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## Observations of a Publicist.

**On the Ascent of High Mountains, on the Evil Effects of Faint-Heartedness, on the Advantage of Commerce, on the Relations to the Mensheviks etc.**

**By V. I. Lenin.**

Preliminary Observations by Comrade Zinoviev.

The following hitherto unpublished article was recently found among the papers of comrade Lenin. This article was written for "The Communist International" (approximately in February or March 1922) and was intended to be a continuation of those "Observations of a Publicist" which Vladimir Ilyitch at that time was publishing in almost every number of "The Communist International".

I remember, how Vladimir Ilyitch had promised to finish this article for the regular number of "The Communist International" but this he failed to do owing to his being overworked and overcharged with work.

With regard to the role of Paul Levi during the Third Congress there were also considerable disagreements within the Russian delegation. Lenin repeatedly in conversations acknowledged his error in this question. It appears now that he also did so in written form. The declaration of Lenin in the following article puts an end to a dispute, which is not without interest, over the important episode which assumed great importance for the elaboration of the tactics of the Communist International.

As regards comrade Lenin's strong condemnation of Serrati, this refers to the time of the greatest errors of the latter and of his most reprehensible attacks against the Communist International. In this place we have deleted from the manuscript of Lenin some sharp phrases evoked by the heat of combat, and we are thoroughly convinced that in this respect we are

acting in Lenin's spirit. He would now have been the first to strike out these sharp phrases and would have rejoiced at the return of comrade Serrati into the ranks of the Communist International — the more so as comrade Lenin held comrade Serrati's abilities in high esteem.

Lenin's article — even though unfinished — appears at the most opportune time. There will shortly take place the V. Congress of the Communist International which will deal with many of the problems, touched on in this article. The German C. P. is again experiencing a sharp inner struggle. There are ultra-left comrades appealing to the error made by Rosa Luxemburg in 1903 against the views of the Communist International, as for instance in the organisatory question. It will be particularly useful to these comrades to read what Lenin writes in this regard. There are sensation-mongers who are talking of the "crisis" of the Communist International. For these comrades it will be particularly useful to read what comrade Lenin writes about "the noiseless, unassuming, deliberate, unassuming, but profound work of constructing real Communist parties in Europe and America". And it would be of very, very great advantage if many "critics" of the policy of the C. P. of Russia were to read, mark and learn what Vladimir Ilyitch writes on the "Ascent of High Mountains" and in particular on the "Evil Effects of Faint-Heartedness".

Moscow, 15th April 1924.

G. Zinoviev.

### I. An Example.

Let us imagine a man who is attempting the ascent of a very high and hitherto unclimbed mountain. Let us assume that he has succeeded, after having overcome unheard of difficulties and dangers, in climbing far higher than his predecessors, but that, nevertheless, he does not reach the top. He arrives at a position where to go forward in the chosen direction and path appears to be not only difficult and dangerous, but downright impossible. He is compelled to turn back, to go downwards, to seek new paths, even if longer but nevertheless promising the possibility of arriving at the summit. The descent from that height which had never at any time previously been attained and on which our imagined traveller found himself, involves even greater dangers and difficulties than those encountered in the ascent. One is more likely to lose the way, it is not so easy to find the place where one has to place his foot, there no longer exists that feeling of highest elation evoked by the movement of direct ascent towards the goal etc. One must bind oneself with a rope, waste whole hours in order to hew out with an axe steps or platforms where one can firmly attach the rope, one must move with the slowness of a snake, and in addition to this move backward, downward, farther from the goal and none the less one cannot see whether this desperately dangerous and torturing descent is at an end, whether one has reached a tolerably reliable new path, following which one can again proceed, more boldly and rapidly, upwards to the summit.

It is only natural to assume that a man in such a situation, notwithstanding the fact that he has climbed to such an unheard of height would experience periods of faint-heartedness. And it is probable that these periods would be more numerous, more frequent, more burdensome, if he could hear the voices of those who, safe below in the valley, are watching him through their field-glasses, making this most dangerous descent which even cannot be called (as do the "Smenovyekhevtsi"\*) a descent "with the brakes on", as this presumes a proper and approved equipage, an already prepared path and a previously tested mechanism. And here we have neither equipage nor paths nor in general anything which has been tested before.

The voices from below express a malicious joy. Some are openly expressing their malicious joy, they triumphantly shout: he will break his neck, it serves him right, he should not have been so hare-brained. Others are trying to conceal their malicious attitude, they pose as being sorry and say: we regret to state, that our fear has been justified. Had we not, after having devoted all our lives to preparing a reasonable scheme for the ascent of this mountain, demanded a postponement of the ascent, until our scheme had been definitely elaborated? And if we have been opposing so passionately the path which has been abandoned by the mad-man himself (just look, he is turning back, he is going downward, he spends whole hours in preparing the bare possibility of moving himself on one yard. And he insulted us with the most insolent words, when we systematically demanded moderation and precision); if we have condemned the mad-man so sharply and warned everybody from imitating and helping him, we have acted exclusively out our love for the great plan for the ascent of this mountain, and in order not to compromise this great scheme in general.

Happily our imagined traveller, in the conditions of the example we have chosen, cannot hear the voices of these "true friends" of the idea of the ascent, otherwise it would have an ill effect upon him and this would not conclude to clearness of head and firmness of foot, especially at such a great altitude.

### II. Without Metaphor.

An example is no proof. Every comparison is faulty in some respects. These are undisputed and generally known facts but they must nevertheless be called to mind, in order better to show how far any comparison in general is valid.

The Russian proletariat in its revolution clambered to an enormous height, not only as compared with 1789 and 1793, but also as compared with 1871. We must take into account as soberly, clearly and observantly as possible what we have already "put an end to" and what we have yet to achieve: then our heads

\*) "Smenovyekhevtsi" those who change the direction, i. e. the movement among Russian intellectuals in emigration in favour of now backing the Soviets, though not Bolshevism; a movement which has become ever stronger in the last three years and having as its central organ the "Nakanyune" (On the eve) one of the Russian daily papers being published in Berlin. Ed.

will remain all the clearer and we will not be subject to giddiness nor illusions nor depression.

We have "put an end" to the bourgeois-democratic revolution as "purely" as never before in the world. This is a very great gain which no power can deprive us of.

We have found the way out of the most reactionary imperialistic war by revolutionary means. This too is a gain of which no power in the world can deprive us and is even of more value, in as much as reactionary imperialistic slaughters are unavoidable in the near future, if capitalism remains. But the people of the twentieth century will not very easily be fobbed off a second time with "Basle Manifestoes", by means of which in 1912 and in 1914—18 the heroes of the Second and Second and a half International befooled themselves and the workers.

We have created the Soviet-type of the state and thereby inaugurated a new world-historical epoch, the epoch of the political state of the proletariat which is to follow the epoch of the dominion of the bourgeoisie. This too can no more be taken away, though only by the practical experience of the working class of several countries it will be possible to "achieve" the Soviet-type of state.

But we have not even completed the foundation of socialist economy. This can still be taken away by the forces of dying capitalism opposed to us. We must plainly realise and openly acknowledge this, because nothing is more dangerous than illusions (and the feeling of giddiness, especially at great heights). And there is absolutely nothing "terrible", nothing which would justify even the least depression, in acknowledging this bitter truth, for we have always been preaching and reiterating this primitive truth of Marxism: that for the victory of socialism the common efforts of the workers of several advanced countries are required. But we still remain quite alone, and in a backward country, in a country which has been shattered more than others, we have accomplished incredible things. Moreover, we have conserved an "army" of revolutionary proletarian forces, we have maintained its "manoeuvring capacity", we have conserved clarity of thought, permitting us to judge soberly, where, when and how far we have to retreat (in order to advance more forcefully) where, when and how we have to set about working on that which has not been accomplished. Those Communists who imagine that one can complete, without errors, without retreats, without repeated modifications of that which has not been accomplished and has been commenced in an erroneous manner, such a world-historical "undertaking" as the laying down of the foundation of socialist economy (especially in a country of petty peasantry) must be regarded indeed as hopelessly lost. Those communists have not failed (and are not likely to fail) who are not given over to illusions or to depression, who maintain force and the adaptability of the organism for a repeated "beginning afresh", when dealing with a difficult task.

Just as little as we can permit ourselves to give way to the least depression, as little have we cause for so doing, as in spite of all the devastation, misery, backwardness and hunger, we have begun to move somewhat forward in the sphere of preparation for socialist economy, while alongside us throughout the whole world, countries more advanced, a thousand times richer and military more powerful than we, are continuously retrogressing as regards "their" capitalist economy which they hold as sacred and which they have tested and experienced for centuries.

### III. On Fox-Hunting; on Levi; on Serrati.

It is said that the best method of fox-hunting is the following: The fox is encircled at a certain distance by means of a rope with small red flags attached, not too high above the snow. The fox, fearful of this palpably artificial "human" apparatus, emerges from the circle only at the spot where this "boundary" is interrupted, and precisely where the hunter expects him. One would think that with such a creature as the fox, which is hunted by everybody, caution would prove an extremely valuable quality. But here "exaggeration" of a "virtue" converts it into a disadvantage. The fox is caught precisely because of his excessive caution.

