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Session of the Enlarged E. C. C. I.

(Detailed Report.)

Sixteenth Session, March 8th, 1926.

Report on the Political Commission.

Chairman: Comrade Semard.

Comrade Pepper:

On behalf of the Political Commission I should like to report on the work: The Commission had several sessions during which it dealt very fully with all the amendments to Comrade Zinoviev's theses.

I should like to point out from the start that no counter-draft theses were set up against Comrade Zinoviev's theses, which were also adopted by the Presidium of the Executive. In the general analysis, too, we were able to ascertain that there were no other very divergent analyses. It can be said that in the general analysis only the following divergent opinions were expressed in the discussions of the Political Commission and at the Plenum.

Firstly, the opinions of Comrade Bordiga, who asserted that the whole world situation presented only two factors: Soviet Russia on the one hand and the capitalist surroundings on the other hand.

Secondly, the formulation of Comrade Rosenberg, according to whom matters in the world situation were as simple as this: that there was a general tendency of the capitalists to unite against the working class.

Thirdly, an analysis of the French Right comrades and ex-comrades, who on the whole refuse to see the revolutionary situation and the critical position in France, and who in their analysis reckon with an almost permanent stabilisation of capitalism.

In this connection I should like to mention the proposal of the French delegation concerning the character of the French Government. Comrade Zinoviev's theses say that the present French Government, that is, such as it was until Briand's fall, is a petty-bourgeois government, although in many respects it carries out the policy of the bourgeoisie. But the French Dele-

gation declares in its proposed amendment that the French Government is a government of the big bourgeoisie, which has the support of certain petty-bourgeois sections.

The political commission was unable to accept this amendment proposed by the French Delegation, because it was of the opinion that such an analysis is not a correct description of the situation in France and shows a failure to understand the critical state of affairs in France.

Against these conception the commission expressed the view that Comrade Zinoviev's theses give a correct analysis of the world situation. Why? Because the theses present a very variegated picture of the world situation, because they present a very full and variegated analysis of what the world is like today.

There was at times a tendency during the discussion of the Political Commission to consider the world situation from a local viewpoint. I will give a few examples: A proposal made by some American comrades, which endeavoured to emphasise all the features of the general situation in America which are unfavourable to the bourgeoisie. No one can deny that there are unfavourable features in the present situation even for American imperialism, but it would nevertheless be a mistake to lay too much emphasis on these insignificant unfavourable features, obliterating, thereby the main tendency, that American capitalism and American imperialism are still on the upward grade. Therefore, the Political Commission could not accept the proposals which said that the real wages of the American working class are now on a downward grade. Neither could it accept the assertion that the working class of America is at present undergoing a process of radicalisation. However, the Political Commission took from this proposal that which is according to facts, namely, that there are in America a few insignificant partial crises. Moreover, the Political Commission, on its own initiative, emphasised that in

America, too, violent crises are bound to come in the normal development of capitalism. Without making prophesies concerning the date of the next crisis, the Political Commission placed this perspective on record.

Then we had also proposals concerning Great Britain, which were all in the other direction. These proposals endeavoured to emphasise features in the present situation which show that British imperialism has still a good many favourable and positive factors on its side. These proposals were also rejected by the Political Commission. Why? Not because they were erroneous in every respect, but because by over-emphasising these so-called favourable features for the British bourgeoisie, the clear line of the British development would be obliterated, namely the inevitable eclipse of British imperialism.

The most important discussion in the Political Commission was that on Locarno. The theses on Locarno analysed the Locarno situation clearly and unambiguously. They declared:

1. That Locarno came about in the interest of capitalism, especially in the interest of American capitalism. But at the same time it also represents the first timid attempt at the formation of a bloc of the European debtor-nations against America in its capacity of creditor-nation.

2. Locarno shows the consolidation of the supremacy of British imperialism with respect to France.

3. Locarno was an attempt made by the British Empire to form a bloc against Soviet Russia.

These were the main tendencies on which stress was laid in the theses.

Locarno is not the terminus in the development of European capitalism, and still less the terminus in the development of world capitalism. One should realise that after this station there will come many more stations. It goes without saying that the Social Democratic analysis, that Locarno is a terminus, that it means permanent peace, the end of any possibilities of wars, the coming of the millenium, or whatever all these social-pacifist prophesies may be, is wrong. The Political Commission declared that Locarno is an important station, but not a terminus. It was a junction where many ways and tendencies cross each other, and this makes an analysis of the Locarno Pact and of all other agreements and political intrigues which crossed each other in Locarno, somewhat difficult. During the discussion in the Political Commission some comrades were inclined to judge Locarno rather one-sidedly, only from the standpoint of the observer.

From the French standpoint Locarno seemed to be the greatest economic, political and military defeat of French imperialism. If we consider what the German press is writing about Locarno, we can see only Germany's dependence on America, the enormous credits granted by America, and thereby the economic and political dependence of Germany on the U. S. A.

From the British standpoint, or rather from the onesided standpoint of the British colonies and dominions. Locarno means an enormous consolidation of British imperialism.

The political Commission was of the opinion that all these conceptions, although they are to a certain extent correct, only represent one side of the matter, from the standpoint of one country. Therefore, the Political Commission was of the opinion that the theses are quite right in considering the question from the world standpoint and on the basis of the reciprocal effect of all the interested countries.

The Political Commission found it necessary to modify the theses concerning Locarno only with respect to two points, namely:

1. To lay a little more emphasis on the first timid attempt at the formation of a bloc of the European debtor nations against America, as the most important creditor nation.

2. The proposals of the Political Commission lay a little more emphasis in France's reserves in Locarno, and declare that Locarno attests the failure of France's attempt to establish a military hegemony over the European continent.

Otherwise the Political Commission left the theses on Locarno as they were.

Another problem which occupied the attention of the Political Commission was Great Britain's attitude to the dominions and colonies. There was a tendency to over-estimate the possibilities of the utilisation of the industrialisation of the dominions and colonies on the part of the British mother country. The idea prevailed that the industrialisation of the colonies can, at least indirectly, help the mother-country to find a way out

of the economic and political impasse. The Political Commission declared that all these smaller and bigger attempts of British imperialism cannot prevent the inevitable secession of the dominions — neither imperial preference, nor the bribing of the upper strata of the national bourgeoisie in the colonies in order to secure them as allies.

The Political Commission declared that the theses give a correct appreciation of the attitude of the British colonies to the mother country, and that the fundamental tendency is the centrifugal, the secession tendency.

The Commission also carefully examined all the other countries characterised in the theses, and introduced the following alterations and additions:

1. A short chapter on fascist Italy.

2. A few alterations concerning Germany, especially the peculiar position of Germany: that some of the economic forces of Germany are driving it to an imperialist development, and at the same time the impossibility of an imperialist development, as Germany is deprived of all imperialist instruments of power.

The Political Commission has also added a new chapter on the Danube and Balkan countries, which declares that through the peace treaties and the entire development since the world war, the Balkan countries have been even more Balkanised than before and are now, more than ever, a breeding ground for wars.

A new chapter was added concerning White Terror. It had to be definitely stated that the sphere of White Terror has almost become a geographical conception. No less than 150 million people live under its domination.

The Commission extended somewhat the chapter on the East, as the importance of the liberation struggles in China, Morocco and Syria deserve the greatest attention and consideration on the part of the entire International.

The Commission also carefully studied some of the problems of the labour movement and the tasks of the Communist Parties, and decided on the following alterations:

1. An addition on the role of the II International in the East. A new labour movement is beginning to crystallise there, and the II International, particularly the reactionary British trade union leaders, are endeavouring just now to obtain a footing in the Far East, and to capture for the II International and to organise this new labour movement which has neither reformist nor Social-Democratic nor Labour Party traditions.

2. Then we have also amendments to the theses on the question of unemployment. Here one had to reckon with two dangers. Firstly, that through this permanent mass unemployment the working class will be for a long time split into two sections, and in this connection it is essential for Communists to lay emphasis on working class unity. Secondly, there is the danger that under the influence of the resistance of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy, Communists might neglect the interests of the masses of unemployed workers. The theses and the proposals of the Political Commission, which partly emanate from Comrade Zinoviev himself, endeavour to define very clearly the attitude of the Communist International to this question.

3. Then we have also an important modification with respect to the letter to the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain. The new text which the political Commission recommends here is based on the standpoint of our British comrades. It unequivocally lays stress on solidarity with the steps taken by the Communist Party of Great Britain, and recommends to the Independent Party that if it be really in earnest with the united front, it should form it with its "own" Communists and should not merely play with the idea of the united front on an international scale.

4. Then we have also a short but important and fundamental chapter on the new organisational methods and forms for the winning of large sections of workers. This chapter deals with the question of parallel organisations, the role of the organisations — to draw the working class sympathisers like a net around the Communist Party.

5. The Political Commission also proposes to insert a short chapter on work in the cooperatives, then also a few sentences concerning the youth, in which is contained a quite mildly critical piece of advice.

This brings me to the end of my report. On behalf of the Political Commission I ask you to adopt and endorse here at the Plenum Comrade Zinoviev's theses and the amendments of the Political Commission, all of which — I should like to emphasise this — were adopted unanimously in the Commission.

Concluding Speech by Comrade Zinoviev on the Political Report.

Immediate Problems of the International Communist Movement.

I. The Fight to Gain the Majority of the Working Class.

International Women's Day.

Comrades, I first of all must fulfil the instructions of the Presidium by making a few remarks on the significance of **International Women's Day**. Today is International Women's Day. This day has become pre-eminently a Communist day for, as everybody knows, Social Democracy consigns it more and more to the shade. We use this opportunity of once more reminding all Comintern Sections of the **particular importance of work among women**. If we really desire to prepare the proletarian revolution, we must firmly remember that without attracting the toiling women into the Party, into the trade unions, and in general into the proletarian struggle we cannot fulfil this task. Hitherto our Sections — and we say this with great regret — have paid too little attention to this most important task. Everyone of our Sections that desires to become a mass Party should think more and more about the organisation of women. **On behalf of the whole Communist International we send to-day our proletarian greetings to all working women, all women toilers.** (Loud applause.)

I shall now proceed to make my concluding remarks.

The World Bourgeoisie on the Enlarged Executive Session.

Comrades, the work of our Plenum is only just being brought to a close, but our theses and discussion have already found echo in certain bourgeois parliaments, not to mention the bourgeois press which is carrying on vigorous controversies on our conference. Some points in these bourgeois commentaries are not without interest. The **German bourgeois press** sometimes tries to represent things as if the centre of gravity of our work were directed "against Great Britain". In the French bourgeois press they talk about our work being directed mainly "against America". An article in the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" dealing with the E. C. C. I. Session was actually entitled: "Anti-British Moods of the Communist International". The French paper "Echo Parisien" considers that the slogan of our Conference (and, they say, this is a new "hobby" of the Comintern) reads: Down with America.

There is no need for my serious refutation of this nonsense to you. The Communist International is a world organisation and is fighting against the world bourgeoisie.

It is true, that our Plenum this time dealt with questions concerning **Great Britain and America** more seriously and more attentively than on any former occasion. That is because these two countries, particularly the second, are more and more occupying a leading position in world politics. The fact that we paid so much attention to America and Great Britain only proves that we are gradually becoming more of a **World International**.

