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The Liberal Labour Government in England

By A. Thalheimer.

In a Czech periodical President Masaryk recently drew, for him, a characteristic parallel between the assumption of the government in England by the Labour Party and the death of Lenin, the leader of the Russian Soviet Republic and the Communist International, which took place just about the same time. The policy of Macdonald as the "modern civilized" application of Marxism takes the place of the revolutionary "barbaric" application of Marxism, as it was embodied in Lenin. It is characteristic that the „Vorwärts" publishes this article by Masaryk without any reservation. The first steps of the Macdonald Government have already shown very clearly to the workers the true meaning of the "civilized Marxist policy" of the Labour Party, while the personal composition of the English Labour Government, in itself, gave the necessary indications as to what was to be expected. The bourgeois press remarked with satisfaction that, with few exceptions, the members of this government come from bourgeois circles, while it contains only one or two one-time workers. As a matter of fact, if one looks at the personal composition of the English Labour Government, it is at once observed that the so-called Labour representatives are for the most part intellectuals of the Fabian type, with Sydney Webb, the father of English Fabianism, at the head, radical bourgeois intellectuals who first found their way to the Labour during the war, or conservative trade union bureaucrats of the type of Thomas, Clynes or Frank Hodges. The "wild men" of the Clyde had to be satisfied with one insignificant post, and now the Liberal and even the Conservative English press is discovering that the Macdonald cabinet is a government of all the talents. One will remember that at the beginning of the formation of the government, a small panic arose in the City and that English capital already began to take flight to safe, reactionary America; but in the meanwhile the panic has been allayed. At the general meetings of the English joint stock companies, reassuring speeches have been held which were directly addressed to British capital, and with all good reason.

Lloyd George and other Liberal leaders have repeatedly pointed out with emphasis for the alleviation of the excitement

of the English bourgeois public, that this Labour Government takes office under such conditions that it cannot under any circumstances be dangerous to the English bourgeoisie. These conditions consist of the fact that the Liberal Government can overthrow the Labour Government any moment that it chooses and that, as a result, this government is compelled to adhere strictly to the line which is dictated to it by the Liberals. In the fullest sense of the word, the Macdonald Government is a Liberal Labour Government. The Times report that one of the Liberal leaders had cynically remarked: "Macdonald governs, but we rule". So it is in fact, and the tactics of the Labour Government are completely determined by this fact. They consist in attempting to defeat the Liberals with their own Liberal election program. The Macdonald Government will carry out the Liberal program, and reckons that if the Liberals should overthrow the Labour Government upon any question of their own program, the election campaign can be carried out with success by the Labour Party against the Liberals.

In this sly calculation, Macdonald and his crowd forget only one thing, and that is that bourgeois policy must in all cases be against the class interests of the proletariat. Naturally, the Liberals are speculating upon this and, as it appears to us, with more right. It seems to be the destiny of reformist labour parties, that they are all compelled to take up immediately a counter-revolutionary stand against the working class. The Ebert-Scheidemann Government, in the Autumn of 1918, began in this way, by taking up an attitude against the wage movement of the workers, and the Macdonald Government begins by having to take up an attitude against the strike of the locomotive engineers. It will have to stand up against a number of such social movements in a short time, such as that of the dock workers and the miners. It is becoming apparent in the case of the English working class, in the same way as it will become apparent in the case of the working class of the whole world, that as soon as it has a measure of political power in its hands, it begins to tug at the chains of its social slavery. The fine liberal and reformist distinction between

political power and social oppression cannot be driven into the heads of the working class. If in the struggle between Capital and Labour the English Labour Government takes the side of Capital, the English working class will take a great step forwards, which step will be against the present Labour Government. If the astute English bourgeoisie is reckoning rightly that the next political move on the political chessboard will be in its favour, they overlook the fact that it is precisely the inevitable disappointment of the English workers over the policy of their Liberal Labour Government that will lead the English working class upon the way of proletarian revolution, that is upon the way of Lenin.

Typical of the character of the Liberal Labour Government are its first steps in foreign policy. One of the most important touchstones for a revolutionary proletarian policy is the attitude towards the colonial peoples. One of the first acts of Macdonald, however, was to notify the Indians that they have nothing to hope from the use of force against British rule. In this way, Macdonald has proved that his government is just as imperialist as any liberal or conservative bourgeois government. The Liberal and Conservative English press were absolutely charmed with this confession of faith of the Labour Government in imperialism. Further, this government denied with the greatest indignation the rumour that it had the intention of discontinuing the development of the harbour of Singapore as a naval base. And finally, the recognition of Soviet Russia by Macdonald is quite openly bound up with the representation of the imperialist interests of the English bourgeoisie. Macdonald in the same way as Lord Curzon wishes the discontinuance of the "propaganda" among the Oriental races which is alleged to proceed from Soviet Russia. Macdonald demands the recognition of the debts which were contracted under the Czar, either to the English state or to private individuals. In form, the policy of Macdonald towards Soviet Russia is much more cautious than that of Curzon, but its contents bear the same character.

In its Continental policy the Macdonald Government has not yet a sure line. It will become apparent that the Macdonald Government, upon which the German Social Democrats as well as a large part of the German bourgeois are setting such hopes, have neither the will nor the strength to risk a break with France. For the English Liberal bourgeoisie, while it does not wish to have a French domination on the continent of Europe, desires just as little a revival of German commerce and industry that could be dangerous to English trade. What is concealed under the pacifist phrases of Macdonald, is the attempt to foil the territorial plans of France, and at the same time to set up, jointly with France and the United States, such an economic and financial control, that the economic development of Germany can be kept within the bounds to be fixed by England and America, who will be the deciding powers. The hopes of the German Social Democratic Party in the aid of the Labour Party will very soon show themselves to be illusions, and the cracks in the Second International, which are at the present moment plastered over by these illusive hopes, will then become all the deeper.

For our Communist Party in England, a period has now begun which offers huge possibilities of development. It will be its task to hasten and to make use of the rising development of the class consciousness of the English proletariat, which will begin in the practical school of the Liberal Labour Government, and this it must do on the basis of superior Communist insight and revolutionary energy. The facts will show that the entry into Power of the Macdonald government will, against the will and knowledge of the English bourgeoisie and its Labour Party, open the way for revolutionary Marxism which is best characterized by the name of Lenin. To the English Liberal Labour Party belongs a short moment of history; tomorrow belongs of history; tomorrow belongs to "Leninism".