I must confess to one error which I was fated to commit at the Third Congress of the Communist International, — this also on account of excessive caution. At that Congress I stood on the extreme right wing. I was convinced that this was the sole correct position, because a very numerous (and "influential") group of delegates, with many German, Hungarian and Italian

comrades as their leaders, occupied an exaggerated "left" and an incorrectly "left" position, too often substituting for a sober consideration of the circumstances, which were not very favourable for a rapid and immediate revolutionary activity, a vigorous waving of small red flags. Out of caution and in my care that this undoubtedly incorrect deviation towards leftism should not give an erroneous tendency to the whole tactics of the Communist International, I defended Levi by every means, expressing the view that, owing perhaps to an exaggerated fear of the errors of the left, he had lost his head (I did not deny that he had lost his head) and that there had been cases where communists, who had lost their heads, afterwards had "found" them again. Even admitting — in face of the pressure of the "left" — that Levi was a Menshevik, I pointed out, that even such an admission did not decide the case. For instance, the whole history of the struggle, lasting for fifteen years (1903—1917) between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks in Russia shows, as is also shown by the three Russian revolutions, that the Mensheviks in general were absolutely wrong and that they were in fact agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers' movement. This is an undisputed fact. But this undisputed fact does not eliminate the fact that in single cases the Mensheviks were right as against the Bolsheviks, as for instance in the question of the boycott of the Stolypin Duma in 1907.

Eight months have already passed since the Third Congress of the Communist International. Evidently our dispute of that time with the "left" has already become antiquated, has already been decided by life. I have proved to be wrong as regards Levi because he has successfully shown that he had entered the Menshevik path not by chance, not incidentally, not only by reason of "exaggeration" in face of the most dangerous error of the left, but persistently, definitely, out of his very nature. Instead of honestly acknowledging after the Third Congress of the Communist International the necessity of seeking again to be admitted into the party — as a man has to do who has incidentally lost his head out of anger on account of some errors of the left — Levi began to attack the Party, to create obstacles for it, i. e. to render practical service to the agents of the bourgeoisie in the Second and Second and a half International. Of course the German Communists were quite right in replying to this by further expelling some gentlemen who had secretly offered help to Paul Levi in this noble action.

The development of the German and of the Italian Communist Parties after the Third Congress of the Communist International shows that the "left" have become clear regarding the errors committed by them at that congress, and that they are slowly, gradually, but steadily improving, while the decisions of the Third Congress of the C. I. are being loyally carried out. The transformation of the old type of the European parliamentary party, — which in fact was reformist and merely slightly tinged with a revolutionary colour — into a new type of party, into a really revolutionary, really communist party, is an exceedingly difficult matter. The example of France illustrates this difficultly best of all. To modify the type of party work in every day life, to secure that the Party becomes the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat, without becoming estranged from the masses, but coming continually into closer contact with them — all this is the most difficult, but the most necessary work. If the European Communists for the purpose of this radical internal profound modification of the whole structure and of the whole work of their parties, fail to make use of that (probably very brief) interval between the periods of the particular intensification of the revolutionary combats which many capitalist countries of Europe and America passed through in 1921 and at the beginning of 1922, this will constitute a very great crime on their part. Happily there is no reason to be anxious in this regard. The noiseless, unassuming, deliberate, unshaking, but profound work of constructing real Communist Parties in Europe and in America, real revolutionary vanguards of the proletariat, has been commenced, and this work is now going on.

The political lessons to be derived from the observation of even such a trivial matter as fox-hunting, prove not to be entirely without use: on the one hand excessive caution leads to errors. On the other hand we must not forget that by substituting for a sober estimation of the position mere "emotion" or waving of small red flags, one commits irretrievable errors and can even meet with a complete wreck, and that under circumstances where, although the difficulties be indeed great, such a disaster is by no means unavoidable.

Paul Levi now desires to render special service to the bourgeoisie — and consequently to its agents, the Second and Second and a half International — by publishing precisely those works of Rosa Luxemburg in which she was wrong. To this we reply with two lines of a good Russian proverb: it sometimes happens to eagles that they descend lower than poultry, but poultry never succeed in mounting as high as eagles. Rosa Luxemburg has committed errors in the question of the independence of Poland; she made mistakes in 1903 in the estimation of Menshevism; she has been in error as regards the theory of the accumulation of capital; she was mistaken when, in July 1914 along with Plekhanov, Vandervelde, Kautsky and others, she backed the Union of the Bolsheviks with the Mensheviks; she also made blunders in her wrings in prison during 1918 (after she had left prison, at the end of 1918 and at the beginning of 1919, she rectified a great portion of her blunders). But notwithstanding these errors of hers, she was and remains an eagle: and not only will her memory always be treasured by the Communists of the whole world, but her biography and the full collection of her works (over the publication of which the German Communists are taking an unaccountably long time, which can only be partly attributed to the unheard of number of victims in their heavy struggle) will constitute the most useful lessons for the education of many generations of Communists throughout the world. "German Social Democracy, after the 4th August 1914 has become a stinking corpse" — it is with this quotation of Rosa Luxemburg that her name will be recorded in the history of the Workers' Movement of the whole world. And in the backyard of the Workers' Movement, on the rubbish heap, the poultry of the type of Paul Levi, Scheidemann and of this whole fraternity, will of course cackle triumphantly over the errors of the great communist woman. Everything in its right place.

As regards Serrati, the Italian Communists, who have created a Party of the revolutionary proletariat in Italy, will now have an instructive model of Menshevism to put before the eyes of the working masses. Not at one stroke, not without many repeated instructive lessons, will the useful warning effect of this example make itself felt, but it will inevitably do so. Not to alienate oneself from the masses; not to lose patience in the difficult work of practical exposure of all the Serratis before the advanced workers; not to accept the solution which is at once too easy and most dangerous; where Serrati says: A "to repeat minus A"; to educate the masses continually to a revolutionary world-outlook and to revolutionary action; to make a practical use also of the magnificent (though dearly bought) instructive lessons afforded by Fascism — this done, and the victory for Italian Communism is secured.

Levi and Serrati are not characteristic of themselves, but constitute the modern sample of the extreme left wing of petty bourgeois democracy, of "their" camp, of the camp of the international capitalists who are fighting against us.

"Their" camp, without distinction from Gompers to Serrati, is rubbing its hands with malicious joy or shedding crocodile's tears over our retreat, over our "descent", over our new economic policy.

They are welcome to their malicious joy. Let them carry on their clown-like antics. Everything in its right place. But we must neither abandon ourselves to illusions nor to faint-heartedness. Let us not be afraid to acknowledge our errors nor afraid of the repeated work of rectifying them — and we shall reach the summit. The cause of the international bloc from Gompers to Serrati is a lost cause.

## POLITICS

### Electoral Victories of the C. P. of Germany and the Future Tasks of the Party.

By G. Zinoviev.

The outstanding feature of the parliamentary elections which have been just concluded in Germany is undoubtedly the victory of the Communists. However much our opponents may strive to conceal this, the fact remains a fact. When the German Social Democratic Party in its most flourishing period, led by August Bebel, received 3,000,000 votes, (during the elections 1903, 1907, 1911) it was regarded as a world historical event.

With much greater right can we claim that the fact that the German Communist Party has received nearly 4,000,000 votes is an event of world historical importance.

The German Communist Party entered the battle with banners flying, as the party of **Proletarian Revolution**. For eighteen months already the German Communist Party had openly declared that it will arm the workers and was preparing for the armed revolt against the capitalist system. It openly declared a war to the death against the present system and flung its challenge in the face of the bourgeoisie.

During the election campaign the German Communist Party told the workers with frank brutality (and it acted quite rightly in doing so) that the regime of bourgeois parliamentarism has become completely bankrupt and that the communists will enter the so-called parliament not for the purpose of conducting practical "organic" work but for the purpose of revolutionary agitation and for the mobilisation of the masses. It told them that the real questions confronting Germany could be solved not by the ballot box, but by armed fighting, and that everyone who voted for the communists was voting for the Soviet system in Germany. This resolute but most appropriate presentation of the question, undoubtedly repelled all the irresolute sections of the working class away from the Communist Party. But this did not matter. The more weight does this give to the almost 4,000,000 votes that were cast for the German Communists.

Within the last few months the German Communist Party has been wholly absorbed in solving the internal problems of the Party which had become acute as a consequence of the retreat in October 1923. A re-estimation of values and a re-grouping of forces took place and an intensive and acute internal struggle was carried on. There is no doubt that the election campaign suffered as a consequence of this. Furthermore, the Party has only just emerged from underground. Hundreds and thousands of the best Party workers are still in prison. The ablest leaders are being persecuted and are obliged to act illegally. Half the newspapers of the party were suppressed.

Yet another circumstance must be borne in mind. The votes cast for the German communists were votes cast for the Party and not for individual persons. There are almost no great "names" in the German Communist Party. The Party ticket was headed by the Hamburg workman, Comrade Thälman, who is only just beginning to acquire wide political fame **throughout Germany**. The more remarkable therefore, is the brilliant victory of our Party.

