

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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The Polish C.P. and the  
Elections

Editorial

The Change in the Tactics  
of the C.P.G.B.

A. Martinov

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## The Polish C.P. and the Elections

THE elections to the Polish Sejm were marked by increased unrest amongst the masses and a growing disappointment in the Pilsudski Government. The workers, who considered Pilsudski their protector at the time of the May coup d'état, are becoming more and more convinced, after one and a half years of his rule, that he only seized power in order to be in a better position to organise capitalist exploitation than the former Government, and to prepare for war against the Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Government.

On this account the elections even in the self-governing organisations were a powerful demonstration against the Fascist Government. In the most important industrial centres the majority of the workers voted against the candidates of the "United Workers' Bloc."

This first trial of force showed the Pilsudski camp the necessity of intensifying the degree of treachery and terrorist methods in order to misrepresent the real will of the working masses during the elections to the Sejm, and to silence their strong protests. Yet, despite the enormous difficulties, which the political awakening of the workers and peasants and the growth of the revolutionary movement constituted for the Fascist Government, the Government set about using the electoral campaign as a means of strengthening the Fascist dictatorship in Poland.

THE Government was helped in this undertaking by its complete control over the police machinery and certain economic successes, which enabled it to distribute bribes (credits to the co-operatives, agricultural societies, the society of "colonisers," etc.) and increase its influence, not only amongst the rich bourgeoisie and landowners, who had come over to the side of the Pilsudski Government after the May coup d'état, but also amongst considerable sections of the wealthy peasants and well-to-do bourgeoisie.

Not only did the rich bourgeoisie and landowners support the Pilsudski Government as the best organised and "sanest" government that had ever existed in Poland, but the socialist groups and Christian democrats had already begun to go over to the Pilsudski camp. The elections were intended to intensify and speed up this process of winning over new masses from the opposite camp to Pilsudski.

THE tasks which the Pilsudski Government set itself during the election campaign may be summarised as follows: Firstly, to have the May coup d'état legalised in certain circles, and thus to secure sanction for the dictatorship by inducing such circles to vote for the Government or for the party which merely makes a pretence of opposition.

Secondly, to hasten the process of the disintegration of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties and to advance the work of the creation of a Fascist Government party.

Thirdly, to entrench the Government amongst the bourgeois landowning class.

Fourthly, to elect a Sejm, absolutely under the control of the Government, which would conceal its dictatorial and Fascist nature from the eyes of the masses.

The recent fierce electoral struggle and the splitting up of parties into various groups did nothing to change the fact that all these parties, composed of different bourgeois elements, could put up no real opposition to the Fascist policy since they themselves actually represent a part of the Fascist camp.

The only force, which mobilised the workers and peasants against Fascism, and organised under its leadership all those who were really against Fascism, was the Communist Party of Poland.

This fact explains the circumstance that, despite the multiplicity of lists of candidates, the real struggle was between two camps: the Fascist camp under the leadership of the Government and the revolutionary anti-Fascist camp led by the C.P.P.

It was the task of the C.P.P. to make this fact clear to the masses of workers and peasants and to rally to its banner all those who were sincerely out for the struggle against Fascism.

The question which the C.P.P. put before the workers and peasants was: "Are you for or against Fascism?"

The Party endeavoured to form the most extensive anti-Fascist front possible and in so doing rallied to its support all the revolutionary and radical workers' and peasants' organisations on the basis of the following slogans:

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“Down with Fascist dictatorship—up the workers’ and peasants’ government!”

“Down with imperialist war—defend the U.S.S.R.”

“Self-determination for oppressed nationalities even to separation; the land to the peasants without compensation.”

**T**HE elections to the Fascist Sejm were a clear proof of the growth of the revolutionary movement in Poland and of the influence of the C.P.P. The masses of workers and peasants who voted against the Fascist bloc candidates did so in the same spirit as they had already done at the time of the elections for the self-governing bodies; they voted without any illusions about bourgeois democracy, with its empty promises of reforms and concessions, and without pinning their faith on the possibility of overthrowing the Fascist dictatorship by means of the ballot box.