It is certain that the proletarian revolution in England will not be an exact copy of the proletarian revolution in Russia, but instead of the characteristics of Macdonald it will bear those of Marx and Lenin. It will be in a much more pronounced degree than the Russian revolution a proletarian revolution and from the very beginning, with England as the centre of a huge world empire, will wear the features of a world revolution, that is, the connection of a proletarian revolution with an agrarian and colonial revolution.

POLITICS

What does the Horthy Amnesty mean?

The Pardoning of "Communists".

By Albert Király.

Hungary constituted and still constitutes for the great European powers an object which can very easily be played by one of the great powers against the interests of another great power. The antagonistic interests of the capitalist states of England and France demand from both sides a policy which makes use of every possibility in order to gain an advantage over the other. French policy was directed towards an encirclement of Hungary, and the geographical situation of the country assisted the French policy quite materially. A great opening for French influence is presented by Czecho-Slovakia on one side and by Yugoslavia on the other. The English bourgeoisie which has invested no inconsiderable amount of its capital in Hungary, is naturally at pains to protect its influence by all possible means. The government that held office before the Macdonald cabinet, did everything to assure their bourgeoisie its due in this respect. Hohler, who was formerly ambassador in Hungary under the Baldwin Government, was a close personal friend of Horthy. It was an open secret, how this English ambassador Hohler gave all possible support to the Hungarian counter-revolution. Hohler not only denied, condorsed, hushed up and covered the traces of the terrible deeds which lie at the door of the Horthy regime, he even delivered arms, ammunition and equipment to the Hungarian reaction and also stood at their side with financial aid against the working people.

The policy of Baldwin and Curzon of reducing the Continent to the state of a colony did not of course make any exception in the case of Hungary. Nevertheless, it is a matter of indifference whether the capitalist state of England is led by a conservative government or a labor government of a Macdonald shade; Hungary will always remain one of the chief figures upon the European chessboard which will be moved by England against France in the same way as by France against England.

Like nearly all the bourgeois states of the world, Hungary has fallen more and more into a condition of economic decay in the post-war period. The Horthy government of Hungary is now striving tooth and nail to obtain the international loan that has been held out to it. In fact, during the Baldwin Government in England, Hungary had received certain assurances on the part of that country, in regard to this loan. At that time, Premier Bethlen took a trip to London for that purpose. When the business of government was taken over by Macdonald, Bethlen had it announced in the press that certain difficulties in respect to the international loan had arisen. Now, after Macdonald has taken over the business of government, Peidl who was the Social Democratic Premier after the fall of the Soviet Government and who performed invaluable services for the Hungarian counter-revolution, has gone to England in company with the Social-Democrat Garami who lives in Vienna. It is not yet certain what is the object of this trip to Macdonald and on whose behalf it has been undertaken. One is compelled to ask whether the Hungarian Social Democrats, who did not even dare to send a representative to the foundation Congress of the Socialist Labour International in Hamburg, have found the courage to appeal to Macdonald for help against the Horthy reign of terror, or whether Peidl, true to his past role, as a helpful intermediary for the Hungarian bourgeois is going to Macdonald to put in a word for the granting of the international loan, or whether in fact his mission serves both purposes.

In any case it would appear at first sight as an achievement of Peidl's that the Horthy Government which has so far felt quite at ease in its orgy of vengeance, suddenly puts on its sheep's clothing and issues an amnesty to a large number of its most bitterly and relentlessly persecuted enemies, that is many "Communists". According to the official proclamation, 16 prisoners who were sentenced to imprisonment and 22 who had emigrated to foreign countries, were pardoned. In all cases the official announcement spoke only of Communists. The truth is, however, that, as regards the 16 pardoned (who have already languished in gaol for five years), all have nearly completed their sentences, and that among the 22 pardoned Emigrants there is not a single Communist. It is here a question of out and out

supporters of the extreme Right leaders of the Social Democrats, who left the country owing to the rising wave of pogroms against anything that was in the least way inclined to the Left.

The true character of the wolves Horthy, Heyjas, Bethlen and company, who now wish to convert themselves into sheep before the eyes of the world, can be best recognized by the actual facts in Hungary. The bestial justice of the Hungarian counter-revolution flung one hundred thousand workers and peasants into prison or internment camp; and even today, after five years, there are still one thousand political prisoners in the clutches of the Horthy Government, comprising 830 in the prisons and 180 in the internment camps. The plaints of the captives, which sometimes manage to find their way through even the three foot thick walls of the prisons, tell us that the majority of them are ill and are victims of tuberculosis. Still worse even is the condition of the 180 who are interned for an indefinite period. They are obliged to suffer cold and hunger, they must submit to ill-treatment and are exposed to epidemics.

Thus, after the "Communist" amnesty of Horthy, 814 political prisoners still languish in the prisons and have to serve a total of about 5,400 years, while the 180 internees are as good as condemned to death. Among the prisoners, there are four who are condemned to death, and one to life imprisonment. It was not enough for the Horthy beasts that they carried out a legal murder of fifty revolutionaries and an illegal massacre of thousands, for there are still four victims today who are awaiting the carrying out of the death sentence.

The leaders of the revolution live in exile, and of those who did not escape, many were liberated through the solidarity of the Russian proletariat and exchanged against the Hungarian officers who had been kept back as hostages. The common soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the labour movement who are still in prison, were chiefly employed in the welfare institutions of Soviet Hungary. Fifteen women in Marianostrá, who were nearly all sentenced to ten and fifteen years, are languishing there because they made propaganda for socialist pedagogics, people's culture and child welfare. Hundreds of representatives of the workers who conducted the struggle of the workers for their daily bread, are sacrificed to the agonies of imprisonment and internment. The counter-revolution wishes to continue to be the hangman of the Hungarian people. It does not want to open the door of freedom to the 814 prisoners, the 180 internees and the workers, peasants, clerks and intellectuals, numbering about thirty thousand, who are living as Emigrants in other countries.

The answer of the English proletariat must not be anything else than: No material or moral support for the Hungarian bourgeoisie! Liberation of the interned! Abolition of internment! Right of combination and holding of meetings! Abrogation of Police Control! Away with Horthy!

The Parliamentary Elections in Italy.

By Ruggiero Grieco (Rome).

The Tactics of the parties for the Election on April 6th.

