stream of Italian emigration into Tunis has greatly increased under French rule, and even according to the official data of 1926 there were more Italians in Tunis than French. Of the total number of Europeans in Tunis—173,281—more than half—89,126—are Italians. Only 71,020 are French.

But the numerical preponderance of Italians over French by no means corresponds to the actual correlation of forces. The commanding heights in the political and economic life of the country are entirely in the hands of French capitalism. The French direct the biggest enterprises in the country and play a dominating rôle in agriculture, ruthlessly exploiting the native masses (the native population of Tunis is about two millions). The Italians, however, are in the main workers. In agriculture they also play a secondary part, in spite of the constant increase in land properties owned by Italians. The area of their property increased from 5,658 hectares in 1912 to 14,696 in 1925.

The customs policy of French imperialism—the customs alliance of Tunis with France—benefits French capitalism to the detriment of Italian interests, and France plays a dominating rôle in the foreign trade of Tunis. For the years 1923-1927 the import of French goods to Tunis comprised 64.8 per cent. of all Tunis imports. For the same period this comprised 46.6 per cent. of France's total exports. The corresponding figures for Italy are 6.2 per cent and 19.1 per cent. (Frédéric Labord, "The Economics of Tunis" in the *Political and Parliamentary Review*, November 10, 1929, p. 229).

The Italian Government is conducting in-

tensive work among its emigrants in Tunis in order to preserve and strengthen their contact with the "motherland," to maintain their nationalist feelings. This policy has the object of creating in Tunis a solid base for Italian imperialism, which she could rely on at a decisive moment, when the language of cannon and lead replaces the language of diplomatic notes.

France is striving by every means to destroy this little Italian island in Tunis. For this she is in every way facilitating naturalisation, *i.e.*, the adoption of French citizenship by Italian immigrants, the systematic effecting of their denationalisation. By decree of the President of the French Republic, dated November 8th, 1921, confirmed by the law of 1923, all persons born in Tunis—whose parents or only one parent are of European origin, but also born in Tunis—are considered by law to be French citizens. This is tantamount to envisaging the denationalisation of all Italians through two generations. (See Tittoni, *The Foreign Policy of Italy*, German translation from Italian, Munich, 1928, p. 24.) An extremely effective means of speeding up this denationalisation is the granting of free plots of land and beneficial credits to the naturalised subjects. French imperialism is very skilfully utilising this method of "hastening voluntary naturalisation."

The question of the judicial position of Italians in Tunis is *at the present stage* the central problem of Franco-Italian relations in Africa. The position of Italians in Tunis was regulated by the 1896 convention, which guaranteed Italians the same rights as Frenchmen in the economic sphere and in the taking up of any profession or trade or in industry. This convention was declared null and void by France in 1918 and is automatically renewed every few months. The Franco-Italian negotiations for a revision of the convention remain without result up till now. But in the meantime France is conducting a policy of denationalising Italians and is confronting Italian imperialism with the accomplished fact of the destroyal of its basis of support in Tunis. The impotence of Italy in face of this, the impossibility of offering resistance by economic means, impels her to a solution of the dispute by force of arms.

## LIBYA AND THE QUESTION OF MANDATES

The question of the southern frontiers of Libya, the Italian colony in Northern Africa, is connected with the concessions promised to Italy by France and England in accordance with Article 13 of the London Treaty of 1916 on questions concerning the frontiers of the Italian colonies Eritrea, Somaliland and Libya, which are bordered by French and English colonies.

In the opinion of Italy, this problem is far from being solved, and the compensation she has received is totally inadequate. Italy is demanding that she be granted the territory of Tibetsi and Borcu, near Lake Chad, which is of great importance in linking up Libya with Central Africa. The new occupation of Libya by Italian troops kicked out of there at the beginning of the World War, and their encounter with French troops has once more made the problem acute.

France has replied to the Italian proposals by a categorical refusal.

"French colonial statesmen unanimously consider such a change of the map of Chad as being impossible. This locality has a great future before it. It will become the central route of communications between the African East and the remaining black continent. This zone must be looked upon as the axis of all African economic life of the immediate future. We must not leave it under any pretext; public opinion must make a firm stand on this question."

(Reino, "Italian Pretensions" in *Colonial Fortnightly*, March 25th.)

The third basic problem of the Franco-Italian conflict in Africa consists in the dispute on the former German colonies divided up among France, Belgium and Great Britain as mandate territories. Whereas the powers operating the mandates are endeavouring to get these territories entirely into their own hands and consider themselves to be the complete owners of them, Italy, who has received no mandate insists, on principle, that these colonies are only temporary possessions with the powers' mandate over them. She is demanding more and more energetically a redistribution of mandates and that she be granted one of the colonies at present belong-

ing to France. Maurice Pernau writes in the *Ere Nouvelle* of May 10th:

"It is asserted that in the event of the redistribution of colonial mandates, the Italians will try to seize the Kameruns."

Linking up this demand with other Italian pretensions in Africa, he continues:

"Then they might as well demand that France immediately gives up her African empire."

The categorical refusal of France to give up part of her German loot for the benefit of Italy still further accentuates the conflict with Italian imperialism.

## THE STRUGGLE IN THE BALKANS

In Europe, *i.e.*, in the Balkans, Franco-Italian antagonism is not of such a striking character as in Africa. The existence of a number of so-called independent states in the Balkan peninsula, ruled by cliques guided by the reins of one or other of the "great" imperialist powers, often bribed by them, causes the struggle of the great powers for hegemony in the Balkans to be closely interwoven with the fight of various social groupings and cliques inside the various Balkan countries. The feverish activity of diplomats and financiers who have profitably "lubricated" the friendship of politicians, and who draw big economic advantages from these connections, as also the innumerable intrigues, make it extremely difficult to give an accurate definition of the correlation of forces of France and Italy in the Balkans.

The biggest Balkan country—Yugo-Slavia—is entirely under French influence. Together with the other states of the Little Entente—Czecho-Slovakia and Roumania—as well as with Poland, Yugo-Slavia constitutes the foundation of the French bloc in Europe. The struggle against Yugo-Slavia for domination over the Adriatic Sea is the central point of Italy's Balkan policy. Albania, which by the Tirana (?) Treaty of 1926 was transformed into an Italian colony, is the jumping-off ground, the base for her military intervention in Balkan affairs.

One may say that the constant attempts of Italy to break up the French bloc from within have not led to any result. On the contrary, of recent times, we witness a stabilisation of

France's position in the Balkans. In Yugo-Slavia, before the military *coup d'état* (January, 1929) and the establishment of the absolutist dictatorship, Mussolini gave increasing support to the Croat movement, Raditch's party. Almost at the same time as the Croat nationalists were waging in the Belgrade Parliament a fierce "patriotic fight" against the ratification of the Nettuno treaties, a big Croat delegation visited Rome and in secret negotiations there even went to the length of working out a trading agreement between Italy and the independent Croat State. The *coup d'état* of Alexander I. brought about under the direct guidance of Paris, was a palpable blow for Italy. It meant the defeat of her Yugo-Slav policy and the strengthening of French rule. French imperialism is now complete master in Yugo-Slavia.

"Almost the whole electrical and electrometallurgical industry of Yugo-Slavia is in the hands of the French. The Government has concluded an agreement with the French 'Tunisian Phosphates and Chemical Products Company' by dint of which this company has formed a new society which is to receive all the concessions which were formerly in the possession of the Italian 'Sulphite Company,' for the exploitation of water power . . . French capital is participating in the glass industry, and has also extensive schemes for the exploitation of the boxite deposits in Dalmatia. It is true, this question, properly speaking, is not so much an economic one as an external political and military one. The boxite deposits are the basis for preparing aluminium for the aeroplanes of France and her vassals. Dalmatia, threatened by Fascist Italy, is thus drawn into the economic sphere of France." (O. Valkovskaya: "The Military-Fascist dictatorship in Yugo-Slavia," *World Economy and World Politics*, 1930, No. 3, p. 114.)

The attempt to draw Roumania into the orbit of Italian influence has also met with defeat. The recent Fascist *coup d'état* brought about by Prince Carol—like the one in Belgrade—under direct orders from France, after Loucheur's visit, also means a strengthening of the French positions in Roumania, the con-

solidation of the Roumanian section in the French military bloc.

Italian positions are fairly strong in Bulgaria, which, together with Hungary, belongs to the Italian bloc. In Bulgaria Tsankoff is the puppet of Rome and his recent entry into the Cabinet undoubtedly means the strengthening of Italian influence. At the Second Hague Conference, Italy, by defending the interests of the vanquished countries on the question of Eastern reparations, endeavoured to strengthen her alliance with Hungary, Bulgaria and Austria. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Grandi, in his speech of May 9th, emphasised, after the Hungarian Prime Minister, Bethlen, "that bonds of unbreakable friendship unite the Magyar nation with Fascist Italy."

At the same time he put forward the programme of an "Italian bloc," a bloc of the conquered countries and Italy, who had been squeezed at Versailles—as opposed to the French bloc, that of the victor powers, who were interested in the inviolability of the position created by the peace treaties. In his programme speech of May 9th, he opposed the principle, "according to which, under pretext of demanding the formal and strict observance of the treaties, the attempt is made to preserve a sharp and unjust distinction in the position of the victor and the vanquished countries."

"Treaties are not eternal," he added—and proclaimed, "the necessity for adaptation to the new needs and new facts of the actual situation." The programme for the new partitioning of the world to the advantage of the young imperialist powers, whose expansionist tendencies have been overlooked by the Versailles Treaty—which treaty France wanted to maintain for all time—was quite frankly and clearly formulated in this speech of Grandi's. The Franco-Italian conflict here emerges as the central pivot around which all the contradictions between the imperialist powers of post-Versailles Europe are being concentrated and crystallised.

#### THE NAVAL PROBLEM

We have reviewed the fundamental points of contention between France and Italy. At the London Conference on Naval Disarma-

ment this antagonism was particularly sharply expressed in connection with the problem of naval parity.

The London Conference was summoned for the limitation of naval armaments. But in reality it was a grandiose parade for the purpose of arranging an international agreement against the Soviet Union, under the guise of pacifist manœuvres. It was not possible fully to achieve this object, in the first place because of the impossibility of Italy and France coming to terms.

The point of view of Italian imperialism on the naval problem may be summed up in the demand for naval parity with the fleet of France—the most potent power on the continent. France may need defence on three seas, but Italy—exclusively in the Mediterranean. Another motive put forward is the necessity for maintaining contact with the colonies, which are scattered over the whole world. France could only agree to parity in the event of Great Britain and the United States guaranteeing her their support in the event of aggressive acts by Italy. But this condition was rejected by Great Britain and the United States. For Italian imperialism, however, the question of parity is most urgent, because without this actual supremacy over France in the Mediterranean basin, all the plans for Italian expansion are doomed to failure in advance. Such parity is quite unacceptable to French imperialism, for it would mean leaving at the mercy of Italy all the French interests in the Mediterranean. The solution of the contradiction between these two demands has proved impossible, even with the aid of the best diplomatic talents.

On the basis of this imperialist contradiction, the French and Italian rulers are endeavouring to introduce a whole superstructure of pacifist theories, the object of which is to conceal the substances of the problem. Thus, according to Grandi, "the conception of naval parity really is a new principle of morals and international law, whose duty it is to create mutual trust between the states; this conception means the uprooting of all mistrust or suspicion in their mutual relations, and therefore the confirmation of the futility and needlessness of armament races, and, finally, actual disarmament."

France, in rejecting parity, is supposedly aiming at "assuring the safety of peace" and thus "facilitating the cause of disarmament."

The position of Italy vis-à-vis France may be compared with the position of the U.S.A. in relation to Great Britain: parity is demanded on both sides and in both cases there are the same arguments—the necessity of self-defence in all parts of the globe. But the correlation of forces in these two cases is quite different. Whereas the U.S.A. is capable—by threats of increased armaments, in which, owing to her financial power, victory is indisputable—of compelling England to accept her demands, Italy cannot for long maintain the competition in armaments with France which considerably surpasses Italy from the point of view of financial possibilities. In so far as the tonnage of the French fleet is now 200,000 tons in excess of the Italian tonnage (708,366 tons as against 497,729, according to data of the *Ere Nouvelle*, January 25th, 1930, p. 147)—France can maintain this relation of forces without any difficulty. The absence of a Franco-Italian naval agreement means preserving Italy's disparity in this respect. That is why the negative results of the London Conference caused such a storm of discontent.

The demand for naval parity had the object, apart from its formal aspect, of bringing pressure to bear on France in order to receive concessions from her in Africa; this might have been achieved by linking up the naval problem with the whole ensemble of Franco-Italian mutual-relations and ultimately foregoing parity for compensation in Africa. This plan of Italian imperialism was also rejected by France during the negotiations of Grandi, Briand and Henderson at Geneva in the early part of May. Grandi then proposed appointing a commission composed of British, French and Italian representatives for the joint discussion of naval problems. As to the remaining questions of importance, he proposed solving these by means of the rapid procedure of direct negotiations between France and Italy.

France replied with a refusal to both these proposals. Franco-Italian negotiations, it was stated, could be continued by the usual diplomatic methods. As to the Italo-Franco-British naval problem, Briand proposed post-

poning its solution until the final regulation of the special disputes between Italy and France. In other words, France rejected the connection of the naval problem with the other problems, *i.e.*, the connection which Italy precisely wants to create. At the same time the French reply means that France does not consider it necessary to be in any particular hurry, that Italy is acting as pleader, while France has nothing against the postponement for eternity of problems that are urgent for imperialist Italy. At the present moment imperialist France is master in Africa, and, as we have seen, is solving the questions in dispute there in accordance with her own interests. This French "strong will" is conceding absolutely nothing to Italy—and that is the chief element if the international atmosphere that has brought about the combative utterances of Mussolini and the sharp deterioration in Franco-Italian relations.

But the international situation is not shaping favourably for the specific demands of Italian imperialism in yet another sense.

#### AGAINST U.S.S.R.

The dominating factor in international politics at the present moment is the work for the creation of a military-imperialist bloc against the U.S.S.R. The world economic crisis, which is becoming more acute every day, is intensifying the anti-Soviet tendencies in the imperialist camp.

France is at the present time the skirmisher and organiser in the anti-Soviet crusade. The *coups d'état* in Yugo-Slavia and Roumania were directed mainly against the U.S.S.R. The Anglo-French understanding can be called the pivot of the world anti-Soviet bloc, and at the present time we are witnessing the realisation of Anglo-French collaboration both in Europe and outside. The differences separating these two powers are now being cast aside for the sake of the "higher interests" of world imperialism. The whirlwind of risings in the colonial world, the revolutionary events in India, the movement in Indo-China, the rise of the revolutionary tide in China—all this dictates the closest collaboration between the commanding colonial powers, France and England. And finally Anglo-French collaboration also contains an

element of hostility directed against the U.S.A. The Anglo-American antagonism still remains the chief inner imperialistic contradiction, in spite of all declarations of friendship and agreement. The project for a "Pan-European Federation, put forward by Briand, contains the idea not only of an anti-Soviet but also of an anti-American bloc.

But for Italy the Anglo-French agreement means isolation in Europe, as, without the help of England, Italy has no hope of succeeding in her affairs. The necessity for England to have French support against the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., does not permit her to act continually as arbiter in the Mediterranean Sea or to persuade France to make concessions.

The object of France and England is to draw Italy into their sphere of influence, thus extending the anti-Soviet bloc under their direction. Hence the moderate tone of the French press in relation to Italy. It is clearly evident that the differences with Italy are not the chief anxiety of French imperialism. Italian fascism is quite prepared to conclude an arrangement with her "Latin sister" against the U.S.S.R. The social difficulties inside Italy impel her on to that path. But it must obtain concessions from France, and France is not prepared to concede on anything. The antagonism between French imperialism and Italian imperialism becomes more acute just at a time when the imperialist world is concentrating its forces against the U.S.S.R. We see that both these tendencies do not exclude one another. On the contrary, we see before us a peculiar form in which they are interwoven, have mutual connections.

#### THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRANCO-ITALIAN CONFLICT

Directly after the London Conference, the Italian Council of Ministers passed a decision for the construction in 1930/31 of one 10,000-ton cruiser, two 5,000-ton cruisers, four 1,240-ton destroyers and 22 submarines. This means a considerable increase in tonnage as compared with pre-war years; it is a step forward towards parity with France, the commencement of a new race for armaments. On April 27th five new units, with a total tonnage of 33,000

tons were launched. That is the way Italy answered France's refusal to agree to parity. Simultaneously an anti-French campaign commences to develop in the Italian parliament. The president of the war victims' association, in his speech of May 9th, threatens France with an Italian alliance with the defeated countries—above all with Germany. He literally said the following :

“France should realise that here there is the risk of creating real solidarity between us and her enemies.”

The same day Grandi put forward his programme for revision of the treaties which was to serve as the basis for concentrating the forces of the conquered countries, under the aegis of Italy, in opposition to France and the entire system of the Versailles Treaty.

Then follows the breakdown of negotiations in Geneva, to which we have already referred above. The tension between France and Italy reaches its highest point. Mussolini expresses this in a sharp form in the blatant speeches which he made during his official tour of Tuscany.

Already in his first utterance at Leghorn, Mussolini demanded “a corresponding prestige and place in the world for the Italian people” and threatened those who dare encroach on Italy's independence, that the temperature of the whole nation would rise.