When the workers and peasants cast 200,000 votes for the Cancelled Lists of Candidates of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Unity Bloc, at the time of the municipal elections they had already finished with all such illusions. Every extra day of life of the Fascist Government meant new experience for the masses and the Party concentrated on directing this experience towards convincing them that the only means of overthrowing Fascist dictatorship is by an armed rising, and that only by such means of a determined revolutionary struggle will the establishment of the workers’ and peasants’ government be speedily realised.

Although at the time of writing we are not in possession of the complete results of the Fascist elections in Poland, still all the available information goes to show that the heroic struggle of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the C.P.P. greatly influenced the election results.

The savage terror, which the Fascist Government used against the revolutionary bloc—terror which even eclipsed that of Tsarist times—failed.

All possibility of publicity was abolished: electoral addresses were destroyed and those caught distributing them were arrested. Election agents were terrorised and also those who signed the lists. In the Dombrov valley there was a sort of punitive expedition, consisting of police and spies; it attempted by threats and arrests to frighten the workers into withdrawing their support from the Workers’ and Peasants’ Unity candidates and voting for the Government. In Vilna, for instance, dozens of legal workers were arrested on the eve of the announcement of the lists of candidates in order to prevent any voting taking place.

The entire Executive Committee of the Left Polish Socialist Party was put under arrest and also the leaders of “Peasant Force.” The most vehement attack was made on the Workers’ and Peasants’ Unity Bloc and its supporters.

Every meeting ended with arrests and police attacks which caused hundreds of casualties. Even the bourgeois papers were obliged to acknowledge that the prisons were overcrowded and that there was no place to put the fresh batches of prisoners.

But neither terror nor force was able to paralyse the activity of the masses, thanks to the influence of the Communist Party. And as happens in every campaign

when the masses are subjected to terror, the place of one arrested comrade was taken by several new acquisitions to the ranks.

**B**UT the Fascist Government did not rely on the use of terror alone in its attempt to circumvent the will of the masses, and, therefore, it had recourse to the extreme measure of annulling the list of anti-Fascist candidates. From a total of 64 electoral districts about 50 per cent. put up anti-Fascist candidates, but the large majority of these were disqualified. Only 13 of the 30 Workers’ and Peasants’ Unity candidates escaped. All the lists of candidates put forward by the “Peasant Force” were published and a selection of those of the Peasants’ Aid and the majority of the Left Polish Socialist Party candidates. But lists were cancelled in districts where the influence of the Left Socialists was strong and where there was a possibility of their candidates being returned.

These were the means employed to prevent the majority of the workers from voting for the anti-Fascist candidates. This also explains why the number of seats secured does not equal the influence of the Communist Party nor give proof of the extent of its campaign. In whole districts, especially in west White Russia, where our Party is very strong, the workers were unable to do more than demonstrate their support of the disqualified candidates.

The Government not only indicated the methods to be used to secure garbled election results, but even issued exact instructions.

Elections in capitalist countries are carried on by misleading and gulling the masses, but the recent elections in Poland under the heel of Fascism constitute the greatest deception of the masses that has ever been recorded.

In support of the Government candidates every possible measure was made use of, from the administrative and juridical apparatus to out-of-date democratic prejudices and the radical tendencies growing amongst the masses. This tactic explains the varied mass of slogans issued by the Fascist camp, which comprised monarchist ideas, workers’ and peasants’ government, “real democracy,” anti-parliamentary slogans, etc.

**F**ASCISM endeavoured to make capital out of such things as the Trotsky opposition in order to bring confusion into the ranks of the workers. In Warsaw, for instance, on the eve of the elections a manifesto was widely circulated entitled: “A Word about the Internal Enemies of Communism.” The manifesto began thus: “Ten years have elapsed since the victorious revolution of the Russian proletariat threw off the yoke of the all-powerful bourgeoisie and hoisted the Red Flag on the Kremlin. Ten years of Communist Soviet Russia have been ten years of fighting by Lenin and Trotsky to strengthen the rights of the workers and peasants; they have been the story of the victorious Red Workers’ and Peasants’ Army, and its struggle with the bourgeois counter-revolutionary bands of Yudenitch, Denikin, and with all the Franco-British coalition hordes.”

