

INTERNATIONAL

Vol. 13 No. 42

PRESS

22nd September 1933

CORRESPONDENCE

CONTENTS

Ernst Bayer: The London Verdict	906	Report of Proceedings of the Counter-Trial	917
Politics		Appeal of the C.P. of Germany	925
Bosse: Cuba's Second Revolution	908	Social Democracy and the Reichstag Fire	926
Oesterreicher: The Autumn Offensive of Austrian Fascism ..	909	India	
L. I.: The Change of Government in Spain	910	V. Basak: The Present Situation in India (Continued) ..	927
J. P.: The Change in the Japanese Foreign Ministry ..	910	Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union	
Germany		L. F. Boross: The Way of the Soviet Village to Socialism and Prosperity	929
Letters from Berlin: I.—The Reichstag Fire Trial in Leipzig	912	Members of the I.L.P. on their Visit to the Soviet Union ..	929
II.—The Nuremberg Party Congress of the National Socialist Party	912	In the International	
III.—Hitler's War against the Poor	913	Lessons of the Clay Cross By-Election	931
London versus Leipzig		Fight against Cultural Reaction	
R. Page Arnot: The Legal Commission of Inquiry into the Burning of the Reichstag	915	Down with Cultural Fascism!	932

The Leipzig Trial Begun—Who are the Real Incendiaries?

By Wilhelm Pieck (Berlin)

The Hitler government followed the example of all rulers of a declining order of society when it adopted the old and ever new methods of bloody terror and violent repression against the revolutionary working-class movement after the fascist accession to power. One of the measures adopted by the Hitler government was the firing of the Reichstag which it blamed on to the Communists and used as a pretext for the launching of a furious campaign of bloody persecution. However, Hitler, Goering and Goebbels organised the incendiarism so clumsily that from the very beginning the whole world knew that not the Communists but the national socialists themselves were the real fire-raisers. All the attempts of the Nazi incendiaries to cover up their tracks have not only not been successful, but they have even made their guilt still clearer. When the Hitler government laid the fire in the Reichstag on the 27th February it was no longer in a position to choose its provocation carefully. The Communist Party had obtained information concerning a number of such provocative plans, for instance, staged attempts on the lives of Hindenburg, Hitler and Goering, staged attempts at train wrecking, etc., and had denounced them to public opinion. Thus, the Hitler government was compelled to choose a form of provocation to deceive the masses like the burning down of the Reichstag. Despite our correct estimation of the methods likely to be adopted by the fascist government, it was difficult for us to foresee just this provocation.

"The Brown Book" issued by the World Committee for the Victims of Hitler Fascism on the burning of the Reichstag and the Hitler terror published documents which unambiguously reveal

the guilt of the Hitler government and the International Commission of Inquiry which met in London and consisted of famous bourgeois lawyers and advocates from a number of capitalist countries had no difficulty in formulating its verdict.

The trial organised before the Supreme German Court in Leipzig on the 21st September by the Hitler government against the alleged incendiaries Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev is nothing but a comedy to divert the attention of the world from the real criminals. The Hitler government would gladly have sent its tool van der Lubbe the way of all other uncomfortable accomplices and accessories such as Hanussen, Oberfohren and Bell, but it had manoeuvred itself into the situation of being compelled to hold the trial. Without van der Lubbe even the pretence of a trial would have been impossible, or the Hitler government would have been compelled to admit that it was not interested in the trial as a means of discovering who set fire to the Reichstag, but simply and solely as a means for disposing of Communist leaders and intensifying its murderous campaign of extermination against the illegal Communist Party. To this end the Hitler government is preparing new provocations to whip up the necessary pogrom atmosphere against the Communists and to supply the trial with the required background. The Communist information service has succeeded in revealing a series of such planned provocations such as the burning down of peasant farms and buildings, granaries, etc., attempts at robbery with violence, attempts on the life of Hitler and other Nazi leaders, dynamite attempts on trains and on important factories and other buildings. The exposure of

their plans will naturally not prevent the criminals from carrying them into execution. The Nazis need this pogrom atmosphere against the Communists because the Communists are the only serious enemies of the Hitler régime. The quicker the masses begin to see through Hitler's demagogy, the more the masses are plunged into misery and poverty, the quicker will the Communists be able to convince the broad masses of the necessity of the class struggle for the overthrow of Hitler fascism by the proletarian revolution. The Hitler government will do its utmost to bar the path of the masses to this only solution of their problems, to this only way to prevent a fearful war, by increasing persecution of the Communists.

The Leipzig process is intended to provide the Hitler government with the necessary pogrom atmosphere against the Communists. Mercenary witnesses prepared to swear any amount of perjury will be produced at the trial by the Hitler government. Hitler, Goering and Goebbels will raise their bloodstained hands to swear that they have saved Germany from disaster, the Communists having been about to plunge the country into destruction and ruin. The "secret insurrectionary plans," the "lists of hostages," etc., allegedly found in the cellars of Karl Liebknecht house are to serve as "proofs" of this. But these "finds" are in reality the product of the criminal phantasy of the Hitler government. The "secret insurrectionary plans" were invented and forged by the Hitler government in order to be presented subsequently as the "justification" for the slaughter of anti-fascist workers. The Communist Party of Germany has always declared frankly and openly that its task is to free the proletarian masses from capitalist oppression by the proletarian revolution, but this can only take place with the active and conscious support of the majority of the working class, and not as the result of any "secret insurrectionary plans," individual terrorist acts, or other conspiratorial "properties." Everything produced at the Leipzig trial by the Public Prosecutor or by any of his "witnesses" suggesting the contrary is lying and deception. The accusation that the Communist Party set fire to the Reichstag shows clearly enough the lying manoeuvres adopted by the Hitler government. The Hitler government might have said correctly that the Communists were determined enemies of capitalist exploitation and that they must therefore be suppressed in order that the Hitler dictatorship might be maintained. But the Hitler government is not able to save the masses of Germany from impoverishment and misery. On the contrary, the Hitler government is thrusting the masses deeper

and deeper into poverty. Such an honest explanation of the persecutions against the Communists would therefore only have increased the solidarity of the masses with the Communist Party. Therefore the Hitler government was compelled to adopt provocative measures like the burning of the Reichstag, and like the measures which it is now preparing in order to cut off the masses from the Communist Party. However, all these attempts will fail. The growing mass resistance to the Hitler régime under the leadership of the Communist Party will overthrow the fascist dictatorship in Germany.

To illustrate how little the Communist Party had to do with the burning of the Reichstag let it be pointed out, though the proof is superfluous enough, that on the day of the fire in the Reichstag the party leadership held a session in a private room of a bourgeois restaurant in the East End of Berlin which lasted from two o'clock in the afternoon until 11.30 in the evening. The session discussed the electoral work of the Communist Party, the situation created by the Hitler government, and the measures necessary to counter it. The members of the party leadership first heard of the Reichstag fire on their way home, in other words, at a time when the fire had already been extinguished. Without having any idea of the wide-scale persecutions already being carried out against the Communist Party by the Hitler government I parted from another member of the leadership at the very crowded underground railway station at Alexander Platz, having stood there previously for about a quarter of an hour discussing political questions. Only as I was on my journey did I hear of the Reichstag fire from a party comrade, and at first I thought it was one of the many rumours flying about in those days. However, when the rumour was established as a fact it became clear to me that this was the provocation which the Hitler government had planned at the last hour in order to whip up a pogrom atmosphere against the Communists for the Reichstag elections and to increase the persecution of the Communist Party by an intensified terror.

No matter how the Hitler government may carry through the Leipzig trial and its planned series of provocations, the Communist Party will continue its fight against the Hitler régime with increased energy. It will mobilise the masses for this struggle and lead them to victory. Neither Hitler fascism nor the social democracy will be able to prevent the proletarian revolution. The day on which the proletarian revolution in Germany is victorious will be the day on which the fascist incendiaries, murderers and provocators will meet their judges.

The London Verdict

The Fascist Fire-Raisers in the Pillory Before the World

By Ernst Bayer (London)

On the eve of the opening of the Leipzig trial, one of the most brutal and insolent frame-ups ever planned against revolutionary working-class leaders, the verdict of the London counter-trial has just been announced to the world. Every day of the counter-trial, every hour of evidence given by the numerous witnesses helped to form the verdict of the International Commission of Inquiry consisting of bourgeois lawyers and advocates. The London verdict declares to the workers and to all honest people all over the world:—

"That the accused Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev ought to be regarded not merely as innocent of the crime with which they are charged, but also as not having been concerned in any manner whatsoever, directly or indirectly, with the arson in the Reichstag."

The bourgeois jurists who formed the International Commission carried out their investigations in the Court Room in Carey Street in the heart of London's legal quarters with the greatest objectivity and reserve. They examined the available evidence concerning the fire in the Reichstag, but not from the point of view of the proletarian class struggle. They carried out their investigation according to the customs and usages of bourgeois law, and maintained a strict legal objectivity even where the political significance of the facts clearly established the guilt of the Nazis. The International Commission drew up its report on the basis of this strictly judicial investigation and its conclusions are such that

the national socialist fire-raisers and their government are pilloried in the eyes of the world as the real criminals.

The London counter-trial declares to the world from the lips of famous bourgeois jurists that the Leipzig indictment has been formulated by the criminals themselves.

London declares on the basis of clear and incontrovertible evidence that the alibis of Torgler and Dimitrov are proved up to the hilt. Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev are proved opponents of individual terror in every form.

London hammers home the fact in the consciousness of the world that the Reichstag was set on fire by at least ten incendiaries who could have entered and left the Reichstag only through the tunnel connecting Goering's house with the Reichstag.

London demonstrated through irreproachable witnesses from Holland and Germany that Marinus van der Lubbe was an enemy of Communism who sympathised with fascism. He was a homosexual pervert and instrument of the lust of Roehm, the Chief of Staff of Hitler's storm detachments. Van der Lubbe was a tool of the fascists. Impelled by vanity and revenge he will conceal the names of his provocative masters in Leipzig.

After the London investigation there can no longer be any doubt that the Reichstag was set on fire at the instructions and in the political interests of the national socialist party.

The counter-trial presented a clear picture of the political situation in the February days in Germany and showed how the Communist Party warned the workers clearly and definitely against

the planned provocations of the Nazis, whilst at the same time exerting all its energies to secure the creation of a united front of the working millions against the fascist dictatorship of Hitler and Goering. There was not one bourgeois or social-democratic witness at the London counter-trial, no matter how bitter may be their opposition to Communism, who could give witness to dispute this clear policy of the German Communist Party. All the witnesses were unanimously in agreement with the Communist witnesses **Koenen** and **Kuehne** in one point, namely, the national socialists needed the fire in the Reichstag in order to have a pretext to let loose a brutal terror against the revolutionary working-class movement all over the country. The national socialists needed the Reichstag fire in order to bring about a change in the division of power with the government itself in their favour and to push the German nationalists to the wall. The national socialist party planned and staged the Reichstag fire as a continuation of its policy of provocation, individual terror and mass murder against the revolutionary working class.

The London counter-trial has demonstrated that bourgeois jurists of the highest standing, examining all the material with the greatest care and with all safeguards must come to an overwhelming condemnation of the real incendiaries in the leadership of the Hitler party, and this is a fact of world importance. The press in London and Paris, the big newspapers in all the capitals of the world outside Germany, the newspapers in far-off countries, printed columns and columns of reports on the London counter-trial every day. **Even the bourgeois world was unable to ignore this unusual tribunal.** The exposure of Hitler's policy of provocation and the condemnation of Hitler barbarism resounds throughout the world in the ears of millions and millions of people as the result of the London counter-trial, including millions and millions of people who are still under bourgeois political influence.

The London counter-trial had sufficient evidence at its disposal, although numerous witnesses could not be got out of Hitler Germany, although witnesses like Comrade Kolaroff and others were refused permission to come to London by the British Government. There were one or two subordinate incidents at the counter-trial which, however, were unable to influence the main trend of the proceedings; for instance **Breitscheid** did his best to differentiate between the political opinions of Torgler and of the Communist Party of Germany. However, the next day his attempt was brought to nothing by the evidence of the bourgeois journalist **Phillipsborn**, who repeated the severe criticism which Torgler had exercised against the policy of the social-democratic leaders. The former Police President of Berlin, the social democrat **Grzesinski**, once again presented himself for admiration as a particularly capable fighter against Communism, and his mediocre bureaucratic performance demonstrated once again drastically how the social-democratic leaders prepared the way for fascism in their struggle against the revolutionary working class. But even the evidence of such bitter enemies of Communism and the Communist Party as **Breitscheid** and **Grzesinski** completely refuted the lies of Goering concerning the "catacombs" in the Karl Liebknecht House. Their evidence was a clear and definite confirmation of the unambiguous opposition of the Communist Party to individual terror, and showed equally clearly that the Reichstag could only have been set on fire by the national socialists.

The publication of the verdict of the London counter-trial coincides with the beginning of the tragi-comedy of justice in **Leipzig** which is being stage-managed in every particular by the man who organised the plan for the burning of the Reichstag, the national socialist Reich's Propaganda Minister **Goebbels**. This man has learnt from the reactionaries of all countries and at all times, and he is using his knowledge to stage this trial in the most unscrupulous and cunning fashion. The managers of this trial will hesitate at nothing. There will be no forgery that they will not attempt. There will be no perjury which the witnesses for the prosecution will not swear on demand. The national socialist lawyers officially appointed to defend the accused will in fact act as the assistants of the Public Prosecutor, as all trials in Nazi Germany have clearly demonstrated. The German lawyer **Dr. Sack**, one-time defender of the fascist Fehme murderers, the man who came to London and sought to influence the press and to convince it of the "decency" of the Hitler government, will conduct Torgler's defence as a shield to cover the real incendiaries.

The tragi-comedy of Leipzig is faced with the accusation which the London proceedings have raised before the whole world: the real incendiaries are **Goering, Hitler and Goebbels**.

This accusation is at the same time an appeal to the world to save the innocent accused **Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev**.

However, the verdict of the bourgeois jurists in London can only become effective if it is backed up by the workers of all countries. Not a moment must be lost. All over the world the London verdict must be held up against the fascist swindle being carried out in Leipzig. The London verdict must urge on the workers of the world to exert all their forces to save Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev. The London verdict must result in a tremendous increase of the campaign of mass meetings, demonstrations and strikes to save the working-class leaders on trial for their lives in Leipzig. Only the mass power of the workers of the world can save Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev from the hands of the fascist executioner and rescue Thaelmann and the other anti-fascist workers from the prisons of fascism.

Even bourgeois jurists were compelled to alarm the conscience of the world against the crime being planned in Leipzig and now the anti-fascist workers of all countries must raise a world storm of protest against fascist class-justice in Hitler Germany. The international proletariat must stay the arm of Hitler's executioners.

Findings of the Legal Commission of Inquiry

Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev not connected in any manner whatsoever with the Arson of the Reichstag

London, 20th September, 1933.

The Legal Commission of Enquiry into the Burning of the Reichstag—consisting of Madame Dr. Bakker-Nort (Holland), Maitre Gaston Bergery (France), Mr. George Branting (Sweden), Mr. Arthur Garfield Hays (U.S.A.), Mr. Vald. Huidt (Denmark), Maitre Moro-Giafferi (France), Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C. (England), and Maitre Pierre Vermeyley (Belgium)—issued their report this evening at a large gathering of press representatives and the general public at Caxton Hall, Westminster. The report, which is a lengthy document comprising eighteen pages of manuscript, was read out by Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., the chairman of the Commission. It concludes with the following findings of the Commission:—

- (1) That van der Lubbe is not a member, but an opponent, of the Communist Party.

That no connection whatever can be traced between the Communist Party and the burning of the Reichstag.

That the accused Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov, and Tanev, ought to be regarded not merely as innocent of the crime charged, but also as not having been concerned with or connected in any manner whatsoever, directly or indirectly, with the arson of the Reichstag.

- (2) That the documents, the oral evidence, and the other material in its possession tend to establish that van der Lubbe cannot have committed the crime alone.

- (3) That the examination of all the possible means of ingress and egress to or from the Reichstag makes it highly probable that the incendiaries made use of the subterranean passage leading from the Reichstag to the House of the President of the Reichstag.

That the happening of such a fire at the period in question was of great advantage to the national socialist party.

That for these reasons, and others pointed out in the third part of the report, **grave grounds exist for suspecting that the Reichstag was set on fire by, or on behalf of, leading personalities of the national socialist party.**

The Committee considers that any judicial organism exercising jurisdiction in the matter should properly investigate these suspicions. If during and after the trial at Leipzig there should be any need that this Commission should reassemble to take into consideration the facts elucidated at the Leipzig hearing and any further available facts, and to prepare a further report on the basis thereof, every effort should be made to bring the Commission together again.

Politics

Cuba's Second Revolution

By A. G. Bosse (New York)

After holding power for three weeks the *Cespedes* government, put into power by U.S. Ambassador Welles, has been overthrown by a mass movement of the workers, peasants, and rank and file of the armed forces. Welles' job was too crude and the revolutionary pressure of the masses too great to continue *Cespedes* in office long. The revolutionary Junta now precariously in power is democratic and bourgeois both in its leadership and programme, though pretending to be radical because otherwise it could not exist.

The United States, angered and disturbed by the quick overthrow of its agent, has sent or has ready (by September 7) to send to Cuban waters 30 warships, plus a dozen planes with marines and thousands of the latter. With every repetition of his opposition to armed intervention Roosevelt rushed more warships. He could hardly prepare more fully and quickly if it were against Japan.

The causes of the second revolution were the great discontent of the masses with the refusal of *Cespedes* to do any more than continue the policies of Machado in disguised form. The peasants demand the division of the great estates and plantations; the workers bread, increased wages, and the right to unionise; and the rank and file of the soldiers, sailors and police the elimination of Machadoist officers, and the restoration of their pay cut. All groups, except the landlords and big bourgeoisie, demand the ending of the rule of American imperialism, especially of the sugar and public utility magnates and bankers.

Other reasons were the retention of Machado officials in office, failure to call for immediate revision of the constitution and holding of a general election, *Cespedes*' aiding Machado to escape and his refusal to seize the latter's property, and the fact that *Cespedes* followed Machado's policies, legalising all the actions of his congress and preparing for another dictatorship.

The sugar workers have backed up their demands for improved conditions and lower taxes by threatening to take over the plantations and mills. In a number of provinces they have done this and driven out the foreign and native owners. The soldiers are fraternising with the people. In Santiago de Cuba the general strike continues, and at Cienfuegos the workers have sacked hardware stores and seized arms. The influence of the Communist Party, Y.C.L., and revolutionary unions is rapidly spreading and threatening the restoration of "law and order."

The cabinet is reported to have been selected by the rank and file of the army and the students, also by the left wing of the A.B.C. (landlord-bourgeois secret opposition under Machado), and the revolutionary students of the Directorio Estudiantil. All political groupings but that of Menocal were at first reported to be supporting the Junta, but more recent reports include rumours of the breaking away of many of the bourgeois groups, as revolutionary mass pressure intensifies and American military intervention comes closer.

The "revolutionary" character of the Junta is shown by the fact that all its members disclaim radical intentions. Thus, San Martin states its programme is "non-political," while Carbo characterises his colleagues as respectable and "solid." With Cuba surrounded by American warships Carbo says that to think of armed intervention would be "an insult to Roosevelt," that their presence "does not mean a threat to Cuban sovereignty." One radical A.B.C. leader in the Junta even says the revolution was unintentional, so far as its leaders were concerned: "We did not aim to unseat the *De Cespedes* government, but merely wanted to spur it on to more decided revolutionary action." (N.Y. "Daily News," September 7.) Sergeant Batista, who led the military uprising and is now the head of the army, states the revolution is not Communist, "nor will the armed forces tolerate such." He characterises the new government as "without any political tendencies whatever." Communist meetings and agitation in the army are

being prohibited, and army and navy officers being restored. An ex-army officer has already been made head of the national police. The Junta has secretly decided to attempt to disarm all civilians.

The excuse for intervention is the alleged disorders at the far eastern end of the island, but the press, for example the N.Y. "Herald Tribune" of September 7, states explicitly that there has been no disorder anywhere: "On the contrary, the shooting down at sight by the A.B.C. of Machado's adherents came to an end with the passing of the *Cespedes* government, and no murders have been reported in the last two days." It is the threat of the peasants to seize the plantations and the workers the mills, that alarms American imperialism, and this despite the extreme caution of the Junta. The 5,000 Americans on the island and the investment of over a billion dollars in Cuba must be defended no matter how many Cubans are massacred.

One purpose of the tremendous American naval concentration at Cuba is to obtain the restoration of *Cespedes*, if possible, as is admitted by Roosevelt spokesmen. The government apologists of intervention say it will be only a small intervention, to protect foreign lives and prevent "anarchy," not a comprehensive occupation, "taking over the agencies of the government . . . and carrying out electoral reforms or industrial programmes." (N.Y. "Herald Tribune," September 8.)

The *Communist Party* and Y.C.L. of Cuba issued a manifesto on the general strike on August 3, when the strike was just beginning. It contained the programme for which the masses of workers, peasants and revolutionary petty-bourgeois are fighting to-day.

That the struggle for the demands contained in the manifesto has been intensifying is evidenced now even in the capitalist press, which for weeks refused to take cognisance of the Communist movement. The N.Y. "Post" says *Cespedes Kerensky* has been thrown out; "will it now set up a Bolshevik republic?" (September 7.) The "Times" refers to Ruben Martinez Villena as "the youthful leader who organised the general strike which brought about the downfall of General Machado . . . The Communist element is rapidly gaining strength, particularly down the island, where thousands of underpaid workers are out on strike." (September 7.) Even Welles admits that Communist agitation has been increasing in the last two weeks. Revolutionary agitation has forced the government to turn over to the unemployed a \$500,000 appropriation for the maintenance of the presidential palace, which is to be closed.

A wave of strikes preceded the overthrow of the *Cespedes* régime, 15 strikes being declared in one day by groups ranging from tobacco workers to doctors. Over 8,000 workers struck on four sugar plantations in Havana province, their struggle being supported by the croppers and tenants. At Coliseo workers on six plantations struck, at Central Hormiguero in Cruces province 1,000 struck, in Fuerta de Golpe all tobacco workers, in Cardenas and Rincon sugar workers, in Havana photo-engravers. The Cruces strikers won an eight-hour day and wage increases, but reopened the strike immediately for further demands, including cancellation of all debts to the company. In Moron 3,000 workers won their demands, but when the plantation owner telephoned for troops they threatened to blow up the bridges and occupy the plantation if the troops came. At a number of other sugar centres militant hunger marches are reported. At American copper and asphalt mines strikes or lock-outs have been declared. In Oriente and Santa Clara provinces workers under Communist influence seized a number of sugar mills and drove out the American and Cuban owners.

On September 7 thousands massed in the streets of Havana to celebrate *International Youth Day*, having forced the Junta to issue a permit after its initial refusal. The demonstrators carried red flags and slogans reading, "We pay no debts to Yankee bankers," "Drive the Marines out of Guantanamo," and "Let's have no government that will deal with Yankee extortioners." Batista had to withdraw the machine-guns posted around the park, and in the evening another Communist demonstration was held. Thousands of leaflets calling for the meetings and containing the demands of the revolutionary workers were distributed before the demonstration.