The speech which Mussolini delivered on 28th January in the general assembly of the Fascists in Rome, marked the official opening of the election campaign. The real commencement of the period of preparation for the elections was in December and can be dated from the day on which the Parliamentary Session was ended. On that same day there began everywhere the discussion concerning the actual problem — the elections. The words uttered by Mussolini on 28th January in the Palace at Venice, will certainly not be without their effect upon the program and the tactics of the parties participating in the election struggle.

The Premier has already stated the task, which Fascism has set itself by imposing the new elections: it is desired to bring about a plebiscite. Mussolini's expressions on this point were not very happy. It is naturally impossible to believe in the neutrality of the Government in the elections, especially in Italy, where everyone is aware of the badly concealed corruption, which made the name of Giolitti notorious, as well as the deeds of his hirelings, who, paid by the government candidates or by the government itself, had to achieve at any price the election of their paymaker. Still the elementary tactics of the government, whether it be unprejudiced or not, demands, that

the rights of the citizens to freedom of propaganda and of the ballot be publicly announced, and that all organs of the state be exhorted to preserve this right. Mussolini, — who can never refer often enough to the fact, that in October 1922 he created no special courts and no exceptional laws, that he has kept to the constitutional apparatus of the State and has not dissolved any political organization — in reality systematically undermines the laws of the Constitution; thus, while not dissolving our Party, he has placed it in such a position, that any kind of legal work, has been made impossible for it. Just at this time, several comrades in Varese (Milan) have been arrested on the charge of having founded a Communist Section (in Varese there always was a communist section, which had naturally to exist illegally). A few months ago, our press was forbidden, and it was only a few days ago that the bann was taken off; still, let us have no illusions — the prohibition will soon be set into operation again.

Mussolini's tactics serve the purposes of his foreign policy; it is to his interest not to appear outside the country, as leader of a reactionary government, for among the bourgeois governments with which he has to deal, and which in a certain sense are on a par with the Italian, it is customary to use liberal and democratic language. In his speech on January 28th, Mussolini was very careful not to express his view regarding the Italian political problems, or to set forth a program. He submitted to examination the conduct of the various parties — the traditional rhetorical opening of the campaign in our country — and closed with the customary reference to the possibility of an appeal to the Black Shirts, a possibility, which is ever present, and which must be held up in order to terrify all parties standing in opposition to Fascism. There is no Fascist election program: it was not included in the speech of January the 28th and, further, it will not be proclaimed, since the Premier has assured his friends, that he will not open his mouth again during the election. Whoever follows the intellectual and political movement of Fascism, knows, that it in fact does not possess a Theory, a Doctrine, that it developed as a reaction against the great social movement of the working class in the years 1919—20. Fascism is more concerned with actual facts, with "particular cases", which (without being hampered by preconceived methods) it tests and seeks to solve according to the opportuneness and exigences of the given moment. Therefore, Fascism can allow itself the luxury of having no program. The Fascist program can be expressed in one word: Nation. Mussolini faces Parliamentary Government as a historical fact: he says, so long as the disease of Parliamentary Government exists in Europe, one must have elections. — The opinion is no theory, it is a pose. In reality, Mussolini's anti-parliamentarism is aimed at having an accommodating Parliament as an instrument in his hand.

The Clerical Party (Popolari) which has now for many months defended the political watchword, "neither collaboration nor opposition" goes over now, with its election manifesto, decidedly into the opposition camp. The Fascist press hastens to brand the Popolari as an anti-government party.

The Republicans, who have no great following in the country, belong to the opposition and will take part in the elections with their own list.

The Unitarian Socialists (Turati Party) are supporters of abstention from voting, while the Maximalists, whose views are represented by the "Avanti", have not yet given any clear expression of their attitude. The Communists announced already in December their will to partake in the elections. Of the propositions made by the Communists to the Unitarians and Maximalists for an election block of the "proletarian opposition" something special must be said.

The Liberal and Democratic opposition is not yet clear on its attitude. The Milan Society for the Defence of Proportional Representation has changed into a Committee of Democratic Defence with a program which stands in opposition to Fascism. With this committee, the Democratic League — which was founded in Rome in 1923 and at whose head Bonomi stands — appears to have entered into an alliance, in order to consider the form of their share in the elections on April 6th. Just now, also a Conference is taking place of the Autonomous Democrats, a group which has cut itself off from the pro-govern-

ment Social Democrats (at whose head is the Minister Di Cesaro), and gone over to the opposition. It is supposed that all these opposition democratic groups will form one Block. Still, it is difficult to predict the attitude of the democratic parties; in their ranks are many leaders, who long for a member's mandate, but there is no great leader, who could rally them all around a serious program.

The government list, which will be a national list with a Fascist majority, will contain names of persons friendly to Fascism belonging to any party or to none. The inclusion of their names in the government list does not mean conformity on the basis of a laid down program (the government list has no certain program) with the parties whose members figure in the list. The government list contains right-wing "Socialists" out of the pro-Fascist Girona group (Enrico Ferri, Cesare Alessandri), Popolari (National Union of Popolari) Democrats (Social Democrats), Liberals (pro-Fascist, Right-wing Liberals). The Liberal Party, which wishes to keep its autonomy, will share the list of the minority, its "parallel" list will be supported by the Government. The election law which insures victory to the government list, still takes up a number of minority seats for the Liberal friends of the Government, by the System of parallel lists, and so strengthens the Parliamentary position of the government.

All the above is in the nature of information; we Communists are not surprised by anything in connection with these elections; they are different from former ones on from elections in other capitalist countries, because the dictatorial method momentarily ruling in Italy, is formally different from the methods which the bourgeoisie in other lands is using at present.

United States War on Mexico looms up.

By John Pepper (New York).

Greedy American imperialism is preparing a new crusade: It wants to conquer Mexico.

The United States Government first sold arms to the Obregon Government and now it has sent warships to Tampico.

The Coolidge administration declared at first that it was selling weapons to Obregon because that is the "constitutional" government in Mexico, and because the United States is interested in the maintenance of order and peace in Mexico.

The Coolidge Government now declares that it must send warships to break the blockade established by the government of Adolfo De la Huerta at Vera Cruz, "to prevent interference with legitimate American commerce".