This introduction was necessary as a preliminary for the attack on the leadership of the Russian Communist Party and its policy, in order to come out as the defenders of “the nearest and most faithful of

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Lenin's collaborators"—Trotsky, Radek, etc. This extremely cunning and provocative manoeuvre was issued by the "Left Communists" and signed "The Polish fraction of the Trotskyists." It concluded with the slogans: "Not a vote for the betrayers of Communism—for the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc!" ; "Not a vote for the hirelings of Stalin!" ; "Not a vote for the counter-revolutionary, corrupt, Stalin 13!" ; "Long live Trotsky!" ; "Long live the Fourth Communist International!" etc.

With such methods Fascism tried to smash the anti-Fascist bloc and bring confusion into its ranks.

The Party was faced with enormous tactical difficulties during the campaign. The conditions of the Fascist regime made it impossible for all workers' and peasants' groups to stand solid in one electoral bloc, under the leadership of the C.P.P. in the fight against Fascist dictatorship.

Since the revolutionary movement was deprived by Fascism of any possibility of carrying on a legal campaign, the Party was obliged to resort to a complicated manoeuvre: the Party placed itself at the head of the workers' and peasants' anti-Fascist bloc during the elections and put forward a number of parallel anti-Fascist candidates in the electoral division. The Party had to carry out its campaign in such a manner as to avoid confusing the masses by this manoeuvre and also to prevent splitting the votes; it collated them at the moment of election in support of one candidate in every electoral division.

The fact that the elections took place two weeks after candidates were approved added to the enormous tactical difficulties which the Party had to face. During this period it was necessary to sift the lists of candidates from the political standpoint and leave one candidate for whom the entire bloc undertook to vote. There can be no doubt that this tactic of the C.P.P. helped both the Party and its allies to launch a mass campaign and to bring into the ranks of the anti-Fascist bloc those masses who were not as yet ripe for Communism, but who were tending towards the left.

**O**UR Party showed a great capacity for manoeuvring when one considers the most savage terror and conditions of illegality under which it had to work. A proof of this may be found in the results of the Lodz elections, where the workers' and peasants' candidate was forced to withdraw and the Party set to work to unite the masses around the local anti-Fascist candidate. The "Glos Prazy," a Fascist organ, wrote as follows about the tactics of our Party:

"The secret Communist organisation, despite the fact that its leaders are in prison and it is subjected to continuous espionage, is so well-organised that in the course of a few days it was able to prepare quite a formidable campaign. In Lodz, where the candidates were twice forced to withdraw and there were three sets of workers and peasants candidates, absolutely every vote went to list No. 13 at the command of the conspirative centre. Such approval of the underground work of a thousand Communists and their

allies should convince everyone and be a source of uneasiness."

The "Przeglond Evening Paper" states:

"In spite of the unusually extensive means of propaganda at the command of the Polish Socialist Party, it was forced to take a second place even in the big industrial centres. . . . The Communist conspirative machinery functioned throughout the State, despite the fact that membership of that Party involves severe punishment and that recently terms of six and seven years' penal servitude have been imposed for membership of this Party."

From the point of view of the most extensive use of the campaign for the mobilisation of the masses against Fascism, the Party left nothing undone to convert every electoral possibility into a mass campaign.

The simple act of choosing a candidate developed into a mass campaign in which thousands of workers and peasants took part. Instead of the usual 50 signatures which the electoral regulations demand, our Party collected hundreds and thousands.

The incomplete data at our disposal show that the candidates of the anti-Fascist bloc received over 60,000 votes. Some electoral divisions secured more votes for our candidates during the recent canvassing campaign than during the previous Sejm elections. For example, in two electoral divisions in Warsaw more than 9,000 votes were secured as compared with 3,600 during the previous elections.

The terrible reign of terror made it impossible for the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Committees to exist legally. Only in a few districts were such committees set up, but these were so closely watched by the police, that the workers took good care not only not to frequent these centres, but they even avoided passing through the streets where they were situated. Therefore, the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc advocated the formation of electoral committees at mass meetings; these committees constituted the basis of united front organs and carried out the campaign in the spirit of the anti-Fascist bloc. During the first few weeks 300 such committees were formed. Simultaneously in a number of districts electoral "threes" were formed, composed not only of members of the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc, but also of sympathisers. In the Dombrov Basin there were 237 such groups, which helped greatly to extend the scope of the campaign. In the Dombrov Basin alone the supporters of the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc trebled during the elections.