The bourgeois and Social-Democratic press is full of election "sensations". Hundreds of newspaper columns are filled with the petty squabbles between the various bourgeois factions. All sorts of conjectures are made concerning various inter-party combinations which spring up and wither before they have time to bloom and all the time they refuse to see the **most important**: that the irreconcilable party of proletarian revolution is overcoming all obstacles and is advancing ever forward; that the spectre of "Communism" is assuming real material form, is acquiring flesh and blood, that militant Communism has opened the path for itself towards millions of workers, that 4,000,000 communist votes have been cast against all bourgeois parties and against Social Democracy and that this is an event of world historical importance, a **memento mori** for the European bourgeoisie.

We did not defeat you in October 1923, but our victory is not far distant. This is what the 4,000,000 workers have said to Messrs. the Bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats.

German Social Democracy has lost over 4,000,000 votes. This does not imply the final collapse of German Social Democracy, but it is a blow from which it will never recover. For German Social Democracy, parliamentary successes and failures are everything, for parliament is its natural element which determines its activity. German Social Democracy will now be compelled to take a **right turn**: it will tend still more to rely on the non-labour and petty-bourgeois elements; it will become more dependent on the bourgeois parties. The millions of workers who voted for the German Social Democracy from this time now onward will be nothing else but recruits for the Communist Party. Either today or tomorrow they will gradually join the ranks of the communists.

German Social Democracy is a **declining** power, German Communism is a **mighty rising** power. The star of German Communism will soon shine with unexampled brilliance; the decisive battle is approaching.

During the elections to the Constituent Assembly which took place after the conquest of power by the Soviets in November 1917, we Bolsheviks obtained 9,000,000 votes (in 54 constituencies) out of 36,250,000 votes. The German Communists in this election, May 1924, obtained 4,000,000 votes out of 23,000,000 million. If we take merely the numerical relation, the German Communist Party already is not far removed from the position the Russian Bolsheviks were in 1917. Against their 4,000,000 votes, the German communists have the 6,000,000 cast for the Social Democrats, but the Bolsheviks in November 1917 had 21,000,000 votes of the SRs and a little over half a million votes of the Mensheviks against their 9,000,000 votes. The fact is, however, that comparative figures at elections completely fail to settle the question. The Russian Bolsheviks in October and November 1917, had the majority in the decisive place and at the decisive moment (the proletariat and garrisons in both capitals, the important armies which had not yet been demobilised, and the most important peasant districts). Comrade Lenin explained this circumstance to the international proletariat with classical clearness in his famous article "The Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat". The German communists, unlike the Russian Bolsheviks, cannot in May 1924 lead the German proletariat immediately to the final battle. But after the October (1923) set-back of the German Communist Party and after all its partial defeats, the elections in May 1924 undoubtedly show that the time is near when the German Communists will have the decisive place at the proper moment. Then the wavering will not be repeated and the German Communist Party will carry out its great historic mission.

The results of the election throw some light on the controversy within the German Communist Party which roused such concentrated attention among all the sections of the Comintern.

The first conclusion that one naturally draws is that the recently concluded period of work of the German Communist Party was not wholly bad. In the application of the tactics of the united front in Germany, great opportunist errors were committed, but the tactics in themselves were correct. The German Communist Party broke through to the masses. It became a powerful mass proletarian party in spite of all misfortunes and the opportunist mistakes of its leaders. This would have been impossible if the tactics of the united front had been wrong in principle.

The second outstanding fact is the comparatively great success of the Social Democrats in Saxony and Thuringia and the small successes of the Communists in those places. This is a new and important confirmation of the fact that the "Saxon policy" of Comrade Brandler's group was opportunistic and wrong and that the left majority of the German Communist Party, with the Comintern, were absolutely right when they condemned and repudiated this policy. In Saxony and Thuringia, where the Communists directed their aim towards an agreement with the Social Democracy, the masses of the workers saw the Social Democrats in their "left" robes. This, as it were, placed a halo around the head of Social Democracy. By its vague tactics tending towards opportunism, the Brandler Group failed to win over the Social Democratic workers and to a considerable extent lost its influence among the revolutionary sections of the proletariat.

The third fact that the elections have emphasised is the tremendous growth of Communist influence in such important centers as Berlin and Hamburg. This too emphasises the colossal error of the Brandler Group which, during the course of three years, in which they were at the helm of the Party, failed to link up closely with the Berlin and Hamburg organisations, the most important organisations in the Party, and failed to understand that the fate of the revolution would be determined by these two centers.

In our article "The State of Affairs of the German Communist Party", written in March this year, we expressed some fear with regard to the future of the German Communist Party owing to the acute controversy going on in its ranks at that time. The conference of the German Communist Party which took place recently illegally in Frankfurt, showed that the state of affairs in the Party was better than we had expected. On the question of trade unions the party apparently has restored the line. The impatience which threatened to bring about an immediate split in the trade unions presented a great danger to the German Communist Party. If the Party had listened to these impatient voices, it would have been a great blow to the communist movement. Comrades who were present at the Frankfurt Party Conference unanimously declare that the composition of the conference was

excellent, that the overwhelming majority of the delegates represented the best of the German proletariat, closely connected with the masses. On the trade union question, the firm and irreconcilable attitude of the Comintern against the so-called "new tactics" (leaving the trade unions), was supported by the majority of the conference. Judging by its recent declarations, the new Central Committee rightly adopted a firm irreconcilable position on this question, which in the main coincided with the position of the Comintern.

The important task now confronting the new Central Committee is to remove the traces of factionism, and not merely in words but in deed, to attract the best of all the former factions to the work, in order finally and completely to restore the line and to render harmless the "ultra-left" tendencies, which the Central Committee rightly describes as tendencies towards passivity and in order to put an end to the internal conflict and to take up broad political work.

There are many reasons for believing that the Central Committee of the Party will manage to fulfil its task.

To take up broad political work — this is the principal task of the party. The elections have created a most favourable situation for this. Whatever government is formed now (either a large "coalition" or a bloc under the heel of the right), it is clear that none will be stable. The mistake made by those who said that Fascism had been victorious in Germany, is now evident to all. The fluctuating situation will continue. The solution of international difficulties which appeared to be approaching (the decision of the Committee of Experts) becomes less probable as the result of the elections in Germany and as a result of the events proceeding in France. Even if this "solution" of the question be accepted, the hopelessness of the situation will again become evident in a very short time. There is no other way out for Germany except by a proletarian revolution. This is what the elections have shown.

A broad illimitable field of action now opens up for the German Communist Party. The confidence of the members of the Party and of the revolutionary workers generally is rising. Every such worker will say to himself, "we are four million adherents of the proletarian revolution".

Economic battles are extending. Political problems are becoming more acute.

Meanwhile — deeper among the masses. Increase the work of the Communists in the trade unions tenfold. Set up, not on paper but actually, an extensive system of Communist fractions in the trade unions. Capture the factory councils in fact. Reorganise the Party on the basis of factory council nuclei.

Only if the Party does all this, will it really commence a new chapter in its history. Only if it does this, shall we really commence to carry out the policy of unity from below, in place of the method of negotiating for the united front mainly with the leaders as has been practised hitherto.

It is necessary that the Party really conduct its work on new lines. It is necessary that the change of course shall not be limited merely to the publication of more radical articles in the newspapers. It is necessary to plunge right into life. It is necessary to become the focus of the economic and political struggle.

The German Communist Party is fighting on the most important positions of the world revolution. This explains the enormous interest displayed by the workers and Communists of all countries in all that is taking place within the German Communist Party. The German Communist Party is at heart, so sound that no mistakes committed by the leaders, no internal crisis can destroy it, but such errors nevertheless may cause the Party considerable damage.

Our desire is that the German comrades quickly remove the traces of the already too-long-drawn-out internal controversy. The difficulties are great, but great also is the spirit of the German proletariat. The attention of the whole of the Communist International is concentrated on the work of its German detachment. In spite of today's brilliant election victory (and perhaps because of it), the German bourgeoisie, in alliance with the German counter-revolutionary Social-Democrats, may strive tomorrow again to drive the German Communist Party underground. But no matter what the enemies of the German proletariat may do they will only further the proletarian revolution.

And the German Communist Party will be at its post.

## The Police Raid upon the Soviet Union Commercial Delegation in Berlin.

By Hugo Eberlein (Berlin).

The incredible attack made by the Prussian Police, who are under the leadership of the Social Democrats Richter and Severing, upon the Russian Commercial Delegation in Berlin (Linden Strasse) has already brought about results regarding which, apparently, neither the German Federal Government and still less the German population are ever clear.

That this attack is a serious offence against international law is beyond all doubt. But what do the Prussian police know of international law? This attack is just as clear and palpable an offence against the treaty which the Russian Government concluded with the German government on May 6th 1921, as it is against the Rapallo Treaty. On this point also there is no room for doubt. It will now be the task of the Russian government to bring home quite clearly and without danger of misunderstanding to the mind of the German Federal Government that such treaties cannot be arbitrarily broken and that agreements which are made between a government of workers and peasants and a capitalist government have quite another meaning and significance than when they are concluded between two robber governments of the capitalists. The attack upon the Commercial Delegation is, however, not only a breach of the treaty, it is a serious affront and insult to the whole Republic of the Workers and Peasants. We are able already to record with pleasure to-day that this Workers' and Peasants' Government does not allow itself to be played with. The measures that have already been taken by the Russian government for its defence are so incisive for Germany, that they will be understood by the least intelligent of our ministers. Should this not prove to be the case, the Russian Government will without doubt take other measures to impress the seriousness of the situation upon the people in the Wilhelm Strasse.

