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## **Tenth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.**

Full Report.

### **The Economic Struggles, our Tactics and the Tasks of the Communist Parties.**

Seventeenth Session. \*)

#### **Report of Comrade Thälmann.**

##### **I. The Turn in the General Situation and the Changes in the Class Struggle.**

Comrades, when speaking at the X. Plenum on the economic struggles and the tasks of the Parties, it will be quite impossible to do full justice in the two reports — Comrade Lozovsky's and mine — to the enormous complex of questions and the multitude of our tasks. It will be my task to speak on the trade union-political work and the new methods of our tactics, whereby I shall not touch a number of questions such as the trade union movement in the countries with a split trade union movement, in the countries of fascism, in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and the questions concerning the R. I. L. U. These questions as well as the weaknesses, shortcomings and mistakes will be dealt with by Comrade Lozovsky. It goes without saying that the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. and the VI. World Congress and the various concrete lines followed by individual Parties in the application of tactics need not be discussed here once more by me, even in the specific part of my report.

I will concentrate on the following questions: 1. The change in the general situation and the change this implies in the class struggle; 2. the fascisation of trade unions, their merging with the State apparatus and finance capital; 3. the new tactic of our Parties and independent leadership of economic struggles; 4. economic strikes and political mass struggles in connection with the revolutionary representatives system, and 5. the most important international tasks of the Communist Parties.

##### **1. THE CHARACTER AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STRUGGLES IN THE PRESENT PERIOD.**

In regard to the first question, we must take as our point of departure the political orientation of the decisions of the VI. World Congress. We have to record that, in the carrying through of the decisions by the Parties, considerable success was achieved in spite of serious errors and shortcomings. Wherever we applied our tactic energetically, we achieved genuine successes. Where the Party vacillated, where it did not take advantage of the situation quickly enough and

\*) The Report was concluded in the 18th Session. To simplify matters we publish the whole report in the protocol of the 17th Session. Editor.

did not apply the new tactic, the result was mostly unsatisfactory. The main thing we have to record in regard to the whole situation is the growing activity of the working class throughout the world. New organisations and forms of class struggle are the outcome of the creative power of the masses. We can see that confidence not only in the Communist International, but also in the Red International of Labour Unions has grown. This does not only apply to capitalist countries, but also, and especially so, to colonial and semi-colonial countries where national revolutionary struggles have broken out in the last years. While in the second period, the great Chinese revolution went on without adequate support on the part of the working class of the other capitalist countries, in the third period there will take place the revival of the colonial revolutionary movement simultaneously with the revival of the revolutionary labour movement in Western Europe and in America, the proletariat of these countries supporting the colonial movement. This will no doubt have an enormous influence on the further trend of the Chinese and Indian revolution.

The Right and the conciliators in the Comintern are emphatic in saying that the offensive of the employers is the most important thing in the present development. There is, no doubt, a strong offensive even now on the part of the employers, and this offensive is assuming sharper forms. We can say that it is stronger than in the second period.

But the new thing in the present situation, in the third period, is not the capitalist offensive, but the manner in which the proletariat reacts to this offensive. Let us take Germany since 1924. During the first rationalisation wave, the bourgeoisie applied various methods of capitalist rationalisation in the social and technical sphere. The abolition of the 8-hour day, the enormous worsening of living conditions and the enormous increase of exploitation of the workers, etc. are well known to us. In spite of this development, the big technical revolution in the process of production with all its enormous methods of social exploitation of workers which took place between 1924 and 1928, has not been marked by mass economic struggles. The small struggles which broke out were of a defensive character on the part of the proletariat. The masses did not meet the capitalist offensive with a counter-offensive for the purpose of resisting capitalist rationalisation.

However, in 1928 we witnessed a revolutionary change not only in Germany, but also in various other countries.

There was, for instance, the big Ruhr lockout in the steel industry when hundreds of thousands of workers took up for the first time after many years the struggle against the lockout methods of the employers, and what is even more important, broke for the first time through the barriers of trade union legalism. We had also big struggles in a number of countries such as France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Scandinavia, the Balkan countries, the United States, India, and even several partial strikes in Great Britain which are going on now. Moreover, another impetus has been given to the labour movement in China, and we witness there a new strike wave. These few facts mark already the workers' transition from defensive to counter-offensive, and even offensive against the employers.

But this impetuous character of the development in general which was already pointed out by various discussion speakers in regard to the first item of the agenda, is noticeable not only in the struggle for economic partial demands, it is also expressed in the political collision of the working class with the bourgeoisie, the State power, and the reformists. The revolutionary events in Bombay, the heroic cotton operatives strike in Lodz, the recent may incidents in Berlin, are all of them signs of this new revolutionary development in the ranks of the working class.

### THE TWO WORLD FRONTS.

We must consider this struggle also from the standpoint of the imperialist war danger. We must realise that these struggles are assuming an ever-growing importance for the consolidation of the anti-imperialist front in the struggle against the anti-Soviet war preparations of the bourgeoisie. We can see that on both sides of the class front this struggle is becoming very bitter. The trust bourgeoisie is making in various countries

energetic and even brutal attacks on the proletariat. It is taking all the necessary measures to increase its pressure on the revolutionary proletariat and to smash ruthlessly all obstacles and resistance. The bourgeoisie is so aggressive because it must try to break the power of resistance of the proletariat, in order not to have a very strong "internal enemy" to face at the outbreak of the World War. On the other hand, we see that the workers are taking up the counter-offensive. We can say that, from our viewpoint, the present economic struggles are skirmishes before the big decisive struggles. The strike strategy and independent strike leadership which we are applying now, are, taken as a whole, important anti-war work for the future. They mean that we are rallying our forces already in this preparatory development of the growing imperialist war danger, and are carrying through a revolutionary mass mobilisation against imperialism and its social-fascist allies. We can see by various recent examples that the reformist trade unions are abandoning the carrying out of wage struggles. We all of us are familiar with the well-known method of class-collaboration and industrial peace. Let us take, on the one hand, the Mond Conference in Great Britain, and, on the other hand, the trade union conferences in Swansea and Hamburg. We see here clearly the tendency and practice of thorough agreement between employers and trade unions on the basis of a front directed against the revolutionary proletariat. Taking as their point of departure the theory of organised capitalism and industrial peace, the Amsterdam trade unions are developing the fundamental line of their general counter-revolutionary practice. But the facts of development are harder than the theory of the reformists. We see that in spite of the conferences, there is not only no justification to talk about industrial peace, but that in some countries industrial war of a virulent character is actually waged.

The second fact is the enormous change which is going on in the ranks of the working class. This change keeps pace with the change the structure of the proletariat undergoes through the methods of capitalist rationalisation. On the one hand, women, youngsters, unskilled and skilled workers, and, on the other hand, the labour aristocracy who are on the side of the reformists and the employers in regard to nearly all questions. What Lenin said: that reformism is splitting the working class, that an upper stratum created by the bourgeoisie is set against a terribly oppressed bottom stratum, fits exactly the present development.

In regard to appraisal of the character of the struggles and the general situation, to us, revolutionaries, work in countries with still "united" reformist trade unions and our revolutionary work in the red trade unions, is of enormous importance. This is, of course, not only a question of political education, of revolutionary mobilisation of the masses in general. To-day, we are faced with a much greater and higher task. Let us take on a world scale the two big class fronts, on the one hand, the big world organisation of the proletariat under the leadership of the Comintern, accompanied by an increasing consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union and, on the other hand, the world front of capitalism supported by reformism, social-fascism and fascism.

Naturally, these two powerful world fronts undergo changes in their development through changes in the class forces of the individual countries. Sometimes the change in the correlation of forces is rapid, sometimes more complicated and sometimes very slow. But no one can dispute the fact that they are influenced by the two great factors, the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions on the one side of the barricade, and the Second International and the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions on the other side.

These two class fronts which are on a world scale, are already clearly separated from one another in the political and ideological sphere, they are irreconcilably opposed to one another. They make their appearance also in the trade union movement, in some countries in the form of an organisational split. But they also exist where so-called "united" reformist trade unions are still to be found. In regard to the fundamental questions of the present policy, insofar as principle is involved, these two world Powers are struggling and wrestling for the proletarian and oppressed masses. We are bold and optimistic enough to bring forward already at the X. Plenum the question of immediate struggle for hegemony between com-

munism and reformism in the ranks of the proletariat in some of the important capitalist countries. The II. International and the International Federation of Trade Unions are fighting among the masses for the maintenance, defence and support of the capitalist system of exploitation, the capitalist State, and its predatory imperialist policy. They support the war preparations against the proletarian State, against the Soviet Union. The Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions are fighting for the defence of the Soviet Union, i. e., they are fighting against imperialism and social-fascism, against the predatory capitalist system. The II. International and the International Federation of Trade Unions are supporting and glorifying the League of Nations as an instrument of peace. We are exposing this impudent deceit as a crime against the workers of the world. The II. International and the Amsterdam Trade Union International are supporting the brutal coercive policy of imperialism against the colonial peoples which are engaged in a heroic struggle. We are fighting for the victory of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, because the Communist International and the Red International of Labour Unions are the leaders of all oppressed in the world, because by destroying imperialism, we are smashing the whole capitalist system of exploitation.

In regard to another fundamental question of contemporary politics — the reparations problem and Young-Plan, the two world fronts are again irreconcilably opposed to one another. Within the framework of this great world policy, in the utilisation of all conflicts and differences in this period, goes on the struggle between Communism and reformism for hegemony in the world proletariat. This great revolutionary world struggle against the world bourgeoisie, against fascism and social-fascism requires that all our Parties should concentrate their attention on persevering, indefatigable work in all mass organisations, and especially in the trade unions. We have achieved lately considerable successes in various big mass organisations: sport, educational and other important organisations.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS STRUGGLE.

But to us the most important question is — what to do in order to give an impetus to our difficult, revolutionary work in the trade unions. At the X. Plenum we must once more raise the question of the role of trade unions in the revolutionary class struggle, and of their role for the bourgeoisie and the carrying through of its methods of exploitation and coercion. Put in this manner, this sounds perhaps schematic, because there are in the trade union itself two fronts, the rank and file can be mobilised and influenced from two sides. But it is no doubt correct to say that reformism, social-fascism is endeavouring to win over with all the means at its disposal the class organisations of the proletariat for its own purposes for the capitalist aims. Let us take, for instance, the process of capitalist rationalisation. In Germany, the first rationalisation wave is already at an end. In the second rationalisation wave, we notice already new methods of exploitation. Let us take the war question. Trade unions can be used for the militarisation of their own members. At a time when trade unions, as this is now the case, are merging with the capitalist State apparatus, when the reformist bureaucrats are giving unconditional support to the capitalist State, when sharper methods of struggle must be used against Communism in all spheres, when trade unions are being developed into State organs such as the reformist bureaucracy wants, it is very probable that the reformist trade unions will be militarised. There have already been various statements by Social-Democrats who speak quite openly on this question. Comrades, when war breaks out, trade unions in the hands of the bourgeoisie and social-fascism will constitute the greatest danger to the revolutionary proletariat. Still greater is this danger in case of an imperialist war against the Soviet Union. But what importance will the trade unions be to the proletariat and the revolution, if we succeed in increasing our influence there. Firstly, in the struggle against the employers' offensive in general; secondly, against the social, cultural, and political oppression of the proletariat, against the capitalist State on the whole and its war preparations against the Soviet Union, and, thirdly, for the general tasks of the proletarian revolution.

#### THE STRENGTH OF THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

There are only approximate estimates of the numerical strength of the world trade union movement. The figures published on January 1st, 1929, by the International Federation of Trade Unions are, of course, not true to facts. But the interesting part in these figures of the I. F. T. U. is the reference to the gigantic successes of the Red International of Labour Unions as shown by its proportional growth. In spite of the various tricks of the I. F. T. U. and its struggle against the R. I. L. U., the reformists are compelled to admit the powerful development of the R. I. L. U. About 13 million workers are organised in the Amsterdam Trade Union International, whereas about 15 million are organised in the R. I. L. U. In regard to this statistic, one must take into consideration that the 13 million of the reformist trade union movement include all revolutionary workers and workers in sympathy with us whose unions are affiliated to I. F. T. U. But the fact that everywhere, except Germany, the reformist trade unions have regressed, and that in Germany they are increasing their membership only thanks to the energetic recruiting work of the revolutionary trade union opposition and the Communists — I will deal with this question later on — shows us that the revolutionary trade union movement is constantly growing.

About 2,100,000 workers in the whole world are organised in Christian trade unions.

Comrades, these millions in the trade union movement throughout the world are of enormous importance in regard to our tasks of revolutionary class struggle. In this connection, we must not underestimate the great revolutionary work still in store for us. Let us, for instance, remember that there were not so long ago comrades in various Parties of the C. I. who thought that the Red International of Labour Unions should go into liquidation. This shows that where such tendencies were noticeable, our comrades had not paid sufficient attention to the value and importance of the R. I. L. U. and had failed to understand what the R. I. L. U. means in regard to the organisation and mobilisation of the proletariat. Comrades, we must appreciate the work of the Red trade unions at the right value and must support them energetically, because they offer us splendid opportunities for the development of our revolutionary strength and enable us to win millions of workers for our policy.

The bourgeoisie is feverishly arming against the Soviet Union. These war preparations can be carried through by the bourgeoisie only by the most ruthless crushing of the proletariat, by creating a "national front" on the basis of "industrial peace" and "class collaboration". The reformist trade union bureaucrats and social-democratic leaders are supporting this policy by means of the "economic democracy" swindle, or, as they say in England, by means of the "industrial peace" slogan.

The time is past when reformists could talk of trade union neutrality, could say that political struggle is "the business of the Parties". The class struggle has assumed such hard and fast forms that the reformist trade union bureaucrats are no longer in a position to beg the question. In this connection, of the utmost importance is the development of the trade unions in the Soviet Union where the percentage of organised workers is the highest. In the Soviet Union, 90—92% of the total number of workers are organised in trade unions. This is an eloquent refutation of the reformist assertion throughout the world, including Germany, that we are the "party of the unorganised".

Under the fascist regime in Italy, trade unions have been transformed into State organisations which are used for the application of the Mussolini policy, in order to keep in subjection the revolutionary proletariat and to support finance capital in all spheres.

Comrades, we must not leave out of account that fascisation of trade unions is bound to play a very important rôle in the policy of the Müller-Stresemann Government and subsequently also in the policy of the MacDonald Government, when social-fascist dictatorship will begin to develop. This is not a process of today or tomorrow, such processes develop in connection with the objective situation and in connection with the class fronts which come into collision and wrestle with one another.

## II. Fascisation of Trade Unions, their Merging with the State Apparatus and Finance Capital.

### THE RELATIONS OF THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS TO FINANCE CAPITAL.

The best example of the fascisation of trade unions are the German unions. The bourgeoisie cannot make the capitalist offensive a success unless it effects a sharp change, i. e. fascisation of its government methods with the help of the social-democrats. As the means of bourgeois democracy for the coercion and exploitation of the proletariat become ineffective and the dictatorial and social fascist methods of the bourgeoisie develop, organisational democracy will disappear in the trade union movement. The trade union bureaucrats will become more aggressive against the revolutionary front and will have recourse to a more energetic fascisation of trade unions in general. The closer the association between the trade union apparatus and the State apparatus, the stronger the attack of the revolutionary trade union opposition on this system, the more independent, active and energetic the revolutionary opposition is in the work assigned to it, the sharper will be the social-fascist attack on the revolutionary front. A very drastic example of this development, is the attitude of the A. D. G. B. (German General Federation of Trade Unions) to May-Day. It has come to our knowledge that prior to May-Day, negotiations took place between the Berlin Chief of Police and the social-democratic leaders and reformist bureaucrats of the A. D. G. B. These negotiations have also played a certain role in a political law-suit after May-Day. The facts which we brought forward were not refuted even by the bourgeois court. It is precisely the A. D. G. B. leaders in Germany who demanded that the prohibition should be upheld on May-Day under any circumstances, whereas some of the prominent leaders of the Social-Democratic Party were inclined to allow open air meetings on May-Day. This is a confirmation of strong social-fascist tendencies in the A. D. G. B. leadership.

Of importance to us is not only the close association between the trade union and the State apparatus, but also the intimate relations between the reformist and social-democratic trade union leaders and organisations and finance capital. This intertwining exceeds perhaps anything we have hitherto experienced. Lately, the trade unions have been using trade union funds more and more for joint economic activity with finance capital. They are trying to invest the trade union membership dues and contributions according to principles of private economic accumulation. In 1905, 41% of trade union monies were spent in support of strikes and economic struggles. In 1924, 24% were spent for economic struggles, and in 1927, expenses connected with economic struggles constituted only 9% of the total expenditure. This statistic alone shows the internal change in the orientation of the trade unions: no longer orientation towards the struggling masses in support of economic struggles, instead, orientation towards association with finance capital. The Labour Bank is associated with the Hannoverian land-mortgage bank, behind which is the capital of the metal, chemical and Ruhr mining industry. The Labour Bank of the A. D. G. B. has backed lately various industrial enterprises as, for instance, the "Lindner Cycle Works Joint-Stock company". It will give you an idea of the corruption which is going on, if I tell you that the Labour Bank has given Leipart, the Chairman of the A. D. G. B., a villa as a birthday present.

But not only in Germany, in other capitalist countries too, this kind of thing is going on. The Belgian "Labour Bank" is financing a number of joint-stock companies in the Belgian colonies. It controls wool, cotton and linen spinning-mills, dye-works, weaving-mills, a stocking-factory, an artificial silk factory, also the biggest fishery in Belgium, a brewery, an iron-works, cold storage enterprises, as well as various banking enterprises. The social-democratic Rusizi Company has a cotton and ore concession in the Congo. Last year, owing to famine, 30,000 Negroes died, and for these deaths the cotton company is responsible. Such is the famous social-democratic theory of education of natives into workers.

Another example from Austria. After the inflation period, the social-democratic enterprises which had almost collapsed, were put again on their legs by the finance magnate Bosel who supported the Vienna police and supplied it with victuals. The process of close association between trade unions and finance capital has made the greatest progress in America.

But we must also take into consideration all that militates against this development. The more social democracy, especially in Germany, and the Labour Party in England, are acting as government parties in the service of the bourgeoisie, the more rapid and more open will the fascisation of the trade unions proceed. The fascisation of the trade unions meets with strong resistance on the part of the proletarian masses in the trade union organisations. This resistance is, of course, discouraged and frustrated by the bureaucrats. But this resistance of the proletarian masses is greatly enhanced by the recognition of the arbitration system on the part of the trade unions, by the method of the reformist Trade union bureaucrats to conclude, long-term wage agreements, by their attempts to throttle strikes and resist any attempt to organise and support strikes. This inevitably leads to the sharpest conflicts between the revolutionary trade union opposition and the social-fascist leaders. Here the struggle for the majority of the rank and file in the trade unions enters a decisive stage. But the fact that enormous numbers of workers are organised in the reformist trade unions compels us to bring these proletarian masses onto our side, to continue the struggle against the reformist bureaucrats in the trade unions with the utmost determination. Let us take as an example one of the mass organisations, for instance, the sport organisations in Germany. If the reformist bureaucrats in these organisations had not adopted split tactics, we would have got into our hands this whole proletarian sport movement at the next central congress if elections had taken place on the basis of proletarian democracy. There is a similar state of affairs in the Freethinkers' League. The reformist bureaucrats in this organisation altered its statutes, and the greater portion of the elected delegates to the National Congress were wrongly refused admittance to the Congress. If they had not done so, we would have also got the free-thinkers' organisation into our hands.

Reformism, social-fascism removes everywhere proletarian democracy, the right of the rank and file of these organisations to have their say. The split has already taken place in the sport organisations and the Freethinkers' League of Germany. The same process is going on in the trade union movement. The more deliberate and determined the revolutionary trade union opposition comes forward against social-fascism, the more the masses are grouping themselves round the revolutionary trade union opposition, the more energetic and frank are the expulsion and splitting methods of the reformist trade union bureaucrats.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS LINE AND REVOLUTIONARY UNITY IN THE REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS.

But we see also in our own ranks a certain inclination to give way, we have functionaries who dare not go against the reformists and are prepared to capitulate. This struggle in the trade unions demands on our part perseverance, revolutionary composure and also capability of persuading the masses that the trade union movement is being disrupted not by us but by the reformists.

Naturally, our struggle for trade union unity is not a struggle such as the Right and the conciliators visualise, namely, a struggle for "unity at any price". It is rather a struggle for the revolutionary class line, for the establishment of revolutionary unity against the social-fascist disrupters and splitters of the trade unions.

Also in our own ranks, we must not allow any illusions in regard to the capture of trade unions. There is an inclination in some Parties to consider capture of the trade unions as

capture of the trade union apparatus. But those who speak of the "capture of the trade union apparatus", fail to understand the fascisation of the apparatus, the fascist methods of the reformist bureaucrats which enable this apparatus to assert itself against the will of the trade union rank and file. The capture of the trade union apparatus is a different matter now than in the past second period. In the present, third, period which is a period of sharp class struggles, the struggle for the majority of the working class assumes quite different forms.

Capture of the trade union rank and file is still our foremost task. Without indulging in illusions, we must realise that every new class struggle, that independent leadership of economic struggles demands enormous sacrifices. Since the application of our new tactic in economic struggles and factory council elections, we have in Germany between 1,500 and 1,700 individual expulsions. In addition, there have been expulsions of pay offices, as for instance, in the Miners' Federation where whole pay offices were expelled, or in the Berlin Metal Workers' Union where the plumbers have been expelled, and the expulsion of lock-smiths and turners is being contemplated.

But when the reformists are adopting such tactics, does this mean that we have to change our fundamental revolutionary tactic in general? Certainly not! We keep the expelled pay-offices going, we collect membership dues through our pay-offices and branch executives, we carry on an energetic struggle for the reinstatement of expelled members. If we continue this struggle, if we do not treat the question of the expelled as the main problem of the trade union movement, but only as a partial problem, if we really strengthen our revolutionary work in this sphere, then in the course of development, as the class struggles become sharper and our general work more intense, it will probably happen that we will be in a position to stop the gaps which reformism has made in our ranks by new forces of the revolutionary trade union movement. I say that our tactic in countries with "united" reformist trade unions has remained the same as before, I also say that formation of new revolutionary trade unions is not the order of the day in Germany.

We must expect that owing to growing opposition in the trade union movement, the reformists will dissolve the most important trade union organisations. Such a development at which the reformist bureaucrats are aiming, demands, however, steadfastness and perseverance in our ranks, in order to struggle for class unity of revolutionary trade union organisations. We know that in our own ranks, the erroneous and extremely harmful view is likely to crop up that revolutionary trade union work is superfluous. To nip such tendencies in the bud we must strengthen in this sphere our revolutionary trade union work with all the ideological and organisational means at our disposal. Why must we put this question thus? Because in spite of the enormous difficulties of the present development and of the reactionary course pursued by the social-fascists, we have splendid opportunities of bringing the masses over to our side. In view of the growing danger of an imperialist war and in view of the seriousness of the present situation, we have of course not much time left to organise the enormous masses of the unorganised proletariat.

#### OUR ATTITUDE TO THE EXPELLED.

As the most important trade union organisations and reformist trade unions will play a very important role at the outbreak of war, it is incumbent on us to discourage any inclination to leave the trade unions voluntarily, and to conduct in our own ranks energetic struggle against those who think that the time has already come to form and develop new trade unions.