In the **British Parliament**, a small but interesting and lively discussion took place in connection with our debates. A member of the Conservative Party, **Mr. Hall**, asked the right honourable Sir Austen Chamberlain whether he had read our theses and our report and whether he did not (i. e. Chamberlain) intend taking any measures in connection with our speech. Chamberlain proudly stated that he was well informed as to our report. In reading it, he became convinced that we attacked not only the British bourgeoisie, but also the bourgeoisie of other countries. This evidently was meant to serve as a certain consolation to the members of the British parliament. Moreover, **Chamberlain** boasted that as distinct from Mr. Hall, he had read a more detailed account of our report and that it is just from this more detailed account that he had become convinced that we did not confine our "attacks" to the British bourgeoisie alone. In order to facilitate further discussion for these honourable gentlemen,

perhaps you will find it necessary to instruct Comrade **Piatnitsky** on behalf of the Secretariat to send a full stenographic report of our debates to this honourable company. (Laughter.) **Mr. Hall** and **Sir Austen Chamberlain** were also interested in the question as to who Comrade **Sambry** is, who is a member of the British Commission elected by the Enlarged Executive: is he an Englishman or an American. In both cases they would not be loth to "arrest and despatch". To this question we will let them find the reply themselves.

That we are enemies not only of the British bourgeoisie, but of the bourgeoisie of the whole world is quite true. But nevertheless we are able to distinguish the more powerful and the more dangerous enemy from the weaker. Take for instance **Messrs. Tsankoff and Chamberlain**. If we speak of personalities, both of them equally enjoy our "love". We could express quite definite desires in respect to both these gentlemen. But we nonetheless understand that although in personal qualities **Tsankoff** by no means cedes place to **Chamberlain** the objective significance of **Chamberlain** at the present time is greater than **Tsankoff**. The group of the bourgeoisie on behalf of whom **Chamberlain** now speaks, has undoubtedly much more significance and represents a much greater danger for the International labour movement than that represented by **Tsankoff**. And that explains the fact why we devote more attention to **Chamberlain**. But it stands to reason that personally **Chamberlain** does not interest us in particular. If to-morrow he will be replaced by another — and this does happen sometimes, look, **Chamberlain** at the fate of **Briand** — we will discontinue using his name as an alarm. Is it not natural that the International Communist proletariat devotes serious attention to the Conservative Government of Great Britain?

I should also add that it has not even entered our heads to put forward the slogan "Down with America". We say: "Down with imperialist America." Despite the tremendous objective obstacles which we have to face in our work amongst the American proletariat, we know very well that we also have friends in America and that we are gradually concentrating there an increasing number of forces. Very highly placed American statesmen declare that as long as the Comintern still exists, and that as long as you will be addressed by such a sinner as I, there can be no talk of American recognition of the Soviet Union. I think that this statement should not be taken too seriously. Our International will certainly exist and grow stronger in the future, and America will nevertheless recognise the U. S. S. R. As far as I know the spirit of the members of the Soviet Government I can impart to you the information that these comrades of ours are awaiting with full calm and absolute certainty the moment when America will abandon its absurd position with regard to the U. S. S. R. and will recognise the Soviet Union. I think that this time is not far distant. And even if this recognition should be delayed, the Soviet Government will hardly turn grey over it.

We were interested in America and Great Britain in our debate, but not with these two countries only. Our tasks are much more extensive. And our work at the Plenum and in all Commissions had much more depth than the afore-mentioned papers think.

The Vanguard and the Wide Masses.

What is the nature of the work of our Plenum? I think one may say that the main problem around which our work has been centred is the question as to how we must now, after having already partly won the **Vanguard of the working class**, — how are we now to win the broad masses, how are we to win the majority of the working class, the majority of the toilers. It is on this question that all our thoughts are, in the final analysis, concentrated.

Lenin once wrote: "The proletarian vanguard has been won ideologically. That is the main thing. Without that, not even

the first step to victory can be made. But it is quite a distance still from this stage to victory. We cannot be victorious with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive fight before the whole class, before the wide masses have taken up a position of either directly supporting the vanguard, or else at any rate a position of benevolent neutrality towards it, and of complete incapability of supporting its enemy, would not only be stupidity, but also a crime. In order that really the whole class, really the wide masses of toilers and exploited by capitalism come up to this position, for this propaganda alone and agitation alone are but little. For this these masses need their own political experience.”*)

In order to obtain this, in order that the broad masses oppressed by capitalism adopt our position, for this it is therefore necessary not only to have agitation and propaganda, but also the personal experience of these masses. And I think, that we may now say without exaggeration that the first part of our task is being more or less solved. We have gradually won, at any rate, ideologically, the proletarian vanguard. Organisationally, we have not yet strengthened this task. But we are on the way to fulfilling it. Our work at this Plenum has indeed been devoted to the question as to how this vanguard will now win the wide masses. I think that the entire tactics of the united front arise out of this, the whole line of our tactics in general. There was a time when we had to form independent workers' Communist Parties at all costs (even at the cost of splitting the old Socialist Parties). This struggle was first and foremost to win the vanguard of the proletariat. After this part of our programme has been more or less solved, a new, more important and serious problem arises: **How to win now the majority of the working class.** And in this period the united front tactics naturally are pushed forward.

In 1920 Lenin said (the American comrades should listen with particular attention to this): “If now in Russia, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the Russian bourgeoisie and the Entente we were to make the ‘recognition of the dictatorship’ a condition for joining the trade unions, we would have committed a folly which would have spoiled our influence over the masses and helped the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to convince the backward, to be able to work amongst them and not to get fencible off from them by brainy, childishly ‘Left’ slogans.”**)

I think, comrades, that we are now just in such a period when it is very important for us to emphasise not so much what separates the Communist workers from the Social Democratic and non-Party workers, as what unites them as members of the same class. At the present time, when in a lesser or larger degree we have won the vanguard and are faced with the higher task of winning the majority of the working class, we must at all costs free ourselves from the “childishly Left” slogans, as Lenin put it. At the present time, when the Communist Parties have become crystallised, they must be able to give prominence and bring before the working masses whatever brings us us nearer to the broad masses of workers, especially the Social Democratic workers.

Of course, the fulfilment of this task by no means signifies an abandonment of the struggle against “their”, i. e. the Social Democratic vanguard (naturally a vanguard in quotation marks, as the Social Democratic leadership is an advanced detachment of the bourgeoisie in the workers' camp) — this does not signify the abandonment of our struggle against the counter-revolutionary leaders of Social Democracy.

“...If a revolutionary Party”, says Lenin, “has not the majority in the advanced sections of the revolutionary classes and of the country, there can be no question of a rising.”***)

We have not yet got this majority. The main task of the epoch is to work untiringly to win this majority.

We are now living through an epoch in which we should be able to assist the wide masses of the toilers to accumulate

their own political experience. Our task is to lead the workers further on step by step. Our task is to work so that the vanguard is not cut off from the wide masses and at the same time does not cease to be the vanguard.

We have won a section of the vanguard. That is already a great deal. It is a great victory, a serious step forward. But it is not yet the conquest of the majority. Formerly we thought that we would secure victory in a few years. But more time is required. In certain countries we have already won about a half of the working masses, and in rare cases the majority. The whole art of our tactics should be expressed in getting as close as possible to the wide masses of the workers, including the Social Democratic workers, at the same time emphasising what distinguishes us from the bourgeoisified upper heights of the Social Democratic leadership.

The Org Conferences of the Comintern on the Methods of Organisationally Embracing the Wide Masses.

The Organisation Conference, which took place before the opening of our Plenum, will in my opinion be of quite considerable importance in the realisation of our first task: the better unification of the vanguard and making it organisationally compact. We need the organisational consolidation of the vanguard as a means to an end. The end consists in penetrating into the wide masses of the toilers in the most organised and schematic manner possible. We need a strong and organisationally welded Party, but we must also display great flexibility. The Org. Conference unanimously confirmed that the most important nucleus of the Communist Party should be the factory nucleus. That is immutable. There can be no other foundation for the Communist Party. And at the same time the Organisation Conference acknowledged that we must reveal adequate flexibility and wherever necessary must be able to supplement this form by other organisational forms. Now this is the street nucleus, but a time might come when yet other forms of organisation may be needed. We must not become fossilised. We must take into account the concrete peculiarities in every country, in every town and in every trade.

Comrade Kuusinen will place before you a resolution on the new methods and forms for organisationally embracing the wide masses by the Communist Parties. I think that these proposals are a valuable continuation to the resolution of the Third World Congress on the organisation question — a resolution which Lenin specially approved and propagated. During the last few years we have also been able to rely on a number of non-Party organisations which are of particular advantage to the International Labour Movement, such for instance as the I. C. W. P. A., W. I. R., etc. But now there is a possibility of forming yet further organisations of this kind. The resolution proposed to you enumerates the following new possible types of non-Party organisations:

“Of the already existing sympathising mass organisations the Red Aid is the organisation whose work must be supported primarily by Communists. Of considerable importance is also participation by Communists in the work of organisations which, as for instance the Workers' International Relief, have developed as independent non-Party organisations and which today embrace broad masses.

Societies to fight against war, organisations against colonial atrocities and oppression of Eastern peoples are a new type of sympathising mass organisations which in the immediate future come to our notice in many countries. In countries where large sections of workers and peasants are in sympathy with Soviet Russia (especially in connection with a workers' delegation campaign) the formation of societies of working class friends of the new Russia may come into question. Under certain circumstances, proletarian self-defence organisations also find favour among the masses and thereby assume great importance (as for instance the Red Front Fighters' League in Germany). Moreover, it may be expedient in various countries to organise smaller sympathising organisations such as workers' clubs, labour headquarters societies, workers' educational and students' societies, etc.

Formally non-Party publishing activity on a large scale, partly through sympathising mass organisations and partly through special publishing societies is in many capitalist countries an expedient and effective means for the consolidation and extension of Communist mass influence.”

*) Lenin's complete works Russian Edition 1923, Vol. XVII, p. 179.

***) Lenin's complete works Russian Edition 1923, Vol. XVII, p. 145.

***) Lenin's Collected Works, Russian Edition, Vol. XIV, part 2, p. 255.

I think that all these concrete indications although still insufficiently developed, will have great significance for us. To form one mass non-Party organisation near to us is sometimes more important than passing scores of theses. Now when we are winning and have partially already won the proletarian vanguard, we must build bridges — the strongest and the largest number of bridges possible — which will lead from the vanguard of the wide masses to the entire class. Wherever possible we must do this legally, if we cannot do it legally then we must do it illegally.

On work in the Army.

Lately, we have been rather slack in our agitation in the bourgeois armies.

Side by side with our small modest work, side by side with our care for the everyday needs of the workers and their families, and with the capability of utilising every possibility for uniting the masses, we should also not forget such big tasks as propaganda in the army. This work, naturally, demands great sacrifices, but without that we cannot fulfil our revolutionary duty.

The theses presented to you, which, I hope, after we have completed them with a number of amendments from the brother Parties will be passed unanimously, correctly solve the problem as to how, after winning the vanguard we can find a path, build a bridge, from the vanguard to the masses. Therein lies the main significance of the work of our Plenum.

II. On Comrade Bordiga's Ultra-Leftism.

Two deviations.

At our Plenum as usual, the struggle against two deviations, the **Right** and the **ultra-Left** plays no small role. Apparently, without a struggle against these two deviations, we will not get along for some considerable time. In the "**Left Wing Communism**" Lenin says: "Anarchism is often a kind of punishment for opportunist sins of the Labour Movement. Both abnormalities mutually complete one another.")

These words of Lenin's may serve as a guiding thread for us in solving the problem of Ultra-Left and Right dangers.

What is an **Ultra-Left**, properly speaking? An out and out consistent ultra-leftist if in general such a thing exists, is an anarchist or almost an anarchist. An out and out consistent Right is an opportunist. Both these deviations, both these distortions of Marxism, as Lenin says, mutually complete one another. Anarchism has often been a kind of chastisement for opportunist sins of the movement and vice versa. Parties which have been unable to conduct a decisive struggle against anarchistic deviations, have inevitably paid a tribute by Right Wing distortions and vice versa.