In Florence Mussolini, on behalf of Italy, “with a decisive and war-like countenance,” confronted France with the simple alternative : either close friendship or else the fiercest enmity. Against those who “thought of isolating Fascist Italy,” he pronounced a declaration in honour of war :

“Words are fine things, but rifles, machine-guns, warships, aeroplanes and guns are still better.” It is highly piquant to compare this “indignant” voice with the recent speech of Grandi on June 3rd concerning those who “attach to Italy militaristic intentions, whereas with infinite impatience she is giving ever newer proofs of her desire for disarmament and of her policy of collaboration and peace.”

At Milan Mussolini already came out with the formulation of the policy of a new division of the world by armed force.

“We emerged from Versailles with a mutilated victory. But we still hold victory in our fists.”

The minister Giuratti continues this Mussolini programme against the Versailles Treaty : “If by pacifists you mean defenders of the last Peace Treaty with all its injustices and absurdities, if you mean co-partners of those who in Geneva are amassing a colossal amount of loot, then in no case are we pacifists !”

In order to realise this anti-French programme, imperialist Italy is feverishly seeking allies. Mussolini is turning his eyes towards Germany, the “great victim of the war,” but also with his mind on the revision of the peace treaties. German ships are given a triumphant welcome in Italian ports. Mussolini gives an interview to the editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Theodore Wolf, in which having expressed his conviction as to Germany's revival and prosperity, states : “There are naturally questions upon which we could reach agreement—the question of disarmament and also the question of disarmament and also the question of colonial mandates. Our view-point on principles should be the same.”

With the intermediary of the Vatican, Mussolini is trying to draw the Centre Party and Zeipel's Christian Socialists in Austria into his policy. The Italian Government has for a long time been trying to conclude an alliance with Turkey. In this manner it would be possible to bring about a bloc of the countries beaten in the world war with Italy as hegemon. (Hungary and Bulgaria are closely bound up with Italy.)

#### HOW DOES FRANCE REACT ?

France's answer to Mussolini's excursions and the other Italian manoeuvres did not have to be long awaited. At first this reply emerged in a number of demonstrations of a military nature: big manoeuvres of the French fleet off Toulon, Corsica and Tunis; journey of the Chiefs of the General Staff, General Weygand and General Petain to Nice; tour of revision of the War Minister Maginot, and his journey to Algiers, and, finally, review of the naval base at Bizerte by the Naval Minister Dumesnil. Simultane-

ously, a diplomatic manoeuvre took place. Loucheur undertook a tour of Yugo-Slavia and Roumania. In Yugo-Slavia he already showered praise on France's ally—Yugo-Slavia. In Roumania he prepared the ground for sticking the French agent Prince Carol on the throne.

At the same time Briand comes forward with his scheme for a "pan-European" Federation, which is nothing else but a project for creating United States of Europe on the basis of the correlation of forces created at Versailles with the hegemony of France on the European continent. Briand's pan-European Federation is to become the broad basis for an anti-Soviet coalition under the direction of France. Indirectly this plan is also directed against Italy, against the policy conducted by Mussolini. The *Temps* counterposes Briand's "pacifist" policy—an expression of which is his "pan-European" memorandum—by the policy of "prestige" pronounced by Mussolini at Florence.

It is characteristic that Italy's attitude towards Briand's memorandum was particularly cold and that she is now clinging to the League of Nations, which she counterposes to the "pan-European" Federation idea. The League of Nations *no longer* satisfies France from the view-point of preserving the Versailles system. Italy, however, is by no means responsive to France's desire to strengthen her positions; on the contrary she is preparing a fight with French imperialism on the "pan-European" question.

#### THE PROBLEM OF EMIGRATION

We have pointed out the basic causes of the Franco-Italian conflict, and the special causes that have led to its accentuation in recent times. It merely remains for us briefly to refer to certain secondary problems connected with this conflict. In the first place there is the question of the Italian anti-Fascist emigration. At the present time there are more than nine million Italians in foreign countries. Extensive fascist propaganda is conducted among the masses. As opposed to this, revolutionary anti-fascist elements carry on energetic activity. The Italian Communists expose to the toiling masses of Italian emigrants, the class nature of the bloody

fascist dictatorship and mobilise the masses to fight it.

On the pretext that Freemason France supports the anti-fascist feelings of the emigrants and their "criminal propaganda" against Italy, Fascism is preparing the minds of the public for a fight against France. We may recall that the question of the activities of emigrants was the excuse for the previous sharpening of Franco-Italian relations just over three years ago. But actually the question of the emigration is merely a pretext. The French Government fights against the revolutionary anti-fascist elements so energetically that nothing better could be desired from the fascist view-point. Large numbers of Italian revolutionaries are continually being expelled from France. The reason for such friendly Franco-Italian collaboration in suppressing the revolutionary Italian workers is very simple: the Italian workers in France in fighting against the French capitalists who exploit and oppress them, show no less energy and hate them when they fight against Italian Fascism.

The bourgeois elements in the Italian emigration in general abstain from any comment on the Franco-Italian conflict, but in substance they support the pretensions of Mussolini towards France: for after all, Mussolini represents the interests of Italian capitalism, whose faithful servants they also are. But they have the minimum of influence. In so far as close collaboration has been established between the Italian and the French police for a joint persecution of Italian revolutionaries, it may be considered that the question of the anti-fascist emigration abroad has already been solved favourably for fascism.

A fairly widespread explanation of the Franco-Italian conflict—one that is even current in our own ranks—is to counterpose an overpopulated Italy to a France with a declining population. The high birthrate in Italy is looked upon as a *natural* cause for Italian expansion, which tends *naturally* towards declining France. It is obvious that this "demographical" theory of imperialism is quite false. There must be ruthless exposure of the bourgeois nature of this theory which covers up the class-nature of the Franco-Italian conflict, the social-economic causes of

imperialist wars — one of the factors of expansion.

Under conditions of imperialism, the surplus of cheap labour power increases the tendency to expansion and is one of the factors of it, but it is never its cause. In general the dynamics of the Italian birthrate refute this demographical thesis. The number of births in Italy has decreased since the beginning of the twentieth century, whereas imperialist tendencies have steadily increased. Here are the births statistics in Italy as from 1901 :—

1901 to 1905	...	32.6	per thousand
1911 to 1914	...	31.7	.. ..
1926	...	27.2	.. ..
1927	...	26.5	.. ..
1928	...	26.9	.. ..

An almost continuous fall! (Quoted from Mitratis, "The Demographical Problem in Italy," *Political and Parliamentary Review*, October 10th, 1929.)

#### THE FRENCH DEMOCRATS AND THE FRANCO-ITALIAN CONFLICT

The French "socialists" sum up the Franco-Italian conflict as a fight of two régimes: Fascism against democracy. Hence arises the duty of the French toilers to defend French democracy against the aggressiveness of Mussolini. "We consider the very existence of the terrorist dictatorship of fascism to be a permanent menace to peace," writes Rosenfeld in the *Populaire* of June 5. And we know very well that foreign policy is always a reflection of internal policy. A régime based on crime and dishonour cannot conduct an honest policy abroad."

The renegade, Louis Sellier ("Workers and Peasants" Party) in practice adheres to this view-point, and demands as a guarantee of peace—the internment of Mussolini in a mad-house! It is curious that Mussolini really defends the same thesis, explaining the differences with France by the opposition of Italy's fascist population to Freemasonic French democracy. It should be clear to

every Communist that the conflict between French and Italian imperialism has nothing in common with the fight between Fascism and Democracy. In our analysis of the Franco-Italian differences we have hardly had cause to mention the difference in the political régimes existing in these two countries. Even if there were another capitalist government in Italy it would conduct, in the main, the same foreign policy as Mussolini.

But can we conclude therefrom that fascism is of no significance from the point of view of the war danger, that the formula "Fascism is war" is incorrect? No, at the present time, the fascisation of the state apparatus is an essential factor in the preparation for war. This fascisation has already reached a high degree in French "democracy" and there is no substantial difference between it and that of Fascist Italy. The greater flexibility of fascistised French "democracy" is more in accordance with the *present phase* of her war preparations.

The accentuation of the Franco-Italian conflict makes the danger of a war between France and Italy more concrete and more immediate just at a time when the threat of an imperialist war against the U.S.S.R. is as imminent as ever. This makes it necessary for the Communists of France and Italy to link up the fight against the danger of a war between the imperialist countries with the fight against the anti-Soviet war, and to explain to the masses the close connection existing between these two dangers—and their common cause: imperialism. If the danger of war against the U.S.S.R. is the most imminent, the danger of a war between Italy and France is also growing and it would be extremely dangerous to leave the workers unprepared for it.

In our campaign against a Franco-Italian war we must concentrate attention on ruthlessly exposing the illusions as to a struggle between fascism and "democracy"—an illusion created by both sides in order to gull the masses. We must expose the true imperialistic causes of the conflict and clearly explain to the toilers the rôle played by fascism in all its forms—including social-fascism—in the preparation of wars.

# THE WORKERS' COUNTER-OFFENSIVE IN THE WOOLLEN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

By J. R. CAMPBELL

**T**HE heroic woollen textile strike in England marks the highest point yet reached in the new rising wave of revolutionary struggle in England. In the struggle there are unmistakable signs of a changed attitude on the part of the working class towards the social fascist bureaucracy and Government, an appreciation of the political character of the struggle, a high state of combativeness and a willingness to employ new methods of struggle. None of these things would, however, have given the strike the powerful aggressive character which it now possesses had the Communist Party and the Minority Movement not been able to harness and direct the militancy of the workers on correct lines. The woollen strike marks the highest point yet reached by the rising wave because it is the first large-scale successful application of the new line of independent leadership in economic struggles.

## THE DECLINE OF THE INDUSTRY

In the woollen textile industry is reflected all the characteristic features of the decline of British capitalism. In production in general, in production per head per worker, in technical efficiency, in its share of world trade, even in its share of the woollen textile of the whole British Empire, the woollen industry is markedly on the down-grade. The following figures give some idea of the decline of the industry as compared with pre-war:—

	<i>Imports.</i> <i>Sheep &amp; Lambs' wool</i> (thousand centals).	<i>Exports.</i> <i>Woollen</i> (thousand sq. yards).
1913	21,743	105,884
1928	7,808	128,557

The Board of Trade's index of the activity of the woollen textile is based on the wages paid, and as there have been no substantial

widespread alterations in wages until recently it is a relatively reliable index.

	1924	1928	1929	March, 1930
Wages paid	100	92.7	90.3	83.4

The industry is technically behind that of its leading competitors in countries like Japan and France. While there are a number of well-equipped modern firms there are also a host of small paternal enterprises. The difficulties of really effective technical rationalisation are enormous.

The industry is distinguished from the cotton textile industry in the facts that (1) it was in pre-war (and to-day) a relatively poorly paid industry; (2) the specific weight of the aristocracy of labour is not so great as it is in the cotton industry; (3) the industry was poorly organised in the trade union sense before the war and in recent years the proportion of the unorganised has been again growing.

## THE ATTACK OPENS

It was in this industry that the employers at the end of 1927 decided to terminate the agreement with a view to the reduction of wages. The trade union bureaucrats were perfectly willing to arrive at an agreement with the employers on the basis of wage reductions, but a strong campaign by our Party made it difficult for the trade union bureaucrats to openly capitulate and the employers, fearing the workers and still under the impres-

<i>Worsted</i> (thousand sq. yards).	<i>Yarns</i> million lbs.)	<i>Tops</i> (million lbs.)
62,490	80½	43½
42,112	66	33

sion created by the fierce resistance of the workers during the mining lockout of 1926, were afraid to declare a lockout.

The agreement was therefore terminated, but no large scale lockout was declared. The employers' strategy was to lock out district by district and mill by mill. A number of district and mill lockouts took place. The Party strove to organise the workers for resistance. The bureaucrats did their utmost and in the main succeeded in breaking, for the time being, the resistance of the workers. The process was on the whole a slow one and the growingly desperate position of the employers forced them to resort to drastic large-scale action. On September last the employers demanded a cut of 17 per cent. in wages, but subsequently modified this demand to 8.3 per cent. The trade union bureaucracy were prepared to concede 7.25 per cent., but the workers in a ballot vote declared by a four to one majority against all wage reductions.

The Communist Party's campaign against all wage reductions and in favour of immediate strike action was a big factor in getting this ballot result. The Party's campaign, however, showed the predominance of agitation over organisation. A strong spirit of resistance to wage cuts was created, but no attempt was made to organise the militant workers around the Party for the commencement of a struggle inside the mills and the trade unions for the creation of organs of independent struggle.

#### THE WAGE CUTTING GOVERNMENT

The next move was the appointment by the Labour Government of an industrial court, consisting of one man, the Scotch Tory lawyer, Lord MacMillan. After a few months' enquiry MacMillan made a recommendation for a cut in wages that went in several cases beyond that demanded by the employers. Again the bureaucrats in the largest union in the industry—the National Union of Textile Workers—recommended the acceptance of the MacMillan award. Again an overwhelming majority of the workers turned down the recommendation of the bureaucrats and voted for resistance.

The bureaucrats had still another card to play. At least one-half of the workers in the industry were unorganised. If there was no organisation of the strike the unorganised workers would not come out on strike, the

organised workers would be demoralised and the strike would be broken. In this calculation they forgot two things—the spirit of the unorganised workers and the leadership of the Communist Party and the Minority Movement.

#### THE PARTY ORGANISES THE STRUGGLE

The Party, after the MacMillan Award, adopted the correct tactics with regard to the organisation of the strike. Numerically the Party in the woollen district was very weak, about twenty-five members at the most; but it was speedily demonstrated that even the smallest force of Communists working on correct lines can play a considerable rôle in the development of events. With the assistance of propagandists from the Party centre, an intensive mill-gate campaign was conducted with a view to getting delegates elected to a conference of action which would elect a Strike Committee. When the conference was called, it was found that there were no delegates elected from the main body of workers in any factory, only a few delegates elected by groups of militant workers in the factories, while the vast majority of the workers attending the conference did so in their own individual capacity. Nevertheless, a strike committee was elected charged with the task of securing a complete stoppage of work.

It must be explained that the lockout did not commence in all the mills on the same day. Some mills were called upon earlier than others to either accept the terms of the employers or be locked out. One of the first mills to be called upon to make a decision was in the main an unorganised mill from the trade union point of view. The strike committee successfully concentrated forces on this mill and brought about a complete stoppage. A lead had been given by the strike committee and the unorganised workers and the great mass of the workers in other mills responded. The unofficial strike committee had successfully defeated the strike-breaking tactics of the trade union bureaucracy.

In the early days of the woollen strike there was a tremendous spontaneous movement of the workers, which strongly resembled that of the General Strike when the workers assembled spontaneously at important junction points

on the roads and stopped and overturned motor vehicles. Here the workers began to congregate at the mill gates, here they found the leadership of the strike committee already familiar to them through the preparatory campaign. They showed their readiness to accept the directions of the strike committee and to defend the members of that committee from interference by the police.

Even at this stage the bureaucrats and the Government and the employing class failed to realise the extent of working class determination and the influence which the strike committee was wielding amongst the workers and continued to treat the strike as a "flash in the pan." The strikers they believed would be speedily starved into surrender.

#### THE FIGHT FOR FOOD

This confronted the strike committee with the necessity of ensuring that the strikers were properly fed. Correctly they concentrated on securing the necessary relief from the public assistance committees of the local municipal councils by means of mass action. An example of such action was afforded by the mass demonstration at Shipley. Every worker on strike was asked to go to the Public Assistance Committee and demand relief. As worker after worker was refused the basis was laid for a mighty mass demonstration. After a heavy struggle the police broke up the demonstration and arrested a number of leaders, but so great was the militancy of the workers that the magistrates let the leaders off with a nominal fine and the Public Assistance Committee granted a fair amount of relief.

A secondary feature with regard to feeding the strikers is the organisation of W.I.R. canteens. One hundred and sixty of the workers on strike have been despatched to various parts of the country and with the aid of Communist Party local organisations they have succeeded in sending a steady stream of money to maintain the feeding centres, which are not merely philanthropic centres, but centres of strike organisation and political organisation.

Steadily the bureaucrats were working to sabotage the strike. A number of employers who were working to fulfil contracts were anxi-

on terms slightly below those which were being demanded by the general body of the employers. The bureaucrats made agreements involving wage reductions, and the unofficial strike committee had to mobilise all forces to prevent a return. After the strike had lasted a few weeks there came the Easter holidays. The employers and the bureaucracy hoped that during the holidays the spirit of the workers would weaken. The employers prepared for the opening of the mills.

#### THE WEAKNESS OF THE UNOFFICIAL STRIKE COMMITTEE

The unofficial strike committee prepared to resist. There the weakness of the strike committee was revealed. The unofficial strike committee was not based on strike committees in the factories, but was simply a body of the most militant workers, led by the Party through the M.M., a body which had put itself at the head of the struggling workers which had their confidence and support, but which had not built up a closely-knit strike organisation based on the factories. The strike committee divided itself into groups of comrades, each group charged to rally around it a mass picket of workers which would stop the blacklegs returning to work. In some cases the comrades succeeded in rallying around them from 50 to 100 workers, in other cases much less. Some mills were stopped completely, at others there was a considerable resumption of work, but the workers in the mills which were stopped rallied behind the strike committee and stopped completely those mills where there had been a partial resumption of work until there were actually more workers out on strike after the holidays than there were before the holidays.