The question of the expelled does not only concern the German Party and the German revolutionary trade union work, it is also the order of the day in other countries. In Poland, for instance, a number of revolutionary workers have been expelled from the metal workers and miners unions, including members of factory councils, also from the textile workers union, etc. Lately, several pay-offices have also been expelled from the reformist unions. In Czechoslovakia, expulsions from reformist unions which were formerly an exception, are becoming the rule now. In Great Britain, although our position in the **Minority Movement** is very weak, we notice the same new unscrupulous splitting methods on the part of the reformists. The

facts which have come to our notice in regard to the Garment workers' union, the treatment meted out to the Amalgamated Engineers' Union in London and various other facts are, to us, international signs of this new aggressiveness of the reformists.

Comrades, how are we to decide the question of the expelled in the various countries where united reformist trade unions still exist? How are the expelled to be co-ordinated organisationally?

In regard to the general improvement of our revolutionary trade union work, the most important thing is organisation and co-ordination of the revolutionary trade union opposition. Hitherto this work did not get beyond good intentions even in Germany. Real organisation of the revolutionary trade union opposition was to be found only in a few unions. If we do not effect a real organisational-political change in this sphere, we will meet with difficulties in regard to attaching the expelled to the revolutionary trade union opposition.

Our estimate of the number of expelled is at present about 1,700 Communists and sympathising workers. We must expect that this number will increase by several hundred in the next months. These are the best forces who can be relied upon in industrial struggles, factory council elections and in all spheres of the proletarian struggle. That these revolutionary class fighters, especially those who were organised for decades, should wish to retain their membership on some other basis, is only natural.

But such moods cannot be allowed to influence our policy now. As soon as we collect membership dues from the expelled and begin to co-ordinate them in new organisations or, may be, to attach them as sections to some other mass organisation, other good revolutionary class fighters are also bound to go to their class fellows; they will leave the reformist trade unions and will throw overboard work in these reformist organisations. These moods must on no account be underestimated, especially in view of the treachery of the reformist bureaucrats. We therefore think, and the Polit Secretariat of the E. C. C. I. associates itself with us, that the expelled should be attached to the **trade union opposition of the respective union**. In how far we will help the expelled by financing their struggle for reinstatement in the unions, or in how far we will support them in the economic struggle financially, depends on conditions in the individual organisations and on the struggle itself. We are of the opinion that a certain percentage of the trade union dues should be levied on the expelled, in order to be able to carry on more energetically on this basis the struggle for reinstatement in the unions on a higher level.

But the material side in regard to strike support and support for the victimised in the economic struggles, is and should not be a reason for us to levy special contributions or to co-ordinate the expelled in new organisations. These expelled comrades must be treated in the great struggles just as all class fellows, they must be supported in their struggle through the solidarity of all workers.

#### THE QUESTION OF PLEDGES\*).

Another question in this connection is that of pledges. We do not refuse to sign pledges in all circumstances. Owing to the social-fascist development of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, the signing of pledges plays a different role than in the preceding years, in the second period. In the second period, these pledges were frequently formulated in a manner to enable us to sign them. But since the trade unions have been developing towards social-fascism, the pledges placed before us are in most cases formulated in a manner to make it impossible for us to sign them. We cannot sign such pledges, because this would be tantamount to abandoning the carrying through of the revolutionary line of the trade union opposition. If our comrades were to sign such pledges their action would not be understood either by our sympathisers, the revolutionary workers, or even by our own Party. I think that the question of pledges can be decided only from this standpoint.

\*) Note: This refers to the written pledges enforced by the reformist trade union executives from their members and which aim at debarring the members from any revolutionary activity. Ed.

### THE "LEFT" IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

The last question in this connection is that of the so-called "Left" in the international trade union movement. Comrade Kuusinen said already in his report that a Left social democracy is absolutely necessary for the carrying through of social-fascism. If this is so, and it is so, the development of social-fascism in the trade unions will mean that the "Left" will play in the trade union movement the same role as in the Social-Democratic Party.

In this connection, there is a question which deserves special attention. Our tactic in the second period towards Cook, Purcell and others was correct and did us good service at that stage. In the then situation, the proletarian struggles were of a defensive character owing to the defeat of the working class in Germany in 1923. Application of united front tactics from below in connection with measures and manoeuvres of the united front tactics from above, in order to mobilise and organise the masses, was absolutely necessary, especially in Great Britain. But subsequently, a drastic change should have taken place just in this respect, in order to expose the reformist elements. Already at the time of the British miners struggle, Purcell and Co. had openly gone over to the class enemy and were against the Comintern and the Soviet Union. I think that manoeuvres such as were made use of a few years ago, are no longer admissible. To continue them would be wrong, harmful and opportunist. Cook

has turned openly against Communism. This is what he said in his speech, in May 1929:

"Thanks to the intervention of the Prince of Wales on behalf of the miners, the monarchy question has ceased to be a problem to the labour movement of Great Britain... In theory, I am still a republican, but no longer an out-and-out republican... I think that the Prince of Wales is at present the foremost advocate of social reforms in this country of ours... I have abandoned my own revolutionary ideas in this respect, because the Prince of Wales has ceased to be a Royal Highness in the usual sense of the world." Then he went on to say:

"It is possible that by shaking hands with the Prince of Wales, I have made myself hated both by the C. P. of Russia, and in the C. P. of Great Britain. But I do not regret this."

Comrades, this speech by Cook shows (interjection: complete self-exposure) not only complete self-exposure, but a thorough political turn-about-face which took place in these two years among the "Left" in the international trade union movement: open, unashamed and cynical betrayal of the proletariat. In this connection, one must say that the Communist Party of Great Britain hesitated much too long in regard to the General Council and support for it.

## III. The New Tactic of Our Parties and Independent Leadership of Industrial Struggles.

### THE PURPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC STRUGGLES.

The new tactic of the Communist International and the R. I. L. U. is the outcome of our appraisal of the recent development. We effected a change already at the IX. Plenum. On the strength of events throughout the world, we elaborated at the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. a new strike strategy, new forms of organisation and new fighting methods. The VI. World Congress brought about this important change in its whole fundamental magnitude, to its fullest extent.

What is the difference between the new forms of struggle and the former methods? The application of the united front tactic from below, and the fact that this tactic is carried through on a different basis than this was formerly the case in the Comintern and all the individual Parties. Further the independent leadership of the economic struggles. This does not only signify a new form of trade union work, not only a definite strike tactic, not only a new method of the revolutionary mass work, but a new stage of the revolutionary class struggle, on an international scale, a new revolutionary strategy of Bolshevism. In what consisted the application of the new tactic? Firstly, in the conduct of the smelting workers' strike in the Ruhr, and in the different struggles in all parts of the world; secondly in the factory council elections in Germany and in several other countries; thirdly, in considering the May-Day question not only from the standpoint of incidents in Germany, but from the international standpoint, by carrying out international mass demonstrations against reformism in all countries under the revolutionary May slogans of the Comintern and the leadership of the Communist Parties; fourthly, in the class against class tactic which was elaborated by the IX. Plenum for France and Great Britain; fifthly, in the new forms and methods of organisation for the proletarian mass struggle in general.

In regard to the application of the new tactic, we had to wage a sharp struggle against the liquidators and conciliators in our own ranks. Already in connection with the first item of the agenda, in the analysis of the world situation and our political tasks, it was proved beyond doubt that the conciliators in our Party have taken over the role of the Right. The tremendous strike wave is irrefutable evidence against the theory of the conciliators regarding the firm stabilisation.

The attitude of the conciliators to the problem of the unorganised, shows very clearly that their ideas are wrong. They deny and minimise the revolutionary importance of the millions of unorganised workers, of their growing activitisa-

tion and participation in all the struggles of the proletariat. They call us slanderously the "Party of the unorganised", because we draw these millions not only into all proletarian struggles, but also into all the leading organs of the mass struggle, strike committees, Red factory councils, etc. The standpoint of the conciliators in regard to the unorganised is a narrow, craft-labour-aristocracy standpoint of the worst kind.

We have gone through a mighty strike wave in the last year, since the VI. World Congress. Concerning Germany, I will give only two facts: in 1926, the number of strike days was 1½ million, in 1927, already 6 million, and in 1928, 10½ million. Although most of these strike days were caused by lockouts, it would be wrong to assume, as the conciliators are doing, that the proletariat is on the defensive. We pointed out at the XII. Congress of the C. P. G. that although progress is made with revolutionary struggles, retrogressive tendencies are also noticeable. The development is not uniform everywhere. In some countries it goes on at a rapid rate, whereas in other countries a certain amount of zig-zagging and also partial defeats have taken place. It has also happened in Germany that temporarily outside influences, etc. have played a negative role in the development, for instance, in the Saxon elections.

But if we take the Ruhr lock-out with about 75%, and the lock-out of cotton operatives which has been going on for seven weeks, about 35% of the locked-out workers being unorganised, and municipal councils being instructed not to give financial support, also collisions with the police in various districts, as well as other struggles, for instance, the 14 week shipwrights strike in Hamburg, — we observe all these struggles were of a progressive character. One could see that the unorganised were joining the organised in their struggle against the bourgeoisie and the social-fascists under the leadership of the revolutionary trade union opposition.

### THE NEW TACTIC AND THE HINDRANCES AND MISTAKES IN OUR OWN RANKS.

I am prepared to admit that the German Party encountered serious difficulties in the application of the new tactic in industrial struggles and the factory council elections. There was a certain amount of opposition among certain members and many functionaries of our Party. You can imagine how difficult it was to carry through successfully the revolutionary tactic, considering that there was a Right Wing in the Party, that conciliators were even in the PolitBureau which, of course, encouraged vacillations in the lower organisations.

Let us take the development in France. Since June 1928, we have carried through over 1000 strikes (number of participants about 53,000 per month). In June, 137 of the 169 strikes ended in higher wages being granted to the workers. Some of the medium strikes were lost.

But the most important thing in these strikes is — that 50% of them broke out without being prepared and organised by the Red trade unions. The Red trade unions intervened only after the strikes had broken out. I say here, in agreement with the French delegation, that in this sphere many mistakes and defects exist in the French development.

I welcome here the fact that the French comrades are fully aware of these mistakes and shortcomings, and that they are trying to take the initiative in regard to effecting a change in the leadership of the Red trade unions. The new features of the present industrial struggles in France are: appearance on the scene of new branches of industry which never participated in any struggles in 1920/1921 and 1922; strikes in the State armament industry; extraordinary long duration of strikes in some branches of industry, for instance, in Halluin where the strike lasted seven months; the important international phenomenon that many African, Spanish and Polish workers were drawn into this strike front in France; strike incidents in several strike areas, such as soldiers called in by the employers refusing to act as strike-breakers and fraternising with the strikers, and finally, — this is very important for our whole policy and our orientation — the political character of the struggles with which I will deal later on.

There were defects in the work of the Party also in this big strike wave. For instance, it frequently happened that the instructions issued by the Communist Party of France to the fractions in the Red trade unions were not carried out. There was opposition on the part of the Executives. No preparations for the struggles were made by the Executives of the Red trade unions, hence, their lagging behind the struggles of the masses before and during the strike. If we are looking upon the Red trade unions as the big revolutionary leading organisations — parallel with the Communist Parties — in future struggles, and we must do so, a radical change in the work must be carried out in this sphere in all countries where Red trade unions exist.

A few remarks on experiences in Czechoslovakia. In the cotton operatives' strike, which was under the leadership of the liquidators who were at that time still in the Party, they did nothing to prepare the struggle. Some of the leaders were not quite sure whether the necessary premises existed for the initiation and preparation of this cotton operatives' strike. The masses entered into the strike before the Party and the Red trade union movement had taken it up properly.

What is the most important point which we must take note of? That the members of the Red trade unions were not the driving element in this struggle, this driving element were women workers and young workers who were not yet organised. It has happened (of the 40,000 cotton operatives of Czechoslovakia, 8000 were on strike) that in an enterprise employing 1300 workers, 1000 of whom were organised in the Red trade unions, the strike was not declared. Can you imagine such a thing that all workers are under the leadership of Red trade unions, and yet not joining the strike! The abominable thing has even happened that several members of the Red trade unions were brought to the enterprise under police protection to act as strike-breakers.

I lay so much stress on these incidents, because they reveal the enormous ideological weakness and lack of understanding in the Red trade unions in regard to the application of our new tactic. I will tell you what happened in the agricultural labourers' strike in Czechoslovakia which was already of a somewhat political character, which is rather important for us. When attempts were made to make two detachments of soldiers act as strikebreakers, they mutinied and refused to do such dirty work. The Czech Government ordered of course the arrest of the strike committees. But the Party had not created the necessary illegal premises, and was taken unawares in spite of the lessons of Red Day. All the strike committees were arrested by the police, and the leaders of the strike were for the time being separated from the masses through these repressive measures.

## THE STRIKES AND THEIR LESSONS ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE.

The heroic struggle of the **Bombay** proletariat is no doubt in the forefront of all the economic struggles of the past. This heroic struggle has been mentioned repeatedly in the political discussion. Why is this struggle so important to us? Because we had in 1928, according to statistics, 31 million strike days in Bombay, namely, more strike days than in the last 5 years. Secondly, this industrial struggle of the Indian cotton operatives shows that the working class is beginning to attack, in its economic struggles, the bourgeois State and British imperialism with its satellites — the national bourgeoisie; that it is aware of the treacherous character of the national bourgeoisie and is struggling against it. We analyse the development of the Indian revolution and lay stress on its importance to the revolutionary world struggle, because the Bombay struggle gives even more prominence to the question of proletarian hegemony in the national-revolutionary movement than the Chinese revolution.

This is the great lesson which we must draw from this struggle, a lesson which is of enormous importance also for the coming struggles and for the alliance with the peasantry in this movement. I want also to draw attention to the newly broken out cotton operatives' strike in Shanghai where, in spite of white terror, the proletariat is resuming the big revolutionary struggles of 1927. I further point to the strikes in **Bulgaria** which recently broke out in spite of the fascist terror, to the general strike in **Australia** and to the economic struggle in **Japan**, which is being suppressed with all brutality. I will also draw attention to the mass uprising which took place not so long ago in the **French Congo** where thousands of Negroes were shot and seriously wounded. There have been everywhere strikes and mass struggles also during the session of this Plenum.

We witness a new development in the struggles in **Germany**, due to the activity of the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition. I mean, the **inter-wage rate struggles**, i. e. wage struggles carried out in various branches of industry outside the wage agreement. This is quite a new form of struggle against long-term wage agreements, against the arbitration system and all repressive measures.

Big economic strikes of a truly political character are also taking place in "stabilised" **America**. For instance, the big tramwaymen's strike in New Orleans where we are very weak as a Party and where the workers took up the struggle and came into conflict with the authorities. In this struggle women particularly have played a very important role. The same can be said about the recent struggles in France.

From **Great Britain**, we hear of the new move of 500,000 cotton operatives who intend to take up on August 1st the struggle against a wage reduction of 12% to 15%.

But the struggle from which we can probably draw the most useful lessons, is the well-known **Lodz** strike.

Perhaps no strike in the whole world was so well prepared and revealed such an initiative as this strike in **Lodz** which was led by our small Party organisation.

In spite of the collective agreement in **Lodz** expiring only in September, the struggle was prepared already in March by our Party organisation, without making the mistake of using the tactical slogans which "matured" only in September, at the beginning of the strike. These slogans were brought into play gradually and helped to develop the whole campaign.

Our Party also took care to explain to the masses that the strike was not only for economic demands, but was directed against the P. P. S. and its policy of supporting fascism. The demands brought forward were not only for a 35 per cent. wage increase for women workers and young workers, the struggle was not only against capitalist rationalisation, there were also demands connected with workers' rights, immunity and new election of factory delegates, pay for strike days whenever a strike is declared, the previous exposure of the arbitration court and permanent popularisation of the strike demands among the workers. Moreover, it was made quite clear from the start that prolongation of the collective agreement cannot be contemplated. After such positive systematic preparation came the big decisive mistake. But it was not accidental. At the moment when a strike committee of 22 workers was to be formed under conditions which promised success, our

comrades made the serious mistake to approach the trade union organisations with the request to sanction the strike in order to be able to expose the trade union bureaucracy later on. The reformist trade union bureaucrats accepted this proposal, but this was only a clever manoeuvre. They had to sanction it, if they were not to lose their influence over the masses. Then our comrades committed another mistake by being "decent" enough to give the reformists an opportunity to delegate their representatives to the strike committee. The reformists sent 18 representatives to the strike committee in addition to our 22 comrades. Moreover, these 18 were picked leading reformist labour aristocrats. This grave opportunist mistake of our comrades led to the defeat of the strike.

This showed inability to break through trade union legalism, it showed that in the application of the new strike strategy, not only positive preparation under correct economic and political demands is necessary, but also application of tactics by which we can act as a decisive independent factor in the leadership of the struggles. The non-application of this tactic was the mistake in the Lodz strike, which is of great importance to all industrial struggles throughout the world.

Some words on the special features of these great international struggles. Nearly all these struggles reveal the tenacity, the persistence, the great determination and the fighting spirit by which the proletariat is possessed. They further reveal the broadest development of mass initiative and self-activity. They prove the correctness of our concentrating mass work upon the new fresh sections of the proletariat, the working women and the youth who are playing an active role in these struggles. They confirm the correctness and the revolutionary necessity of the decisions of the IV. R. I. L. U. Congress and of the VI. World Congress of the C. I. regarding the independent leadership of these struggles by us and the establishment of independent organs for the conduct of these struggles from the midst of the broadest masses themselves.

They further signalise the growing understanding of the masses for the political importance of these struggles. And finally, as the most important factor, unlike previous struggles, as a precondition of the success of these struggles, they reveal the breaking through of trade union legalism, the more energetic break with the old social-democratic traditions in the labour movement. This last most important factor, this new kind of strike strategy — to conduct these struggles exclusively under our independent leadership, is the most important question of our revolutionary work.

Comrades, what is the difference between our present and former activity in industrial struggles? In former industrial struggles too much "deference" — I do not want to use a stronger expression — was shown to trade union legalism, too much giving in to reformism. For instance, the tactic we applied two years ago was absolutely wrong: "Compel the Bureaucrats", "the A. D. G. B." (or some other reformist organisation) "must lead the struggles". This tactic impeded the general revolutionary development of the proletariat and acted as a brake on the spirit of offensive. In this connection, other fundamental questions of our trade union policy played, of course, an important role. Recognition of trade union discipline which has become capitalist discipline because the trade union apparatus is merging with the State apparatus, leads to subordination to the policy of reformism, in the end, to subordination to the policy of the capitalist State and the bourgeoisie. Giving way to reformism, as this is done quite openly by the conciliators, would be in the present situation tantamount to betraying Communism. In view of the general development, in view of the social-fascist development of the trade unions, the foolish warnings of the conciliators that we are isolating ourselves from the masses by the new tactic, are nothing but attempts to paralyse the Comintern and the Party as progressive factor in the class struggle.

Comrades, as far as we are concerned, not trade union discipline counts, but only the revolutionary discipline of the Party and the Comintern. It is the revolutionary fundamental law of our action. Against the laws of reformism we place our revolutionary laws of the organisation and the victory of the proletarian revolution.

In the further development of trade unions into State organs, trade union legality spells State legality. The trade union apparatus is associating itself more and more with the State apparatus. Therefore, break with trade union lega-

lism and the reformist trade union laws in the further development, means breaking through State legality, breaking through the laws of the State power.

## THE REACTIONARY MEASURES OF INTERNATIONAL CAPITALISM AGAINST THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS FRONT.

We, too, must watch our class enemy who is carefully studying the present revolutionary development, who encounters us with new methods of struggle in order to impede the revolutionary development. The State laws which have been passed recently, mean that the rebellious masses are to be suppressed more ruthlessly, that sharper coercive methods are to be used to make the workers submit to the coercion and exploitation policy of the employers.

I will give you a few international examples which bear out this: the arbitration system in Germany, the agreements entered into in the last two years, the preparations for the compulsory arbitration law in France, anti-strike laws in various countries, the British trade disputes and trade unions act, the anti-trade union law in Norway, the dissolution of the Red trade unions in Rumania and Yugoslavia, the injunction orders of public prosecutors in American strikes, prohibition of picketing in all countries, and last not least, the arrest of strike committees, — all these are political fighting methods of imperialism and the capitalist State. Our new forms of struggle and fighting organisations, our strike committees and committees of action formed as class organisations of the fighting masses in the enterprises, constitute a great danger to the bourgeoisie and social fascism. That is why the bourgeoisie of all capitalist countries is trying to knock us down especially in the factories with all the means at its disposal. Therefore we must carry out a serious change in our legal working methods in the factories and investigate and apply with the greatest acceleration new illegal working methods for the revolutionary protection of our mass cadres in the factories. There is no doubt whatever that the development of social democracy into social fascism contributes to the accentuation of the conflicts between the masses and the bourgeoisie. As economic struggles get sharper, the political struggle against the State power and trade union apparatus will also get sharper.

## NEW FEATURES AND FIGHTING METHODS OF OUR WORK IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MASS STRUGGLE.

Comrades, provided we appraise correctly our class enemy, and the new methods in his struggle against us, provided we do not lose sight of the complicated nature of the present struggles, then this new revolutionary strategy requires the greatest unity and harmony in our own ranks and also the internal unity of the revolutionary trade unions opposition and the Red trade unions in all countries. For our new strategy which is progress on the way to Bolshevisation, does not only mean a change in our political course, but also a change in our whole organisational work in the various struggles, in accordance with the given situation. The leading role of the C. P. finds expression in the fact that it mobilises the masses and heads the masses in the preparation and in the struggle. Thus, we have quite new forms of struggle in the third period. We have united front organs, strike committees, committees of action, May committees, bodies of delegates, anti-war committees, self-defence organs, etc. This applies not only to individual countries, it has and must have an international character.

It is above all necessary to seriously prepare our struggles. The weakest point in the development of our work is inadequate preparation of struggles. We must admit that in all countries, Germany included, we have been so to speak "taken unawares" by the masses. They frequently entered into the strike before the revolutionary trade union organisation or the revolutionary trade union opposition had taken any preparatory measures.

Comrades, important tasks are confronting us in this sphere. A preparatory committee in an enterprise must, for instance, take the initiative in the preparation and carrying through of the struggle, it must coordinate the big enterprises of some branch of industry, it must mobilise the workers of the whole branch of industry against the measures of the



employer. For instance, if we bring into motion the workers in 5-6 enterprises where we have strong positions, this is sometimes an incentive to struggles in other enterprises. In Germany, for instance, struggles can be started in this manner for inter-agreement wage rises. We must have active well-functioning factory nuclei, especially in all big and medium enterprises, capable of doing justice to their tasks in all spheres, nuclei which do not only prepare wage struggles but are also under the obligation of bringing all political questions into the daily life of the enterprise. There are various enterprises in Germany where we have already begun to discuss everyday questions with the workers during intervals. One cannot be a Party leader without being familiar with the life of the working class, without being able to deal with primary questions of the daily class struggle. This requires connection between the leadership of the Party and the life of the workers in big enterprises and in the whole working place.

Application of united front tactic from below plays an important role in connection with the new methods of the revolutionary mass struggle.

I will briefly indicate the organs of the united front which are of a temporary character: committees of action, strike committees, committees for the preparation of economic struggles, women workers, adult and young workers delegate conferences, factory committees, self-defence organs, May committees, anti-war committees, etc. which were formed lately. These organs are, naturally, coordinated by the revolutionary trade union opposition. Apart from registration of the revolutionary trade union opposition, politics must be brought within the reach of the masses through propaganda material and special factory newspapers.