Now, when we have already a fairly strong and compact Communist world organisation, there are not and cannot be any manifestly expressed anarchists or opportunists in our ranks. But at the commencement of the Comintern's work things were rather different. At that time we deliberately allowed into the Comintern certain anarchists and syndicalists (for instance the German Communist Labour Party entered the Comintern as a sympathising Party). We did this under the leadership of Lenin, considering that at a time when the war had just ended, when new tendencies in the International Labour Movement had only just begun to be formed, people sincerely opposed to the imperialist war and for International action of the proletariat should be given the possibility of adhering to the Comintern. At the same time we conducted negotiations with the **Independent Social Democrats**, i. e. with the Social Democratic organisation, which had broken away from official Social Democracy. But very soon the Comintern had to draw up the famous **21 conditions** which remain in force to this very day. The entire subsequent trend of development of the Communist International is characterised by the fact that we are gradually purging our ranks and becoming transformed into strictly Bolshevik Parties.

Comrade Bordiga said here: "Now we have been already a whole year Bolshevising the Parties, we should sum up the re-

sults and these results will be gloomy." Comrade Bordiga evidently considers that a year is a very long period for such a task as Bolshevising several score of Communist Parties. I do not think so. Not one of us reckoned that in one year we could Bolshevise our Parties. In fact, we already have 6 years history of the Comintern behind us, but the task of Bolshevisation is naturally still far from being solved.

Therefore comrades, we should above all clearly understand that the ultra-Left and Right deviations mutually complete and nourish one another, that only with a correct struggle against both these deviations, against both these distortions can a genuine Marxist, Leninist policy be conducted. Who has really the right to attack the ultra-Lefts and who can do this with success for the Marxian cause? Only those who in a really Leninist manner fight also against the Right danger. On the other hand, who has the right and who with success for the cause of Marxism can fight against the Right Wing digressions? Only those who are able, in a Leninist manner, to fight against ultra-Left errors.

Schönlink, recently excluded from the ranks of the Communist Party of Germany, just before his exclusion wrote in a Programme article: "In my opinion the errors of which the E. C. C. I. accuses the bankrupt Left leadership are a result of the incorrectly conducted policy of the International during a number of years. The Communist International was too late in making its basis point of departure, adapted to new political conditions, the weakening of the active revolutionary struggle. The section of the working class which has the most inspired will for the struggle going amongst the vanguard of the labour movement, got accustomed to scraps and preferred fights on the field of battle to the dull everyday work. The Communist International has taken too long in dealing with these ultra-Left tendencies. The attempts of the Third World Congress to put an end with one blow to this pseudo-revolutionary ideology, left behind by the trend of historical development, did not succeed because the position of the Communist Parties at that time did not permit them to overcome the resistance from within. On this basis the split of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany at Halle was not a political error; as the mass transition of this Party gave a strong impetus to the revolutionary labour movement."

They say that Schönlink is an honest fellow in his convictions, but his struggle "against the ultra-Left", is of course not acceptable to us. He fights against the Ultra-Left in order himself to become a Social Democrat. The Schönlinks have no right to fight against the ultra-lefts. To oppose the ultra-lefts does not yet mean that the fighter is himself a Marxist and Leninist. No. Some people oppose Left Wing errors only in order to preach and themselves commit, no less harmful Right Wing errors.

Anarchism and opportunism are two different sides of the same medal. Anarchism is a kind of punishment for opportunism and opportunism is frequently only a reward for anarchism.

Comrades, how do things stand in this respect at the present Enlarged Executive of the E. C. C. I. We have the ultra-left very richly represented — one might say in all the colours of the rainbow. The Rights, as far as personal representation is concerned are represented much more poorly at the present conference, but this does not mean that the Right danger of the Comintern is in general any the less.

This time a certain section of the ultra-left had the one feature in common with the Right that they do not speak openly. A large section of the ultra-leftists who spoke here (with the exception perhaps of Comrade Bordiga) represented things in their speeches as if they were not by any means ultra-lefts, that this deviation is unknown to them, and if you please, that it absolutely does not interest them, etc. In one word, "I am not myself, the horse is not mine, and I am not the izvostchik". As we already said Comrade Bordiga is an exception as he enters the fight more courageously and endeavours to maintain his Old Testament views.

In Germany at the present time there exist three ultra-Left groupings (or sub-groupings). There are ultra-Lefts in Poland and in Norway. Some of these comrades apparently are not adverse to correcting their errors. Certainly, to such com-

*) Lenin complete Works, Russian edition, Vol. XVII, p. 125.

rades we say: there is more rejoicing over one sinner that hath repented than over ninety and nine just persons.

Well, and what about the Rights, where do they now threaten us?

In France we have now a very serious Right danger, this question will be a subject of special discussion. During the very proceedings of our Plenum the E. C. C. I. received new materials from Czechoslovakia, impelling us to introduce a special resolution against the Right elements in Czechoslovakia. The same with regard to Norway. Only a day or so ago information was received showing how certain influential Norwegian Communists are drifting directly towards liquidationism in the most genuine sense of this word: they are prepared to liquidate our own Party. A Right danger also exists in the Spanish Party, where amongst the leadership there is a clearly expressed Right Wing working hand in hand with Souvarine. The Right danger also exists in Holland.

It would therefore seem that we have to deal with dual dangers and deviations. In the epoch we are passing through and in the present stage of development this is apparently inevitable. The whole thing is that in the present concrete situation, with the present actual correlation of forces, with the present concrete trend of political development, we must be able correctly to determine in each separate country what is the specific gravity of each of these deviations, and which of these deviations is most dangerous in the present situation.

The Views of Comrade Bordiga.

Let us now examine Comrade Bordiga's views more closely. I have attentively read everything he has written during the recent period. His booklet on Lenin in the Italian language is a substantial document in which all the weak sides of the author are reflected. Then there is his "famous" article on the opportunist danger in the Communist International. Further, there is his draft resolution on the question of the activity of the Italian Party recently presented to the Congress of the C. P. I. and rejected by the latter. And finally there are the two speeches of Comrade Bordiga made at the present Plenum.

In the second one of Bordiga's speeches he acknowledged that he had very few supporters in Italy itself. But he consoles himself according to the prescription of his close fellow-thinker who said to him: We will act like the Jews! if we have suffered defeat in Italy we may console ourselves with the fact that the Jews in Palestine are also weak, but in other places they are strong. (Laughter.)

And thus Comrade Bordiga himself acknowledges that in Italy his tendency has very few followers whilst in other places it is strong. May we ask the modest question — Where? That is a great enigma. It would be good if Comrade Bordiga would solve this riddle for us. If Comrade Bordiga meant that his ultra-Left views are winning influence in other parties, then in my opinion he is guilty of a serious "miscalculation". The ultra-Left views are steadily dying out in other Parties also and not the other way round. Why is this? It is not because of the incompetency of the persons leading the ultra-left tendency, but because their errors have been revealed and proved by the process of the labour movement on all main questions. Time has done its work.

Comrade Bordiga asked that he be judged on the basis of his genuine views and not on the views attributed to him. Bordiga said in his speech: "I know that I am not too good looking, but why did Comrade Bukharin need to distort my portrait still more?" Well, we will try to paint the political portrait of Comrade Bordiga in complete accordance with the original. I have noted 7 points on which it seems to me the incorrectness of Comrade Bordiga is fully proved. It would probably be possible to find 77 such points, but we will confine ourselves to the most important.

The first point is the question of parliamentarism. The first fight between Bordiga and Lenin in the same hall took place at the Second Congress of the Comintern on the question of the permissibility of Communists utilising parliamentarism for revolutionary aims. Is it not clear now that on this question Comrade Bordiga was wrong while the Comintern was right? At that time Comrade Bordiga thought that the main barrier

between us was this question of revolutionary parliamentarism. Is it not clear that Comrade Bordiga made a great mistake here?

The second point is — should the Communist Party be a mass Party or a small but "pure" Party (in actuality a sect)? Comrade Bordiga's tendency indeed amounts to the latter. This has to an extent explained his position in respect to the Italian Maximalists, etc. Well, I ask you, is it not proved now for the whole International by the example of the Italian movement that Comrade Bordiga was wrong and that we were right? In what sort of a position would we now be if we had not set out from the very commencement to form at all costs mass Communist Parties? At the present time the Comintern would be an absolutely uninfluential sect.

The third question is the peasant question. This is an important question. Comrade Bordiga in general has not paid serious attention to it. But insofar as he did say something on this question his position has been absolutely unLeninist and anti-Leninist. The trend of development of a whole number of Parties and to a large degree also the Italian Party, has confirmed the correctness of our Leninist solution of the peasant question.

The fourth point — the famous Rome theses drawn up by Comrade Bordiga. The basic conceptions of Comrade Bordiga have found full reflection in these theses. They are his ten commandments, the philosophy of his tendency. I will bet anything, comrades, that in these theses any commission, even very well disposed towards Comrade Bordiga will not find now a single correct line. Since these theses have been written four years have elapsed. Events in all countries including Italy serve as a striking refutation of these theses. How it is that Comrade Bordiga does not understand this is a riddle to me. But he does not understand it. He remains "still in the same position".

The fifth point — the question of united front tactics. Comrade Bordiga does not take up too clear a position here, but in general one may say that he undoubtedly is an opponent of united front tactics. We have already accumulated sufficient experiences to prove that on this question also it was the Comintern that was right and not Comrade Bordiga. Let us take Great Britain alone. The importance of the British trade union movement is colossal. What are the results of two years application of united front tactics in Great Britain? It is clear, even to a blind man, that it is only these tactics that have opened up to the British Communists access to the masses. The British labour movement will have to play a world historic role. Marx and Engels did not succeed in winning influence for Marxism among the masses. In England it was the Comintern who first found access to the masses and it was undoubtedly thanks to the united front tactics. I need not even speak of the experiences of other countries; I affirm that the British example alone is sufficient to refute all the arguments of Comrade Bordiga against the united front tactics.

The sixth point is the question of factory nuclei as the basis of the Communist Parties. Comrade Bordiga said in one of his speeches at this Plenum: I am not opposed to nuclei in general, but political problems should be discussed not by the factory nuclei, but by general meetings of Party members. I cannot quite make out this position. Is it possible that Comrade Bordiga really thinks that factory nuclei operating in the very thick of the masses should not discuss political questions? What kind of an opinion of the nuclei, of the factory, and the working masses is this? A nucleus is only then a serious Communist nucleus when it is capable of drawing the working masses in the factory into political life. And on the other hand, have our Parties ever objected against certain nuclei meeting together to discuss political problems? Perhaps in Italy, in difficult underground conditions, this is temporarily impossible, but only for conspirative considerations. Where in reality, Comrade Bordiga, and by whom have rules been made prohibiting the arrangement of nucleus meetings? It stands to reason that there has been no such decision.

Much of what Comrade Bordiga has written, in particular his pamphlet and articles that I mentioned, and especially the draft resolution, testify to a quite different comprehension of the role of the Party on his part. Hence his negative attitude towards factory nuclei as the primary nuclei of the Communist Parties. While acknowledging the right of the nuclei to exist, but opposing the discussion of political questions by them, you disclose a manifestly non-Marxist deviation. I must admit that it seemed to me that on the question of nuclei, Comrade Bordiga

is commencing to capitulate. This would be a reason for rejoicing.

The seventh point is purely Italian: The attitude to the former "International" fraction (Terzini). Many of you will probably still remember the fervent struggle that Comrade Bordiga waged against the unification of our Party with the "III International" fraction which had split away from the Maximalists. Comrade Bordiga feared that by this we would dissolve the Party, by introducing unstable elements into it. Comrade Bordiga says in one of his articles that he knows from reliable sources that at the IV Congress Lenin was opposed to the position taken up by the Congress on the question of the Maximalists. That is not true. Comrade Bordiga writes: I have information confirming this, but I do not wish to utilise it. But Comrade Bordiga by making this statement has already utilised this "information". Therefore it would be extremely desirable that this "information" be communicated to the whole Comintern. I know very well, as do all other Russian comrades, that the whole policy on the Italian question, as by the way, the entire policy of the IV Congress, was conducted with the complete agreement and approval of Lenin.