#### THE TRADE UNION ACT NULLIFIED

In the course of this struggle the Trade Union Act of the Tory Government, despite the anxiety of the Labour Government to enforce it, was smashed to smithereens. The Act prohibits mass pickets, but there were mass pickets outside of the mills every day and the police, while now and then arresting leaders and harassing workers, were afraid to break up the pickets. The Trade Union Act was nullified.

May Day came and with it a mass demonstration of tens of thousands of workers behind the Communist Party in strike centres like Bradford and Shipley. Such demonstrations had never before been seen in the woollen textile area. The police were completely helpless. The workers for the time were masters of the streets and the Communist Party was their leader. The small party district of twenty-four members had, under the leadership of the new Executive, elected by the Eleventh Party Congress, put itself at the head of tens of thousands of workers.

#### THE LEFT SOCIAL FASCISTS

About this time a still more dangerous attack was made on the unity of the strike. In the town of Huddersfield, where before the strike our Party local was weak and rotten with opportunism, a prominent employer offered to make a settlement on the basis of a 7.25 per cent. reduction in wages, a reduction midway between that demanded by the majority of the employers and that which the trade union bureaucrats were prepared to concede. In this the Huddersfield employers were assisted by Ben Turner, the Minister of Mines in the Labour Government, and by J. H. Hudson, the pseudo-Left M.P. The utmost efforts were necessary to prevent a serious breakaway in this district, but the strike committee succeeded.

#### THE STRUGGLE FOR MILL COMMITTEES

The Political Bureau could not rest content with the success achieved, particularly as the absence of mill committees was a source of serious weakness. A strong lead was sent out to all comrades operating in the district to drive for the creation of mill strike committees which would send their delegates on to the Central Strike Committee. Here the Political Bureau had to break down not only open opposition to the idea of mill strike committees, but also the more furtive opposition which, while agreeing as to the necessity of building such committees, did nothing to build them up. A series of mistakes had also been made in the course of the struggle which militated against the formation of mill strike committees, as for example the practice of the strikers picketing mills other than those at

which they worked in order to avoid victimisation. The idea of mill committees of action was also to some extent strange to the workers themselves—the tradition in Great Britain is for the strike committee—like the trade union branch—to be formed on a residential rather than a factory basis. It cannot be said that the Party has achieved more than a partial success in the formation of such committees. A number of mill meetings have been held, committees have been elected, delegates have been sent to the Central Strike Committee, but the impress of the original forms of strike activity has remained strongly marked in the practice of the workers.

The Political Bureau had also to consider the question of Workers' Defence, which was necessitated by the action of the social fascist police. Some progress has been made in the better organisation and disciplining of the most militant members of the strike pickets who are functioning as a RUDIMENTARY defence force—but still very rudimentary.

#### RECRUITMENT.

Another shortcoming of the early days of the strike was the failure to actively recruit for the Party and the Minority Movement. It is true that the work of developing the strike organisation was making heavy demands on the energies of Party members and sympathisers. It is true that a special day of Party recruiting was organised to which there can be no objection provided it had been emphasised that apart from this day of concentrated propaganda and recruiting every day should have been regarded by Party members as a day of Party recruitment. The defects have now been remedied, recruitment has been recognised as a daily Party task, the new recruits have been organised on a factory basis and have been put through Party training, in conjunction naturally with their strike activity. A similar recruitment has taken place for the Minority Movement.

#### THE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE STRUGGLE.

Right from the commencement of the strike, the strike committee has kept to the front the political character of the strike as a struggle against the Labour Government. The Party in the early days of the struggle, however,

failed to relate the struggle to the decline of British capitalism and to the struggle for the revolutionary workers' Government. This the Political Bureau has striven to remedy. New slogans have been advanced as the struggle develops, the seven-hours day, the solidarity of the striking textile workers with the Indian revolution and the defence of the U.S.S.R. The aim of the Party is not to secure the mechanical adoption of such slogans by the strike committee, but their adoption as a matter of deep conviction by the mass of the strikers.

#### OUR CENTRAL WEAKNESS

What is the central weakness of our position in the strike? The absence of mill committee organisation and our failure to break the mass of the organised workers completely away from the leadership of the trade union bureaucrats. What are the reasons for this? Naturally the fact that the strike district is a district with deep-rooted social democratic traditions and that the union bureaucrats are paying strike pay to trade union members has a certain influence. The most important cause, however, was the earlier failure of the Party and the strike committee to campaign energetically for and to build strikes committees of action based on the factories. The reformist trade union branch organisation was geographical, our strike organisation was geographical also and thus there has tended to develop two geographical strike organisations—the reformist strike-breaking organisation in which the organised workers participated and our unofficial strike committee behind which marches the unorganised workers and the youth, and which from time to time powerfully influences the organised workers. Next to our failure to drive energetically for mill committees was our failure to appeal specifically to the organised trade unionists and the mass of reformist workers.

In addition to general appeals to organised and unorganised we should in the *Daily Worker*, have taken the prejudices of those workers into account, examined the arguments they were bringing forward for refusing to desert the reformists and actively participate in our strike organisation and should have striven systematically to break those

prejudices down. In recent days the growth of the influence of the unofficial strike committee on the workers in the reformist unions has been very marked (as for example the woolcombers' decision not to accept reductions of wages at any price), but so long as the barriers have not been broken down and mill committees of action comprising both organised and unorganised workers established the situation is full of danger.

#### OTHER WEAKNESSES

Now a word on some of our other weaknesses, bearing in mind that on balance the struggle has been a tremendous success for the Party and for the new line.

The *Daily Worker* failed in the early days of the strike. This failure was not that of the editorial staff alone, but of the Party leadership, whether situated at the Party centre or in the strike area.

The paper failed to fulfil its rôle as a strike organiser, explaining the new policy of independent leadership of economic struggle, breaking down the prejudices of the organised workers, showing the necessity of mill strike committees, showing how such committees can be built up and so on.

It further failed to feature the news of the strike. Important demonstrations get only a few lines and the lessons of those demonstrations were not hammered home.

The poverty of the workers' homes, the fierce resistance in spite of the tremendous unemployment, the heroism of the women and the youth was not properly driven home. The main blame for this rests on the Party comrades in the strike area who neglected to supply the paper with news. This mistake was particularly dangerous because the capitalist press (including the *Daily Herald*) having learned a lesson from 1926, and knowing that descriptions or even denunciations of the strike would only rouse feelings of solidarity amongst other workers, boycotted strike news completely.

The failure of the Party to relate the strike to the decline of British capitalism and to our revolutionary aim—the revolutionary Workers' Government—was of course mirrored in the columns of the *Daily Worker*.

#### THE PARTY AND THE ORGANISATION OF SOLIDARITY

The Party outside the strike district has on the whole failed sufficiently to mobilise the working class in defence of the textile strikers. There has been a fair amount of money raised for the strikers in Scotland and London and in the Castleford district of Yorkshire, in most other districts the results are poor—in South Wales ghastly beyond description. In few cases, however, does the instructions of the Political Bureau to build the Textile Aid Committees as broad united front committees seem to have been carried out. The failure to apply the united front from below is the cardinal failure of most of the recent campaigns of the Party and the Central Committee is devoting considerable attention to this problem.

#### THE CHARACTER OF THE STRIKE

What are the feature of the woollen textile strike? Firstly, its strong offensive character. The strike takes place in the midst of growing unemployment. In January, 1929, there were 37,000 woollen textile workers unemployed, in March, 1929, 67,000. The organised workers repeatedly turned down the advice of their leaders. The unorganised workers, the women and the youth show tremendous militancy. The Trade Union Act is disregarded. Mass demonstrations force relief from the local authorities, a crowd of 3,000 attempts to storm the Town Hall in Bradford in an effort to release strike prisoners (Bradford, May 28). It fails to reach its objective, but when leaders of the crowd are arrested a number of them are rescued by the workers. The Minority Movement, under the leadership of the Communist Party, organises the unofficial committee and is accepted as the only strike leader by tens of thousands of workers. The trade

union bureaucracy and the Left social fascists are exposed before the masses, the rôle of the Labour Government is exposed by the strike committee, the revolutionary perspective in the present situation is brought to the front by the Communist Party, more aggressive slogans are developed by the strikers, the workers' counter-offensive is in full swing. Not a defensive struggle, but the highest point yet reached by the workers' counter-offensive, the precursor of still greater struggles, such is the woollen textile strike.

#### PERSPECTIVES

The perspectives outside the immediate strike area there is not yet prospects of sympathetic strike action on the part of the workers. There the task consists of making the textile aid committees real united front committees by drawing into activity of militant non-Party workers and not merely the Party under another name, the organisation of mass demonstrations and the direction of these demonstrations against the local Labour M.P.s, social fascist bureaucracy and local councils—the visible embodiment of the social fascist wage-cutting government.

In the strike area the strike committee should organise not only demonstrations of strikers, but general working class demonstrations endeavouring to create the conditions for a local sympathetic strike, municipal service, etc. In this way the strike can still develop.

The general perspectives that the rising wave of struggle typified by this strike are opening out for the working class in the period of rapidly deepening economic crisis, in the period of rapid advance of the Indian revolution are of the most tremendous character. Mightier struggles are immediately in front and in those struggles—the creation of the mass Communist Party and the advance to the decisive struggle for power.

# THE GERMAN PROLETARIAT FACES NEW STRUGGLES

By H. REMMELE.

**G**ERMANY, with its annual burden of tribute amounting to 3-6 milliard marks, displays a number of characteristic features of the crisis which indicate that the economic and, consequently, the political shocks sustained by the capitalist system have, in many respects, more profound effects to show here than in many other capitalist countries of advanced industrial structure.

First of all we shall deal briefly with the structural changes in German economy in the post-war period. There is no capitalist country in which the structural changes in the national economy have been as great in the last decade as they have been in Germany. The change was accomplished in the form of a development towards a greater degree of organisation in production and in capitalist finance, towards monopoly economy. This development was followed by a number of phenomena peculiar to the period of dying capitalism. They are particularly obvious in the contradictions and disproportions which necessarily arise in such a period: externally, conditions show a rapidly rising curve of national economy and production, but the internal features expose the rottenness of decay. We give some examples of the disproportion referred to:

1. The continual increase in the capacity to produce, accompanied by diminishing possibilities of sale.
2. The contradiction between productive capacity and its actual extent.
3. The contradiction between the rapid rate of the development of production and the decrease in the number of workers employed.
4. The rapid increase in the output per worker and decreasing wages.
5. The sharp change between constant and variable capital in favour of the former and the consequent fall in the rate of profit
6. Finally, a number of contradictions which follow from all these economic factors of disproportion.

The structural change in German economy is easily indicated by a few significant figures; e.g., in 1925 the number of electro-motors amounted to 1.8 million h.p., in 1929 it had increased to 19 million h.p.—almost a ten-fold growth in the use of electrical power within five years. The productive capacity of Germany's blast furnaces amounted in 1912 to 153,000 tons, in 1927 to 270,000 tons, annual output, in spite of the loss of a very large percentage of Germany's industrial areas in the east and west as a result of the war. In addition, there has been a very great development of productive technique, such as was unknown in the pre-war period, particularly in the chemical industry, the extraction of oil from coal, the utilisation of by-products and the generation of electrical power on a large scale, to mention only a few instances.

But the actual utilisation of these developments does not by any means correspond with their rapid advance and with the structural changes in industry. German industry, even in the best years, to which the year 1927 undoubtedly belongs, did not work to more than 66 per cent. of its capacity. In chemicals, the highest output has not exceeded 70 per cent. of total capacity. The steel trust has a productive capacity of 9 million tons; its actual output is no more than 6 million; that is, only two-thirds of its full capacity. And just as the contradictions in the economic development of capitalism in the last decade are growing more acute, so also are those contradictions which directly affect the class struggle. While production increased by 20 per cent. in the five years from 1925 to 1930, total wages only rose 16 per cent., while production increased and the output of each individual worker rose considerably, the number of workers employed diminished. If we take the figures for 1927 as equalling 100, the index figures for January, 1930, were as follows: Index of production, 96; index of workers employed, 88. We shall return to this subject later; for the present these figures are given as the characteristic features of the crisis. Now as to the facts of the crisis itself:

The index figure of stock exchange prices for the second half-year of 1929 and the first quarter of 1930 shows a steady decrease. The figures are as follows :

June, 1929 ..	109.8	Nov., 1929 ..	100
July, 1929 ..	104	Dec., 1929 ..	96
Aug., 1929 ..	103	Jan., 1930 ..	95
Sept., 1929 ..	011	March, 1930 ..	94
Oct., 1929 ..	101	April, 1930 ..	91

The figures of savings invested in the public savings banks show a similar decline.

As for the development of industrial production : there was a steady increase from 1923 to 1927 amounting to 20 per cent. ; from 1927 to 1929 the figures remained practically constant. From the middle of 1929 however, a slight fall set in, which became much more rapid in the first quarter of the present year. The decline in production can be seen from the following figures : In March, 1929, the daily output of steel averaged 52 tons ; in January, 1930, it had fallen to 49 tons, in March to 46 tons. The output of cast-iron in March, 1928, amounted to 37.8 tons per day, in March, 1929, to 34.2 and in March, 1930, to 32.5 tons. The coal industry presents a similar picture. For March, 1929, 540 tons, January, 1930, 554 ; February, 1930, 507 ; and March, 1930, 482. The increase in coal production up to January, 1930, was a deliberate part of price and wages policy ; throughout the year 1929 stocks were kept up to 1.2 to 1.5 million tons, in January they rose to 5.7 and in April, to 7.2 million tons. These large stocks were maintained in order to facilitate the struggle against the working-class on the matter of wage cuts. All the figures, taken as a whole, show clearly that the crisis has Germany in its grip.

The aggravation of the crisis is also shown in the figures of bankruptcies, which increased as follows :

Sept., 1929 ..	678	Jan., 1930 ..	1133
Nov., 1929 ..	874	March, 1930 ..	1167
Dec., 1929 ..	933	April, 1930 ..	1130

Even more interesting is the German price level, which is influenced or determined by the policy of finance capital. Although the crisis affects the prices of raw materials and semi-manufactured goods,—just as it does on the world market—the prices of finished goods, and particularly of foodstuffs and commodities of mass consumption, follow quite different laws,

determined by the political supremacy of finance capital. A few figures will demonstrate this : the index figure of prices of industrial raw materials and semi-manufactured goods, such as wool, leather, ores, hemp, etc., fell from 130 in January, 1929, to 103 in March, 1930, that is, 27 points. But this fall is by no means reflected in the prices of articles of mass consumption, and particularly of foodstuffs. They are affected chiefly by the monopolist character of German economy, which controls the market and keeps prices high, while the policy of high protective tariffs and taxes on consumption, imposed by monopolist economy through the State, reinforces this action.

The price of wheat has fallen rapidly on the world market, but in Germany it has risen steadily. The wholesale price of wheat rose from 252 at the end of last year to 275 in January and to 288 in May ; between the 10th and 15th April the price of wheat fell in Chicago from 114 to 106, and in Liverpool from 8.3 to 7.8 shillings. The price of rye has also risen in Germany. There is a tremendous difference between the price of the most essential food-stuff for the working-class and the world market price of the same commodity ; for example, German rye in March of this year averaged 15 to 16 marks per 100 kilos, while at Hamburg, at the very same time, beyond the tariff frontier, Polish rye was being offered at 8 to 9 marks per 100 kilos, that is, nearly half as cheaply as German rye. These figures reveal most clearly the starvation offensive being carried out against the German working-class by finance capital and the large landowners. In order to maintain and to increase the prices of the food consumed by the working masses, some millions of tons of corn were destroyed by governmental orders and the Ministry of Agriculture bought up large stocks of dairy produce, in order to withdraw them from trade and so drive up prices.

It is appropriate to deal at this juncture with the agrarian crisis in Germany. At the present time Germany is suffering from a very severe agrarian crisis, which has already lasted longer than the industrial crisis. Those most deeply affected by this crisis are the smallest and poorest landholders. In 1927 about 2,500 holdings, comprising altogether 36,000 hectares of land, were sold by auction ; in 1928 38,000 hectares of

land had to be sold by auction, while in 1929 the figure rose to 50,000. With the exception of the eastern provinces, the small scale agricultural concern is predominant in Germany.

About 77 per cent. of the peasants possess no more than 5 hectares of land ; 22.7 per cent. have from 5 to 100 hectares, and only 0.4 per cent. have more than 100 hectares of land. The small farms of less than 5 hectares have been most affected by the agricultural crisis. In the group of 2 to 5 hectares, no less than 1,197 holdings changed hands. In the second group of 5 to 100 hectares, only 114 lots underwent a change of ownership. The greatest sufferers have been the peasants possessing less than 2 hectares. The change of ownership in this category amounted to 62 per cent. of the total transfer of land. These peasants have either become agricultural labourers or have been driven off the land to become proletarians in the town.

This "agricultural distress," as it is called by the large landowners, who have now become a part of finance capital, has given the bourgeoisie the opportunity to "save agriculture" by raising tariffs and indirect taxes, etc. to a height unequalled in any other country. Actually, however, these measures will do nothing to save the small holdings ; they only promote the enrichment of the large landowners and the transformation of small holdings into large estates. Hence, in agriculture too, development has been in the direction of greater concentration of land ownership.