### THE INDEPENDENT LEADERSHIP OF THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLES

Comrades, factory councils, the body of revolutionary representatives, or as they are called in some countries, bodies of factory delegates, and the self-defence organs must be looked upon as organisational links, as definite permanent organisations, and of course, also our nuclei in enterprises which, as permanent organs of the political centre are the control organs of the Party in the factories and are responsible for the carrying through of our policy. Independent leadership of industrial struggles requires not only stronger organisational and political activity of the revolutionary trade union opposition and of the red trade unions, we must also set up against the strike-breaking policy of the reformist apparatus new revolutionary mass organs, we must set on foot the collection of strike funds, in order to be able to support in extreme cases the struggling sections of the proletariat through the solidarity of the whole working class. Comrades, in regard to this, the French comrades have set us a splendid example. In the last 3-4 months they have collected a strike fund of 2,000,000 Francs for the support of the strikers. In Germany, financial support for the unorganised who are struggling together with the organised, is now in the hands of the W. I. R. which achieves tremendous work in this sphere and organises collection campaigns. I would like to make myself quite clear on this question, so as not to leave room for illusions. Future development will compel the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement to raise the question of strike movements independent of financial support by the reformist trade unions, that is to say, without an absolute guarantee of the financial side. Economic struggles, too, must be shown to the workers in their true aspect, they must be represented as struggle against the employer, the State power and reformism. This implies of course enormous difficulties.

I cannot possibly go in my report into all the details of the preparation and carrying through of economic struggles, I will merely point to a few fundamental questions.

The preconditions for this tremendous revolutionary work in all the Parties are:

The strengthening of factory work the formation, development and greater activity of our factory nuclei.

Political ruthlessness in the carrying out of the tasks of the struggle against social-fascism and fascism.

Internal reorganisation of the Party for all struggles. For instance, if struggles break out such as the Ruhr struggle or the strikes in France, the best forces of the PolBureau must

be sent to the strike area, in order to give an impetus to the work.

It is also of the utmost importance to make agitation and propaganda bear on the actual movements. Not only the comrades, who are specially engaged in trade union work, but also the heads of the Party have to intervene constantly both in the centre and in the districts to intensify the work. We must above all draw attention to conditions in enterprises, among women workers and young workers, in order to rouse the workers. Elastic methods must be adopted in connection with the continuation or breaking off of struggles. The latter case can lead to great losses in our ranks if we only superficially examine the fighting mood of the strikers and the general fighting situation. If we go a step too far and miss a link in the chain of development of a strike or political movement, it might cost us very dear, it might exact sacrifices which are perhaps unnecessary. In view of the accentuation of the general struggle and of strikes, the question of new reserves is extremely important. In industrial struggles, we must not limit ourselves to the workers of individual enterprises, to the strikers themselves, we must concentrate our entire political work on the next movement and, beyond it, on the whole proletariat in the respective country. Such measures must be taken, of course, not in every strike, but when the strike spreads to other branches of industry, or when a very considerable number of workers are involved.

**Women delegate conferences** strengthen the fighting alliance between the strikers and the proletarian women who have sometimes failed to understand that strikers have to struggle frequently for weeks to enforce their demands. We must not limit ourselves in these struggles to economic demands, but must raise at the same time the question of struggle against the arbitration system, against the bourgeois government, the social-democrats, factory fascism and fascist organisations which are making common cause with the employers and the government; we must further raise the question of the withdrawal of the police, the release of the prisoners etc. Mass mobilisation must be supported by mass demonstrations of the whole proletariat and by keeping the strikers themselves and all the workers all the time informed about the development of the movement and of all political events. This is very necessary indeed, in order to give the strike a political character and to make the workers realise the political importance of the struggle.

In his concluding speech, Comrade Kuusinen pointed out the fact that the cotton operatives struggles in Lodz (Poland), München-Gladbach (Germany) and in South France took place almost simultaneously, without the least connection being established among the strikers. What should be done in such situations? This is a matter for the R. I. L. U. It must see that delegates are sent mutually to the strike areas, in order to learn by experience, to strengthen international solidarity and to develop the fighting spirit of the masses also internationally.

### OUR TACTIC AT THE FACTORY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

I am coming now to our tactic at factory council elections and the problem of the unorganised. The difficulties which we encounter in the carrying through of our tactic during industrial struggles, are even greater now, when we are applying the new tactic at the factory council elections. Let us examine the development since 1924.

Since then, lists of factory council candidates were made up in Germany, with a few exceptions, as trade union lists, i. e., that only trade union members, mostly reformists, were put on the factory council lists. We must consider where we would have got to if, in the present development towards social-fascism, we had not broken through this method. We would have followed in the wake of social democracy, we would not have displayed any fighting spirit or will to fight against the reformists. We would have drifted into a situation which would have been very dangerous to the whole working class, if we had not applied our new tactic in time.

We must admit at the time of the VI. World Congress there was not the same determination as now in the German delegation in regard to breaking with the old tactic of factory council elections, as is now the case. The Comintern, together with the German Party Executive, had to insist on this before

it was done. At that time we had not yet decided to put up independent lists of candidates under political slogans. In the January decisions of the Comintern, 1929, the questions of our tactic at factory council elections was brought forward in a sharper form, the factory council was looked upon as an organ of strike leadership and revolutionary policy.

When we began to apply the new tactic, we found that our own ranks had to be prepared for it ideologically, in order to remove the social-democratic relics from the Party. Only by means of convincing political arguments was it possible to persuade the whole Party that a change of tactic at factory council elections — concentration on the new labour element created by capitalist rationalisation, on the millions of badly paid wage earners, especially woman and adolescent labour — is absolutely necessary. Certain sections of our Party did not fully understand this development. Some comrades would have preferred bargaining, in order to get a number of oppositional delegates onto the joint factory council list, instead of putting up our own lists. This policy would have meant renouncing revolutionary mass work and struggle against reformism on principle. This was the main question. In the last years, before we took up the new tactic, the platform of factory council elections was not a political platform. Now, when our tactic is applied, political problems of the proletarian revolution play an important role in such elections. The new tactic also enabled us to strengthen and consolidate our organisational positions in enterprises. Comrades, if we had applied this tactic in the enterprises with enthusiasm and energy throughout Germany, we would have achieved still better results. But in many enterprises and in whole districts of Germany, we could not enforce our tactic because time was too short for general political preparation and because there was too much opposition in the Party, our forces not being strong enough to break down this resistance rapidly. Nevertheless, the positive results in the various districts were the most convincing proof of the correctness of our tactic.

Comrades, there were various weak points in our work, as for instance, inadequate organisation of employees' council elections, inadequate mobilisation of the masses in the preparation and carrying through of factory council elections, omission to appoint election committees for election work in general etc. But in spite of these defects, the result was surprising, nay, even staggering.

If we were able to achieve such a result in spite of all social-democratic remnants, defects, sins of omission, and inner opposition, what enormous forces for class struggle and Communism there must be in the proletariat!

Our next tasks in this sphere are enormous. If our Red factory councils in Germany do not carry on a palpably better policy for the workers in the enterprise than the reformists, a certain amount of distrust will develop against them and also against us. (Neumann: Berlin transport workers!). We fared, for instance, badly among the Berlin transport workers, because our factory councils there did not take up a determined enough attitude towards the management, neither did they behave on May Day as they should have done. We are compelled to hold in Germany not only elementary courses on the field of activity with which every factory council must be familiar, we must also give political instruction which enables factory councils to carry out the revolutionary tasks of all the workers of the enterprise.

The firm connection between factory councils and the other united front organs in the enterprise and the masses, education of trade union functionaries and factory councils, constant representation of workers' interests in the enterprise, establishment of a revolutionary body of representatives, organisation of conferences of local and district factory councils, — such are our immediate tasks. Factory councils must be trained for leadership of political struggle in the enterprise. We must coordinate factory councils fractions not only on a local and district, but also on a central scale.

A few experiences during the factory council elections in Czechoslovakia and Austria. Was our tactic applied in Czechoslovakia? It was not. In this sphere our work in Czechoslovakia was very inadequate. In the Czech Party, the question was considered only from the trade union standpoint, and **not from the standpoint of revolutionary mass work.**

There are many illusions in our own ranks about factory councils. There are comrades in the French Party who think

that the formation and organisation of factory councils should be sanctioned by the bourgeoisie. As far as I know, there are also comrades in the French Party who think that it should be proposed in the Chamber to pass legislation for the development of a factory council movement. There is also a tendency in the French Party to connect the factory council movement with the slogan "control over production".

From the purely constitutional and legal standpoint of the bourgeoisie, factory councils are organs by means of which the bourgeoisie is trying to carry through its policy, its "industrial peace" measures. The functions of factory councils are laid down by law. Naturally, just as the bourgeoisie tries to make use of factory councils in its own way, we make use of them in the revolutionary way by endeavouring to bring them under our influence, and by developing them into points of support for revolutionary policy and work in enterprises. We are using them in the anti-imperialist front and in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, fascism and social-fascism.

### THE PROBLEM OF THE MILLIONS OF UNORGANISED AND THEIR INCLUSION IN THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS FRONT.

Comrades, what is most important in the tactic of factory council elections? I think that our greatest achievement in this respect was — that for the first time new sections of the proletariat — the most oppressed sections — the unorganised have played an important role in this struggle. This big mass problem is of decisive importance for the development of our Party and its struggle for hegemony in the ranks of the proletariat. By consulting all the most important delegations, I have tried to find out the relation of organised to unorganised. According to the estimate of the delegations the state of affairs is as follows: In Czechoslovakia, the unorganised constitute about 65%, in Great Britain about 70%, in Germany 73%, in America 90%, in France about 91% and in Poland as much as 95%. Comrades, if we analyse this question in connection with the regrouping of the proletariat as a result of capitalist rationalisation, and also take into consideration that certain groups of the labour aristocracy are better organised than other workers, also that the numerical strength of organised workers varies according to occupations (printers, for instance, are organised up to 100%, whereas in other industrial groups the percentage of organised is very small), these figures assume considerable importance. Of special importance is the fact that the unorganised are mainly employed in big and medium enterprises, and very few of them in small enterprises. The unorganised have played an important role in the recent struggles. The unorganised have been frequently more revolutionary than the organised workers. There are definite reasons for this. We can see that in the process of capitalist rationalisation, the structure of the mass of the workers has undergone a change. Capitalism is applying new methods of exploitation in the process of production, and is drawing into it new sections of workers, especially women and young workers. There is an increasing wage-disparity between the labour aristocrats, the privileged workers in the process of production, and the lower strata of the proletariat who are more and more oppressed and who get less and less wages in the most important industries. This fact plays a very important role in regard to the change in the composition of trade unions.

### THE NEW RESERVES AND THEIR GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION WORK.

Throughout the world, the reformists are trying to block the way to the trade unions for the lower strata of the proletariat. In America, for instance, membership dues are so high, that many workers cannot afford to join the trade unions. In Germany, unemployed are not allowed to join the trade unions. In the Ruhr lockout, when proletarian elements wanted to join the unions in order to support the revolutionary trade union opposition, the trade union bureaucrats refused to admit them. The same happened in the shipwrights' strike. Owing to this state of affairs the trade unions are gradually becoming organisations of the upper strata of the proletariat. The following statistic of membership dues in the A. D. G. B. shows clearly that a social reshuffling is taking place in the structure of the reformist trade unions:

In 1924, the annual contribution of every 100 members amounted to 10.40 M., from 10.8% of the whole membership.

In 1927 this percentage was reduced to 5.2.

In 1924, the annual contribution of every 100 members was from 10.41 to 26 M., from 39.2% of the total membership.

In 1927 this percentage was reduced to 17.2%.

In 1924 the annual contribution of every 100 members was from 26 to 52 M., from 45.7% of the total membership.

In 1927, from 57%, namely an increase.

In 1924 the annual contribution of every 100 members was 52 M. from 4.3% of the total membership.

In 1927, from 20.6%, namely an increase.

We see an enormous increase in the percentage of the biggest contributors, a sure sign that the reformist bureaucrats are resting more and more on the well-to-do sections of the proletariat and are making entry into trade unions difficult to the lower paid workers. Women and young workers constitute an enormous percentage of the unorganised.

We are therefore confronted with the decisive question: how can we get these unorganised masses into the unions, in order to win them for the class struggle, to enlist them for the struggle of the trade union opposition, in spite of the social-fascist ideology of the unions, in spite of the unions developing in this direction in a truly appalling manner.

It is of course difficult to persuade the masses to join the reformist trade unions. We must, nevertheless, work energetically for the inclusion of the unorganised workers in the trade union organisations. Why? Because the trade union organisations are after all the most important forms of mass organisations which have still behind them millions of workers who do not yet understand us. They are the elementary form of the class organisations of the proletariat, if they conduct a revolutionary struggle and train the masses on a class basis. Do we have examples in the past to show that whenever there is a revolutionary wave, the unorganised masses are streaming into the unions? Certainly. In the rising wave of 1922—1923, hundreds of thousands, even millions streamed into the unions, elements who are not to be found in the trade unions now. There was a similar state of affairs in Czechoslovakia and even in France at other periods when the political situation was acute. **Rosa Luxemburg** raised the problem of the unorganised already at the Jena Party Congress, in the discussion on political mass strikes. At that time there was, as is known a struggle between the revisionists, the Centre and the Left of the Party on the problem of the revolutionary mass struggle. This is what Rosa Luxemburg said at the Jena Party Congress in regard to the unorganised:

"The policy and tactic of the Party must be such as to inspire with enthusiasm and self-sacrifice also the mass of workers outside the trade union organisation. This is the only way to carry the mass of the unorganised with us and to capture them for the organisation."

These words of Rosa Luxemburg can be applied to practical work today, although the development of social-fascism will impel us to adopt another attitude in this question in a very acute situation.

Comrade Stalin has given a true picture of the development in America and quite correctly mentioned that such a development is also possible in Germany. Does anyone dispute the possibility of a similar development in Europe? Certainly not. In this upward development, when the new reserves of the proletariat are coming to us, when they dissociate themselves from the reformists, when the reformists are exposing themselves, — what brilliant opportunities we have of bringing those who do not yet march with us into the stream of revolutionary development and of organising them, in spite of expulsion and splitting methods! We must, however, carry on our trade union recruiting work differently today than in the past. Formerly, we invited workers to join the trade unions indiscriminately, without considering political views. It is greatly due to our exertions that the German trade unions increased their membership last year by 620,600. Today, this question must be put differently than in the second period. Today we no longer advocate indiscriminate entering of all workers into the reformist trade unions, we advocate only entering of class-conscious revolutionary workers, to strengthen the revolutionary opposition. This task is not an easy one, it is enormously difficult. It is our task to educate the masses

for the revolutionary struggle, to organise the masses in the struggle against the resistance of the social-fascist bureaucracy which wishes to prevent the rebellious masses from joining the trade unions. The unorganised masses will become convinced of the necessity of joining the trade unions only in the struggle for their class interests, for the revolutionary aims against the policy of the social fascists and strike-breakers. These new million masses who are mostly exploited and impoverished, who are exposed in all rationalisation measures to the strongest attacks, who are much less hindered by the barriers of trade union legalism than the social democratic trade union members who are daily exposed to the disintegrating influence of their social-fascist apparatus, have in the last struggles fought shoulder to shoulder with their organised class brothers, in the most self-sacrificing, active and revolutionary manner. Therefore Lenin has, in his article on "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", designated the work among the least organised, but the most exploited sections of the proletariat, "its bottom strata", as he called it, as "an indication, a gauge of revolutionary activity of the Communist Parties".

### THE WRONG CONCEPTIONS OF THE GERMAN RIGHTS.

There is still much confusion of ideas among many comrades in regard to the Red trade unions, with the result that in countries where the trade union movement has split, Red unions were not properly supported. If we want to equip the Red trade unions with a revolutionary fighting programme, we must make use of every strike and wage struggle, in order to strengthen the revolutionary trade union opposition, to oust the reformist unions and to adopt fighting measures in our struggle which will enable us to transfer parts of pay-offices and whole pay-offices of the reformist unions to the Red unions. We have been guilty of gross errors in the past in regard to this.

We had in our German Party sharp controversies with the conciliators in regard to the trade union question. Comrade Meyer, who belongs to the conciliator group, has pointed out that at the Essen Party Congress we designated the trade unions as the chief arena of the struggle between Communists and social-democrats. He fastened to this the assertion that we have deserted our old standpoint. We asserted, against the assertion of the conciliators, that we are pursuing our old standpoint on a higher plane of development. Today, in the period of encounters, offensives and breaking through the enemy's line, the chief arenas of the struggle are in the first place the enterprises where we must capture the mass of the organised and unorganised workers. Meyer and his friends proposed that we should attend on May Day trade union meetings, which practically meant that we were to abandon our own demonstrations. We issued the slogan of boycott of social-democratic-reformist meetings on the strength of our correct decision that May Day demonstrations must be open air street demonstrations. Also, because the reformist bureaucrats intended to foment a fratricidal struggle in the ranks of the proletariat already in the early morning. Thirdly, because we wanted all our forces for the preparation of the mass demonstration. The standpoint of the conciliators in regard to this question results from their general erroneous political conception and from the fact that they are against our new tactic.

In regard to the trade union tactic and the question of the unorganised, they ignore the present development of the class struggles of the proletariat, they put the question schematically, they transfer indiscriminately the forms and methods of organisation of the second period to the third. We know that the capture of the majority of the proletariat cannot be effected within the framework of the trade unions, that this task cannot be solved within such narrow limits, that it can only be effected in all the spheres of public life, in all proletarian mass organisations and, first and foremost, in the enterprises. Our Wedding Party Congress declared correctly that struggle for the enterprises is in the forefront of our general policy, that struggle between reformism and Communism is becoming very sharp because it is a struggle against the Triple Alliance — the employers, the state and the reformist trade union bureaucracy.

The liquidators, who have been expelled and their place-holders in the Party, want to confine themselves to the struggle within the frame of the trade unions, within trade union

legalism; by this they deny the character of the present struggles. As followers of the tail theory they cannot set themselves the task of organising the new revolutionary wave. They still consider the question of the capture of the trade unions to be the capture of the trade union apparatus. The question of the capture of the apparatus stands today quite different than in the second period. The social fascists are splitting today every trade union when there is danger for them that the revolutionary trade union opposition takes over the leadership. Capture of the trade unions means in the first place capture of the trade union masses for the tasks of the revolutionary trade union opposition against the social fascist trade union bureaucracy and their State and strike-breaking policy. Comrades, in contradiction to the Rights we are of the firm opinion that we thereby carry along with us the unorganised masses independently into the struggle and that we thereby can utilise them as levers of the revolution, as also the honestly class-conscious workers who are still in the ranks of reformism. Our opinion arises from the analysis of the present mutual relations of the class forces in general and the specific economic character of the struggles which are growing more and more into political-revolutionary struggles.

Capturing the unorganised masses stands paramount, as far as extending the class front, giving an impetus to the revolutionary movement and organising the masses by independent fighting organs, are concerned. In this connection, I will concentrate on three categories of workers; women workers, young workers and agricultural labourers. Comrade Lenin repeatedly said: "The Party must study the workers' life, examine the content of the struggles and perceive the most important categories of the fighters."

#### THE ROLE OF THE WOMEN WORKERS, THE YOUNG WORKERS AND THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS.

Capitalist rationalisation has effected a thorough social reshuffling throughout the world, and especially in the most important industrial countries. According to the last occupational census from 1913 to 1927, there are three million more women workers in the process of production, and according to the last factory inspection report in 1927, 26% of the women workers are employed in medium and big industrial enterprises. According to the latest statistics, over 4 million young workers are employed in industry.

In the 8 most important branches of industry in Germany women's wages fluctuate between 55.1% (in the metal industry) and 74.8% in (the textile industry) of men's wages. Wages are still lower for the young workers. Women's wages amount on an average to 62.5 per cent. of men's wages. In Poland matters are even worse in this respect, the figures there are positively appalling, especially in regard to young workers. There are cases where young workers get 5% of men's pay. On average, young workers' pay in Poland is 25% of the men's pay. It is by no means accidental that in West White Russia alone at least 10 young workers' strikes have taken place lately. I will pick out a few facts which are important because they help us to realise the importance of these sections of workers in our struggle.

In the cotton operatives' strike in North France: did not women and young workers stand up for the economic demands, and did they not also join the political struggle, the struggle with the police in the streets? Women especially were to the fore. Let us take, for instance, the political mass strike after the May incidents in Berlin. Was it purely accidental that women cigarette makers and women workers in the boot factories were the first to respond to our political slogans of mass strike? We had held preliminary women workers' delegate conferences, and it was by no means accidental that revolutionary women workers were the first to respond to the slogan of the Party.

Of particular importance is also our work among the youth. It was not for nothing that this question was so thoroughly dealt with in the discussion and in Comrade Kuusinen's concluding speech on the first agenda item. Hitherto, our Parties have not realised what will be the task of young workers in the coming struggles, they have not realised that we must rouse their fighting enthusiasm, must emancipate them from bourgeois and reformist influence and must bring them nearer to us. We have paid much too little

attention to the Young Communist League, to the new field of activity among the young workers and working women.

I am coming now to the third category, the agricultural labourers. They are the most exploited and oppressed section of the proletariat. Though bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the whole proletariat, agricultural labourers are a special category, because they are not as class-conscious as the industrial proletariat and are therefore misused by the reaction in the fight against the proletarian revolution. They do not see the daily life in the factories. The accentuation of the war danger and the growth of fascism which has an enormous influence on these agricultural labourers, make it incumbent on us to penetrate into these circles, especially in the agrarian countries where these questions are even more important than in industrial countries. Lenin once said: "Without organisation of the agricultural workers there is no organisation of the proletarian revolution". We must therefore carry on specific work in this respect in all Parties, we must organise constant reporting and control over this work.

These new sections are the great reserves which will, under our leadership, have the greatest importance in all the approaching struggles. Because from the organisational-strategic standpoint the rallying and organisation of these millions of rebellious oppressed sections and their comprehension into the united front organs, created by the working class under our leadership, signify a revolutionary bond for the strengthening of our fighting forces in the whole world. Because from the political-strategic standpoint with the extension of our proletarian basis these proletarian divisions, together with the millions of workers and peasants in the Soviet Union and the oppressed colonial peoples who are again revolting, are beginning to become a revolutionary world army, against which the world bourgeoisie and their active confederates, fascism and social fascism will mobilise and activate all their fighting forces. With the rising revolutionary strike wave of economic and political struggles, of the murderous exploitation by means of capitalist rationalisation in this development which is full of contradictions, this great world struggle will make great claims on us, on the C. I., the R. I. L. U., on all Parties. Just as the Chief Army Command in the war, according to the strength, the fighting and war-field of the enemy, mobilises and lets its armies attack in the struggle and in the fighting strategy in order to push back and to annihilate the enemy, we must also understand, in the revolutionary world policy and in the revolutionary work which our Parties have to carry through in the various countries, to attack the class enemy, to achieve successes with as little losses and sacrifices as possible and to oppose to the offensive of the class enemy with great boldness and revolutionary deliberation of the political action, our counter-offensive in all spheres of the political struggle.