We ask: Whose views were confirmed on this question? It goes without saying that they were our views and not Comrade Bordiga's. Has not the "III International" group grown up together with the Party? Have we not acquired valuable forces through it? Do they not help us to smash the Maximalists and reformists?

I think that these seven points are sufficient to show that Comrade Bordiga is not right.

Comrade Bordiga on Leninism and the Party.

Comrade Bordiga in his theoretical works, devoted to the question of Leninism, is divided and often approaches a denial of Leninism on very important questions. For instance in one of his articles Comrade Bordiga declares: why invent a special kind of theory — Leninism? Comrade Bordiga writes: "Our movement is based on a theoretical system which is a finished world conception: this is Marxism, historical materialism, which has its most energetical supporter in Lenin. There is no need to call it Leninism, and in respect to Lenin, there is all the less reason. But what were the relations of Lenin to this system? If he were its revisionist, it would be right to replace the terms Marxism and Communism by Leninism and Bolshevism. But Lenin was not a revisionist and proudly fought against revisionists of various schools and denied their right to employ the name and traditions of Marx, proving this with sharp arguments. He defended his orthodoxy by arguments taken from actual history and by a detailed and thorough interpretation of the teachers, analysing all the shades and turns of the texts, whose contents were confirmed by past history*).

At first sight this seems very clever. Naturally, Lenin was a Marxist. He did not "correct" Marx and did not "revise" him. Therefore why any special term — Leninism.

Desiring to be strictly objective with regard to Comrade Bordiga's position, I should here mention that Comrade Bordiga declared in another place that in his opinion both Marxism and Leninism are synonymous. But when Comrade Bordiga begins to enumerate the points on which he is not in agreement with Leninism, the list becomes so long that one unconsciously asks oneself: on what does he agree? What especially does not satisfy Comrade Bordiga is the tactical side of Leninism. Whereas this is the strongest and the rightest side of Leninism. You already know that Comrade Bordiga is not in agreement with Leninism in many respects, for instance on such radical problems as the question of the role and organisation of the Party and the question of the united front tactics. That explains why Comrade Bordiga does not like using the word Leninism and thinks it superfluous.

Take, for instance, the definition of the meaning of the Party given by Comrade Bordiga. According to his definition the Party is simply a league of people with the same opinions, people united by their general conceptions. This is certainly one of the symptoms of a Party. A Party certainly endeavours

to unite people who agree with its programme and who have a general world conception, etc. But Comrade Bordiga loses sight of the most important thing of all — the live dialectics of the inter-relations between Party and class. He forgets that the Party is nothing more nor less than a section of the working class, its advanced detachment, its vanguard. He does not notice the complexity of live inter-action between the working class and its vanguard. He does not understand what Lenin wrote on the inter-relations between the Party and the mass, the mass and the class. He forgets that the workers often come into our Party without having what one might call a consistent "world conception". He is totally incapable of imagining the reason and conditions causing ebbs and flows in our Parties. In his opinion, Party members are "fellow thinkers" in the academic sense of the word.

Indeed, just look at his arguments with regard to Bolshevism. Does not Comrade Bordiga here repeat the error of Right Wingers? He says: You have already been conducting Bolshevism for a whole year, but where are the Bolshevik Parties?

Such a presentation of the question is absolutely incorrect. It goes to show that Comrade Bordiga is as far off from Leninism as ever. Surely, Comrade Bordiga, you do not think that the Comintern can be Bolshevised in one year? We say: you can live a century and go on being Bolshevised for a century. We know that Bolshevism is a complicated process. Even the C.P.S.U. has never affirmed that it is a 100% Bolshevised, although it exists as a Bolshevik Party already a quarter of a century. Surely no one could expect that in the most difficult situation in which the Communist Parties are obliged to exist and develop they can become 100% Bolshevised in one year?

Are our Parties being Bolshevised?

But can Bordiga deny that many of our Parties have nevertheless achieved great success in this respect? Take for instance the Czechoslovak Party. Compare it as it is now with what it was 2—3 years back; has it not moved forward along the path of Bolshevism? There is not the slightest doubt that it is now a Bolshevik Party in a much greater degree than it was before. Three years ago there were still doubts as to whether it was possible, or as to whether it was necessary to form a united Communist Party without distinction of nationalities. Now it does not enter into any one's head to doubt this.

Look at the French Party. It is now experiencing rather great difficulties. The opponents of the Comintern like to laugh at it saying: some bolshevik Party!

If the enemies of the Comintern scoff, that is not quite to be understood. But Comrade Bordiga after all is not an enemy of the Comintern. Compare, Comrade Bordiga, the present position in the French Communist Party with the position of 2 or three years ago. At that time, such personalities as Frossard, Ernest Lafont were still speaking on behalf of the French Party. In reality, the Party was then still in the hands of Social Democratic leaders. And what is the French Communist Party at the present time? It is actually, a sound workers' Party, which has not yet forged itself a sufficiently homogeneous and strong leadership (which will come however in the near future).

We understand very well that in the future things will not proceed without crisis. But would it have been conceivable two or three years back that the French Party would have taken up such a firm excellently bolshevik position on the question of the colonial war as the C.P.F. did on the question of the war in Morocco? Whence have the petty-bourgeois pacifist breezes disappeared which formerly held such sway in the French Communist Party. Not a trace of them has remained. Of course, no one will now assert that the French Communist Party is a 100% Bolshevised. It has on more than once occasion had to experience big fights — we should not close our eyes to this fact. The real test of strength will commence when heated encounters take place. The C.P.F. has not yet secured big victories and has not yet passed through the furnace of serious defeats. It has not had to participate in civil war. The French comrades take this excellently into account. But is this a ground for a member of the Comintern contemptuously stating: what kind of a Bolshevik Party is this in France, and what kind of a Bolshevism is it that we have been conducting for a whole

*) "The Opportunist Danger and the International", article by A. Bordiga in "Unita", September 30, 1925.

year? Is it a good thing that Comrade Bordiga is to a certain extent joining in Souvarine's song?

Or take the **British Party**. Naturally the Party is still small. But is it not being Bolshevised? Can one compare the present British Communist Party with what it was a few years ago? Has it not made colossal steps forward? Is it not now a healthy workers' Party? Has it not learned to apply Leninist principles for embracing the masses of the British working class in a complicated social structure? Does it provide a real Communist with any pretexts for jöking or jeers?

Or take such a Party as the **Swedish Party**. Naturally, it is not a world Party. Sweden is a comparatively out-of-the-way place. But has not our Swedish Party succeeded in sweeping away Höglund who was the leader of the Party, with a fairly good record and a good name? Has not the Swedish Party, after kicking out the Right Wing leaders, succeeded in winning over wide masses to its side — we need only recall the recent conference at Göteborg. Is it not now a healthy workers' Party? And yet not more than 18 months ago, we were assured that if Höglund left, nothing would remain of the Communist Party.

Now look at the history of the **Italian Party** itself! Has it not passed through the most difficult stages? Has it not been compelled to experience treachery and again treachery? Was not its position in face of the Fascist offensive desperately difficult? The path of the Italian Party was heavy. At first the entire Italian Socialist Party came to the Comintern including Turatti, then the first split took place, after which we had the swing round of Serrati. And finally the defeat and seizure of the factories followed by the Fascist coup d'état. And in spite of all this we now have in Italy a strong, organised, compact Party which is conducting a struggle against Fascism and is gradually winning over the working masses. **Our Italian Party has become a mass Party**. Just look at the influence it enjoys in all the working class centres. It is becoming stronger than both the other "workers" parties in Italy. It has passed through all the stages of the White Terror. But we may nevertheless say calmly at the present time: Fascism has not the means whereby it could suffocate our Party. It tried everything and without result. The Party and the masses have grown together. Naturally, Fascism can still kill our comrades by the hundreds, but no one will now be able to kill the Communist Party.

Finally, take the **German Party**, the largest Section of the Comintern after the C. P. S. U. Of course the enemies of the Comintern are not prohibited from smiling about the crises which have been experienced by the German Communist Party. The leadership was changed twice and there have been profound complications. But compare the development of the German Communist Party even with the development of the Russian Bolsheviks after 1905. Our defeat of 1905 may fully be compared with the German defeat of 1923. At the head of our Party stood **Lenin**, but nonetheless a difficult struggle took place in our Party throughout a number of years. There were grave crises, there were splits and secessions and our Party became Bolshevised only gradually. Surely you do not think that the Russian Party became Bolshevised in one year. After the 1905 defeat several difficult years passed before the Party became properly awakened. The German Communist Party has not its Lenin. Its best leaders have been killed. It has to deal with a very strong Social Democracy. Its enemy in the form of a big organised bourgeoisie, upheld by the aid of American capital, is very strong and skillful. And nevertheless — surely one cannot say that in the German Communist Party there is nothing else but errors, failures, and crises. The position is difficult, but despite all the difficulties our German Party can be Bolshevised and is being Bolshevised.

Thus, to sneer at Bolshevisation, to hold forth about a whole year having passed and that crises have not been overcome, to make such conclusions as Comrade Bordiga did is a grave error.

Of course, excessive optimism would be out of place. We do not want any Potyomkin villages. We must speak about existing crises and maladies openly. We must speak openly of the fact that things are very unsteady with us as far as internal Party democracy is concerned. And we do this. But black pessimism and mockery of Bolshevisation are no testimony to Comrade Bordiga's advantage.

Internal Party Regime.

Comrade Bordiga spoke here on the theme of the internal Party regime. This is an extremely delicate problem. I will yet have occasion to refer to it in detail. Comrade Bordiga did right in raising this question. We must speak openly about those things in our midst that are bad, and of what must be done to improve them.

Comrade Bordiga spoke here of the necessity of turning the pyramid upside down. It would be better if Comrade Bordiga expressed himself more accurately: does he deny in general the necessity of a centralised International, or does he think the centralism which we already have is too excessive. Does he think that leadership in the Communist International should not belong to the Russian Party, or does he think that this leadership should belong to the Russian Party, but should be in the hands of other Russian comrades? All these questions can and must be discussed quite openly.

I will not attempt to deny that in the way of centralisation the Comintern has sometimes made mistakes. We already acknowledged this when the question of centralisation was brought up in connection with the discussion with **Tranmael**. To "over-centralise", "over-administer" — this is a serious danger for an international organisation. Well, then, let us rectify such errors and "superfluities". Perhaps Comrade Bordiga thinks that the Russian Party should not enjoy such exclusive influence in the Comintern. We can also speak openly on this question. You know that the last Congress of our Party (as the E. C. of the Comintern itself frequently did formerly) brought forward the question of other Parties taking much greater participation in the collective leadership of the Comintern than hitherto.

But it is absolutely unclear to me what Comrade Bordiga has in view when he talks about a pyramid. In the old days, we used the "pyramid" in our agitation as a symbol of Czarist autocracy. Comrade Bordiga launches forth with phraseology in application to the Communist International without appropriate commentaries.

Internal Party democracy is by no means widespread amongst us. We pass resolutions on this question and carry them out badly. In our internal Party regime too little place is left for the real self activity of the rank and file Party members. This is true. This must be rectified at all costs, and this can be rectified now. In the first years of the Comintern activity, we were all steering a course for an approaching immediate civil war, and on the basis of this perspective we made the question of centralism, of military discipline in the Party particularly acute. But it appears that the epoch that we are now passing through is unfortunately not yet the epoch of immediate civil war. This by no means signifies, of course, that we can renounce the principles of centralism and of iron discipline within our ranks. Without both these there is no Communist Party. But the forms can and must be modified. It must not for one moment be forgotten that for us it is not merely a question of centralism, but of **Democratic centralism**.