We have now given some facts and figures illustrating the effects of the crisis in Germany. No doubt the last few weeks offer better and clearer statistical material, supported by the daily political press and the trade journals, which would present a more complete picture than the one given above. We have only dealt with the tendencies in development, arising from the given data ; and these suffice to explain the basis upon which political events are occurring in Germany.

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The determination of the foreign political relations of German finance capital by the international finance powers, which followed upon the Young Plan, represents for the German bourgeoisie the starting point for the concentration of its political relations and for the

general direction to be taken in carrying out the Young Plan and the internal policy which necessarily results therefrom. At its Congresses in Dusseldorf and Berlin, the National Union of Industrialists laid down the programme of its offensive. The employers' press, particularly that section belonging to heavy industry, summed up the programme in the brief formula : "Work more, eat less." The offensive decided upon by the German bourgeoisie is directed chiefly upon four main points.

The first point in the programme reads : To shift all the burdens arising from reparation problems on to the shoulders of the working-class. The Hilferding-Moldenhauer financial programme serves this purpose. The second point reads : The abolition of all the social burdens on industry in regard to social insurance, i.e., the abolition of sickness, invalid and old-age insurance, which has existed in Germany for a generation ; and, above all, the abolition of unemployment benefit, which still remains from the revolutionary days of 1918. The third point in the programme is coalition with the large landowners, and concessions to them in the matter of tariff and price increases for food ; and, finally, the fourth—and one of the most important points in the programme—is the direct attack on the wages of the workers. This programme has been put forward under the slogan of reducing the basic costs of production, in order to be able to win new markets which, apparently, will be to the exclusive benefit of the working-class.

Since the acceptance of the Young Plan in the summer of 1929, the German bourgeoisie has been conducting a starvation offensive against the workers. First of all the "emergency programme" of taxation was put into operation. The taxes on consumption, turnover, wages, etc. all the burdens falling on the workers, were considerably increased. Taxes on property, capital, rent, land and inheritance, which affect the capitalists, were reduced. In order to enable this wholesale robbery to be carried out, the Brüning Government was empowered by Parliament to deal with fiscal questions at its own will. The basis principle of the financial programme drawn up by Hilferding and Moldenhauer is, that the milliards which have to be raised for reparation payments should come wholly from the working-class, and

particularly from the industrial workers ; property will be completely relieved of the burden of reparations. This was supplemented by the agrarian programme put forward by Schiele (landowner and Minister for Agriculture), the "emergency programme for agriculture," which created the highest and most unbroken tariff wall which has ever been built. The import of cheap American frozen meat, which was one of the most important foods consumed by the working-class, was entirely prohibited. In spite of the fall in world market prices, the prices of all foodstuffs rose rapidly in Germany.

Bourgeois statisticians (and the National Bureau of Statistics) calculate that the cost of living increased by 14 per cent. between March, 1929, and March, 1930. Since, however, the legislation referred to above only came into force in February-March, 1930, it follows that the present increase in prices will put last year's quote in the shade.

In addition to this "democratic" starvation offensive, there is the direct attack on the industrial proletariat—wage cuts. The employers are using the rapidly intensifying crisis and the tremendous consequent increase in unemployment to carry out large scale wage reductions. The effect of the crisis can be seen in the following figures : The monthly turnover of commodities has fallen by 0.8 milliard marks, which represents about 10 per cent. of the total turnover. This fall is expressed in the decrease in railway freightage, which has dropped by more than 10 per cent. The German representatives of the steel cartel (the strongest cartel on the European Continent) are proposing a 25 per cent. decrease in production. The building industry, despite more favourable weather conditions, has 50 per cent. more unemployed than it had at the same time last year. Building has decreased more than 30 per cent. The textile industry, especially in the lower Rhine district, and in some parts of Saxony, has 60 to 80 per cent. of its workers unemployed, and there is also a great deal of short time. The employers are exploiting this position to force down wages, which go as far as suggested reductions of 60 per cent. Wage reductions proposals in the metal industry reach 20 and 25 per cent. The wage agreements for about 5 million workers will come to an end this year. The agreement covering building workers came

to an end in March; it was extended for another year by the trade union bureaucrats, negotiating in secret behind locked doors. The agreements covering the metal industry will come to an end between June and October. In Central Germany (Halle, Merseburg, Magdeburg, etc.) the employers are asking for a 25 per cent. wage cut, in the Ruhr for a 30 per cent. wage cut. Wages in the chemical industry have been reduced, on the average, by 15 per cent. In several industries, such as textiles, wages in some parts of Germany have been reduced to the wretched level of unemployment benefit.

This explains why the industrialists are launching such an attack on unemployment benefits. Unemployment benefit must be abolished (up to the present it has only been abolished for seasonal workers, juveniles and all workers who are members of families where other members are still in employment). With the abolition of unemployment benefit, about one-fourth to one-third of all the workers in Germany (who are already permanently unemployed) will be suffering so much from hunger, that they will be prepared to compete for the most miserable wages with the workers in employment.

The social-fascist party and trade union bureaucracy is supporting, with all its strength, the attack of the German capitalists on the workers. It was the social-fascist ministry and parliamentary fraction which carried the ratification of the Young Plan in Germany. And even when they were pushed out of the government by the bourgeoisie, the social democrats in parliament continually saved the Brüning government from defeat : it was the ministry of Müller, Severing, Hilferding and Wissell which drew up the starvation programme as Moldenhauer, the Minister of Finance, was able to prove ; and it is the social-fascist trade union bureaucracy which is wholeheartedly supporting the employers' wage-cutting attacks and preaching to the working-class the necessity for wage reductions in order, as they say, to be able to compete on foreign markets, in order to prevent industry from being completely crippled.

In this situation it is the task of the revolutionary trade union opposition, under the leadership of the Communist Party, to organise the resistance of the German proletariat to the capitalist offensive and to carry out, with

organised strength, a counter-attack. The developments in Germany are giving rise to a powerful process of radicalisation, expressed in the most varied forms. The most outstanding example is the desertion of the social democratic camp by large numbers of workers. There are great demonstrations, such as have not been witnessed in Germany for many years, vigorous working-class action against police terrorism, mass organisations, such as the sport and cultural organisations, are leaving the camp of reformism and coming over to the revolutionary camp of our Party. We must, however, point out that the resistance of the masses on a large scale is only just beginning. In the case of hundreds of thousands of workers, covered by certain wage agreements which have recently come to an end, there have not been any great mass struggles. The only force which can organise and lead these mass struggles is the revolutionary trade union opposition guided by the Communist Party. The factory committee elections which took place in the last few months showed that the revolutionary trade union opposition is beginning to make great strides forward in the factories. At the elections last year only 400 factories put forward red committee lists, whereas this year the number increased to 1,300. These committees were nominated principally in the large factories; in small and middle scale industry we were not so successful in our fight for the revolutionary committees.

Although the trade union opposition is growing in strength and is advancing, it has not yet succeeded in organising the resistance to the employers' offensive and in developing the workers' counter-offensive by means of large scale wage struggles. What are the causes of this? To a large extent it is due to the greater use of terrorism on the part of the employers and to organised strike breaking by the social-fascists. As more and more factories cut down their output or close down altogether, the employers are making a thorough comb-out of Communists. In alliance with the employees, the trade union bureaucracy is exerting all its strength to crush the influence of the trade union opposition and the Communist Party. But there is a third factor working in the same direction, and that rises from our own ranks.

The resistance to the resolute advance of the

trade union opposition along the road of organising the proletarian counter-offensive is found in our own ranks, in the first place in right wing opportunism, opportunism in practice. In the situation in which the vanguard of the German proletariat finds itself at the present time, right wing opportunism is expressed in the defence of, or in the passive acquiescence to the reformist lie that "with the crisis, and with great unemployment, no wage struggles can be fought." It is also expressed in a sort of utopian legalism, which consists in adhering to the standpoint, when ruthless wage cuts are taking place, and the wage agreements are worth no more than a scrap of paper, that the laws and the capitalist class courts will see that the workers get their "rights," and that the workers themselves should not break the agreement by a strike or any other defensive action. Opportunism in practice can also be seen in fairly widespread trade union legalism, when many of our officials put the treacherous decisions and promises of the trade union bureaucrats higher than the revolutionary slogans of the Party, and refuse to carry out the decisions of the Party. There is also in evidence a strong tendency to retreat in face of the employers' terrorism in the factories and the splitting tactics of the trade union bureaucracy.

The factory committee elections showed the strength of this right wing opportunism, which is the greatest obstacle in the way of the vigorous growth and development of the militant revolutionary strength of the proletariat. Although these elections indicate an advance over the previous year, the results were far less than the actual possibilities of success. There are in Germany about 50,000 factories in which, according to law, factory committees must be elected. Actually, however, there are only about 20,000 factories in which factory committees had to be elected. Of these 20,000, in which we should have put forward our own election list, only 1,300 had a list of red candidates. Even if we add another 500 or 600 factories, where employers' terrorism and trade union denunciations prevented the nomination of a revolutionary committee, there was still an overwhelming majority of factories in which we did not succeed in mobilising our supporters for independent action. Roughly estimated, there must be at least 10 to 12 thousand workers in those 20,000 factories, either members of the

Party or sympathisers, who adhere to the trade union opposition. Although we are dealing mainly with small and middle-sized concerns—since we were successful in putting our lists forward in practically all the big concerns, it may be said that at least 10,000, if not more, Party members and sympathisers failed, for opportunist reasons, to carry out the decisions of the Party with regard to factory committee elections and refrained from putting forward their own red lists. This fact affords a measure of the extent of opportunism in practice, of surrender to reformism and to the bourgeois state, and of open refusal to participate in this sphere of the revolutionary class struggle.

And if opportunism in practice is so strong in factory committee elections, where the matter at issue is only one of elections, how much more are these irresolute sections of the revolutionary class front inclined to give way to the external pressure of the crisis and to surrender the workers to the capitalist offensive, without having put up any fight, when the matter at issue involves the far more difficult task of organising the direct struggle against the employers, against the bourgeoisie and the social democrats.

Without the decisive suppression and elimination of right opportunism in the ranks of the revolutionary class front, it is impossible to organise the resistance of the proletariat to the capitalist attack and to transform that resistance into a working class offensive. The Party is fully aware of the chief danger which confronts it in this respect and is carrying on an energetic struggle against all manifestations of right opportunism, of opportunism in practice.

But the difficult situation in which the proletariat and the proletarian vanguard finds itself at present in carrying on the class struggle, also gives rise to another danger. The contradiction which exists between the rapid leftward development among practically all sections of the proletariat and the deficient mobilisation of working-class resistance, gives rise among

certain sections of the proletarian vanguard to the desire to overcome to some extent the obstacles and difficulties in the way of mobilising the workers' resistance by other ways and methods than on the basis of determined struggle in the factories, or else to avoid the difficulties all together. This tendency in the Party leads to sham successes in minor spheres being used to hide difficulties and failures and to the substitution of utopian and wordy revolutionary chatter in place of real class struggle. A new theory, a new ideology is arising, but we can recognise it as an old and well-known acquaintance of the revolutionary movement, namely, left or pseudo-radicalism.

The left-sectarianism attitude, petty-bourgeois radicalism, arises on the basis of strong right wing opportunism, and is, moreover, the chief obstacle in the way of the struggle against right opportunism, without the elimination of this left radicalism, opportunism in practice cannot be successfully fought and conquered.

The Communist Party of Germany, which is doing its utmost to organise the trade union opposition has, in spite of all the difficulties encountered in the fight against the obstacles in the way of the development of the class struggle, and in spite of all the difficulties of the present situation, a number of successes to record, which indicate that these obstacles will be vigorously overcome. The great strike movement in the Mansfeld mining district, the mobilisation of the Ruhr workers against the threatened wage cut and a number of smaller struggles even in those industries which are most deeply depressed, such as textiles, show that the resistance of the proletariat is growing stronger and, under the leadership of the Communist Party, is assuming to a greater extent the character of a counter-attack. That these class struggles will take on sharper forms and will be fought with greater persistence than in the past, follows logically from the intensification of class contradictions at the present time.

# A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC THEORY THAT NEEDS DENOUNCING

By I. MINGULIN.

THE theory we are dealing with is that of "organised capitalism." The Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. sharply condemned this theory as being social-democratic. This is the theory the right-wingers have drifted into. It had already been developed by Comrade Bukharin during and after the War. Comrade Bukharin also tried to drag this theory into the programme of the C.P.S.U. at the Eighth Congress in the summer of 1917. Lenin sharply opposed these attempts at a "bookish" interpretation of finance capital. This theory then served as the basis for Comrade Bukharin's "Left" policy. It was based on a mechanical and not a dialectical revolutionary approach to the problems of the development of capitalism. This method, in its logical continuation, was inevitably bound to lead to, and does lead to, the complete denial of dialects and of the revolutionary-Marxist views on the development of Society, *i.e.*, leads to a vulgar "evolutionary" theory, to the theory of one social formation "growing into" another. It is not by accident that the basic slogan of all Right-wing deviators is the slogan of "gradual growth." According to Brandler the proletarian dictatorship "grows into" a bourgeois one, according to Bukharin Kulak and even concessions capitalism grows into Socialism, etc.

Whereas Lenin's teaching on Imperialism is the theoretical-economic basis of the entire Comintern Programme, the teaching on "organised capitalism" is, on the contrary, the theoretical economic basis of the Second International's policy.

However, although social-democracy is the *main* support of capitalism, although its theory of "organised capitalism" has also become the theory of the *main* deviation in the Comintern—the Right deviation—(and of the Trotskyists also), the denunciation of this theory and the concrete fight against it are clearly inadequate.

This is an example of theory lagging behind practice. The Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

was held about a year ago, yet only a few articles have appeared in the Communist press on this question. On the other hand, during the very course of this fight Comrade Bukharin's book, *Imperialism and World Economy*, appeared in two languages (German and English). That this book appeared at all is hardly a disaster. It represents the most elaborate exposition of the theoretical views of Comrade Bukharin on the question of imperialism and the collapse of capitalism. By the critical study of this work, one can improve one's understanding of the Leninist theory of imperialism. But what is by no means in keeping with the interests of Leninist propaganda is the inscription on the title cover of the American Edition:

"A sharp and clear analysis of the international relations of contemporary capitalism combining a lucid description of the structure of world economy with an analysis of its imperialist tendencies. The present work is an original fundamental study giving a clear and exhaustive picture of the chief motive forces of modern capitalism."

That is what is printed when these very views are condemned by the Comintern as being social-democratic!

In the present article we above all wish to refer to the only more or less extensive effort to denounce this theory. This example will show that the fight against this theory, besides other things, has a very important "by-product": it gives a really clear understanding of the theoretical-economic basis of our activity—the Leninist teaching on Imperialism. The theoretical weapon, like all others, is only really sharpened *in struggle*.

But before we come to the substance of the matter, one observation is essential. Many people are inclined to treat the theory of organised capitalism as though it were "flogging a dead horse." That is a variety of "Left" distortion which evidently assists the Right deviation. The economic crisis, they say, has already put an end to that theory.

That is clearly an exaggeration. The crisis has dealt this theory a knock-out blow, but it has not killed it and could not kill it. Theory is a weapon of the class struggle. The theory of organised capitalism is the theory of social-democracy in the present epoch, and this theory will only die together with social-democracy. It is the main theoretical weapon of social-democracy in its struggle against the U.S.S.R., against the revolutionary movement. The outcome of the struggle between the theory of organised capitalism and Lenin's teaching on imperialism cannot be separated from the outcome of the struggle between the Comintern and the Social Fascist Second International, between the proletarian revolution and imperialism. This must be strictly remembered, so that what has already happened to a considerable extent—as described below—does not happen again.

Did not the Austro-Marxists, despite the economic crisis, in the new-year number of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, bless 1929 as the year of the triumph of "organised capitalism"? Did not Hoover's Economic Council extol all shades of social-fascism, as the "planned" activity of capitalism, overcoming the crisis? It is quite evident that in the theory of "organised capitalism" we have a whole historic stage—the last stage, in the ideological development of the Third Party of the bourgeoisie.

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The backwardness in theory, as compared with practice, that Comrade Stalin alluded to at the Conference of Agrarian Workers, is also seen on the question of "organised capitalism." Right revisionism has been largely exposed in practice, was also condemned in international questions as far back as at the Sixth Congress. Although a year has passed during which the Comintern and the C.P.S.U. have waged a historic struggle against the Right wing; although in the international arena the Right wing has been exposed as the direct agency of social-fascism and the preaching of its views deemed to be incompatible with membership of the Communist International, nevertheless, the exposure of the *theory and ideology* of Right revisionism on international questions has by

no means been the centre of attention in the work of our theoreticians.

Only *after* the Tenth Plenum had exposed and condemned Comrade Bukharin's action, was the theoretical work of the Communists applied to exposing the ideology of "organised capitalism." And this means that theory is floating listlessly in the wake of practice; it means that its fighting Bolshevik spirit has not risen high enough.