#### NEW METHODS OF EXPLOITATION BY CAPITALIST RATIONALISATION.

Definite premises must be created if real revolutionary trade union work is to be done. Firstly, maximum firmness, experience and knowledge of class strategy, internal coordination and unity in the Party. But not only internal coordination and will to fight in our own ranks is the indispensable premise, we must convince the whole proletariat that we are the real bearer of proletarian class unity in revolutionary struggles against the social-fascist destroyers and splitters of the labour movement. We must develop new fighting plans, we must find out new fighting methods and fighting forms, we must proceed on new fighting paths and strengthen and extend our political-organisational tasks by a new bolshevist fighting strategy. Our class enemy, trust capital, is also effecting a "tactical change", it is using new and stronger fighting methods against the working class. We must realise that the second wave of capitalist rationalisation will enormously increase the exploitation of the mass of the workers and will worsen their position enormously. Methods of exploitation will be brought into play, such as are not yet fully developed today. We know what the premium system is, we know that job-work is all the go in the most important branches of industry, but in the meantime something new has been introduced in a big concern in Germany. What are the new factors in this? To spur the working men and women on to increase their output beyond

the normal standard, which as it is can only be reached by fully capable and vigorous workers, by bonuses for increased output, by a system of premiums, is a cunning and devilish system. The employer seeks, by means of agreement with individual workers, to abolish in practice the collective agreements. Further, he wishes to fetter the workers and enthuse them by means of extra pay accompanied by the greatest exploitation and intensity of labour, and to prepare the way for the community of the economic interests by the workers and employers in the factory.

It means introduction of a normal task which is so high that only the strongest and healthiest person can do justice to it. This means that the employer is aiming at still greater exploitation in the enterprise. It goes without saying that capitalist rationalisation will continue to develop. I deal so fully with the question of payment by results, because in 1927, when the North German Wool Concern demanded the introduction of payment by results, the trade union bureaucrats rejected this demand on principle, on the plea that this would mean increased exploitation of and bigger job-tasks for the workers. They call it "refinement of the job-work system". And yet, the reformist trade union bureaucrats signed an agreement in April 1929, according to which payment by results and the premium system are being introduced. "Der Textilarbeiter", organ of the reformist textile workers' union, writes as follows on April 19, 1929 about this infamous agreement:

"It is a bridge for the future. The contracting parties will have to prove whether, throughout the duration of this agreement, what they contracted for has been loyally carried out in good faith. To judge by the state of affairs and in view of the declaration made before the arbiter when this agreement was signed, it would seem that both parties, who have entered on to entirely new ground, will really endeavour to promote the victory of the new idea. It has

been possible to bring about a very complicated piece of work which will probably have far reaching consequences."

In 1927, the "Textilarbeiter" wrote as follows on this question:

"The management of the concern which has introduced in its enterprises payment by results, has done so for the sole reason of increasing output, i. e. it wanted to use to the utmost the labour power of the individual. For this reason, it has added to the existing maximum rates special extra premiums for output up and above the highest former output."

By introducing payment by results, the employers aim at increased exploitation. They do not want the workers to rest even one or two minutes. They are to work 9 hours and more like a machine. If this system of payment by results is introduced everywhere, we will witness a big change in the system of production. A big difference will be made between healthy and sickly people, between younger and older workers etc. This is of enormous importance not only for Germany, but also on an international scale. Precisely in the present situation, it is of the utmost importance to bring the mass of the workers into energetic, ruthless struggle against capitalist rationalisation. Comrades, that is why we attach so much importance to the inter-wage agreement struggles. These struggles are a direct attack on the long tariff agreements and on the state arbitration system. They undermine this system and break through it. In all the struggles which I have sketched out here, one can see that nearly all of them exceed the limits of an ordinary wage struggle, that these economic struggles have a political character and are developing into political struggles. This brings me to the question of political strikes and the system of revolutionary functionaries.

## IV. Economic and Political Mass Strikes, the System of Revolutionary Functionaries.

### THE FUNDAMENTAL FEATURES OF THE STRIKES, THEIR CONVERSION INTO POLITICAL MASS STRUGGLES.

How can we develop economic actions into political actions and, vice versa, give political revolutionary actions a broad economic basis, in order to enlist as many workers as possible for the Struggle? This task is of course the most difficult tactical problem of the present stage of the struggle. Lenin attached enormous importance to the strike system. Nobody in the Russian labour movement has studied the strike statistics and the mutual relations between the economic and political strikes so attentively as did Lenin.

He wrote on this subject the following in the year 1905:

"It is today quite obvious what are the mutual relations between the economic and political strike: without their close connection a really broad movement bearing a mass character is impossible; the concrete form of this connection consists, however, in the fact that at the beginning of the movement and in the process of the drawing of new sections into the movement, the purely economic strike rouses the backward elements and brings them into movement, extends and generalises the movement and raises it to a higher level."

Have we not today some such facts of the revolutionary strike movement?

I have already spoken of the powerful strike wave in France. The mutual relation between economic and political struggles was very noticeable lately in France. In the Paris builders' strike in which 20,000 workers were involved, political demands were brought forward: release of the 2 arrested secretaries of the union, of Marty and another member of the French Party who is in prison. The builders demonstrated in the streets of Paris for these political demands, with the result that both arrested secretaries were released by the police. I have already mentioned several strikes in which, side by side with economic demands, the demand was brought forward "down with the gendarmerie, down with the police".

When such demands are brought forward in an economic struggle, it shows that a definite political aim is pursued. Lenin wrote after the great events on the Lena where he had to fight the liquidators in the movement:

"This year's May Day strike, and also a whole series of strikes during the last 18 months in Russia, have been of a revolutionary character, contrary not only to the usual economic strikes, but also to the demonstrative and political strikes with demands for constitutional reform, as for instance, the recent Belgian strike. This peculiarity of the Russian strikes, which is entirely due to revolutionary conditions in Russia, people in the grip of liberal ideas who have forgotten how to look at things from the revolutionary standpoint, fail to understand."

Thus, we see that the various strikes which we have witnessed lately are of the category mentioned by Lenin. Haven't we had a series of such strikes? The heroic strike of the cotton operatives in Bombay was a big revolutionary mass strike. The participants were not only workers of one enterprise or one industry, but also other sections of the proletariat who were driven into the political movement, who turned not only against the British imperialists, but also against the national bourgeoisie. This brought to the fore the revolutionary character of the Bombay mass strike. The scenes of the Lodz strike were repeated on May Day when, in spite of prohibition and white terror on the part of the Polish fascists, the masses demonstrated in the streets. Finally, the May Day incidents in Germany which have been already fully dealt with here. If one takes the post-war period, we clearly see the difference, for instance between the English miners' struggle and the strike which we shall have to carry through on the 1st of August. The last named strike is precisely that type of a strike which has the purpose to bring tens of thousands into movement and to draw them into the revolutionary actions. The present mass strike has the same importance of which Lenin spoke in his time:

"This means — is the revolutionary strike, the tenacious strike which springs from one place to another, from the one end of the country to the other, the repeated strike — the strike which lifts the backward elements to a new life of struggle for an economic improvement, — the strike which brands and stigmatises every striking act of the rule of violence, of arbitrariness and of crime of Tsarism — the demonstration strike, which hoists the red flag in the streets of the capital, which carries revolutionary speeches and revolutionary slogans into the crowd, into the mass of the people."

By the political revolutionary mass strikes we can measure the revolutionary strikes against imperialist war preparations and imperialism in general. What do we achieve through the application of revolutionary mass strikes? Firstly, that the masses are made to realise that the state apparatus and the reformists are entirely at the service of capitalism. We are destroying the illusions which the proletariat still has about the role of social-democracy. The masses are realising that the economic democracy preached by the trade union bureaucrats is only meant to mislead the workers. In Germany, they see, that in the republic with a social-democratic government, they are as much oppressed as under the monarchy, and this disperses the fog of illusions which still holds them captive. Also in regard to the war danger and the so-called defence of the fatherland, the workers begin to see clearly. We are educating the masses to a recognition of their own strength. In this connection, I would like to quote a few sentences from Lenin's report at a youth meeting in Zürich on the Russian Revolution of 1905. He said:

"The real education of the masses can never be separated from independent political and, especially, revolutionary struggles of the masses themselves, it cannot take place outside these struggles. It is struggle which educates the exploited class, it is struggle which makes it realise its own strength; struggle widens its horizon, develops its capacities, clears its mind, forges its will."

What Lenin said then, applies also to the present mass struggles. The illusions of the masses are shattered in the struggle, and this provides us with a basis for the education of the proletariat for the fulfilment of its revolutionary tasks. How do we educate the masses for confidence in the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition, as well as in the Red trade union? Have we already the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the workers? Certainly not! it is only in the course of struggle that the masses will acquire confidence in us and our leadership. Revolutionary Strikes are the most important means in the capture of the majority. In the present struggles, in the political mass strike we unite the backward sections of the proletariat with the class conscious advanced elements, and obtain thus a strong united front.

We organise the masses through their own fighting organs, by developing their self-activity, by establishing the system of revolutionary representatives. This brings me to this special task the solution of which we are taking up now in Germany. I want to say at the start that such mobilisation and organisation will be very difficult in some of our Parties, that retrogressive tendencies are likely to crop up, when the masses do not know how to make use of political struggle as a means of attack. On the strength of such retrogressive tendencies which are possible and probable in some places, it is essential to be quite clear on this point in our own ranks. All the Parties must take up this question, just as we have done in Germany, in regard to the system of revolutionary representatives.

## V. The Struggle Against Right Deviations and the International Tasks of the Communist Parties.

### THE YAGLOM-TOMSKY GROUP IN THE C. P. S. U.

Comrades, we can say without exaggeration that our successes since the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. and the VI. World Congress have been truly amazing. But let us examine also the fact which cannot be denied that the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. and of the VI. World Congress have been carried through by our Parties much too deficiently and partly very badly. This great turn, the new strategy of political life, was a great school of our whole political work.

We have in the enterprises, firstly, factory nuclei; secondly, the revolutionary trade union opposition and thirdly, factory councils which have other functions to fulfil in the enterprise than the factory nucleus and the trade union opposition. But we must have another basis from which we can launch mass actions whenever the class enemy tries to attack the workers, from which we can mobilise the mass of the workers for the revolutionary line. When we set ourselves the aim of developing economic strikes into political and at the same time into revolutionary mass strikes, it is clear that this is not only a question of carrying through a correct political line, but that it is necessary to create a system, an organisation with which we are able to beat factory fascism, Christian and yellow trade unions, the social-fascist bureaucracy and its social-democratic network of functionaries in the enterprise.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY FUNCTIONARIES SYSTEM.

Comrades, we must give new forms to the growing confidence of the masses in the Communist movement and in the revolutionary trade union opposition. What does the system of revolutionary representatives mean? We say, deliberately, system of revolutionary representatives, because it is not a system of Party representatives which would consist only of organised Communists. This is not our aim in the struggle for class unity. We are struggling for the whole mass of the proletariat. To develop the masses for self-initiative and self-activity, we have to bring into this network of representatives in enterprises also non-Party and honest social-democratic workers, who possess the confidence of the revolutionary workers in the factory.

The social democrats, on their part, are already beginning to establish everywhere such a system of representatives. In Hamburg, for instance, they have already such a system in the enterprises. The Berlin S. P. G. advertised recently in the "Vorwärts" for 3 secretaries for special "work" in enterprises. Also in other big German towns, we have noticed the social democrats' strong orientation towards big enterprises. This shows that although the social democrats cannot prevent our measures, they are endeavouring to combat our factory work and to make it more difficult. In spite of this counter-attack of the reformists, and attempts at intimidation on the part of employers, we were fairly successful already at the time of the Wedding Party Congress with the construction of the system of revolutionary representatives. In the course of two to three months we succeeded in establishing a network which has become part of the Labour movement and has developed the right of the masses to have their say in everything. Such a system of representatives in the departments of enterprises gives the workers an opportunity of constantly controlling their elected representatives. There have been already cases when representatives who did not do their duty were recalled by the workers of their department.

The system of revolutionary representatives is sure to become the prop and pillar of our Bolshevik strike tactic. The strike campaign is a political campaign. We cannot carry through strike campaigns in enterprises, unless we have a definite political and organisational basis in all the branches of a big enterprise. This is precisely the function of the system of representatives. Let us go a step further. When this policy has been established, the body of representatives will play a very important role whenever our Parties have to go into illegality. In times of accentuated war danger, when war breaks out and for the transformation of war into civil war, the factory is the decisive starting point.

For the first time we have broken through, by greater mass movements, the social-democratic traditions in all spheres of the labour movement. It was not easy to carry through the new tactic. Our cadres were clumsy, they were still partly enveloped in the fog of social-democratic tradition, and we had first of all to get them out of this fog. Certain groups in our Parties frequently offered opposition to the application of the new tactic and sabotaged decisions, sometimes unconsciously, but frequently the sabotaging went on on the sly. Even in our leading Party of the Communist International, the C. P. S. U., these

Right deviations made their appearance in the trade union-political sphere. The Right wing of the C. P. S. U. was very strong in the Central Trade Union Council. It wanted to hamper the C. P. S. U. in the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy. Several members of the Central Council endeavoured also to prevent other Parties carrying through the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. The Right and the conciliators endeavoured to transfer their general opportunist passivity to the other Parties, namely, in regard to proper application of self-criticism, to the question of struggle for increased output and to the whole development of socialist reconstruction in the Soviet Union, and in regard to struggle against the petty bourgeois moods of the backward sections of the population who come to town from the villages. The Yaglom-Tomsky group was in touch with all the Parties, especially with the German Party. I will only mention the great difficulties we had in Germany with the periodical "Einheit" controlled by the now expelled Siewert and his friends who were for many years at the head of this movement. Tomsky and Yaglom were hand in glove with Siewert and his friends, and there was considerable disagreement between us and the management of "Einheit" in regard to carrying through a truly revolutionary unity movement. We endeavoured time after time to change the political course of "Einheit", we tried to do so also in the organisational sphere, by inducing workers to collaborate. But in this we met constantly with bitter opportunist opposition on the part of these groupings. Fundamental questions connected with the struggle between reformists and Communists on matters in which principle is involved, were systematically slurred over in the "Einheit". Instead of promoting the unity movement from the Bolshevik standpoint, there were tendencies which declared that the split in the working class is the misfortune of the labour movement. Or as is the case with the renegade Walcher who demanded fusion of the Red International of labour unions with the Amsterdam Trade Union International.

Comrades, such out and out opportunist and frankly liquidatory tendencies, were frequently supported by the leading wing in the Central Council of the Soviet trade unions.

#### HINDRANCES IN THE CARRYING OUT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION TACTICS.

We can say that we have made considerable progress with our trade union-political work. Most of the liquidators have been already expelled from the Comintern, and the group of conciliators in the International, unless they change their policy, will meet with the same fate, because the policy of the Comintern is carried through ruthlessly, because our revolutionary line of class struggle is ruthlessly pursued also in our inner-Party course. Our work was hampered and impeded in our own ranks by the opportunist groupings. Right conceptions, even if they did not take immediately the form of groupings, paralysed the spirit of offensive in the Party, which was an obstacle to its revolutionary policy. There was also much wobbling in the ranks of the majority. Some comrades hesitated much too long before taking proper measures for the carrying through of the line laid down by the VI. World Congress and the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. But now we are justified in saying that this wobbling has to a great extent been put a stop to. There is already more clarity concerning the problems confronting us. Opposition in our own ranks is not as strong as before, but still strong enough to hamper us in the carrying through of decisions. Here is a short sketch of our internal life: obstacles in the way of our political work, gradual awakening to the fact that in the carrying through of our great tasks we must not forget to establish the right kind of unity and co-operation in the Party on correct revolutionary lines. In connection with general clarification and carrying the general political work onto a higher plain, we must and will drive rotten opportunist elements from our ranks.

#### THE MOST IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL TASKS.

In the international sphere our main tasks are:

1. Initiation and independent leadership of economic struggles.
2. Sharp struggle against capitalist rationalisation and energetic popularisation of the ever-growing success of socialist reconstruction in the Soviet Union. This question plays an im-

portant role in our agitation throughout the world. It is incumbent on us to destroy bourgeois rule in all capitalist countries. If we are unable to convince the working class that we can replace the old capitalist system by a better system, we will not win them for it.

Have we such opportunities for the utilisation of the successes of the proletarian dictatorship? I think that the development of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, the impetuous character of this development in the reconstruction period, the introduction of the 7-hour day in the most important branches of industry in the Soviet Union, the fact that the material and cultural life of the working class of the Soviet Union is steadily improving, whereas new reactionary methods of coercion are applied in all spheres against the working class in the capitalist countries, have not been utilised by us to the extent that they should in our agitation and also in the trade unions.

3. Politisation of economic struggles and demands, and extension of political mass struggles.

4. Establishment of united front organs elected by the working class itself, for the organisational and political consolidation of our revolutionary mass basis.

5. More thorough concentration on the establishment and development of factory nuclei.

6. Strengthening of our revolutionary work in the trade unions.

7. Destruction of the influence of the reformist trade union apparatus, consolidation of the position of Red trade unions in countries with a divided trade union movement.

8. Extension of the influence and politisation of Red factory councils.

9. More thorough internationalisation of our work and support to the colonial movement throughout the world.

10. More attention to support to the big army of unemployed, in the sense that we must draw the permanent army of unemployed into the united class front of the whole struggling proletariat.

All these tasks are closely connected with an all-round consolidation of the Red International of Labour Unions. In the last 3 or 4 years there was a tendency to ignore the Red International of Labour Unions as an important part of the labour movement, working side by side with the Communist International. There were opportunist tendencies to which I have already drawn attention, to deny the importance of the R. I. L. U. as a parallel organisation of the Communist International. If we have two different fronts: on one side, the Communist International together with the R. I. L. U., and on the other side, the II. International and the I. F. T. U., does not this mean that now, as before, we are carrying on a struggle for revolutionary trade union unity on the basis of revolutionary class struggle throughout the world? Certainly! Our aim is to conquer the world, and in this struggle against the world bourgeoisie we must weaken the various positions of reformism which we must destroy.

In connection with the struggle for revolutionary trade union unity we set ourselves the task of conquering the workers in the trade unions for Communism against social-fascism, against the Amsterdam International. This means struggle for hegemony in the proletariat between reformism and Communism throughout world. Comrades, we find ourselves now, as Comrade Molotov correctly remarked, at the beginning of a revolutionary revival among the masses. It depends on our tactic, revolutionary initiative and perseverance in how far we can give an impetus to this revolutionary revival, convert it gradually into revolutionary mass struggles, start economic and political strikes, in order to get thereby the majority of the proletariat on our side and to assume leadership in the decisive struggle for political power. Temporary reverses and partial defeats are unavoidable. We must set ourselves the task to get hold in every situation of the right link in the chain of events, i. e. we must not skip over any phase of the development, neither must we remain passive at the moment when revolutionary action is required. If we carry out our policy ruthlessly, if we stick to our course and inspire the masses with confidence in their revolutionary strength, if we apply our tactic in the spirit of offensive and ruthlessness and overcome all hesitations, we will be able to lead the proletarian forces to victory in the struggle for proletarian dictatorship and overthrow of capitalism. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

## Eighteenth Session.\*)

# Report of Comrade Lozovsky.

Comrade Thälmann's extensive and detailed report on the question of Economic Fights and the Tasks of Communists, a report with which I fully and entirely agree, deals exhaustively with a number of questions, while by preliminary arrangement I am going to deal with a number of other questions.

### THE STRIKE AS A VARIETY OF THE GENERAL CLASS STRUGGLE.

The first question which, to my mind, ought to be seriously discussed, especially at the present moment, may be formulated as follows: what is the place occupied by the economic fights in the general class struggle of the proletariat?

There is not the least doubt that the economic struggle, and its most important form — the strike, constitutes a variety of the class struggle. The strike is one of the forms of the struggle applied by the proletariat in order to achieve its aims and purposes by means of direct action against the employers. The basic methods of the struggle of the working class may be classified in the following order: the economic strike, the political strike, the revolt, and finally the civil war. All these are links of a common chain, different forms and means of the struggle of the working class at different stages of its political level, and under the different conditions in which the working class finds itself.

If we establish this chain — the economic strike, the political strike, the revolt, and the civil war — thereby we do not mean to say that there is something like an impassable boundary between the different methods of the struggle; as the struggle goes on, one of these forms passes into the other, and we may say that this does not happen accidentally, because they are links in the system of the struggle of the working class in its different stages and in its different phases. We may state that the proletarian struggle assumes one form or another, depending upon the circumstances, upon the level of political development and the correlation of the forces, as well as upon the degree of organisation existing in the proletarian party.

While the highest forms of this struggle — the civil war or the revolt — usually include also the other forms of the struggle, i. e. the civil war and the revolt are frequently combined with economic and political strikes, — the economic and political strikes, in their turn, frequently take place without reaching the climax in the shape of revolt or civil war.

It would be erroneous to think that there are here some fixed boundary lines, that the transition from one form of the struggle to another requires a very lengthy period of time, or that the primitive, more elementary forms do not contain in themselves also the traits of the higher forms and methods of the struggle. The experience of the international labour movement tells us that the strike is one of the sharpest and most effective forms of the struggle, and that it always accentuates — if not subjectively to the strikers, then objectively — the contrast between the exploited and the exploiters.

\*) The 18th Session commenced with the conclusion of the report of Comrade Thälmann, which, for the sake of simplicity, we have included in the protocol of the 17th Session. In the same manner we publish the whole of the report of Comrade Lozovsky in the protocol of the 18th Session, although the concluding portion of the report was delivered at the 19th Session. Ed.

### EVERY ECONOMIC STRIKE IS A POLITICAL FIGHT.

If it be true that the economic strike is a variety of the class struggle, then the further deduction must be made from this premise. Marx said that every class struggle is a political struggle. On the other hand, we know that every economic struggle contains in itself political elements, since it puts the workers in contrast to the employers. The degree of the political character of the strike, its scope, demands, and specific features, i. e. everything which determines the final shape of the strike, depends upon a whole number of conditions. Yet on the whole, as a rule, it cannot be doubted that every economic strike contains in itself the elements of the political struggle.

This was true also in the past, but it is particularly so at the present time when we are witnessing the last phase of capitalism — monopoly capitalism, when we see the unmistakable fusion of the reformist T. U. apparatus with the bourgeois State, and when the fascist reaction holds sway in a number of countries. It is under such circumstances that the political traits of each economic strike stand out in particular relief. And I believe we may recognise it as a law that under the specific social circumstances of the present, under monopoly capitalism, under the fusion of the T. U. bureaucracy with the bourgeois State, under the conditions of fascist reaction, every economic strike constitutes a political fight.

Insurrection is an art. A still greater art is civil war. Yet, it is also an art to lead strikes, especially when scores and hundreds of thousands of workers are involved in the fight. Experience and Marxian theory have worked out the forms and methods of leadership by the party of the proletariat in the event of the armed insurrection, whereas the question of the leadership of strikes has not been worked out, and yet the study of this domain of proletarian strategy and tactics acquires exceptionally great importance in the present phase of the struggle. The art to arouse the masses is a difficult and intricate art, but we should master it upon the basis of studying the great wealth of experience gained in the class fights of the proletariat.

### MILITARY SCIENCE AND CLASS WAR.

Wherein is the weakest, the most vulnerable point of all our Parties? Not in the fact that there is insufficient activity of the masses, nor that the Parties run on ahead while the masses lag behind, but in the fact that the parties are lagging behind the masses. We have a tremendous upheaval among the masses, and inadequate adaptability and manoeuvring ability of our Party in connection with mass movements. Under the present circumstances, when scores and hundreds of thousands of workers are drawn into the class fights, the problem of leadership in these fights becomes one of the most essential problems. And here we may apply not only those principles which were laid down by Marx and Lenin as regards leadership of the armed insurrection, but we may and should also borrow something from elementary military science. It was not accidental that Lenin had made a careful study of the works of some military specialists, particularly Clausewitz.