The U. S. A. workers and farmers must be aroused. The greatest menace is facing us. The United States, the youngest, greediest and mightiest imperialist country of the world, now aims openly at conquering Mexico, after it has undermined it economically. But the conquest of Mexico not only constitutes the greatest danger for the workers and farmers of Mexico, but is also the greatest menace to the workers and farmers of the United States. The costs of the great world war were paid in blood, money and sweat by the workers and farmers of the United States. The workers still pay through the increased cost of living. The farmers still pay through the frightful bankruptcy of millions and millions of tillers of the soil. A new war against Mexico would mean the sharpening of the world crisis, it would mean the increase of the army and navy, the growth of centralized government and ever new burdens upon the working population.

This is the most cunning and most unscrupulous game played by American imperialism. United States imperialism first forced the Obregon Government to its knees. The Obregon Government was recognized by the United States, but only after Obregon recognized all the prerogatives and privileges of American capitalists in Mexico, and after Obregon, the representative of young Mexican capitalism, had not only betrayed the interests of Mexican native capital, but had begun to oppress the workers and disarm the peasants who had supported him until then.

The United States government recognized the Obregon Government after Obregon had capitulated; but the Obregon Government is still too radical for the United States, and American imperialism, at the same moment that it recognized Obregon was stirring up a counter-revolution in Mexico against him. Behind the Adolfo De la Huerta counter-revolution, stand not only the big landowners who had to give up a part of their land

to the armed peons, not only dissatisfied army officers and the reactionary Catholic church, but also the powerful American oil interests.

Wall Street recognizes Obregon, and Coolidge sells him weapons, while on the other hand the De la Huerta counter-revolution is financed by Wall Street, and simultaneously with that Coolidge sends warships to break the sea blockade established by the De la Huerta government.

It seems nothing but a mass of contradictions. It appears to be mere madness. But there is a frightful and bloody method and logic in this madness. This method and logic is the logic and method of imperialism.

The seemingly contradictory acts of the United States are explained by the plans of Wall Street and the White House to conquer Mexico. The United States supports Obregon and supports Huerta, in order thereby to render any government impossible in Mexico. American capitalists want to invade Mexico. The Chicago Daily Tribune has given away the plans of the imperialists. The Chicago Daily Tribune, which represents that tendency of American imperialism which does not want to have anything to do with Europe but wants to conquer Latin America, declares:

"We have guarded and backed the right man, but if he is friendly and wants to develop a peaceful Mexico it is highly moral to give him arms and ammunition. If that method will not succeed, the United States eventually will be driven to more direct intervention, as it has been driven in Haiti and elsewhere.

In that case the wise thing for America to do would be to enlist and direct the Rurales, well paid Mexicans, to keep the country in order, just as the Filipino constabulary does in the islands. That naturally would cause an uproar, but it would be justified. It may be avoided by supporting a Mexican administration in the way our government is now doing."

It will be the task of the Workers Party of America to arouse the workers and farmers of the whole country, to expose the plans of American imperialism, to fight against the new war. The workers and farmers must see that one step will follow the other. First came the sale of arms. The second step was the sending of warships. The third step will be the landing of troops. The fourth step will be the complete mobilization of army and navy. And then it will end with the new conscription of the manpower of the nation.

And there is a possibility that the Mexican War will not remain isolated. Already there is a conflict between American and British oil interests in Mexico. Today, the United States sends war ships to protect "legitimate American commerce". Tomorrow, Great Britain will send warships to protect "legitimate British commerce".

In the imperialist period of capitalism, there is always the possibility and even the probability that no local war remains isolated and localized. In 1914 the insignificant local conflict between Austro-Hungary and Serbia led to the explosion of the world war. Who can guarantee that the local conflict between the United States and Mexico in 1924 cannot bring on a new world conflagration? We must realize that war danger and war is not an accident in the period of imperialism, but that it follows with iron inevitability from the very nature and inner structure of this period of imperialism. What is being done today by the United States Government in Mexico was already explained theoretically on November 8, 1923 in the speech of Hoover, Secretary of commerce, before the American Marine Congress:

"It seems worth repeating at times that our international trade is one of the very foundations of our standards of living; that our whole fabric of living and comfort are dependent upon the import of commodities which we do not and cannot ourselves produce — tin, rubber, coffee, sugar, and a score of others; further, in the main, the amount of these commodities we can import will depend upon the volume we export. Moreover we need a constant expansion of our export markets to give stability to our internal production by a wider range of customers."

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Splitters of the Trade-Unions at Work.

By Fritz Heckert.

It is known to the workers of all countries, that the situation of the German working-class has reached such a stage of wretchedness as was never known before. Nowhere are the workers forced to be robbed through such starvation-wages, as they are in that country, which possesses the greatest trade-union movement in the whole world. This misery of the German workers is due not solely or even in the first to the unfavorable circumstances, in which Germany found herself after the end of the war. Far more greatly to blame than the unfavorable circumstances of the country, are the heads of the German trade-unions, especially the leaders of the A. D. G. B. (German General Confederation of Trade Unions). These people, for the past ten years, have never been able to do enough in the way of flunkey service to the bourgeoisie.

Rosa Luxemburg, who was assassinated by the Noskuguards, already in 1917, wrote concerning the Leaders of the German trade-unions: "They resemble prostitutes, who are willing to give themselves up to anybody in response to the slightest whistle". After the end of the war, nowhere was there greater and better opportunity of increasing the power of the working-class than in Germany. The leaders of the trade-unions however have done everything possible to deliver the workers over to the cruellest slavery. They succeeded only too well in this infamy. With a diabolical system they set to work to break down all resistance that the workers could possibly set up against their misery. The policy of co-operation with the employers was instituted and with this most refined instrument for betrayal of the working-class they played one trump after the other into the hands of the employers.

The German workers were not so foolish as to mistake the nature of this policy of co-operation. They felt instinctively that this was a means for fettering the proletariat, and since its existence they have been fighting for its abolition. To this struggle of the workers against co-operation of the trade-unions with the employers, the heads of the trade-unions reply with expulsion of the leading spirits of the opposition out of the unions and with denouncing them to the employers, in order that the latter can subject them to disciplinary punishment. This is analogous to what happened during the war-time. At that time the reformist leaders of the unions denounced the members of the opposition to the military authorities, in order to have them sent to the trenches or to prison. In the same way as the Social-Democrats, under the leadership of the trade-union bureaucracy, expelled the oppositional members, who fought against co-operation with the military authorities, from the Social Democratic Party, so now the opponents of the co-operation with the employers are expelled from the unions.