We quite openly acknowledge that in a number of our Parties we have over-strained the leash. Genuine internal Party democracy must become a reality. We have already in our resolutions for nearly two years been speaking about the necessity for normalisation. What is normalisation? It is the genuine enforcement of the basis of internal Party democracy. This normalisation, this internal Party democracy has not been conducted in those Parties where it is fully possible and necessary to enforce them. It seems to me that even Comrade Bordiga cannot deny the fact that in the theses we have presented to the present Plenum, the question of internal Party democracy has been emphasised quite strongly enough.

But Comrade Bordiga says: we are always passing good theses while our practice is bad.

We ourselves are ready to admit that it is much easier to pass good theses than to put them into force. We ourselves do not hide for one minute the fact that in this respect things are particularly bad as far as Party democracy is concerned. And we turn to all Sections, to all Communist workers and say to them: the enforcement of Comintern decisions on questions of internal Party democracy entirely depends upon you yourselves, upon the whole Party rank and file. Without waiting for anything, begin putting this internal Party democracy into

force and insist in an organised and systematic manner that these decisions do not remain on paper.

Of course, in such countries as Italy and Poland the position is so difficult at the present time, White Terror is so rampant, that the introduction of internal Party democracy here comes up against tremendous objective difficulties. But wherever the Parties are developing under relatively legal conditions, the possibility of normalisation, the possibility of conducting internal Party democracy actually exist.

If Comrade Bordiga seriously, persistently, calmly and not like a spectator from afar were to insist on the genuine enforcement of internal Party democracy, on real concerted leadership of the Comintern, he would be quite right. But when he scoffs at Bolshevisation, when he sneers at the term "Leninism", when he denies the industrial nucleus as the primary nucleus of the Party, when he casts about enigmatic phrases about pyramids, things are already very bad. He acts not like a soldier of the Communist International, but like an outside observer, and as that one none too well-disposed.

Moscow or Amsterdam.

The absence of dialectics in Comrade Bordiga's presentation of problems is seen at every step. Take for instance the following question. Comrade Bordiga says that he rejects the whole of our trade union tactics (i. e. the tactic of struggle for international trade union unity) as he maintains the old slogan: Moscow or Amsterdam. Such is an example of a non-dialectic presentation of the question.

Have we really abandoned the slogan: Moscow or Amsterdam? This slogan remains absolutely in force. It is around this slogan that the struggle is conducted and will still be conducted for a whole historic period. But the form of the struggle has changed. That is what Comrade Bordiga does not understand. Comrade Bordiga apparently imagines that we are ready to surrender the banner of Moscow and go into a general trade union international and abandon our Communist views. Comrade Bordiga does not understand that if a joint congress of the two trade union Internationals were summoned to-morrow, the struggle under the slogan: Moscow or Amsterdam, i. e. Communism or revisionism, would only just commence properly.

The alternative "Amsterdam or Moscow" is the alternative "reformism or Communism". Surely Comrade Bordiga does not really think that to conduct negotiations with the Amsterdamites concerning a possible amalgamation of the two Internationals mean betraying our flag? Don't worry, Comrade Bordiga, we will not let the banner of Moscow, the banner of Communism out of our hands. But this does not signify that we must stand rooted to the spot and only repeat: Moscow or Amsterdam. As the vanguard of the proletariat, we endeavour to find access to the masses by various methods. We endeavour to influence those strata of the working class who still follow the reformists. And the historic dispute — Moscow or Amsterdam — continues and will continue right until the complete victory of Moscow.

Comrade Bordiga, just as anyone else, is allowed the right to defend his opinions openly here, however severe they may be. But we also are not prohibited from replying to you. Learn from the history of the Communist movement, Comrade Bordiga, learn to understand what can be done in one year and what cannot. Study the history of the Russian Bolshevik Party and then you will understand that even that Party was only able to become a Bolshevik Party as a result of a long, stubborn internal Party struggle and work of self-criticism and self-tempering. Let us, Comrade Bordiga, not only teach the Communist International, but also learn something from it.

III. On the German Ultra-Left.

Position in the German Communist Party.

First of all we should make it quite clear to ourselves that we are standing on the threshold of the gradual preparation of the fourth mass action of the German working class against the bourgeois order.

The First armed conflict took place in 1919 (the Spartacus rising). The Second in March 1921. For the third time in 1923 armed action of the workers and the revolutionary situation in general knocked at the door in Germany. Now an accumulation of forces is in process, slowly for the time being, for the fourth action of the German workers, to be expected in the forthcoming epoch, in the course of which we hope the German Communist Party will act as the real leader of the majority of the German working class.

On each of the former three occasions of the German working class mass actions, the question of mutual relations between the Party and the masses was a most decisive one.

In 1919, the spontaneous enthusiasm was very great. Large masses of workers hurled themselves into the fight. But the Party was only a small, though heroic advance-guard. The Spartacus League did not cope with the tremendous historic task which it took upon itself. The treacherous role of Social Democracy hindered the rallying of the majority of the workers. In 1921, the Party was already more of a mass Party, was already better trained, but the majority of the working class did not believe in a decisive struggle and did not participate in the rising. In 1923, the situation was objectively revolutionary in many respects. But by this time the Party which had absorbed many Social Democrat elements had not yet succeeded in remoulding them. The serious errors committed by the Party leadership of that time prevented the favourable situation from being utilised. Again and again the question of the inter-relations of the Party and the masses arose very acutely.

We do not know and no one knows when the fourth mass armed action of the German working class will actually take place — a year sooner or a year later. But one thing is indubitable: the turning point that has been made in the German labour movement is a commencement (we emphasise, indeed only the commencement) of the preparation for such an action. The whole question is, in what condition will our Party be when these future events occur. Both the masses and our Party will be different from what they were in the previous skirmishes. Objectively, with every month the situation is becoming more and more favourable for the German Communist Party. It will become exceptionally favourable if our Party will be able to apply the united front tactics in a proper manner.

Here in the "Bergwerkzeitung" the paper of German industrial and commercial capital, just received to-day we read:

"The main danger of the radicalisation of our State is as follows: While the described decline of the trade unions is taking place, timid attempts are being made to enter on to a new path, a wedge is being driven into the trade unions which are tired of the struggle. Already for several months the Communists, who have received the most exact instructions from Moscow and who are supplied with considerable funds, are issuing the slogan: Back to the unions.

The hazy trend of thought of the trade union leaders is counterposed by the triumphant realpolitik of the Communist Party: 'The less able the Social Democrats are to hide their bourgeois nature, the more must the Communist Party take the path indicated by Karl Marx and Lenin'... Moscow is working well." ("Deutsche Bergwerkzeitung", Jan. 25, 1926.)

I have doubts about Moscow working especially well. In my opinion, neither we here nor our Party in Germany are anything like working well yet. But the German bourgeoisie, with correct class instincts, have already understood that the German Communist Party is on the correct path and is successfully establishing contact between the vanguard and the masses.

The Anti-Leninist Line of the Ultra-Lefts.

In what does the lesson mainly consist that our German Party should draw from the history of the past few years and from the entire internal struggle which it has experienced? There is no harm in probing into the history of the so-called Left in Germany in a rather detailed manner. I must say that

in my opinion, the attempt of the so-called German Left (Maslow-Ruth Fischer and others) to counterpose their policy to the policy of the Comintern was (if we do not count Comrade Bordiga) practically the only attempt to launch a policy radically at variance with that of the Comintern. The clash between the Comintern and the so-called German Left was a kind of struggle between Leninism and a "new" diffusive, not very clearly crystallised, but nevertheless quite different policy. The substance of the matter does not lie in the various mistakes of the Left. What is of the greatest significance is the fact that the leaders of the German Left, though not saying this openly, considered that the Leninist leadership of the Comintern was incorrect, considered that the "Russian" leadership which had grown up in a backward peasant country could not point out the proper road to the Western European labour movement. The real kernel of the matter lies in the fact that the Left leaders endeavoured to find some kind of different, perfected "Western-European" Leninism.

Naturally, everybody who thinks that the Comintern policy is not correct has the right to say so openly at our Congresses and to propose another policy. The whole question simply is, on the side of which policy is the truth really to be found.

We will examine the details of the German crisis in a special commission. Here it will suffice merely to touch on the most important points. What was this alternative policy of the leaders of the German Left? Firstly, they considered that we were wrong on the trade union question, and that our instructions in this sphere were not appropriate for Western Europe. Secondly, they opposed the views of the Comintern on the peasant question. Thirdly, they considered the views of the Comintern on the national question as not entirely correct. Fourthly — the united front tactics. As you see, it is a question of the most radical problems of our movement.

Timely Warnings.

I must state here openly that the German Lefts won over the German Communist Party despite the efforts of the E. C. C. I. This is the only case as far as I am aware, of such a thing occurring in the history of our International. This fact testifies that the German Left was sufficiently strong in its time. The German Lefts conquered the Party, at any rate at the commencement, against the will of the Comintern. The E. C. C. I. had to become reconciled to this fact and to manoeuvre, waiting until a group closer to us crystallised within the Left. There was no other way out. The question arose only in one way: either Brandler or the Lefts. All the more or less sound proletarian elements followed the Left, for the Right Wing leadership had become bankrupt in a most unprecedented way. Our attempt to support a "centre" group alas, did not meet with success. The centre group quickly disappeared from the scene.

Let us examine then, how the mutual relations between the E. C. C. I. and the German Lefts developed at that time. I will take the liberty of citing here certain documents, as this question is of tremendous importance not only for Germany, but for the International as a whole.

When the Left had already succeeded in winning the Party onto its side — this was on the eve of the Frankfurt Congress — I wrote to Comrade Maslow on April 1, 1924:

"I am very much afraid of:

1. errors on the trade union question. I repeat a thousand and one times: this means ruin for the Party.

2. An error consisting in the simple rejection of the united front tactics (which Ruth Fischer is particularly eagerly engaged on). The united front tactics were not conceived by Radek — Radek only distorted and vulgarised them. These tactics were taught and established by Lenin. And they are **Correct**. If you reject them, you challenge us to a struggle with you (which we do not want).

In general, you should not fall into extremes. This is inevitable in the struggle, but not to the extent of losing a conscious attitude to matters. Do not get nervy.

We have done everything that is possible. We have sent three influential members of the C. C. We are our-

selves ready to do everything possible to march with you. But the resolution against the united front which you are passing (Berlin) must be understood as a struggle against the Communist International."

We then sent to Germany three comrades from our Russian C. C. for negotiations with the "Left" leadership. At first the negotiations proceeded extremely badly. Our delegation was presented with a demand in the form of an ultimatum to withdraw the letter of the E. C. C. I. which sharply criticised the Left errors. Disagreement acquired a particularly acute form on the question of the united front and the question of the trade unions. In our Letter of March 31, 1924, to two influential workers — members of the German Left; namely, Comrades Thälmann and Schlecht (at that time Schlecht also had great influence in the Left) — we wrote:

"Dear friends! There is no use your deceiving yourselves. If you accept all the above the result will be a

K. A. P. D. (German Communist Labour Party. Ed.) Did we wage a struggle against the K. A. P. D. in order to adopt its standpoint now? If we make any concessions to these five errors, this means **Ceasing to be bolsheviks**.

Do not let yourselves be lulled to sleep by consoling phrases about the ultra "Left" tendency being very weak, that it is not a serious movement, that it can be put an end to by means of comradely persuasion of x, y or z in a tête à tête. That is not how things stand. The position of a workers' party in Germany in the present transition period of two revolutions is such that it will inevitably give birth to this left liquidationism as the late Lenin would have termed it. In order to combat it, there must be sufficient courage to strangle it at the roots, there must be a public decisive and unswerving attack made at the present time.