The exposure of the theory of organised capitalism has constituted a serious step forward in the study of the problems of post-war capitalism and the world revolutionary movement. But it must be said that this step is still insufficient, for it has been undertaken mainly in the form of refuting and exposing the theory of "organised capitalism" as being incompatible with and contradictory to the teachings of Lenin on imperialism. The theory of organised capitalism is the perfection of a whole system of views and theoretical evaluations, of *facts* of the development of capitalism, particularly in its post-war period. A real exposure of this theory can only result from *systematic* Marxist-Leninist work at all problems of post-war capitalism, account being taken of all the latest facts of development of the crisis of capitalism.

Lenin's work on Imperialism was written as long as fifteen years ago, *i.e.*, a historic period has elapsed just as considerable as that, the study of which Lenin summed up in his work "on Imperialism as the new and last stage of development of capitalism." There is no doubt that during these years *tremendous* changes have taken place. But *of what nature* are these changes, *in what direction* have they taken place? If they confirm—and they do confirm and strengthen—Lenin's teaching on Imperialism, and if they decisively refute—and they indeed do decisively refute—the theory of "organised capitalism," then the theoretical study of this data is a tremendous *agitational* weapon. And we have not sufficiently utilised this weapon.

Such a position on the theoretical front can only be explained by the weak organic day-to-day systematic practical connection of the theoretical work of the Communists with the *world practice* of the revolutionary proletarian movement. Such a position must be altered;

it is absolutely *abnormal and harmful*, especially at the present time. The exposure *in practice* of everything that we combine under the word capitalism is going on at full blast. Theoretical work should catch up and overtake this practical work. And this can only be done by making close contact with this practical work in one's day-to-day theoretical work.

The Communist literature that has appeared dealing with "organised capitalism" is totally inadequate. Even in the U.S.S.R., there are only four books. Of these we will refer only to one, which is an attempt at broad criticism of the theory. This is *Organised Capitalism*, published by the Communist Academy, 1930.

This book is the verbatim report of the discussion in the Institute of World Economy and World Politics, Communist Academy, Autumn, 1930. It contains the speeches of Comrade Varga—"The basic problems of 'Organised Capitalism,'" J. Goldstein—"Organised Capitalism and Bourgeois Economists," M. Yoelson—"Organised Capitalism and Social-Democracy," Louf-Bochen—"New Forms of Competition in the U.S.A.," and the contributions to the discussion by Comrades E. Khmel'nitskaya, L. Eventov, B. Borilin, S. Bessonov, M. Rubinstein, A. Itkina, A. Kon, S. Novikov, Markov, I. Butaev, A. Leontev, and the concluding remarks of Comrade Varga. Added as an appendix are the articles by Comrade Bukharin: "Bourgeois Theoreticians on Certain Problems of Contemporary Capitalism" and "The Theory of 'Organised Disorganisation'." There is a preface by Comrade Varga.

So far, this book is the only work that endeavours to elucidate from all sides the question of "organised capitalism." The attempt is not without success, but it bears a clear reflection of the fact that in recent years Communists have not paid sufficient attention to the theoretical study of the concrete problems of post-war imperialism.

In his report, Comrade Varga tries to give a definition of the conception "organised capitalism," to establish whether the creation of monopoly leads to planned economy, to give an analysis of the mutual relations of the

problems of "organised capitalism" and "state capitalism," the "social state" and "economic democracy," and, lastly, super-imperialism. Comrade Varga places main stress on the analysis of the *interpretation* of "organised capitalism." He even boils down the results of the whole discussion to this:

"As a result of the discussion," writes Comrade Varga in the Preface, "there has become evident the internal, by no means dialectical contradiction which lies in the very conception of 'organised capitalism'."

One can hardly agree with such a presentation of the question. It is well-known that none other than Lenin, in his notes to Bukharin's book, *The Economics of the Transition Period* (where Bukharin wrote: "*Theoretical political-economy is the science of social economy based on the production of commodities, i.e., the science of unorganised social economy . . . immediately we deal with an organised social economy, all the basic 'problems' of political-economy will disappear from Engels; (2) commodity production is also 'organised' economy.*" (*Leninist Collection*, XII. p. 349. V. I. Lenin, "Remarks on N. I. Bukharin's book *The Economics of the Transition Period.*") What are we to conclude from this? One must either say that Lenin also took up the standpoint of the present-day theory of organised capitalism, which would be an evident negation and denial of the entire teachings of Lenin *on Imperialism and the Proletarian Revolution*, or else one must say that here it is not a question merely of the conception itself, of any "internal contradiction" in the conception. The only other explanation would be to say that in that passage Lenin did not express himself clearly. The true position, however, is the second one, and not any unclear expression on the part of Lenin. Of course, commodity production is also "organised economy," of course capitalism is also "organised" society; otherwise it could not exist. The increase in its disorganisation, its increasingly chaotic nature is the process of growth of its crisis and decline, is the process that leads to its decline. But the essence of the matter is that this economy is organised *in its own peculiar way*, through *markets*, through the exchange of commodities, *i.e.,*

this "organisation" is not *planned*, but is spontaneous, restricted to markets, very unstable and subject to periodical convulsions. Furthermore, this society is also "organised" *in its own peculiar fashion*—through the *dictatorship* of a small *exploiting minority*, whose oppression increases more and more, becomes more and more intolerable, arouses and "organises" larger and larger *masses* for the decisive struggle against itself. In the "Third Period" in particular, this economy is subjected to more and more disorganisation, for it is the period of the *break-up* of capitalist stabilisation. And, as the growing world crisis shows, things are heading at an ever-increasing pace for the *complete* disorganisation of capitalist economy and society, for the proletarian revolution.

Consequently, Lenin was absolutely correct in that note to Comrade Bukharin's book. Indeed, Comrade Bukharin presented the question in a *vulgarised* and confused manner, as he has done in his recent articles.

According to him, commodity economy is unorganised economy and it is only here that there is room for political-economy or science; according to him the latter deals only with an irrational type of economy. Besides this error in defining the object of political economy, Comrade Bukharin has given here a vulgarised, confused, subjective definition of the economic characteristics of capitalism. Indeed, according to Comrade Bukharin, it would seem that if we talk of the Marxist science on the anarchy of capitalist production—this means production is unorganised. This shows confusion and incapacity to treat dialectically the problem of the anarchy of capitalist production, of its "organisation" on an *anarchistic basis*. Finally, here is the error of the subjective "point of view" which Lenin so often observed in the work of Comrade Bukharin. Marxism finds in the "movement" of capitalist economy on a basis of anarchy, definite *objective laws of development*, determined by the law of value.

But this vulgarisation of Marxism, confusion and subjective viewpoint, *subsequently* has led to the growth of monopolies being taken for the "organisation" of capitalist economy, *the disappearance of its anarchistic basis*, the *replacement* of the irrational by the

rational; the "organised nature" of capitalist economy as an objective fact, with the increase in its general chaoticness, is taken for its organised nature in a *subjective* sense. In other words, it is taken as a replacement of capitalist economy organised on an anarchistic basis by an economy organised also subjectively, *i.e.*, in a planned manner, developing the socialisation of labour on a scale embracing the entire society and abolishing anarchy of production. In arriving at this, Bukharin *opposes* Lenin.

Leninism-Marxism presents in a clear-cut fashion the question of the *objective* laws of development of capitalist society, the laws that "organise" it, lead to the growth of its contradictions, its chaoticness and its downfall—in the proletarian revolution. Reformism and Right revisionism present the question as though at first there is complete lack of organisation, chaos, but afterwards there is a growth of monopolies, *i.e.*, a growth of the degree of organisation of capitalism, the disappearance of chaos and anarchy, and the peaceful, tranquil birth of "planned" economy and "socialism." Marxism-Leninism presents the question dialectically in a revolutionary manner; Right revisionism presents it mechanically, in a reformist manner.

And in the case we are dealing with we see the same thing (which is not an isolated case with Comrade Bukharin). It indeed would seem that the left phraseology on unorganised economy, in its development, leads to a sheer Right-wing opportunist conclusion as to organised, *i.e.*, planned, capitalism.

And Comrade Varga, though perhaps not wanting to, has taken an incorrect path on this question. Moreover, and at present this is still more important, to transfer the weight of the discussion on to the question of *interpretation* means giving the opponent a pretext to *replace* (which is already being done) the *essence* of the dispute by secondary factors, by scholastics. This, of course, even in the present case, does not mean that the question of terminology is not of importance.

It is obvious that the social-democrats and Right revisionists, in advancing the thesis of "organised capitalism," have in mind something quite the opposite to what Lenin had.

As opposed to the Comintern, they want to emphasise *two* things: first and foremost, that post-war capitalism is gradually overcoming and has overcome the post-war *disorganisation* of capitalist economy, its post-war crisis, that capitalism is becoming stabler and stronger; secondly, that capitalism is not only recovering from the disorganisation (which in a greater or lesser degree *always* accompanies capitalist "organisation"), but that it is getting sounder *as a system, i.e.*, it is getting over its contradictions, its basis of antagonisms and is being transformed from an "unorganised" anarchistic capitalism into an "organised" capitalism, which the social-democrats interpret as *planned* capitalism. But there is no internal contradiction in this conception of the social-democrats, for this so-called "planned capitalism" is what they hand out as Socialism growing into capitalism. The growth of the "plannedness" of capitalism, meaning that it withers away and that Socialism grows up within it—that is the social-democrats' platform.

We cannot deal in greater detail with the other errors of Comrade Varga or the other speeches in general. We will merely briefly note some of them.

Comrade Varga is incorrect when he says that Comrade Bukharin's "theoretical digression from Lenin's views . . . in the explanation of the imperialist phase of capitalist development . . . has only now acquired . . . political importance." That is historically incorrect and theoretically incorrect (problems of the state, national question; minimum programme, Brest-Litovsk, etc.). Further, one can in no way agree with Comrade Varga's criticism of the theory of "organised capitalism" from the viewpoint of problems of production and distribution (p. 9); nor with the interpretation Comrade Varga puts on the Leninist criticism of the theory of ultra-imperialism (p. 8). The same must be said in relation to a number of other questions: State-capitalism (pp. 11, 12), monopoly and free competition (p. 16), the decline of capitalism and technical progress (p. 166—concluding remarks).

Comrade Varga is quite right when he connects the theory of "organised capitalism" with the development of social-democracy to

social-fascism. But here, of course, it is not a question of a mere "bridge" leading from "the old social-reformism to social-fascism." There is not a bridge, but actual ground all the way, the theoretical-economic *platform* of social-fascism, otherwise theoretical and political errors can occur, and have occurred, as with Comrade Goldstein.

Let us now turn to the other contributions to the discussion.

Comrade Goldstein correctly remarks that the question of "organised capitalism is closely bound up with the question of the fate of capitalism" (p. 18) and that "insufficient attention has been paid by our press to all these problems." (p. 21.) The crisis of capitalism also accentuates the crisis of bourgeois political thought. Here the connection is not automatic, but dialectical. The unsolvable growing contradictions of capitalism, the regrouping of classes, the evident uselessness of the old theories, both for explaining the past and for outlining the perspectives of the future, their uselessness as a weapon of the class struggle compel the more discerning theoreticians of the bourgeoisie to wander about in search of new theoretical means and solutions. Thus, an elaborate variety of new theories are worked out. The theory of "organised capitalism," however, is *not merely one ordinary member* of this theoretical family, as Comrade Goldstein would have it. The theory of "organised capitalism" is a fully-fledged and finished antithesis to Lenin's teaching on imperialism and the possibility of building up Socialism in one or several countries taken together. It reflects the really opposed positions as between the growing country of Socialism and the surrounding imperialist world with its fascist or social-fascist dictatorship and increasing hostility to the revolutionary movement and the Soviet Union. That is the basis of the matter and, unfortunately, it was not elucidated in Comrade Goldstein's report.

The connection between the theory of "organised capitalism and the fate of capitalism," which Comrade Goldstein correctly points out at the beginning of his report, apparently does not remain clear to him all the time. That is evidently the explanation of the fundamental error made by Comrade

Goldstein in defining both this connection as also the connection of the policy of "economic democracy" with the present-day position and the destiny of German capitalism. "When Germany was threatened with a proletarian revolution," says Comrade Goldstein, "the bourgeois economists could not decide to talk about this (about the degree of vitality of capitalism—I.M.). But now there are sufficient requisites for discussing the problem as to the subsequent existence of capitalist society." (p. 21.) What is all this about "sufficient requisites"? To this question Comrade Goldstein replies at the end of his report. "There was a time," writes Comrade Goldstein, "when the German bourgeoisie during the first years of the War, was prepared to make certain inconsequential concessions on this question (on "economic democracy"—I.M.) in order to nourish illusions as to 'economic democracy.' But now the position of the bourgeoisie has *radically* (my italics—I.M.) changed. In the present stage of development of capitalism it has stabilised its position to such an extent that it can indulge in 'organisational conclusions' and say—'the Moor has done his work, the Moor can go.' Such an attitude towards 'economic democracy' at the present time must be taken into consideration in estimating the prospects of development of State capitalism." (p. 40.)

Here in a few words there is a deal of confusion. First of all it would appear that the question of the fate of capitalism (as also the question of "organised capitalism") is connected with the stabilisation of capitalism, is connected with the stabilisation of the position of the bourgeoisie. But we are of the opinion that the contrary is the case. It is strange to commit such mistakes in the fight against this theory and against Comrade Bukharin. It is strange to fight against the Rights in that way.

So it would seem that during the last few years the position of the German bourgeoisie has "radically" changed for the better! "Economic democracy" (apparently placed in the same category as state capitalism—though they are absolutely different things!) would seem to be a "concession" of the bourgeoisie. To whom? We are unaware. Perhaps to the proletariat? In that case, we

suppose, the Brandlerite "control over production" is a "real" proletarian policy *even without* a revolutionary situation, and simply by way of a "concession" of the bourgeoisie. Or was it a concession to social-democracy? In that case one cannot say that "the Moor has done his work" for the bourgeoisie, and now can go. According to actual history there was no concession formerly, nor is there any actual resignation of the Moor now.

Comrade Goldstein's report gives an interesting exposition of the views of bourgeois economists on the problems of present-day capitalism. Incidentally he points out how Comrade Bukharin in expounding these views has believed what the social-democratic publicist Braunthal (as also the Wolfers) has said, and fallen into the trap. In the bourgeois camp, they find they can obtain the identical theory of "organised capitalism" both from Comrade Bukharin and from the social-democrat publicists. Comrade Bukharin has elucidated by a supposedly Marxist analysis, what is so dear to the heart of social-democracy.

Of great value is the contribution by Comrade Louf-Bochen. It is a criticism of "organised capitalism," based on a wealth of concrete material.

The report of Comrade Bessonov is also of great interest and value. He deals with that aspect of the problem, which, as far as we know, has not been dealt with in the press. This contribution has already received favourable mention in the press, and correspondingly, has received generally correct criticism in respect of its defects. (cf. *The Bolshevik*, No. 2, 1930.) We wish to refer merely to one point. Where did Comrade Bessonov get the idea that "Comrade Bukharin, following Lenin, develops an argument in regard to an ultra-imperialist trust," particularly in his work *Imperialism and World Economy*, which Comrade Bessonov also dealt with. That Comrade Bukharin opposed the theory of ultra-imperialism is true. But precisely because in arguing against this theory he followed not Lenin, but—Bukharin, his arguments have no standing. That is the essence of the matter. As there are sometimes comrades in our ranks, who are still greatly tempted to state that both Lenin *and*

Bukharin recognised the abstract conceivability of the realisation of ultra-imperialism, we will cite a few quotations from Comrade Bukharin's book in order to confirm what we stressed above. Perhaps this will somewhat quell the desire to place Comrade Lenin and Comrade Bukharin in the same boat on this cardinal question of differences.

"There are absolutely no grounds for expecting," wrote Comrade Bukharin in that book (p. 88, Russian Edition, 1922), "in a relatively *short* (my italics—I.M.) at any rate, any agreements or amalgamations between state-capitalistic trusts and their transformation into a single world trust. One only has to compare the economic structure of France and Germany, England and America, finally, the advanced countries, with countries like Russia . . . in order to understand how *far* we are away (my italics—I.M.) from a world *capitalist* organisation." Thus for Comrade Bukharin the question of an international trust is a question of a *concrete historic period*. It is not a theoretically abstract conception (which Lenin also did not allow but actually a concrete-historic result, which has been theoretically emancipated by a definite position—Bukharin's—on questions of imperialism. (See also pp. 28, 89, etc.) Thus, to say that in developing his arguments against ultra-imperialism Bukharin followed Lenin is either an embellishment of the positions of Comrade Bukharin or, what is worse, a distortion of the views of Comrade Lenin. Whichever you like.

We know, of course, that Comrade Bessonov desires neither the one nor the other. This is apparently a result of Comrade Bessonov's mechanical presentation of the question of ultra-imperialism. "The state capitalistic trust," says Comrade Bessonov (p. 111), "as such, has never existed, does not exist now and never will exist in practice. I say in practice because the abstract possibility of a single trust was admitted by Lenin and we cannot say that abstractly such a trust is impossible; it is impossible in practice, impossible in reality." Here Comrade Bessonov has left out one "link," one "transition stage," and as a result has got everything wrong: namely—he has omitted the fact that Lenin also *theoretically, i.e.,* from the view-

point of *Marxist theory*, considered ultra-imperialism unachievable. And it could not be otherwise. And the "abstraction" to which Comrade Bessonov (like many others) refers—though he does not properly understand it—and about which Lenin spoke, is the abstraction of Kautsky. In other words, it is non Marxist, non-dialectical, does not take into account the concrete, actual, that is to say, also the *theoretical* conditions of development of imperialism, *i.e.,* it is also a *theoretically* incorrect abstraction. That is the substance of the matter and Lenin uttered a warning about this more than once. It should be understood, once and for all, so as not to make any *theoretical conciliation* to "organised capitalism" and to ultra-imperialism, that the question of the feasibility, the conceivability of ultra-imperialism *is not* a question of separating theory from practice, is not a question of distinguishing between them as between the abstract and the concrete. The question of the Marxist theoretical conceivability or non-conceivability of the realisation of ultra-imperialism of two opposite and mutually-excluding theories and practices. *Either* the one *or* the other.