When in the spring 1922, after the great railway strike, capitalist Germany began with a great offensive against the eight hour day and the right of the workers in the factories, the leaders of the Trade Unions did not, perchance, declare: "Now all the forces of the workers must be set in motion for defence against the employers' offensive". But on the contrary: "The best struggle for the interest of the workers is the struggle against the Communists". In accordance with this battle-cry, they expelled a great number of revolutionary fighters from the Trade-Unions. In spite of these measures, they did not succeed in extirpating the opposition against co-operation. The opposition increased to such an extent that it gained the majority at the Trade Unions Congress in Leipzig and carried through a decision to abandon altogether the policy of class co-operation. German Trade Union leaders are, however, superior to all majorities, they stand for bourgeois democracy, but not for democracy in the workers' movement. Just as they are heroically fighting against the dictatorship of the proletariat, so they are fighting with still greater violence and using the basest means in order to set for up their own dictatorship in the Trade Unions.

In 1923 the policy of working together with the employers was completely wrecked. The capitalist can dispense with the help of the lackeys of the A. D. G. B. in the exploitation and

suppression of the workers. In the consciousness of their strength, the employers go so far as to bestow kicks on their best lackeys among the Trade Union leaders. The employers have promptly made good use of the favorable opportunity, so that today the German workers are in a deplorable position. Of course, the German workers wish to defend themselves and as they felt themselves to be abandoned and betrayed by the trade union leaders, they had resort to self-help. A number of actions for defending themselves took place without the sanctions of the leaders within the last years. But even in these actions, the workers are conscious, that their prospect of success lies in these movements being well organized. They know very well that with the continuance of the reformist policy in the Trade Unions the employers would triumph everywhere and that the Trade Unions would be crushed.

As a result of these experiences the Conference at Weimar was organized and the program of the conference arranged: "Salvation of the Trade-Unions from ruin, setting aside of all policy of co-operation, resumption of the ruthless class-struggle, purging of the Trade-Unions of all elements of class treachery and building up of the German Trade Union movement to great united industrial unions." These efforts evoked an enormous response in the proletarian class. Weimar is regarded as a Day of Salvation out of weakness and humiliation. But this is not the case with the heads of the Trade-Unions. They want to go on with their policy of class co-operation, they do not wish to know anything about the class-struggle. They lead no fight against the reduction of wages and surrender without a struggle in the question of the eight hour day, thereby increasing the misery and weakness of the workers. On the very day on which the employers succeeded in robbing the workers of important branches of the eight hour day, the ADGB. met for the purpose of starting a new campaign against the opposition in the Trade-Unions. These wretches, who are too stupid and cowardly to defend even the smallest position of the threatened working-class, decide unanimously: "These events (the struggle of the opposition at Weimar for the salvation of the Trade-Unions) compel the Trade-Unions to a common defense . . . Those, who are serving this separate organisation or who are favoring the above named aims, willfully place themselves outside the Trade-Unions. It lies in the interest of self-preservation and the unlimited fighting power of the Trade-Unions, to rid themselves such obnoxious persons. . . . The leaders of the Union expect every trade union member to withdraw from the splitters and to support energetically the necessary measures for liberating the organization from those elements!"

And immediately after this notification from above, the official creatures of the A. D. G. B. in the subordinate organs began to carry through this devilish plan for destroying the German Trade-Unions. The Trade-Union Commission of Berlin and the Trade-Union Conference of Berlin-Brandenburg have decided to expel all local organizations of the A. D. G. B. which ranged themselves on the side of Weimar, and expressed the expectation that the unions will quickly get cleansed from the oppositional elements.

That is the call for the destruction on of the Trade-Unions. That is the best way of delivering the working-class rendered defenseless, to the capitalistic vampires. This is work of such monstrousness, that every treachery up to now fades by comparison into nothing. During the war, the leaders of the Trade-Unions have built up the Trade-Unions to be the best bulwark of the reaction; during the revolution they let them serve the counter-revolution, and now they will simply hand them over to destruction. The opposition will do everything to frustrate their plan. The Fascist bandits of the A. D. G. B. will not be allowed to accomplish their work. The workers will be on the alert. The workers in all factories, in all localities, in all Trade-Union branches, will rise and will put a stop to the proceedings of those leaders, whose only skill is to extract payment for their Judas-deeds out of the pockets of the betrayed. It may be that the opposition of Weimar will not be able to hinder the splitting of the Unions, but it will hinder the capitalists from deriving advantage from these acts of the leaders. The German Trade-Unions will grow again under the leadership of the opposition and will become a mighty and victorious weapon of the working-class.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The International Communist Women's Day.

By Clara Zetkin.

I.

Let us make timely and energetic preparations for the approaching International Communist Women's Day, all of us, men and women, who are organized in the communist sections and stand for the aims of the Communist International. It is by no means "solely an affair for women". Our Women's Day is a matter for the whole Communist International, of all the affiliated Communist parties. Its aim is to bring to the broad masses of working-women the glad tidings of Communism, which will save them from need and suffering, from exploitation and constraint. But only on one condition. They themselves must fight with all their energy either inside the Communist Party of their country or at least under the leadership of that Party for the suppression of the exploiting and oppressing dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by the dictatorship of the proletariat. For it is simply and solely by that means that the living human being — whether man or woman — can be liberated from that power which is the very foundation of all the many social miseries. To drive out by such a knowledge the weary, despairing hopelessness of millions of people and to create an iron energy, is a most sacred duty.

The general offensive of the world bourgeoisie against the workers of all capitalist countries is still continuing, it wrests the last bit of bread out of the worker's mouth, lengthens and intensifies the toil and tread down the few poor privileges and rights won in hard battles. All the powers of capitalism are still on the alert to overthrow Soviet Russia, the only Workers' and Peasants' State of the world, the protector and firm shield of all toiling people. For the profit of a small minority the toilers have to bear the huge costs of the imperialistic robber war, the re-establishment and consolidation of capitalistic economy, which is cracking and crumbling in all parts and, in addition to that, the workers have to yield big profits to their exploiters. In the factories, commercial houses and banks as well as in the state, the great capitalists employ every means of power against those who have little or nothing. Bourgeois democracy is exposing itself even to the most credulous minds as the brutal class rule of the junkers, the owners of the mines and heavy industries, of the big merchants and great banking kings, developed to a naked, bloody, bourgeois class dictatorship and to merciless white terror.