The Autumn Offensive of Austrian Fascism

By Oesterreicher (Vienna)

We were not mistaken when we anticipated that the German Catholic Day would introduce a new stage in the development of fascism in Austria. The Federal chancellor Dollfuss himself established this connection between Catholic Day and inner policy at the first session of the Congress in the Vienna Stadium, designating it as a turning point in contemporary history, "whose impulse must soon be felt in public life. The manner in which this is to be realised Dollfuss laid down to the "Fatherland Front" on 11th September at the Viennese racecourse.

Dollfuss' speech did not bring anything especially new. All that he announced was the acceleration of the fascisation of Austria. He stated that the task to be accomplished by the government in the autumn months is "corporate reconstruction." The days of the liberal capitalist state of society and economy, the days of Marxist leadership and leading astray of the people, the days of party rule, are over. What the Fatherland Front wants is a social, Christian, German state of Austria on a corporate basis, with a powerful authoritative leadership.

Dollfuss spoke in particular detail of the "corporate order" and of the "overcoming of the parties state." That this is what the Fatherland Front and the government want has been plain long enough. But it is important to note—this was perhaps the most important point in his whole speech—that he stated:

"The organisation of the external form of vocational representation is the task to be fulfilled by the government during the coming weeks and months."

This signifies nothing more nor less than the announcement of a blow to be dealt by the government against the trade unions. Mussolini and Hitler have already shown the way.

With regard to the coming constitution, Dollfuss stated that the government has no intention of permitting "possibilities for demagogy or party-political hegemony." This is, of course, intended to signify that there will be no elections, and that the leadership, the "hegemony" will be reserved solely for the "Fatherland Front" as the only formation which the government does not regard as "party political."

The fact that all this is designated as the concrete task for the next few weeks and months gives an idea of the speed at which the fascisation of Austria is to be continued.

It is not difficult to guess the reasons for this acceleration. The Austrian bourgeoisie is on thin ice, and the spectre of the threatening economic collapse and the increasing radicalisation of the workers is forcing it forward to a rapid gallop over the cracking surface.

On the very day when the Cardinal Legate "drove in triumph" through Styria, the miners of the most important coal-field of Austria came out on strike, so that even the Styrian provincial governor contracted a political cold in the head and excused his absence at the cardinal's reception.

This fact speaks volumes regarding the situation in Austria.

The Dollfuss government has not been able to solve in any way the main problems of Austria: the army of more than half a million unemployed. The results of the work schemes programme are a very transparent swindle. It boasts that it has found employment for 50,000 new workers, yet unemployment is greater this year than last. The government has ruthlessly strangled the investments of the public bodies on the one hand, in order to be able to play the "work scheme" game on the other. Besides this, the 50,000 newly engaged persons have to work under the slave conditions of the so-called "voluntary labour service." Since the buying powers of the labour service workers are no higher than those of the unemployed, it is perfectly obvious that the effect of the "work schemes" is to deprive the fully paid workers of employment and to employ "labour service" workers, who do not alleviate the crisis, but are bound to intensify it. That slave work is the most unproductive and expensive will have to be realised by the Austrian bourgeoisie.

But the Dollfuss government intends pursuing this path further. The Federal Railways have just announced the dismissal of 4,000 more employees by the end of the year, to be followed next year by the dismissal of thousands more.

The Dollfuss government has lowered the standards of living of the masses very considerably by a series of emergency orders.

In this direction it is pursuing the policy of the Third Realm. It has reduced the number of unemployed entitled to benefit, it has reduced the benefit itself, and it has smoothed the path for a new wage cut offensive on the part of the employers by means of the strike prohibition, boards of arbitration, and abolition of collective agreements. The employers have made ample use of these possibilities. The wage cuts already carried out or impending average 10 per cent. But this only whets the appetite of the employers, and now they are urging the government to find further possibilities for wage cutting.

The large-scale reduction of the income of the masses is not compensated for by the cheapening of food and of the most necessary articles of consumption; these prices rather tend to increase.

In spite of the fact that the prices of agricultural products in Austria are far higher than those on the world's markets, the position of the greater part of the peasantry is desperate. Starvation reigns in the valleys.

The strike of the Styrian miners is the first revolt of the Austrian workers against fascism. Fascism and reformism have shattered the organisation of the Austrian miners. Therefore the government and the mineowners assumed that they might impose lower standards of living with impunity.

But the miners have risen in protest, whether organised in the Heimwehr, or in the free trade union, or unorganised. This struggle should be the signal for a broad mass rising of the Austrian workers, for the advance of the workers against the fascist front. It is at least the forerunner of the coming great mass struggles.

The slogan issued by the social democrats in face of all attacks on the standards of living of the toilers by the Dollfuss government is: This is the result of the elimination of the parliament, therefore you must first fight for the restoration of the constitution.

With this slogan they have held the masses back from a struggle against the concrete measures taken by fascism, and their campaign for the dead constitution has in reality lent valuable aid to the fascists.

The miners of the Köflach district have broken the spell of the "fight for the constitution," and have refuted by action the arguments of the social democrats. They have taken up the struggle against the emergency orders shortening their ration of daily bread, and have thereby established the united front of the workers on the firm basis of the class struggle.

This shows clearly that the social democracy is becoming less capable every day of continuing its historical rôle of holding back the masses from the struggle.

The government cannot but be aware that the rank and file of the social-democratic organisations are passing through a rapid process of radicalisation. It has prohibited the activities of the Communist Party, but it cannot prevent the social-democratic workers, alienated by the actual united front policy of their leaders with the Fatherland Front, and disgusted by the capitulation of their leaders before every step taken by the fascist dictatorship, from recognising precisely at this juncture the necessity of the united front of struggle with the Communists. There are numerous examples of this recognition.

The government, confronted by this process of development among the social-democratic workers, is left no choice but to turn its attacks on the free trade unions and social-democratic organisations, if it does not want to expose itself to the danger that the workers will emulate the strike of the Styrian miners on a larger scale.

Hence the announcement that "other forms of vocational representation" are to be found, and that the "parties-state is to be overcome." The Christian Social "Linzer Volksblatt" formulates this even more clearly: "The parties must die if the Fatherland Front is to live."

Therefore the government hastens to have concentration camps in readiness and organises raids upon the Communists.

These exertions leave Austrian fascism less and less opportunity for the luxury of internal differences of opinion. It must assemble all its forces. And here its most racial wing, the Heimwehr organisations, naturally set the pace. To this end the differences between the Christian Socials and the Heimwehr are being smoothed out, and to this end the "National Styrian Front" of the Land League is to be affiliated to the Fatherland Front

within a few days. Hence, too, Dollfuss emphasised readiness to come to an understanding with the Nazis.

The strike in Styria gives us reason to believe that the workers will not submit without a struggle to the attacks made upon them. Severe struggles are impending in Austria. Their issue depends on the extent to which the Communist Party will be successful in gaining the leadership of the masses.

The Change of Government in Spain

By L. I.

Lerroux, after protracted negotiations, has formed his Cabinet. The new Prime Minister will appear before parliament in a few days. He announces already that should this parliament not give him a vote of confidence he will not hesitate to dissolve it. This is the manner in which fascist adventurers always commence to work. It is significant that in the course of the two days preceding the formation of the Ministry the social-democratic leaders participated in the bargaining for fresh Ministerial seats. Lerroux expressed his pleasure that the social-democratic President of the Chamber, Besteiro, served as a mediator between him and the social-democratic party of Spain.

Another very significant fact: during the negotiations for forming the new Ministry Lerroux received a deputation of officers in uniform, who had come to assure him of their complete loyalty and devotion. And it seems that this encouraged Lerroux to ignore the decision of the Radical Socialists who opposed him and to set up his Ministry in any case.

Spain is approaching an exceedingly disturbed period. It is perfectly certain that the crisis called forth by the resignation of the Azana Cabinet is far more important than an ordinary change of Ministries.

Some months ago, Azana, in spite of the counter endeavours of Alcalá Zamora, the President of the Republic, and the tricks of Lerroux and Maura, managed to patch his Cabinet together again. The last-named three persons have placed themselves at the head of the movement which was launched by the big land-owners, and behind them in turn by the darkest forces of reaction.

Shortly afterwards a fascist conspiracy was discovered in Spain. As a result, the government had a very uncertain existence. On September 8 it resigned. A vote in parliament at which the majority withheld their votes, and the results of the elections to the Constitutional Court, which meant an undeniable defeat for the government parties, formed the pretext for the resignation. As a matter of fact, however, the crisis is deeper and its origin goes much further back. The whole policy of the Republic of April 14, 1931, consisted in preserving the majority of the social privileges which had served as buttresses of monarchy.

Nay, more, the new rulers have done their utmost to retain in the majority of cases the personnel of the old regime. It sufficed for Sanjurjo to make a declaration of fidelity to the Republic in order to be appointed by the Republic-Socialist Ministers Commissioner in Morocco and then Commissioner in Andalusia, when he ruthlessly persecuted the Communists right to the day on which he conspired against the Republic.

Maura, Lerroux, and Zamora, who prepared for the seizure of power by fascist reaction, also sat in the same Ministry together with the socialists Caballero, Prieto, de los Rios.

On the other hand, the Republic, which behaves so mildly towards the reactionary agitators and is obviously incapable of solving a single problem of the democratic revolution, directed all its blows against the revolutionary workers' movement, against the Communist Party of Spain. In doing so it employed all the methods which the social democracy employed in Germany. The results can now be seen.

The most dangerous forces of fascist reaction are raising their heads. They are calling for a strong government compliant with their will. They are of the opinion that this government must be freed of the socialist Ministers, not, however, because these Ministers represent the least danger to the bourgeois order, but because they are of the opinion that precisely at this moment in the life of Spain they can render more useful service in curbing the workers' and peasants' movement if they are no longer in the government.

One often reads reports in the papers that Lerroux, Maura

and Co. opposed the agrarian reforms of the government. One must, however, understand this rightly. The socialist Ministers have done their utmost to preserve the enormous privileges of the junkers, of the "terratenientes." But the peasants are in a state of revolt. Not a week passes without the working people in the rural districts attacking the manor houses.

At the recent Conference in Paris of the Second International many flattering references were made to the socialist Ministers of Spain. They were greeted as those who, in the general dissolution, had managed to save their goods and chattels. As a matter of fact, they attempted to save the goods and chattels of the bourgeoisie by persecuting the proletariat. But, like their colleagues everywhere, they have prepared the way for reaction and fascism.

Lerroux's entry into office no doubt represents the biggest attempt made by all fractions of counter-revolution hitherto. These fractions are of the opinion that collaboration with the social-democratic party is to be no longer in the form of their participation in the Ministry, but in the form of a loyal opposition, under cover of which reformism will continue its work of betraying and sabotaging the workers' movement.

Thus, after two years of the revolution, after two years of the Republican and "socialist" government in Spain, the fascist bandits are still able to organise their fierce attacks upon the workers and peasants.

In this serious situation the Communist Party of Spain calls upon the toilers to organise fighting committees against fascism. The C.C. of the C.P. of Spain has just published an important manifesto, in which the following slogans are put forth:—

Release of all political prisoners; freedom of assembly, of demonstrations and the press; right to strike and right of combination; cancellation of all fascist laws; closing down of the premises of the fascists and of the monarchists and handing over of the latter to the people's court; disarming of the civil guard; arming of the workers and peasants; expropriation without compensation of the big estates of the Church and of the big landowners and distribution of the land among the small peasants; against any wage cuts; for bread and work for the unemployed; against dismissals; for the right of self-determination of Catalonia, Galicia and the Bask district; evacuation of Morocco by Spanish imperialism.

The Communist Party is calling upon the toilers to mobilise for the fight on the basis of a united front for the advance of the revolution and the victory of the workers' and peasants' government.

The Change in the Japanese Foreign Ministry

By I. P.

The Foreign Minister of the Japanese Cabinet Ushida has resigned and Hirota has been appointed his successor. The official reason given for Ushida's resignation is that his health is failing and the official explanation points out that for this reason he took a short holiday at the end of August last. Despite these explanations Japanese public opinion considers Ushida's resignation to be surprising and assumes that it was in reality caused by differences of opinion with military and naval leaders with regard to the estimation of the international situation and the foreign policy to be pursued by Japan as a result.

In particular, Ushida was of the opinion that the recent speeches of the Minister for War Araki and of the Naval Minister Osugi (who both demanded that the strengthening of Japanese armaments should be made the central point of the "new fundamental State policy") represented a challenge to the other powers and that they would inevitably lead to a further isolation of Japan in the international arena, whereby Ushida represented the attitude of certain circles of the Japanese bourgeoisie. Further, Ushida regarded the suggestion in these speeches that there had been "no preparations to settle the intensifying foreign political crisis" as a condemnation of the foreign political line which was associated with his name and despite the fact that this line had been followed on the basis of an understanding with the whole Saito Cabinet and in particular with the War and Naval Ministries.

It has also become known that following on a discussion with the Finance Minister Takahashi on the 9th September Araki wanted to meet Ushida in order to discuss with him the question of the "new fundamental State policy," but that Ushida had refused to meet him and had handed in his resignation on the 12th September. Ushida's resignation was accepted, and on the same day Saito began to negotiate with Hirota. Hirota was obviously the

only candidate for the post of Foreign Minister with whom Saito opened up negotiations. In political circles the appointment of Hirota as the successor of Ushida was considered certain from the beginning because Hirota is not only closely connected with military and naval circles, whose confidence he enjoys, but he also enjoys the support of influential persons in the reactionary patriotic organisations. *Hirota's appointment is therefore regarded as a strengthening of military influence in the Cabinet.*

Before the announcement of Ushida's resignation the Japanese newspaper "Asahi" published a sensational report according to which on the 12th September the former Japanese Prime Minister Kiyura, "disturbed at the prospect of the foreign political crisis facing Japan in the years 1935-36," visited Ushida in order to discover Ushida's attitude towards the necessity of adapting Japan's foreign policy to this situation. At this meeting Kiyura advised Ushida to take the measures necessary in this situation. In particular he put the following questions to Ushida:

1. Would Japan be in a position after its resignation from the League of Nations to maintain its friendly relations to the European and American countries?

2. What proposals would Japan make in the future for a settlement of the problems represented by the Soviet Union and China?

3. Would Japan be in a position to secure any political results if it pursued an active policy towards the other powers?

4. What was the attitude of Ushida to the naval conference called to take place in Washington in the year 1935?

5. Was Ushida demanding new funds in the new Budget for a reconstruction of Japan's foreign policy?

6. Were the rumours that Ushida was indifferent to the proposed alterations of Japanese foreign policy based on fact?

According to the report of the "Asahi" Ushida pointed out in his answers to the questions mentioned above that by its resignation from the League of Nations Japan had ended the foreign political relations established after Versailles. Japan was preparing to pursue a policy which would be more constructive. At the moment, however, the world powers were experiencing an economic depression, and further, in its efforts to win new markets Japan was coming up against the interests of other powers. Under such circumstances one could not reckon with any speedy resumption of Japan's friendly relations with the other powers. Ushida pointed out that Japan must assist Manchukuo and declared:

"Theoretically it appears a natural course that Japan should accept the policy of co-operation with China, the Soviet Union, the United States and those powers which were members of the League of Nations, however, Japan must first take a series of steps with a view to re-establishing its friendly relations with these powers. In any case, the given situation does not appear to be the one for taking any steps."

So far as the foreign political crisis which it was feared would arise in the years 1935-36, was concerned, declared Ushida further, the Foreign Ministry had already prepared practical measures. It had thoroughly studied the question and provided for the necessary expenditure. In conclusion Ushida expressed regret that certain circles by their support of the attitude of Araki and Osumi, who had approached Takahashi with regard to certain Budget demands, should condemn him, Ushida, for passivity.

In an interview given to a representative of the agency Simbun Renga the Minister for War Araki declared, referring to the resignation of Ushida, that Ushida's position had been "a difficult one on account of the fact that pressure had been exerted upon him from outside in order to secure the revision of the policy previously followed by the Foreign Ministry." In the same interview Araki pointed out that the new Foreign Minister Hirota was a good friend of his and that "Japan's foreign policy has already been laid down definitely and despite the fact that Hirota has taken the place of Ushida there will be no sudden changes."

The new Japanese Foreign Minister, Koki Hirota, was born in 1878 in Fukuoka and he is one of Japan's most prominent statesmen. He graduated from the diplomatic school of the Imperial University in Tokio. In 1906 he was appointed attaché to the Japanese Mission in China. In 1909 he was sent to England. In 1918 he was Chief Secretary of the Japanese Embassy in Washington. In 1921 he was placed in charge of the Information Service. From 1924 to 1927 he was in charge of the European and American Department of the Japanese Foreign Ministry. From 1927 to 1930 he was Plenipotentiary in the Hague for Japan, and from 1930 to 1932 he was the Japanese Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Rescue the White-Russian Peasants from the Clutches of Fascist Justice!

By G. H.

A fresh wave of brutal terror, to which the workers of the whole world must turn their attention, is sweeping over Poland. In Central Galicia punitive expeditions are behaving as if they were in an enemy country. They murder and steal, they reduce to beggary the poor and middle peasants who have taken up the fight against tax extortions and against the capitalist exploiters.

At the present time the fascist government is openly bringing Communists before the Summary Courts. In the occupied districts of White Russia, in Kobryn, eight White Russian peasants—Leon Bodanowicz, Jan Liskiewicz, Jan Kitel, Grzegorz Tymoszczuk, Roman Maciech, Szymon Kozlovicz, Aleksy Guzik, Bazyl Nikonczuk and the woman worker Regina Kaplan—have been brought before the Summary Court. These nine champions for freedom are threatened with death by hanging. The Public Prosecutor demands the utmost penalty, because, as it is stated in the indictment, "the accused, as members of the Communist Party of White Russia and for the purpose of separating the North-East district from Poland and uniting it with Soviet Russia, in the night of August 4, formed an armed detachment consisting of seventy persons and in accordance with a previous plan, after destroying the telephone connections, carried out an attack on the police guard in Novosiolki."

The whole accusation is a falsification. The facts are that on the evening in question a group of White Russian peasants organised a demonstration which was attacked by the police, and after an obstinate fight the police were driven back to the station.

It is not necessary to prove that a group of seventy persons would not and could not organise a revolt for the purpose of separating the north-east district from Poland. The fairy tale about the revolt was necessary for the fascist bloodhounds in order to make a bloody pogrom against the poor population of the district of Kobryn and to bring the accused to the gallows.

Finally, the characterisation of the objects of the C.P. of White Russia, which is a part of the C.P. of Poland, is a downright distortion. The political slogan which the C.P. of Western White Russia and the C.P. of Poland have issued in the national question is the fight for the self-determination of Western White Russia and Western Ukraine up to the separation from the Polish State. The addition made by the Public Prosecutor about "union with Soviet Russia," pursues the same aim as the fairy tale about the revolt in Novosiolki.

The fact that the fascist government wishes to bring the White Russian peasants of Novosiolki to the gallows for this fight, for which thousands of champions for freedom in Poland and in the occupied districts are pining in the fascist prisons, and have even given up their lives, is a proof that the old blood-thirsty Pilsudski is pursuing the same path as Hitler in order to choke the approaching proletarian revolution in blood and to dam back the ever-growing revolutionary movement.

These fairy tales, which are spread by the Polish social fascists of all shades, only prove the miserable role which these people are playing as the lackeys of fascism. The savage brutality of the Pilsudski police was revealed at the first day of the trial before the Summary Court in Kobryn. The woman worker Kaplan was subjected to the most frightful torture. The accused Bogdanowicz told how he was brutally beaten and tortured for two and a half days, until he finally said to his tormentors: "Write whatever you like."

The Polish "Ochra" is now proceeding to murder well-known revolutionary workers. In the night of August 20 the mutilated corpse of a Communist was found in a forest near Warsaw. This murder was undoubtedly the work of the political police.

Polish fascism, however, is mistaken if it believes that it will be able by the fresh wave of terror to weaken the fighting spirit of the masses and their love and confidence for the Communist Party. The big textile workers' strike, the heroic insurrectionary movement of the peasants of Central Galicia, the fresh struggles in almost all branches of industry, the ferment in the P.P.S. and in the kulak peasant party, prove that the revolutionary movement is breaking through the barriers of fascist terror and that Poland is approaching a revolutionary crisis.

In this situation the Polish proletariat expects support from its class brothers.

Germany

Letters from Berlin

I. The Reichstag Fire Trial in Leipzig

The interest and tension with which the Reichstag fire trial in Leipzig is being awaited throughout Germany and the whole world are increasing from day to day. After innumerable announcements and repeated postponements, the beginning of the trial has finally been fixed for the 21st September. On this day millions of workers all over the world will be looking towards Leipzig. The working class of Germany and of the whole world will wait with bated breath to see whether Hitler and Goering will dare to hand over four of the best representatives of the international proletariat to the executioner.

The world will follow closely how those who themselves should be in the dock will play their rôle as accusers. The moral situation of Hitler and Goering, if one can use the word moral in any connection at all with these two names, is not a particularly good one. The world has already formed its opinion on the Reichstag fire. And in Germany, even amongst the stupidest supporters of Hitler there are very few who still believe that Torgler and the other Communist accused set fire to the Reichstag.

A little while ago the "Voelkischer Beobachter" declared that the National Socialist Party snapped its fingers at the opinion of the world, but this does not mean that the protest actions of the workers and intellectuals outside Germany have had no effect on the Hitler government. On the contrary, the Hitler government fears such actions acutely.

This fear of public opinion outside Germany was responsible for the order issued by Rudolf Hess, Hitler's adjutant, on the 9th September strictly forbidding the Nazis to interfere with foreigners. It had become a habit amongst the flower of the nation, as they call themselves, to beat up anyone, man, woman, or child, who failed to honour the appearance of the Nazi flag (known to the German workers as the hunger rag) in the prescribed form. In the future foreigners are to be spared such close contact with the new German culture. Another instance of the fear of the German Nazis for foreign opinion was the fact that when a trainload of Jewish refugees left Berlin on the 11th September the uniformed Nazi storm detachments were carefully kept out of the way.

In order to whip up the necessary atmosphere for the trial in Leipzig Goebbels caused his Propaganda Ministry to issue a book prepared by a previously unknown "All-German Union of Anti-Communist Associations" with the attractive title, "Armed Insurrection—Revelations on the Attempt at Communist Revolution on the Eve of the National Revolution." At a press conference on the 12th September the statement was made to the assembled journalists quite seriously that the "All-German Union" had no intimate relations with the government or with the National Socialist Party. The German press representatives are by this time so regimented in the interests of the National Socialist Party that they showed no surprise when, after this official statement, the further statement was made that the book had been prepared on the basis of official information. An interesting point was the announcement that one of the members of this "All-German Union" was a "Russo-German Club," which no doubt embraces all the white-guard elements at present in Germany.