There *cannot* be any bridge whatsoever, no matter how small. Such bridges are rotten and only constructed with rotten theoretical ideas. An end must be put once and for all in our ranks to this attempt at revision and distortion of Lenin in favour of the social-fascist theory of organised capitalism and ultra-imperialism.

In Comrade Kon's contribution we merely wish to observe the rather mechanical presentation of the question of the mutual relations of monopoly and competition (the fight of "tendencies"—p. 136). Also, he wipes out, in substance, the qualitative boundary between free-competing capitalism and monopolistic capitalism. (p. 137.) The second error is connected with the first. Here Comrade Kon's arguments come very close to Bukharin's and in general to many bourgeois arguments on the question of the mutual relations of monopoly and free competition. As a result it would appear that "all cats look alike at night-time"—monopoly determines competition, competition determines monopoly, these two tendencies "permanently"

fight and so on. Where is the end to this? The main point is left out. The matter is by no means so simple. Competition at a *definite* degree of *development* inevitably *gives birth* to monopoly, which accentuates beyond belief all the contradictions of capitalism and the degree of chaos of capitalist production as a whole. And monopoly does not simply "determine" competition, but denies it, though not finally destroying it; it creates the opposite thing to it, enters into unsolvable and ever-growing contradiction with it, in other words prepares the downfall of capitalism. "It is precisely this combination of mutually contradictory 'bases'," wrote Lenin, "competition and monopoly that is essential to imperialism; and it is precisely this that is preparing the crash, *i.e.*, the Socialist Revolution." (Vol. XX.)

Comrade Kon's mechanistic presentation provides no other conclusion but the theory of a struggle of tendencies, of forces, the divorcing of economics from politics. "In the first place," says Comrade Kon, "the accentuation of class contradictions in the system of contemporary capitalism also makes it impossible for the monopolistic tendencies to rise to their completion within the confines of capitalist society." (p. 140.) (Does he mean, then, that these monopolistic tendencies could be "completed" outside the "confines" of capitalist society!?) This very strange argument is thoroughly mechanistic. "In the first place"—class contradiction; and what is in the second place? Class contradictions, the class struggle is in general the "last" instance, in which all historical problems can only be solved, and up to now have been solved in the development of class society. Marxism, Marxist dialectics, has never, and could never present the problem in any other manner. But they do not want to say that they mechanically separate economics from politics. What does this separation mean? It means theoretical *capitulation* to reformism. Wherein lies the capitulatory substance of these arguments? It lies in the fact that the class struggle and contradictions ("politics" in general) are *divorced from* economics, *lose their basis*, their *economic basis*, are left hanging in the air. And a

"class war" of that kind is, of course, not worth a cent.

We make these observations solely in order to note some of the chief mechanistic (and in other cases—openly idealistic) distortions of the Leninist presentation of the problem of imperialism. We make them in order to show in a concrete manner that the *criticism—i.e.*, the surmounting—of Right-wing (and also "Left") revisionism is not possible from any other position than the purely Leninist one.

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The problems raised by the discussion and the struggle against "organised capitalism" are fundamental problems of capitalism and the proletarian revolution. It must be said that they have so far been very poorly dealt with in international Communist theoretical literature. A great deal of confusion has accumulated and theoretical ideas are lagging behind. A decisive change must be effected here. The most striking example of this is what our British Party press writes about Comrade Bukharin's book. We know of two reviews of Comrade Bukharin's book in the press of the British and American Communist Parties.

In the *Communist Review* for April, 1930, Comrade Henry Sara, in an article "The Stage of Imperialism," gives a review of Comrade Bukharin's book. It is sufficient to say that this article does not contain a single critical observation either on Comrade Bukharin's theory in general or about this book in particular. The author, while giving a generally favourable notice, starts from the assumption that Comrade Bukharin's book is merely of historic interest, and has absolutely no relation to modern problems. Besides this, he refers to the favourable appreciation given to this book by Lenin in the preface. It would thus seem that Lenin were in full agreement with Bukharin. It is quite evident to anyone who has read Comrade Bukharin's book that neither the first nor the second contention is correct. The first assumption is incorrect if only from the fact that Bukharin, in his new utterances on "organised capitalism," reproduces *in extenso* the same theoretical views expounded in the book referred to, even though this be in a somewhat new manner and new setting. The second contention is

incorrect if only from the fact that Lenin fought against these theoretical views both before and after the War; the Party also rejected them then, and Lenin subjected them to exceptionally sharp criticism in his notes on Bukharin's book, *The Economics of the Transition Period*.

Such a treatment of the question as given in the above-mentioned article is a distortion of our views on the problems of imperialism and "organised capitalism," is a distortion of Lenin's views on these problems and amounts to a conciliatory attitude to the theory of "organised capitalism." It is strange that the editor should have passed such an article.

We also want to refer to the note in the *Daily Worker*, organ of the American C.P. It gives a critical review of Comrade Bukharin's book, but the article does not present the question sufficiently clearly and correctly. The titles and sub-titles indicate that Bukharin's book shows the class forces of the present-day world struggle. In the text itself it states that *in the main* Bukharin's book supports Lenin's teaching on Imperialism. It is true it is pointed out here that the book contains the embryo of the theory of "organised capitalism," but in the first place the first two assertions are incorrect, and, secondly, the book contains not the embryo of the theory of "organised capitalism," but it is fairly extensively developed there. Thirdly, the main stress is, nevertheless, given to a favourable estimation of the book, which is wrong.

As to Lenin's preface to Bukharin's book, everybody knows that Lenin most sharply combated and opposed Comrade Bukharin's incorrect conception both during and after the War. In the preface itself, Lenin, possibly having in mind also the inadequacy of Comrade Bukharin's criticism of the theory

of ultra-imperialism, gave an exceptionally sharp criticism of this theory. The same applies to the insufficiently firm exposure of this theory given in Comrade Bukharin's book. Finally, it is quite evident that in his preface Lenin did not set himself the object of criticising or favourably appreciating the various theoretical conceptions developed by Comrade Bukharin in the book, but evaluates it from the viewpoint of exposing the annexationist robber policy of imperialism and the imperialist nature of the world war and therefore of all those social-chauvinist tendencies which in one way or another supported this policy and this war.

We do not pretend, of course, to have dealt with the question exhaustively by this article. Our object has been to direct greater attention to the theoretical sector.

What has the fight against both the Trotskyites and the Right-wing opportunists shown? It has quite adequately and convincingly shown that any serious mistake and deviation from the correct Communist line ultimately leads to and depends upon a distortion, an incorrect conception of, and a denial of the Leninist teaching on imperialism and the proletarian revolution; it means sliding into the social-democratic theory of "organised capitalism." It is therefore apparent that the problems of imperialism, the problems of the fight against "organised capitalism" should be given very much more attention—both in quantity and quality—by the theoretical organs and writers in all sections of the Communist International. *But, in doing this, it is necessary that all this work be based on the concrete facts and events from the field of the class struggle, from the field of economic development, from the field of ideological struggle and development.*

# THE STRUGGLE FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

Towards the 5th  
Profintern Congress

By E. HERKERT

## MORE CLARITY ON OUR PROBLEMS

**T**HE Fifth Congress of the R.I.L.U. should take the revolutionary trade union movement a good way towards clearing up the questions which it has to solve. The discussions now taking place in articles and meetings, in preparation for the Congress, serve the same purpose.

In No. 18-19 of *The Communist International* Comrade Per dealt with some of the questions which confront the Congress. The problems he raised were: the extent to which reformist trade unions have become fascist, the new unions, the strengthening of the revolutionary trade union opposition, the slogan "Into the Unions." These are all extremely important questions, and we should therefore examine with great care the answers given by the author and estimate their correctness. By those answers, the author wished to help in bringing us nearer to our main objective in the present situation, the winning of the majority of the proletariat. Before we deal individually and in detail with the answers which Comrade Per made to the questions he put forward, we shall ourselves attempt to propound and to answer certain questions connected with our trade union work. This in itself will provide a commentary on many of the questions and answers contained in the above-mentioned article.

## WINNING THE MAJORITY OF THE PROLETARIAT

That the Communists must win over the majority of the proletariat has by now become an accepted truth; it is generally agreed that there is no more need for dispute on this subject within the Communist International. The times are past when, in the mind of many Communists, the problems of the proletarian revolution are to be answered, not from the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, but from one derived from a "heroic" interpretation of history. Lenin's incomparable work: *Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, was written in the struggle against these

"heroes." Nevertheless, in our practical trade union and mass work, relapses—often unconscious—are frequently made into the heroic age. If we do not rid our tactics and mass strategy of such relapses, we shall endanger our entire revolutionary activity and delay the development and ripening of the proletarian revolution.

The struggle on two fronts, decided upon by the Comintern at its Tenth Plenum in June of last year, and which has only now been initiated in the separate countries, is also concerned with the elimination of such backslidings. Opportunism in practice and left sectarianism, marching along in the rear of the masses or else drawing away from them—these are the disorders against which the present struggle is directed. Unless they are overcome, we cannot win the majority of the proletariat for the revolution.

At the Tenth Plenum of the C.I. the winning of the majority of the proletariat was put forward, not as a general task—as such it has existed as long as the Communist movement itself, and will continue to exist until the proletarian revolution is completed — but as a concrete task to be carried out immediately in such countries as Germany, France, Czechoslovakia and Poland. If we wish to prove ourselves to the Communist International and the entire proletariat, we must give a concrete answer to this, and such an answer can only consist in the actual accomplishment of this task in the quickest possible way. Of course, the problem can only be solved by correct mass tactics and methods of organisation, not by general recipes and on the basis of experimentation. It is only by the constant self-criticism of all our political and organisational work in all spheres, only by the most thorough vigilance in regard to every step taken, that we shall be able to approach the accomplishment of our task.

We must win the majority of the working class. How shall we begin? What positions are the most important in relation to this.

task? The art of all strategy is to be strong at the decisive points. If we proceed from this well-tryed rule, it follows that our chief fire must be directed on the factories. In them, the force of the proletariat is strongest as against its class enemy, if that force is organised and correctly employed. The proletariat is nowhere so strong as it is in the factories. That is why Lenin said that every factory must be a revolutionary fortress. And of the factories, it is in the large factories that the sections of the workers decisive from the point of view of the revolution are to be found. Therefore, to win the masses in the large factories is a foremost task. For the revolutionary struggle, not all branches of industry are of equal importance. Factories in the key industries are more decisive than other factories.

Key industries—that is, industries on which the industrial economy of the country is principally based—are different in different countries. In Brazil the coffee plantations are the key positions, in Greece the tobacco industry. In highly-developed capitalist countries, on the other hand, in countries such as Germany, England, France and the U.S.A., coal and iron play the chief part. In England, too, the textile industry is a key industry; even if one can no longer say now, as was possible before the war, that England is the weaving shed of the world, still the textile industry has a dominant position in British national economy as a whole. Besides these main positions in the industry of the different countries, there are a few other positions of almost equal importance: the transport system (railway and shipping) and gas and electricity supply. One has only to comprehend exactly the importance of these positions to realise immediately the value of winning over the majority of the workers in these industries, from the point of view of revolutionary development. The differences that exist between the various industries also exist between various areas. The workers in the large towns are of more importance than those in the villages. Districts in which industry is concentrated, such as the Ruhr in Germany, the Clyde in Great Britain, or Longwy-Briethionville in France, are strategic centres. Whether or not we have the majority of the

workers within the ranks of the revolutionary movement is absolutely decisive in any great struggle. If we consider the position of the revolutionary movement at these decisive points, we find that it is still extraordinarily weak, weaker even than it is in other places of far less decisive importance to the revolutionary movement. This is due to a number of objective causes. The power of the capitalists is greatest at these points. The great factories and industrial centres are controlled by a few powerful trusts, syndicates and employers' unions. The employers and the capitalist state powers also realise the decisive importance of these positions in the proletarian class struggle, and on their part they have consequently taken steps to prevent the Communists and revolutionary trade unionists from winning the majority of the workers there. (The prohibition of organisations by law, at the dictates of the employer, by company police, factory espionage, company sports, yellow unions, denominational splits among the workers—the Christian trade unions—privileges accorded to the social-fascist foremen, etc., subsidising fascist organisations, the systematic dismissal of revolutionary workers and the employment of reliable fascist or social-fascist elements, etc., etc.).

Moreover, the composition of the workers in many large factories and important industrial areas often forms an obstacle to the revolutionising of the masses. The very great division of labour, particularly promoted by rationalisation, enables the employers to take on the more backward sections of the workers from distant villages and even from other countries. Before the war the majority of the workers in the Rhine-Westphalian industrial area were not born in that district, but came from East Prussia and Upper Silesia, and included many Poles, Czechs, south Slavs and Dutch, workers without any political rights and for the most part stupefied by religion. Even to-day similar conditions exist in many large industrial areas, where the workers are chosen for their backwardness and their capacity to be easily influenced by reactionary forces.

Before the war only soldiers who had served their term were employed on the German rail-

ways; their political reliability had been thoroughly tested during the period of service.

Such a composition among the employed, and the terrorist measures, naturally make it more difficult to win the masses in these important branches of industry, and consequently the revolutionary movement on the whole is stronger in smaller concerns, such as those found in the building and clothing industry, than in the large factories. The difficulties encountered in work in important factories and industries make many revolutionary functionaries shrink back, and this also often explains the numerical weakness of the cells in large factories, or their inactivity. Election defeats such as those suffered by the German revolutionary trade union opposition at Leuna, the Berlin Transport Company, Siemens, etc., to quote only a few important concerns, are clear indications of our weakness at the decisive points. They contain a warning to us, and oblige us to make a fundamental change in our work, a change directed towards work in the large factories. So long as we are not supported by the majority of the workers in the decisive factories and industries, not only in voting at elections, but also in the actual struggle, so long is any talk of the majority of the working class nothing but self-deception. Nor should we be deceived about the participation of the workers in great mass demonstrations, such as the First of May, or on other occasions. It is one of the most important tasks of the Fifth Congress to reveal our weakness in the large factories and important positions, and to make it a binding obligation on the adherents of the R.I.L.U. to eliminate this defect within reasonable time.

The slogan: concentrate forces on the large factories, on the railways, power stations, mining, steel and foundry works, the iron and chemical industries, must no longer remain a mere slogan. We must agitate and urge forward our functionaries, until the revolutionary trade unionists have realised that slogan and every vital factory has been changed into a revolutionary fortress. Our supporters must learn to overcome all the difficulties experienced in revolutionary agitation and propaganda and in the organisation

of the masses in rationalised factories. The company spy, the fascist and social-fascist assistant of the trust capitalists, the employer's terrorism, the fear of being one of the great army of unemployed, should not be allowed to remain a serious obstacle. We must learn to adapt all our methods of work to the conditions of rationalised factories. With correct united front tactics among the masses of the workers in the vital industries and factories, we shall succeed.

Revolutionary trade union work in the Ruhr district, for example, should consist not only of helping forward the miners and foundry workers in the struggle for higher wages and shorter hours; it should also be conducted as ideological work for eliminating the denominational and political alliance of the Catholic workers with the Christian trade unions and the Centre. Unless we separate these workers ideologically from their present organisations and leaders, we cannot succeed in enrolling them into the revolutionary fighting front. If they remain in the Christian trade unions and the centre organisations, they will be a wholly uncertain factor in the class struggle of the workers, fighting mostly on the class enemy's side of the barricades. Equally great ideological work must be conducted among those workers who have been caught by the national and social demagogy of the fascists. They, too, as a necessary sector on the class front of the proletariat, must be liberated from their present bonds. Still greater is the ideological work which has to be carried out among the social-democratic workers in such industrial areas as the Ruhr. These social-democratic workers are not easy to win over, because they think that they are in opposition to the Christian and yellow workers. They consider themselves to be much better than the latter. They are the victims of social-fascist swindlers, who are adept at playing off one sections of workers against another, in order to keep them from fighting for their common interests.

How, for example, in the Ruhr district, can such slogans as: "Whoever is not with the Communists, is an ally of the class enemy and must be treated as such," or "Fight the adherents of the fascists, so that they can be driven out of the factories," or "The social-

democratic members are as bad if not worse than their social-fascist leaders, who have already been exposed to the masses"—how can such slogans win us anything but isolation from the masses? And these facts are not disposed of by the superior smile of the comrades who say that "it is regrettable that there are still amongst us comrades who do not yet understand the social reactionary character of those elements." The reverse is much more regrettable—the fact that there are still amongst us people, who, in their "cunning," deplore those who realise the difficulty of our work and try to find ways and means of meeting that difficulty, and are not proudly content with saying that there is nothing to do in the circumstances because the Christian, fascist and social-fascist workers are lost in capitalism, for better or worse. The Fifth Congress must entirely repudiate that arrogance, which cultivates the idea that in fact the majority of the workers in the decisive factories cannot be won for the revolution, because they are still adherents and followers of the fascists and social-fascists.