**T**HE anti-Fascist bloc took the lead of all other parties in mass agitation work. As there was no possibility of publishing literature, the anti-Fascist bloc concentrated mainly on getting into direct touch with the masses by holding meetings. Already before the lists of candidates were announced, dozens of meetings were held in every electoral district. The Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc was able to hold more meetings than other parties; in the Dombrov Basin, for instance, the Right Polish Socialists could not hold any open air meetings and had to confine their activities to meetings in closed halls, etc.

Our Party increased its propaganda during the weeks immediately preceding the elections. Every Sunday mass meetings were held which were often

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attended by thousands and finished up with huge street demonstrations. The greatest successes in this direction were attained in the proletarian districts: Warsaw, Dombrov Basin, Lodz and Upper Silesia. All the savage repressive measures employed, including mass arrests, breaking up of meetings by police, etc., failed to prevent these meetings, which often lasted several hours, attracting not only thousands of supporters, but also whole battalions of infantry and mounted police.

**T**HE elections provided our Party with the possibility of extending propaganda to the villages where it penetrated even into the most remote corners, where Communist propaganda was hitherto unknown. The following fact is a proof of the great anti-Fascist bloc, especially of the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc.

During the agitation in the Dombrov Basin the Right Polish Socialists called their list of candidates: "Workers and Peasants Unity No. 2"; the heading was in heavy type, but "No. 2" was just in tiny type, although this was the real sign of the anti-Fascist bloc. The Right Socialists purposely used this title in order to confuse the masses and to utilise their sympathy for the anti-Fascist bloc for their own ends. They justified their use of this title by the fact that they had joined up with the opportunist peasant party. In another district the Pilsudski peasant party assumed the name "Peasant Self-aid" in order to deceive the peasants and catch their votes.

The election campaign strengthened and extended the influence of the C.P.P. and also provided the possibility of entrenching this influence in an organisational manner. One of the most important tasks of the executive of the C.P.P. if the Party tactics are to be correctly estimated, must be to examine thoroughly the results of the elections and to analyse the correlation of forces which are the outcome of the elections.

**I**N this article we deal only with those results which are clearly demonstrated by the outcome of the elections. The elections show that two groups increased in strength: the Fascist and the Communist.

The outstanding points in the election results are: the large number of votes cast for the purely Fascist candidates, which greatly exceeded the expectations of the Pilsudski camp, and on the other hand the victory of the C.P.P. in the big industrial areas and the great increase of its influence throughout the country, despite the general terror and trickery employed.

The Dombrov Basin takes the first place; there the Workers' and Peasants' Unity Bloc polled 67,000 votes and returned three candidates to the Sejm, out of the six allotted to the electoral division—at the last elections the W.P.U. got 33,000 votes; in Warsaw, 65,000 as against 27,000 at the last elections; in Lodz 47,000 and only 14,000 at the previous elections.

The Right Polish Socialists lost 25 per cent. in the Dombrov Basin in comparison with the previous elections, in Warsaw 50 per cent. Only in Lodz did the Right Socialists succeed in polling more votes than at the last elections; 73,000 as against 19,000, which was even more than the votes secured at the last municipal elections. This result may be explained by the

fact that the socialists made a bloc with the German social-democrats who polled about 25 per cent. of these votes, and also by the complete failure of the National Labour Party. Thousands of left workers belonging to this party came under the influence of the "opposition socialist P.S.P."

**T**HE elections in the big industrial areas marked a great setback for the Polish Socialist Party and the escape of the working class masses from the influence of petty bourgeois ideology. The sphere of influence of the Polish Socialist Party is being narrowed down more and more to that of the petty bourgeoisie, the backward workers and semi-proletarian circles; amongst these the party secured a considerable number of votes at the expense of bourgeois groups.

This is the reason why Fascism is not satisfied with the Polish Socialist Party. For instead of snatching votes from the Communists in the factories and mines, it is confining its activities to those social groups whence Fascism also rallies its supporters.

The Fascist organ "Glos Prazy" is openly dissatisfied with the Polish Socialist Party as may be gathered from the following:

"Despite the fact that the Polish Socialist Party increased the number of its mandates, it is experiencing a crisis. It is ceasing to be a workers' party; a fact which the elections of March 4th prove only too clearly. The Polish Socialist Party is leaving the leadership of the workers to others and is adopting the orientation of the petty bourgeoisie and the small peasantry. The party lost mandates in all working class centres—in Warsaw, the Dombrov district, Lublin, the Cracow district, Przemysl and in the oil districts.