The book itself contains no more than the usual fantastic anti-Communist ravings, and it is not even put together with any degree of cleverness. The main burden of the book is that the Communists had planned to murder Hitler and proclaim an armed Communist rising on the 5th March. These plans were foiled, according to the book, by the "premature" outbreak of the fire in the Reichstag, and, naturally, by the energetic intervention of the Prussian government with Goering at its head. It must be obvious to the simplest mind that this "premature" outbreak of fire in the Reichstag has also burnt a big hole in the credibility of the story.

However, a little incredibility does not prevent the German press from publishing columns of extracts from this book. Orders are orders, and in Nazi Germany every order is holy. This is the way in which the atmosphere for the trial is being prepared. The book is also intended for foreign consumption, first of all to counter the effects of the publication of the "Brown Book of the Hitler

Terror," if possible, and secondly, to persuade foreign public opinion that it should bow to Hitler for his great achievement in having scotched the Communist menace.

Within Germany the Nazis do not need to argue. Within Germany they can show their real features, and the terror is raging frightfully. The least expression of opinion not in accordance with the interests of the Nazis means concentration camp at least. An example of the extent of this terror can be seen in the conviction of a Berlin worker before an exceptional court on the 9th September for having failed to honour a Nazi flag in the usual fashion. This worker was beaten up on the spot by the Nazis and before the court he was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

Since the 7th September 11 death sentences have been passed on anti-fascist workers (nine in Duesseldorf and two in Koenigsberg). Many more trials of workers who defended themselves against Nazi attacks prior to the Nazi accession to power are in course of preparation. On the 9th September the anti-fascist worker *Schriefer*, who was sentenced to death in connection with a collision with Nazis which took place before Hitler came to power, was executed in Ebras prison near Bamberg in Bavaria. Hundreds of arrests have been made during the past few weeks and there are innumerable new cases of maltreatment and torture. The law drafted by Goering which provides for the death sentence for no greater crime than the passing on of a leaflet best characterises the present situation in Germany which was introduced with the second great wave of terror which began towards the end of July. Since Monday the 11th September the Supreme German Court in Leipzig has been surrounded by strong forces of police. The Nazi rulers of Germany are frightened. They know that despite all the blows which have been directed against it the Communist Party is alive.

II. The Nuremberg Party Congress of the National Socialist Party

The whole course taken by the Nuremberg Party Congress has strengthened the impression which, with the approaching autumn, becomes clearer in every sphere of Hitler's policy. The greater the inner difficulties of the fascist dictatorship become, the more self-evident the bankruptcy of Hitler's policy in every sphere, and the stronger the resultant anti-fascist mass feeling in the country, the more frantic and exaggerated will become the endeavours of National Socialism, by means of constant demonstrations of the apparent strength and immutability of the regime to deceive itself and its still faithful adherents regarding the true situation. Hitler, Göring, Goebbels and the rest of them, are acting like children who have got lost in a forest, and begin to sing to keep their courage up. For a time this may be maintained, but the reaction is the more dangerous.

It was obvious from the beginning that this party congress would be nothing more than a new advertising parade on a large scale. At this party congress there were no discussions; the "authoritative" principle was not abandoned for a moment, even in the commissions; the officials present had to listen to and obediently accept the speeches. Hitler himself formulated this in his speech to the officials, declaring:—

"The nature of our organisation, which knows no voting and no election, which knows only authority, discipline, responsibility, and subordination—this nature of our organisation prevents anyone from being able to hope to substitute it by another."

This bold assertion is not made true by being bold, but it outlines the system of military obedience being imposed from top to bottom, and its present strength lies in the fact that a large stratum of leaders, great and small, has been created, and to these the joy of issuing commands convinces them of the importance of their task. But that even now this principle no longer suffices to furnish the guarantee against subversion asserted by Hitler is evidenced by the ever-growing number of rebellious Storm Troopers being interned in concentration camps, by the ceaseless mutinies, and by the sullen resentment of that opposition which, though

still dumb, has already seized upon wide circles of the Storm Troops, and above all, of the Nazi factory organisations.

Even in initiated circles it had been assumed with certainty that Hitler would utilise the opportunity of the party congress, before so great a forum of his adherents and in the presence of a number of diplomatic representatives—though these were chiefly from the South American States, whilst the sole great Power represented was Italy, and the only other European Powers, Hungary, Switzerland and the social democratic Denmark—to give some kind of a foreign political speech. Nothing of the kind took place. With the exception of the fact that an Austrian regional leader who had been helped to break out of prison in Innsbruck and had been very slightly injured in his flight, was carried theatrically on a stretcher at the march past of the Storm Troopers, not even the "Brothers in Austria" were mentioned. The catastrophic impression made abroad by the war demonstrations at the Tannenberg monument, and by the Saar demonstrations at the Niederwald monument on the same day, evidently prevented at the last minute the expected foreign political proclamation. Instead of this, the astonished world was presented—apart from the military parades and the inevitable attacks on Communism—solely with the ideological substantiation (to adopt the phraseology of the Nazi press) of national socialism; this was especially the case in Hitler's great speech at the culture conference and in his closing speech at the party congress. It is perfectly impossible to repeat the empty platitudinous phrases, the amateurish racial theories, and megalomaniacal presumption, contained in these speeches. It is even impossible to suppose that the authors of these speeches had the faintest idea of what they were formulating. If the "scientific reasons" for anti-semitism, on which the claim to rulership by the Aryan race is based, are equivalent to these "profound philosophical expositions of the leader," then one can only wonder that the foreign diplomatic press representatives were able to preserve their gravity. Now, however, we know at least that the lower races, especially the Jewish, have for their aim in life only the satisfaction of their lowest instincts, whilst the Aryan race, possessing higher requirements, is for this reason alone called upon to rule eternally over the inferior races. And we know from Hitler's concluding speech—a much more important point than his racial theories—that this division into superior and inferior beings is intended to prove one thing only, and that is (we quote Hitler):—

"Therefore the idea of **private property** is inseparably bound up with the conviction that human performance is multifarious and of varying value, and that therefore human beings themselves differ in kind and in value."

The "heroic conception of blood, race, and life" is opposed to the economic conception of the age of liberalism; and finally the task is imposed of the selection of racial national socialist leaders.

Scarcely had these shallow and preposterous phrases, adopting the guise of slogans, been uttered of the leader, when the Ministry for Propaganda commenced on 6th September with an enlightenment campaign for the increase of the population and the improvement of the race. Political and economic life is to be permeated by the "ideas of biological inheritance."

It would be wrong, however, to fail to recognise the actual political meaning concealed behind the Nuremberg party congress, ostensibly devoted to racial theory. Not only has the point on which all foreign opinion is obviously unanimously against Hitler—the question of anti-semitism—been stressed with deliberate intention to provoke. But another point is even more important. The whole meaning of the claim to rule made for the Aryan race, and the claim that the racially superior elements of the German people are to be the leaders, is nothing more nor less than a threat of war. The military spectacle of the march past of 120,000 Storm Troopers before Hitler, the spectacle of the militarisation of the youth in the great camps of the Hitler Youth, maintained the spirit of the belligerent demonstrations at the Tannenberg and Niederwald monuments. An utterance made by the head of the Foreign Political Office of the National Socialist Party, the German-Baltic and White Guardist, Rosenberg, in the course of his address to the effect that the highest qualities of the governing races have always been developed solely in conflicts with other and inferior races, was a definite provocation to war. To all appearances the highest officers of the Reichwehr have tended strongly towards Hitler during the last few weeks—Blomberg's welcoming speech to Hitler at the inspection of the Reichwehr troops in Ulm is significant in this respect—and this is due to

the fact that the adventurous course towards war adopted by the Hitler government, becoming more obvious as the inner catastrophe makes the military means of escape necessary, is naturally extremely agreeable to the military heads.

But those who hoped from this party congress a reply to the urgent want and misery of the moment, who eagerly awaited the slightest indication that the social promises of the Third Realm are to be fulfilled, were sent empty away. A few self-satisfied remarks on the gigantic successes gained in the struggle against unemployment, a magnificent ignoring of foreign policy—there is always a tendency to ignore defeats—and for the rest: parades and marches, marches and parades, till all participants were physically exhausted. That even such a paper as the "Frankfurter Zeitung," which has hitherto ventured an occasional word against utterly amateurish economic experimenting, falls into the flowery and romantic language of Adolf Hitler, and announces enthusiastically that in Nuremberg "the jubilant soul of the national socialists was revealed openly before us, neither overshadowed by the struggle for power nor dimmed by songs of hate," is not only a regrettable sign of the complete state of imbecility into which the bourgeois press has fallen, but much more than this: it signifies deliberate support given to the state of organised intoxication into which it is intended to bring the masses, in order that, as "Frankfurter Zeitung" itself writes: "They may feel their national and social distress suddenly transformed into a feeling of happiness, and may be given the conviction that the conditions of want and poverty in Germany have been abruptly changed by the magic power of national socialism into conditions ensuring the greatest possibilities of intellectual and political rebirth, even beyond the frontiers of Germany."

The growing wave of strikes and partial struggles in the works and factories, the mutinies in the labour service camps, the revolts among the members of the Storm Troops and members of the Nazi factory organisations, give a fair idea of what this "feeling of happiness" is in reality.

The magnificent self-deception of the clouds of Nuremberg incense, in which Hitler, Goebbels, Göring, and their confederates envelop themselves in order to hide from their eyes the frightful spectre of the impending catastrophe, is nothing which we have not every cause to welcome. The "unshakeable faith" in the national socialist leaders, allegedly manifested in the march past of the brown columns in Nuremberg, looks remarkably different when viewed in the workshops and factories, at the labour exchanges, and even in the rural districts. No parades in Nuremberg can stay the advance of winter. The amazing drops in values on the German exchanges two days after the close of the Nuremberg parade farce have more relation to actualities than the master-race philosophy of the national socialist rulers.

III. Hitler's War against the Poor

The Reich's government declares that the issue which is receiving its greatest attention is the struggle against unemployment. The struggle against unemployment is being conducted victoriously, it declares. The radio broadcasts the news and the German press announces it in great headlines. But in reality Hitler's struggle against unemployment is a struggle against the unemployed. The struggle against unemployment is an unbloody, but nevertheless terrible struggle against the poorest of the poor. We are quite aware that this statement sounds like an exaggeration, but it is nevertheless the bitter truth. During the past few weeks there have been almost indescribable scenes at the labour exchanges and in particular at the local relief offices throughout Germany. A campaign to lower the rates of support indirectly has been commenced on a scale never before experienced.

Let us first of all quote the official figures for unemployment. According to these figures there were 4,128,000 unemployed workers registered at the labour exchanges throughout Germany on the 31st August. It is hardly necessary to point out that this figure is far too low. The best way of exposing the swindle is to go to the labour exchanges for the various trades and ask the unemployed workers there how many of their fellow workers have obtained work. The result of a round of 12 Berlin labour exchanges is nothing short of astounding. A few members of the Nazi storm detachments who appeared at the exchanges in uniform have been provided with jobs, many of the other unemployed workers have been arrested, and a number of young workers under

21 years of age have been packed off to the "voluntary" labour camps. That was all. In exchange for those Nazis who found jobs came new unemployed who had lost their jobs because they were suspected of "Marxism."

But even if the official figure of 4,128,000 is taken to be correct, the fact remains that only 3,134,000 workers are still in receipt of unemployment support. According to official figures 360,000 workers are in receipt of the usual unemployment insurance support, 1,170,000 workers are in receipt of transitional benefit, and 1,604,000 workers are receiving support from the German equivalent of the public assistance committees. According to official figures therefore there are almost a million unemployed workers who are in receipt of no support of any kind. The impoverished situation of the German proletariat is best characterised by the fact that the greater part of the officially registered unemployed, namely, 1,604,000, are in receipt of support from the public assistance committees. This means that over a million and a half German workers and their families have not been in receipt of normal wages for over a year and up to three years.

It must not be forgotten that these are "recognised" candidates for public assistance who, long before Hitler's time, were examined thoroughly before their claim to public assistance was allowed. Those persons in receipt of public assistance must pay back the sums they have received in this way should they at any time afterwards obtain work. This is not the case with the support paid out under the unemployment insurance scheme, nor with transitional benefit. Those workers in receipt of public assistance and their families are the poorest of the poor. In Berlin alone, 306,000 of the 500,000 unemployed officially admitted are in receipt of public assistance and it is against these workers in receipt of public assistance that the main weight of the Hitler "struggle against unemployment" is directed.

As the government is not in a position to provide work for the unemployed the Nazi leaders have hit upon a solution which is worthy of them. They have adopted the theory that those workers in receipt of public assistance are not really unemployed at all; that although they receive public assistance they do unregistered work, known as "black work." This charge of "black work" was the signal for the press and the highly paid journalists of the Nazi newspapers began to fulminate against the crime committed against the National Socialist State by these "black workers."

The Nazi Commissar for Berlin, Lippert, organised flying squads consisting of police and public assistance committee officials and systematic raids were made on the slaughter-houses, cattle markets and goods depots, and the result was that a very small number of labourers who wanted to earn a few pence to stand between them and starvation were snapped up.

With such and similar methods the Nazi rulers are trying to conceal the tremendous fiasco of their labour provision plans. At all labour exchanges leaflets are being officially handed to the unemployed workers informing them that all "black workers" caught will be placed in concentration camps. However, the actual aim of all these measures is to cut down the rates of support.

All those social gains made by the German working class in 1918 and defended bitterly under the leadership of the Communist Party since then have been lost. The Nazi commissars have issued new instructions for the granting of public assistance. All persons now in receipt of such assistance are to have their cases re-examined. A small army of Nazis has been engaged by the Berlin municipality to visit the homes of all persons in receipt of public assistance. Formerly those workers who had been unemployed for a long period received supplementary support occasionally in the shape of bread cards, coal cards and articles of clothing, but no supplementary support of this nature is granted now. The gloomy corridors of the public assistance committee buildings are full of hungry workers who wait for hours in the hope of obtaining some support. Anyone who dares to make a remark displeasing to the officials, who are now all Nazis, is immediately flung out by the Nazi guards and taken off to an unknown destination and not even the nearest relatives are informed as to the whereabouts of the arrested person.

A few days ago the Berlin "Nacht-Ausgabe" announced triumphantly that as a result of new and improved methods the public assistance committees had saved thousands of marks already. On the 12th September the Prussian Ministry of Justice issued an order abolishing the special commissions for dealing with corruption. The Public Prosecutor's Department has been instructed to pay special attention to "all acts of sabotage against

our struggle against unemployment." The threatening placards on all hoardings bearing the inscription, "Whoever does not help us is our enemy—Give to the Unemployment Funds!" speak volumes. It is true that already thousands of marks have been taken away from the poorest of the poor, but the interest on these sums will not please the robbers. At the labour exchanges and the offices of the public assistance committee the bombastic phrases about the "people's commonwealth" have long ago been thoroughly seen through.

IV. The Revival of Economy

The more official optimism spreads itself over the political section of the German press, and the more frantic and ridiculous its efforts to hold its position, the more convincing is the language of reality which finds its way into the financial and commercial columns of the newspapers, in spite of all censorship, showing the actual catastrophic developments in German capitalism.

Interest is centred to a great extent on the striking depreciation in the value of the most important industrial shares, including those of the Dyes Trust, on 4th, 5th, and 6th September. In some cases the shares dropped five and six points on one day. The Berlin Stock Exchange committee found itself obliged to issue a declaration that this depreciation was due to the selling orders of German subjects intending to settle abroad, and that it could not be used to base any conclusions on the economic situation, which continues stable. Let us take only a few facts from the last few weeks as illustration of this "stability."

In the week from 20th to 26th August the daily output of the Ruhr coal mines was 241,853 tons as compared with 244,066 in the previous week; further, 46,521 tons of coke as compared with 45,441 tons the week before, and 8,180 tons of pressed coal briquettes (8,391). This falling off in the production of coal and briquettes has been accompanied by an increase of idle shifts due to decline in sales, from 33,453 idle shifts to 37,325. Here it should be remembered that normally the winter orders should be coming in and improving the sale of coal.

The Association of German Jute Manufacturers has issued a new production regulation to its members, valid from 1st September. This agreement, to remain in force till the end of 1934, has been agreed to by 97 per cent. of the total capacity of the jute industry. The agreement signifies restrictions on production, to amount to 30 per cent. for the large-scale undertakings and to about 20 per cent. for the small ones. Besides this, the Association has laid down basic prices; these are, however, to apply at home only, not abroad, in order not to destroy completely what remains of export business.

The Württemberg Industry and Trade Conference stated that there is no sign of a revival of foreign business. This is having a serious effect on the Württemberg industries, which are especially dependent on exports. In the clock and watch-making industry, which generally has increased orders in August at the beginning of the autumn season, there is no sign of this. The shoemaking and motor-car industries are the only ones showing a slight revival.

The developments in the turnover of the department stores tell the same story. The monthly report published by the "Ueberblick" shows that in July, 1933, the value of the department stores' turnover was precisely 20 per cent. less than in July, 1932. It is a characteristic sign of the general impoverishment that the greatest falling-off in the returns of the department stores is in the food departments. Here only 66.9 per cent. of the 1932 turnover was attained in July, whilst in June, 1933, the percentage was still 72 per cent. of last year's. The turnover for ready-made clothing amounted to 83.1 per cent. of last year's, but the figure in July, as compared with June, 1933, dropped from 94 to 87.4 per cent. for women's and girls' clothes, from 90.7 to 86.3 per cent. for men's and boys' clothes.

In conclusion, we may take a glance at a few examples from well-known large-scale undertakings, some of which are represented in the Nazi press as "model examples of the national provision of work," but which in reality show precisely the same worsening of the economic situation, either by the introduction of idle shifts and days off, or by direct dismissals. The Opel Works have had to go over to the 4-day week, meaning a 20 per cent. wage cut. Borsig forced a week's unpaid holiday on its workers, and has now gone over to the 2 and 3-day week. The Adler Works, in Frankfort on the Maine, discharged 1,100 workers in July and August. The Niles Works in Chemnitz have reduced their staff from 600 to 200. And these are only a few examples of the many which might be adduced to prove the fraud of the alleged improvement of economy in the Third Realm.

London Versus Leipzig

The Legal Commission of Inquiry into the Burning of the Reichstag

By Page Arnot (London)

The Legal Commission of Inquiry into the burning of the Reichstag which concluded its public sitting on Monday, 18th of September, is unique and unprecedented in the history of Europe. Never before in the history of Europe has a political trial so flagrantly disregarded all the canons of bourgeois law and justice that a jury of lawyers of international repute should constitute themselves into a Commission of Inquiry into the burning of the Reichstag. As Sir Stafford Cripps, K.C., said in opening the proceedings: Adequate defence for the accused had been rejected by the Leipzig Court, evidence existed outside Germany, which for obvious reasons could not be put before the Court; a German newspaper has suggested that the death penalty should be imposed on all those who appeared to give evidence for the defence; the Reichstag arson has been alleged to be part of an insurrectionary movement by the German Communist Party, and, on the other hand there were counter-allegations which accused the Prussian Government itself. It was clear, concluded Cripps, that the Leipzig trial would be political in the fullest sense and that, on the other hand, the findings of the present Commission in London would assist the public opinion of the world to give a judgment.

It is these circumstances which have assembled this Commission, consisting of such well-known lawyers as Maitre Moro Giafferi (France), Gaston Bergery (France), Branting (Sweden), Waldemar Huidt (Denmark), Dr. Bakker-Nort (Holland), Pierre Vermeulen (Belgium), Garfield Hayes (U.S.A.), and D. N. Pritt, K.C. (England).

It is this which brought the press of all the world to listen to the four days' Inquiry of the Commission.

Thus this Commission of Inquiry is not only a legal examination of the facts, but is in effect a trial of the Leipzig trial; is in effect a trial of the German government and of the National Socialist Party. The German government has from the beginning shown itself very apprehensive of this Legal Commission and was able to exercise sufficient pressure on the government of the Hague to prevent the trial being held in Holland. Even in London the German Government, so the official statement goes, anxiously enquired whether the Government was responsible for the trial, and the Foreign Office, while replying formally that the Commission was a private matter, appears to have sought to hinder the progress of the Commission both by exercising pressure on the capitalist press and by seeking to influence the Law Society on whose premises and in whose Court Room the proceedings were held.

The proceedings began in the absence of the Bill of Indictment, which the Leipzig Court and the Advocate Dr. Sach refused to release, with the reading of the official Prussian Press Service statements for the five days from 28th February to the 4th March, followed by excerpts from the British press for the same period. The wild and railing accusations of the official Prussian Press Service (their combination of unsupported allegations against Torgler and the three Bulgarian revolutionaries, their story that the Reichstag burning was the signal for a Communist insurrection, whose planned details had been found three days before in the "catacombs" below Karl Liebknecht House, and its series of new decrees banning the Communist Party papers, the social-democratic press, and creating a Bolshevik bogy election scare) contrasted oddly with the sceptical tones of the foreign correspondents of the British press.

Then followed the first witness, Dr. Hertz, whose experience as chief whip of the social-democratic parliamentary fraction put him in the position of an expert witness on the topography of the Reichstag and the underground passage to Goering's house, and on the impossibility of the Communists obtaining an entrance, either by the roof of the Reichstag or by its façade, or by the underground passage from the engine house, or from Goering's house. "The Communists," said Dr. Hertz, "could not possibly have got into the engine house or into Goering's house," and then

added: "I correct myself; a Communist might have found his way in, but he would never have found his way out."

He was followed by Grzesinsky, who was able to ridicule the Nazis' trumped-up charges against the Communists as well as their cock-and-bull stories about the "catacombs" in the basement of Karl Liebknecht House. Grzesinsky dealt with these points in a series of answers to Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C. (chairman of the Commission), and it was noticeable that the witness in giving evidence against the Nazis was at the same time unconsciously giving evidence against himself and his associates and showing how ready they were to suppress the revolutionary working class.

Question: "Do you know Karl Liebknecht House?"

Answer: "It was frequently searched when I was President of Police."

Question: "Is it true, as Admiral von Levetzow so claims, that dangerous material and catacombs never known before could have been discovered there?"

Answer: "It is not true, because on August 10th, 1931, under my direction, the whole area round Karl Liebknecht House was put under emergency law. The whole house was searched from top to bottom, from cellar to roof, and plans were made, not only of Karl Liebknecht House, but of every house near it. Karl Liebknecht House has cellars, like every other office building, but the statements made in March of this year by the Prussian Press Bureau are fairy tales.

Grzesinsky was followed by Georg Bernhard, editor of the "Vossische Zeitung" and social-democratic member of the Reichstag from 1928-1930. Bernhard in turn was followed by Dr. Breitscheid, chairman for the last five years of the Reichstag fraction of the social-democratic party.