We wish to remark in the first place, that we Communists, as the representatives of the revolutionary workers of Germany, are completely in agreement with the measures of defence of the revolutionary government of the workers and peasants and that we are in solidarity with them.

The Russian Commercial Delegation is not a delegation of Russian capitalists, but a portion of the Russian government, as it is well known that in Russian the whole of the foreign trade is a monopoly in the hands of the government. The Russian government is, however, as is the case in no other country in the world, the pronounced representative of the Russian proletariat, of the Russian workers and peasants. And therefore we Communists see in all the measures of the government not the measures of any particular government, but the measures of the Russian workers and peasants with whom we revolutionary workers of Germany are most closely united and *whom we support unconditionally in every respect.*

What measures has the Russian government adopted up to the present as a defence against the shameful attack upon the Commercial Delegation?

Before all the Russian government has closed the Russian Commercial Delegation and thereby broken off all dealings between the Russian government on the one side and the German government and the German employers on the other side. It will at once reduce its staff of employees by one half and intends to reduce it to a quarter in the course of the next month, if the further sharpening of the situation does not make a complete liquidation necessary.

The Russian Government has in the same way closed the commercial delegations in Leipzig and Hamburg and the delegation which was set up in Königsberg at the desire of the local employers will not be opened.

It has cancelled its participation in the Cologne Fair and will not take part in the exhibition of raw materials at the forthcoming Leipzig Fair. The large number of American purchasers who are already on the way to Germany in order to conclude business deals there, have been informed, and they will therefore abandon their journey.

Still more important is the *complete suspension of the deliveries of grain to Germany.* The great consignments which were already on the way to Germany, have already been diverted to London. The same is true of great deliveries of eggs which are on the way from the Ukraine. They have been held at the Polish frontier and will be sent on to England. In the last few

days the greatest supplier of grain for Germany has been missing from the German market. What this signifies for the German population can be seen from the fact that last year Russia delivered 38% of Germany's grain consumption. As Germany cannot produce enough grain for her own support, she is now thrown back upon the deliveries of American grain. But in the past year America has reduced her annual wheat production considerably and will now more than ever have the German consumer entirely at her mercy, since Russia her great competitor drops out, and the American capitalists will force up the price of their grain considerably. This has already taken place. The price of American grain has already considerably risen on the grain exchanges of Copenhagen, Danzig and Rotterdam as a result of the suspension of Russian deliveries alone.

In addition to this, the Russian Government has ordered that all deals with German employers are to be broken off, and the large orders which came here in the last few weeks, have already been sent on to Prague and will be carried out by Czecho-Slovakia. New business will not be concluded.

Did the German government perceive all these results? We must doubt it, for we do not consider even them to be so stupid that they wished to bring about these measures. For these measures will have as a result a severe shortage of grain in the next few weeks and along with it a sharp rise in prices, even if new grain is drawn from America. The second result will be that through the holding up of large industrial orders and the refusal to give further orders to Germany, numerous concerns will have to reduce their staffs and probably close down. For Russia is today the only large customer for German industrial articles. The German workers will be the first who will have to feel the results of the insane act of the German government. And for this reason we consider it the duty of the German proletariat to take all suitable measures immediately to make it clear to the German government that the German workers do not countenance the proceedings of the government. They must compel the German government to arrange its relations with Soviet Russia in such a way that working relations between the workers' and Peasants' government are possible. The German proletariat must at once conduct the sharpest possible struggle against the German government in order to bring the latter to reason.

If one finally reflects as to what was the purpose of the German government in making this attack upon the Russian Commercial Delegation, there is only one explanation and that is: the German Government by reason of its policy of fulfilment which it pursued toward the Entente with "such great success" in the past years, must once more grovel before Poincaré when it is a question of swallowing the monstrous report of the Experts' Commission. By this cringing attitude, it hopes to get into the good graces of Poincaré and it believes that it can best achieve this by taking up a brutal provocative stand against the Russian Government of the Workers and Peasants.

That this raid upon the Commercial Delegation was not a mere chance, an unprepared affair, is beyond all doubt. We know that this attack upon the Russian Delegation was planned a long time ago and was prevented at the last moment by the cleverness of the Russian Embassy in Berlin. Now it has finally been carried out. The incident of the two police officials in the Commercial Delegation was the desired provocation. That is best confirmed by the course of the whole affair.

While Stresemann in negotiation with Krestinski, the Russian Ambassador, recognised the complete illegality of the proceedings of the Berlin police and gave the order to suspend the action at once, the Prussian Ministry of the Interior calmly went on with it, so that a game with double cards went on. That is proven by a telephone conversation which was carried on during the occupation by the notorious Oberregierungsrat Weiss with his superior. When occasion arises, we can supply the stenographic report. Weiss received from his superiors the order to evacuate the Commercial Delegation, but to do it slowly and in such a way, that all the orders which he had received, should be carried out first, and especially he was to establish the exact identity of all Russian and German employees, further to make exact plans of all the rooms and departments and to take possession of all material which appeared important to him in the course of the search. Weiss thereupon declared, that he understood and that his superiors would be satisfied with him. That is the substance of the telephone conversation.

The long preparation made for the attack is also shown by the fact that the first officers who raided the place did not look for the "Communist criminals" who were alleged to have

fled into the building, but that they first of all asked for the room of the cipher department, rushed into this room and rummaged into everything like madmen in the hope that the most important documents of the Russian government to the Embassy and vice versa would fall into their hands. That the officials had bad luck and forced their way into the wrong room was due to the fact that the rooms of the Commercial Delegation had been renumbered only a few days previously, and proves at most that their spies are not very closely touch with things. It proves, however, their intention of finding not "Communist criminals" but correspondence between the Russian Government and the Embassy, which appeared important to them.

Taken in all the German workers can realize in this, in what a careless, frivolous manner the government and its Social Democratic henchmen play with their most vital interests. We are convinced that the German proletariat will hasten to give this government with all clearness the answer that it deserves, and that on the other hand it will once again proclaim its complete solidarity with the Russian workers and peasants.

## IN THE INTERNATIONAL

### The Frankfort Conference of the C. P. of Germany.

#### II.

### Second Letter of the E. C. C. I. to the Party Conference.

#### The Trade Union Question.

Dear Comrades!

The extreme importance of the Trade Union Question induces us to deal with it in a special letter. What is at stake is not only and not so much the fate of the trade union movement, but the fate of the German CP. itself, and consequently the fate of the German proletarian revolution. It is a question of whether the German CP. is really going to be a proletarian mass party or not!

At the end of January 1924 we subjected the trade union question to a most detailed and thorough discussion, participated in by a delegation authoritative for the whole German Left, as represented by comrades Maslow, Ruth Fischer, Thälmann, König, Hesse, and Scholem. We debated the question from every point of view, and then unanimously adopted the following resolution, which has already been published in No. 1 of the Berlin periodical "Der Funke":

#### "The Work of the Party in the Trade Union Movement. The Unity of the Trade Union Movement.

The Communist Party of Germany, which holds the emancipation of the proletarian masses from the influence of reformism for its most urgent task, is decidedly opposed, now as before, to the slogan of withdrawal from the trade unions.

The Communists, who are to be found at work everywhere where there are proletarian masses, are now setting up and establishing their communist fractions within the trade unions with even greater energy than before, and, in view of the disintegration in the ranks of the Social Democracy, with greater prospects of success. These fractions form the central point of the broad movement of revolutionary trade union organization.

At the present moment, whilst the Party is suffering the disadvantage of illegality, and is obliged to strive for the utilization of every legal possibility, this is of special importance.

The Communists, now as before, are opposed to a split, and will continue to combat the schismatic policy of Social Democracy even if the latter expels them from the trade unions. The preservation of unity in the trade union movement is of special importance during a period of capitalist offensive and growth of reaction.

#### The Organization of those expelled, and of others.

Those who have been expelled from the trade unions, and those workers who are not organized in trade unions, must be gathered together by the communists, in each case in accordance with the concrete conditions obtaining in each separate trade union. This implies the ability to apply many and multi-

farious methods (factory councils, control committees, unemployed committees, parallel trade unions formed by the expelled, Union of Hand and Brain Workers, general workers committees, etc.), without thereby becoming permanently bound to any of these methods and forms of opposition. The joint workers' committee of the workers' associations and of the Union of Hand and Brain Workers will cooperate with the Reich committee of the factory councils. Under the given circumstances the Party must devote especially careful, energetic, and systematic work towards the organization of the unorganized and non-partisan masses, in order that the scattering of labor forces desired by the employers and by the trade union bureaucracy may be prevented.