The counsels given by Lenin on the eve of October 1917, the famous "Counsels by an Outsider", were not only in the nature of advice given by "an outsider", but they were also definite instructions. In those instructions, in those five points, Lenin laid down, in accordance with Marxian doctrine, how the Party should behave in the event of a revolt:

1. Never play with revolt, but having started, remember that it has to be carried out to a finish.



2. It is necessary to gather a **big preponderance of forces** at the decisive place and the decisive moment, as otherwise the enemy, possessing better preparation and organisation, will crush the rebels.

3. Once the revolt is started, it is necessary to act with the **greatest determination** and positively, absolutely go over to the **offensive**. "Defence means death of an armed revolt."

4. An effort should be made to catch the enemy unawares, to grasp the moment when his forces are scattered.

5. It is essential to gain **daily successes**, however small (one might say, hourly successes if it is the case of one town), keeping up the "**moral preponderance**" at all costs.

These counsels, as all of you realise, are highly applicable to the question of how to lead economic strikes. These famous "Counsels" have now become the heritage of world Bolshevism, and I am not going to enlarge on them.

I shall take the four fundamental principles laid down a century ago by the most eminent war strategist Clausewitz, I shall read them to you, and you will say whether or no they are applicable in the leadership of economic fights.

Here are the four principles laid down by Clausewitz:

"The first and most important principle is to harness all the available forces to the last limit. Any relaxation of effort enhances the distance from the goal. Even if success be fairly probable, it would be the height of folly to refrain from making the utmost effort to render it **quite certain**. Because such efforts can never have unfavourable results."

The second principle:

"To concentrate the forces as much as possible at the spot where decisive blows are to be dealt; to run even the risk of setbacks at secondary points in order to ensure success at the chief points."

The third principle:

"To lose no time. Rapidity will nip in the bud hundreds of measures undertaken by the enemy, and will incline public opinion to your side."

Finally, the fourth principle:

"To utilise with the utmost vigour any success already gained."

How little do we know and how little do we study our own experience of the strike movements, and how still less do we utilise the experience of military science for the strike movement. Yet this course ought to be recommended to all our Parties.

How do we study the experience of the class struggle, how did we study the gigantic conflicts which occurred in recent years? Take the general strike in Great Britain, or the 17 weeks' struggle of the miners, and you will find that only 2 or 3 booklets and about a score of articles have been devoted to these events. Take the Ruhr conflict, and you will not find a serious book devoted to this subject. Take the strike movement of recent months in France, and you will find a few very valuable resolutions, but no serious study tracing day by day, and step by step, the occurrences whether positive or negative, and so on. Take the peculiar strike movement of China, or the gigantic, truly historic strike of the textile workers of Bombay. Somehow we pass by these gigantic conflicts without taking into account that at the present every serious economic fight, in which hundreds of thousands of workers are involved, is of no less importance than the famous battle of Sadowa, or the Mukden battle, or the Marne battle of 1914, or the Vistula battle of 1920. The participation of several million workers in the general strike in Great Britain — why, this is a gigantic conflict, a gigantic political event! The bourgeoisie has studied its battles for centuries. Bourgeois military science is still studying the Punic wars, and how wars were fought by Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, etc. The least military conflict of olden times, of the middle ages, the least campaign of Napoleon, his least strategical and tactical manoeuvre, all this is studied in scores and hundreds of schools. Hundreds of volumes are written on these topics, whereas our class fights, which should teach the working class of all countries, are dismissed by us in a couple of manifestoes, in a couple of articles, and that is all.

We are monstrously behind as regards studying the great wealth of our past experience. True, the economic and political fights of the working class are younger than the military battles. Strikes commenced along with the industrial revolution. Yet, we have not got a single strike of the present period thoroughly studied. The fact that we do not dedicate scores of books and essays to the study of the big economic and political strikes which should be an education for a whole generation of leaders, is the most outstanding defect of the different parties, as well as of the Comintern and Profintern. We cannot raise a real generation of leaders if they will not know how to carry on a strike and how a strike should not be carried on, if they will not know the mistakes committed by our Parties and our comrades in the leadership of the strikes, and how they should have acted. During the last year we have closely taken up this question in the Comintern and in the Profintern, but I say that in summarising the experience gained in this respect, say at Lodz, and its relation to the Ruhr, to the French strikes, to the Czechoslovakian strikes, etc. all this was done only within the limits of the country in question. I now ask the German comrades here: do many of you know the lessons of the strike movement in France, the result of our extensive study? Do many of you know the resolutions passed by the French Party, by the French Unitary Confederation of Labour on the strike movement, etc.? I ask the French comrades: do many of you know about the Ruhr, about Lodz? We may thus put the question to the different countries and we shall have to observe the deplorable fact that international experience already summarised to a certain extent in the Comintern and in the Profintern, and the research work on these lines, is little known in the International. Many comrades are still refraining from seriously studying these questions. I believe this to be our shortcoming and I recommend our Parties to emulate the example of the bourgeoisie which studies in special schools how to destroy whole nations, and whose scientists write scores and hundreds of volumes on every international conflict, on every war.

#### CAN GENERAL RULES FOR STRIKE LEADERSHIP BE LAID DOWN?

What types of strikes can we distinguish on the basis of our experience?

Strikes occur of the following types: 1. spontaneous; 2. organised; 3. aggressive; 4. defensive; 5. solidarity strikes; 6. intermittent; 7. local; 8. district; 9. in one branch of industry; 10. general; 11. international; 12. economic; 13. purely political. These, then, are the different types of strikes which we have. These are the different types we have to deal with, and in these the Communist Parties should play a distinct, decisive role. And you know that it is fairly difficult to play a decisive role without a satisfactory understanding of the movement!

Is it possible to lay down some general rules for the leadership of all types and kinds of strikes? Is it possible to lay down some rules that might be equally acceptable everywhere, regardless of the different level of development reached by the movement, regardless of the specific conditions of the country, and so on?

If we want the general staff, the leadership of the strike, irrespective of its size, to be equal to the situation, as is urged by the Comintern, the following should be the rules guiding the leading staff at the head of the strike movement:

"1. To choose the suitable moment for the blow; 2. to choose the weakest spot of the enemy and to aim the blow at the weakest link; 3. to seize the initiative and to be able to keep it; 4. to hit at the centre of the enemy's concentration (Clausewitz); 5. to forestall possible actions of the enemy and paralyse those dangerous to us; 6. to use all means to render the blackleg organisations harmless; 7. to be able to resort to roundabout and concentric movements; 8. to ascertain the limits of pressure to be brought to bear on the enemy, and his degree of resisting ability; 9. not to be carried away by success, and be able to terminate a strike in time; 10. after a successful strike, never yield to temptation and provocation, and be able at the necessary moment to start the fight again; 11. to be

able in case of need to retreat in time, to make a truce, without losing one's head; 12. never to forget that all agreements with the bourgeoisie are no more than a truce, and always prepare for a new attack ("An agreement is a means to gather the forces" — Lenin); 13. to be able at the decisive moment to attract new reserves, chiefly, workers from socially necessary enterprises; 14. never, after the start of a strike, to take up a referendum on the question whether to continue or discontinue the struggle; 15. never to carry on negotiations with the employers behind the scene, but to do everything openly, in full view, promptly informing about it all those who are concerned; 16. to organise detailed information on the course of the strike, in order to paralyse the activity of the bourgeois press; 17. to organise connections among the strikers of the different districts in order to keep the whole of the struggling army in a constant state of tension; 18. to get not only working women, but also the wives of workers to participation in the strikes, to the struggle against blacklegs, etc.; 19. immediately after the outbreak of a strike, to shut all the liquor establishments, which usually are the centre of blackleg activity; 20. to arouse sympathy for the strikers among the toilers and workers of all categories; 21. to send strikers' children from one district into another or from one country into another; 22. to organise special bands to fight against the blacklegs and the hirelings of the employers; 23. during big strikes, to set up a wide agitation in the army in order to prevent possible intervention by the troops; 24. to organise special detachments to stop the transport of goods from the factories and the delivery of raw materials; 25. to disorganise the ranks, and particularly the rear of the enemy (to conclude agreements with individual employers, to deal the first blow to the chairman of the employers' association, and so forth)."

These are the rules which I have drafted upon the grounds of the experience of the strike movement, of the experience of the political struggle of our Party, and finally, of the experience accumulated by military science. Personally I believe these rules to be quite correct. Of course, it is very difficult to lay down rules for all countries, for all phases of the struggle, and so on. Yet, one might argue with equal success that it was generally impossible to create such a thing as military science, nevertheless it does exist. For, military strategy and tactics represent most serious scientific systems to which numerous volumes of researches have been devoted.

The question involuntarily arises: why is it that in our Parties, in the Comintern and in the Profintern, we are still unable to summarise the experience accumulated in the realm of strikes? For we are not working in a desert place, we have a vast fund of experience, and not a day or an hour passes without bringing a new strike, and new actions by the workers, while the forms of these actions are most diversified. Sometimes in a little strike involving a few hundred workers it is possible to gather such huge interesting material concerning the direct action of the masses, the methods of bringing pressure to bear upon the employers, etc., as may not be gathered in big conflicts. Yet we do not study this, and not only are we unpardonably stewing in the juice of our own national limitations, but frequently we do not study even those strikes that take place in our own country. This applies to the extent of nine-tenths to nearly all the Parties.

On the question of strikes, as is known, we differ fundamentally from the reformists? What is the essence of the present position of the reformists? A strike, they say, is too costly to the national economy, and for this reason an end should be put to strikes. The whole philosophy of international reformism is concentrated in the brief formula: strikes are very costly. It is true that strikes are costly. I may refer here to an American professor, Professor Hiller of Chicago University, who has written a whole book entitled "The Strike".

This professor says: "Of course, a strike is a very costly thing, but just because it is costly, it is effective to a certain extent." I believe the word "to a certain extent" may be omitted, and then the definition of the bourgeois professor will be correct. The strike is effective just because it is costly. And we approach the strike movement not from the standpoint of how costly it will prove to the employer or to the so-called

national economy — not by this consideration are the Communist Parties guided — we leave it to the reformists to approach the problems of the strike movement from this point of view. **Just because the strike is costly and thereby hits at the national economy of the employers, we adopt it as a sharp weapon of the struggle.** Yet, comrades, hence it follows that our Parties should act in this sense upon the grounds of the huge already accumulated experience, which is not as yet the case, as you all know. In this respect we still have a great deal of improvisation, a good deal of spontaneity, a good deal of talk about strikes — of course, this also means progress as compared with the past — but we are still applying very little even the most elementary rules of strike leadership.

The independent leadership of the economic struggle implies a general readjustment of the whole of our activity. And it was not by accident that this has coincided with the tactics of "class against class" in parliamentary elections. Some believed — e. g. in France, especially during the first period of the discussion — that the slogan of "class against class" was only a parliamentary tactic. There was something similar also in England, where there was considerable opposition to the new tactic. On the other hand, there were also comrades who believed that our new line of leadership in economic fights was purely a trade union question, purely a tactic applied in the economic fights, but not associated with the whole of our position. Yet it is most closely connected with the whole intensification of the struggle against the social democracy, with the intensification of the struggle against the trade union bureaucracy, and with the intensification of the struggle for the leadership of the masses. It was from this standpoint that the problem was raised of creating special organs to lead strikes.

Although this was fully understood in some countries, nevertheless we have carried out a vast amount of work during the last year, if we consider the Comintern, the Profintern, and all their Sections as a whole. Naturally, the results of this work are not equal in all countries. What in some countries constitutes already an accomplished phase, is only being approached in other countries. For instance, in Germany the question of "Zwingt die Bonzen" (Compel the Bureaucrats) has already been settled, whereas in Austria it still exists. What has been accomplished in Germany and other countries, will yet have to be seriously done in a number of countries outside of Europe. A whole number of slogans which we have discarded are now taken up by the Trotskyists, by the progressives and Socialists, as you will presently see. In a word, a tremendous political differentiation has taken place. It has not yet reached the very depth in some of the Parties, it has not yet been realised by all the members of the Communist International. There is still a large amount of work in this sense because the level of the Parties is not the same, nor have they achieved an equal degree of political development.

### STRIKES ARE NOT PHILOSOPHY BUT ACTION.

It might be argued that "general rules for strike leadership" smack a little of philosophy, whereas a strike is not philosophy but action. Of course, a strike means action, not philosophy! But, comrades, the general rules with which we are dealing are not made at random, but are taken from real life.

How was this question approached by the Comintern and the Profintern during the last year and a half? We have thoroughly studied each strike in particular. Let us take the Lodz strike: Scores of meetings were devoted by the Comintern and the Profintern to a study of the whole course of the strike, of its circumstances, and of all the weak and strong points of its organisation. The experience of the strike has been summarised in a number of resolutions. Or let us take the French strikes. This question has also been the subject of a number of lengthy discussions which dealt specially and in detail with the positive and negative experience of the strikes that has been gathered in a number of resolutions. The same was done in regard to the strikes in the Ruhr, in Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere.

During the last year we have not only studied the experience of separate strikes, but have also taken upon our-

selves the initiative of convening a special International Conference to study the experience of strikes. Generally speaking, there has been no precedent of this kind in the history of the labour movement, and I assert that the Strassburg Conference has given us the very essence of the whole of our experience in this domain. Of course, the resolutions of the Strassburg Conference will probably be supplemented by actuality, but the main thing is that we have made serious efforts in the direction of studying all the questions of the strike movement and of summarising our experience. I think that it will be necessary to persevere in this direction, to continue the work, so that the decisions of the Comintern and the Profintern in connection with every strike might become the common heritage of the whole Communist International. In a number of countries, let us say, there are Party schools, etc. Do these Party schools study the experience of the strikes? Of this I am not aware, but I know the very opposite. I ask you how is it possible to form cadres capable of leading the struggle if the experience, if all the positive and negative aspects of our experiences are not studied? If we fail to do this we shall never make any headway.

### PECULIAR TRAITS OF CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC CONFLICTS.

What characterises the present wave of economic strikes? The most characteristic feature of the conflicts now developing is the **heightened political sensibility of the large masses of the workers**. Compare the situation of two years ago with what we have today. Today there is a whole number of strikes and actions on questions over which the workers would not have fought two years ago. And what is the significance of the heightened political sensibility of the working masses? Everyone among us who has studied the revolution, our revolutionary fights which have taken place in Central Europe and elsewhere — and everyone of us has studied this — knows that the characteristic trait of the eve of a revolutionary situation is the tremendous political sensibility of the masses, who poignantly and sharply react to every seemingly insignificant fact. If we look at the various strikes now going on in France, in some remote corner of Greece, Poland, the United States, in South or North America, in Japan, in China, — we see everywhere the tremendously heightened sensibility of the masses, the tremendous rise in the political reaction of the workers to such actions of the employers and the reformists to which the workers would have not reacted at all a year ago. This signifies the imminence of a revolutionary situation. This constitutes the most characteristic trait of the revival through which we are passing. We are not speaking about the revival that is yet to come; we are already in the very thick of that revival. Only the blind moles of "Against The Stream" can fail to see it. They say that the revival will come some day, they do not "lose hope of the revival". Yet, as a matter of fact, the revival is already going on before our own eyes. We are in the midst of this revival, and a whole number of isolated, seemingly trivial facts indicate the strength of this revival. I shall refer only to one or two instances reported in latest telegraphic dispatches. The strike of 2000 tramwaymen at New Orleans is accompanied by a whole number of murders; this strike is characterised by heightened activity not only of the workers but also their families, which has not been witnessed in the United States in recent years. Wives of strikers placed themselves across the tramway lines, thereby preventing the cars from running. The same is taking place in Rouen. Or, for instance, the strike in Gastonia, with wounded, killed, etc.

In Greece, a strike is declared upon seemingly purely economic demands, yet it immediately takes the shape of bloody encounters. There are masses of killed and wounded. The same takes place in other localities not only in Europe, but throughout the world. The peculiar feature of the strikes of the present period is that in the democratic countries the strike is started over a wage rise of a few cents, ending in shooting and killing, in furious fighting on both sides. I do not wish to weary your attention, or else I would simply read to you the telegraphic reports from the International class front at least for two or three weeks, and you would become convinced that the present economic strikes are impregnated with gunpowder and blood.

What is the significance of all these so-called economic fights that are impregnated with political features? They signify that tremendous revolutionary fights are imminent, that we are on the eve of a revolutionary situation in a whole number of capitalist countries.

### INTERTWINING OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MOVEMENT.

Yet, comrades, just because the economic fights, as soon as they have started, are objectively turned into political encounters, into clashes with the fascist officials and the trade union apparatus, the problem of intertwining the political and economic fights, the problem of shifting the economic fights on to the political plane, becomes the practical question of the day. We know that all this is an indication of the existence of political discontent among the large masses. For instance, take Italy where the workers are exposed to the rigours of the fascist regime, or a number of countries under similar conditions. Although this intertwining is objectively inherent in every strike, nevertheless the degree to which each strike bears a political character depends upon the subjective factor, upon the extent to which the Communist Party is capable of imparting a political character to each strike and of making it the starting ground for the development of a political movement upon a wider basis and higher level.

On the question of the intertwining of the political and economic fights, an energetic rebuke was given by Lenin to those who came forward with the theory of the "harm of confusing economic and political action".

This happened in 1912. The Bolsheviks in those days raised the question of linking up the economic with the political struggle, of turning every strike into a political fight against the autocracy, and so on. It was then that one of the prominent liquidators of that period, Yezhov, wrote in the "Nevsky Golos" about the harm of mixing the economic struggles with politics, saying that "it would be an irreparable mistake if the economic strikes became intertwined with the political action of the workers". Lenin replied to this:

"Each sentence here has to be turned into its very opposite in order to get the truth... It is wrong to say that the intertwining would be a mistake. On the contrary, it would be an irreparable mistake if the workers should fail to realise the whole peculiarity, the whole significance, the whole necessity, the whole fundamental importance of this very "intertwining". Finally, it is wrong to assert that such mixing "would have a harmful effect upon both forms of the struggle." On the contrary, it would have a beneficial effect upon both. It would strengthen both." (Lenin, vol. XII, Part. I, p. 162.)

It is necessary to warn all the Parties against assuming that this intertwining occurs in a mechanical way. It frequently takes place independently of the wishes of the Party, and frequently the workers, starting upon the grounds of the most elementary demands, come into conflict with the apparatus of the State. It is essential that on all questions, however simple and trifling they might be, the Party and the revolutionary trade unions should be at the head of the action taken by the workers. Such intertwining forms the foundation of our tactics. Yet it is not so simple and not so easy to "intertwine". For instance, a demand cannot be put up like this: "Give us a rise of 5 pennings, down with the bourgeois government!" No, a whole series of consecutive demands is required to lead on the workers to such a political demand. This is one of the most intricate problems, but we have to solve it.

The intertwining of economic and political strikes presupposes the subjective factor — the correct political position of our Communist Parties, the ability to grasp the very substance of each strike, to perceive its main issue, to see the trend of the movement of the masses, to feel the throb of the pulse of the struggle, and to understand how it is possible and how it is necessary to move the working masses against the entire capitalist system, against the bourgeois State, the reformist trade unions, etc. etc.

All these things appear to be quite elementary, and I shall be among the first to rejoice when this will really become quite elementary for all the Sections of the Communist International. Yet, wherein lies our weakness? It consists in that the things which are elementary to us are at the same time far from elementary to our cadres, and still less to all the members of the Communist Parties. That is why the greatest stress ought to be laid upon the problem of transforming economic fights into political, of intertwining these fights, of raising them to a political plane, upon the problem of turning the more primitive into the more advanced forms of the struggle. This should be grasped not only by the leaders, but by the whole of the rank and file of our Parties.

#### RESISTANCE TO NEW TACTICS BY THE RIGHTS.

What constitutes the difficulties, for instance, to our German Party in taking up the new tactics? The correct tactics, the correct slogans, the correct policy outlined by the C.C. on the question of the factory committee elections, as well as during the movement in the Ruhr, met with tremendous resistance of the lower cadres who had retained to a considerable extent the trade unionist and manifestly opportunistic tendencies in each nucleus. The C.C. of the German Party had to win the Party again when taking up the new tactics, to win each nucleus again. True, this was of great importance in the sense of raising the Party to a higher stage, nevertheless this hampered the pursuit of the correct policy.

Yet what has been done in Germany has not yet been done in a number of other countries, in a score of our Parties.

Yet what has been done in Germany? In Germany the Party has overcome the opportunistic wing, has banished it from its ranks, and now the Rights represent a small and harmless group. In Czechoslovakia the Party is considerably weaker, and owing to the existence of independent unions the opportunistic group, concentrating in its hands the leadership of the trade unions, has managed to retain certain organisational positions. In France, the Party is stronger than in Czechoslovakia, and the existing opportunistic wing is in a minority in the unitary trade unions; the Party as a whole is stronger, and together with the best section of the Unitary Confederation of Labour, it gives such counter-action to the Rights that they remain in a minority in the unions; nevertheless our French comrades should not forget for a single moment that in their Unitary Confederation of Labour there is an organisationally shaped Right wing which is politically dangerous to the highest degree. In France, owing to historic traditions, this Right wing has an anarcho-reformist face. We have there a peculiar cross-breed of traditional anarchism and modern reformism. This crystallised wing hampers the development of the Unitary Confederation of Labour, and the most determined action ought to be taken against the former.

Of course, the method of action against the Right wing in the French unions, where the rights are at the head in several federations, should not be the same as it was in Germany. In France the Rights are at the head of 4 federations, and for this reason the tactical methods against the Rights should be different. First of all, it is necessary to secure the support of all the workers in these federations, and then, upon the basis of a wide mass campaign, to isolate the bureaucratic leaders from the workers, and then the workers themselves will draw the necessary organisational conclusions.

The struggle around the new tactics has passed on from Germany to Czechoslovakia, and to France, and is now going on also in the United States of America. For instance, what does Pepperism or Lovestonism represent in America? It is the expression of the Right wing on American soil. The theory of exceptionalism (exclusiveness) is the very expression of opportunism upon an all-American scale.

The Right wing within the Comintern and the Profintern is an international phenomenon. Not Germany alone is blessed with a Brandler-Walcher group. There are some small numbers of such Brandler-Walchers in all countries. Hence, the problem of the struggle against the Right wing becomes a most serious

problem for the whole of the Communist International. Yet, how do the Rights oppose our tactics; what alternative do they propose as against our line which has been vindicated in the fights? I shall read you a few extracts, without comment, in order to show that the Rights have quite a different line from the Comintern, that they smell of social democracy, and that they have nothing in common with us. Here are a few statements made by the more consistent, the more learned opportunists in "Against the Stream":

1. "The new tactics destroy the influence of the Communists in the trade unions and in other mass organisations. The new tactics are liquidating two things: first, our influence in the trade unions, and second, the Leninist principles of trade union tactics."

If our Party had liquidated its influence, then the Brandler-Walcher influence should have grown; yet such is not the case, and one cannot make out head or tail in their theory!

2. "The new tactics are deepening the cleavage between the organised and the unorganised which has been created by the reformist T. U. bureaucracy, because together with the unorganised they are storming the trade unions from without while doing nothing within, as there is no possibility left for doing any inside work." (See article entitled "Super Maslow" in "Against the Stream" No. 2, 1929.)

3. "The Comintern and the Profintern are out to split immediately the trade union movement."