Both of these witnesses covered somewhat similar ground and gave from a social-democratic point of view a description of the political situation in Germany from the elections of November, 1932, up to the first week of March, 1933. Each dealt in some detail with the Oberfohren Memorandum and substantiated its contents. Bernhard stated that without the Reichstag fire and the Bolshevik bogy scare there would have been no majority in the Reichstag for the Nazis and the Nationalists. The Nazis and the Nationalists, he said, had exploited their power as a Government ruthlessly; and tried to make election propaganda impossible for the Communist Party and very difficult for the social democrats, more difficult even than in the time of the Hohenzollerns. The Nazi agitators had told the peasants that Communist crowds would come and seize all their goods and burn up all their farmsteads and with the government control of the only press allowed to be published in the last week of the election, and with the control of the wireless, the Reichstag fire, as misinterpreted by them, had had a colossal influence on the elections. Both Bernhard and Breitscheid were asked the same question as regard to the Reichstag fire: "Whom did it benefit most?" and Breitscheid gave the answer: "It benefits those who say that Communism is the greatest danger for Germany; it benefits those who say that Communism must be rooted out; it benefits those who say that they are the chosen instruments to carry out this great task." In the course of his remarks Breitscheid gave a rather dubious and inferential account of conversations that he had had with Torgler, and whenever in any statement he was trying to show the integrity of Torgler, and the impossibility of his having any complicity in the Reichstag outrage, he usually at the same time tried to cast some reflection against the leadership or the policy of the Communist Party.

In view of the frequent references to the Oberfohren Memorandum, this was read out in Court.

The remainder of the evidence laid before the Commission falls into three parts:—

- (1) The inquiry into the character and the connections, political and otherwise, of van der Lubbe.
- (2) The establishment of Torgler's firm alibi.
- (3) The establishment of Dimitrov's firm alibi and inferentially of the other two Bulgarians as well.

When the van der Lubbe section of the evidence was reached, the chairman of the Commission explained that the evidence with regard to van der Lubbe was partly contained in a report prepared by a sub-committee of the Commission which had sat in Holland and taken evidence there before a Notary, and was partly contained in the evidence that would be laid before the Commission. The secretary of the Commission then read the statements of the Prussian Press Service with regard to van der Lubbe and the findings of the sub-committee which had sat in Holland, and had heard sixteen witnesses there.

Most of this evidence and of the evidence given in person to the Court by **William Plasmeyer** (of Leyden), **van Santen** (a chair-maker of the Hague), **Freek van Loeuwen** (a personal associate of van der Lubbe) mainly confirmed the statements that are now familiar to all who have read the Brown Book of the Hitler Terror. In brief, this evidence showed that van der Lubbe had been living in anarchistic and homosexual circles; that this had had a great influence on his life; that his perverted moral character was established without a doubt; that he was an anti-Communist; that his eyesight was extremely feeble (which bears on the allegations as to his having recognised various persons accused); that he was conceited and vainglorious, very easily falling under the influence of other people, and was on the Liebeslist of the notorious homosexualist, Captain Roehm, leader of the fascist Storm troops. It was also established that van der Lubbe, who had been expelled from the Dutch Y.C.L. in April, 1931, had spoken at meetings in Holland in favour of fascism in the autumn of 1932, and that when he finally left for Germany he had stated that this was the last time he would use his passport.

On the second day of the Inquiry, **Dr. Sach**, the official "defender" of Torgler, arrived with two assistants at the Commission of Inquiry, but left the next day at the call of his "private practice," although he had been informed that evidence particularly dealing with his own client's innocence would be laid on that day. This circumstance lent a certain piquancy to the examination of the fourth witness as regards van der Lubbe. This witness had recounted the information received by him from **Dr. Bell**, the adventurer who was in connection with Captain Roehm, who had figured in the Chervonetzi trial (for forgeries), and who, in the spring of this year, was murdered at Kufstein by his fellow Nazis.

The first witness on behalf of Torgler's innocence was **Adolf Phillipsborn**, parliamentary correspondent of the "Vossische Zeitung" in the five years preceding the burning of the Reichstag, who, as his duties consisted of making contacts of members of all parties, had had several conversations with Torgler. The most important conversation he had with Torgler was on Sunday, February 26th, in which witness told Torgler that it was being whispered in press circles that an excuse would be found to put a ban on the Communist Party before the election.

Torgler replied that he knew this, but that the Communists would not permit the folly of doing anything expected of them by the government. He said further that the attitude of the Communists was to refrain from provocative actions. Torgler criticised the attitude of the social-democratic party and its Reichstag fraction, and said:—

"We are ready to join in any action called by the A.D.G.B. (German T.U.C.); we are too weak to take action alone."

The next witness was Comrade **Wilhelm Koenen**, the secretary of the C.P.G. and member of the Reichstag. This witness's evidence completely established Torgler's alibi. In minute detail and in a manner which convinced everybody in the Court Room of its truthfulness and faithful accuracy, Comrade Koenen described exactly what he and Torgler had done in the Reichstag from 6.30 p.m. onwards on the evening of February 27, how they had left the building shortly after 8 p.m., walked slowly to Aschinger's Restaurant, and there learned after 10 o'clock about the Reichstag fire. After this evidence had been laid, even the most prejudiced anti-Communist present in the Court Room was convinced of Torgler's complete alibi.

The earlier part of Torgler's activities on that fateful day were then covered in the evidence of Comrade **Otto Kuehne**, secretary of the Reichstag fraction, who described how Torgler and he had worked together all day until Koenen arrived; how there was no possibility of Torgler having met van der Lubbe at midday as the Nazis had alleged, and how Torgler had spent the night at his (Kuehne's) house after they had learned, at midnight, of the wild allegation against Torgler and the Communist Party. This evidence made Torgler's alibi doubly secure.

The final picture of Torgler's movements on the 26th, 27th and 28th was supplied by **Kurt Torgler**, the 15-year-old son of the arrested man, a fair-haired stripling, who in the corroborative details which he gave to the Commission impressed the Court Room by his truthful and straightforward answers.

The next two witnesses established a complete alibi for **Dimitrov**, who was shown by **Djuru Cvijic**, a Croat Communist from Zagreb, to have been in Munich on the 26th and 27th of February, where he participated in a conference on Balkan questions.

Both in the case of Torgler and of Dimitrov the evidence established a double alibi. Not only was their physical alibi proved beyond a shadow of doubt, but even stronger proof was brought of what may be called their political alibis—that is, of the inconceivability of such men, with the political outlook which they held, having been connected with acts of individual terror. In the case of Dimitrov, the evidence given by his sister, **Dimitrova**, of her brother's whole life, from the moment he entered the factory, participated in the struggles of the workers, built up the workers' trade unions and became the political and theoretical leader of the toiling masses in Bulgaria, gave the lie direct to the accusations of the Nazis. "Three times," said Dimitrova, "my brother was condemned by Bulgarian Courts for his political activities, but not once did his bitterest enemies even suggest that he had been responsible for the outrage in Sofia Cathedral in 1925."

"Dr. Goebbels," said Cvijics, "was very unhappy when he chose to accuse Dimitrov of acts of individual terror and to try to link up the Sofia Cathedral outrage (really a frame-up of the Zsankov government) with the Reichstag arson, because it is rare to find a personality who in his writings so systematically, persistently and steadily fought against acts of individual terror as did Georg Dimitrov."

The last two witnesses were **Ernst Toller**, the radical dramatist, who gave evidence of the Nazi campaign against culture, initiated at the burning of the Reichstag, and **Frau Schülz**, wife of the Reichstag member who was murdered by the Nazis on 28th March. The harrowing story she told of her husband's murder gave an example to the Court Room of the fiendish brutality of the gangsters now in control of Germany. At the same time her evidence showed that nine months before the burning of the Reichstag, Torgler had made a speech in Königsberg against individual acts of terror, which fact, combined with all the previous evidence, makes Torgler's political alibi unshakeable.

The whole course of this legal Commission of Inquiry traversed in brief space the Nazi accusations set out in the bulletins of the Prussian Press Service, and established on point after point the complete falsity of these allegations; but the Inquiry did more than that. Listening to the evidence it was impossible to avoid the following conclusions:—

- (1) That the Reichstag arson was a frame-up, in which van der Lubbe was the tool.
- (2) That the four accused, Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev, had complete alibis, both physical and political.
- (3) That those who carried out the frame-up were the true culprits and that it was the Nazis, and particularly Goebbels and Goering that burned the Reichstag.

The holding of this Commission of Inquiry and the evidence there should be a powerful stimulus to the workers in every country to redouble their efforts for the release of Thaelmann, Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov and Tanev. By protests to the German Consulates, by telegrams of protest to the Supreme Court at Leipzig, by mass meetings, demonstrations and strikes, the workers of other countries must bring to bear that powerful mass pressure which can stay the hands of the fascist hangman.

Report of the Proceedings of the Counter-Trial

London, September 14, 1933.

Already several hours before the commencement of the counter-trial the Court Room in Carey Street was besieged by numerous photographers and press representatives as well as spectators. The counter-trial is followed with the greatest attention by the whole of the world press.

At about half-past eleven the members of the Committee of Investigation entered the Court Room. One saw the Dutch woman jurist and member of parliament Bakker-Nort, the French politician Bergery, the Swedish senator and lawyer Branting, the celebrated American jurist Garfield Hays, the Danish lawyer Vald Huidt, Sir Stafford Cripps, and the Belgian lawyer Vermeylen. The whole Court Room is crowded.

The proceedings were opened by **Sir Stafford Cripps, K.C.**, the former Solicitor-General in the Labour government. He first pointed out that since the fire of the Reichstag many rumours had been current regarding the origin of the fire. It should have been the duty of the German Attorney-General to examine all these clues, but the active propaganda against Communism rendered such an objective investigation impossible. It must therefore be undertaken by jurists of foreign countries. For a great number of witnesses it was impossible for obvious reasons to give evidence in Leipzig. Regarding these reasons it is significant to observe that a German newspaper has suggested that the death penalty should be imposed on all those who appear to give evidence for the defence. The Committee of Inquiry would also have to examine the rumours to the effect that the national socialists set fire to the Reichstag. It was hoped that the findings of the present Commission would assist the public opinion of the world to give a judgment. In conclusion he observed that no member of the Commission belonged to the Party of the accused, and that the Commission had no responsibility for the Brown Book, nor took part in its preparation, but would consider whatever evidence was given them. The course of this trial should show to the whole world that we are only seeking to ascertain the truth.

The chairman, **D. N. Pritt, K.C.**, then announced the procedure to be followed.

The English lawyer Lawson, by way of introduction, then read out the whole of the official reports of the Prussian Press Service on the Reichstag fire as well as numerous foreign press reports. From this reading it was to be seen that all the official reports stated that at least eight to ten persons had taken part in firing the Reichstag, as twenty fires had been started simultaneously in various parts of the Reichstag.

Extracts were then read from the official handbook of the Reichstag, showing that there existed an underground corridor leading from the House of the president of the Reichstag Goering to the Reichstag premises.

There then followed the calling of the first witness, **Dr. Paul Hertz**, social-democratic member of the Reichstag, who had been secretary of the Reichstag fraction of the S.P.G. since 1922. Hertz described the general safety regulations of the Reichstag, the number of entrances and the exact control of the entrances. During the recess in January and February very few people visited the Reichstag. Strangers had first to send in their names and had to be accompanied by an official before being allowed to enter the Reichstag itself. The Reichstag consisted of three buildings—the Reichstag proper and to the east, on the other side of the Friedrich-Ebert-Strasse, the house of the president of the Reichstag and the Engine (Power) House. These three buildings were connected by an underground passage with three exits, one in each of the three buildings of the Reichstag, which contained the electric light cables and pipes for heating and which were large enough for men to walk along comfortably in order to carry out repairs.

The morning session then adjourned.

Among those present were: Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, P.C., M.P.; Lt.-Col. Powell, M.P.; Mr. H. G. Wells, Mr. Ernst Toller, Professor Harold Laski, a representative of the "Völkische Beobachter" and the "Vossische Zeitung."

Afternoon Session, 14th September, 1933

The hearing of the evidence of **Dr. Hertz** was continued during the afternoon session.

Hertz pointed to the fact that two or three officials are on duty up to eight o'clock at entrance No. 2, and that the fire must therefore have been laid after this hour. Hertz then made the following sensational statement regarding the limited time the incendiaries had at their disposal in order to lay the fire. At entrance No. 2, inside the building, there is a letter-box which is cleared every evening at 8.50. According to reliable information which the witness possessed, this letter-box was cleared on February 27 at 8.50. As entrance No. 2 was already closed at this time, the postman had on 27th of February to go back to the main entrance, pass along the assembly hall and then go back again to the ground floor in order to reach entrance 5. This is about 160-200 metres. It has not been known that the postman, shortly before nine o'clock, saw any signs of fire or noticed any smell of burning. The statements of the official Prussian Press Service, however, speak of fires having been started in 20 to 25 places, from the ground floor up to the press gallery. Hertz raised the question: Would it be possible for one man, between 8.50 p.m. and 9.15 p.m. when the fire was discovered, to lay the fire in 20 to 25 places in such an enormous building?

Could such a destructive fire be started in a stone building, with timber only in the interior, without a great quantity of combustibles first being collected? Could a person unacquainted with the place start such a fire in all parts of the Reichstag building without being seen by the staff?

Hertz called attention to the fact that the main fire was started, strange to say, in the press gallery and in the press rooms, which are closed when the Reichstag is not sitting. He held it to be absolutely impossible that one man, unfamiliar with the premises, could set fire to the Reichstag, in 20 places, and this in a few minutes.

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On the evening of the first day of the session there commenced the examination of the witness Herr Grzesinski, former social-democratic police president of Berlin.

Morning Session, 15th September, 1933

At the Friday morning sitting of the London counter-trial the examination of the former police president of Berlin, **Grzesinski**, was continued. He stated that in 1919 he was Under-Secretary for War; between 1919 and 1921 he was Reichs Commissar for the demobilisation of the old army. In 1925 to 1926 he was police president in Berlin, from October, 1926, to February, 1930, the Prussian Minister for the Interior, and from November, 1930, to July, 1932, police president in Berlin once more.

The witness stated that all the police reports about the discovery of secret passages and catacombs in the Karl Liebknecht House in Berlin in February, 1933, were only fairy tales. He spoke like a genuine police socialist with enthusiasm about his well-functioning detective apparatus—at the time when he was police president in Berlin—and evidently wished to show to the bourgeois jurists that he was never lacking in energy in fighting against the Communists.

The evidence of the next witness, the former chief editor of the "Vossische Zeitung," **Professor Bernhard**, showed that, in view of the whole political situation in February last and having regard to the fight for the division of power in the government, only the Nazis could gain any political advantage from such a large-scale provocation as the setting fire to the Reichstag. Professor Bernhard confirmed that the contents of the Oberfohren Memorandum (a document a part of which is quoted in the Brown Book) corresponds with his own information from the government camp and the German nationalist party. Bernhard's evidence acquires increased importance in view of the fact that he declared himself to have been for decades an opponent of Communism.

This morning the Berlin lawyer **Dr. Sach**, the lawyer appointed by the Nazi authorities to "defend" Torgler, appeared in the Court Room, accompanied by two "secretaries."

The president of the Court, Pritt, asked Grzesinski what he

would have done if, as police president, he had learnt that public buildings were threatened.

Grzesinski: I would have had the persons arrested from whom the danger threatened and had the buildings specially guarded.

Pritt: What would you have done if a putsch was planned for four o'clock in the morning?

Grzesinski: If the C.P.G. had planned a putsch for four o'clock in the morning, I should have known of it two days before (laughter) and had the leaders arrested.

Pritt: If, however, the government had not been informed, would the C.P. of Germany been able, between the fire at ten o'clock in the evening and four o'clock in the morning, to have called off the planned putsch in such a short time without the public noticing it?

Grzesinski: No.

Pritt: Could a cat-burglar climb into the Reichstag building at the Platz der Republik without being seen?

Grzesinski: Impossible.

Grzesinski declared that the drawing up of warrants for 1,500 arrests, which were carried out in the night of the Reichstag fire, would have occupied the staff of the political police for at least two or three days.

Pritt: Do you know the Karl Liebknecht House?

Grzesinski: While I was police president it was thoroughly searched several times. On August 10th, 1931, on my instructions the whole of the staff was cleared out and the house searched from top to bottom, from cellar to roof, and plans were made not only of Karl Liebknecht House but of every house near to it. The house contains cellars and corridors. The Karl Liebknecht House was also searched several times by my successor Melcher.

Pritt: Do you know anything of secret passages and catacombs?

Grzesinski: The statements made about them in February of this year are fairy tales. In any case, the whole of the buildings were known to the police long before Levetzov was appointed police president in Berlin in the second half of February.

At this stage in the proceedings the president explained that the Commission were investigating primary material to establish who was responsible for the burning of the Reichstag, but political questions would affect this issue, inasmuch as it might have been to the advantage of one or more political parties to raise an alarm of fire. The Commission therefore intended to call two well-known German politicians, **Dr. Bernhard** and **Dr. Breitscheid**.

In his evidence, **Dr. Bernhard** stated that he had been a political director of the publishing house of Ullstein from 1908-1914, and since that date had been, until 1930, chief editor of the "Vossische Zeitung," and for two years a member of the Reichstag. The witnesses explained the political situation between November, 1932, and 1933. At the November elections there was a drop of 2,000,000 in the votes of the national-socialist party, and an addition of 600,000 to the Communists.

Schleicher, who became Chancellor instead of von Papen, was anti-national socialist, and he pursued a political policy which was intended to gain the support of the trade unions, etc., for a non-party government. He had against him the greater part of the landowners and the big industrialists who feared his social tendencies, and during the whole of his Chancellorship there were negotiations to overthrow Schleicher and form a coalition which would include the national socialists. Von Papen, who was embittered by his replacement by Schleicher, was the instigator of these negotiations. At the same time, intrigues were carried on to convince Hindenburg that Schleicher proposed a military coup d'etat, and the arrest of President Hindenburg himself. Thus, in the end, Hindenburg was prevailed upon to accept Hitler as Vice-Chancellor.

There were serious differences between the German nationalists and the national socialists both before and after the formation of the Cabinet. Hugenberg represented a Liberal economic policy favouring heavy industry and the agrarian policy of the big landowners, while the Nazis had promised socialisation of the landed estates. Hitler had promised Hindenburg to use only constitutional methods, and thus his party's problem was how to seize

power and gain a majority with the nationalists at the elections sufficient to alter the constitution. There were struggles between the nationalists and the national socialists with regard to the prohibition of the Communist Party. The nationalists opposed this prohibition of the C.P., as they could not foresee what results it would have on the election, and thus the prohibition was not carried out, although election propaganda was made difficult for the Communists as well as for the opposition bourgeois parties.

Witness stated that to his knowledge these efforts to check the opposition propaganda had the opposite effect to that desired, and had the election taken place under normal circumstances, it would not have been possible for the national socialists and the nationalists to gain the required majority. The burning of the Reichstag, on the other hand, had an enormous effect on the population. The press and radio were controlled by the government, and the government press accused the Communists of being the culprits. The petty bourgeoisie and small peasants in Germany were very much afraid of being expropriated and reacted to national socialist propaganda alleging that the Communists intended to burn the property of the peasants.

The witnesses stated that there never had been any Communist danger in Germany.

The only party which could have obtained any advantage from the burning of the Reichstag was the national socialist party; it would have been impossible for the Communists to derive any advantage from it. Had the Communists proposed it, their Executive would have been composed of madmen.

The witness then quoted a leading article in the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" of February 28th, stating that it was politically impossible to understand why a Communist should have been found to commit such a crime.

The witness stated that he himself was violently anti-Communist, but he knew the Party and individuals in it too well to believe in any act of individual terror on their part. They would have made use of any chance of a successful revolution, but they would never have indulged in acts of individual terror.

Dealing with the Oberföhren Memorandum, the witness stated that he knew it; that he did not know who had written it; that it was not quite in Oberföhren's style, but the contents corresponded with what Oberföhren might have thought, and it certainly corresponded with a large part of what the nationalists not only thought, but actually said in his presence.

The witness stated that the nationalists themselves lived in fear, after the burning of the Reichstag, of being treated in the same way as the Communists. He further stated that the political position outlined in the document was an accurate picture of the state of affairs in Germany.

The witness stated that the date of the elections—March 5th—must have been fixed several weeks before.

Witness stated that he had known Herr Torgler because they were both for two years members of a budget committee and a budget sub-committee. He considered Torgler to be a trustworthy, straightforward, clever man who was very familiar with socialist theory and political conditions. He considered it impossible that Torgler, in view of his intelligence and his whole political attitude, could have participated directly or indirectly in such an insane act as the setting fire to the Reichstag.

* * * * *

During the course of the morning session **Dr. Rudolf Breitscheid** described the political role played in Germany by the German nationalist politician, **Dr. Oberföhren**, who was a bitter enemy of the coalition between the German nationalists and the national socialists. The witness stressed the fact that he was strongly anti-Communist in his political opinions, but at the same time expressed his firm conviction that neither Torgler nor the Communist Party could have had anything to do with the fire. He explained that the Communist Party had rejected the proposal of the social-democratic party for the conclusion of a pact of non-aggression between the two parties, and declared that it had been his impression that Torgler personally had been in favour of the pact. Apart from this transparent attempt on the part of Breitscheid to exploit his evidence at the counter-trial to discredit Torgler and the Communist Party, every sentence of his evidence was a damning indictment of the fascist fire-raisers.

After the evidence of Breitscheid had been concluded, the famous **Oberfohren Memorandum** was read out. This document describes the struggle in the February days inside the "government of national renaissance" between the national socialists on the one hand and the German nationalists, the Stahlhelm and the Reichswehr generals on the other for the upper hand in the government. It was this situation which compelled the national socialists to attempt through some big provocation to change the whole situation both inside and outside the government in their favour. It was the Oberfohren Memorandum which offered the basis on which the "Brown Book of the Hitler Terror" was able to charge Goering and Goebbels successfully with full responsibility for the burning of the Reichstag.

Breitscheid reported that Dr. Oberfohren was very strongly opposed to an alliance between the German nationalists and the national socialists. Oberfohren, declared Breitscheid, had expressed a very contemptuous opinion of the national Socialists and had sharply criticised the policy of the leader of the German nationalists, Dr. Hugenberg, towards them. Oberfohren had declared that to give a State funeral to a murderer like the Charlottenburg leader of the nationalist socialist storm detachments, Maikowski, was scandalous. The national socialists would undoubtedly get the better of Hugenberg, and under the circumstances he, Oberfohren, did not want to remain a member of the Reichstag any longer. The witness was aware that Torgler and Oberfohren often had discussions together. Torgler had declared to the witness following such discussions that the Hitler government would undoubtedly use provocative measures against the Communist Party prior to the Reichstag elections. After a discussion with Oberfohren, Torgler had asked the witness whether he, too, was aware of plans to prohibit the Communist Party or to take other action against it.

Breitscheid declared that Torgler was innocent. No one who knew the political situation in Germany towards the end of February could believe in a putsch of the Communist Party. No matter what attitude one might take up towards the Communist Party—he personally was an opponent of the Communist Party—it was not possible for anyone to believe that the Communist Party could have committed such an insane act.