#### The United Front from below.

The communists must decline any negotiations with the leaders of the reformist trade union movement, or with the leaders of Social Democracy, the actual allies of the bourgeoisie and Fascism, and must succeed in forming the united front from below in the trade unions. They must induce the broad masses of those organized in the trade unions, and of the proletariat which is not yet organized, to join together for the daily struggle, and must even call upon those strata of the working class which have not yet broken with Social Democracy to take part in this common struggle. Negotiations and agreements made by the communists with the local mass organizations or the trade unions (local groups, cartels, etc.), in the interests of the struggle, are not only compatible with the united front from below, but in fact form an important weapon against trade union bureaucracy and reformism.

In those cases in which the communists are members or the same unions as the Social Democratic workers, and work alongside of these in the factories and workshops, it must be the endeavor of the communists to combine the co-ordination of their practical activity with the sharpest accentuation of their essential principles, and with a relentless criticism of the errors, the vacillation, the half measures, and the inconsistency of Social Democratic demands.

Here the Communist Party must make it perfectly clear to the workers:

1. that the crisis being undergone by the trade unions arises from the whole history of the reformist trade unions, from their pursuance of the tactics and policy of civil peace;

2. that the present wretched economic condition of the working class is not to be overcome by the ordinary measures of trade union struggle, but solely by the overthrow of the power of the capitalists, by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Party must not decline to utilize any workers' mass organizations, especially anti-reformist organizations, in the fight against reformism. The Weimar conference is to be regarded from this standpoint, for here it proved possible to gather together not inconsiderable strata of anti-reformist elements beneath the common banner of a definite program of action. This applies equally to the associations formed by the expelled, to the Union of Hand and Brain Workers and others.

#### The slogan: "Save the Trade Unions".

The slogan of "save the trade unions", as it has hitherto been interpreted, is not right. The trade unions cannot be saved along the old lines. It is only possible to save them by means of a fundamental change in the trade unions, to be effectuated by factory nuclei aiming at organization according to industry and at the substitution of reformism by revolutionary activity.

#### The Role of the Factory Councils.

Thus the most important task set the communists is the concentration of the whole of their forces upon work in the workshops and in the factory councils, for the purpose of developing the factory councils into the starting point and fulcrum of the whole of the work being done by the Party among the masses, especially the work of opposing the reformist leaders.

The shop stewards have a further important task to deal with, that of combining the accumulating elementary struggles of the masses organized in the trade unions with those of the non-organized masses.

This requires that the factory councils be organizationally connected with one another in industrial groups, that is, they must be associated locally and in regard to the technics of production, in districts and as a whole, as the pre-requisite and basis for the future organization of production.

At the same time any subordination of the factory councils to the reformist trade unions is to be combatted as harmful at the present time.

#### The Economic Struggle.

The decentralization arising inevitably from the existing situation (the unfavorable economic conditions, the reduction of production, the bankruptcy of the reformist trade unions, etc.), and the elementary outbreaks of strikes among the workers (against the will of the trade unions and without the financial support of these), confront the communists with the duty of undertaking the leadership of these strikes.

Every concrete question of economic struggle and trade union tactics must be combined by the communists with the general historical task of the working class, with the necessity of fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The communists must take energetic part in the organization of strike leadership and committees of action, and maintain the connection between these and the factories and shops.

But the whole responsibility of the economic struggle must not be thrown exclusively upon the shoulders of the factory councils, for the factory councils form the foundation for the general regrouping of the forces of the working class for its struggle.

The factory councils must indict the trade unions and hold them responsible for the increasing impoverishment of the working class.

#### General Tactics in the Trade Unions.

Trade union tactics, and the slogans issued in the trade unions, will be decided by the communists solely upon the basis of the general and concrete estimation of the tasks incumbent upon the working class and the Party and of the forces participating in the struggle."

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Only a short time has elapsed since this. What has changed since then?

1. The Party has become legal: The future will show how long this legality will last. (It need not be said that we must retain our illegal apparatus, which we shall still require.)

2. The leaders of German Social Democracy, and the leaders of the ADGB. (General German Trade Union Federation), are working with persevering determination at provoking a split in the trade unions, and are endeavouring to bring this about by means of expulsions and similar measures.

3. Within the CP. itself the Left has won a decided victory.

4. The Reichstag elections are fixed for the beginning of May.

These are the most important changes which have taken place since the time during which we collaborated with the delegation of the Left in drawing up the well-known resolution in the trade union question.

The fact that the leaders of the ADGB. are working perseveringly towards a split in the trade unions, and are resorting to the most despicable provocations in pursuit of this object, naturally adds greatly to your difficulties. And yet this fact does not by any means create a perfectly new situation. Similar provocation has often enough been offered in the past and will be offered again in the future. And as regards the other above mentioned new political factors, these could not in any case form a basis upon which we could undertake a revision of our tactics in the trade union question.

We are well aware that there are conditions under which a split in the trade unions becomes inevitable, and we have no intention of binding ourselves in principle in this respect in Germany more than anywhere else. We know that sooner or later the reformist leaders will bring about a split in the trade unions, as they have done for instance in France. But on the other hand we know equally well that we communists are interested in precisely the reverse, in the maintenance of unity in the trade union movement. As already mentioned above, the question of the tactics to be pursued towards the trade unions by the Communist Party is a question of the fate of the German CP. as the mass party of the revolutionary proletariat. The question at present raised in the CP. regarding the trade unions can only be properly solved if taken in combination with the question of the future prospects of the German revolution. Schematically considered, two possibilities exist:

a) either a more or less rapidly maturing of a fresh revolutionary uplift, bringing about the decisive struggle within a few months, or, let us say, in the course of one to two years,

b) or a somewhat longer drawn out period, extending over a number of years.

In the first case, the errors committed by the German CP. in the trade union question would naturally be obliterated by a victorious revolution, whilst in the second case a mistake made by the German CP. in the trade union question would unquestionably and certainly lead to disaster.

We have already stated that the German CP., whilst doing its utmost to increase the chances of the first possibility, must at the same time so regulate its tactics as to be armed for the second possibility.

In the case of a speedy victory of the proletarian revolution we should naturally at once find a large number of new and rapidly effective measures securing us the allegiance of the trade unions. But should the maturing process of the revolution require a longer period, and were we at the same time to give the leaders of the ADGB. the possibility of crowding us out of the trade unions, then this would mean the end of the German CP. The great art of the Bolsheviki, in the epoch between the two revolutions (from about 1907 till 1914) consisted of the fact that they were capable, besides conducting a relentless fight against opportunism and liquidation, of preventing by every means at their disposal, their separation from the mass organizations of the workers. They did not permit themselves to be carried away by "left" phrases. At that time there was no lack of voices, in the Bolshevik fraction, from impatient comrades demanding the cessation of work in the Menshevik trade unions, in the Duma, etc. Comrade Lenin fought determinedly and relentlessly against all untenable "left" tendencies. He declared that we must be prepared, in the interest of the proletarian revolution, to enter not only a reactionary parliament or a Menshevik trade union, but even a "pigstye" if necessary.

We can well understand the indignation of those workers who do not want to pay members' subscriptions to the reformist trade unions out of their few hard-earned pence, for the workers are daily witnesses of the treachery of these unions, and have even to look on whilst the leaders fetch the Reich militia against fighting workers. We can well understand the revolutionary impatience of many hotspurs among the workers, the indignant clenching of fists against the leaders of the ADGB. But emotions alone are bad advisers in a position so difficult as your present one.

It is ridiculous to suppose that we could suddenly invent some new form of organization for the working class in place of the trade unions. Such a supposition is un-Marxian, and therefore un-Bolshevik. The trade unions were not invented by Grassman, or Wels, or Dissmann, or any of these people. It is nonsense to assert that we could easily find some "new type" of labour organization in Germany. This is mere empty imagination; when the wave of revolution rises again, the new type of workers' organization will be the workers' Soviet. But even then the trade unions will continue to exist; we shall only reorganize them and inspire them with a different spirit. The trade unions are the historically given form of mass organization for the duration of the whole epoch. Even if the German proletariat does not succeed in utilizing the trade unions in its fight for emancipation before the victory of the proletarian revolution, the unions will none the less play a very important role during the proletarian revolution, and an even more important one immediately after the victory of the proletarian revolution. Recollect the experience gained during the Russian revolution and in the Russian trade union movement. Up to the October revolution the Mensheviki had the majority in the trade unions. And yet a very considerable section of the trade unions revolutionized by us helped us to seize power at the time of the October revolution. After the October revolution we won over the trade unions rapidly, and these rendered inestimable service to the proletarian dictatorship. Without the help of the trade unions, the proletarian dictatorship could not have been maintained even for a few weeks in Russia. This was repeatedly and rightly pointed out by comrade Lenin.

Your German Mensheviki are only a very little worse than the Russian Mensheviki, whilst the German communist proletarians — of this we are confident — will not prove to be worse communists than the Russian communists.

If you attempt the immediate formation of parallel trade unions aided by practically formless unemployed organizations, factory council representatives and other such organizations, you will only arrive at hopeless confusion. You will not create powerful proletarian organizations on such lines. The result would be more likely to be trade unions of the unemployed than trade unions of working comrades. The unemployed can and must be organized. Under favourable circumstances they can play a very important part in the preparation for proletarian revolution. Nevertheless, it is impossible to build up parallel trade unions of the unemployed.