In Spain and in Japan military dictatorship, in Italy continued rule of Fascism, in Bulgaria and Germany the military power is victorious; Military dictatorship, government and victory of Fascism, what does it mean except the severest oppression of the workers with hand and or brain, to squeeze out the last ounce of strength and to coin it into glittering gold? The fact of the intensified exploitation and slavery of millions by a few, proceeds from one country to the other. And everywhere it is the women who can offer less resistance against adverse, who have to bear the heaviest burdens of need and worry. The hunger of countless millions for bread, liberty and right, the revolt of their humanity against being soiled and trodden under foot by the iron heel of the capitalistic powers, gives rise in the bourgeois states to the slogan, which will awake, on the International Communist Women's Day, the huge masses of women, will summon them and lead them into the revolutionary class-fight. The Unions of the Socialist Soviet Republics, however, will unite the working women in the demonstration of international solidarity with their sisters in the East and the West, they will call them to active help in building up a higher form of economics and society.

Sacrificing, mighty activity of solidarity with the starving German proletariat, that is the general international slogan of the Women's Day, which the situation places in the foreground, as it was the hunger relief for Russia in the past years. The occupation of the Ruhr area by French imperialism has quickly increased the decay of German economics. Poincaré's bajonets and Stinnes' hunger-whip have created together a hell of misery for the Ruhr proletariat. The number of unemployed and workers on short time far exceeds the half of the population. The half, even three quarters of the inhabitants

of big and, formerly, flourishing cities, as Cologne, Duisburg, Dusseldorf are nearly starving and live by public funds. The owners of the heavy industry of the Rhineland and Westphalia, the Junkers and the great capitalists of the whole Reich, took advantage with impunity of this situation for a huge robbery of the proletariat, the middle class and the small peasants of Germany. Their insatiable lust for gold smashed what there was left of German economics and plundered the public treasure which is to be filled by the poor and the poorest with their taxes. Swindles with paper-money, closing down of works and short time, goods disappearing from the market are characteristic of the present time.

With four millions of unemployed and three and a half millions of workers on short time in December, nearly a third of the employable people of Germany were wholly or almost unemployed. Dependent on these 7½ millions, are further millions of women, children, aged parents, who lived on the earnings of these now unemployed. Besides this, there is to be added the millions of war-invalids, war-widows and war orphans, state insurance and small pensioners, ruined small and middle businessmen, and in addition the great number of badly paid employees, officials, teachers and intellectuals of all kinds who have lost their positions. In Munich, for example, 15% of the physicians were without practice. To these mountains of misery, broad masses are to be added who will become unemployed and homeless even to-morrow. But even the fortunate people who seem to have secure employment and earnings are, with their dependants, lacking the most necessary things. The wages of the workers, the salaries of the employees, of the officials etc. are only the half or a third of the pre-war time while the cost of living has doubled. A skilled worker before 1914 earned in an hour sufficient to buy one pound of meat of good quality, now he is obliged to toil eight hours to obtain this. The daily wages of many family bread-winners are just enough to buy the necessary bread. In the industrial centers in many larger cities you meet, at every step, beggars, starving, freezing, exhausted. Trembling old women and pale-faced children are looking for crumbs of bread in the rubbish heaps.

Not only the proletariat, accustomed to suffer, are to be found among these dying and perishing people. The greed of the big capitalists have expropriated the middle stratum of the population and pushed them into the depth of social misery.

The International Communist Women's Day must hammer this into the consciousness of the masses when we call on them to participate with brotherly solidarity in fighting against the starvation in Germany. The reason that millions are devoured by the most terrible misery, is not to be sought in a natural catastrophe, as was the case in Soviet Russia in 1921—22, it lies in the social and political structure of society. It scourges only the proletarians and members of the middle strata of the population. The exploiters and usurers are feasting as never before. It is mainly rooted in the fact that the German workers, in their majority, have been deceived by the treacherous and cowardly Social Democratic leaders, who did not use the political power which had fallen into their hands in a revolutionary way, by setting up their dictatorship and in striking down the vampire of capitalism, which is sucking out blood and marrow. Fooled by the illusion of democracy, the workers gave five years' credit to the bourgeois republic to secure bread, rights and liberty promised them by reforms. And the result?

The German bourgeoisie has consolidated its governing and exploiting power over the wage-slaves these last five years. The end is neither democracy nor reforms, but the military dictatorship of Seeckt. The eight hour day is annihilated. The miserable rights of the shop stewards are trodden down, the right to strike is delivered up to the employers. Wages are going down. The usury-prices for provisions, clothing, dwellings, heating etc. are not to be paid. The taxes increase in a unendurable way. The state of siege sets aside all liberty of meetings and press and in Bavaria, Saxony and Thuringia treads under foot, together with the constitution, the last democratic trappings. Ebert, the Social-Democrat, passes the sword to the generals of the Hohenzollern, with which they subject the working people to the slavery of Stinnes, with which they defeat the starving and mutinous. In order to rob the exploited and disinherited of their means of defense and leadership, the Communist Party was prohibited. Its press was forbidden, its fighters are filling the prisons.

Just as the last cause, so the effect of the unlimited misery in Germany is political. Famine is prematurely killing off millions of working people, it thins the ranks of the proletarian fighters and weakens their power. The proletarians require great numbers for their battles and likewise after their victory for the building up of their power. Starving people, who tremble eager for a mouthful of bread, wearied by misery, might storm rashly forwards in a moment of desparation, but they rarely possess the power to sustain the battle tenaciously and perseveringly. Alluring hopes and prospects often cause them to step aside, or drive them even to the armies of the counter-revolution. Unemployment and want have rallied a great number around the Fascist banner.

The German famine is a danger for the revolutionary struggle of the German proletariat. To meet this by international solidarity means to strengthen and to steel the will and the energy of the exploited in Germany for the revolution. The bread given by their sisters and brethren beyond the frontier possesses a twofold power. It not only appeases those who feel hungry, it kindles in the memory of the donors the spark of international feeling, it wins revolutionary fighters. Thus the cause of revolution in Western Europe, where its final proud cry "I am" will be of the greatest significance, demands the rising of the workers in France, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and in the other capitalist countries to a great historical Doomsday for their class-enemies. The International Communist Women's Day must not only touch the hearts for the needy. It must awaken the spirit of active help for the revolutionary fighters. It is an action involving conscious Communist knowledge and decision, to raise millions of women and add them to the forces of the proletarian world revolution and in this way push the revolution forward.