The opposition of the Communists to parliamentarism could not serve as presumptive evidence of Communist guilt in the burning of the Reichstag, for the Communists had gladly used parliament as a platform, and this had been particularly true of Torgler. On the contrary, in view of the fact that the whole Communist press and all Communist meetings were prohibited, the Communists had a particular interest in using the Reichstag as a platform to voice their opinions. There would further have been no necessity to burn down the Reichstag as the signal for a putsch. If the police had really found documents referring to the planned burning down of the Reichstag several days before the fire, then why was the Reichstag not better guarded? All indications spoke strongly against any complicity of Torgler and the Communist Party in the fire. The witness had known Torgler for many years and had talked with him on innumerable occasions. The witness held Torgler to be a very reasonable person.

Dr. Bakker-Nort (Holland) asked the witness: In view of the statement of the witness that the fire was not in the interests of the Communists, in whose interests it actually was? The witness replied that the fire had been in the interests of those who had represented the Communist Party as the greatest danger in Germany and who had wanted to present themselves as the saviours of the German people. A friend of the witness who had spent some time in a concentration camp had informed him that in discussions with the guards, who were members of the national socialist storm detachments, these men had declared that they too did not believe that the Communists had actually set fire to the Reichstag. Highly placed persons had been responsible, in their opinion, but, in any case, it had been a very clever political move.

The English barrister Lawson then read the report of the legal Commission which had examined sixteen witnesses in Amsterdam concerning van der Lubbe and his life. The report pointed out that van der Lubbe had not been a member of the Communist Party of Holland since April, 1931, that even prior to this date he had committed breaches of Party discipline, had acted against the will of the Party and had not been in agreement with the policy of the Communist Party. The statements of the witnesses showed that van der Lubbe was in favour of individual

terror, that he openly opposed the Communist Party of Holland about the middle of 1931, and that at a meeting in October, 1932, he expressed sympathy with fascism before two witnesses. Van der Lubbe lived in a circle of anarchist and asocial elements and homosexuals.

The German police commissar Heysing, who had been sent to Holland by the German authorities, had failed to examine important witnesses concerning van der Lubbe's person, his character and the environment in which he lived. The evidence of these sixteen Dutch witnesses had been incorporated in a sworn statement of over sixty pages, taken down before a Notary.

The report of this legal Commission was confirmed completely by the evidence of the Dutch witnesses who then gave evidence. The first Dutch witness was Plasmeier of Leyden. He gave evidence referring to a public meeting in October, 1932. At this meeting van der Lubbe had spoken, declaring that the fascists were also workers and had the right to express their opinions. Groups formed afterwards which discussed the speeches of the fascists. In one of these groups van der Lubbe had declared: "You do not know what fascism is. Fascism also has something good for the workers." The witness also reported that van der Lubbe saw very badly and was unable to recognise acquaintances on the street. He could read only with the book right close up to his eyes. As a result of this eye trouble van der Lubbe was in receipt of a small allowance.

Dr. Bakker Nort (Holland) asked what reputation was enjoyed by the Uiterste Gracht group. The witness declared that these people led a peculiar life and were known as "Rade" communists (soviet communists).

Me. Pierre Vermeyley (Belgium) asked what was the difference between these "Rade" communists and the official Communist Party of Holland, and the witness answered that the "Rade" communists were very much opposed to the official Communist Party.

The second Dutch witness was Willem van Sanden of the Hague. He gave evidence concerning a meeting of striking taximen in the Hague in October, 1932. Van der Lubbe had spoken at this meeting in favour of individual action and had stressed again and again that it was time something was done. A colleague of the witness had warned him against van der Lubbe as the latter was a fascist. The witness had declared that it was therefore his duty to do his best to draw van der Lubbe away from fascism. The colleague had declared that all such labour would be lost. The witness had immediately recognised van der Lubbe from the newspaper photos published after the Reichstag fire. He, the witness, had sat next to van der Lubbe at this meeting and had been struck by the peculiarity of van der Lubbe's demeanour. The brutal fashion in which van der Lubbe had engaged in argument had suggested mental deficiency and a violent character. There was no doubt about the fact that van der Lubbe had not been a Communist; on the contrary, he had been opposed to Communism. He had made the impression of an individualist who was prepared to subordinate himself to no sort of leadership.

A signed declaration of the brother and sister-in-law of van der Lubbe was then read, according to which van der Lubbe was not a member of the Communist Party and that he belonged to no political party of any sort.

The next witness was Freek van Leeuwen of Rotterdam, who declared that he had known van der Lubbe since 1927. He was aware that van der Lubbe had left the Communist Party somewhere about 1931. Van der Lubbe had been opposed to the Communist Party. Van der Lubbe had told the witness that he intended to make a world tour. Van der Lubbe had taken a few German lessons, but his German was very bad. One day van der Lubbe had come very depressed to his landlady, Frau van Zijp, with whom they all lived in the Uiterste Gracht, and told her that he had to go to Germany. The landlady had pointed out to him that his passport expired on the 15th March and he had answered that that would give him time enough to do all he wanted to do. He had also declared that this would be the last time that he would go to Germany and that big things would happen there.

Dr. Bakker-Nort (Holland) asked whether van der Lubbe had sufficient money for such journeys, and the witness answered that the journeys were always made when he, van der Lubbe, was most hard up. Van der Lubbe had told the witness that he earned a little money by selling postcards and that rich people in motor-cars would give him a lift on the way.

The witness declared that van der Lubbe often received letters from Germany and that he often wrote to Germany. The witness did not know to whom van der Lubbe wrote in Germany. In reply to a question, the witness declared that the landlady van Zijp had burned a number of letters addressed to van der Lubbe from Germany when she heard of van der Lubbe's arrest, declaring that "spies of the Third International were inquiring into van der Lubbe's past." (Thus, important material concerning van der Lubbe's relations with German fascist circles has been destroyed.—Ed.) Van der Lubbe had been very vain and ambitious and he had liked people to talk about him.

The further evidence of the witness confirmed the statement in the report of the legal Commission to the effect that as a result of his frailties van der Lubbe was the type of person who would easily come under the influence of others and be their tool. The witness then described the environment in the Uiterste Gracht. A prostitute and a professional thief lived in the same house. Anarchist opinions had been very prevalent. In reply to a question by Me. Pierre Vermeylen (Belgium) as to whether van der Lubbe had had homosexual relations with other men, the witness declared that he had every reason to believe so, although he personally had not had such relations with van der Lubbe. The male occupants of the house had slept in the attic. An occupant of the house, K — V —, had told the witness that his K — V —'s relations with van der Lubbe had been those between a girl and a boy. The witness's impression had been that van der Lubbe played the role of the girl in these relations. The intimate relations between K — V — and van der Lubbe were so well known that when van der Lubbe was not present K — V — was often asked where his girl was, meaning van der Lubbe.

Third Day of the Proceedings.

16th September, 1933.

Saturday morning's session of the counter-trial brought new and sensational evidence showing that Marinus van der Lubbe not only sympathised with fascism, but was the direct tool of the German national socialists. During his presence in Germany van der Lubbe had come into intimate homosexual and other relations with highly placed persons in the national socialist storm detachments, and in particular with the Chief of Staff of the storm detachments, Roehm.

The first witness was unnamed in view of the fact that his relatives were still living in Germany and he did not want to endanger them unnecessarily. The name of the witness was, however, known to the members of the Commission of inquiry.

The witness declared that in the years 1930 to 1932 he had met Dr. Bell on about fifteen occasions. He had first met Bell in connection with the Tchervonetz forgery trial at which Dr. Bell was on trial as a tool of the fascists. Later on Bell had become the foreign political adviser of Roehm and in this capacity the witness had met him on many occasions. At one of his meetings with Bell the latter had shown him a list containing the names of Roehm's male lovers. On this list had been the unusual name Marinus van der Lubbe.

The evidence given revealed the many connections running from the counter-revolutionary Tchervonetz forgers to the fascist fire-raisers in 1933. The real character of Dr. Sack was also revealed, a man who had acted in the Tchervonetz trial as the formal defender of Bell, but who had in fact conducted himself as a sort of assistant public prosecutor in the interests of the German government. There is therefore no more to be expected from Dr. Sack as a defender of Torgler than from the other German lawyers who have been officially appointed to defend the three Bulgarians.

The unnamed witness declared that he first met Dr. Bell, who was a close co-operator of Roehm and who had since been murdered by the national socialist Fehme organisation, in January, 1930. At that time Bell had been one of the accused in proceedings taken against several Georgians and national socialists who were charged with having forged Soviet notes. In view of the attitude of Bell at the trial, at which he indicated that he had acted at the instructions of more highly-placed persons, but that he was not prepared to mention names, the witness had approached Bell during a pause and had asked him why he did not make his situation easier by giving the names. Bell had temporised and only after the witness had met him on several occasions did Bell finally declare that his lawyer had advised him against giving the names, as they were the names of important

military and civil personalities of the German State. Thereupon the witness had declared: "In that case your lawyer is not acting for the defence, but for the prosecution." Bell had given the witness information concerning a forgers' workshop set up by the German government in Bad Toelz in Bavaria. Bell had also given details of the secret funds out of which the workshop had been set up, and the names of the actual forgers who were all men closely connected with the Captain Ehrhardt circle. This workshop had produced exclusively French 1,000 franc notes.

As Bell's situation at the trial became less favourable, he had finally agreed to tell the witness the names. The principal name was that of General Kress von Kressenstein, a commanding general of the German Reichwehr, and a series of other highly-placed persons in the German Foreign Office. The witness, a free lance journalist for liberal bourgeois and "left-wing" newspapers, had finally published these revelations in the "Rote Fahne" after a number of other newspapers had refused to touch them owing to their "delicacy." Proceedings had been commenced against the "Rote Fahne" for high treason, but after the German Supreme Court in Leipzig had been given clearly to understand that in the event of the case ever coming to trial most damaging revelations concerning the forgeries would come to light, the case had been abandoned. This, declared the witness, was the first time in history that proceedings against the "Rote Fahne" had been abandoned.

The witness described Bell as an adventurer of the first rank, and declared that all his experience had convinced him that Bell had told the truth. After about a dozen meetings with Bell during the Tchervonetz forgery trial the witness had seen nothing of Bell for about two years. In January, 1932, the witness had received a communication from Bell asking for an appointment. The meeting had taken place and Bell had introduced himself as the foreign political adviser of Roehm and had informed the witness that leadership of the Hitler party were planning to get rid of him (Bell) and Roehm by way of assassination. Bell had asked the witness to provide him with material concerning the opponents of Bell and Roehm in the National Socialist Party, and above all for material concerning the Fehme murderer, Lieutenant Schuelz, who had been the commander of the illegal "Black Reichwehr" and who was, according to Bell, the organiser of the plan for the assassination of Bell and Roehm.

Asked by the witness whether he did not fear the same ingratitude on Roehm's part as he had experienced in the Tchervonetz process, Bell had replied that this time he had guaranteed himself against any such betrayal, and he had produced from his pocket a yellow sheet of paper which he had handed to the witness with the words: "Here is a list of Roehm's lovers." The list had contained chiefly Christian names, but with regard to the name Ernst which was on the list Bell had laughed and declared that that was not a Christian name, but the family name of Count Helldorf's adjutant. A second name on the list which had been given in full had been that of a well-known German aristocratic family. A third name on the list had been Marinus Van der —. The surname had been unclear, but the final part of the name had been "ubbe." In brackets after this name had been the word "Hollaender" (Dutch). The witness had remembered this name in particular because it was so unusual.

The sensational evidence of the witness produced a great stir in the court-room, and a close examination of the witness was then made. Me. de Moro-Giafferi declared:—

"Your evidence is of extreme importance and we must therefore ask you for your word of honour that it is truthful."

The witness replied: "I am well aware of the danger which threatens me and my relatives, who are still in Germany, as the result of the evidence I am giving here. I am telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Me. de Moro-Giafferi: "Is the Count Helldorf, whose adjutant's name you say was on this list, the same Count Helldorf who is mentioned in the Oberfohren Memorandum as the instigator of the Reichstag fire?"

Witness: "Yes."

Frau Bakker-Nort (Holland) asked: "How is it that Dr. Bell approached you and had confidence in you?"

Witness: "Because his defending lawyer in the Tchervonetz trial had prevented him from giving the names of the highly-placed persons; Bell had every interest in defending himself in another fashion and presenting himself as an instrument of these

highly-placed persons by securing the publication of their names in some way or the other."

Valdt-Huidt (Denmark): "Were you the only journalist to whom Bell confided in this fashion?"

Witness: "In Berlin, and at the trial of the Tchervonetz trial, yes, but during the Fehme murder trial I believe that Bell approached the 'Vorwaerts,' and two weeks after he had revealed to me the details of this plan to murder him and Roehm, the full details were published in the social democratic newspaper in Munich, the 'Muenchener Post.' Later on these details were proved to be correct at the trial. However, the accused at this trial were not the instigators, but only their tools who were sentenced to terms of imprisonment."

Mr. Garwood Hays: "Who was the lawyer who defended Dr. Bell in the Tchervonetz trial?"

Witness: "I would prefer not to go into that matter here."

Mr. Garfield Hays: "Was it Dr. Sack?"

Witness (after some hesitation): "Yes."

This admission on the part of the witness caused a profound stir in the court.

The chairman, Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., then declared that this concluded the evidence to be heard by the Commission of Inquiry with regard to Van der Lubbe. The Commission would now deal with the evidence referring to Torgler's person, and first of all an extract would be read from the speech which Torgler delivered on 23rd February, 1933, i.e., four days before the Reichstag fire, in a meeting of the Prussian State Council. In this speech Torgler had expressed a warning against provocations, which were contemplated by the national socialist party for the last days before the election. Torgler made special mention of an alleged plan to assassinate Hitler, which would provide the "justification" for the suppression of the Communist of the Communist Party of Germany.

The next witness then heard was **Adolf Philipsborn**, who had been parliamentary correspondent of the "Vossische Zeitung" from November, 1928, until March 6th, 1933. As part of his duties consisted of making contacts with members of all parties, he had had many conversations with Torgler, and occasionally Torgler gave the witness advance information.

The most important conversation he had with Torgler was on February 26th in the Café Friedrich. The witness obtained on February 25th possession of an important document containing information with regard to the intentions of the national socialists for the night of March 5th after the elections. He telephoned to Torgler on Sunday morning and arranged a meeting for 4 p.m. On submitting the document to Torgler the latter stated it was very plausible.

In further conversation witness told Torgler that it was being whispered in press circles that an excuse would be found to put a ban on the Communist Party before the election. Torgler replied that he knew this but the Communists would not commit the folly of doing anything expected of them by the government. He said further that the attitude of the Communists was to refrain from any provocative actions. Torgler also sharply criticised the attitude of the social democrats and the trade union leaders, whilst stressing the readiness of the Communist Party of Germany to fight.

Referring to the Oberfohren conversations, Torgler said that Oberfohren and the German Nationalists were perfectly conscious of the fact that in the event of the Communist Party being banned the national socialists would gain a clear majority, and they were striving to prevent the ban on the Communist Party. The witness had the impression that Torgler was speaking the absolute truth.

Witness referred to this conversation at a meeting of Jewish front fighters he was addressing on February 27th, when he was informed by telephone that the Reichstag was burning. He told the meeting that in his opinion it was absolutely impossible for the Communists to have had anything to do with the act of incendiarism.

In examination the witness stated that had the Communists been planning the burning of the Reichstag Torgler could not have made precisely that statement but would have formulated his remarks differently.

The witness visited the rooms of the Communist Party in the Prussian Diet the next morning and observed that the officials who still had not been arrested seemed to have lost their heads and were completely surprised by the news of the burning of the Reichstag.

The witness further stated that it would have been utterly impossible for a man of Torgler's character to have employed a

foreigner for any purpose without obtaining first careful information from his national party as to his reliability.

Torgler's Alibi

The Court Room was closed for two hours.

The President, Mr. Pritt, stated that no one would be permitted to leave the room during the next two hours. There then appeared before the Commission the Communist Reichstag deputy, **Wilhelm Koenen**, who, as a representative of the C.C. of the C.P.G., also expressed his opinion on the question of individual terror.

Koenen related that on the afternoon of 27th February he had prolonged negotiations at police headquarters and in the Karl Liebknecht House with police commissioners with regard to the surrender of certain election material that was still in the printing works of the K. L. House. Koenen left Commissioner Braschwitz about 5.30 p.m. and called up the secretariat of the Reichstag fraction from a neighbouring restaurant. He arranged a meeting with the Party member responsible for the distribution of election material and with Torgler in the Reichstag, since Torgler was the chairman of the Election Committee of the C.P.G. Koenen reached the Reichstag about 6.45 p.m. As Torgler was expecting a call at seven o'clock he asked Koenen to wait a moment, so that they might be able to leave together, and meet Party comrades later on. In the meantime they discussed the question of how the election material could be got out of the K. L. House. As this was very urgent in the last week of the elections, Torgler also had a telephone conversation with the government councillor at police headquarters, Diels, about 7.30 p.m. He was after this connected by him with an assessor, with whom he also had a few minutes discussion and made certain appointments for the following days with regard to the election material. As Torgler's expected telephone call had not yet come through, he rang up the telephone exchange, which informed him that they closed at eight o'clock and that the call would then come through at the telephone box at Entrance No. 5. A few minutes after eight o'clock the porter at Entrance No. 5 rang up to say that the call for Torgler had come through. Torgler ran down the three flights of stairs, finished his conversation and came back after about five or six minutes. Then Torgler and Koenen left the Reichstag, not hurriedly, as the fascist reports stated, but particularly slowly on this day. The woman secretary of the Reichstag fraction, Anna Rehme, had a painful inflammation of the veins of the leg, and could, therefore, only walk very slowly. The two deputies walked down the stairs with her step by step, and left the Reichstag more slowly than they had ever done before. As they passed through the entrance doors a policeman was passing. Otherwise everything appeared to be normal in the neighbourhood of the Reichstag and nothing peculiar could be noticed. Two Reichstag officials at Entrance No. 5 saw them leave the building. They walked slowly to the well-known Berlin restaurant, Aschinger, near the Friedrichstrasse station. They sat there for some time conversing with some Party comrades. About ten o'clock, just at the time when the waiters were changed, a waiter came up to Koenen and said: "Herr Koenen, the Reichstag is burning. Don't you know that?" Koenen answered that it was impossible. The waiter declared: "All the taximen are saying that there are already thousands of people in the neighbourhood of the Reichstag." In this way Koenen and Torgler learned of the monstrous crime of the Reichstag incendiaries.

After the Provocation the Persecution

Torgler said: "The first thing we must do is to find out at once what is the matter." They therefore met once again that evening in the neighbourhood of the Alexander Platz. From conversations with other people and telephone conversation, they had, in the meantime, learned that the population had been stirred up against the Communists in an unprecedented way by this monstrous act of provocation, the burning of the Reichstag. They changed their living quarters and arranged to meet the next morning. The next day Koenen did not meet Torgler again. At midday he read in the papers that Torgler had presented himself at the police headquarters and had been arrested.

Faked "Discoveries" in the Karl Liebknecht House

Hays: Do you remember any incriminating material that it is alleged was found there? Koenen stated that he had remained as the last representative of the Party in the House, while the

activities of the Party leadership had been transferred from the House. Everything had been arranged for a sudden attack, for the closing of the House. If any dangerous material had really been in the cellar and in the "catacombs" there would have been plenty of time to remove it. In the newspapers, about the 20th February, it was stated that terrible discoveries had been made in the Karl Liebknecht House. In the course of daily negotiations with the police commissioners during a period of seven days he had never heard anything of the finding of such documents. When Koenen asked the police commissioner, Braschwitz, where the catacombs really were, Braschwitz was only able to show him the entrance to an old beer-cellar in the watchmen's room in the House. This cellar dated from the time of a restaurant that had formerly existed in the House. Koenen pointed out that everything had repeatedly been searched, and that on February 22nd nothing more could be discovered in the K. L. House than the former social-democrat police president, Grzesinski, had already discovered in the course of his twelve days' occupation and search of the House in the year 1931. Since the social-democrat Grzesinski had carried out this occupation they had always been prepared for such a seizure of the House by the police. Koenen declared that the alleged "terror documents," which had never been published up to the present moment, could only have been introduced by the police or the S.A. and S.S. into the rooms that had been occupied by the police for a week.

Hays: You negotiated for several hours on February 27th with police commissioners, although the incriminating material is said to have been found in the K. L. House on February 24th?

Koenen: Yes.

Hays: Was there no difference in their treatment of you? And was there no stronger guard put on the Reichstag?

Koenen: I negotiated exactly as before with the police commissioners. There was nothing to be seen of a stronger guard at the Reichstag after the alleged discoveries. (Excitement in the audience.)

Moro Giafferi: Were the documents sealed after their confiscation?

Koenen: Normally a receipt used formerly to be given when documents were confiscated. We always demanded receipts, in order that forged documents should not be attributed to us. On the 24th of February the search occurred in our absence and without our being informed of it beforehand. Either it did not take place at all or it was only a sham search. It would seem to have had the purpose of arousing a violent persecution of the Communists by means of the alleged discoveries.

Moro Giafferi: So then your absence from the search on the 24th February could have enabled them to introduce forged documents?

Koenen: I am convinced of this political intention on the part of Goering. The police knew that we always very carefully controlled the searches.

Declaration on the Question of Individual Terror

Koenen then declared, as the representative of the C.C. of the C.P.G. present at the inquiry, he wished to make some remarks on the question of individual terror. The text of the document would be deposited with the Commission. Koenen quoted the following from the declaration of the C.C. of the C.P.G. of the 10th November, 1931:—

"The C.C. of the C.P.G. notes that such tendencies (of individual terror) have nothing in common with Communism. They are in the most flagrant contradiction to the iron basis upon which Marx and Engels built up the strategy and tactic of the revolutionary workers' movement. They are in the most flagrant contradiction to the programme of the Communist International (par. iv., 2), which expressly condemns the 'propagation of individual terror' because it 'diverts the proletariat from the methods of mass organisation and mass struggle.' The C.C. lays a duty on all its Party members to act unswervingly in the spirit of this resolution and to struggle ruthlessly against any deviation from this line. The interest of the working class, the interest of the proletarian revolution, demands that the strongest disciplinary measures, even expulsion from the Party, should be employed in the case of any breach of the terms of this resolution."

Koenen added that there was no question of any manoeuvre in the issuing of this declaration, and referred to an article by the

Party leader Ernst Thaelmann, which he laid on the table of the Inquiry Commission, and in which Thaelmann declared that this declaration against individual terror was nothing new, but was the result of experiences over several decades. The Communists were convinced that the revolutionary movement could only develop out of a struggle of the workers and oppressed for their own interests. Individual acts achieved only the opposite. The Communist Party, therefore, also made a declaration after the Reichstag fire.

Hitler Terror Prevents a Real Inquiry

Hays: Then the waiters at Aschinger's, as well as the porters and cloakroom attendants at the Reichstag, could also be heard as witnesses for Torgler's alibi.

Koenen: Yes, but in the present state of affairs the life of anyone who states the truth in order to exonerate a Communist is endangered.