After you had formed these parallel trade unions, the masses would demand of you, on the very next day, that you conduct successful economic struggles. Under the conditions obtaining at present in German industry, and with the counter-revolutionary German Social Democrats and the ADGB. attacking you from behind (and at least two thirds of the workers would remain members of this last), you would be entirely unable to carry any economic strike to a successful issue. And the leaders of Social Democracy have still another weapon at their disposal: they can declare our parallel trade unions to be illegal, and thus throw fresh obstacles in the way of the movement. But as soon as the masses see that our trade unions are unable to carry out successful economic strikes, they will be disappointed, and turn their backs on our parallel trade unions. Our forces would be frittered away, and as a result the traitorous leaders of the ADGB would only have their aims facilitated.

It is frequently maintained that the movement in favour of quitting the trade unions has assumed enormous proportions, that it cannot be dammed any longer, and that the trade unions are losing precisely the best and most revolutionary workers. This argument does not hold good. Were it a fact that but few workers are remaining in the Social Democratic trade unions, it would be all the easier for the firm kernel organized by the communists to capture the trade unions from within. But the real facts of the case are that these Social Democratic unions are not by any means so weak. At the present time they count double the number of members possessed by them before the war. To this must be added that the slightest improvement in Germany's industrial circumstances, and it is quite possible that such temporary improvement may take place as a passing episode, will enable the old traditions to be revived and the Social Democratic trade unions reconsolidated.

The number of organized workers has diminished. This is true. This confronts us with fresh tasks. We must form organizations in the ranks of the unorganized. We must work amongst them. But it is unallowable to desert the trade unions, and to leave them in the hands of the Social Democrats.

There are many practical difficulties. Moscow cannot foresee all these beforehand. In this respect you will have to depend much upon your own exertions.

The resistance against the Social Democratic leaders must be organized from below in the trade unions. Every expulsion of a comrade must be responded to by a struggle, a resistance, if possible by a street demonstration, a mass declaration of solidarity from below etc.

We are told that the best revolutionary workers are leaving the trade unions. No, no, a thousand times no! Those who leave the trade unions against the instructions of their communist Party cannot in any case be regarded as the best and most revolutionary elements. We Bolsheviki were frequently told the same during the years from 1908 till 1914. And we invariably replied: those who leave the Menshevik trade unions in disobedience to the instructions of the Bolshevik party are not the best and most revolutionary elements, but the worst disciplined — at best **emotional revolutionists**. If our German CP. is worth anything, it must above all prove its capability to carry out the directions issued by the Party with reference to the non-withdrawal from the reformist trade unions. Remember what Lenin bequeathed us in his magnificent book: "Leftism — the Infantile Disease of Communism". Above all the chapter

#### "Should Communists work in reactionary Trade Unions?"

Remember the passion and implacability with which he even then combated communists of the extreme "left", who refused to work in the reformist trade unions. Had the II. Congress of the C.I., in response to comrade Lenin's insistent demands, not decisively and categorically forbidden the communists to withdraw from the reformist trade unions, we should not have had



one single communist mass party in Europe today, and we should have had no influence on the existing mass organizations.

The leadership of the German CP. is now passing into other hands, into the hands of the Left. This may prove of great service to the revolutionary movement in Germany, but only so long as the Left takes no steps paramount to a liquidation of the whole tactics of the CI., that is, of the whole tactics of Leninian Bolshevism. Were your Party Conference to approve the so-called "new tactics" in the trade union movement, it would signify a renunciation of Bolshevism in one of the most fundamental questions. The CI. would not in any case undertake the responsibility for such an alteration in tactics. Were you to come to such a decision, you would place yourselves in absolute opposition to the fundamental decisions of the CI. The CI. would then be obliged to combat your decision, as we are profoundly convinced that it would involve the greatest possible harm to the cause of proletarian revolution in Germany, and would bring about no less unhappy results internationally.

The CI. recommends your Party Conference to confirm the resolution on the trade union question passed in Moscow in January of this year, drawn up by the representatives of the Left in collaboration with the EC. of the CI. We recommend you to oppose positively and emphatically, and supported by the full authority of the Party Conference, those comrades who are withdrawing from the reformist trade unions. We shall suggest to you a number of practical measures for the purpose of forming a united association of all expelled members, enabling these to fight together for their re-admission into the trade unions, and to cooperate in finding the best solution of the question of the restoration of unity in the trade unions. We further propose to you that you take the slogan: "Trade Union Unity" for one of your leading slogans in the coming Reichstag election, and during the whole of the impending fighting period. We propose that you declare, in the name of the Party Conference, that you are prepared to renounce the immediate convention of a congress of the trade union opposition, in order to deprive the leaders of the ADGB. of even an external pretext for a split. We advise you to attach no fundamental significance to the question of the obligation entailed by membership of these trade unions, but to treat this question as we do the oath taken in the bourgeois parliaments, and to maintain this attitude openly before the working class. At the same time we are of the opinion that one of the chief tasks of the German CP. lies in increased work in the factory councils and trade unions. It is time that we succeed in making the communist fractions in the trade unions something more than organizations existing merely on paper; it is time for our communist fractions to become something more than mere leader organizations. In so far as we are forced to it by the leaders of the German SP., we must be capable of carrying on illegal communist work in the reformist trade unions.

Up to now nobody has adduced any serious argument proving that the resolution passed in Moscow at the end of January 1924 is now already no longer suitable of application. The CI. has taken years to work out its tactics with reference to the trade unions, and it most certainly has no reason whatever for changing these tactics.

Moscow. 24. March 1924.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International.  
Chairman: Zinoviev.

## Resolutions of the Conference of the Balkan Communist Federation.

### VII.

#### The Agrarian Question in Roumania.

1. In estimating the general position in Roumania one will determine this position by two cardinal questions (1) the Agrarian Question and (2) the National Question, which, in conjunction with the doubling of the extent of Roumanian territory after the war, has become particularly acute.

2. The Communist Party of Roumania, as the party of the revolutionary proletariat will have no prospect whatever of development, if the whole party, from the Central Committee down to every individual member of the Party, does not see and appreciate the full importance of the Agrarian Question, if it has no clear agrarian program and if it does not put

forth boundless energy with regard to agitation and propaganda among the peasants, support of the demands of the peasantry and the creation of a block between the town proletariat and the wide peasant masses.

3. The activity of the CP. in this sphere is of particular necessity at the present juncture, when an increase of Fascism in this country has already appeared. If the CP. ignores the Agrarian Question in the future as it did formerly, if it is not prepared to penetrate into the villages, the leadership of the Peasant Movement, which, owing to the lack of ground, the need and poverty of great peasant masses, must inevitably arise, will pass into the hands of the Fascisti, the worst enemies of the working class. The experiences of the Italian movement must serve as a bloody warning to the Roumanian party.

4. The agrarian demands of the CP. must have as their object the overthrowing (with the aid of the peasantry) of the present political regime, which represents the dominion of a block of the feudal Boyars, of the semi-feudal financial industrial oligarchy, by drawing great masses of the peasantry over on to the side of the working class.

5. The basic demand of the Party must therefore consist in the demand for the Confiscation (i. e. Expropriation without any compensation) of the large estates, the handing over of the great agrarian crown and other properties, forests, estates, inventories etc. to the peasants. This demand must form the central point of our propaganda and agitation and must on no account be turned into a kind of Platonic wish.

The devision of the landed property before the war was as follows: (Hektar = 100 acres)

	Old Roumania (% of the land)	Bessarabia %	Siebenbürgen %	Bukovina %
Estates over 100 Hektars . . . . .	48,7	45,0	34,6	60,0
Percentage of Landowners . . . . .	0,64	0,7	0,5	0,4
Medium Properties (10—100 hektars)	11,0	30,0	29,9	14,6
Percentage of Landowners . . . . .	3,68	24,3	10,8	3,32
Small holdings (under 10 hektars) .	40,3	25,0	35,6	55,3
Percentage of Landowners . . . . .	95,5	74,4	88,7	96,3

Thus about one half of the total land belonged to the big landowners, a small group of people.

The agrarian population, according to social position, is divided as follows:

	Old Roumania	Bessarabia	Siebenbürgen	Bukovina
Large peasants (with dependents) . . . . .	12,025	67,594	19,375	?
Medium peasants . . . . .	181,590	1,316,750	348,780	?
Small peasants . . . . .	3,885,190	2,306,105	1,401,345	?
Semi-proletarian . . . . .	719,335	974,905	454,520	?

There is not the slightest doubt, that under such conditions, the land is ready for an agrarian revolution, that the CP. has the duty to seek among the peasants for an ally for the town proletariat, that this is the most important problem of the revolution. The repeated agrarian unrest (particularly in 1907 and further in connection with the Russian revolution of 1917) confirms the correctness of this general estimate.

6. That the agrarian question is the most vulnerable point of the feudal-bureaucratic clique, is evidenced by the so-called "Agrarian Reform" of the "liberal" government. The ruling clique knows very well where its Achilles' heel is. This "Agrarian Reform" which was undertaken in order to buy off the peasants' revolution, remained to a considerable extent merely on paper, and became simply a deception of the peasant masses.