4. "The incorrect assertion as to the 'Gompersisation' and fascisation of the trade unions leads the Party to the criminal tactics of smashing the Free trade unions."

Don't you see, our furious onslaught against the whole of the gang of blacklegging T. U. bureaucrats is described as the "tactics of smashing the Free trade unions". This is the whole philosophy of Brandler-Thalheimer.

5. "By forming committees of action, the revolutionary opposition puts itself in contrast to the trade unions, to the majority of the organised workers, and thereby defeats the struggle. It is 'quackery' to claim independent leadership of economic fights, having no influence over the majority of organised workers." ("Against the Stream" No. 18.)

6. "The fight against expulsions as carried on by Niederkirchner (continuing to carry on their functions, etc.) is crime and a provocation, leading to the smashing of the revolutionary opposition."

It means that if you are expelled, or if a whole union is expelled, you should assume a penitent attitude, i. e. to put it briefly, you should capitulate. For, if you do not capitulate, it means "provocation" and "smashing the trade unions".

7. "The new tactics have been imposed upon the T. U. opposition without any previous discussion as to their soundness."

8. "The Party no longer sets itself the aim of winning the majority of the working class. Abandonment of this task, that and naught else, is the sense of the official prattle about the importance of the unorganised."

9. "The theory of so-called 'social-fascism' is naught else but the theory of giving up the task of winning the workers who are still in sympathy with reformism."

I should like to draw your attention to these gems of thought. We maintain that the fascisation of the reformist T. U. bureaucracy is going on, that the reformist apparatus is being swallowed up by fascism, whereas the Rights assert that this means the refusal of the Communists to win the workers who are still supporting reformism!

Finally, the last discovery, no less striking than the rest:

10. "As long as the revolutionary workers are drawn away from their trade union duties to toying with committees of action, the reformists enjoy full freedom; they are free from any pressure by the masses, since the Communist workers are forbidden to 'bring pressure to bear on the T. U. bureaucrats' ('die Bonzen zu zwingen')."

Here you have it, we are indulging in "toying with committees of action". The bureaucrats are quite free and happy, as nobody brings any pressure to bear upon them, and thus the Communists are smashed in the trade union movement. This is the whole message of the mouthpiece of the Rights, "Against the Stream".

One cannot help asking, what bearing has this philosophy upon the events in Germany? If the influence of the German Communist Party has really diminished, if it has allowed itself to be smashed and discredited, if it not only fails to make progress, but even moves backward, if all this be true, why do not these true "Leninists", "Marxists", etc. — as they describe themselves — make any headway?

Well, the facts tell quite the opposite story. The application of the new tactics in Germany has shown that the Party is rapidly growing, that it embraces fresh strata of the workers, that it embraces new industrial establishments, and that what is now taking place in Germany is particularly symptomatic in the sense of indicating the imminence of a revolutionary situation.

When did the Communists command such audiences in the factories as they do now? There is a number of facts to show that the social-democratic workers, the workers belonging to the reformist unions, frequently send requests to the Communist Party for speakers. In many a factory where Communists used to be denied a hearing, where they used to be driven out, they are now invited to come. What does this fact mean? The loss of influence by our Party? Of course, it means the very opposite. Hence, all this talk about the loss of influence by our German Party, about its inability to win the majority of the working class, and so forth, is not worth a brass farthing.

You will ask, is it worth while to deal with what the Rights are now scribbling? For, they are cut off slices, and is it worth while to pay any attention to them? Well, if all our Parties were on the same level as the German Party in the sense of ideological discrimination and of the struggle against the Rights, one could afford to leave this matter alone. But, comrades, in many of our Parties this question has not yet come down to the rank and file. Moreover, there is another highly important circumstance that within our Parties there are groups which defend these very views, groups of conciliators. Do you ask for proofs? Here they are. At the last Congress of the German Communist Party, in an official declaration by the conciliator group we find the following (I am only citing a few of their expressions): "The Party is now in a state of crisis". What is it that they want? They want "a break with the erroneous mass policy of the ultra-Left leadership"; they assert that "the Party leadership is departing from the established Leninist strategy for winning both the organised and the unorganised"; they say that "the Party's policy within the trade unions, its handling of the question of the unorganised, totally upsets this strategy, which means abandoning an important tactical position of Leninism." The conciliators want the Party to sign "reverses" (pledges) without any reservation, pledges made against the Communist Party and the Comintern. They say that the refusal to sign these reverses and to capitulate implies "the absence of Bolshevik manoeuvring". They are against the new tactics in the factory committee elections. They find these tactics to be "erroneous in all respects"; they accuse the Party of insufficient flexibility because the Party refuses to send delegations to wait on the reformist leaders. Finally, they assert that "there is great ambiguity in the Party on the trade union question." They declare that the new tactics fit in with "petty-bourgeois ideology" and they demand therefore the "restoration of the Leninist trade union tactics."

This is all that can be fished out from this declaration of the conciliators.

And wherein do the "Leninist tactics" of the conciliators consist? A glance at the formulae proposed by the conciliators shows them to be literally the same as are made in the "Against the Stream" articles. Instructive in this respect is the Italian example.

## THE RIGHT ESSENCE OF THE "CONCILIATIONISM" OF SERRA.

There are still some comrades who are unable to define what Serra really represents, whether he is a "conciliator" or a Right. And here is what Serra himself writes:

"The formula of 'emancipation from trade union legalism' is a dangerous one, because it is not only a problem of our emancipation from legalism, but of getting the masses to support us in this respect."

Of course, the problem is not only of our own emancipation, but of the emancipation of the masses from trade union legalism. But why is this formula dangerous, and wherein is the danger? We want to see our Parties free from legalism, and we also want to emancipate the masses from legalism. What is dangerous in this? Such talk is merely a repetition in the Italian language of what is said by "Against the Stream"

Further.

"It is entirely to our interest to secure the participation of the reformist T. U. organisations in the movement and to get the trade union leadership to share the responsibility."

This is how Serra pictures to himself the economic struggle. Do not the Brandlerites talk as well about sending delegations to wait on the leaders of the trade unions? Serra says:

"It is to our interest that they should act, that they should share the responsibility."

But Serra is not interested in mobilising the masses and in leading them; before the fight is started, he wants to know who is to be responsible for the fight. He is afraid of the Party's responsibility, he is even afraid to proceed towards independent leadership. He is afraid to raise before the Parties the problem of independent leadership in the economic struggle. To speak about Serra as a "conciliator" is to indulge in a manifest exaggeration that is absolutely unfounded. Serra is a typical Right. If some of the Italian comrades have any doubt on his score, it seems to me that such doubts are a survival of the past and a kind of illusion that Serra might be improved by good treatment. In politics, as you know, when we have to deal with serious utterances against the entire line, there must be the most ruthless and relentless action, which alone prevents deviations. Lenin repeatedly said, and it was confirmed by practice, that in order to do away with the vacillations of others, one has to quit vacillating oneself. This rule, laid down by Lenin, is applicable to the whole struggle of all the Communist Parties against any deviations.

## THE NEW TACTICS AND THE TROTSKYISTS.

The last question in this series to which I should like to draw your attention is the present role of the Trotskyists in regard to the new tactics. It is an exceedingly curious thing. The Trotskyists, who pose in the domain of pure politics as extreme "Lefts", as the Leftest people in the world, when it is a question of the concrete practical struggle among the masses, are found to be in a united front with the Rights all along the line. How did the German "Lefts" express themselves about the new tactics? They opposed them resolutely and categorically, accusing the Party of adventurism. How did they express themselves on the question of the factory committee elections? They joined the Rights in attacking the Party. How did they speak on the question of the 1st of May? Again with the Rights against the Party. The German "Lefts" are a harmless little sectarian group, something like a Russian religious sect, which marks time and keeps on repeating the same phrases. Yet, wherever the Trotskyists have the least influence, their tactics become far more pronounced.

In Belgium the Trotskyists had influence in the Union of Educational Workers. Do you know what they did? They conducted a campaign for the withdrawal of the Belgium Teachers' Union from the class International of Educational Workers and for its affiliation to the Amsterdam International. Here you have the Left Trotskyists and their trade union tactics!

And what are the Trotskyists doing in America? What are Cannon et alia doing? What do they write in their organ, the "Militant"? They speak sharply against the Party, against the decisions of the IV. Congress of the Profintern and of the VI. Congress of the Comintern that urge an intensification of the struggle against the socialists; they speak in favour of a bloc with the so-called progressives, and instead of forcing the American Federation of Labour to organise the unorganised, they advocate the slogan of "Zwingt die Bonzen" which the Communist Party abandoned 18 months ago under pressure from the Comintern and Profintern.

Such are the exploits of the Trotskyists on the international stage. At the same time in the last number of "Fahne des Kommunismus" a long article was written by Trotsky himself against Brandler and Thalheimer. Trotsky is displeased with their Right policy, while the Trotskyists pursue the same policy as Brandler and Thalheimer. What a happy subdivision of labour! The theorist and leader utters Left phrases, while his followers are doing Right deeds. At the same time, while uttering Left phrases, Trotsky does the following: he addresses a letter to Souvarine urging the latter to renounce some of his views so that it might be possible to "co-operate in future". And all this is what they call "Left tactics" and criticising the Comintern and the Profintern "from the Left".

Thus you see, comrades, a complete united front has been formed by all the backsliders from the Comintern and the Profintern, against the new tactics, against the Comintern and the Profintern. They come out under various guises, using various arguments. Yet the substance of their talk is this: do not accentuate the struggle against the social democracy, do not put up independent candidates at elections against the trade union bureaucrats, do not reject the slogan of "Zwingt die Bonzen", do not create new unions in America, join the Amsterdam International and not the class International of Educational Workers.

#### WINNING THE TRADE UNION MASSES AND NOT THE TRADE UNION APPARATUS.

About what is the quarrel with all these groups? The quarrel goes on both with them and also within our own ranks on the question of **methods for winning the masses**. Under various labels and diverse political guises, the Rights, the Centrists, the conciliators, the Trotskyists and other elements, are disputing the correctness of the line of the Comintern and of the Profintern, the correctness of the new methods which we have adopted for our more rapid and more radical penetration into the masses. The Rights are particularly sensitive when we emphasise categorically and definitely, with full Bolshevik lucidity, that we mean to win the trade union masses and not the trade union apparatus. On this question there were vacillations at the IV. Congress of the Profintern. Those vacillations were connected with all the Right and conciliatory groups. What was the nature of those vacillations? This point of view was most clearly formulated already at the IV. Congress of the Profintern by one of the conciliators, Frenzel, who said:

"The contrasting of the apparatus to the masses, which may be detected in Comrade Losovsky's words, renders impossible a concrete and practical policy for capturing the trade union positions; it renders it impossible for our comrades who are active in the trade union movement to carry on a positive fight for capturing the official positions in the trade unions."

It appears as though our task was to capture the functions in the trade unions, as though our purpose was not to win the masses, but to capture trade union positions. Recently an attempt was also made by Walcher to formulate his point of view on this question:

"Losovsky says that the difference between the 'Rights' and the Comintern consists in that the former want to capture the trade union apparatus 'whereas we have always understood under the capture of the trade unions the winning of the trade union masses'. On this point it ought to be observed that we are convinced that it is impossible to

win the trade union masses without pursuing the aim of capturing the trade union apparatus."

It may seem as though the dispute here was not over a particularly important question, and yet this is the root, this is the central question of our struggle against the Rights. According to Walcher, our aim is to capture the apparatus; but the trade union apparatus, as you know, is composed of elected trade union officials as well as of appointed officials from the insurance organs etc. If we should oust the social-democrats from their positions and capture a local union, do we thereby capture the apparatus? Not at all. **We would merely win the masses in this particular union in which we would have ousted the old representatives of the apparatus.** If it be true — and this has now been recognised — that the trade union apparatus is becoming fused with the bourgeois State, how is it possible to capture the reformist trade union apparatus? We might just as well try to capture the bourgeois State by means of peaceful collaboration. We have so far believed that the bourgeois State cannot be captured, so we were taught by Lenin. If we emphasise in all our resolutions that the fusion of the trade union apparatus with the bourgeois State has been and is going on, it follows that the trade union apparatus cannot be captured. And if during the struggle for the masses we shall chase out the trade union officials, will this mean the capture of the apparatus? He who believes in reforming the social democratic officials, in gaining over to our side the reformist apparatus men, is a hopeless case.

Comrade Smoliansky's attempt, in an article in the "Bolshevik" on this question, to draw some distinction between capturing the fascised trade union apparatus and capturing the apparatus of the bourgeois State, strikes me as incorrect. It is incorrect because Comrade Smoliansky forgets what both of us have repeatedly urged, and what has also been repeatedly urged by the Comintern. He forgets that the fusion of the trade union apparatus with the bourgeois State has turned the trade union apparatus into an auxiliary organ of this State. Do you believe it possible to capture the auxiliary organs of the bourgeois State? Obviously, no. Comrade Smoliansky is rather vague on this question, and this vagueness may lead him into confusion.

On the question of our activity in the trade unions there are two methods, two approaches. In the dispute which we have had with a number of comrades within the Profintern after the IV. Congress, including Comrade Yaglom, I asserted that Lenin, who had written so much about the necessity of working in the reactionary, base and filthy trade unions, had never said that we should work in order to capture the trade union apparatus. I challenged them to produce an utterance of this kind ever made by Lenin, and of course, this could not be done, because Lenin had never said anything of the kind. Lenin spoke about **winning the trade union masses wherever they were**, in the Catholic, Hirsch-Dunker unions, etc. But he never raised the question of capturing the trade union apparatus, nor could he raise such a question. The substitution of the slogan of "capturing the trade union apparatus" for the slogan of "capturing the trade union masses" is the expression of the fundamental difference between two political tendencies which profoundly diverge in their principles, the difference between Bolshevism and a kind of reformism which has penetrated into the Comintern.

A quite correct, quite definite and clear position on this question was taken by the XII. Congress of the German Communist Party. Again it was not accidental that in the struggle against the Rights the Congress of the German Communist Party had to state the question very sharply. **The congress combated the manifest opportunistic position and rebuked all the rights in Germany, and I believe that this was done in time.** There was so much confusion on this question within the Germany Party that it was high time to put an end to this confusion.

#### ABOUT NEW UNIONS.

One of the most poignant questions, which has caused many debates and discussions in the Comintern, which has caused bitter attacks on the Profintern by all the backsliders, is the question of new trade unions. I wish to dwell on the

experience of the new trade unions in order to examine quite objectively the positive achievements in this respect, as well as the shortcomings. You remember, comrades, what a particularly furious controversy occurred on this question at the IX. Plenum of the E. C. C. I. It was believed by the American delegation — upon this question the Majority and the Minority were for some time united — that the Left wing should concentrate its efforts upon the American Federation of Labour. This is how the problem was formulated by Lovestone. He said that the "main current" of the American labour movement was the American Federation of Labour. You remember how at the IX. Plenum of the E. C. C. I., and subsequently at the IV. Congress of the Profintern, we have categorically repudiated this theory. We advocated the formation of new trade unions in America because there are over 90% unorganised workers, while those unorganised workers are employed in the most essential industries.

It is necessary to abandon the somewhat hackneyed idea so frequently encountered, the idea that to form a new trade union means to follow the line of least resistance. No, comrades, the creation of new unions — and this has been demonstrated by experience both in America and in England — means a very serious and exceedingly difficult thing, which is far from following the line of least resistance.

The American comrades can tell us a good deal about what it means to create a union, and not only to create it, but also to try to lend vitality and activity to this new union. We now have in the United States 3 unions: the Miners' Union with approximately 7—8,000 members, the Transport Workers' Union with 5—6,000 members, and the Clothing Workers Union with 12—14,000 members. To be sure, these are little unions. Yet, the peculiarity of the situation is that there is not a single strike and a single conflict in the United States without the participation and leadership of these little unions. Why? Because the American Federation of Labour and its affiliated unions are resolutely working together with the employers. Frequently they co-operate with the employers in hiring blacklegs, in literally hiring murderers, in employing provocateurs, etc. Every strike in the United States becomes transformed into a fierce fight with masses of victims, with killed etc., as was the case at Gastonia.

Our unions in America are still extremely weak. They are poorly organised, and also ideologically weak. The formation of these unions went on under conditions of furious factional strife. Each faction tried to form its own unions. Lovestone and the Lovestoneites wanted them to be Lovestonean unions and nothing else. I believe this will be corroborated by the comrades Minor and Browder. This factional strife has resulted in that in the new unions there has been a struggle among the factions for leading positions instead of penetrating into the masses and winning the masses for the union. Tens of thousands of workers have already joined the new unions, nevertheless they are both organisationally and ideologically weak to the highest degree. In spite of all their shortcomings, these little unions constitute just now in America a serious factor in the economic fights that are going on. Why? Because through them our Communist Party is acting, because through them, regardless of the shortcomings of the Communist Party (and there are such shortcomings in plenty), the Party does penetrate into the masses. The Party is growing, the unions are growing, becoming robust and attracting new workers into their ranks, and so on; under these conditions the little unions are playing a great political role. That is why in speaking about the new unions of the United States, in summing up the experiences of the new unions, we must say: ideologically and organisationally the unions are weak, nevertheless during the last year they have justified their existence to the extent of not only 100% but 200%.

We have had frequent occasions to call attention to a whole series of mistakes committed by our comrades in the United States, particularly in the South. I must dwell on this also now. Is it not characteristic that our comrades are still unable to get rid of White chauvinism in their own ranks, within the Party? We have Communists there who regard the Negroes in the same light as the headers of the American Federation of Labour. This is a fact. And I say, as long as we

have not overcome this in the Party, we shall not have a Bolshevik Party in the United States.

How was the situation in the South in connection with the strikes? Our comrades were confronted with the fact that the White workers did not wish to be in one union with the Negroes. What is suggested there by some of our comrades? To form separately a White union and a Negro union. And I ask you, is this correct? Is it right for Communists, taking the initiative of creating new unions, to form separate unions for White and Negro workers?

(Piatnitsky? They have already progressed. Now they are only segregating by ropes the Negroes from the Whites at union meetings.)

And do you know that the leader of the Textile Workers' Union, Weisbord, arguing at a meeting in favour of the Negroes being in one union with the Whites, has told his White listeners that to be in one union with Negroes does not yet mean to feed at one and the same restaurant, to live with them in one hotel, and to travel in one street car with them. Such "communists" should be chased out of our ranks. There is no room for such gentry in our ranks. If a Communist leader of a revolutionary union is afraid to come out against White chauvinism at a workers' meeting on account of the prejudices with which the White workers are contaminated, he is not a Communist, but a rag, an alien element to be banished from our ranks! (Applause.)

White chauvinism is a serious disease in America. It is no joke for the American movement and for the Comintern if there are Communists in our ranks who are infected with White chauvinism. You will excuse me, but a Party which does not chase the White chauvinists from its ranks should be seriously examined and shaken up from the bottom to the top. In the American Party there were entire nuclei which declared that they did not wish to enrol Negroes into their ranks. Were such nuclei disbanded? Nothing of the kind! The American comrades were engrossed in their factional strife. Well, now they will have time.

Even with these defects, with the existence of White chauvinism, the loathsome survival of the old "culture" in our ranks, with all these defects, our unions are creating for the Party a tremendous possibility for growing and for winning new strata of workers. However poorly, the Party did lead the Gastonia strike; however inadequately, the Party does act in connection with all the strikes, becoming a serious factor in the economic struggle of the American proletariat. The Party is active, although inadequately, among the automobile workers. This line ought to be further pursued, and I am convinced that the further experience will vindicate the path mapped out by the IX. Plenum of the Comintern and by the IV. Congress of the Profintern. If we had any doubts as to the correctness of introducing the new tactics in America, now the activity of the Trotskyists and the progressivists in the American Party against our line serves to demonstrate that we were quite right.

We also have the experience of two new unions in Great Britain: the Scottish Miners' Union and the Clothing Workers' Union. How was the case with the Scottish Miners' Union? We quarrelled here in the Comintern with the British comrades, we told them it was time to start the creation of a union in Scotland because they had obtained a majority in all the elections, whereas the T.U. bureaucrats were manifestly violating the expressed will of the majority by remaining at their jobs. We urged them to act upon the fact of having obtained the majority of votes, and not upon the idea of "unity at all costs". Nevertheless our British comrades delayed the creation of the new union and started it only when the union had lost two-thirds of its members. The loss of membership was the result of our meekness and retreat before the T.U. bureaucracy. When two-thirds of the members were lost, when the union had become emaciated, only then did the British Party proceed to create the new union. The union was created, and it is now in a difficult position. The whole apparatus of the State, the mine owners, the General Council, the Miners' Federation, etc. are putting their whole weight against this union. It is also opposed by the "Lefts" (Cook, etc.). It is not easy to withstand this united front. Tremendous ef-

forts are needed to march forward. Upon this ground there may arise, and there are arising defeatist moods, and all efforts ought to be made to overcome these moods.

Let us take the Clothing Workers' Union of London. How was the case there? How did it originate? A few hundred clothing workers declared a strike and won it in defiance of the Executive Committee of the Tailors and Garment Workers' Union. What did the Executive do? It expelled the leader of the strike, who was also chief organiser of the London branch. It was then that the London branch became transformed into an independent union and the leaders began to think that after the formation of this union, everything would proceed smoothly and well. They did not foresee that the old union would resort to provocation in collusion with the employers, that it would wreck strikes, and so forth. The union had to withstand a concentrated blow. The new union suffered defeat in one strike, and some of the members got thoroughly downhearted. Those comrades, apparently, thought that they would form a new union and it would grow strong all at once. Excuse me, comrades, do you not know the history of the labour movement? Do you not know that the trade unions have sustained scores of defeats? Are they serious leaders who lose their courage and spirit after a single defeat? No, such leaders will not hold their own in a fight in which they are opposed by the united and mighty front of the employers, the State, and the reformist unions.

The British Party has done a good deal to support this union, although inadequately. It was necessary to make far greater efforts. If we shall be smashed in these two unions, not only will the workers no longer have confidence in us, but they will also not believe the Communists to be capable of leading an organisation. Even if we should be forced then to get at the head of a new trade union, the workers will say: well, the Communists cannot lead trade unions, they have shown this by the example of the Scottish miners and of the clothing workers.

To the British Party it is now a matter of principle to strengthen these trade unions. If these unions are smashed, the Communist Party will have shown its weakness, its inability to lead. **What has been done so far and what is being done now is inadequate.** These two unions, with all their weakness, are meriting every support.

At the same time our comrades should not entertain any illusions. He who believes that the new unions in the struggle against the employers, against the reformist apparatus, against the powerful united front, can march forward without defeats, realises very little the difficulties confronting the new unions. I put it to you this way. The Clothing Workers' Union has suffered defeat in a strike, it is passing through tremendous difficulties about which the British comrades will tell you much better than I am able to. Yet, what should our comrades do? Shall they capitulate, or defend the new union? The Comintern is against capitulation. May be the union will be defeated again, but fight it must again. Who said that we were marching on to victory on a straight line? It was never asserted by the Comintern, by Bolshevism, that we should march to victory without a defeat. We have always stated the very opposite: **That we are learning from our defeats**, that there will still be defeats, but that the ultimate victory will be ours. This should be realised by every Bolshevik, by every leader of a revolutionary trade union.