Hays: Could further witnesses be found?

Koenen: At least seven to eight witnesses.

Hays: If an independent lawyer went to Germany?

Koenen: He would first have to allay the fear of the witnesses in the present conditions of Hitler terror. The evidence of the two waiters at Aschinger's Restaurant was deposited with a Berlin notary shortly after the Reichstag fire. It is possible that it may be obtained shortly.

Vermeulen: Would it be possible for a foreign Communist to get in touch with the Party? Could van der Lubbe, who came from Holland, co-operate with the Party?

Koenen: Anyone who does not possess credentials from another Party cannot be active in any way in a foreign Party. It is, of course, inconceivable that van der Lubbe should have had any contact with any section of the C.P.G., particularly as a non-Party member.

Branting: Could van der Lubbe take part in the sittings of the Committee of Action?

Koenen: That is a fairy story (laughter in Court). The organisation of the C.P.G. is very simple; it has a large C.C. that possesses a Political Bureau. The C.C. makes decisions between the intervals of Party Conferences. There is no romantic "Committee of Action," except in the fantasy of Herr Goering.

Morning Session: September 18th.

At this morning's session evidence was given by the witnesses Kurt Torgler, the son of the accused Ernst Torgler; and Otto Kuehne, the former secretary of the Communist Reichstag fraction. During the hearing of Kuehne's evidence the court room was again closed for reasons of safety. The outstanding feature of this session was the fact that the statements made by the witness Kuehne constituted a fresh confirmation of Torgler's alibi and a striking refutation of the false accusations made by the prosecution witnesses.

Kurt Torgler, the son of the accused Ernst Torgler, stated he would be fifteen years of age in January.

Witness stated in examination that he remembered Sunday, Feb. 26th, and that he knew of his father's appointment with a journalist, August Phillipsborn. His father took his little sister of twelve with him to this appointment which, so far as he remembered, was between 2 and 3 o'clock. He saw his father on his return to the house between 8 and 9 o'clock that evening. His father told him that the journalist had given him certain material dealing with the intentions of the National Socialists and that he also discussed with him the prospects of the National Socialists and Communists for the elections. His father told him that he had informed the journalist that the Communists would commit no act of folly before the elections.

His father was in no different mood from usual on Feb. 28, and he saw no signs of luggage being packed or of preparations being made for flight.

On the morning of Tuesday, at 5.30 a.m., two police officials came to the house to conduct a search. His father, however, had passed the night with a friend, and rang up about 9 or 10 o'clock to say that he had heard of the fire and would get into touch with his counsel, Dr. Rosenfeld.

The witness further stated that he saw his father two weeks later at the police headquarters in Spandau, and that on that occasion their conversation referred only to personal matters as police officials were present.

The witness stated that his father was removed to the Moabit

Prison four weeks later and he was able to see him once a week for ten minutes until he, witness, left for France four months ago. The question of his defence was discussed by his father with his mother. Counsel was offered him but the fee of 5,000 marks was too large for his mother to raise from the 45 marks per month she received in relief. She had begun collecting means to pay this sum when the counsel offered to his father refused to go on with the case.

The next witness, **Otto Kuhne**, secretary of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, was heard with the doors of the court closed.

The witness first referred to the situation of the rooms of the Communist Party in the Reichstag. They were situated at the point where the north and eastern wings of the Reichstag met and the rooms of the National Socialists adjoined them. Room No. 9 was used for the Secretariat, and No. 9b by the executive of the Party in the Reichstag. On the floor above, in the attic storey of the Reichstag, were the rooms for individual members of the Party to work in.

There were frequent searches of the rooms of the Communist Party, the last one having occurred on the 15th or 16th February, when not only the Secretariat and the room of the executive were searched, but also the rooms on the floor above.

The witness stated that it would have been absolutely impossible for incendiary material to have been stored in the Party rooms, not only in view of these frequent searches, but also in view of the fact that the Inspector of the Reichstag, a member of the National Socialist Party, frequently searched the rooms in the absence of the Communists. There was no illegal written material nor other compromising material in the rooms.

The witness then described the events on the day of the burning of the Reichstag. He went to his office at 9 o'clock; the secretary was at the doctor's and was not present. At ten o'clock Torgler arrived and the witness discussed with him certain routine and other matters until about one-thirty. They were uninterruptedly occupied during this time. Then they wished to go to lunch but were requested to speak to the representative of the 12 Uhr Blatt. They held a conversation with him until about two o'clock and then were absent for about half an hour in a café. The witness then worked until 7.15 p.m., and during this time Torgler had no conversations with any strangers but he saw other members of the Reichstag fraction. During the afternoon a messenger came to collect signatures of candidates at the election; this man was arrested in June or July. Before leaving the witness arranged to meet Torgler at a café near the Alexander Platz later on in the evening and waited for him there from 8.15 p.m. It was there that he first heard of the burning of the Reichstag. At about 12.30 a.m. on this night witness got into touch with the 12 Uhr Mittagsblatt, and was informed for the first time that Torgler's name was being used in connection with the fire. He realised immediately that this would mean an intensification of the campaign of incitement against the Communists, but did not realise to the full the meaning of the affair. However, it was decided that Torgler should not go home to sleep, but should spend the night with the witness. They arrived at witness's flat at about 1.30 in the morning, and at about 6 a.m. uniformed police and detectives appeared and produced a warrant for the arrest of the witness. Whilst the witness was dressing, the detectives looked round the flat and discovered Torgler in bed. The detectives asked the wife of the witness who Torgler was, and was told that he was a friend of the family. The detectives were satisfied at this and no attempt was made to interfere with Torgler, who left the flat later on without interference. Thus, it was a deliberate lie to suggest that Torgler had not given himself up, but had been arrested by the police. Torgler, had he chosen, could now be in security. In the afternoon the witness met Torgler at the Police Presidium, Alexanderplatz, where Torgler informed witness that he had tried to get into touch with Party comrades, but had succeeded only in the case of the Communist deputy, Maria Reese, who had strongly advised him **not** to give himself up to the police. However, Torgler had done so, hoping thereby to be able to do something to refute the foul and baseless accusation made against him and the Communist Party.

On the 1st March, at about 6 p.m., witness was taken, with Torgler and a number of other prisoners, to Spandau prison. On the 7th, 8th or 9th of March (witness cannot remember the exact date), Torgler's constant demand to be examined was finally acceded to, and he was questioned closely by the authorities. Only one definite accusation was produced against him, namely, that on the 27th Feb., the day of the fire, he had spoken with Van der Lubbe and discussed with him the final preparations for the arson

outrage. The witness was alleged to have been present at this discussion. It was true that witness and Torgler had had a discussion on the afternoon of the day of the fire with a third person, but that third person had been not Van der Lubbe, but the well-known bourgeois journalist, Walter Oehme.

The witness then gave a short description of the room in which the discussion with Van der Lubbe is alleged to have taken place; this was not in reality a room at all but the ante-room to Hall 12. People were constantly passing through it, and it was adjacent to the rooms of the National Socialist Party. One of the witnesses who declared that they observed Torgler and the witness in conversation with Van der Lubbe was a National Socialist deputy named Kalwahne. In 1921 this man had been a member of the Independent Social Democratic Party, and had afterwards joined the Communist Party. During the political differences in the Communist Party in 1925-26, Kalwahne had been in opposition to the Party leadership, finding the Communist Party not revolutionary enough for him. This fact, but still more the fact that there were serious accusations against Kalwahne's personal integrity in connection with certain race-course transactions, caused his expulsion from the Communist Party. Later on Kalwahne had joined the National Socialists and become bitterly anti-Communist.

On the 13th March witness was released from Spandau. On the 15th March detectives came to witness's house to re-arrest him on the grounds that he was implicated in the fire.

In answer to questions put by the chairman, the witness declared that on the day of the fire he had been with Torgler from 9.30 in the morning until 8.15 in the evening, with only one interruption of half an hour for lunch. In the evening he had been with Torgler from about 11 o'clock until the arrest of the witness next morning. In the opinion of the witness, it would have been absolutely impossible for the Communists to use the underground passage leading from Goering's house to the Reichstag. Since Goering had become President of the Reichstag, his house had been constantly occupied by uniformed members of the National Socialist Storm Detachment.

Before the Reichstag fire took place the Communists had been in possession of confidential information to the effect that the Nazis were planning some anti-Communist provocation. The suggestion had been that an arranged attempt would be made on the life of Hitler. In order to counter any such provocative action as far as possible, the Communist Reichstag fraction had organised, on or about the 20th February, a press reception, to which all prominent German and foreign journalists were invited. Wilhelm Pieck, the representative of the central committee of the Communist Party, had addressed the assembled journalists and explained to them the fundamental attitude of the Communist Party towards individual terror.

The witness then handed the Commission of Inquiry the official statement of the central committee of the Communist Party condemning individual terror.

In reply to a question the witness declared that this statement contained the principles not only of the German Communist Party, but of the whole Communist International and all its sections concerning the question of individual terror.

Answering a question, the witness declared that the idea that a foreigner should come to Torgler and suggest burning down the Reichstag, and that Torgler should immediately agree: "You are just the man we have been waiting for," was ridiculous. Were Torgler actually guilty, then the witness must also be guilty. Van der Lubbe was quite unknown to the witness. Witness explained that a Dutch Communist coming to Germany could not work in the German Communist Party unless he had previously been vouched for by the central committee of the Dutch Communist Party. Witness had never seen Van der Lubbe nor known of his existence prior to the Reichstag fire. He did not know whether the three Bulgarians were actually members of the German Communist Party, but in any case he knew that they were not active.

Witness then answered a number of questions with regard to the interior arrangements of the Reichstag. He pointed out that any stranger coming into the Reichstag at night would find all the interior doors locked. He could remember definitely that on the 27th February Goering's house was occupied by members of the Nazi Storm Detachment, because the windows of the Communist fraction rooms overlooked Goering's garden, and he had seen on that day uniformed Nazis exercising Alsatian dogs in the garden.

Witness declared that had the Communist Party of Germany

planned any such action he, the witness, must have known of it. It was not possible that the three Bulgarians could have organised such an action on behalf of the Communist International without the knowledge of the German Communist Party. The Communist International would not only have expelled anyone who suggested undertaking such an action at all, but anyone who suggested undertaking any action at all without the knowledge of the German Party.

Afternoon Session: September 18th

At the opening of the afternoon session, the President of the Commission stated that one piece of evidence had been given by declaration before a notary in Paris. He had seen the original in French and German, and was satisfied that the translation of this document was correct. The name of the witness was omitted owing to possible danger to her family and herself in case she returned to Germany, but the witness was a spinster of German nationality. The witness testified that prior to her departure from Germany in July, she was secretary to a German Nationalist journalist who constantly received information from German Nationalists, and in particular from Dr. Oberföhren. She had met the latter. Some time after March 5th she typed a twelve-page document for this journalist, which was sent to sixty addresses. This document was drawn up from information supplied by Oberföhren, and witness was present at discussions during which the journalist and Oberföhren made alterations in it. This document was identical with the well-known Oberföhren Memorandum.

The next witness was **Elena Dimitrova**, a sister of one of the three accused Bulgarians, Georg Dimitrov. Her statements, which were made in a very convincing manner, made a great impression on the press representatives and the public.

In examination the witness stated emphatically that neither her brother nor his friends had anything to do with the explosion in the Cathedral of Sofia; that this was an act of provocation designed to enable the government to put down the whole of the workers' movement.

The witness read an extract from an article written by her brother two and a half months before the explosion, which defined his strong condemnation, as well as that of the rest of the Communist Party in Bulgaria, of acts of individual terror.

Witness emphasised that there was nothing in the life or character of her brother to lead one to believe that it would be likely that he would indulge in acts of individual terror.

Witness stated that her brother had no active contact with the Communist Party of Germany. She was not with her brother at the time of the burning of the Reichstag, but she knew that he was in Munich, and there were comrades with him at the time who could give evidence as to this.

Referring to the other accused Bulgarians, Tanev and Popov, witness stated that she had known them both for some years. They both had the same attitude towards individual terror as her brother. Tanev had no active contact with the German Communist Party, and did not speak German; Popov also, so far as the witness knew, did not know German; she did not think he had any active contact with the German Communist Party.

Dimitrov was 50 years old, Popov 32, and Tanev about 36.

Witness declared that her brother's name had never been connected with the explosion in Sofia, and that even the Tsankov government had never accused him of any complicity in the destruction of the Cathedral, and that the first time she had ever heard his name connected with it was when she saw it mentioned in the German papers after the fire. The same was true of the other two accused.

The witness agreed that there were two politicians, Obov and Todorov, members of the Peasants' Party, who were enemies of her brother during their period of power and after.

At the conclusion of her evidence the witness Dimitrova referred to an interview with the Bulgarian Minister of Agriculture, Todorov, published in the "Manchester Guardian," in which the Minister pointed out that whilst he was an absolute political opponent of Georg Dimitrov, he was not prepared to believe that Dimitrov had anything to do with an action like the burning of the Reichstag.

The witness, **Georg Cvijic**, then gave evidence. He declared that he was a Communist and had been closely associated with Dimitrov since 1923, and their relations had been maintained up to Dimitrov's arrest. On the day of the Reichstag fire, and on the day preceding the fire, the witness was constantly in the company of Dimitrov in Munich.

The witness then described the political career and the political character of Dimitrov in order to show that he could not possibly have had anything to do with any acts of individual terror. Dimitrov had been a Deputy to the Bulgarian Parliament, and had been, and still was, the leader of the working class, of the peasantry and of the national revolutionists in the Balkan countries. Dimitrov had also been a member of the executive committee of the Communist International, and a member of the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions. He had also been closely associated with the work of the Anti-Imperialist League, the Red Aid, and other working class organisations. Dimitrov was a well-known Communist theoretician, and his articles had been published in the working class and Communist press of many countries and the "International Press Correspondence." The whole political career of Dimitrov and his unshakeable belief in the final victory of the working class mass movement effectively excluded any possibility of complicity on his part in any act of individual terror.

An official report issued by the German authorities declared that Dimitrov had been sentenced to death in connection with the Sofia outrage in 1925. After he had left Bulgaria, Dimitrov had been sentenced on three occasions by the Bulgarian Courts in his absence. He had never been sentenced to death, and he had never been sentenced in connection with the Sofia outrage. Thus, indirectly, the Bulgarian Courts refuted the suggestion that Dimitrov had had anything to do with the Sofia outrage. The witness declared that it would hardly be possible to find anyone better known for a consistent and untiring campaign against individual terrorism as a weapon in the political struggle than Georg Dimitrov. Dimitrov's attitude towards individual terror had been laid down clearly in an article written by him and published in 1925 in the International Press Correspondence about one month before the Sofia outrage.

The witness then described his association with Dimitrov in the months immediately prior to the Reichstag fire. In January the witness was together with Dimitrov in Vienna. From the 6th to the 8th February they took part together in a conference of representatives of the Communist Parties of Italy and Jugoslavia. On February 9th Dimitrov left Munich for Vienna. From the 9th to the 13th February Dimitrov was in Vienna together with the witness. On the evening of the 13th February Dimitrov left Vienna for Berlin. For some time previously a conference of Jugo-Slavian Communist representatives had been arranged to take place in Munich on the 26th and 27th February. Dimitrov had arrived in Munich on the 26th and stayed for two days at the Hotel Roter Hahn, where he was officially registered.

There was a dentist practising in Munich who could testify to Dimitrov's presence in Munich on these two days because Dimitrov had visited him on both those days to have his teeth seen to. The witness was not quite sure of the exact name, but this could easily be discovered. The witness then described Dimitrov's movements in Munich in detail, giving the names of the cafés which he, witness and Dimitrov had frequented. On the day of the Reichstag fire the witness had introduced an American of Jugo-Slavian origin, named Pauline Harvey, to Dimitrov, and this lady had expressed her willingness to give evidence before the Court at Leipzig to prove Dimitrov's presence in Munich. This lady was in possession of an American passport issued by the American Consulate in Munich, and she had received correspondence in Munich through the American Express Company, so that her existence and presence in Munich is well vouched for.

The conference ended on the 27th February between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening. Two trains left Munich for Berlin, one of them having a third-class sleeping car, and it was this train which Dimitrov had used to return to Berlin. The witness took leave of Dimitrov, who left Munich with this train at about 8 o'clock, that is to say, about one hour before the fire of the Reichstag was discovered. An hour or so later, the witness heard the first report of the Reichstag fire by wireless in a Munich café, that is to say, at a time when Dimitrov was still in the train on his way from Munich to Berlin.

In reply to a question put by the Chairman, the witness declared that Dimitrov was active in Balkan political affairs. Naturally, Dimitrov took a lively interest in German politics, however, he took no active part in the work of the German Communist Party, and he was never at any time a member of the German Communist Party. Dimitrov was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bulgaria. The witness had first heard the suggestion of Dimitrov's complicity in

the burning of the Reichstag somewhere about the 20th March from the statements in the press. Quite a number of Bulgarians had been arrested after the Reichstag fire, including Dimitrov, who had been arrested in a café, with Popov and Tanev. The witness did not know either Popov or Tanev personally, but knew of them. The witness had never heard of van der Lubbe prior to the Reichstag fire, and neither had Dimitrov.

The witness further stated that Dimitrov most likely knew Torgler from meetings at international conferences in Moscow, but owing to his Balkan work he would not dare to have any relations with him in Berlin; there would be nothing more dangerous for Dimitrov than to be taken prisoner in the company of Torgler.

Referring to the relations of the three Bulgarians, the witness stated that the relationship of Dimitrov to the two others was that of an older Party member to two younger ones, and that while the two latter were in Berlin they would meet Dimitrov almost daily. It was quite impossible for the two younger members to have had any project for burning the Reichstag without the knowledge of Dimitrov and if Dimitrov were innocent the two others would also be innocent.

The witness Dimitrova then returned to give supplementary evidence with regard to the charges which had been raised in Germany as to the personal moral character of her brother. She stated emphatically that she had never met a man whose relations with his mother, his wife, his brothers and his sisters were more honourable. He had treated his wife as his best friend, colleague and comrade. In Bulgaria such an accusation would never have been made even by his worst enemies. The Protestant clergyman who had married him and his wife always held them as an example of what married life should be. His wife was so devoted to him that when she heard of his alleged connection with the fire she lost her reason, so inconceivable did it seem to her, and shortly afterwards she died.

The next witness was Ernst Toller, the well-known writer and dramatist. Herr Toller said that he was a German subject and that he had lived in Germany until the end of January, 1933; he had left for Switzerland on personal business some days before the accession of Hitler to the Chancellorship.

In examination he explained that Storm Troops entered his flat on February 28th to arrest him. They also visited the flat of certain well-known writers, such as Von Ossietzky, Renn, Erich Muehsam, and arrested them.

The warrants for their arrest had been prepared for some time. The reason why they wished to arrest these men, some of whom were by no means revolutionary, was that these men were known for their indefatigable work in the cause of justice. The national socialists wished to bring them into connection with the fire and to defame their reputation before the people. None of them even yet had been charged on any precise charge, and the horrible thing about Germany to-day was that thousands of men were imprisoned in concentration camps without knowing what they were accused of.

The witness stated that the warrant for the arrest of the writers mentioned were furnished with photographs and examples of their handwriting, and therefore it was obvious that they had been prepared in advance. It would not have been possible for the most efficient officials to have prepared these warrants in the time at their disposal after the fire.

The witness stated that he knew Torgler only slightly, but was convinced even by his slight acquaintance that he was quite incapable of so crazy an idea as the burning of the Reichstag.

The next witness was Elise Schültz. This witness declared that her husband had been murdered in Königsberg. A previous attempt had been made on his life on August 1st, 1932. Torgler spoke in Königsberg in November. He dealt in his speech, inter alia, on the question of provocation and warned them not to let themselves be provoked by Nazi acts. He strongly condemned individual terror as a political weapon, and his speech had been so convincing that the witness, who, after the attempt on her husband's life, felt that the Nazis should be answered with their own weapons, realised that this was incorrect. Witness stressed the fact that her attitude in this matter had not been based on theoretical considerations, but purely on her personal feelings. Prior to his murder her husband had also issued a leaflet against individual terrorism. He had received many threatening letters. After the Nazis came to power her husband had had to go in hiding. The Nazis caught a worker who knew where her husband was

hiding and beat him so long that finally he revealed the address. On March 28th a large company of armed and uniformed Nazis broke into the house of the witness's sister; they abused the sister and threatened witness's son that they would thrash the flesh off his bones. Not finding the witness's husband in the house, the Nazis searched the whole block and found him in the home of a neighbour. He was permitted to say good-bye to the witness, and the accompanying Nazis told her bluntly that she was saying good-bye to her husband for the last time. Witness was taken to the police presidium and was arrested. At the presidium the police had declared that her husband had been beaten into a pulp by the Nazis and that not a bone had remained whole.

The Chairman, Mr. D. N. Pritt, K.C., then declared that the public hearings of the Commission were now at an end. The Commission had endeavoured as far as possible to hear all evidence in public. There were, however, still one or two witnesses who had to be examined in private. The Commission had formed a Sub-Commission consisting of Messrs. Branting, Bergery, and Garfield Hays, which would draft a statement of the general conclusions of the Commission and this draft statement would be considered by the whole Commission which would decide on its final form. The statement would be published on Wednesday.

The public Sessions then concluded.

Appeal of the C.P. of Germany

World Storm of Proletarian Internationalism Against the Threatening Judicial Crime in Leipzig

Save Thaelmann, Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov, and Tanev from Jail and Death!

To all, all, all!

Only a few days more, and fighters for freedom, friends of the oppressed, soldiers of the revolution, are to be the victims of one of the vilest political crimes ever committed by the ruling class. Before the Supreme Court at Leipzig, where since 1918 the sentences passed by Weimar democracy have buried thousands of revolutionary fighters alive in the jails of the German bourgeoisie, the trial of Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov, and Tanev, begins on 21st September.

"Arson," "crimes against the people and the nation" shriek the fascist fire-raising ministers of the Third Realm, and call for executioners for the Communists. Provocateurs and incendiaries sit in judgment on their victims! Bought bandits are the witnesses! Forged documents are the evidence! Hirelings, mercenaries, are appointed for the "defence"! The crucifix and the code of penal law are the insignia of justice!

Workers of all countries, oppressed of the whole world! Why is the Leipzig trial being held, what is its significance?

Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels themselves laid the smouldering torch to the Reichstag building, and in the light of the flames the fascist deceivers organised the plebiscite, the Reichstag election of 5th March. Under the aegis of the Reichstag fire they commenced their campaigns of murder and plunder against anti-fascist Germany. By lies and deception they goaded on their hordes to bloody pogroms against the Red army of freedom. Communists were defamed as incendiaries and criminals, the Communist Party thrust into bloody illegality as a band of putschists and inferior beings. Since then thousands have been murdered or crippled. The crime of the Reichstag fire has sent thousands of innocent persons to death by starvation in the concentration camps. The Leipzig trial is intended to furnish belated legal and moral absolution for the brown murderers, in the eyes of the world, for their crimes since 31st January.