"The role of the Polish Socialist Party as a workers' party, has been reduced to nought. This state of affairs must be considered from the point of view of the government and a substitute should be found for this party in working class districts."

From this criticism of the Fascist organ it is clear that Fascist circles are disturbed at the failure of their old lackey, and are anxious to find a substitute.

But the Polish Socialist Party still holds the backward workers and the small peasantry and has been able to keep a considerable number of votes. It would be a grave mistake not to take this into consideration. The task of the Communist Party is to win over these supporters and first of all to defeat the Socialist Party in the working class district of Lodz.

**T**HERE can be no doubt about the fact that our Party carried out one of the most successful mass campaigns that has ever been known since Poland gained independence, and that the present elections mark a great victory for the Party. At former elections Communist candidates polled 126,000 votes in 26 electoral divisions. The recent elections resulted in a poll of about 350,000 votes in 14 electoral divisions. In spite of all difficulties the Communists returned seven deputies to the Sejm and the other anti-Fascist parties a total of eight. But this victory for our Party should in no way make us underestimate the victory of Fas-

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cism. We already pointed out the tasks which the Fascist government set itself during the elections and these tasks have been realised to a great extent.

The official Government list of candidates secured almost two million votes. These are not only the votes of the rich peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie, there are also amongst them quite a considerable number of workers' votes and those of working peasants. These facts are quite clear from the incomplete data available and it is not to be denied that in several working class districts the Government polled more votes than did the Communist candidates.

The Government succeeded in smashing the opposition bourgeois groups; it had marked success in entrenching around itself the landowners, the Polish

bourgeoisie and also the foreign bourgeoisie, the upper circles of the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia.

The official Government list of candidates is at the same time a step towards the formation of a Fascist Party, although this constitutes one of the most difficult tasks for the Fascist Government. But the elections were to a large extent a political preparation for this task.

In short the Sejm now elected will be a true and faithful servant of Fascist dictatorship.

The Communist Party of Poland, whilst appreciating its victory secured at the price of the sacrifice of thousands of fighters, must not for one moment forget the victory of its enemy.

The struggle for the masses is to a great extent also the struggle with the immediate influence of Fascism on the masses.

# The Change in the Tactics of the C.P.G.B.

A. Martinov

**T**HE next elections in Britain will take place amid an international and national situation greatly differing from that which prevailed during the last Parliamentary elections in Britain in 1924. This fact induced the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern to raise the whole question of relations with the Labour Party and to lay down a new tactic for the C.P.G.B., one which before the plenum was defended only by a minority of the British Central Committee, but which after a thorough discussion at the plenum was unanimously approved by the entire British delegation.

The new course, indicated at the plenum, signifies a very radical and difficult tactical change, one which unquestionably will form an outstanding landmark in the history of the British Labour movement.

In its relations with the Labour Party and the Labour Government, the British Communist Party has hitherto kept to the line of tactic which Lenin recommended to the British Communists as long ago as the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920. Lenin said that the Hendersons, MacDonalds, Snowdens, etc., were in no way better than Scheidemann and Noske. None the less he insisted that the British Communist Party should enter the Labour Party, since the latter presented a peculiar type of party, differing from the Continental social-democratic parties since it was built up on a federative principle, and together with political parties included trade unions on the basis of collective membership, and also inasmuch as its members were not bound either by a programme or by party discipline and consequently had the possibility of freely criticising the leaders of the Labour Party. Lenin regarded the entry of the Communist Party into the Labour Party as indispensable, recognising it as the sole way to the establishment of a link between the British Communists and the working masses and to the transformation of the small British Communist Party into a mass organisation.

Basing himself on these considerations, in his brochure "Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Sick-

ness," Lenin convinced the British Communists that they should assist the Labour Party to come to power.

"If we are not a revolutionary group," he wrote, "but a party of the revolutionary class, and wish to carry the masses with us (without which we run the risk of remaining mere babblers) we must first help Henderson and Snowden to defeat Lloyd George and Churchill; or, to be more explicit, we must compel the former to defeat the latter, for the former are afraid of their victory. Secondly, we must help the majority of the working classes to convince themselves through their own experience that we are right; that is, they must convince themselves of the utter worthlessness of the Hendersons and Snowdens—of their petty-bourgeois and treacherous nature, of the inevitability of their bankruptcy. Thirdly, we must hasten the moment when, through the disappointment of the majority of the workers with the Hendersons it will be possible with serious chances of success, to overthrow the Henderson government."