The great aim also includes that the International Communist Women's Day has to be an increasing demonstration of solidarity for the proletarians, for the working people of all countries, where the military dictatorship, where Fascism, makes the exploiting and oppressing powers of the great owners more intense. Wherever the women on the 8th of March vow to lead the sharpest fight against misery and constraint of the working people, they will think of the severely tried proletarians and peasants of Yugoslavia, Greece, Spain, Japan, Italy and Bulgaria. There the class dictatorship of the rich and exploiting rages in the form of an unrestrained brutal white terror against the poor. They are not protected by even the least rights. Through the prohibition of the Communist Party, the revolutionary vanguard is forced into illegality, its fighters fill the prisons, they are tortured, assassinated and murdered. In Japan, the military dictatorship erected its government upon the ruins and heart-breaking misery which was created by the catastrophe of the earth-quakes. Mussolini's iron fist is still strangling the Italian proletarians, who are beginning to join the Communist Party again in spite of the severest hindrances and dangers. The clique of officers and usurers governing in Bulgaria revenge themselves, because the workers and peasants, under Communist leadership, have bravely revolted. But even there the forbidden and hunted Communist Party summons the dispersed proletarians and gains allies for them in the peasantry. Under the prevailing circumstances, it is natural that our Women's Day must appeal fervently: Fight against the white terror! Help for its victims, for the victims of the bourgeois class-justice! Release the prisoners! Even women, not yet politically awakened and skilled, will lend a willing ear and heart to this appeal, by feeling with them, begin to comprehend.

The consciousness of international relations puts another political slogan into the foreground of the Communist Women's Day. Whole-hearted solidarity with national fighters for liberation, where the population of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and of those territories and countries threatened with becoming colonies, is rising against capitalistic imperialism. From Ireland to China, rising flames, or already immense conflagrations, of national rebellions can be seen nearly everywhere. Everywhere too a political and social awakening of women is felt. Masses of women in Ireland favour the national revolution, in the countries of the Near and Far East the women can boast of being the foremost fighters for nationalism; thousands of working women participate in strikes. The revolution is undermining the last governing and exploiting areas of capitalism, it destroys its last reserve-powers. We heartily welcome these facts, for we are firmly convinced that only by overcoming capitalism, that only by revolution can the door of social equality and human liberty be fully open to women.

Therefore there remains a slogan for our International Communist Women's Day which is so obviously necessary that there is no need to emphasize it: great, powerful solidarity with Soviet Russia, the land of the proletarian revolution, where the dictatorship of the working class has created the same right for both sexes. Struggle against all capitalist powers, which seek to throw down the Proletarian and Peasant State.

II.

The general political slogans which we have indicated for our Women's Day are the same for all countries, but it is a matter of course that in each country special prominence is given to that slogan which arises out of the situation resulting from the general offensive of the bourgeoisie against the working masses. The general political slogans of our International Women's Day bear the character of a Communist revolutionary proclamation. They draw a sharp line between the reformist Women's Day arrangements and ours. For if the latter also speak of the emancipation of women through Socialism and of the social revolution, these are only empty platonic words, behind which there is no will for action to fight the way on to Socialism. In actual fact Reformism rejects the revolution, it hopes to obtain from bourgeois democracy, what only Socialism can give. Its most eminent leaders detest and fear the revolution, which will be a fighting action on the part of the masses, and not an accumulation of votes and Parliamentary decisions. The reformist Women's Day gatherings therefore will not summon women fighters for the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. That constitutes an unbridgable contradiction between it and our International Women's Day.

Its essential content culminates in the political slogans of revolutionary proletarian class-struggle, and especially in the demonstration that for the masses of the working women also, the conquest of state power, the erection of the dictatorship by the proletariat is the demand of the hour, in order to carry through which they must work consciously and devotedly with all their powers. But the pure political slogans do not exhaust the import of the International Communist Women's Day. They must be made understandable, inspiring and inflaming the feelings, the thoughts and will of the not yet politically enlightened and schooled millions of women of the working people. We must point out their inner inseparable connection with the conditions of life of these millions. The latter shall learn to understand that the hunger-cry of the unemployed or badly paid working woman, of the starving female official, and teacher, the longing for knowledge and right, the painful cry of the mother for care and education of her child, in short, the resounding chorus of their sorrows, pain, desire and demands must end in the vow: Struggle, revolutionary struggle on the side of our brethren for the next step to emancipation, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie out of the state power, the carrying out of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Therefore our Women's Day must claim in international solidarity all those demands which pertain to the full rights for women in theory and practice, through protection of working women, far-reaching amelioration of the lot of the housewife, comprehensive social provision for mother and child. In short, we must stand for the abolition of all legal and social hindrances, which stand in the way of the development of woman into a full human being, equal in right, duties and worth; we must demand reforms and measures, which lead to this high aim of humanity. The demands of the Women's Day of one and another kind sprung forth from the special position of women in legislation and in society, from the special duties connected with motherhood; from the physical and psychical qualities peculiar to our sex, and last, but not least (in all organisations of society and in all states, which are based on private property) out of the social structure, of the class conditions.

Although harmonizing internationally in their main lines, our Women's Day's demands will differ in the different countries or groups of countries. These will be determined before all by the phase of development and character of economics; their effects on the political and social superstructure, and on the ideology of society and the legislation; the strength of the movement for women's rights and its special aims; the relation of power between the exploiting and the exploited and the fighting energy, the will to struggle, the clearness of aim of the oppressed classes of the population, including the working women. The Communist sections will, together with the leading women comrades, have to examine what "special demands for women" within the frame

of the general international situation are to be put in the foreground at the present time.