And this is not enough! Counter-revolution has celebrated the victory too soon. It has transformed Germany into a jail, a morgue, and an arsenal. But the starving cannot be fed with the tears of the mothers and children robbed of their breadwinners. The crisis cannot be overcome by the guillotine, the steel whip, and the gallows. The cruel want and misery of the coming winter cannot be glossed over by fireworks. A profound dissatisfaction is maturing in the depths of the national socialist masses themselves. The proletariat is making ready for the advance, under the flag of the illegal fighting Communist Party. Inextinguishable in the hearts of the proletariat is the burning hatred against the brown pestilence, irresistible the growth of recognition among the social-democratic workers of the abominable class betrayal of their leaders and of the necessity of joining the Communists in adopt-

ing the revolutionary way out. The fascist rulers cannot save the toiling German people; they can only plunge it deeper into the catastrophe. They need new pogroms, intensification of the civil war, that they may stop the mouths of the hungry with lead. The Leipzig Communist trial is to give the brown agents of the exploiters carte blanche to exterminate the Communists once and for all, as pogromists and murderers, incendiaries and well-poisoners, whilst the defendants are to be brought to the scaffold as the leaders and intellectual instigators, as traitors to their country. A fresh wave of terror and murder is to emanate from the court of justice at Leipzig. The Leipzig trial is to furnish an alibi for the ex-lunatic and drug addict Göring, giving him a free hand for fresh provocations in the autumn and winter.

The judicial crime in Leipzig is the class trial of the bankrupt capitalist world and its brown confederates against the party of the revolution, the C.P.G.

The Leipzig farcical trial is the prelude to a monster trial of the C.P.G., its Central Committee, and its imprisoned leader Ernst Thälmann.

The Leipzig Communist trial is the signal for the brown torturers to carry out a Saint Bartholomew's massacre of the toiling people of Germany.

Workers, toilers of the whole world! Show that you are capable of coping with the task set you by the fighting outposts of the German proletariat. Prove to the fascist canaille in their ministerial seats, and to the rulers of the whole world, that proletarian internationalism lives and marches. Show this rotten capitalist world of knaves and usurers that a fresh power has risen up among them, a power inscribing the heroic slogans of proletarian solidarity on its banners.

World army of oppressed workers, toilers of all countries!

Let us march in our millions against the judicial crime in Leipzig! In every country of the world a storm of protest and active aid for the German anti-fascists must arise. Into the streets against the fascist justice criminals! Protest strikes in all works and factories! Storm the swastika consulates! Inundate the murderers and executioners of the Supreme Court with a flood of protest telegrams and resolutions! Down with the bloody rags from the ships of swastika Germany! Form Thälmann Committees and collecting campaigns for the illegal struggle of the German Communists, for the overthrow of Hitler!

The day on which the trial begins, 21st September, must be a Red international rally of the millions. It must awaken the luke-warm and apathetic, it must carry the shrill alarm into the remotest cottage, it must gather together the solidarity of all toilers into one swelling and irresistible current of proletarian action and revolutionary unity!

Workers of the whole world! No more hesitation! Comrades call upon you from the dungeons and torture dens! Communards stand before the bar of the bloody fascist law courts; The fighters for freedom of the proletarian revolution must be saved!

May our fist hold back the hand of the executioner!

May the day of vengeance and judgment dawn against the executioners and murderers of the Third Realm!

Form the revolutionary unity of your class in all countries of capitalism, against the will of the splitters and betrayers of the workers' movement, and crush the enemy in your own country!

Therefore forward; Each for all and all for each!

For the release of Thälmann, Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov, Tanev, and all other anti-fascists! Save them from jail and death!

Workers of the world, unite for the victory of the German revolution!

For the workers' and peasants' republic!

For the victory of world Communism!

Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany.

Social Democracy and the Reichstag Fire

Already on the morning of 28th of February, contradictory reports and rumours were current in Berlin, according to which the editors of the "Vorwärts" had been informed by social democratic Reichstag deputies of the intended incendiary provocation of the Nazis before any report had reached the public. Somewhat later the official news agencies were compelled to take note of this event. There is also no doubt that social democratic deputies were informed by Communists regarding contemplated Nazi provocations on a large scale, and that these reports were confirmed by their own information.

The leaders of the social democratic party therefore were never for a moment in doubt as to who were the actual incendiaries. They hoped, however, partly, or entirely, to avert the fascist terror from themselves by denying that their party was in any way guilty, and on the other hand expressly leaving open the possibility that the Communists were the incendiaries.

Up to the time of the prohibition of their party on June 23, the social fascist leaders surpassed themselves in declarations of loyalty and services to the Hitler government. As soon, however, as it became apparent that the Nazi government had no immediate use for them, they began preparing—under protection of the new "Left" sounding phrases—for a repetition of their Ebert-Noske policy. As a result of the pressure of the proletariat and of world opinion they are now siding at the London Counter-Trial with those who are proving the innocence of Torgler and the three Bulgarian comrades and condemning the real culprits.

With an air of innocence they are seeking to create the impression that right from the first day they have fought for "justice" and against injustice.

In view of this attitude of the social democratic leaders, every documentary proof must be used in order to pillory the double game they are playing. This will render it easier for the masses to see through in time the fresh crime which the social democrats are preparing against the proletarian revolution.

A social democratic pamphlet has appeared in Holland, entitled: "The Truth about Germany: The History of the National Socialist Coup d'état" (48 pages). It is obvious it was written at the end of March, but it is still being sold in Holland by the social democratic labour party. Although the author remains anonymous, according to our information, it was written by a leading German social democrat, from whose manuscript it was translated into Dutch, whilst it has not been printed in German.

Two and a half pages of this pamphlet are devoted to the "question of guilt." The greatest part of this consists of anti-Communist incitement, from which we take the following examples.

The author is compelled to admit that the accusations made against the Communists in Germany are not believed by anybody. He adds, however:—

"Not that it is thought the Communist Party would be incapable of this (arson), but it is not believed, having regard to the relations of power."

The following selection of abusive words are devoted to proving the "possibility" of Communists having fired the Reichstag:—

"Revolutionary phraseology . . . sham-radical party of protest . . . petty bourgeois elements with a Bolshevik-Moscovite ideology . . . Bakunist and anarchist views . . . Communist dynamite heroes . . . uninterruptedly driven on by the inexorable whip in the East, which demanded of them (the Communist leaders) more than they were ever able to give."

It is perfectly obvious that the author would very much like to make the same assertions as the Nazis and to side completely with the fascist incendiaries. Fear of the social democratic rank and file prevents him from doing this. It compels him to make a reservation regarding the official lies concerning the arson, but on the other hand he accepts the preparatory lies at their face value.

"There exists a ridiculous disproportion between the plans for revolution and instructions for civil war—which were found in the cellars of the Karl Liebknecht House—and the real importance of the Communist Party. . . ."

The author then declares, completely in the spirit of Göring and Göbbels:—

"On the other hand, these considerations (the Nazi provocation) are in no way the logical counter-proof against the thesis of Communist co-responsibility for the fire."

The baseness and stupidity of the accusations is thereby increased. The trial will show that the social democratic leaders have given the prosecution the catchword, have furnished them with the "arguments" which will be made use of at the Leipzig farcical trial.

"The penetration of Bakunist and anarchist influence into the Communist movement has led to the belief that the lack of support of the masses for the Communist revolt, the lack of spontaneity, can be replaced by the method of provocation (!!)."

"The history of the March rising of 1921 gives some very instructive examples in this respect. At that time the Communist dynamite heroes had the crazy idea that they could

let loose the mass revolt by blowing up railways and town halls and by attacks on their own premises (!!).

"Between their defeats and the blows from the whip of Moscow, the Communist movement in Germany has arrived at the most insane ideas. It is therefore not impossible that the idea arose, by means of an act which they would impute to others, to give the signal for a Communist rising.

"The communications made by the investigating judge to the Leipzig Court resemble in many respects an international detective novel. But as the prerequisites for such a novel are not unknown in the practice of the Communist International . . . this impression is no counter-proof. . . .

"The German social democrats have already had sufficient experience regarding the criminal and frightfully stupid actions of the German and International Communists."

International social fascism, whose "left-wing" does not know what its "right-wing" is doing, which is capable of selling the Brown Book together with such pamphlets, must be exposed in the eyes of the workers. They must not forget what these same people asserted yesterday; what they assert in similar cases to-day, and what they are capable of asserting and doing to-morrow.

India

The Present Situation in India

(Continued)

The total absence of the Communist Party (1928-30) played a decisive role in the unsuccessful result of the Bombay strikes of that time. It also explains the fact that the process of differentiation and separation of the revolutionary wing from the national-reformists (in 1929-32) took the form of splitting the trade unions, splits provoked by the national-reformists. The Red trade unions, which to a certain extent replaced the Party, served as the only arena on which the ideological and organisational splitting of the Communists from reformism took place. Some Communists were unable to understand that the struggle against reformism did not necessarily mean the splitting of mass organisations, and in any case never meant that the Communists and class-conscious workers should leave those mass trade unions which were led by reformists and national-reformists. And it is not a contradiction at all, that at the same time it was correct to build Red trade unions where conditions allowed. The task of taking the initiative in the building of Red trade unions does not contradict, but on the contrary simultaneously presupposes, active work in mass reformist trade unions. A sectarian policy of withdrawal from trade unions led to the strengthening of the position of the bourgeoisie and their agents, gave them a free hand to fool the workers.

Other Communists at the same time were unable to understand that work in the reformist trade unions or unity with the national-reformist trade union organisations (which we must not give up even now) not only does not mean to slow down our criticism of the reformist leaders, but presupposes more energetic and clearer struggle of the Communists against reformism for Communist policy, for our slogans and proposals. Agreements with the national-reformists in the trade unions, strike committees, for individual campaigns and concrete mass actions, or even amalgamation of the Red and those national-reformist trade unions where the latter have masses must not lead to the abandonment of the independence of the Communist Party, the rejection of our principles, the rejection of the open defence and propaganda of our views and our right to criticise and expose the vacillations and treachery of the national-reformists. The failure to understand these two views mentioned above explains why some Communists were unable to take the initiative and properly carry on the struggle for the unity of the working class and organise the masses

This is the basis of the confusion on the question of Kandalkar and Co. The struggle against Kandalkar and other "Left" national-reformists does not mean the rejection of work in the reformist trade unions and the application of the tactic of the united front, or even the refusal to merge the Red with the mass national-reformist unions. It is important to understand this and carry it out precisely at the present period, the period of approaching mass economic and political fights. By this means we shall make it easier for the workers to understand the correctness

of revolutionary policy. The success of the resistance of the workers to the attacks of the factory owners and the imperialists depends on the rapid formation of the Communist organisation, the formation of mass trade unions relying on factory committees, energetic everyday practical work and the correct application of the tactic of the united front.

What has been said regarding the Bombay textile proletariat is true with regard to the railway workers, jute workers, coal miners and the workers of other districts. The rise of the strike movement is taking place while peasant discontent is growing. It suffices to read the newspapers ("Advance," etc.), of April, May, etc., to become convinced that the movement of non-payment of debts, taxes and rents is not slowing down. Throughout the country the landlords are bringing hundreds of thousands of cases to courts with the demand forcibly to collect debts from the peasants and drive them from the land. Peasant farms are being sold by auction for the merest trifle. Frequently a cow or bullock to the value of 12-14 rupees is taken in payment of a debt of 12 annas or 1 rupee 4 annas. In Kashmir, Alwar and other districts discontent is growing, the movement is spreading and inflammatory material is accumulating. The policy of small concessions re taxes is not able to stop the peasant movement.

In such conditions the slogan of non-payment of rent, taxes and debts still remains the chief slogan uniting the peasants at the present stage of the movement. This includes the organisation of peasant resistance (meetings, demonstrations, etc.) against the confiscation of property, against evictions, to organise support of the neighbouring peasants against the sale of the holdings of the poor, against the payment of fines and contributions.

The British imperialists are trying to split the toiling masses by using religious and other distinctions. The civilised provocateurs while putting a tax or contribution on some village, compel the Hindus to pay and exempt the Mussulmans, hoping in this way to split the ranks of the toiling peasants and disrupt the united struggle against the imperialists, landlords and usurers. The Communists and all the revolutionaries, the workers and the peasants should stand united against these manoeuvres of the enemy and the treacherous policy of the Congress leaders who help to put down the struggle of the peasants. Our reply must be still more energetic organisation of the peasant masses, formation of the peasant committees and fight against every case of oppression and plunder of the peasant masses.

The Struggle Against the Slave Constitution and the Tactic of the United Front

The project of the feudal-imperialist constitution launched by British imperialism aims at strengthening the rule of the imperialists while adapting itself to new conditions. By bringing in the princes and landlords to a certain limited participation in the government of the country and making some constitutional and economic concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie at the expense of foreign competitors and toiling masses, British imperialism is rallying together the forces of counter-revolution against the Indian people, preparing for a new international war, above all war of intervention against the U.S.S.R. The experience of the entire history of the Indian national movement, especially from 1919 to 1933, shows that the Indian bourgeoisie is dead for the revolution, and the further they go the more they collaborate with imperialism against the revolutionary masses. Experience shows that the National Congress, in spite of a number of peculiarities, is a class organisation of the bourgeoisie connected with the liberal landlords, and it consistently opposes the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution. Experience shows that the path of passive resistance and compromises as preached by the leaders of the National Congress is completely bankrupt and only leads to the further enslavement of India. The Indian experience, like the Chinese experience, once more confirms the prophecy of Lenin: **that in the epoch of imperialism there is no salvation for the colonial peoples except the people's revolution under the leadership of the proletariat headed by the Communist Party.**

The National Congress led by Gandhi has repealed the movement for mass civil disobedience and is trying to replace the struggle against the constitution by a peaceful reformist activity for improving the caste system, etc. This is open support for British imperialism. It is the policy of adaptation to the constitution, the policy of hiding collaboration behind a wordy oppositional chatter.

At the same time, some of the "Left" leaders of the National Congress, such as Bose, have come forward with a proposal to form a new party. It is possible to judge of any party and group by its deeds only and not by its words. The past of Bose does not give reason for confidence. Bose, Nehru and their supporters have completely supported the past policy of Gandhism. In 1928 Bose signed the anti-national constitution of Motilal Nehru, the starting point of which was the rejection of the demand for the independence of India. In 1929, having formed the League of Independence together with Nehru, Bose and his friends quietly buried the League in 1930-32 when Gandhi put forward his eleven points, made a pact with Lord Irwin, etc. Bose split the trade union movement in 1931, trying to isolate the Communists, hiding behind the false accusation against the Communists that they oppose the independence movement. At that time in reality the Communists opposed the participation of the National Congress in the Round Table Conference, opposed the treacherous policy of the leaders of the National Congress. **The "Left" Congressites, including Bose, bear full responsibility for all this policy of betrayal of the people's interests by the National Congress.**

At present (June, 1933), in his appeal to the "third Indian political conference in London," Bose criticises Gandhi, accusing him merely of incapability to make proper compromises with British imperialism. In this appeal Bose continues to preach the theory of non-violence and, instead of calling on the masses for immediate resistance against the constitution, instead of calling to spread the movement of the non-payment of taxes, rent and debts, instead of calling for the preparations for a general strike, etc.—i.e., instead of the mass struggle—he proposes that the masses should wait until Bose and his friends study the experience of other countries. In this way, on the basic question to oppose the attempts of the leaders of the National Congress, to stop and disorganise the mass movement, which makes it easier for the British imperialists to carry through the anti-national constitution, Bose supports Gandhi.

Gandhi and Bose act in unison, although the latter conceals himself behind "Left" phrases. Bose is opposed to the struggle against the constitution being turned into a movement of the millions, giving as a pretext the alleged apathy and the decline of enthusiasm among the people. This is plainly an incorrect statement.

The increasing strikes of the workers, the revolts of the peasants in Alwar, the numerous actions of the toiling masses, the movement for the general strike and the non-payment movement, are all signs of the activity of the masses. The revolutionary people are ready to fight, but they are becoming more and more disappointed by the treacherous policy of the leaders of the National Congress, and are seeking a new path, a new programme, new leaders.

All honest fighters for the independence of India, for land and freedom for the peasants, for an improved lot for the workers, must accept the path and the slogans pointed out in the Platform of Action of the Indian Communist Party. The Indian Communists do not refuse to collaborate and even to make temporary agreements with any national revolutionary group and organisation which is prepared and capable, even for a short period, to carry on a revolutionary struggle for independence.

At the present period of mass disappointment with the policy of the National Congress, along with the possible formation of national revolutionary groups inside and outside the National Congress, we see the appearance of pseudo oppositional groups which, while hiding behind "Left" phrases and a pseudo-radical criticism of the policy of the National Congress, as a matter of fact are against the growing mass revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. They advocate the old policy of subordination of the working class to the bourgeoisie, of maintaining the leading position of the bourgeois National Congress among the toiling masses. It is the duty of the Indian Communists to raise the banner of struggle against the constitution, making it a mass movement, linking it up with the strike movement in defence of the direct demands of the workers, with the slogan of the general strike, and the non-payment of rent, debts and tax movement and the fight for the liberation of the political prisoners. It is the duty of the Indian Communists to call for and to begin to form a wide united front of the workers' organisations and then of the peasants' and students' and other organisations for the struggle against the constitution, appealing to the rank and file of the

National Congress to drop the reformist policy and give support to the workers and peasants, **exposing all the time the policy of the "Left" national-reformists, who attempt once more to deceive the toiling masses as was done before by the League of Independence. It would not be correct for the Indian Communists to abandon the struggle against the constitution and limit themselves purely to the economic struggle.** The movements can begin as economic struggles. However, it is the duty of Communists, in the course of the struggle, to fill it with political contents, thus systematically preparing the forces of the national revolution. Among the toiling strata of the population, the lower strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, especially the students, a change is taking place in revolutionary methods of struggle. This is shown by the experience of a number of provinces (Bengal, etc.). The power of the Communist movement to attract the masses is growing. Its significance as a revolutionary factor is increasing. In these circumstances the application of the tactic of the united front in the national independence movement is absolutely necessary. While conducting this policy it is imperative to **preserve and strengthen** the independent class character of the Communist Party and not to dissolve it in the petty-bourgeois ocean and not to become the tail of the bourgeoisie. At the same time sectarian mistakes must be avoided, temporary allies utilised, necessary stages of the struggle must not be jumped over, because this would inevitably lead to the isolation of the Communists from the masses.

In the course of the mass struggle, the Communists will acquire the necessary practical experience and learn how to carry on a correct Communist policy. **However, as a main precondition it is necessary to bring about the more rapid amalgamation of Communist forces in every town and province and throughout the whole country, because only a united All-Indian Communist Party can ensure the correct policy and secure the winning of its leadership in the national movement. (To be concluded.)**

Comrade Mietek Rydygo Murdered by Fascists

On August 21, Comrade Mietek Rydygo, member of the C.C. of the C.P. of Poland, was murdered by the political police on the road leading to the village Vlochy near Warsaw. The police communiqué, which was published by the press on the following day, does not mention the name of Comrade Rydygo, and only reports the discovery of a corpse with a mutilated face. The political police attempt to represent the crime as an ordinary murder, with robbery as its motive. Up to this very day the police are allegedly unable to establish the identity of the corpse. Here it is a case of a political murder which must arouse the attention of the broadest masses of Poland and of the international proletariat. This murder shows the course which Polish fascism is ready to adopt in its fight against the revolutionary movement and in particular against the Communist Party.

Comrade Mietek Rydygo was one of the best and most self-sacrificing sons of the proletariat. He was scarcely 32 years old. He was particularly hated by the fascist hangmen. Right from his earliest youth he fought in the ranks of the proletariat. In the year 1920 he went to Russia, and after the conclusion of the civil war he returned to Poland and joined the ranks of the Young Communist League; he was a member of the C.C. of the Y.C.L. since 1925. In the year 1926 he was arrested and kept for two years in prison awaiting trial. The fascist court sentenced him to five years' hard labour. At the end of 1931, owing to serious heart trouble, the court was compelled to release him from prison. A few weeks afterwards Comrade Rydygo was at the head of the Dombrova organisation, which under his leadership organised the powerful May Day demonstration in 1931 which aroused such a great response among the broad masses of Poland. Comrade Rydygo worked afterwards in leading positions until the vile fascist murder put an end to his young life.

The fascist hangmen are mistaken, however, if they believe they can check the growth of the proletarian revolution by means of mass arrests and bestial murders. Like the death of the heroes of the Polish proletariat, Comrades Huebner, Knievski and Rutkowski, Hajeszyk and Pilarezyk, Engel and Botwin who have been executed, the memory of Comrade Rydygo will stimulate the toilers of Poland to fresh and big class struggle against the fascist dictatorship of Pilsudski, which is stained with the blood of the best sons of the proletariat and of the poor peasantry.

Warsaw, 10th September, 1933.

Central Committee of the Communist Party of Poland.

Socialist Construction in the Soviet Union

The Way of the Soviet Village to Socialism and Prosperity

By our Special Correspondent, L. F. Boross

In the Central Volga District

It is symbolic of the transformation of Samara from an insignificant and obscure commercial town into a big industrial town, that the offices of the town Soviet are situated in the former premises of the Commercial Bank. This Soviet consists up to 64 per cent. of factory workers. In addition to this overwhelming proletarian majority, 4.2 per cent. of this supreme administrative body consists of members of the Red Army and 6 per cent. women house-keepers. The rest of the members are clerks and other working people.

The chairman of the Town Soviet (or "Lord Mayor" according to western ideas), a former building worker, described with scarcely concealed pride the development of his town:—

Before the revolution there was no industry in Samara. There were scarcely 4,000 workers employed in the small mills, numbering about 35, and a few small workshops and building firms. There were no big undertakings whatever. Since the revolution—and for the greater part in connection with the first Five-Year Plan—we have built the following big undertakings: A boot and shoe factory, three clothing factories, a factory producing dress lining material, a factory for the production of tractor parts, an engineering shop, a cinematograph factory, a silica factory, four brickworks, two concrete factories, two factories for the production of standardised building material, a big building combine, a factory supplying the transport industry with material, an asphalt factory, a cement factory, an automatic bread factory, a big mechanical bakery, a restaurant for producing 10,000 meals a day, a boiler-repairing works, etc. Altogether 78 big undertakings.

In addition, the chairman continued, during the Five-Year Plan we have increased our power works fourfold, built a new water works, and last year alone housed 3,000 workers' families in newly-erected dwellings.

At present there is being built a huge factory for the production of carburettors and motor-car accessories, which, when working at full capacity, will employ over 20,000 workers and clerks, and in addition "a meat-combinate," a large locomotive repair workshop, and numerous other enterprises.

The chairman then proceeded to give further figures regarding building activity. Eight big convalescent and rest homes, which can annually accommodate 18,000 workers for 2 to 4 weeks; two workers' sanatoria; a whole children's town in which 5,000 proletarian children can spend their holidays. In addition, several summer holiday homes, with accommodation for 30,000 children. Thus all children of working parents in the town are provided with holiday accommodation (the total population amounts to 260,000—an increase of 100,000 over 1913). There is a sanatorium for children suffering from tuberculosis, a sanatorium for defective children, a children's colony for children below school age, a big park for culture and recreation, four big sports stadiums, a new dramatic theatre, a theatre for the Red Army, a children's theatre, a theatre for the youth.