#### "LOZOVSKY SPLITS THE TRADE UNIONS."

It has now become a sign of good manners in the whole of the opportunistic press to denounce me as one who wants to split the trade unions. Lozovsky wants to form new trade unions everywhere, say the Rights. Lozovsky wants to disband all the trade unions and form his own little joints, is seconded by the conciliators. And Serra writes:

"Stalin's speech at the Presidium of E. C. C. I., the statement made by the representative of the German Communist Party, the documents of the Comintern, all this proves that the question has been decided in principle. It

is rumoured that the quarrel with Lozovsky is only as to the choice of the favourable moment."

This is written by a member of the Presidium of the Comintern. "It is rumoured"! Rumoured by whom and where? Is it the gossip of old women in the market place? Such then is the attitude of "principle" taken by Serra who accuses everybody — Stalin, the Comintern, Lozovsky, and particularly myself — of disruptive desires. Would you perhaps like to hear how these charges are echoed by the German conciliators who accuse the Comintern of disruptive tactics? Here is what they write:

"There is great ambiguity in the Party on the trade union question. If this confusion will remain, if this ambiguous tactic will be continued, the formation of parallel unions will be only a question of time."

Generally, it is assumed by these comrades that the formation of parallel unions is a catastrophe under all and any circumstances. They do not quarrel with us on the question of **where, when and how**, but they quarrel about the principle. We have before us an example of purest organisational fetishism. They believe the reformist trade unions to be divinely ordained and destined to exist forever, so that there ought to be no struggle against the reformist trade unions, while our task should be to obey implicitly the orders of the reformist trade union bureaucracy. I must declare that all this talk about my desire to split all the trade unions is sheer nonsense. We debated in the Comintern not whether the unions should be split or not, but rather **under what concrete circumstances this should be done.** We have never debated the question whether it was admissible on principle to form parallel unions. On this subject there is no controversy in **our midst.** Only the Rights and the conciliators have quarrelled with us on this point. And this means that everything Bolshevik that was in them has evaporated. The problem of new unions is solved on the ground of conditions of time and place, and not in a general way. If the Rights and the conciliators are screaming about the policy of splitting, it is because they want in this way to conceal their tactics of capitulation. He who stands for unity at all costs and under any circumstances should declare right away his unconditional submission to the reformist T. U. bureaucracy. Only at such a price can the unity of the trade unions be maintained, but this will be unity upon the basis of class collaboration, unity upon the basis of total renunciation by the Communists of their views. Such tactics of surrender would be tantamount to treachery, and therefore these tactics are absolutely opposed to the whole position of the Comintern.

#### ABOUT ILLEGAL TRADE UNIONS.

Since the fascisation of the social democracy and of the reformist T. U. apparatus is now going on at a more rapid pace, there will be more and more frequent attempts to drive underground all the revolutionary mass organisations, including the Communist Party. We must therefore consider the question of the formation of illegal trade unions not from the standpoint of how good it would be otherwise — let us leave such sophistications to special devotees — but rather from the standpoint of what our illegal trade unions are doing, and whether more cannot be done under given concrete circumstances. This is the only standpoint from which we approach this question.

If we turn to a group of countries with an illegal trade union movement, we shall be bound to admit that the Communist Parties which have formed and retained the illegal trade unions have been politically vindicated.

Yet, while the Communist Parties were right in forming or retaining these unions in the countries of white terror and fascism, this does not mean that the unions are working well. These are quite different things. To begin with, the maintenance of the illegal trade unions has a great sense and meaning only if such small illegal trade unions (big mass organisations generally cannot exist under illegal conditions) embrace at least a small section of the workers, who are not members of the communist party. Under such conditions alone have the illegal trade unions a right to exist. We need no duplicate of



the Party. If we shall construct the trade union only as a Party nucleus and agree to call this nucleus of the Party a trade union group, it will only be playing with words; because the purpose of a trade union — to influence certain strata of non-Party workers marching side by side with us — will not be achieved. Consequently, the fundamental task of maintaining the trade union under illegal conditions consists in constructing it so that it may embrace certain strata of workers sympathising with the Party, who might be attracted through the trade union to take part in solving the tasks which confront the Party.

Along which road is it possible to extend the narrow limits of these unions? **Along the road of getting at the head in economic fights.** I have an idea that in a number of countries with an illegal trade union movement things are in very bad shape in this respect. I may recall to you what was said by Lenin about an illegal Party and the role of this illegal party in mass fights:

"Two or three hundred underground workers — said Lenin in a rejoinder to the liquidators — voice the interests and needs of millions and tens of millions, telling them the truth about their miserable conditions, opening their eyes to the necessity of the revolutionary struggle, imbuing them with faith in it, giving them the correct slogans, wresting these masses from the influence of the bombastic yet utterly false reformist slogans of the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, Vol. XII, Part. 1, p. 159, Russian Edition.)

You see how Lenin approached the question of a small illegal Party, of a few hundred Communists, considered as a serious army in the class struggle. Yet, we have thousands of Communists in Italy, we have more than a few hundreds in other countries, while our Parties neglect a whole number of fights. Of course, this is not accidental, there must be something wrong in the transmission mechanism from the centre to the lower links, to the Party nuclei. There must be a weak point somewhere, and owing to this the whole Party does not act with sufficient vigour. And when the fights are imminent — it is declared by the Italian comrades themselves that they are on the eve of a serious struggle — if you will not display in time necessary initiative, you will be lost in the mass movement, you will not lead, but will be dragging in the rear of the events. I consider this a serious danger in Italy, and we should warn our Italian comrades in comradely fashion, drawing their attention to this danger. This is not malicious criticism on our part, it is what we have to say to our comrades, it is the warning which we must give if we want the Party to be fully armed for the coming events. Let us not forget that our Communist Parties in such countries will have to get at the head of the mass movement in the struggle against white terror and fascism, and this will be possible only if there will not be even the smallest movement of the workers without the participation of the Communist Party, if our Communist Parties will be able to lead from their underground concealment all the economic fights of the workers, raising the struggle to a higher plane. In these countries, more than anywhere else, we must be able to transform economic fights into political, while the indispensable prerequisite for giving a political content to strikes is the absolutely correct leadership of all the economic fights on the part of the illegal trade unions.

#### ACTIVITY IN THE FASCIST TRADE UNIONS.

In this connection I should like to lay stress on the question of the activity of Communists in the fascist trade unions. Yet, in order to determine what is to be done in the fascist trade unions and how to do it, it should be borne in mind that the fascist trade unions do not represent something uniform. In fact, there are various types of such trade unions, e. g. in China and in Italy. The Italian trade unions are a compulsory State organisation to which the contributions from the workers are collected by the employers and all the workers are considered members of the unions. Since there are no elected organs, no meetings, nor even the most elementary and circumscribed T.U. democracy, since there are no elections to the leading organs, to work in the trade unions in

Italy means to work in the factory, because there are no trade unions in Italy at all. There are only State officials. It means that to work in the fascist trade unions in Italy is to intensify the activity in the factory. It is a different case in China, where the Kuomintang trade unions may outwardly and formally be called trade unions in some cases, since they are not everywhere compulsory, and not everywhere and invariably are the contributions from all the workers collected by the employers. There are trade unions with several thousand members, including a certain proportion of backward workers who do not sufficiently understand what these Kuomintang unions really are. The work in the Kuomintang unions may in such cases yield certain results. Of course, this does not mean that the Party should tell the workers to join the Kuomintang unions. Not at all!

Since they have real workers, the Party must work in them. Nevertheless the Chinese comrades are afraid lest the Communists sent into those unions become demoralised. This, of course, is not evidence of any particular strength, of any particular organisational and ideological firmness of the Party. There is indeed information to the effect that a number of Communists sent into the Kuomintang unions did become demoralised. Well, to hell with them! Such people cannot really be called Communists. Nevertheless it is necessary to send Communists there because there are tens of thousands of workers in those unions. (Of course, it is necessary at the same time to consolidate the illegal trade unions.) This does not mean to try to obtain salaried positions in those unions. This should not be done under any circumstances. The leading elements of the Kuomintang unions are an auxiliary organ of the white terror, the direct agents of Chinese militarism entrusted with the function of hunting for "suspects", of praising the regime of white terror, and of negotiating with the employers as to how to nip the movement in the bud. The Communists have no business to try to gain such positions in which they would have either to turn traitors or to be beheaded.

The problem of the T.U. movement in the illegal countries confronts us in regard to these countries not only with the question of the methods of leadership in the economic fights, but also with the question whether it would be possible to carry out in these countries all those rules and decisions which have been adopted by the Comintern and by the Profintern for winning the masses. Thus, in these countries a great role is played, of course, by the problem of the unorganised which is just now acquiring exceptional importance in all countries.

#### PROBLEM OF ORGANISING THE UNORGANISED.

The problem of the unorganised is confronting us very sharply because there is a new adjustment of the forces of labour employed in the process of production. Rationalisation attracts new cadres of workers, and if we recall the historical development of the trade unions, we find that the best organised are the highly skilled workers while the worst organised are the unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Since the modern rationalised factory employs chiefly unskilled labour, the importance of the unskilled workers in production has increased, and this means also the increased fighting ability of the unskilled working men and women in their strikes against the employers. The unskilled working women and youth in the factories are to a considerable extent unorganised. Hence the increased importance of the unorganised.

Is it possible to count on the unorganised in times of fights? The experience of the last year has shown that it is possible to count on the unorganised. The Ruhr and Lodz strikes, the strikes in France, and the present strikes in the United States and in a number of other countries, have demonstrated the fact that the unorganised are at least not less capable of fighting than the organised workers.

It is under such circumstances that Comrade Serra — whose classification among the conciliators is due to a misunderstanding — comes along and tries to show the line of the Comintern on this question to be wrong. Serra writes the following in his last memorandum to the Comintern: "On the whole, the organised workers are more advanced." I should

like to know who are the organised workers referred to. Organised by whom? In what unions? Can it be said that the organised workers in the reformist trade unions are more advanced because they are under the influence of the reformist T. U. bureaucrats? This would mean turning upside down everything said by the Comintern. But let us read on, Comrades. Serra, classed by misunderstanding among the conciliators, says: "Any demagogical romanticism towards the 'unorganised' (why these inverted commas?) will throw us into a state of childhood, not into a Right or Left deviation, but purely and simply into a state of childhood without any deviations."

This fear of the unorganised, and the misunderstanding of their role, is a rather widespread disease in our ranks. It is curious to hear the opinion of the Rights in "Against the Stream" on this subject. They advance a new theory, they say that the unorganised may play a certain role in the political fights, but under no circumstances in the economic fights. Why so? Why this position? We have so far believed that the political strike is only a higher form of the struggle, that the political strike is the outcome of the economic fight, and that it is our task to transform the simpler form of the struggle into the higher. To speak like the people in "Against the Stream" is to go against sound Marxist logic. The Rights do not even attempt to prove why the unorganised may play a role in the more complex fights while unable to play any role whatever in the less complex, elementary forms of the struggle. This is an absurdity, this is contradictory to the whole of our experience.

I should like to mention a little example of the Seraing Works in Belgium. It was a question there of increasing the working hours by 150 working hours per annum. According to law, the working hours cannot be increased unless the increase is voted for by a majority of the workers of a given factory. Now, in those works there are both organised (reformist) and unorganised workers. The voting was as follows: out of 1,258 workers organised in the reformist union, 493 voted for longer hours and 760 against; of the unorganised, 145 voted for and 423 against. In other words, 60% of the workers organised in the reformist unions voted against longer hours and 40% voted for it; among the unorganised, 74% voted against, and only 26% for. Here is a little illustration of the respective role of the organised and unorganised on a very simple question of the trade union struggle. What does this mean? It means that the reformist T. U. apparatus brings its whole weight to bear upon their organised workers, dragging them on to the reactionary, conservative path; whereas the unorganised workers, who are now drawn into industry in growing numbers, are not connected with the reformist apparatus and are more inclined to go our way. In this there is nothing unnatural, and consequently the whole theory about the "romanticism of the Comintern" in regard to the unorganised is based upon an absolute failure to see what is going on in reality.

#### OUR SHORTCOMINGS AND MISTAKES IN TRADE UNION AND STRIKE TACTICS.

The more "delicate" and more debatable portion of my report has to deal with the question of the fundamental mistakes and shortcomings in the T. U. activity of the Communist Parties, the shortcomings and mistakes in our strike tactics. This happens to be a very ticklish question because many Party leaders do not take critical remarks in the proper way. A negative example in this sense was furnished, for instance, by Comrade Tom Bell in the general discussion when, in answer to my criticisms about the mistakes and shortcomings of the C. P. G. B., he declared that "Lozovsky wants to bring about a crisis in the Party". He went on to say that generally in the Comintern there is a special category of workers who are only waiting for a crisis and are very sad if they cannot achieve this crisis. I consider such utterances a monstrosity in our ranks which should be most emphatically condemned. This means an attempt to stifle self-criticism, an attempt to intimidate us by holding up the bogey of a crisis to cause us to give up the sound self-criticism which is necessary for the normal development of the international Communist movement. Being quite aware of the exceptional sensibility of our comrades when they are criticised, I have chosen the following

method. I have studied all the decisions passed during the last year by the congresses and by the C. C.'s of the Communist Parties and selected therefrom the self-criticism already contained in the decisions of the respective Parties; next, I have put down all these critical remarks in rotation, naturally dropping all repetitions. Thus, I have studied the decisions of the congresses of the Communist Parties of Germany, France, Great Britain, Greece, Yugoslavia, and a number of other countries. Yet, when I tried to add to this the critical remarks made by the Comintern and the Profintern on the tactics in the different countries, there resulted such a gigantic list that I was compelled to abridge it. Yet the list of errors which remains, and which I submit here to your attention, is fundamentally based upon the criticisms formulated by the respective congresses. Here is this abridged list:

1. Under-estimation of the radicalisation of the masses.
2. Lagging behind the spontaneous movement of the masses.
3. Under-estimation of the forces of the T. U. bureaucracy.
4. Under-estimation of the role of the Party.
5. A tendency towards preserving formal unity by refraining from revolutionary activity.
6. Hopes for winning the social-imperialist T. U. bureaucracy.
7. Under-estimation of the revolutionary role of the unorganised.
8. Retreating before every offensive of the reformists.
9. Under-estimation of the fusion of the T. U. bureaucracy with the bourgeois State.
10. Failure to understand the political significance of economic strikes.
11. Tendencies towards T. U. neutrality.
12. The lack of a firm line in the struggle against the new methods of crushing the labour movement.
13. Vacillation between the revolutionary and the reformist line in regard to the mobilisation of the masses.
14. Hesitation before declaring a strike.
15. Systematic hesitation and vacillation in the course of leading a strike.
16. Excessive reverence of constitutionalism and legalism in the methods of the struggle.
17. The Party did not sufficiently sharply and persistently expose both Cook and Maxton.
18. The Party drew up at times the wrong perspective: for instance, the line to the effect that while the present leaders control the trade unions, and as long as these leaders are not ousted in a constitutional T. U. way, no mass struggle is possible.
19. The Party members have not done their utmost to capture the really Left workers in the trade unions and to draw them into the general activity upon the grounds of the Minority Movement.
20. It was a defect of the Party that the struggle between the Communists and the Rights looked like a struggle for offices.
21. The inability to adapt our politics and activity to the capitalist offensive.
22. The presence of moods in favour of giving up activity in the trade unions on account of objective difficulties.
23. Tendencies to talk about new unions in the face of bureaucratic attacks.
24. The formation of a united front (that is, with the reformists. — A. L.) upon the basis of refraining from mutual criticism.
25. Giving up the struggle for the sake of unity of organisation.
26. Implicit obedience to bourgeois legality.
27. Neglect of mass activity in the trade unions.
28. Bureaucratic methods in trade union activity.
29. Indifference towards current questions.
30. General slogans instead of actual, concrete slogans.
31. Drawing up lists of demands without taking into consideration the objective situation.
32. Moderating the demands in the course of the fight, from above, without discussion by the masses.
33. Lack of ability organisationally to consolidate and utilise the strike movement.
34. Appeals by strike committees to governmental organs for mediation.
35. Sending delegations to wait on the government.

36. Appointment of strike committees.
  37. Refusal to form a central strike committee.
  38. No trade union activity is carried on in the factories.
  39. The Party did not lead in a single strike in recent years in the chief centre of the country (Budapest), holding aloof from the economic struggle.
  40. The original demands were substituted within a few days by other demands increasing the original ones by a whole 100%.
  41. There was no strike committee elected before the outbreak of the strike.
  42. During the strike a strike committee was formed, but the C. C. of the Party was not connected with it, and the strike committee therefore fell into the hands of the reformists.
  43. The Communists voted with the T. U. bureaucrats for terminating the strike, but when the masses refused to return to work, the C. C. ordered the continuation of the strike.
  44. A united front of leaders between Communists and fascists at insurance committee elections.
  45. Reformist trade unions are still referred to as class unions.
  46. Lack of attention to the independent trade unions which have broken away from the reformists, and the consequent loss of influence in them.
  47. The Party has frequently dragged in the wake of the T. U. bureaucracy.
  48. The Party did not draw a sufficiently sharp line of demarcation from the reformists in its T. U. activity.
  49. The Party has done nothing to achieve leadership in economic fights.
  50. The Party has followed the slogan of "compelling the bureaucrats to fight" (Zwingt die Bonzen).
  51. Refraining from taking the initiative of leadership in economic fights even where the Party had considerable influence over the masses.
  52. The Party has followed a policy of capitulation in regard to the social-democratic leaders.
  53. Refraining from criticising the practice of class-collaboration for the sake of the united front with the bureaucrats at the top.
  54. Bare enunciation of the principle of "go into the unions" without connecting this question with the strengthening of the revolutionary opposition.
  55. The fear of many Communists to come out openly against the reformist trade union bureaucracy.
  56. Refusal to work in the yellow trade unions of the colonial countries.
  57. Legalist-liquidatory moods, and the refusal to form illegal revolutionary trade unions in the countries of white terror.
  58. Addiction to united front combinations with the bureaucrats.
  59. Admission of reformists to strike leadership upon equal terms although they had slight influence over the masses.
  60. Insufficient demarcation from the Left reformists during the struggle.
  61. Referring conflicts between labour and capital to the decision of arbitration boards.
  62. Slowness in the formation of independent unions where the objective situation demanded the taking of the initiative in this respect (U. S. A., India).
  63. Inability to consolidate organisationally the positions, won politically.
  64. Voluntary yielding of strike leadership to the reformists.
  65. Refraining from independent leadership in economic fights.
  66. Recall of most active leaders in order to maintain unity committees.
  67. "Long live the Confederation of Labour (crom) and down with the Central Committee" (Mexico).
  68. Systematic political and organisational sabotage of the new revolutionary T. U. centre.
  69. Systematic political and organisational sabotage towards the new revolutionary trade union centre.
  70. Participation in a conference of workers and employers convened by the President of the republic (this again in Mexico).
  71. Communists giving their signatures to such a formula: "To treat with full respect the most contrary ideology."
  72. Refraining from political actions in the name of the united front with the anarchists.
  73. T. U. legalism and unity at all costs.
  74. United front with social fascists against other social fascists.
  75. Inability to mobilise the workers of the essential industries in support of a body of strikers.
  76. Unpreparedness of the Party organisation for economic fights.
  77. Improvisation instead of lengthy and careful preparation.
  78. Refusal to raise the slogan of the 7-hour day.
  79. Flagrant wrecking and sabotaging of strikes owing to factional strife.
  80. Attracting peasants into the trade unions, and attempts to transform the trade unions into worker-peasant organisations (Latin America, Mexico).
  81. Too much given to forming all kinds of committees which fizzle out before starting any work (Latin America).
  82. Prevalence of non-proletarian elements in the leading T. U. organs (Latin America).
  83. Presence of anarcho-reformist survivals in the theory and practice of our Communist Parties (Latin America).
  84. Encouragement of top negotiations on unity between anarchists and reformists (Argentina).
  85. Giving prime prominence to the demands of petty farmers and peasants while ignoring the interests of the agricultural labourers.
  86. Sending delegations to the Government to request for the settlement of conflicts (e. g. in Colombia during the strike of workers on the banana plantations).
  87. Inability to transfer the strike to a political plane, and the appraisal of a clearly political strike as a "simple economic conflict". (This happened in Colombia, where our Party appraised the strike on the banana plantations as a simple economic conflict.)
  88. Communists carry out in practice the Left social-democratic policy (Finland).
  89. Subordinating the political line to formal unity.
  90. Constant retreat before the reformists' blackmail and splitting threats (Finland).
  91. Playing with affiliation to the Amsterdam International in spite of the wish of the latter.
  92. Manifestation of White chauvinism at the very height of strikes.
  93. Inability to consolidate and strengthen the new unions; a passive attitude towards the new unions whose weakness is afterwards blamed on to the union because it is a new one, and not attributed to the mistakes committed by the Communists themselves.
  94. Underestimation of reformism as the tool of militarism and imperialism to break up the labour movement in these countries.
- If we analyse this hundred of points of self-criticism (I have refrained from alluding to other points simply out of consideration for those present here), if we study these points quite carefully, we shall find that 98% of them are Right mistakes while the majority of the mistakes may be reduced to one and the same thing, to **trade union legalism, to a failure to see the degree of radicalisation of the masses, and to inability to lead the mass fights in the literal sense of the term.**
- An analysis of the decisions of all the Congresses shows yet one more thing, that many of our Parties, and the best among them, are evading some of the very essential questions. For instance, you will recollect that at the VI. Congress of the Comintern and at the IV. Congress of the Profintern the slogan of the 7-hour working day was launched as a militant slogan in connection with capitalist rationalisation.
- Now, we do not find this slogan even in the decisions of the Congress of the German Communist Party. No doubt, this is an omission. The Congress of the German Communist Party, in the resolution on the trade union question, speaks about shortening the working hours, but does not mention the 7-hour day, and this in a resolution which is undoubtedly one of the best resolutions passed by the Party Congress. Neither do we find the slogan of the 7-hour day as a militant slogan in the resolutions of other Party Congresses. If it is included, it is merely given by the way, and not as a central slogan, whereas **in connection with capitalist rationalisation the problem of the 7-hour day should be urged as the most**

**essential one**, it should be put in the centre of the whole of our activity. With this slogan we should go to the masses, and under this slogan we should mobilise the largest masses. Only in this manner shall we be able to popularise this slogan and make it clear to the large masses, because we are thus linking up the 7-hour day with the question of capitalist rationalisation.

Our strength consists in that we openly criticise all these Right deviations, all these mistakes which we commit. This self-criticism is a sign of strength of our Communist Parties. A proof of this is furnished by the C. P. of France and the C. G. T. U.

Up to a certain time it was thought that the Parties had no right to criticise the mistakes of the trade unions. This tied the Parties as well as the unitary trade unions, driving the disease inwards, because no possibility was given to reveal our shortcomings. Now we have dragged out these shortcomings "before the people". We openly discuss them in the press and at public meetings, and in this respect the Congress of the French Communist Party constitutes a big step forward. The critical activity carried on in France by the Party and by the Unitary Confederation of Labour is something entirely new to the French working class, new in the sense of taking objective stock of our shortcomings, mistakes, difficulties, etc. I believe we ought to move further in this direction.

I have pointed out a number of mistakes committed during the last strike in Bulgaria, during a strike which was led by the independent unions and which brought a partial success after all. Who came out with resolute criticism of these mistakes? This was done by "Yedinstvo" (unity), the organ of the independent Unions which pointed out in a splendid article all the mistakes committed during this strike. I believe such a method to be absolutely correct.