A fundamental difference exists between the appropriate Women's Days demands, their character, their significance and the most important presuppositions for their realization in the capitalist states and in the Union of the Soviet Republics. Whatever we demand on the 8th of March in the capitalist and non-Soviet countries to make the lot of women easier, to raise their position, it will be a fighting slogan and an object of struggle for the proletarians and especially for the working women. All economic and social reforms, which we demand on behalf of working women in general, the proletarian and petty-bourgeois housewife, the woman-peasants, the mothers and children, are in their essence measures for protection against excessive exploitation of labour power by the possessing and governing classes. An excessive exploitation of human beings which increases to the crippling and humiliation of the best powers of the woman's soul, to the obliteration of woman's life, which spoils and even destroys together with the mother, the yet unborn child. All rights for women, for which we raise our voices on the 8th of March must become weapons employed by millions of women against the exploiting and governing classes and their state. Reforms and rights must be conquered in the class struggle of the working and suffering majority against the plundering, oppressing, and feasting minority. The social contrast between the sexes has its last and firmest roots in the antagonism between the possessing and non-possessing class, between the creators and the appropriators of social wealth.

For this reason, it is to be understood that at a time when the general offensive of the world bourgeoisie against the working people creates the most frightful need among women, the most pressing demands for rights, protection and care for the women are not carried out. The bourgeois class dictatorship means in this respect stagnation and retrogression. Not even in Great Britain, the motherland and pattern of bourgeois dictatorship, have, up to now, the limitations of the general franchise for women, which concern in the main part the proletarian women, been done away with. Neither in France, Italy, Spain nor in Belgium nor in Republican Switzerland has the political vote been granted to the female sex. The reformist Social-Democrats of Belgium are still disputing as to whether they should ask that right: Mussolini who once promised it to the Italian women, will at best grant them the municipal vote and that only as a privilege for fine ladies. Still more unscrupulously and more brutally is the bourgeoisie proceeding in the capitalist countries in its general offensive against the remuneration of women's labour, against the protection of working women and of motherhood, against all social measures for lightening the lot of labouring women.

Most capitalist governments have not acknowledged the really modest and insufficient provisions for the legal protection of working women, which were demanded by the international labour conference at Washington. Where they were acknowledged, the prescriptions remained a scap of paper. Everywhere the capitalistic owners over-ride the limitations which were set up by the law against the unscrupulous exploitation of working women. They break them down in practice by means of their economic power, which is enlarged by the economic situation of the present time, and through the decrees of the government and new laws. The prohibition of night-work, the control and shortening of workingtime, the free Saturday-afternoon for working women, the protection-time for women during pregnancy and confinement, the feeding interval for nursing mothers; these and other reforms to check the greed of the capitalists are more or less things of the past. Homes for the pregnant women, maternity and infant homes, creches and infant-schools are closed more and more or their work reduced. Less than nothing is done, even to lessen the horrible housing-misery, which troubles women and mothers most severely in Central and Western Europe as well as in the United States of America.

Taken all in all, the Women's Day's slogans are the same as those of last year. That means, that our forces for action and struggle must be increased to the utmost.

In Soviet Russia, in the Soviet Republics, the most important "specific women's demands" are fulfilled or at least officially acknowledged, and they are passionately eager to settle these questions as quickly and completely as possible. The dictatorship of the proletariat brought to the woman full equal rights in the family, society and the state. Social institutions and measures for protection and providing for mother and child are considered

the noblest duty of the state. Sometimes it happens that shortsighted, prejudiced officials act against those acknowledged principles in practice. But their opposition can be broken down pretty easily. They are not supported by the power of capitalists greedy for profit or by the power of an exploiting class in the state and by considerations for private property.

The Soviet Workers' and Peasants' state is the cause, the means of power for the proletarians, the working people, regardless of sex. In economics as in all other spheres of social life, it represents their lasting interests as a class. It regards all measures and reforms which serve to render women equal, the right and the protection of the working women and provision for motherhood, as bricks for the building up of a higher and newer social order, where Communism shall become a reality. But the will and the desire of the Soviet State has its limits. It is the backwardness, the weakness, the poverty of the economics, which have to bear the costs of the reforms in favour of the female sex. This hard fact reminds the women, that their fate — as history proves — is closely bound up with the development of labour. It reminds women that their interests demand at present as in the future that they give their full strength for building up and for increasing the produce at the economy.

The number and importance of the peasantry, the necessity of fitting the individual petty-bourgeois undertaking into the great social order, to lead it on the right way to communal economic development, make it a task of the Women's Day to promote the firmest solidarity between the female proletarians and women peasants. Both of them have to meet as working people, both of them have to do their best to connect the industrial proletariat and peasantry in a firm alliance of economic and cultural work.

In the countries of Near and Far East, the stress of all "special women's demands" must be laid upon all those slogans which demand full, legal equality of women with men. Except in the Socialist Soviet Republics, equality of woman is not recognized in the legislation of any of these countries. Not even in India, or in the Dutch colonial territories, but even more oppressive than their lack of rights before the law, women have to bear the constraint of religious institutions and hoary social customs and traditions. The heritage of centuries, even of millenniums is resting upon the feelings, the thoughts, the will, the form and manifestations of life of man and woman. This influence is especially prevalent in the relations of the sexes to each other and is also the case in the Soviet countries of the East. There the significance of the 8th of March is so great that this day has been made a national holiday. This holiday, however, is at the same time a fighting day for equality of woman in practice and thereby also a fighting day against the power of prejudice conventions and customs. Similar demands are being passionately formulated which bind together the women of all countries of the East in this struggle. Loud and urgent, there rings out before all others the slogan: Away with the Kalim, with the trade in women. For Soviet legislation makes woman equal in marriage and in the family, but the weight of tradition in all countries of the East debases her to an "object", which can be bought and sold by the head of the family. The destruction of all codes of law, of all institutions, of all prejudices and customs, which keep the women of the Eastern countries in servitude, is in the interest of the world-proletariat. Masses of the female population can only participate with full strength in the national and revolutionary movement, if woman has free control over her own person and her life activity.

All "special women's demands" for the fulfilment of which the masses of women will be mobilized on the 8th of March, are rills, streamlets and rivers, which flow out into the stream of the revolutionary proletarian class-struggle, which will drive the bourgeoisie back from the offensive on to the defensive and culminate in the first place in the dictatorship of the proletariat. This great historical aim gives to the International Communist Women's Day ardour and warmth and concentrates the fighting-power. The fervent revolutionary life, which is denoted by the 8th of March, will be over-shadowed by the recollection that the genius and guide of the world proletariat has departed from us, one of the most clear-seeing, most faithful and leading pioneers for the full social and human equality of women. Let us draw strength from the grateful remembrance of his immortal life work, to be worthy of him. That is to say to give every drop of our hearts' blood, every atom of our will, of our energy for the victory of the world-revolution.