In pre-war time there was not a single high school; now there are eleven high schools and eight technical colleges. About 13,000 pupils (that is 5 per cent. of the total population, including children and old folks) are studying in the high schools and technical colleges.

Our red "Lord Mayor" then furnished us with particulars regarding the tremendous development of the town health institutions: We already have a new physico-therapeutic institute, a maternity and child welfare institute, a central children's hospital, numerous clinics and dispensaries. We are now building a big clinic; the cost of erection amounts to 15 million roubles. Two departments have already commenced to work, and the 13 remaining departments will commence working this year.

There then followed a long enumeration of the newly-erected hospitals, among them being a "kolchos poli-clinic," or special

clinic for the collective farmers of the Middle Volga district. I decided to view this clinic, and on doing so was tremendously impressed. The equipment and also the treatment and advice given surpass almost anything in the capitalist countries, including the most expensive sanatoria. Eighty-seven doctors, among them being the most celebrated professors from the towns, attend the peasant patients with extraordinary politeness and thoroughness.

"This attentiveness shown the collective peasants, and which to an observer may often seem exaggerated," a woman doctor explained to me, "is due to the fact that it is not only necessary to cure the collective peasants of their physical ailments. If you knew the kind of medical treatment the peasants received under capitalism; then you would understand their great mistrust towards doctors. They must be cured of this mistrust! They must acquire confidence in medical science. This confidence in our clinic is increasing every year. Last year we already had 60,000 visitors. This year we reckon to have 80,000. Our clinic has only been in existence for three years, and our fame has already spread to the remotest Khirgish villages in the district.

We do not, however, remain content with clinical treatment. We ourselves go to the villages and deliver lectures on hygiene—in 1932 we delivered 229 of such lectures, attended by 20,011 people. Last year we carried out 3,000 "sanitary investigations," set up small clinics in the villages. In short, we are giving considerable medical aid to the village.

Of the 87 doctors, only three of them are paid for their services. The others—as already said, the best from the town—give several hours of their time each week free. They consider it their duty to do so, as the clinic is a voluntary gift from the Samara workers to the collective farmers of their region. 55,000 proletarian members of the Samara "village patronage organisation" have by their membership contributions and voluntary donations rendered it possible to establish this first-class institution.

A worker at the bench, to whom I told of my impressions of the kolchos clinic, proudly declared:—

"We are not envious, we want the collective farmers also to realise what it means to be masters in the socialist country."

Members of the Independent Labour Party on their Visit to the Soviet Union

Moscow, September 5, 1933.

The special correspondent of the London "Daily Worker" had an interview in Rostov on Don with a group of members and functionaries of the Independent Labour Party and the Labour Party, who had visited the Soviet Union. Aplin, the London organiser and leader of the group, declared:

"Our visit has convinced us that the Soviet workers, having won their Revolution, mean to guard it and are going to carry it through to a successful building of Socialism. 1933, it seems to us, shows that the revolutionary toilers are succeeding at a rapid rate."

Asked his opinion on Citrine's parallel to Soviet and fascist trade unionism, Aplin emphatically replied:—

"When we in England have a trade union movement comparable with that which is in existence here, we, as workers, will be better off, and Citrine won't be General Secretary. There is a dictatorship here; why deny it? But it is a dictatorship of the workers themselves.

"The unions are an expression of that dictatorship, and a very efficient one, too.

"Citrine may talk of democracy versus dictatorship, but any British worker who can come over here and see for himself would choose the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union to British capitalist democracy."

"The star thing of the tour, the most amazing we had ever

seen, was the O.G.P.U. colony at Lyubertsy. Here we saw criminals and waifs, seeming degenerates, being turned into good honest workers by reason of humane treatment, education and the realisation that the people had faith in their powers of reformation.

"The workers' conditions are beyond reproach and the special children's quarters are excellent. Such a place is impossible elsewhere in the world and will remain so until the proletarian revolutions in other countries."

The houses and factory restaurants seen convince the group of the tremendous strides made in workers' standards. They clearly realised that the overcrowding in Moscow was due to the phenomenal growth of the city and was being rapidly overcome.

"The position was summed up," said Aplin, "by a worker whom we met in the housing colony where he had one very pleasant room. We asked him how he lived before the Revolution, and he answered simply: 'I just slept in a corner where I could.'"

At a Leningrad factory (hydro-electric works) they met an English-speaking Russian who had worked for some years in the Siemens' London factory, who told them that he infinitely preferred work in Leningrad.

"In England I felt I was being spied upon and that I was enslaved. Here, whatever hardships we have to undergo from time to time, we are free men, our own masters," he told them.

The group were fortunate enough to be taken to three sessions of a "purging" in the factory and were enormously impressed, particularly by the close interest shown by non-Party members, indicating how closely the Communist Party was bound up with the life of the entire working class.

While Moscow and Leningrad impressed the visitors, Kharkov and Rostov pleased them still more, because of what one described as "their incomparable vivacity." And these towns, it must be remembered, are respective centres of the Ukraine and the North Caucasus, which the bourgeois press claim are completely collapsing.

"The visit has convinced me," said Baker, of Norfolk, "that the Russian workers, and not bureaucracy, are the real rulers. Russia, from once being the most backward country in the world, is making rapid strides towards the occupation of first place."

Several asked me to emphasise their complete freedom to go where they liked and see what they liked. They also desired me to emphasise that wherever they went they found the workers enthusiastic, but at the same time with full power of criticism of the features of which they disapproved, and unafraid to exercise their power.

"While still on the ship," said Aplin, "the whole group met and drew up a list of things and places we wanted to see. No Communist Party member was present, nor any Soviet citizen. When we presented the list we were told that our wishes would be complied with and we have seen everything we asked for in so far as could be fitted in with the time at our disposal."

Once again a body of British Labour rank and file have visited the Soviet Union and satisfied themselves as to the lying nature of the capitalist reports of conditions there. Each such visit helps in the construction of a stronger body of opinion in Britain in sympathy with the Soviet Union.

The Week in the Soviet Union

The Labour Unions Take Over Social Insurance

The Council of People's Commissars and the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions have ordered in pursuance of the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union of June this year concerning the amalgamation of the People's Commissariat of Labour with the Central Council of Soviet Labour Unions, that the labour unions shall now take over all the functions of the People's Commissariat of Labour and administer the social insurance funds, consisting of 4,500 million roubles in 1933. The labour unions now control all the sanatoria, recreation homes, scientific and similar institutions formerly in the hands of the Labour Commissariat. All the previous privileges of the labour unions with regard to social insurance remain valid.

The Colonisation of the Toiling Jews

On the 13th September the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union, under the chairmanship of Com-

rade Kalinin, listened to the report of the committee for the colonisation of the toiling Jews.

Up to the present 7,500 toiling Jews have been settled in the *Birobijan* district. All these Jewish settlers have joined the collective farms. A big soviet grain farm and three tractor and machinery stations have been formed. The area being cultivated has increased from 14,000 to 27,500 hectares and a network of artisans' co-operatives to work up the raw materials produced in the district has been organised. Apart from the Jewish technical high school a technical high school for socialist agriculture has been opened. Four Jewish national soviets have also been formed.

In the *Crimea* 20,000 persons are already organised in the Jewish colonists' collective farms and considerable successes have already been achieved with regard to vegetable growing, gardening and vine growing. A score and more of Jewish national soviets have been formed and numerous schools and technical colleges have been founded.

In the *Ukrainian Soviet Republic* 120 Jewish collective farms are cultivating about 100,000 hectares of land and three national Jewish districts have been formed.

The colonisation of toiling Jews is also proceeding satisfactorily in *Usbekistan*, *Georgia* and *Northern Caucasia*.

All over the Soviet Union a total of 200,000 Jews have been settled on the land up to the present.

The Utilisation of the Seven-Hour Day

At the initiative of the workers of a number of big factories in Moscow and Leningrad the question of the greatest possible utilisation of the seven-hour day, which is now practically general in the factories of the Soviet Union, is being discussed.

In *Moscow* a conference of the workers of the big electric combine has met to discuss this question. In its decision this conference pointed out that the productivity of labour-power is steadily rising, that labour discipline in the factories is also steadily improving, and that the cultural and material situation of the workers throughout the Soviet Union is rapidly improving. The conference pointed out that there were still certain fields of work on which the labour organisation was not yet fully effective and on which the available labour-power was not yet rationally distributed and utilised, and that therefore the working day was not yet utilised to the full. The conference addressed an appeal to all workers, technicians and engineers throughout the Soviet Union to make the greatest achievement of the revolution, the shortest working day in the world, into the most productive working day and thus to accelerate the material and cultural progress of the working class.

The Crimean Harvest Twice as Big as Last Year

The soviet farms, collective and individual farms in the *Crimean Republic* have all completely carried out the State grain plan. Over fifteen million poods of grain have been delivered up to the elevators and collecting depots. The wheat and barley harvest this year is almost twice as big as it was last year and averages about 65 poods a hectare. The collective farmers receive from 7 to 10 kilograms of grain for every working day, or also almost twice as much as last year.

Splendid Success of Autumn Sowings Campaign

In many districts the autumn sowings campaign has already been carried out to the full, for instance, in the *Moscow* district, in the *Tartar Republic*, in the *Ivanovo* district, in the *Northern* district and in the *Leningrad* district. In the *Moscow* district 200,000 hectares of winter wheat were sown as compared with 67,000 hectares sown last year. The plan was exceeded. In the *Ivanovo* district 600,000 hectares were sown, including 150,000 hectares of wheat, as compared with 39,000 hectares of wheat last year. Up to the 5th September over 12 million hectares of winter grain had been sown in the Soviet Union as compared with less than seven million hectares on the same date last year.

From the Industrialisation Front

The fourth coking battery has just been opened in the coking and chemical combination at *Kemerovo*. The plans for the fourth and fifth batteries, which will supply 550,000 tons of coke annually, were drawn up by Soviet engineers and the equipment was produced in Soviet factories.

The third Martin furnace has just been completed in *Magnitogorsk*. The work of assembling the first Martin furnace took 30

days, and the second 28 days. This third Martin furnace was assembled in 16 days.

Martin furnace No. 11 has just been opened up at the works "Djerjinski" in Kamenskoya. Its annual production will be 125,000 tons.

The building of Martin furnace No. 8 is proceeding rapidly at the foundry in Kramatorskaya.

The first automatic telephone exchange has just been opened in Leningrad and serves 10,000 subscribers. The second automatic exchange will be opened in Leningrad in 1934. In their final form each of these exchanges will serve 20,000 subscribers.

In Tcheliabinsk a mechanised dairy farm has just been opened. It will produce 5,000 tons of butter, cheese and other dairy products annually.

Building of Scientific Institutions

The Academy of Science in the Soviet Union has begun to build the first scientific chemical town in the world. This new town will be built on an area of 30,000 sq. metres. It will contain all the chemical institutions of the Academy, several dozen laboratories, a chemical museum, conference rooms and halls, a library of over 100,000 volumes, etc., etc. The building costs are estimated at 17 million roubles.

Work has begun on the building of an observatory near the little village of Bolshoi Log about 12 kilometres from Rostov on the Don. This observatory will be the largest in the Soviet Union.

The Cultivation of Rice in Ukraina

A new culture is growing in importance in the agriculture of Ukraina. This year 553 hectares of rice were sown as compared with 50 hectares last year. The average rice harvest was from 30 to 40 cwts. a hectare. The average world yield per hectare is only from 20 to 30 cwts. The experimental fields of the Konotop district which lies 51 degrees and 34 minutes North refutes the generally held opinion that rice will not grow above the 40 degree of Northern latitude. The Konotop fields yield an average of 38 cwts. of rice per hectare.

In the International

Lessons of the Clay Cross By-Election

The following statement on the Clay Cross by-election has been issued by the Communist Party of Great Britain:

The winning of 3,434 votes for Communism in the Clay Cross by-election is a considerable achievement for our Party, when account is taken of the fact that our campaign opened with no Communist Party in the constituency, that Clay Cross is a Labour stronghold, and that we were opposing one of the most powerful of the Labour Party leaders.

In the space of three short weeks we were able to break nearly 3½ thousand workers from the stranglehold of reformism and win them for Communism. Furthermore, out of the fight we have succeeded in establishing the Communist Party in the division.

Communist Party locals have been established in all centres. Thousands of workers have listened to our Communist message for the first time and have been brought to think seriously about the fundamental questions of Socialism as the only alternative to capitalist crisis and starvation, and of the achievement of Socialism through the day-to-day struggle against capitalism.

The absence of any serious support for Moores, the National Government candidate, coupled with the approval of the capitalist press of the candidature of Henderson, leaves no room for doubt but that Henderson and not Moores was the standard-bearer for capitalism against the workers.

The menace of war was the outstanding issue of the election.

The Labour Party, the Liberals, and several big newspapers were supporting Henderson and the Disarmament Conference. In opposition to the robber capitalist League of Nations, the Party carried out an effective campaign for struggle against war, for the strengthening of International Socialism, for revolutionary mass struggle against war. Similar effective reply was made to the question of Democracy v. Dictatorship, Revolution, "Civil War," etc.

While the Communist Party pointed the road to Socialism as the way out of the crisis, the Labour Party pointed to the policy of President Roosevelt in America.

The Labour Party stood in opposition to the capture of power by the workers as in the Soviet Union, about which they were either silent or slanderous, but declared for binding the workers to trustful capital as in the case of Roosevelt in America. Our Party in the campaign effectively exposed the Roosevelt plan.

Considerable attention was devoted to the problems of the miners, and the way forward to the re-employment of the miners and the re-opening of the pits by the carrying through of the policy of class against class figured prominently in the campaign.

Our revolutionary solution to the crisis in the mining industry was brought to the forefront.

Nevertheless, our campaign suffered from a number of weaknesses, outstanding of which are the following:—

(1) Our lack of detailed knowledge of the conditions in the constituency meant that we were not able to give that concreteness to our campaign which was so necessary.

(2) Too much of our fire was directed against Henderson as an individual and not as the leader of the Labour Party, embodying the whole practice and policy of reformism, and we did not make sufficiently clear that it is our Party and not the Labour Party which leads the fight of the workers against the National Government.

(3) The united front and the refusal of the Labour Party to take part in it, while it was dealt with by all the speakers, was not brought out sharply enough. We did not sufficiently deal with the consistent efforts of the Communist International, and its sections to secure fighting working class unity against war, fascism and the capitalist offensive.

(4) In regard to the organisational side of the campaign we were confronted with enormous difficulties. We had no contacts in the constituency and it was not easy rapidly to pull workers into activity. Nevertheless, all that was possible was not done to draw sympathetic workers into activity and responsible work. Little effort was made to set up electoral committees and consult regularly with sympathetic workers.

The result of this was that practically no recruiting to the Party was attempted until the election was over and thus opportunities were lost for training new cadres during the course of the fight when there were available leading forces for this work.

(5) The Party through the country did good work in raising funds for the campaign, but the comparatively few resolutions published in the "Daily Worker" from T.U. branches and other working class organisations indicate that our comrades generally underestimated the importance of the Clay Cross election fight.

What are the outstanding lessons of this election fight?

(1) The workers are looking eagerly for a way out of the crisis and listen to us with enthusiasm. This was revealed in the sales of our literature. Our campaign reveals a tremendously favourable situation for our Party provided it carries out its revolutionary mass work in the factories, trade unions, and localities.

(2) We must considerably simplify our popularisation of our Communist case.

(3) The poll shows that women took a much keener interest in the fight than previously and are roused to a realisation of the needs for some fundamental change. The widespread support of the working women for Henderson on the question of disarmament makes it necessary that we intensify our work among working women.

(4) We must strengthen our fight against reformism, dealing with every question in the most simple and detailed manner, showing that the Labour Party's policy has nothing in common with Socialism and that only the Communist Party stands as the champion of the daily interests of the workers.

The most important tasks which face us now are:—

(1) Intensify our efforts to bring into the Party those workers who have come regularly to our meetings and have shown sympathy towards our Party.

(2) Organise the new Party members, particularly for work in the trade union lodges and for developing the miners' rank and file movement.

(3) Undertake the systematic political education of every new member of the Party and the organisation of workers' discussion circles for workers close to the Party.

(4) Organise the widest circulation of the "Daily Worker," and secure agents in every mining village.

(5) Popularise the Hunger March on Derby.

(6) In view of the big percentage of employed miners who have

joined the Party, to organise them into pit Cells and giving to the Cells the most detailed leadership and guidance.

The whole Party can utilise the results of the Clay Cross by-election as an example of what successes can be achieved in spite of all obstacles, and it should be used to stimulate and develop Party activity in every part of the country.

Fight Against Cultural Reaction

Down with Cultural Fascism!

From the Appeal of the Executive of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers

To the progressive working people of all countries!

To the freethinkers of the whole world!

The ruling classes in all countries of bourgeois civilisation are seeking to turn back the wheel of history to the darkest middle ages. The bonfires on which books by progressive authors were burnt in Germany are only the expression of the general campaign of the world bourgeoisie against so-called cultural Bolshevism, against all the truly progressive ideological trends of the revolutionary working class. Wherever we look we see the ruling circles, in pale fear of the social revolution, resorting not only to fascist methods of oppression, but also to the blackest cultural reaction against the progressive working people. In Germany and Austria both the revolutionary and the reformist freethinkers' movement have been suppressed; in numerous other countries, in "democratic" Czechoslovakia, in Bulgaria, Poland, Japan, etc., the proletarian freethinkers' organisations have been dissolved.

The bourgeoisie, incapable of mastering the blind forces of the capitalist crisis and giving work and bread to the toiling people, attempts with the assistance of the Churches and religious communities to exterminate the revolutionary ideas of the oppressed. In vain! Neither the fiercest anti-freethinkers' incitement nor censorship and gallows, neither the suppression of the freethinkers nor the milliards of subventions to the priests can save the capitalist order of society, which is doomed and which has become a definite hindrance to any progress of the whole of humanity.

The victorious socialist cultural revolution in the country of the Soviets, which has given 160 million people a fresh ideal and which together with the liquidation of class contradictions and exploitation has done away with religion as a social mass symptom, means at the same time the end of bourgeois culture and thereby of the bourgeois and clerical quacks. The country of the Soviets proves that the political, economic, cultural and spiritual emancipation of the workers is only possible by the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Proceeding from this conviction, the masses united in the world-wide International of Proletarian Freethinkers are fighting on the anti-clerical and anti-religious front of the class struggle. They are connecting this struggle with the general class struggle of the workers of all countries for work, bread and freedom.

Freethinkers of all Countries! Social Democratic Class Comrades!

In this situation of the tremendously sharpened attacks of fascism and black reaction, in which the need of the hour is to unite all really anti-clerically minded toilers, the reformist Freethinkers' International (headquarters in Prague) is leaving the stage of history and the various "socialist" freethinkers' leaders are completely capitulating to clerical reaction. Professor Hartwig, the secretary of the reformist Freethinkers' International, voluntarily ceases to publish the organ of his International, and raises the question: "Whether a freethinkers' organisation is at all necessary." ("Atheist," August 1, 1933.) Sievers, who handed over to Hitler the property of the German freethinkers' organisation, amounting to millions, now states that the Churches were "defeated" by fascism. The Czech social-democratic "freethinkers' leaders not only refrain from criticising the suppression of the revolutionary union of dissidents, but, on the con-

trary, approve of the "arguments" brought forward in justification of this suppression by the Czech government, including seven social-democratic Ministers. In Austria, where the social-democratic party leaders are supporting the clerical-fascist Dollfuss government as the "lesser evil" against Hitler, the freethinkers' leaders also ideologically capitulated to the anti-atheist incitement by designating themselves as "free-religious," without any reference to the working class.

By their cynical support of the whole reactionary policy of the Second International and their supporters of concordat treaties with the Churches, as well as their policy of forming alliances with and tolerating the clerical parties, the freethinkers' leaders such as Hartwig and Sievers have themselves confirmed the predictions of the Fourth World Congress of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers at Bodenbach in the year 1930, which expelled these people from the ranks of the proletarian Freethinkers' International and established that they had gone over into the camp of the bourgeoisie and of blackest reaction.

We sound the alarm! Cultural fascism in Hitler Germany, the international wave of prohibition of freethinkers, the intensified anti-Soviet and anti-atheist incitement on a world scale—all this must call forth an energetic answer on the part of the freethinkers of the whole world. As part of this international mobilisation of the advance-guard of the working people against the crusade of the world bourgeoisie and of the Pope, against cultural fascism and for the anti-clerical united front, the Executive of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers convenes the **Fifth World Congress** for 18th to 22nd October, 1933, in Paris. As provisional agenda we propose:—

- (1) Report of the Executive on its activity since the Fourth Congress.
- (2) The crusade of the world bourgeoisie and the Pope against the freethinkers' movement and our reply.
- (3) The victory of the socialist cultural revolution in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and its importance for the proletarian cultural movement in the capitalist world.
- (4) The next tasks in building up the International of Proletarian Freethinkers.

The executive of the I.P.F. not only calls upon all its sections to send delegates to the World Congress; it also appeals to the whole membership of the freethinkers' associations not affiliated to it, who are determined to conduct a consistent fight against the Church and cultural reaction, to send delegates to the Congress.

The international situation clearly shows that at the present time there is **only one world organisation** which is seriously and persistently organising this fight—the I.P.F.

It submits to the freethinkers of the whole world, to all consistent anti-clerical fighters as the most important problems of the approaching World Congress of the proletarian freethinkers' movement the following:—

Let us organise against the alliance of fascism and the Church a powerful and united counter-action of freethinkers on a world scale. Let us win the masses of social-democratic and non-party freethinkers for the anti-clerical united front!

Let us undermine the mass basis of the parsons by drawing in hundreds of thousands of christian and religious-minded working people into the practical class struggle!

Let us overcome the sectarian character of the freethinkers' unions in the capitalist countries and direct the work into the broad channel of mass agitation among the working youth, the women, the middle classes, the intelligentsia and the rural poor.

Let us embrace the million masses of workers in those countries where as yet there is no freethinkers' movement; let us line up the subjugated in the imperialist colonies, in particular in China, India and Indonesia, in the world front of militant atheism!

The Fifth Congress of the I.P.F. will help to ensure that the next World Congress will be a review of militant atheism in further countries of the victorious proletariat.

The Executive of the International of Proletarian Freethinkers.

Published weekly. Single copies (Britain only), 2d. Subscription rates: Great Britain, six shillings half a year; U.S.A., Canada, five dollars a year. Other places abroad, £1 a year. Remittance in sterling by money order, postal order, or sight draft on London

Published by UNTHANKS BOOKSHOP, 31, Dudden Hill Lane, London, N.W.10, and Printed by THE UTOPIA PRESS, LTD. (T.U.), 44, Worship Street, London, E.C.2.