In persisting in these views in his struggle with the British left-wing Communists, on this question Lenin took up exactly the same position as Engels took up on the British and American question in his time, when he hotly attacked the sectarian views of Hyndman, the British Social-Democratic Federation and the German socialists working in America, who held themselves outside the great stream of the Labour movement because of its opportunism. (See Letters of Marx, Engels and others to Sorge.)

In order to understand Lenin's position in regard to the Labour Party and the new position which the Executive Committee of the Comintern has taken up on this matter, one must take thorough cognisance of the historical conditions which gave birth to such a peculiar type of labour organisation as the British Labour Party, and of the profound changes which have

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taken place within the British Empire during the last decade.

**The Liberal View**

Britain has long since been regarded as the classic country of parliamentarism, of gradualism, social-reformism and empiricism. The Liberal historians were disposed to explain this by reference to national peculiarities in the character of the British nation. That, of course, is pure idealist nonsense. In its early history British political life was richer in violence than that of any other European country. In the seventeenth century the British bourgeoisie accomplished their revolution, and this took the form of a civil war which dragged on for twenty years. And, as the Chartist movement demonstrated, the British proletariat was capable of defending their interests with arms in hand, while leaders of the Chartist movement, such as O'Brien, displayed a fundamental implacability in no less degree than the Continental revolutionary socialists and Communists.

It is true that the British bourgeoisie has displayed exceptional flexibility, an absolutely exceptional ability to corrupt and deprave the classes and nations exploited by it with the methods of compromise; but this is to be explained not by reference to specific features of the British character, but by quite simple economic causes; industrial capitalism developed in Britain earlier than anywhere else, and this afforded her the possibility of seizing and retaining great colonial possessions in her hands. And these same advantages of British capitalism and its many years of monopolist position in the world economy afforded the British bourgeoisie such possibilities of manoeuvring in regard to its oppressed classes and nations as no bourgeoisie in any other European country possessed.

After the defeat of Chartism the British bourgeoisie succeeded in paralysing the political movement of the British working class for half a century and in saturating it with Liberal ideology, thanks to the fact that, drawing enormous super-profits from the colonies as they were, they could afford the concession to the British workers of the ten-hour day and could raise the workers' wage over twenty-five years, from 1850 to 1875, and afterward maintain wages at one level in face of a fall of prices down to the end of the nineteenth century. Having created a labour aristocracy at the expense of super-profits, and with its aid corrupting the British Labour movement, the British bourgeoisie could also without revolutionary pressure from below allow of two extensions of electoral rights; in 1867 and in 1884.

Thanks to the extension of France's colonial possessions in Africa and those of Russia in Asia, and in particular owing to the rapid development of capitalism in Germany, in the 'nineties Britain began to lose its monopolist position, and this was at once reflected in the British Labour movement. The situation of the working class began to be worsened through the rise in the cost of living and the pressure of capital, and the British Labour movement began to show signs of revival. The beginning of the twentieth century saw the first formation of the British Labour Party, which developed out of the parliamentary representation of the

trade unions, a party which was, at least ideologically, still entirely bound up with Liberalism, just as were the trade unions, but was organisationally independent. Simultaneously a mass strike movement began to develop and to take on aggressive forms. Again the British bourgeoisie were threatened with a revolutionary danger similar to that which menaced it during the Chartist period. But none the less at this time British imperialism was still sufficiently strong to manoeuvre again and to reconcile their internal enemies with the State, at least to a certain extent.

**Britain Seeks Allies**

In order to preserve its position in the world, British imperialism began to abandon its position of "splendid isolation" and to seek allies for itself. At first the leader of the Conservatives, Joseph Chamberlain, endeavoured to conclude an alliance with Germany against France and Russia, the two colonial rivals in Africa and Asia. But when Germany turned down these overtures, British imperialism set to work to build up the Entente, to conclude an alliance with France and Russia against her chief economic rival—against Germany. Germany became the chief enemy of British imperialism, and the latter began to surround this enemy by a ring of iron.