#### WHO ARE THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS?

In Germany there are 23 million wage and salary earners covered by social insurance. If we subtract two millions as representing higher officials and well-paid employees of the petty bourgeois class, there remain 21 million workers. Where do the majority of these workers stand? At the last national elections the C.P. of Germany received 3½ million votes. Let us assume that there are about another half million young workers not entitled to vote, to be added to these 3½ million, and at least another half million to be subtracted for non-workers (housewives, etc.) Nine million votes were given to the social democrats; if we deduct three million as coming from the petty bourgeois and from housewives, there remain, with the unenfranchised young workers, about 7 million workers for the S.D. Party. That is twice as many as the Communists have. Workers voting Communist and social democrat together make up about half the total number of wage earners. Assuming that about two million workers refrained from voting, and that there

are about a million unenfranchised young workers who are completely indifferent politically, there are still from seven to seven and a half million workers in the camp of bourgeois parties, the democrats, the centre, the fascists and others. Some of these workers, particularly those engaged in agriculture, probably voted for the class enemy only because of the terrorism of the landowners and employers. But the great majority of these workers are still bound ideologically, in a greater or lesser degree, to the class enemy; there is no talk of giving up the struggle to win over these workers, to draw them away from adherence to the class enemy. As an examination of the results in the municipal and factory committee elections shews, the workers outside the influence of the Communists and social-democrats are not by any means entirely to be found in the backward agricultural areas far removed from large scale industry. On the contrary, the workers who voted for the Centre in the Rhine-Westphalia industrial area are just as numerous, or even more numerous, than those voting for the Communist Party (this was demonstrated at the last factory committee elections). The fascists received a considerable number of votes in a great number of large factories.

Indeed, in many working class areas with widespread unemployment and a greatly impoverished working class population, the fascists were able to mobilise extremely strong support. How, in such circumstances, can we permit an attitude according to which social-democratic, Christian and fascist workers are considered as lost for the class struggle? Does not that imply a renunciation of the proletarian revolution altogether? Revolutionary trade unionists in particular must exercise a great deal of patience in winning, by intensive ideological work, those masses of workers who are still adherents or followers of the class enemy or of its social fascist allies.

#### WHO CAN BE WON FOR THE REVOLUTION?

Very ingenuous answers have already been given to the above question: "The labour aristocracy is lost to the revolution"; "It is an inseparable part of the financial oligarchy"; "The members of the reformist trade

unions are lost to the revolution"; "The organised social-democratic workers, particularly the social-democratic factory and trade union officials, are all in the camp of the class enemy." As ingenuous as these statements may be, theories have already been created, articles written and speeches given in an attempt to prove their correctness. The authors of such declarations have taken little trouble to make a real social analysis of the class differences within the proletariat; the differentiations which exist are repulsive to them, for they dispose entirely of the theories which these comrades have built up on their catchwords. To the question, who are the labour aristocrats, the friends of these theorists answer in the most remarkable fashion. Some say that the workers organised in the reformist trade unions compose the labour aristocracy; others have discovered that skilled workers form the labour aristocracy, while unskilled workers represent the revolutionary mass.

On the basis of these catchwords arose a certain under-valuation of the organised worker and a certain homage of the revolutionary unorganised worker. Of course it is true that the unorganised are more numerous than the organised workers, and it is equally true that the number of unskilled greatly exceeds the number of skilled workers. Consequently, if we consider the question whether, in the coming revolutionary mass struggles, the unskilled and the unorganised will form the numerical standpoint, the greater section, the argument has some foundation, for the unskilled and unorganised workers will certainly form the greater part of those taking part in the revolutionary struggle. But this is almost the only correct argument which has been put forward in justification of those theories. Let us consider the labour aristocracy more closely.

The old idea of a labour aristocracy, as the name given to that section of highly skilled workers who, as distinct from the great number of unskilled workers, were bribed by the capitalist class with high wages, is no longer valid at the present time; firstly, because the position of the capitalist class is such that the number of workers whom they can bribe with high wages is growing smaller and smaller;

and, secondly, because in the rationalised factory of to-day the old difference between the highly skilled and the unskilled manual worker has been abolished. Division of labour has made such progress that unskilled and untrained workers can be employed for almost every process. This explains the tremendous growth in female and juvenile labour in rationalised factories. In such countries as Germany and England there are millions of skilled workers who have, as it were, become unskilled in the modern factories. In former times the capitalist was accustomed to pay a worker wages much above the average, if he had succeeded in acquiring a high level of technical ability. But the new methods of work (the travelling belt, the Taylor system, the Bedaux system) permit a great output to be squeezed out of an ordinary unskilled worker.

The capitalist in the modern factory considers as skilled workers, not those who possess the greatest technical capacity, but those who set the quickest pace, those who can be utilised for factory espionage. From this it follows that both fascist and social-fascist elements can be used by the capitalist exploiter for performing these services. The first worker at the belt, the foreman, the control official, the company sportsman, etc., are drawn from the ranks of the fascist and social-democratic organisations. The skilled worker who, precisely because of his high standard of capacity, thinks that he must not allow himself to submit to the shameful methods of suppression employed, is often the worker least valued by the employer and soonest dismissed. Many thousands of good revolutionary workers from the highly skilled ranks of the metal and wood industries are among the permanently unemployed, or else have been driven out of the large factories into small concerns and workshops.

To-day, therefore, the labour aristocracy is chiefly composed, not of those workers who, because of their high level of capacity are in a position to demand high wages for their labour power in the capitalist labour market, or whom the employers buy over by special privileges, but it consists of all those elements which, for personal advantage, offer their services to the employer for the purpose of main-

taining and intensifying capitalist exploitation. These elements, however, occupy positions outside, and not inside the capitalist factories. They have their seat in the "cushy" places which the capitalist state has to give away; they occupy ministerial posts, police presidencies, they are municipal councillors, mayors, county councillors, insurance officials, labour exchange managers, arbitrators; they are members of parliament, editors of social-democratic journals, officials in the party and trade unions. In short, they form that group of social traitors who consider the present state as their own state, because they are permitted to share the positions which it has to offer and to help in the suppression and exploitation of the workers. These beneficiaries of capitalist society, and the privileged pacemakers in the capitalist factories, domestic slaves and watchdogs whose origins lie in the working class, but who have been brought up by the capitalists, constitute, as against the great mass of the working class, only a small section, and numerically they cannot be anything but few.

Of course there are many millions of workers who are deceived and terrorised by these agents of capitalist society, and are therefore their adherents and followers. But we should never forget that they are not lost for the proletarian revolution, but can be won by correct mass work and the use of correct united front tactics. We must combat every theory and act which does not admit this differentiation and which, under the war cry of "fight the labour aristocracy," is directed against the skilled or against the organised workers as a body. We have only to consider those who have taken part in recent revolutionary struggles to see that large sections of skilled workers, and principally building workers, who are for the most part highly skilled and well organised, took part in these revolutionary struggles; and this will in all probability remain the case.

It is, however, true that in the case of the last few years the social composition of the reformist trade union organisations has altered in favour of the more highly skilled sections. (This is unfortunately also true of the red trade unions.) The social-fascist bureaucracy is also doing everything it can to

encourage this process. (The introduction of higher contributions, which does not allow the less well-paid workers to become members of the union; indifference to the interests of the masses of poorly-skilled workers, particularly women, juveniles and the unemployed.) This social change in the trade union membership, deliberately brought about by the reformists, makes the reformist trade unions a more expedient tool for preserving the safety of the capitalist order. Although we realise that this process is taking place, we cannot conclude from it that the majority of the workers organised in trade unions have a practical interest in guarding the capitalist order of society from upheavals.

#### ABOLISHING THE INFLUENCE OF THE FASCIST TRADE UNION MACHINERY

With the growth of the economic and political difficulties in capitalist society, reformist trade union organisations assume ever-increasing functions as bodies guarding that society from revolutionary explosions. That is why they have been accorded, as it were, a monopoly position in the questions of wage agreements, labour exchanges, workers' representation on labour courts, and factory committees. In England and in Germany, they are even utilised as institutions to guarantee industrial peace within the country, as organisations to guard against the rough weather of "slumps," for protecting the national economy against the attacks of foreign competition by tariffs and subsidies. All this, it is true, shows the stage which has been reached in the fascist development of the reformist trade unions, but it by no means proves that the majority of the members in those unions are conscious of the treacherous character of the unions. It has always been observed that any strain in the relations between the reformist leaders and the employers or the organs of the state is greeted with joy by the majority of trade union members. That fact alone demonstrates that it is necessary to work in the trade unions, not only in pursuance of some out-of-date decision, but because this attitude on the part of the trade union membership creates the possibility for us to carry on successful work within the reformist unions for the purpose of winning large sections of the membership.

Recently there have been many who have declared that the unorganised workers are outside the unions because they do not agree with the fascist policy of those organisations, and that they are outside the trade union movement only because of the absence of revolutionary unions. If we were definitely to establish such revolutionary unions, the masses would immediately stream into them. If this opinion were founded on fact, then it does not explain why, for example, in France and in Czecho-Slovakia, to mention only two countries with revolutionary unions, the masses did not stream into them, and why the revolutionary trade union federations in these two countries have to fight hard to maintain their present level of membership, although it cannot be maintained that the reformist trade unions in the same countries have suffered any very serious decline in numbers.

There are also other examples to show that of the large numbers of workers not organised in trade unions, large sections follow the leadership of the reformist unions and do not come forward as allies of the revolutionary trade union opposition. This happens not only in places where there is, perhaps, no revolutionary opposition in existence, in small towns and remote villages. It happens in important industrial areas and large factories. The factory committee elections in Germany offer a number of examples which prove this. At the Siemens works in Berlin, the social-democrats received twice as many votes as the revolutionary trade union opposition, the social-democratic vote representing several times as large a number of workers as there are trade unionists in the concern, in spite of the fact that the revolutionary opposition received the votes of many of the trade unionists. If it is contended that this social-fascist success is to be explained by the passivity of the revolutionary trade union opposition in the factory, that the blame for our failure must be attributed to opportunism in practice, as evidenced in the work of our Communist factory committees and functionaries, that contention must be granted in so far as it applies to our losses. But then why did the workers vote for the social-fascists, who are supposed to be exposed in their true colours to the same workers, instead of simply refrain-

ing from taking any part in the elections? If the workers really had seen through the social treachery and the fascist character of the reformist trade unions, such a result would have been impossible.

What do these remarks prove? They are intended to show that those of us who say that the social-fascists are already exposed in the eyes of the masses, particularly the unorganised workers in the large factories, and that these unorganised workers have broken with the reformist unions because they recognise them to be organisations of class treachery, are incorrect. An extraordinarily large proportion of the unorganised workers, in spite of the treachery of the reformist leaders, feel themselves still bound somehow or other to the unions; indeed, they even believe that the unions are representative of working class interests. If, because of a misunderstanding of these facts, we were to give up our revolutionary work in the unions, we should fail both to win over to our banner an important section of the trade union membership which can and must be won back to the revolutionary class front, and to win those unorganised masses who, although unorganised, are still bound, in one way or another, to the reformist unions. Their illusions about the unions can to a large extent be destroyed by our trade union work in exposing the social-fascist leaders and revealing to the masses their anti-working class attitude.

It is impossible, within the limits of this article, to speak of the importance of the independent leadership of the economic struggles of the working class by the revolutionary trade union opposition. These tactics, decided upon by the Comintern, are now, as before, the best means of eliminating social-fascist influence over the masses and of winning the majority of the proletariat. Whoever deviates from this tactical and strategic line, cannot be retained within the ranks of the revolutionary trade union opposition. It is a fundamental principle of our revolutionary action.

#### WHERE MUST WE WORK, TO WIN THE MAJORITY?

A few comrades put the matter in this way: Our trade union work is work in the factories (that is in general correct), but they formulate

their answer in such a way as to imply that there is really no longer any room for trade union work outside the factories. Can we accept such a limitation of our field of activity in regard to trade union work? I think not. It is necessary to repeat what was stated earlier on, that the greater part of our revolutionary work must lie in the factories, and that we must make as energetic a change as possible in order to turn, as it were, the face of the Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition to factory work. Is the statement correct that there is no place for trade union work outside the factory? I think not. It is much too narrow. We have only to remember that in Germany and several other countries, twenty per cent. and more of the industrial workers are unemployed. Should we continue to work among these workers, although they are not in the factory? Of course we should.

In very many factories—and in very important ones—there is no Communist cell, no revolutionary trade union opposition. Should we therefore cease our work among the workers there? Of course not. Wherever we meet these workers, whether in the street or in the factory, at home, at meetings or at the pub, whether in sports or cultural organisations or anywhere else, we must work among them. In many cases the workers in the factories where we have no influence are highly organised in trade unions. We meet them at the branch meetings. Should we work among them there? I believe that no reasonable person will dispute the necessity of doing so. Therefore, although it is true that our main work is to be done in the factories, we must carry on our work, and also our trade union work, among the workers wherever we come into contact with them.

In many rationalised factories, where terrorism and company espionage is particularly great, the greater part of our work will in all probability lie outside the factory itself. Is there any possibility of carrying on revolutionary work, outside the factory, but inside the trade union? Of course. Every trade union position which can be occupied by a revolutionary worker, whether it is contribution secretary, reporter at a union meeting, leader of a discussion or anything else, offers

such possibilities, despite the terrorism of the trade union bureaucracy. Unfortunately, we take as little advantage of these opportunities as we do of the possibilities of work in the factory.

#### THE PROBLEMS MUST BE STATED CORRECTLY

Now as to the problems and arguments put forward by Comrade S. Per. What he has said as to the degree of fascist development reached in the reformist trade unions, is far from being all that has to be said on that subject. And it is far from being the most important. It was not, however, intended to serve Comrade Per as an explanation of the actual position in the reformist trade union movement and of our tasks. He was much more anxious to prove that it is not necessary, in regard to the trade unions, to differentiate between the social-fascist machinery of the organisation and the lower ranks of officials. He is anxious to prove that all the lower officials in the reformist unions are thoroughly imbued with social fascism. He writes:

“The reformist factory committee as a whole, and also its individual members, are the champions in the factory of the fascist policy of the trade union bureaucracy.”

And later on:

“The fight against the revolutionary movement is at the present time the central point of the daily work even of the lower trade union officials.”

What is stated here is the desire of the social-fascist leaders. But that does not by any means apply to all reformist factory committee members and to all the lower officials of the reformist unions. It is not a good generalisation; it deprives us of certain possibilities of attaining the united front from below and encourages the disinclination among revolutionary workers to accept the lower positions in the trade unions and in trade union and factory organisations.

To prove that we have not misinterpreted Comrade Per we shall quote the following paragraph from his article:—

“There are unfortunately within the ranks of the revolutionary trade union opposition not a few comrades who still believe that the road of winning the lower reformist officials leads to the road of win-

ning the masses," and the conclusion is drawn that "the task of winning the lower reformist officials in the mass, without having previously won the working masses, is an illusory task."

In support of his thesis Comrade Per quotes the remarks of a Communist at a meeting of the Flohr factory in Berlin. This comrade said that their strong position in the factory was partly to be attributed to the fact that the trade union shop stewards were supporters of the opposition. Comrade Per then categorically declares that these stewards were on the side of the revolutionary opposition "only because the majority of the workers in the shops supported them." Comrade Per's manner of putting the question is completely false. There are not many comrades within the ranks of the revolutionary trade union opposition who have such an eccentric attitude towards these problems as that expressed by Comrade Per. The slogan of winning the lower trade union positions in the factory and union does not mean that we should convince or win over the rotten, social-fascist officials; it means rather that the revolutionary workers should drive the rotten and thoroughly social-fascist elements from those positions and themselves occupy the posts. Not, of course, in his own right, but elected by the trade unionists.

We could occupy thousands and thousands of such positions, but unfortunately revolutionary workers avoid them as they would the plague, because of an incorrect attitude towards our work. A trade union shop steward or treasurer, if he is a member of the revolutionary opposition, is able in virtue of his position to speak to a number of trade union members and can counteract some at least of the social-fascist poison which is poured down from above; this needs no further explanation. Comrade Per wants, somewhat arbitrarily, to place limits on a field of activity which, even if it is narrow, can still be utilised by us.

As to his second problem: "New trade unions in Germany," Per promises us to dispose of a number of inexactitudes in our previous attitude on this question. Here, too, certain formulations make us pause. The Wedding Party Congress is criticised because the following is included among its resolu-

tions:—"The winning of the trade unions is not a peaceful process; it finds its conclusion with the winning of political power and the destruction of the bourgeois state machine by the revolutionary proletariat." There may be some question as to whether this formulation is exactly correct, but Per criticises it because, in his judgment, the establishment of red trade unions is here bound up only with the existence of an acutely revolutionary situation. This formulation, in his opinion, means that new unions can only be established after the victory of the proletariat. But the thesis of the Wedding Congress dealt with a process which is concluded only after the seizure of political power by the proletariat; that is, at the moment that the proletariat seizes state power, it also triumphs over the reformist leaders and positions in the trade union movement. It is obvious that in this case Comrade Per is railing against something that was not maintained at the Congress. Comrade Per uses this argument to show that revolutionary trade unions are necessary before the seizure of political power or before the emergence of an acutely revolutionary situation. He does not consider that the present moment is opportune for the creation of new unions in Germany. For him, too, the essential prerequisites for the formation of such unions are really great mass struggles conducted by the revolutionary opposition; and the desertion of the reformist unions by large numbers of workers. Nor do the decisions of the Wedding Congress say anything different. It might seem that this represents nothing more than a misunderstanding of the Congress resolutions by Per; but that cannot be the case, for he asks the following of the Fifth R.I.L.U. Congress: "That it must lay down the line of work not only for the immediate future, but for a longer period. The Fifth Congress should therefore carefully examine the tendencies of development in those factors which determine the establishment of parallel red trade unions in Germany . . . . The Fifth Congress should deal minutely with the prospects for the formation of red trade unions in Germany, and should point out the ways and means of their realisation."