Do not let anyone talk to us about our being confronted in the trade union question by an indefinite movement of the masses themselves. That is the usual fairy tale. When the leaders are blunderers they always put their blunders on the broad shoulders of the masses. Moreover, we cannot simply put the question like this: That is what the masses want, therefore the matter is decided. No, we must be able also to take action against the prejudices of the masses, if these prejudices exist."

At that time, the workers on the German C. C. shared many of the errors of Maslow and Ruth Fischer, but they did not echo their chief errors: they did not wage a fight against the Comintern. When the Comintern delegation was sent an ultimatum, Comrade Thälmann definitely supported the Comintern delegation, and he succeeded in scotching this ultimatum. That is one of Comrade Thälmann's greatest services.

Certain of the Lefts at that time were so hostilely disposed towards the Rights that it sufficed the Rights to say "yes" and they would immediately reply "no", and vice versa. Such an attitude was quite comprehensible in such a situation.

I will take the liberty also of citing an extract from a letter dealing with the position in the C. P. G. and written by me on the eve of the Frankfurt Congress (March 26, 1924):

"We have always distinguished two currents in the Left Wing of the German Communist Party. The one is represented by excellent workers, revolutionarily disposed and deeply devoted to the cause, who have come straight from the masses and are the best hope of German Communism. The other current is represented by a group of intellectual leaders, amongst whom there are people with extremely high talents, who have already freed themselves from certain deviations and who are capable of rendering great services to the German labour movement. But among these there are also elements that are extremely immature and lacking in Marxist training, without serious revolutionary traditions, with a leaning towards empty revolutionary phraseology, who are capable of causing great harm to the German Communist movement."

I repeat that we said this even before the Frankfurt Congress, however at a time when the Lefts already headed the Party. We considered two perspectives possible. We wrote in this same letter:

"In connection with the victory of the Lefts in Germany two perspectives are possible.

The First. The German Communist Party will really overcome its opportunist deviations and emerge on to the wide revolutionary path. The German Left will not repeat the errors which Brandler made and which led his group to a crash, i. e., it will not ignore all those who hold different opinions, will not threaten with exclusions from the Party, but will endeavour to utilise every revolutionary force in due place, irrespective as to what group this force formerly belonged. The fractional struggle will end. The malady of "Leftism" will be cured. A decisive war will be declared on revolutionary phraseology, on Left "whining", and on Leftwing "childishness". There will not be one step which might turn the Party from a mass Party into a Sect. There will be a concerted real collaboration with the R. C. P. and the whole Comintern. A whole period of internecine struggle will end and a new chapter begin. Under the new leadership the Party will mobilise all forces for the struggle with the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy. Within the Comintern the German Communist Party will maintain the main policy of Leninism against Right wing deviations and infantile Leftism as Comrade Lenin taught us. There will be no fractional diplomacy whatsoever. There will be a real, serious, proletarian discipline in regard to the Comintern.

The second perspective: The left Wing leaders will regard the Left victory only from the aspect of fractional strategy. The Lefts will declare an offensive against comrades of the Centre group. Victory will turn the heads of Left-Wing leaders. The Lefts will fall into the same error against which Comrade Lenin always specially forewarned: The error of becoming arrogant at a time of success. Such fractional conduct of the Left will inevitably lead to a revival of the Right. The fractional struggle will continue. In the German Communist Party, under the leadership of the Lefts, such absurd phenomena as the above-cited statements of Comrades Scholem, Rosenberg, "Rote Courier" etc. will receive the right of citizenship. The Lefts will bring out a platform against the united front tactics in general and will dub as "reformism" and "liquidationism" what really is the tactics of Comrade Lenin and the entire Comintern. They will pour out the child together with the bath water. Such a presentation of the question in reality only helps really reformist tendencies such as have become manifest in Germany and in certain other of the Comintern Sections. As a result there will be an inevitable discrediting of the Left majority in Germany and the collapse of the German Communist Party and the Comintern.

Such are these two perspectives. They must be thoroughly thought over. The Left comrades should clearly perceive both these perspectives. It goes without saying that we favour with all our hearts the first perspectives."

On the Chief Errors of Ruth Fischer and Maslow

We wrote another detailed letter specially on the trade union question, as this question was of the greatest importance. On the eve of the actual opening of the Frankfurt Congress the Left wing leaders (Maslow and others) began to launch a plan for the formation of a "new" mass workers' organisation in place of the trade unions. It seemed to them that to improvise such a "new" mass organisation was quite an easy matter. At that time the position not only of many Lefts, but also of many Centrists and Rights, who also gave themselves up to anti-trade union tendencies, and who were not averse from supporting the slogan to leave the trade unions, was incorrect. For instance, Comrade Stoecker, on behalf of the Centre Group came to Moscow and

literally besought us not to say a single word against the anti-trade union tendency. They argued as follows: the mood among the masses is in favour of leaving the trade unions, we must be with the masses, because we must not go against the stream. It was not without a threat of direct rupture that we got a resolution passed at the Frankfurt Congress which nevertheless somehow or other opposed the anti-trade union tendency. It was proved that just on the most important question of the Western European labour movement, it was we who were right whilst those who endeavoured to invent a "Western European" Leninism were wrong.

And what happened after? The resolution on participation in the trade unions was passed, but the practice of the Left C. C. remained anti-trade union. The C. C. in the person of Maslow, Ruth Fischer, Scholem and Rosenberg, retained its former opinion and only reluctantly made a verbal concession to the International. This deep-rooted error more than anything else caused the subsequent bankruptcy of the "Left" leaders.

Comrade Ruth Fischer said here that she perceives her error in that, at the Frankfurt Congress, she and her friends did not sum up the results of the ultra-Left deviations and did not put up sufficient resistance. Comrade Fischer, you could not do this during the Frankfurt period, because it is difficult for anyone to conduct a struggle against one's own self. For it was indeed you who opposed the united front tactics. It was you, who, together with Maslow, committed the most clumsy error in the trade union question. We all of us make mistakes from time to time, but your error bears witness to the organic defects of your tendency. Without overcoming it, you could not conduct matters correctly, you were bound to make mistake after mistake. That is why it is quite incorrect to picture things in Germany as if on the one hand there was an ultra-Left wing, whilst on the other hand, there was the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group. In essence this was one and the same group at decisive moments. Certain Left-wing workers already then began to understand the organic defects of the ultra-Lefts. But the Brandler errors were still too fresh in the memory, the phase of defeat was still only just past, and the bitterness and anger were still too great. That is why the chain of errors committed at the Frankfurt Congress became possible. If Fischer, Maslow and their supporters want to be honest with themselves, they should recognise that they committed not one or two episodic errors, or misfires; no, their policy was fundamentally one entire political error. The Congress tried to work out a kind of new policy for the Communist International. But with this they did not hit the mark. They tried to say a "new word" on the question of the united front tactics and on the trade union question, and were profoundly wrong in this. Where were you right? There was only one thing in which you did not make a mistake: this was in protesting against the Right wingers and in being capable of giving expression to the discontent with the Brandler policy. However, in politics one cannot live by utilising the errors of one's fractional opponent alone. There must be a positive programme. Of course, it is very praiseworthy that you conducted a struggle against Social-Democratic deviations, but you yourselves could not point out the correct path to the Party.

The question might be asked: why, then, in such a case did the Comintern admit the formation of such a C. C.? Such a presentation of the question would be too simple. At that time in the given situation, there was no other way out. There was the direct threat of a split, of the formation of two or perhaps even three parties, and consequently the crash of our Party in Germany for several years. By the errors of the Brandler C. C. the Party was reduced almost to despair. The Communist workers of Berlin, Hamburg and the Ruhr area, lost all faith in the old Brandler C. C. and they could not visualise a new C. C. other than one headed by the Maslow-Ruth Fischer group. There were no other people. This group did receive the leadership into its hands, despite the fact that the E. C. C. I. was none too enchanted with this combination. The E. C. had to take this course as there was no other way out.

The Open Letter (August 1925), says the Left Comrade Engel, came down upon us "suddenly". Nothing of the sort, Comrade Engel. The ground for such a letter had already been prepared little by little. Step by step the Executive Committee had followed the process of gradual destratification of the Left. We could not guess in advance when the moment would exactly

come when a group for the new leadership of the Party would be formed. But the necessity of waiting until new elements crystallised was absolutely clear to the Executive Committee. Such a crystallisation is a prolonged process. In August 1925 we found it possible to resort to such a severe measure as the Open Letter.

Lessons of the German Crisis.

Such are the lessons of the recent past of the German Communist Party. I do not intend referring to separate personalities. Biographical points may be discussed in a more intimate circle. The essential lesson that the whole Communist International should draw is, that the attempt of the "Left" tendency to create some kind of different policy at variance with that of the Comintern, to work out a kind of "Western-European" Leninism, ended in complete failure.

Comrades, history has already sufficiently proved that Leninism is an **international** teaching, that the experience of three Russian revolutions can and must enter as an inevitable component part in working out a policy for any Communist Party. The experience of three Russian revolutions and the experience of other most important sections of the Comintern, represent a tremendous and invaluable treasure of the Comintern. Comrade Bordiga was profoundly wrong when he accused us of interpreting Bolshevism as the mechanical transference of the experience of the Russian revolution to other countries. No. Already in "Left wing Communism" you will find many a page devoted to explaining that the mechanical transference of Russian experience to other countries without taking the concrete situation into consideration is absolutely impermissible. In our theses on Bolshevism passed at the last session of the Enlarged Executive, we already spoke of this at sufficient length. Bolshevism means utilising the experience of the Bolshevik Party in the three Russian revolutions and the experience of all the other important Sections of the Comintern, while taking account of the peculiarities in each country and of all the big factors of time and place. Bolshevism by no means signifies a simple uncritical repetition of "Russian" experience.

The errors of the German Lefts comprise a whole stage in the history of the German Communist movement. These errors led to the political downfall of a definite group. This lesson goes to show that anyone trying to "correct" Leninism, will undoubtedly suffer political failure.

We now have in Germany three ultra-Left groups. Time will show which of them really can be assimilated by the Party. In my opinion we will have to wait to see how Comrade Scholem and Rosenberg behave in practice, to see whether they will aid the Party headed by the present C. C. and really carry on the policy we have here traced out, without deviations either to the Left or the Right.

We have pointed out on more than one occasion that the group of ultra-Left individuals is a group of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries. We acknowledge that we were rather harsh in characterising them as rabid petty bourgeois. Some comrades became offended at this. Comrade Scholem and Rosenberg asked: surely we are not really rabid petty-bourgeois? But, comrades, just think what the affair with Katz meant, whom the Party had to exclude from its ranks. The shell has burst and poisoned the air. How do we explain the musty atmosphere which has remained after the incident with Katz? This is actually explained by the fact that it was a petty-bourgeois group. I do not intend reviling these comrades, in the personal sense. But in the political respect they represent a group of petty-bourgeois revolutionaries, that is why the affair with Katz smelled so of petty bourgeoisism. Surely Katz could not be taken seriously as a Left revolutionary? Why it was enough to speak ten minutes with him to understand that he was a rabid petty bourgeois. Comrade Engel, I say to you openly that every worker who wavers towards the side of Katz (or Korsch) will be lost for the proletarian revolution. You should very well understand that a "Party" which people of the Katz type might attempt to form, will by no means be a K. A. P. D., but a caricature of the same.

In 1920, when Lenin was amongst us, we accepted the Communist Labour Party of Germany into the Comintern with a clear conscience as a sympathising Party. Why? Because we

knew that in the K. A. P. D. there were honest proletarian elements devoted to the cause of the revolution, and that they could be won for the Comintern. But the present Katz group! Surely no one could imagine that we will accept it as a sympathising body into the Comintern? Of course not. Every worker who vacillates between the Comintern and Katz will be lost for the proletarian revolution.