But from the moment that British imperialism felt the necessity of abandoning its isolation and of concluding some kind of defensive and aggressive alliance for the defence of its colonial might by force of arms, it set itself the task of safeguarding itself from a revolutionary movement in the rear by means of bribery, for which at that time it still retained resources and possibilities. After the victorious conclusion of the four-year war with the Boers, the Boers were granted extensive autonomy. In Ireland the Conservative Government carried through an agrarian reform. But the chief preparation for the war consisted in a fresh corruption of the working class. Even in 1895 the leader of the Conservative-Unionists, Joseph Chamberlain, had put forward a programme of such labour legislation as would interest the British proletariat in the maintenance of the British Empire, for which programme the Liberals nicknamed him a "State socialist." But the realisation of this programme did not fall to him, but to a member of a Liberal Cabinet, Mr. Lloyd George, ten years later. In order to prepare the British workers for the role of cannon-fodder in the forthcoming imperialist world war, and endeavouring to nip the developing revolutionary movement of the British proletariat in the bud, Lloyd George began feverishly to introduce "social-reforms." These "social reforms," (free elementary education for children of workers, restriction of night labour, the right to assistance during unemployment, etc.), necessitated the introduction of the so-called "Socialist budget," which increased the taxes on landlords and evoked a severe conflict with the House of Lords, ending with the defeat of the latter. All these "social reforms" were in the aggregate an insignificant alms to the workers by comparison with the colossal sacrifices in blood with which the workers had to settle accounts for the reforms some five years later, in the world slaughter for the benefit of British imperialism. And all these "social reforms" were unable to restrain the development of the workers' severe strike struggle. But they were ade-

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quate for the purpose of chaining the newly-formed Labour Party to the Liberal chariot, and to hold up the political education of the working class. And thus once more British imperialism had a possibility of manoeuvring and of letting loose the world war and carrying it to a "victorious conclusion," yet averting a revolution and carrying on the war in a situation of internal "civil peace."

**Britain's Decline**

After the war, despite the victory of the Entente and the pillage of Germany, the period of decline set in for British imperialism. It is clearly expressed in the vigorous attack of the British proletariat. In 1920 was formed the "Triple Alliance" of miners, railwaymen and transport workers, and a miners' strike broke out which ended in 1921 with "Black Friday," thanks to the treachery of the leaders. Then there set in a second advance in the workers' movement, unprecedented in Britain for its extent, and ending with the General Strike and the miners' seven-months' lockout. Simultaneously, both in the British Empire and in her "spheres of influence," the foundations of British imperialism were being more and more undermined, and the British Dominions revealed separatist tendencies. In India a strong revolutionary ferment set in immediately after the war. Finally, the Chinese revolution broke out, which threatened to strike a mortal blow at British imperialism.

The enfeebled British imperialism was now no longer strong enough to anticipate and prevent all these revolutionary movements. And it was still more difficult for the reformist leaders, the agents of the British bourgeoisie among the proletariat, to cope with the growing revolutionary movement of the workers than it was before the war. The leaders of the "Triple Alliance," who had betrayed the movement in 1921, saved themselves from the anger of the workers only with difficulty: Thomas had to flee to the United States, Robert Williams lost his position as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, at every meeting Ernest Bevin and Harry Gosling were faced with strong opposition and the indignation of the masses. The reformists were able to cope with the second, incomparably bigger wave of the workers' movement only thanks to the fact that within the Labour Party appeared a "left wing" which with its left-wing phrases corrupted the masses, and because the General Council of the trade unions, together with the leaders of the Labour Party, themselves headed the General Strike—of which they were afraid and which they were powerless to avert—and headed it in order to betray it. This time the anger of the working masses with the treacherous leaders did not show itself so clearly on the surface because the movement was not ready for armed insurrection and the seizure of power, the masses themselves not being prepared for this course owing to their previous political education. But in one way or another all these revolutionary movements suffered defeat—the movement of the British workers thanks to the treachery of the reformist leaders, the national-liberation movement in India and China, thanks to the treachery of the national bourgeoisie. Thus British

imperialism again obtained a breathing-space and began feverishly to prepare for the consolidation of its shaken position in the world arena.