I have said that this collection of mistakes should not drive us to any pessimistic conclusions; personally, I am in no way inclined to do so. I have enumerated here a number of mistakes committed by the German Party which have been acknowledged by the Party Congress; a score of mistakes committed by the French Communist Party; a number of mistakes recorded in the resolutions of the Congresses of the C. P.'s of Great Britain, Greece, etc. In their totality they reveal a picture of serious deviations, mistakes and shortcomings which can be eliminated not merely by recording them in resolutions, but rather by proceeding after the Congress to explain to the masses what it means to underestimate the radicalisation of the masses. It means that the C. P. G. B. would have to tell all the members of the Party that it condemns a too scrupulous attitude towards constitutionalism and legalism in its fighting methods; it would have to tell the masses the meaning of the point about the inadequate exposure of Cook and Maxton by the Party and draw conclusions from this fact in its practical work. Such things will have to be done by every Party. Only then will all the mistakes and shortcomings be rapidly eliminated. At the next Congress we shall be able to survey the work done, and the list of our mistakes will be shortened a great deal.

I maintain that not a single Party has as yet carried out anything like the following experiment: to have full self-criticism at a Congress, and at the next Congress — a year or two later — to verify which of these mistakes have been put right. This we have not yet done, yet this has to be done if we really wish seriously to rectify our mistakes, in Bolshevik fashion. The German Party has advanced more than the other Parties both in the sense of combatting the Rights and of the ideological and organisational consolidation of the Communists, but no one thinks that this has been done even there to the extent of 100%. Such illusions are not entertained by a single German comrade, and it does not behove us to indulge in such illusions. A tremendous amount of work will have to be done along the line of ideological consolidation, along the line of organisational shaping, along the line of getting rid of all the social-democratic Right survivals which still linger within our Parties. Only a persistent educational, systematic propagandist, organisational — and what is essential — political mass activity by the Party as a whole can hasten the process of getting rid of these defects. I shall have to dwell particularly on one very essential defect of our

Parties, which consists in that some of our Parties have a fairly strange, conception of the united front, interpreting it in a way in which it has nowhere and never been interpreted by anybody. Let us state the case of Hungary. There was a very dangerous phenomenon in that country: to form a leaders' committee jointly with social fascists of the type of Yavorovsky, and to settle all questions at such a closed meeting. Not to go to the masses, but to submit to that committee in which the Communists were in the minority; well, comrades, this is not a united front, but, excuse me, a mad house. (Hear, hear.)

Such a "united front" must be condemned in the most categorical and ruthless manner. Such illusions regarding the united front will have to be seriously combated by the Hungarian Party. This constitutes a highly dangerous symptom. Bearing in mind that the Hungarian Party is illegal, a united front of this kind is tantamount to suicide for the Communist Party; it amounts to political harakiri, and the sooner the Hungarian Party frankly gets rid of it — I know there are a number of comrades opposed to it, e. g. Bela Szanto, Bela Kun — the sooner this question will be thoroughly thrashed out by the Party as a whole, the quicker the Party will realise the erroneous character of such combinations behind the scenes, the better it will be for the Hungarian Party.

One more final question. How do we frequently understand the meaning of leading in the economic fights? Frequently we understand the leadership in the economic fights as the speciality of one or another individual or of the particular department, and not of the whole Party. We have our T. U. departments, or at present the strike commissions, or strike departments, and these departments alone engage in questions of strikes. Comrades, I am in favour of specialisation. All of us are more or less specialised in this respect, yet the economic fights are not the business of a special commission or department, but the business of the whole of the party organisation, of the entire Party as a whole. Before every big conflict it is essential to mobilise the whole Party, to gather the best forces in our ranks and to concentrate them in a given district, so as to set the example of correct leadership. We cannot demand from our rank and file workers an understanding of the most intricate and big questions; they may commit a number of mistakes even against their own intentions, blundering quite honestly. And if we shall consider the leadership of the fights as the monopoly of one or another department, if we shall not mobilise the whole Party for this work, if we shall not concentrate the best forces upon the "battle-ground", we shall always be bound to commit tremendous mistakes during the economic fights. That is why I believe the following deduction ought to be made: that it is necessary to mobilise all the forces of the whole Party for the conduct of serious economic fights, of serious class conflicts. Not one department or another, but the Party as a whole should be mobilised from top to bottom. Only then will it be possible to achieve serious results.

## RIGHT MISTAKES IN THE SOVIET T. U. MOVEMENT.

The comrades present here might say: you have enumerated as many as 96 mistakes, you have covered the whole world, but you have omitted to mention the U. S. S. R.

No, comrades, I have not forgotten about the Soviet trade unions and I am now going to deal with the Right mistakes in the Soviet trade union movement, mistakes which have been eliminated far more quickly and radically than in other Parties. This, of course, is due to the strength of the Party, to the consolidation of the Party, and to a number of other circumstances.

We have discussed this question at the fraction of the XI. Plenum of the A. U. C. T. U. And this is how the fraction of the A. U. C. T. U. Plenum appraised the group of the Rights:

"The initial mistake in the position of the Rights is the anti-Marxian and anti-Leninist theory of the peaceful evolution of the kulak into socialism, and the failure to understand the dialectics of the class struggle under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship. It is this position which leads the Rights to the failure to understand the

present phase of the class struggle, to an under-estimation, and even to a denial of the new industrial forms of alliance between the working class and the basic masses of the peasantry, to calumniating the Party that it was pursuing the policy of "military-feudal exploitation of the peasantry", and to offering practical proposals which would really mean the strengthening of the capitalist elements in the country...

"Instead of mobilising the masses to overcome the difficulties of the reconstruction period, — a state of panic in front of these difficulties; instead of unfolding wide activity to attract the masses of the working men and women to economic construction in the process of socialist rationalisation, in the struggle for increased productivity of labour, and for labour discipline, they are attempting to shield the narrow craft interests and moods of backward strata of the working class; instead of resolute and consistent unfoldment of self-criticism in the trade unions, they indulge in formulae and reservations which call for circumspection in the development of self-criticism, which hinder the development of the activity of the masses in the struggle against bureaucratism and other abuses in the trade unions, against the demoralisation of separate links of the T. U. apparatus, against becoming detached from the masses. Instead of strengthening the proletarian influence over the village, instead of assistance by the trade unions to the socialist reconstruction of agriculture, they endeavour to restrict the role of the trade unions in the village and to cultivate an attitude of aloofness, which was especially expressed in the weak influence of the trade unions upon public life in the village, in underestimating the work among the agricultural labourers, and so on. Instead of broadly carrying on the political education and class enlightenment of the masses of the workers, especially of the backward strata, they neglect at times this cultural and educational activity, the general class tasks of the proletariat, while failing to realise the necessity of a resolute fight against the petty bourgeois influences among the backward strata of the working masses. Instead of supporting the general line of the Party and consolidating the trade unionists around the general staff of the Party — the Leninist C. C. — they are trying to put the Communists active in the T. U. movement in contrast to the leading organs of the Party...

"The fraction believes that the resolute fight of the Party against the Right deviation and the conciliatory attitude towards it is an indispensable pre-requisite to the practical carrying out of the Five-Year Plan, to the reconstruction of the national economy, to the socialist offensive of the proletariat along the road of tearing out the roots of capitalism in the country. The A. U. C. T. U. fraction is convinced that all trade union workers who are Communists will give their decided and unconditional support to the Party in this matter and will ensure by their practical activity the unlimited faith of the millions of the proletariat in the Party and in its Leninist General Staff, the C. C."

This resolution which was passed by the fraction of the A. U. C. T. U. Plenum gives an exhaustive appraisal of the Right deviation and of the dangerous tendencies inherent therein.

#### OUR TASKS TOWARDS THE LABOUR MOVEMENT OF THE COLONIES.

Comrades, among the task now confronting us, one of the greatest and most essential tasks is to support the T. U. movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. In recent years we have seen tremendous changes in this sphere. We see the powerful growth of the economic and political movement in the colonies. The Indian proletariat is coming to the fore, and simultaneously with the fights in India, we are witnessing the nascence of new serious fights in China. There is not a colonial country today in which the workers are not up in arms against colonial oppression. Even in Central Africa, in the Belgian, French and British Colonies, i. e. in the most backward parts, we witness the rising of the workers. In

other words, the class-consciousness of the colonial proletariat is becoming crystallised in the course of the economic fights.

What are the distinguishing traits of the whole of this movement in the colonial countries? This movement is young. It has been in existence only a few years. It is still weak both ideologically and organisationally. It suffers from a whole number of defects due not to the personal qualities of the leaders in one country or another, but to the fact that the proletariat of a given colony has but recently come into the movement. Yet, comrades, along with the defects, the labour movement of the colonies has also tremendous merits. The merits of the movement consist in that the workers of the colonial countries have not been corrupted by reformism. They have not been corrupted by the prolonged domination of bourgeois culture. In this movement there is a good deal of spontaneity, but this spontaneity is of tremendous revolutionary importance. This young movement, which was quite recently born as a mass movement, has become transformed from the very outset, from the very first steps, into a profound political movement, because it fights against the whole system of imperialism. Now then, these peculiar traits of the labour movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries should confront our Parties, the Comintern and the Profintern, with the problem of practical and constant assistance to the colonial labour movement.

It must be confessed that we are doing very little along this line, while our Parties are displaying little activity in this respect. For instance, what does the French Communist Party do in the colonies? True, something is done in the African colonies because Africa is near, but has our French Communist Party tried to do anything in Indo-China, or in Syria? I do not know about this, and if our French comrades know, let them tell us, for I have the impression that in this direction they have done nothing or next to nothing. Something has been done by the British Communist Party in India. But what has been done is woefully inadequate. We are witnessing now a tremendous rise of the labour movement in India. The labour movement is confronted with tremendous difficulties. It has to face the united front of the national bourgeoisie and imperialism, of external and internal reformism. The only Party capable of helping — the Communist Party — does so inadequately. Our activity in this sphere should be increased tenfold. For, the struggle in India, for instance, is of world-wide importance. This is not a simple revolt in a little colony. The struggle in India is of tremendous importance because it is the ground upon which the fortunes of British imperialism are going to be settled. He who fails to see this, is generally a hopeless case. Therefore, the Comintern, the Profintern, and all the Parties from whom forces might be required, should give of their best to help India and China. In these two countries the fate of world imperialism is now being sealed. Just imagine for a moment a united front, a revolutionary front of the labour movement of India, China and U. S. S. R. This is an invincible bloc. It will smash the whole of the capitalist world. This ought to be remembered, comrades. We are doing criminally little. An abrupt change ought to be effected in this respect, it is essential that all the Parties do a good deal more. It is essential that they should popularise what is going on in the colonies (and of course, not only in those countries which have colonies, but generally in all countries), that they should popularise the knowledge about the labour movement in the colonies, about the living conditions, about the working conditions, about the system of exploitation, about the doings of the reformists in the colonies, and so forth. These are the things which should just now occupy a prominent place in our Party and revolutionary T. U. press. Otherwise we shall not carry out our tasks, nor shall we fulfil our duties in regard to the revolutionary labour movement of the colonial countries.

#### IS THERE GROUND FOR REFORMISM IN THE COLONIES?

Is there any ground for reformism in the colonial countries, and can the reformists of the Amsterdam and II. Internationals reckon upon having a serious basis in those countries? There is no serious basis for reformism in the colonial countries, but to say that the reformists have no supporting point there, would be a great underestimation of the danger of reformism.

Whence does reformism come, let us say, in China? It has come from the Left Kuomintang. Whence does reformism come, let us say, in India? It comes from the Left Swaraji Party, from the national groups, from the intelligentsia. The latter establish contact with the labour movement, exert influence upon it, form themselves into reformist groups, and get into touch with European reformism, obtaining from it some help. Of course, in the colonial countries there is none of that labour aristocracy which exists in the capitalist countries, and for this reason there is no real ground for reformism; but reformism may capture certain groups, and it has already done so. The reformists may create for themselves certain points of support, and they have already done so. Their struggle against us is now conducted under the slogan of Bunji Suzuki, to oust and drive out the Comintern and the Profintern from the colonial countries. In this respect they have a united front with imperialism and with the national bourgeoisie.

Yet, as regards the question about the extent of the reformist influence, this question, comrades, does not depend on them alone. It depends also on how we shall work in the colonies, on what influence we are going to exercise upon the labour movement. If we shall relax our activity, if we shall not render serious assistance to the nascent Parties in a number of colonial countries, of course, we shall then open the doors to all kinds of Left reformist theories and Left reformist organisations, and it will be difficult afterwards to drive them out. It is therefore necessary to accelerate the framing of a series of measures of aid for the colonial countries.

At the present time we are witnessing an attempt at an understanding between colonial reformism and European reformism. A delegation of a few people from India, under the chairmanship of Joshi, has gone to Europe and is now negotiating about the conditions for the admission of the Indian Trade Union Congress into the Amsterdam International. In this connection, Citrine has gone to Geneva, having previously granted £100 to support one of the strikes in India. Sassenbach has also arrived there, having also donated £100 to ingratiate these reformists. So far the negotiations have been fruitless, because the Indian reformists want to get something tangible, so that they might come home and say: look here, we went to Europe and we have received so much from the International Labour Office and so much from the Amsterdam International. But is there anything tangible that the Amsterdam International can give them? What can the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress give them? What can the Citrines, Jouhaux, Leiparts, Sassenbachs, and the other reformists give them? Nothing at all. For this reason even the most corrupt colonial reformists begin to utter speeches which show that they are experiencing definite disappointment, that their hopes for some help are beginning already to fade away.

Here is a characterisation of the position of reformism in the East that was given by Joshi, the leader of the Indian labour delegation to the International Labour Conference at Geneva, in his speech at the International Conference, quoted in the "Vorwärts" of June 29th:

"Only a small group of workers of Asia and Africa are represented at this Conference. The progressive spirit which prevailed at Washington seems to have **completely vanished**. Geneva has crushed in the hearts of the workers throughout the world the hopes which must at least be partly fulfilled. Moreover, the effect of Geneva upon the imagination of the workers throughout the world, particularly of the workers in the Far East, is not the only influence. There is the **Moscow influence** which digresses from the Geneva ideals and methods, and owing to its greater promises, it has a strong attractive power for the Eastern peoples. Therefore, we must seriously ask ourselves the question whether the results achieved by the International Labour Office are sufficient to satisfy the workers and to ensure the progress of peaceful evolution.

"The workers of Asia and Africa do not want to wait for many decades to achieve the things which were achieved by the European workers, perhaps, in the course of centuries. Therefore, on the ground of self-interest, the progress ought to be sufficiently rapid and decisive. If the workers of the Far East are to be content merely with the

Geneva ideals, which are paraded before them, one should not blame them if they cannot withstand the attractive power of greater, if unrealisable promises held out by Moscow. The results of such a development would be catastrophic, and Geneva could not waive responsibility for this. The different governments responsible in this matter, e. g. my own government, are trying to eliminate Moscow's influence by methods of suppression, the failure of which may easily be foreseen."

Such are the laments of a colonial reformist at Geneva: the methods of suppression in India are ineffective, help us by the methods of reformist corruption to capture part of the proletariat in India, otherwise the influence of Moscow will grow. What is the answer he gets from the Amsterdamites? What is the answer given by Albert Thomas and by international reformism? They give no answer, for they can give none. What answer can they give? Labour legislation? This does not depend on them, but on the imperialists and the national bourgeoisie. Give some promises? But Joshi himself says that the colonial workers no longer believe in promises. And here is Moscow, i. e. the Comintern and the Profintern which carry out their promises. And the poor colonial reformist does not know what to do. He clutches at Amsterdam in the hope of finding salvation. Pressure is brought to bear on him by the labour movement at home and he tries to draw it into the old organisation, while he is getting no support from Amsterdam. It is quite obvious that he will find no support in those quarters.

#### WORKERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST AND OF LATIN AMERICA ARE ORGANISING.

Time there was when the labour movement did not extend beyond the limits of Europe, but we have long since emerged from that period, and the characteristic feature of the present situation is the really world wide character of the labour movement. Only in 1927 was organised the Pan-Pacific T. U. Secretariat which united the T. U. movement of the Pacific Coast, with the exception of India for the time being. In May of the present year a trade union congress of the Latin American countries was held at Montevideo. Perhaps there is someone here who does not sufficiently grasp the meaning of these two congresses. I shall only say that the Montevideo congress brought together 16 countries of Latin America and created a continental Confederation of Trade Unions. The Congress was carried on under the sign of the ruthless class struggle. It is not accidental that the Japanese reformist, Bunji Suzuki, is trying to create a Pan-Asiatic Conference as a counter-poise to the Pan-Pacific Secretariat.

I draw your attention to these two continental organisations. I shall say frankly that I discovered Latin America, approximately, on the X. Anniversary of the October Revolution. We have there a huge labour reserve, a huge amount of revolutionary energy which is spoiling for a fight against imperialism and against the national bourgeoisie, for the creation of a really united revolutionary International. The great significance of the Latin American Congress is indicated by two facts. To begin with, the correspondent of the largest newspaper trust of America received special instructions at Montevideo to cable minute reports about the Congress, regardless of expense. And you know what it means when the newspaper trust gives the order to grudge no expense! It means that the American bourgeoisie is interested in what has taken place in Montevideo.

Another very curious and even more significant fact is the proposal made by Mathew Woll, one of the leaders of the A. F. of L., to the Amsterdam International to form a united front in the struggle against Communism. Why has he come out with this proposal just now? Because he has seen that the labour movement of the whole of Latin America is uniting against American imperialism. He has therefore decided that it is necessary to join forces with the Amsterdam International to strike at the Comintern and the Profintern. As you know, Mathew Woll proposes to the Amsterdam International to unite upon the basis of a division of the "spheres of influence" and of the recognition of a "labour Monroe Doctrine". A response to Mathew Woll's proposal has already been made by Citrine,

by the leaders of the Amsterdam International, as well as by "Vorwärts". All of them are eagerly ready for a united front against us, all of them dream of enlisting supporters from the A. F. of L. for a crusade against the Comintern and the Profintern. Perhaps, they will succeed in forming a united front, but it is more than doubtful whether they will achieve anything in the colonial countries.

The new tactics outlined by the IV. Congress of the Profintern and by the VI. Congress of the Comintern have for their purpose not merely to create strike committees, etc., **but in each concrete clash to carry on the fight to victory.** If this is the task which we set ourselves, it is quite natural and logical that the strike committees which we create should be set up over against the reformist trade unions. We create organs of strike leadership for the struggle against the employers and the reformist unions, and in the struggle against this united front we strive for victory. Consequently, the most essential condition for the victory of the organs created by ourselves during economic fights is **to contrast these organs to those reformist organisations which are in a united front with capital.** Yet, comrades, there is still some confusion on this question, while this confusion exists even where it should not. For instance, comrade Smoliansky contributed an article to "Bolshhevik" under the title of "Trade Union Problems of the Third Period". In that article we find the following statement: "Committees of action should neither be subordinated to the trade unions nor contrasted to them." Pardon me, to what trade unions? Why should they not be contrasted to the reformist trade unions? Why on earth do we create these committees? Is it merely playing with committees, as we are accused by the Rights? No, we do not engage in such play. We create the committees in order to lead the struggle, and this will be possible only if we shall have the masses behind us and if we shall organise these masses in contrast to the reformist trade unions. What is the sense of such incomprehensible formulae? There is no ground for framing incorrect formulae in the third period, any more than in the second or fourth period. Yet, this is an exceedingly incorrect formula which shows the existence of confusion on this subject. Only when the trade unions are **revolutionary** should the committees of action not be contrasted to them.

(Bela Kun: This relates, of course, to the Red Unions.)

There should be no contrasting to the Red unions! It should be plainly stated, so that everybody might understand. On the other hand, **they must be contrasted to the reformist unions.** Herein is the centre and basis of our tactics. It should not be forgotten that if we create strike committees, if we wish to win, we should draw from this certain deductions. Yet, we are rather weak as regards deductions. I shall cite a case in point. Germany is the country of the most classically developed capitalism and reformism. Germany belongs to countries with a so-called single T. U. movement, although really there is no single T. U. movement anywhere outside of the U. S. S. R. But let us assume that during some conflict of a serious economic character the committee of action signs a wage agreement with the employers. **We should endeavour to conclude such wage agreements without and in spite of the reformist trade union.** Next comes the question, who shall see that the wage agreement is observed? Of course, where the revolutionary factory committees exist, they shall look after it, and where there are none, special committees, vigilance committees, wage committees, or commissions, or labour commissions, etc., have to be formed. Thus, it is necessary to make provision not only for the creation of committees to carry on the fight to the end, but also the creation of organs to see to the observance of the terms of the agreement. Only then, only if we shall clearly see the goal ahead, shall we be really able to carry on effectively our tactics to the end.

## NO SHRINKING FROM NEW FORMS OF STRUGGLE!

In the course of 10 years we have had to effect sharp turnings, to advance new slogans, new proposals, new forms and methods of fighting and so on. Can it be said that we have already exhausted all the forms and methods of fighting? Can it be said that what we have done now, or that the methods and forms of work which we now propose or which we proposed at the IV. Congress of the Profintern and the VI. Congress of the Comintern, are something final? I should warn the comrades against such a non-dialectical approach to the question of the methods and forms of fighting. The forms and methods of fighting do not represent something fossilised, something fixed once and for all. The main thing is to learn from the actualities of life, to learn from the experiences of the masses, and to be able constantly to draw from the mass movement fresh hints for further action against the employers. I wish to give an interesting quotation from Lenin, in which he deals with the question of methods of struggle. In the article "Partizan War", written in December, 1906, Lenin states:

"What demands must every Marxist put when considering the question of the form of struggle? In the first place Marxism differs from all primitive forms of Socialism in that it does not bind the movement to any definite form of struggle. It recognises the most varied forms of struggle, and at the same time it does not 'invent' anything but only brings together and organises the forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which have arisen of themselves in the course of the fight, and causes them to be recognised. Marxism, which is the absolute enemy of all abstract formulae, all doctrinaire prescriptions, demands the greatest attention to the mass struggle, which, with the advancing development of the movement, with the increase of the class-consciousness of the masses, with the accentuation of the economic and political crises, gives birth to new and manifold forms of defence and attack. Therefore, Marxism does not reject beforehand any form of struggle. It never confines itself to the forms of struggle existing and possible at the given moment; it recognises the inevitability of new forms of struggle, unknown to the present period, as a result of another social conjuncture. In this respect Marxism **learns**, if one can say so, from the practice of the masses." (Lenin, Volume VII, page 77, Russian edition.)

An interesting and thoroughly up-to-date treatment of the question, although it was written 23 years ago! What do I wish to show by means of this quotation? I wish to show that the tasks of our Parties do not consist in clinging always to the same forms. The difference of the situation and of the concrete conditions, the difference of the relations of forces of the working class as well as of the relation of forces between the classes — all this demands of us that we change our forms of struggle, and perhaps we shall have to reort to forms such as could not be employed a year or a few months ago. That is true dialectics, that is true Bolshevism, which is always and everywhere against metaphysical formulae applicable for all time. Bolshevism is ever young, it derives its forces from the fights, from the mass movement; it proceeds ever forwards, and in this forward movement it draws ever fresh forces in order to unite the revolutionary proletarian forces against capital.

Comrades, the problem of the economic struggle has been dealt with us in this manner for the first time at this Plenum. Speaking for myself I must declare, and I believe that Comrade Thälmann will agree with me, that we have not by a long way exhausted every question. It is the business of the Plenum to do this, to supplement what has been said; it is the business of the comrades, on the basis of their experiences, to make good what we have omitted, in order that we, on the basis of our collective experience, shall advance more rapidly to the victory of world Communism. (Applause.)

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