Against Ultra-Left and Right Errors.

Everything that diverges from Leninism either "to the Left" or "to the Right" means bankruptcy and decline. All attempts to "correct" Leninism, all attempts to invent some other "European" policy as distinct from Leninism will lead to failure. At the present time in Germany a struggle against ultra-Left errors is particularly necessary, but this by no means signifies that in Germany we will make any concessions whatsoever to the Rights. The present German C. C. understands this, and will understand it still better after all that has been said here. In the German commission Comrade Ernst Meyer said: after all, why should we be against the present German C. C. if it is conducting our policy? In other words, if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet came to the mountain. That is how Comrade Ernst Meyer calculates. This declaration alone is sufficient for the German Communist Party to be on its guard. The German Communist Party neither wants ultra-Left nor Right errors; neither the Korsch policy nor the Brandler policy. It is timely to say here that in the Polish Party also it is not a question of either Domski or Valetski, i. e., either the ultra-Lefts or the Rights. The question there is: neither Domski nor Valetski. Neither of them can participate in the leadership of the Party, but both of them can and must be drawn into collaboration in the Party. The same thing applies to the German Party. It is not correct to say: either the ultra-Left group or the Right. No, it is necessary to form a new leadership, and it is being formed and must be strengthened and supported.

It seems to me that the composition of the German Communist Party may be defined in the following manner: it has 80—85% Left workers; Left in the best sense of the word, in the sense that at the slightest opportunist error, at the slightest appearance of a Right wing danger, they will entirely support their C. C. which will fight against the Right; from 3—5% Right wing workers, more or less tending to support the Brandler policy, and 10% ultra-Left workers of all shades. Of course, I might be wrong in percentages, and do not pretend to be exact here, but in general I think that it is like this. It should be added that as far as the upper strata of the Party is concerned, the "responsible" workers, municipal councillors, members of parliament, etc. the correlation is not the same, — there the Rights are much more numerous.

Thus the question as to the German ultra-Lefts and Rights is not a personal question. The events that have been experienced by the German Communist Party during the last 2 or 3 years represent one of the most important chapters in the history of the International. From the German lessons we must learn and understand that anyone deviating from Leninism to the Right or to the Left is leading the Party to bankruptcy.

I do not doubt but that the present C. C., with the support of the E. C. C. I., will be able to utilise all its existing sound forces in the Party. I am by no means in favour of the life exile of those who have made various big errors on the German question. What is the use of that? We have not got so many Party workers that we can afford to throw them about. At the last session of the E. C. C. I. but one, we decided to remove certain comrades from Communist work. But Lenin was right. Errors must be acknowledged and corrected by the people who commit them. Insofar as these people are sincerely devoted to the Party, — this is the only condition, — they must be given the chance of working in the Party in the future also. I think that we can extend this right both to those who have committed Right errors and to those who have committed ultra-Left errors, under the conditions of course, that the mistakes will be sincerely acknowledged, and that the respective comrades will inspire complete confidence.

Everything else on the German question has been already said in the German Commission.

IV. The Situation in the French and Other Communist Parties.

The Possibility of the Formation of a "Souvarine" Party.

Let us turn our attention now to the French question. The work of the French commission has shown that the crisis in the French Party is more acute than we thought. A rather complicated situation has arisen in the Party. Objective conditions in France are favourable to the Communists. The worse thing is that many French Comrades underestimate the seriousness of the social-political situation in France, that they do not fully realise that the country is on the road to a revolutionary crisis.

The Briand Cabinet has fallen. "Recent events in the French Parliament have shown that Parliament has become a circus", — This is what one of the most important French bourgeois newspapers wrote a few days ago. Even Parliament itself lost all sense of parliamentarism. Such is the opinion of the bourgeois press. Some of these organs advocate the formation of a government with dictatorial powers without parliament.

The Fascist peril in France is growing, but one must not exaggerate it. One must not follow the example of some French comrades whose every-day cry is: Fascism is coming! This is something like the tale in which one of the heroes scared all the others with false news that a wolf was going to attack them. When the wolf really made his appearance no one would believe him.

How is the crisis in the French Communist Party expressed? The Right assail us from all sides with a perfect deluge of declarations. Already during the Plenum we had four new Souvarine declarations. Everyone of them is of an inadmissible nature, they surpass each other, each one being more scandalous than the last. What Comrade Engler, the representative of the French Right, said in the Commission was a great disappointment to us. He finished by presenting to the French Commission one more big declaration of a truly provocative character with respect to the Comintern and his own Party. I do not think that it is necessary for me to quote these declarations as copies of them were distributed among the comrades. It would also, perhaps, be doing too much honour to Souvarine if we paid so much attention to his literary productions. The Souvarine-ists are assailing us from all sides. The tone which pervaded Souvarine's periodical has now been transmitted to the collective declaration. In his publication he went so far as to endeavour to besmirch Lenin's Mausoleum and to cast aspersions on the memory of such champions as Comrade Frunze.

I already reminded the comrades in the French Commission that Lenin once called the Party which Martov was forming, the Stolypin "labour" Party, because of its liquidatory tendencies. (Stolypin was one of the most reactionary Tsarist Ministers.) Martov was a greater personality than Souvarine. The time has come to say quite openly, that there is in France the danger of the formation of a new Party — the Souvarine "Labour" Party, which will not be able to rally more than a few hundred people, but which, with the help of the social patriots and even with that of the bourgeoisie, can of course do considerable harm to our Party. This inclination to form a new Right Souvarine Party in France betrays itself in all the Souvarine declarations. These declarations are signed by some scores of workers. These signatures are evidently intended to disguise Souvarine's provocative attitude towards the Comintern.

Comrade Semard and particularly Comrade Torres, gave in their speeches copious quotations from Souvarine's writings. I am of the opinion that if one were to take all the vile things which Levi wrote against the Comintern, adding to them what Frossard, Höglund, Bubnik, and Co. have written against the Communists, we would get approximately that which Souvarine is now writing. We must not deceive ourselves. We have to do with a group which is firmly determined to go any lengths in the struggle against the French Communist Party. What Frossard failed to do, perhaps Souvarine will now succeed in doing. Perhaps he will succeed in forming his own little "Party" which, with the help of our enemies, will fight against us until it bursts like a soap bubble. The Comintern must do its utmost to help the French C.C. to lance this abscess. If we are to save our French Party from "Souvarineism" we must get the better of this group. To honest workers who have drifted into

this group through a misunderstanding and whom we can draw to our side, we will of course extend a fraternal welcome. We must be able to prove to these workers that with respect to such questions as the Moroccan war, united front tactics, the organisation of the Party on a nucleus basis, the appreciation of the general situation in France, the Souvarine Group represents the reformist viewpoint. We must deal a decisive blow against this group. There is no other way out. We must also bear in mind that Monatte and Rosmer are trading on the old syndicalist prejudices, and are endeavouring to cause a retrogression in the French Labour movement by flourishing the obsolete principles of the proverbial Charter of Amiens, which insisted on the trade unions not having any connection with any party whatever. This "work" of Monatte and Rosmer can do even more harm to the Party than the work of Souvarine. We must also carry on an energetic struggle against the anti-Party group.

The French Party and the Trade Unions.

It would not be so difficult to do all this, comrades, if our French Party had not proved itself so weak. The work of the Commission has shown that there is even a certain amount of disunity in our leading nucleus. This must be put an end to. First of all there must be clarity with respect to the question of relations between the Party and trade unions. I dealt with this more fully in the French Commission. I will probably succeed in publishing that speech. Here I will only refer to the following matter: at the recent session of the French C.C., after Comrade Cremé's report on the trade unions, one of the comrades (I believe Comrade Berlioz) said that several Communists made the following statement at the sessions of the Committee of the Unitarian Confederation of Labour: "We have worried quite enough about the question of trade union unity, we have spent enough time over the reformists, now it is high time to strengthen our own organisation". This is a very dangerous way of putting the question. If this frame of mind will prevail in our midst we will not be able to apply united front tactics in France.

This comrade went on to say: "We are certainly losing our influence over the masses (the workers in the trade unions are meant), and the unorganised masses follow the reformists to the same extent as they follow us". This declaration gives also food for thought. It is no use shutting our eyes to the weak points of our work in France. We must not forget that several of our unions have really lost a considerable number of their members. We must also not forget that the Party is far from developing as it should under the existing favourable conditions. "To the masses", is the slogan which cannot be repeated too often — this is what our French Party must bear in mind. It must not forget that France has at present a ten million strong proletariat, that the percentage of workers organised in the Confederation of Labour is probably less than ten.

For us the trade union question is the decisive question. And it is precisely in connection with this question that the Party has not yet outlived some of its shortcomings. The disease called syndicalism is still making itself felt in our ranks. At the same time there are also errors within the Party with respect to the question of relations between the Party and trade unions, too much emphasis is laid on the leading role of the Party in the trade unions, very little is done from within in the sense of creative everyday work in the trade unions.

Another painful symptom is that hitherto there has not been complete unanimity in the C.C. of the French Party. This also made itself felt in the Commission. Our task consists in giving the Party a clear political itinerary and a precise and unambiguous formula concerning the trade union question. Great successes are in store for the French Communist Party in the near future. But it will not be able to achieve them unless it shows itself capable of establishing a strong and united leadership.

The Right in Czechoslovakia.

Let us now consider the other Right groups, which we cannot as yet afford to ignore. I will take first of all Czechoslovakia. As we all know, the situation in our Czechoslovakian Party is at present relatively favourable. We can truly point to our Czech and Italian Communist Parties as examples to be

followed. The former has set an example how to overcome in a correct manner the Right peril, and the Italian Communist Party has set the example of how ultra-Left tendencies should be overcome.

Already during the session of the present Enlarged Executive we received a document bearing witness that the Right peril is still lurking in the Czechoslovakian Party. Eight comrades, headed by Comrade Hula, sent a declaration which was distributed here and which is really an attempt to resuscitate the Right Wing. All of you probably know the unanimous reply made by the Commission to this declaration. The fact that this declaration is signed by people like Vanek shows that this is not a group of particularly good repute. I could quote to you Vanek's article, written after the Czechoslovakian Party Congress, and showing that he can at times almost adopt the language of Souvarine. I hope that the bloc of the Left and the Centre which has come up to expectations in the Czechoslovakian Party, will easily overcome all the attempts of this Right group. The Right peril is still smouldering in Czechoslovakia. These smouldering ashes must be extinguished — first of all of course by ideological struggle. It is essential for everyone in the Czechoslovakian Party to understand that the policy of the present Czechoslovakian C. C., which has the full support of the Communist International, must be taken seriously and that the Right tendencies which are rotten to the core, will not be shown any mercy.

Norway.

During this Plenum important events took place also in Norway, showing that there is also a considerable right peril in the Norwegian Party. Comrade Sundley, a prominent Party worker in Norway, made a statement in the organ of Tranael's Party opposed to us, the meaning of which is that we might liquidate our Communist Party "just a little". Comrade Furoboten, the leader of our Norwegian Communist Party, has wired to say that the C. C. will take the necessary measures in connection with this. The Norwegian delegation here with us has adopted a unanimous resolution concerning decisive struggle against these Right tendencies. There is also an ultra-Left tendency in Norway. These unfortunate tendencies almost invariably run parallel.

The East.

I should also like to say a few words about the East. The position of the Peoples' Armies in China has recently undergone a change for the worse. The entire imperialist press is jubilant on this subject and expresses the hope that the Peoples' Armies will be destroyed. More than once the situation in China was very critical, but the great national-revolutionary movement showed every time new resources. This is precisely the world historical importance of the events in China.