1. It was not even carried out to the extent promised.

2. It simply demanded the passing of the landed property into the hands of the prosperous classes of the peasantry.

3. It did not satisfy the land-hunger of the chief section of the poor peasantry.

4. It imposed heavy compensation charges upon those who received land.

5. It left the question of agricultural inventories, of working capital etc. totally untouched.

The exposure of the mendacious character of this reform is therefore the most important duty of the Communist Party of Roumania. The gross neglect which the CP. of Roumania has shown in the Agrarian Question, consists, among other things, in that the Party has not even taken the trouble to collect particulars of the incidents of the reform. There is neither comprehensive resumé by local correspondents, nor even an approximate estimate of what has been accomplished. That is certainly a most culpable attitude of the leaders of the Party and of the Party writers towards the most important question of public life.

According to the Year Book particulars, 2,700,000 Hektars were divided up in old Roumania alone. The Roumanian comrades deny that categorically. The fact can be regarded as established that compensation reckoned on fifty years' purchase has to be paid for the land, while the price amounts to forty times the annual rent in 1914 and the big landowners get a government loan.

In Old Roumania the area of the property of the big land owners (5385 owners) amounted to 3,810,000 Hektars, the area of the peasant holdings (4,798,140 souls) to 4,065,000 Hektars (40% and 51%). It must be borne in mind that in the given areas, woods, waters, pools etc. are not taken into account. The woods, however, are of essential importance. There is also to be considered in an estimate of the situation the very great extensivity of the farming (about 80% of the ground is exclusively sown with corn). It is to be assumed therefore that the land hunger of the masses has not been satisfied and that the antagonisms in the sphere of agriculture have not ceased to exist. It is therefore the duty of the CP. to collect relevant material and analyse it carefully.

7. The CP. must above all show the peasantry its own political view, that is, it must give an answer to the fundamental questions of the needs of the peasants. In this connection the following fundamental demands are appropriate:

a) Confiscation of the whole of the agricultural inventories, of farm implements, of live-stock and machines of the big land-owners;

b) the annulment of all the debts of the peasantry, of all the usurious agreements;

c) the prohibition of any dealing or price-driving in land and the assuring of this prohibition by the declaration of the nationalisation of the land;

d) the confiscated land will before all be divided among the propertyless and poor peasants;

e) Peasant Councils or local Committees will dispose of the land;

f) organization of ameliorative help for the peasant economy, largescale arrangements for gratuitous vocational, technical and general education;

g) support of the agricultural co-operative trading system;

h) struggle against the system of usury etc.

8. The Party must expose the mendacious character of the Government land reform, show that promises are not fulfilled, make use of all the conflicts arising out of the carrying out of this reform, generalise its propaganda, agitation and slogans and bring the peasant masses to the slogan of the confiscation of the whole of the big land-owners' property as well as to that of the overthrow of the present government of the big agrarians, which is to be replaced by a government of Workers and Peasants.

Only with such prospects can and should partial demands be put forward.

9) These partial demands may be somewhat as follows:

a) Abolition of indemnity payments, propaganda for a boycott of these payments;

b) abolition of farm-rents, propaganda for their boycott;

c) distribution of the land in the first place among the propertyless and land-poor;

d) abolition of the taxes of the peasantry;

e) withdrawal of the gendarmerie and police from the villages;

f) election of agrarian Committees, who shall dispose of the land;

g) amnesty for all peasants who have been sentenced on account of agrarian unrest, and generally, on account of agrarian conflicts;

h) complete military amnesty;

i) distribution of farm implements etc. for the peasants;

j) legal proceeding against the officials who have committed abuses in the carrying out of the land reform;

k) legal proceedings against big land-owners, who have given false returns as to the extent of their estates etc. etc.

10) The pre-requisite of any sort of successful work in this direction for the Party is penetration into the villages. The Party must immediately proceed to the organisation of nuclei and party-groups in the villages, to the organisation of a network of its people working in the country and their linking up with one another. The Party must convene periodical Party Conferences of experienced members, which will direct the work in the villages. The Central will appoint a commission for the work on the land with one member of the Central Committee. The Party must work out practical instructions for the organisation of the work on the land. The Party must have information as regards all the conflicts on the land, their character and their progress etc.

11) It is the duty of the Party to prepare special peasant literature. Under this should be included:

a) Works which explain the importance of the agrarian question in the present situation in Roumania, the actual position of affairs, the program of the Party etc. (for the Party itself);

b) popular pamphlets for the peasantry;

c) leaflets and proclamations to the peasantry, special illegal leaflets on concrete conflicts;

d) a popular peasants' newspaper in thoroughly simple language which can be understood by every peasant. In particular there must be concentrated in the paper collected information from all districts on the carrying out of the land laws and on conflicts. The paper must be a fighting organ of the Party;

e) pamphlets, leaflets upon the subject of how the peasants in Soviet Russia have settled the big land-owners.

12) Special attention is to be paid to the propaganda of the alliance of the Workers and Peasants against the alliance of land-owners and capitalists. The slogan of a Workers' and Peasants' Government is more appropriate in Roumania than in any other country.

13) For the peasants of the annexed districts, the Party, in addition to the demands already mentioned, has also to put forward the demand for the recognition of their right to complete state separation. Whoever fails to recognise that, delivers the peasantry of these districts over to the hegemony of the opposition-decentralist and separatist bourgeoisie of these districts. The Party must without fail take up a position against the forced colonisation within the country.

14) With regard to the so-called Peasant Party, the C. P. of Roumania has to follow such a policy as will further the development of the left wing of this party and its alteration into a radical-democratic Peasant Party with socialist colouring. Suggestions for a united front can only be made with the object of common activities. The tactics of a united front may in no case be allowed to confuse the natural demands of the CP. It may in no case put an end to the criticism of the luke-warmness, the inconsequence and sometimes also the betrayals of the Peasant Party against the Peasantry.

## The National Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party in Brünn.

The National Conference of the CP. of Czecho-Slovakia took place on the 4th and 5th of May in Brünn and was attended by 157 delegates. Below we give the Resolution, forming the second item on the Agenda, passed at the Conference (Attitude of the Fifth World Congress. Reporter: Comrade Smeral). Editor.

### Resolution on the Russian and German Questions.

1. The National Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party, after having heard the reports and the discussions on the situation in the German and in the Russian Party, declares itself to be in accord with the conclusions and standpoints, which the Presidium and the Executive Committee of the Communist International have formed and taken up respectively.

2. It is the task of the World Congress, once more to assess and definitely formulate those experiences, which are connected with the German events and the Russian discussion, in order to reduce them to accurate and authoritative information for all Parties of the Communist International. In particular we attach great value to it, that the principle of the greatest firmness be still maintained in the Russian Party, which is not only the most important Party of the International, but is also the bearer of the governing power in a great proletarian state. For this reason, the National Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian CP. is expressly of the opinion that, in the Russian Party, fraction forming may not be thought of, and that the old Bolshevik Guard as the group which holds the Party together, and as the most tried and most hardened core, is called upon to fill a special function in the Party. This position certainly also lays an increased responsibility upon the old Guard of the Russian Party, and that not only in decisions of a material nature, but also in all questions which influence the development of the personal relations within the party. So far as we have followed the discussion in the Russian Party, which was only possible for us, in spite of the material appearing in the press, at a certain distance, we were at first surprised at the sharp form of some of the positions taken up. Now, however, we have the impression on the whole that at the session of the Enlarged Executive, at the V. World Congress this discussion will be definitely settled, and that the result of the discussion will not only not disturb the unity or injure the capacity of the Russian Party for working and fighting, but on the contrary, will increase the sources of strength and contribute to the further increase of the authority of the leaders both of the Russian Party and also of the Communist International.

3. The National Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian CP. explicitly maintains that, according to our experiences, the sections of the Communist International were only in a position to fight with great success for influence over the broad masses of the workers during the time of the ebb of the revolutionary wave with the aid of the decisions of the III. and IV. World Congress concerning the tactics of the Proletarian United Front and the Workers' and Peasants' government. Also now, when the revolutionary wave is beginning to rise again, the sections of the CI. will only be able to win the confidence of the majority of the working class, if they understand, how to use rightly the tactics of united front in the sense of the conclusions of the III. and IV. World Congress. So far as the Workers' and Peasants' government is concerned, we realise that every practical attempt at its establishment must signify the sharpened development of the revolutionary struggle.

We are of opinion that, if in isolated cases these tactics have not been rightly employed, that is no argument against their correctness and their historical necessity. Therefore it is necessary to examine carefully and to utilise the new experiences, which we have had in all countries in the use of the tactics of United front and of the Workers' and Peasants' government since the last World Congress.

4. Today, when we find ourselves between two waves of revolution, it is necessary to pay strict attention to the purity of the fundamental principles of international Communism, and that chiefly as regards the right-wing tendencies of liquidationism, but also against the left infantile diseases. It is necessary to put a check to every inclination towards reformist degeneration as to everything, which is not conducive to the development of the CP. to a revolutionary mass Party.

5. The Conference recommends the delegation of the Czecho-Slovakian CP. chosen for the world Congress, that they give expression to the point of view formulated in this resolution at the World Congress.

## IN THE R. I. L. U.

### Postponement of the Third World Congress of the R. I. L. U.

Telegram to the Inprecorr.

The Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U. has decided to postpone the opening of the Third World Congress from the 25<sup>th</sup> of June to the 5<sup>th</sup> of July.

The Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U.

## E. C. C. I.

### To the Workers and Peasants of Japan.

Toilers of town and country.

Your country is in the power of a ruling class of landlords militarists, bureaucrats and capitalist monopolists who refuse you any rights, who exploit you unmercifully and oppress you with the cruel hand of violence.

Since the great disaster that befell your country last September the oppression has become greater and the masses are seething with discontent and revolt.

Your ruling class is totally incapable of solving the economic crisis prevailing in your country and of coping with the great task of restoration. While your rulers call on you to cherish the interests of the nation, their only concern is how to get the greatest profit out of the national disaster. While they quarrel over the spoils, nothing is done to ameliorate your condition. Hundreds of thousands are still living in temporary huts in poverty and misery. Tens of thousands are unemployed, Thousands of ruined farms are left unrestored.

Your rulers can offer you no prospect of improvement: meanwhile the country is falling into the power of American finance which will impose on you the additional burden of exploitation by foreign capitalists and convert your government into an instrument of foreign imperialism.

Your ruling class, the landlords, the militarists, the bureaucrats and the big monopolists, faced with a crisis they cannot solve, and seeing the rising tide of revolt against them, are growing frantic in their endeavour to retain power.

The phantom of "dangerous thoughts" is haunting your ruling class and it is introducing a reign of terror to destroy it. The wholesale massacre of Korean workmen, the murder of Japanese workmen in Kameidok, the savage sentences recently passed on the workmen in Nagoya and the forthcoming trials of the communists in Tokio, — whose only crime is that they champion the cause of the toilers — witness to the ruthlessness of your ruling class. It realises that its rule is being challenged.

But your ruling class also tries to employ cunning in order to enslave you. Your rulers offer you fictitious recognition of your labour unions if you will agree to save the face of your exploiters by sending delegates to the capitalist conference of the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations in Geneva. They offer you the protection of the law by their Trade Union Bill which in fact will paralyse your organizations. They try to bribe your leaders with high posts in the government. They offer you land courts which will settle rent disputes in the interests of the landlords. They talk about universal suffrage, but they do not intend to give it to you. They employ every trick to keep you in bondage.

It is significant that the tyrannical Russian Tsarist government, prior to the revolution of 1905, employed the same measures of repression and cunning. But the Russian workers rejected the offer of "official" unions and instead, they fought to overthrow the Tsar and established their own rule.

Toilers of town and country.

You are disfranchised, unemployment and starvation stare you in the face and your rulers can offer you nothing but increased exploitation and poverty, and repression that will force you back to serfdom. The radical bourgeoisie try to win your support by pretending to fight for reforms, but they only seek their own interest. Beware of them.

The Government recently dissolved parliament and "appealed to the nation". But you have no voice in the election of a new government. If you think that a change of government will bring you any improvement in your condition, you will be disappointed. No government of bureaucrats, militarists, landlords and capitalists will bring you relief.

You must take up the fight for liberty. You alone can stop the reaction and open the way for the future development of your country.

You have shown good fighting spirit. In spite of the governmental terror you have bravely resisted the attacks of the capitalists and the landlords. You have shown independence by compelling your labour leaders to decline the offer of a government post. You have repudiated the pernicious Trade Union Bill. But this is not enough. You must storm the citadel of reaction.

Organize your forces for the fight for civil liberties. Hasten with the formation of your Workers and Peasants Party by which alone you will be able to conduct your fight for liberty. Your Party must be independent of the bourgeois radicals.

Put forward your program of liberties and fight until you get it carried.

Demand: Democratic government; immediate adult suffrage for men and women without any qualification; the right of combination; freedom to strike and the right to collective bargaining; freedom of political opinion; the right of assembly — to hold meetings without the presence of the police; real freedom of press and speech for the working class. Put forward also your economic demands.

Combine your labour unions and organize those who have not yet joined, and compel the government to recognise them as independent legal organizations.

Workers and peasants of Japan!

The savage sentences on your fellow workers in Nagya shows that the Government holds out the same fate for your comrades now awaiting trial in Tokio, in Gumma and other places.

Remember, these cases show that the government intends to pick out and crush all the most active and thinking members of your movement and thus demoralise your ranks by leaving you leaderless. The communists are men and women who fight for the interests of the working class. In striking against them the government is striking against you. You must raise your protest in their defence. Commence your campaign for political liberty by demanding the release of all those who are persecuted for their political opinions, and the cessation of all future political prosecution.

Demand the release of the political prisoners.

Form your Workers and Peasants Party to fight for your program of liberties.

Down with the government of landlords, militarists, bureaucrats and monopolists!

Long live the emancipation of the workers and peasants!

6. May 1924.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International.

## PROLETARIAN ART

### "Bela Uitz: The Luddite Movement."

By Franz Koritschner (Vienna).

Proletarian art is the ideological expression of the class struggle. A Socialist art can only come into existence with Socialism itself, that is, long after the capture of political power. The appropriate task for the artist during our storm shaken period is to give the struggle of the working class an artistic expression and to take into account in the field of art the desires of the mass of the proletariat. As within the womb of capitalist society the forms of the proletarian system of society are beginning to develop until, in the revolutionary mass struggle, they break through the old framework, so in the field of art the embryonic forms of a new art are arising within the old ideas, and are destined to become successors of the old. Among the artists who are leading us to new works, belongs Bela Uitz, a harbinger of Socialist art.

Bela Uitz has issued an album containing fifteen sketches. These sketches are destined to form together a monumental fresco presenting the bloody history of that first proletarian class struggle known as the "Luddite Movement": the rising of the

germinating factory proletariat as a class in the years 1811 to 1817. From these sketches there blazes forth the English industrial revolution which transformed the conditions of life and property of the whole of English society. We see the starved weavers and spinners as they are dispossessed by the machine and converted into pariahs. We see the rise of child and female labour in the factories in all its cruelty. We see the mythical figure of the machine wrecker, Ned Ludd. We see the secret organizations. We hear the terrible oath. We live through the armed attacks by the workers, police and military. Deportations and imprisonments, new attacks and still again new attacks without end. Destroyed machines, factories set on fire, powder and shot, — mass murder by the victorious soldiery. The civil war rages before our eye.

"Stop him who dare, stop him who can."

The armed struggle of the workers against the machine rages over the fresco. The hammer of wrath crashes upon the machine which the journeyman worker cannot yet seize. And this monumental work is only the first step on the part of Uitz. It is only the beginning of the gigantic plan. It is his intention to represent the history of the international proletarian movement in a gigantic fresco.

How did Uitz come to take up this work which will occupy the best part of his life? Already as a young man he had great success. In 1915 he received the gold medal in the San Francisco World's Fair. A numbers of museums in Milan, Stockholm, Budapest etc. possess pictures by him. His exhibitions in Europe and America were always of great significance. In America the art critics wrote that he could only be compared with the great ones of all ages. During the war he began to busy himself with the study of Marxism. The first result of these studies was that he broke away first of all from the naturalist school and then from the post-impressionists and joined a school which outwardly posed as being very revolutionary. This group had united within itself Futurism, Cubism and Expressionism. But his studies of the history of art and Marxism, his experiences of the Proletarian Dictatorship in Hungary and a trip to Russia in 1921 forced him to the view that Futurism, Cubism, Expressionism, Suprematism, Constructivism etc. are only products of a decaying bourgeois form of society. These tendencies which call themselves revolutionary, have nothing in common with the revolutionary proletariat. They belong to the same class of phenomena as the rise of Mysticism, Occultism, Spiritualism, Theosophy, sure signs of the dissolution of the capitalist form of production. The tendencies referred to can only deal mainly with the formal problem, and that only in a vacuum. They preach the complete abstraction of art in relation to the class struggle. They revert to the maddest and most vulgar idealism.

A thorough study of Indian, Egyptian, Greek, Catholic and Bourgeois art showed him that the decaying of a system of production always produced such phenomena. In the light of previous class struggles, Uitz could understand that Futurism, Cubism etc. were either insignificant exhalations, which had already sunk into forgetfulness, of capitalist decay and which threatened to infect the class consciousness of the proletariat, or that they were conscious counter-revolutionary machinations without any lasting artistic value.

The same studies showed him also that the rising class forming the new society, at the same time always created a new art which, instead of the problem of mere form, always emphasised the new content of the class ideology most sharply and that it obtained the best material from the heroic history of the new class. Thus Uitz turned his back on Futurism, Cubism etc. and went deeper into the history of the labour movement and the class struggle within the bourgeois society. He went into the most minute details without losing sight of the greater connections.

In the album "The Luddite Movement", Uitz emphasises most strongly the ideological contents of the class struggle. At the same time he has made use of the suitable achievements of those forms of art which are referred to above. Uitz recognises that the alchemists without intending it gave life to some branches of science — questing for gold, they developed chemistry. The decadent schools are carrying on a much more dangerous game than the alchemists, but, without intending it, they have created new forms which they do not perceive nor understand, because they are building within a vacuum. But their forms need not remain unused. Uitz has succeeded in utilising the formal achievements of his opponenets for new creation and for new contents. Thus Bela Uitz signifies through his work not only a new way, but promises powerful proletarian art creation for the future.