If we consider Comrade Per's next questions, on the further strengthening of the

revolutionary opposition and the slogan: "Into the unions," then we see that the longer period referred to by Per is really the concern of the immediate future. He wants the revolutionary opposition in the factories to establish themselves on a broad mass basis. That is a very useful demand.

"With this object in view, revolutionary trade union groups, meeting regularly and working continuously, must be established in the factories, and the workers who sympathise with their platform and are willing to give active help, should be drawn in" . . . "The objection that the establishment of such groups really means the establishment of red trade unions, cannot be sustained . . . for they can only exercise a part of trade union functions."

These groups, then, are, so to speak, a transitional stage to the red trade unions. Very well. But then the affair hurries forward, for:

"the necessity of transforming the revolutionary trade union opposition into an independent mass movement requires that the slogan 'into the unions' be put in a different way, in order to strengthen the revolutionary opposition," . . . for . . . "experience has shown that this slogan, with the general significance that has been given it so far, does not strengthen the ranks of the revolutionary trade union opposition or increase their work in the unions."

Per even maintains that experience shows that with this slogan the position of the reformists is strengthened and our own weakened. Consequently he is of the opinion that . . . "it is wise to draw into the unions only those groups of whom we are sure that they will really fight actively for the cause of the revolutionary opposition, but the general slogan of 'into the unions' has already become out of date as a means to strengthen the revolutionary opposition."

We shall not deal with the other statements made by Comrade Per in his article, but confine ourselves with these three main points. The winning of the lower trade union positions, in order to exercise influence over the masses from those positions, is ridiculed; it is admitted that the present is not a suitable time

for the establishment of new unions in Germany, but the Fifth Congress must concretely and precisely formulate the prospects, for it is its task to lay down the line, not only for the immediate future, but also on a longer view. Meanwhile, there are the opposition groups, which are not yet red trade unions, and should give up their slogan of "revolutionary workers into the unions, in order to strengthen the revolutionary trade union opposition." To any attentive worker who reads this, it represents a whole programme. It follows, despite all the contrary assurances and wishes of Comrade Per, that work in the reformist trade unions is purposeless. The trade unions no longer fight, they are wholly fascist, and it is an illusion to win the lower positions and influence the workers from those positions, the oppositional workers who are asked to support our difficult work in the unions, are going over to the reformists while our own comrades, who are active in operating revolutionary tactics and defending the workers against capitalist attacks, are driven out of the unions. Then he takes the thesis that 99 per cent. of our trade union work lies in the factory, and he concludes that the social-democratic workers and members of the reformist unions are a constituent part of the financial oligarchy. "Why should I be a member of the union, when my contributions will only help the social-fascist scoundrels to betray my class interests even more? I have my group in the factory with whom I work, and it is more useful to pay contributions to them."

Perhaps Comrade Per will say that this conclusion has been fabricated. Unfortunately facts speak louder than words. A large number of members of the Communist Party have in the last few years left the unions, not only in the sense of ceasing active union work, but completely, as members. They left voluntarily, not because they were excluded. Of the Young Communist League, only a very small percentage is active in the trade unions—and this at a time when the workers are really becoming radicalised, when the youth sections of the reformist unions, under the leadership of social-fascist officials, have grown considerably, while the League has for long been stationary. But perhaps this is the case only in Germany? Would Comrade Per

like some examples from Norway, Poland, France, etc.?

In the present situation, when the workers' very existence is threatened by the tremendous capitalist onslaught and the acute capitalist crisis, it is doubly and triply necessary to make clear to the revolutionary workers that they must work wherever there is any possibility of carrying out revolutionary mass work; that it is precisely the revolutionary advance in the working class movement which makes it essential for them to work even in the reformist trade unions, not for love of the reformist bureaucrats, but in order to counteract the influence of social-fascism on the mass of the members. This work in the reformist unions will also help to combat the influence of the social-fascist machine over the unorganised workers, an influence which is built up on the size of the trade union organisations and their monopoly position in the working class movement. If we weaken our work in the reformist trade unions, we shall strengthen the position of our enemies.

The task of the Fifth Congress of the R.I.L.U. is to formulate all our problems correctly, for only then can we draw correct conclusions. There is no doubt that in Germany and in England we shall achieve a great revolutionary movement, based on red unions. Nobody among us will be "afraid" of this. Until then everything possible must be done to strengthen the organisational position of the Communist Party and the revolutionary opposition in the factories. We should no longer allow the cells to vegetate in the factories without any active political life; we should no longer allow the slogan "get revolutionary shop stewards" to remain nothing more than a paper resolution. The revolutionary factory committees must be firmly welded together. In all large factories we must struggle energetically for the workers to agree collectively to support the revolutionary trade union opposition, and to accept directives only from the opposition. We must rally all our adherents and sympathisers in the factories and at the labour exchanges and organise them into groups, and finally we must make the greatest efforts to win new sections of the proletariat for the revolutionary united front, by vigorous and systematic work

in proletarian mass organisations, particularly in the trade unions.

But we should not make any hasty experiments. We must not draw away from the masses, and form new unions prematurely, because revolutionary impatience or an insufficient understanding of the real will of the masses may mislead us. As things are at present, they would be organisations with only officers, lacking a rank and file. The conditions essential to the establishment of red trade unions in countries such as Germany and England will be present in more or less time. A premature foundation of new unions would only isolate us from the masses and assist the work of the social-fascists. The Communist International has expressed this view in a number of important decisions.

It is true that we must work out our prospects for a longer period. But the Fifth World Congress of the Profintern has another and, as far as practical work is concerned, a more important task to accomplish; namely, to determine what is to be done in the immediate future in order to carry out our task of winning the majority of the working class. The Congress will only be able to do this if it applies Lenin's teachings on the art of winning the masses. That is why there must be absolute clarity in formulating the problems. The programme of the Communist International, which was accepted at the Sixth World Congress, is surely not "out of date" on this subject:

**"To win the majority of our own class, including the working women and the working class youth; to achieve this it is necessary to ensure the decisive influence of the Communist Party in the great mass organisations of the proletariat (councils, trade unions, factory committees, co-operatives, sport and cultural organisations, etc.). Of particularly great importance in winning the majority of the proletariat is systematic work for winning the trade unions, those comprehensive mass organisations of the proletariat, which are so closely bound to its daily struggles. Work in reactionary trade unions—to win the confidence of the organised workers, to remove and thrust out the reformist leaders from their positions—this is one of the most important tasks in the period of preparation for the revolution."**

# THE SITUATION IN ITALY AND THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE ITALIAN PARTY

Comintern

A CHANGE IN THE GENERAL WORK OF THE PARTY

By GARLANDI

MENACE OF BORDIGA

THE last session of the C.C. of the I.C.P. has great significance for the future political development of our Party. Though the questions which confronted the Party and which were decided by the Party, should have been discussed at the September Session, 1929 (which means that the discussion of these questions was delayed a few months), however, the change which was aimed at in our work, represented an event the significance of which will be discovered in the next few months.

In the circles of leading comrades and among the "active" in the International our Party was considered as being "too cautious" in relation to the great problems and events in the life of the revolutionary international proletariat. In relation to the struggles with Trotsky and Trotskyism we did not take up an immediate and definite position; also relative to the new opposition of Zinoviev and Kamenev and afterwards relative to the Right opposition in the International. In this manner we were successively suspected of Trotskyism, Zinovism and Bukharinism. But at the same time we resisted Trotskyism, Zinovism and Bukharinism, so that in the words of Dante, we were: "useless, and God and his friends were his enemies."

In all these successive belated positions was there an element of "Aesthetic Independence"? No, we struggled with great energy, commencing with 1920, against the theory of independence preached by the Maximalists and Serratists, as against the remains of the old "integralism" in Italian Socialism and its reflection, if not in national, then in the last resort in jingo Socialism.

The truth about international Centralism, about the peace party, was for our Party not only a profound conviction, but it pushed us in order to scatter in the mass the social-patriotic reformists and provincialists, the nationalistic Socialism of the Maximalists and Serratists, who inherit now the remains of the Angelo Balabanov group.

Meanwhile our tendency to delay was rooted in the ideology natural to our Party from its cradle. Our Party was born a Bordigan. Why this came about we cannot possibly discuss here, but the fact remains and all arguments against it fall to the ground; even those who came to the new Communist Party with another ideology, even nearer to Leninism slipped under the influence of this "Bordiganism" in the first years of the life of our Party. Bordiganism gave an ideological expression unsuitable any longer to lead the various strata of the masses.

Instead of finding in Leninism the means of fighting opportunism, Bordiga believed that it could be found in his clean, formal and schematic logical antithesis of opportunism.

But in a deeper analysis of Bordiganism we would find beneath it the Maximalism and integralism of the Italians; they in Bordiganism, of course, surmount in the most contemporary conception the task of the revolutionary proletariat and mask the principles and formulas, which must embrace the clean party; but these formulas and principles, notwithstanding their support of Provincialism, compelled us Italians to believe that we had brought nothing particular or original to the International, nothing which yet anyone had talked about. Extreme Bordiganism, recalling Marx and Lenin, never avoided to recall the name of Bordiga, and affirmed this trinity, they searched gladness from the conscience that Italy (it is better to say Neopolita) participates in the great work of treating the ideology and strategy of the international revolutionary proletariat.

Though we are already emancipated from Bordiganism the soul of provincial distrust has not yet disappeared from our ranks. To this it is necessary to add that the objective conditions in which our Party was born are absolutely different from the conditions in which the other Communist Parties are to be

found and in which they arose. There have been ten years of bitter struggle, civil war, semi-legality and illegality; if our Party is to be developed into a fighting organ internally disciplined, if we are to be capable of life and struggle in very difficult conditions, then we must be clear on the ideological and political growth of the Party.

However, it is untrue that our Party stands aside from discussion of a problem. Just the opposite! The birth of Bordiganism came late, and only in 1926 was it possible to say that the Party had the upper hand of Bordiga. But the ideological and political struggle against the position of Bordiganism lasted a few years.

This circumstance had its influence in limiting the participation of the Party in the big international debates, narrowing this participation within the framework of a group of leading comrades, who are just those with psychological moods, which more than once influenced the Centre in the delaying discussions of international significance.

With this delay it is necessary to consider also the approach to the problem of the struggle with current mistakes within our Party. We have here to deal therefore with a political weakness which will be found in the Centre and in the periphery and which we are now correcting not without difficulties. We have a limited leadership and low finances.

At the September Session of the C.C. we condemned the viewpoint of Serra (Taska) and removed him from the composition of the C.C. of the Party. But the struggle against Serra (which, meanwhile, remains within the framework of the leading organs of the Party and which was little moved farther into the ranks of the comrades in the periphery and into proletarian circles) chiefly was directed against the viewpoint of Serra on the question of the international politics of Comintern and the R.C.P. After Serra took up a definite position in the meetings of the Pol. Secretariat of the Comintern on the German question (19th December, 1928) he was invited to give an explanation on the question of his relations to the C.C. Serra then did not limit his exposition to the German question and those questions of international

politics which were mostly connected with the position of the German Reconciliators and Rights which he had formerly defended.

Serra produced a complete report of a hundred pages in which he gave an exposition of his views on the entire politics of the Communist International and the questions of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. His viewpoint, as is known, is related to that sphere of views which were successively held by the Rights, and which developed along the line of the ideas of the Social-Democrats and Liberal bourgeoisie. We directed our fire against this position and against those who came forward to defend it.

In September we committed the big mistake of not connecting international problems with Italian problems and the tasks of our Party. The Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. instructed our Party to commence self-criticism, to straighten out a few of our views, which we had held during the last two years. We should have in connection with the Serra affair conducted a broad self-criticism of our Party, not fearing a provisional break in unity, reaching at the cost of refusal to discuss the party line; such unity may only have been ephemeral, fragile and therefore politically valueless.

The Italian commission which in connection with the Tenth Plenum discussed our Party, showed on which points the Party must examine and correct, though at the same time acknowledging that the general line of the Party was in essence correct.

Meanwhile, at the meetings of the P.B. of the Party, which preceded the September Session, with the agreement of Serra, we discussed the report of Comrade Ercoli about the Tenth Plenum and about the politics of the Party. A sharp opposition manifested itself among a group of comrades against Ercoli's report. If Ercoli's report (with which I am in full agreement) was not extremely courageous in respect of self-criticism, then the opposition were definitely confused. It was not clear whether the opponents wished, as all the members of the C.C., to be responsible for the politics of the Party, whether they wanted deeper self-criticism—was the entire Party line basically wrong, or were they against a revision of the Party line? We

came to the conviction that the majority of the oppositionists were divided on this second viewpoint and came forward accepting these in the character of a group struggle. In this way self-criticism inclined to the side of playing with responsibility which was unhealthy.

Other oppositionists, on the contrary, held to the viewpoint that the general line of the Party was wrong basically, but these and the others manifested a tendency to form a bloc. (A few months later they effected a bloc.) There approached a moment when it was necessary to fight basically to bring out all differences, even to sharpen differences and the determination not to leave any point unclear in all our divergencies. We were concerned to be deprived of Serra as a possible ally. Serra formed around himself a group inside the C.C., in all probability more homogeneous than the majority which we created against him. This opinion was disturbing and could have given rise to a big crisis within the leadership, and this we sought to avoid. We came in spite of all that occurred to an united front against Serra and forced him to capitulate or leave the Party.

The analysis of the situation in Italy made in September, already foreseen in the strengthening of the crisis and the movement of the masses, was justified in the course of time. There was placed the question of the necessity to change the methods of Party work in view of the changed situation. The opposition was against any kind of revision of the Party work, right against a more active participation of the Centre in the work of the periphery and the whole Party -- in activity among the masses. At the same time the opposition were not in agreement with our characterisation of the new elements in the situation; with the appraisal of the rôle of the Party in the worsened situation, even when the mistaken views which in the months immediately following enlarged were still in embryo.

The September debates ended in a compromise.

This was why we were backward in applying the concrete directives of the Tenth Plenum. This was why the results of the September Session, which in reality gave a correct analysis of the situation, was indefinite

and cloudy in placing the task of the Party. This was why with the passing of three months after the September Session of the C.C. there grew within the leadership a severe crisis, the most difficult of all since the time of the Third Congress of the Party. The entire politics of the Party was placed under question.

The conflict arose from the circumstance that the Secretariat of the Party, in face of the worsened situation in Italy, and the rising wave of the masses, fixed the whole work of the Party on the side of organising political mass strikes. If in September we had deepened our differences we would have witnessed a breaking of unity over the problem of the perspectives. At the same time, in December, half of the composition of the Secretariat, and in January, 1930, half of the P.B. came forward against a change in the tactics of the Party. The struggle from the very beginning took a sharp character, the opposition began to sabotage the normal course of Party work, and attempted to mobilise the Party apparatus against what was called the "attempts to ruin the Party"; those against a "change" began to propagate slanders against individual persons, beginning fractional work under the slogan "mobilising shortcomings," etc. The leadership of the Party has paid for its September mistake. What were the views of the majority of the active Party members?

We found ourselves confronted with the new facts in the Italian situation, foreseen in our September analysis of the further development of the crisis. These new facts were of an economic and political order. In the economic sphere it is necessary to ascertain that all the antagonisms, created in recent years as a result of the politics of Fascist Capitalism, attained to extreme sharpness; therefore, in the ranks of the ruling class a confusion with which Fascism struggled with difficulty. The American and world crisis deepened the Italian crisis and deprived it of satisfactory perspectives of solution. We have already shown the characteristic lines of the Italian economic crisis in the *Communist International*. In Italian capitalist society, organised with the sanction of the Fascist system, there appeared a new political crisis.

The characteristic lines of this crisis is the circumstance that it develops on the basis of an economic crisis which capitalism can attempt to solve only by running to exceptional means—war. The crisis of 1929-30 is not the same as that of 1926-27. The same methods with the aid of which Fascism came to the crisis of 1926-27 (revalorisation and stabilisation of the credit system, reduction of wages) and especially the international crisis will increase the present crisis in Italy. On the other hand, all crises in post-war Italy

demanded from capitalism exceptional methods of struggle. This circumstance in itself is a factor which aggravated all recent crises. In the post-war period (19-20, 21-22, 24-25, 26-27) crises were surmounted at the price of atrocious breaking down of social relations; but every crisis was overcome by exceptional means, which provoked new trouble which was again difficult for capitalism to overcome.

*(Continued in our next number.)*

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OF THE BOSS CLASS AND THE SOCIAL FASCISTS

THE DAILY WORKER

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