Our Eastern Commission will place before you a series of resolutions — on China, Japan, India, etc. But the general introduction to this subject you will find in our theses which you will be asked to adopt.

Great Britain.

In Great Britain we are on the eve of big conflicts between workers and employers. Particularly great importance attaches to the imminent struggle of the British miners. Unfortunately, very little was said about this at our Plenum. In the course of the next few weeks this question will loom very big. We hope that our British Communist Party will make it its business not only to carry on a struggle against open traitors — Thomas and Co., but also against the vacillating pseudo-Left trade union leaders. It is quite possible that precisely these vacillating pseudo-Left elements will play, as it frequently happened before, a very sorry role when the time will have come to make a determined stand with respect to a miners' strike. These vacillating elements fear strikes as the devil fears incense. We must realise that the forthcoming conflict in Great Britain, if it does break out, will not be an ordinary strike, but will be the beginning of a new phase in the British labour movement. This conflict, if it does break out, will have in it the embryo of coming big social struggles which are inevitable in Great Britain. It is of course quite possible for the British Conservative Government to con-

sent to another big subsidy for the mining industry, evading thereby a conflict with the miners. We must wait and see. But what the Communist International must realise to the full is — that Great Britain is on the eve of a whole series of strikes which imply social struggles of the greatest magnitude and of world importance. The British Communist Party must and will do its share in welding together the workers for these forthcoming struggles. The proletarian vanguard in Great Britain will not hide its head under its wing, but will meet bravely the conflicts which are brewing, and which can only be solved by means of struggle.

To sum up: In Great Britain, France, Germany and in the East, serious events are coming to fruition, slowly but surely. The Communist International must get ready to play a decisive role in them.

In our opening speech we spoke of the necessity for a number of our most important Parties to elaborate a programme of action for a whole period. I think that the Plenum must instruct the Executive Committee to elaborate such programmes together with the respective Parties. This must not be done in a hurry, but calmly and deliberately and under circumstances which will allow us to come to an understanding with every Party separately.

V. Deductions.

Democracy within the Party.

To sum up: I think that our Enlarged Executive has given us an opportunity to decide on a further extension of united front tactics. The Enlarged Executive must also give us an opportunity to make the development of democracy within the Party a reality in our own ranks. All the limitations proposed with respect to this in the Commission were rejected by us. I think that the Plenum too, must reject such limitations. Our theses contain the following statement concerning democracy within the Party:

"The Comintern asserts that up to the present, in a number of Communist Parties, the elementarily necessary minimum of internal Party democracy is lacking. Many recent internal Party crises have become more acute owing to the absence of internal Party democracy. The correct principle of democratic centralism is often interpreted too mechanically. As a result of this, initiative from below is restricted and the formation of fresh leading cadres of the Party obstructed. The Central Committee sometimes become isolated from the masses of Party members. On this basis various deviations easily develop into fractions and thereby become particularly dangerous.

The Communist Party can only be constructed on the principle of democratic centralism. But the system of democratic centralism should function so that not only instructions and leadership come **down from above** but also that a real free expression of the opinions and will of the entire masses of the members of our Party comes **up from below**.

Democratic centralism is not only discipline, but discipline plus real election of the leading elements, plus free discussion within the Party of all questions (except points of direct activity, when the question has already been decided) plus the real individual activity of rank and file Party members.

In view of all this, the Enlarged Session of the E. C. C. I. emphatically insists once more on "normalisation" in those Sections of the Comintern where this normalisation has not yet taken place."

These words must be borne in mind. This decision must be carried out to the full.

Comintern Tactics.

All attempts to "revise" former fundamental decisions of the Comintern, for instance, the decisions of the III. or of the V. Congress, must be rejected by us in a most decisive manner.

They are moreover already being rejected by the very trend of events. Souvarine and Co., in France say: the decisions of the first four Comintern Congresses were good, but the decisions of the V. Congress must be revised. Such a treatment of the question is absolutely inadmissible. We are based on the decisions of all the five world congresses. The trend of events gives first place to the decision emphasised by one or other of these congresses. In view of the present situation great importance attaches to the decisions of the III. Congress, and to that which Comrade Lenin pointed out during the III. Congress. We must learn to put into practice the decisions of all these Congresses, adapting them to the existing concrete conditions.

I cannot refrain from saying a few words also about Comrade Clara Zetkin's statement. I think that she was wrong. She tried to criticise our policy insofar as she said that whilst our analysis was satisfactory we nevertheless had defeats, and she wanted to know why. She said that Marx' and Engels' analysis was so correct that it stands good even now after 70 years. With us the analysis is correct but the policy does not seem to be so, at least not always. I must say that I cannot get at the full meaning of Comrade Clara Zetkin's words. Marx too suffered defeats. Everyone knows that in spite of the very profound and correct analysis of Marx and Engels the Paris Commune suffered a terrible defeat in 1871. The First International led by Marx and Engels fulfilled a great task, but it suffered a split and fell to pieces. I think that no Marxist can expect to be always victorious. Comrade Zetkin's words concerning the Esthonian defeat somehow did not ring true. I must point out that in Esthonia the last battles were lost by comrades who have many big victories to their account. We must of course get at the causes of everyone of our defeats, we cannot slur over our defeats. We must weigh and consider every step of the path which is behind us. But subsequent criticism of the movement only because it suffered defeat is hardly correct. By this I do not mean to imply that everything is as well as it can be with us. We do make mistakes. We must be chastised for these mistakes, and we must draw lessons from them. But we nevertheless assert that in spite of difficulties and manifold complications the Comintern has succeeded in maintaining a correct policy.

Neither can we agree with the hint that some of the fundamental decisions of the V Congress should be revised. There must be straight talk on this subject, or no talk at all. We are convinced that all the fundamental decisions of the V Congress are correct and that there is no need whatever to revise them.

United front tactics are the only correct tactics dictated by the present state of affairs. These tactics have of course their perils. That our path is slippery is self-evident; that this fact is fraught with serious dangers is also self-evident. If we give our little finger to the leaders of Social Democracy they will certainly endeavour to get the whole hand. International Social Democracy is as yet a great force. It has the support of the international bourgeoisie. It would be a great mistake to underestimate for a single moment all these perils. An energetic struggle must be carried on against right deviations wherever we come across them.

Comrade Lenin's opinion, which I quoted, that anarchism and opportunism, the Right and the Left deviations are twins, — must be the Leitmotiv in our work for some time to come. We must not go away from this Plenum with the feeling that some of us were victorious and others were defeated. We must make good the mistakes of the Right as well as of the ultra-left and we must take measures to prevent their repetition. Amputations can only take place if absolute necessity dictates them, when there is no chance whatever to save the worker in question for Communism.

Our route is correct, it is the Leninist route. We must make use of all the forces, we must draw to our side all honest elements who recognise their errors and will show by deeds that they are willing to serve the working class and our Party. Comrade Bordiga is right when he says that we must not trample underfoot the defeated elements within our own midst. We must correct their errors, we must not give way an iota where questions of principle are concerned, but we must not create a situation which would deprive a comrade, guilty of a serious political error and wishing to correct it, of the possibility to do so.

Leadership in the Comintern and in the Communist Parties.

We already mentioned twice that the XIV. Congress of the C. P. S. U. proposed to the other Sections of the Comintern to take a more active part in the leadership of the Communist International. Our Brother Parties must become more independent. Comintern advice and leadership are of course of great use to them, and are guaranteed to them. But it is essential for the Communist Parties, when they are fully developed, to show more independence, to rely more on their own experience, to use their own discretion in the selection of leaders and to see to it that the leadership be stronger and more effective. If we are to "swap horses" every six months, that is to say, if we are to change leaders, to appoint new ones and to say to the old: you can take a rest now, — the results will be far from satisfactory. It is essential for the Parties themselves to produce out of their midst and on the strength of their own experience, leaders capable of leading them into decisive battles. Wherever this cannot be done the Executive will have to intervene. But it is certainly much more to the point if the Party itself can select effective leading cadres.

More independence! More self-confidence, more experience of one's own! Control and leadership by the Executive will of course remain, but an end must be put to a state of affairs where some Party Congress or other makes a decision and appoints a C. C. which the Comintern Executive is obliged to override almost the next day. Our Party Congresses must be so carefully prepared, there must be such a free preliminary discussion of all questions, that all the Party forces could be given full play, that all Party moods and tendencies could find expression at the Congress, that the latter could be a true reflex of the life of the Party. The problem of leadership is one of the most important problems of the proletarian revolution. It is not at all easy for a leading nucleus of our young Parties to crystallise. A little more self-confidence and internal democracy will do no harm, but will, on the contrary, benefit our cause.

The Comintern Path is the Right Path.

The malevolent prophesis of the bourgeoisie and the Social Democracy with respect to the collapse of the Comintern, with respect to its veering to the Right and with respect to the acute differences in our midst, etc., have of course not come true and are not coming true. The work of our Plenum has already shown this. We had of course difficulties to cope with, we have them now and we will have them also in the future. But we will overcome them. The leaders of the Comintern and the leaders of the C. P. S. U., the most important Section of the Comintern, are willing to do their utmost to help the brother Parties to establish a firm footing and to develop their work on the basis of the decisions which will be made here.

I think that the political analysis given in the theses placed before you is sufficiently precise and correct. Together with the comrades from the other countries we endeavoured to make a thorough study of the state of affairs in almost all the European countries and to give a concise estimate of this state of affairs. We paid special attention to the analysis of the position in such countries as America and Great Britain which are now of paramount importance. The slogan, "United States of Socialist Europe" must be brought forward first and foremost in such countries as France and Germany. We must learn to connect this slogan with our general Communist policy. Some bourgeois newspapers are saying that whilst we are endeavouring to establish the United States of Europe, we are omitting the word "Socialist". In other words that we are not for the Socialist United States of Europe, but for the United States of Europe "in general". This is of course not true. Our slogan is: **Workers' and Peasants' Socialist United States of Europe**. Moreover, we know that it is not Europe alone which decides the question. We have at the same time strong support in the East and we are beginning to form a mass Communist Party in America.

In America the correlation of forces is as yet unfavourable to us, but this will undergo a change. Time will be working in our favour. I think that we have found the right solution for the problems which hitherto caused disruption in the ranks of the American Party, and that this solution will satisfy all the comrades.

The Communist International can with a clear conscience adopt the theses of the political commission. It can adopt it with the full conviction that in a perfect maze of manifold social-political problems which were confronting us, we were able to indicate the right path which will lead to the welding together of the Communist Parties and to the consolidation of the Communist International for the further struggle against the bourgeoisie (loud applause).

Comrade Pepper:

I have to make a short statement on behalf of the **Political Commission**. The Political Commission has postponed action on some amendments concerning internal Party problems. It has decided to deal with these matters only after the Commissions, dealing with the problem of the Sections, will be finished with their resolutions. We propose that the Political Commission, in the final drafting of the theses, be authorised to deal with the amendments proposed by the various delegations inasfar as they do not conflict with resolutions of the various commissions. This is the only way to bring into harmony the general political theses and the special resolutions.

Comrade Bordiga:

For reasons which I have given in my two speeches during the general debate I will vote against the proposed resolution.

The latter contains the ascertainment that the internal regime of the Communist International should be modified, but as the very work of the Plenum neither represents the expression of a new method nor is it the prelude to a new course, I will maintain my opposition attitude on this point also. I nevertheless hope that facts will furnish proof of a serious improvement.

I have not presented any theses nor a resolution, and I refer to these which I presented to the V Congress and to the theses which the Left Wing of the Italian Party presented to the last Party Congress.

I will ask the Executive to publish the general section of this thesis before the VI. Congress.

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The vote on the Political Resolution, with the acceptance of the technical motion of Comrade Pepper was postponed to the concluding session.