**The New Rival**

The chief economic rival of British imperialism is at the present time no longer Germany, but the United States of America. And British imperialism is preparing for a decisive clash with this imperialist giant. But it is still a matter for a more distant future. At the present moment the most dangerous enemy of British imperialism is the U.S.S.R.—the centre of the world revolution. And we see that for several years British imperialism has been carrying on a stubborn policy of encirclement of the U.S.S.R. and of preparations for war against it similar to the manner in which British imperialism hammered out the Entente for war against Germany. In order to let loose this war against the U.S.S.R. British imperialism is striving, just as it strove on the eve of the war against Germany, to safeguard itself from the rear and to strengthen its position within the Empire. If we judge by the fact that in Great Britain there is now a united counter-revolutionary front, beginning with Churchill and ending with Purcell, it may seem that British imperialism will be successful in executing this task. However, in actual fact, the matter is far from being so favourable. Actually, British imperialism's possibilities of manoeuvring are now undoubtedly smaller than on the eve of the world war. These possibilities are still great even now, but, despite temporary successes, they are steadily being more and more restricted.

In the first place, what is the situation in the colonies and the semi-colonies? After the victorious Boer war of 1899-1902 Britain, having given autonomy to the South African republics, could regard this front as liquidated. The situation is far from being the same in China at the present time. Although the Chinese revolution has suffered a series of heavy defeats, none the less the situation still remains a revolutionary one, and all the symptoms indicate that a new, still more menacing revolutionary wave is gathering in China. And in India we see at the moment a new rise of the movement for independence.

**Present Possibilities of Concessions**

And what are the possibilities of pacifying the proletariat in the British Empire at present? We have seen that on the eve of the world war Lloyd George had to pass a series of "social reforms" in order to appease the British workers and in order to adapt them to the aims of British imperialism; and for this purpose he had to pass the so-called "Socialist budget," which increased the pressure of taxation on the upper group of landlords and plutocrats, and correspondingly he came up against the strongest opposition on the part of the House of Lords. The so-called "Socialist budget" of 1900 differed from the previous budgets by an addition to the receipts side of £17,200,000. Of this sum the landowners had to pay £6,300,000, the owners of distilleries, £4,200,000; the tax on motor cars (articles of luxury) was raised by £600,000 and income tax increased by £3,500,000. Such was the position on the eve of the world war in



**The Change in Tactics**—continued

1914. But what is the situation in Britain to-day, on the eve of the war being prepared against the U.S.S.R.? Is British imperialism now preparing to increase the burden on the plutocratic and landowning upper circles and to alleviate the burden oppressing the working class? Quite the opposite. The entire export industry, which composes the main basis of the economic might of Britain, is in a state of chronic depression. In order to get out of this state, British imperialism is setting itself the task of rationalising industry at the expense of lengthening the working day and lowering the workers' wages. Britain is at present not passing through a period of social reforms, even of the most illusory sort, but through a period of attack on the trade unions (the Trade Union Act) and of intensified pressure on the working class. It is not a question of the bribery of the workers now, but of fresh sacrifices on their part in the name of future problematic benefits. Now no bridge is being flung across between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but on the contrary, the old bridges between them are being broken down and the abysses between them are being deepened, despite the fact that this is being done under the banner of "industrial peace." This could not but have its effect on the Labour Party. The leaders of the Labour Party have always been the "lieutenants of the bourgeoisie inside the working class." But formerly they had a possibility of playing the role of the opposition to capital, whereas now, in face of a continually intensifying struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, they are forced to take up a definite position on one side or other of the barricades. They made their choice long since and have been transformed openly into a "third bourgeois party." In 1922-23 the Labour Party still included the capital levy, the struggle with unemployment, and an agreement with the U.S.S.R. in their programme. In 1924 the MacDonald Government was compelled to resign over two objectively revolutionary questions. In 1924-25 there was still a "left-wing" inside the Labour Party, as there was in the leadership of the trade unions, and, faced with the situation of the developing movement among the miners, this "left wing" still gave vent to revolutionary phrases. After the present Conservative Government's entry into office, and especially after the betrayal of the General Strike, all this was changed in the most radical fashion. The Labour Party began a systematic attack on the Communists and against the Minority Movement. The line of demarcation between the so-called "left" and the right wing, between Purcell and Thomas, was completely eliminated. Following on the Communists, fire was next opened against the Minority Movement. The Labour Party gradually began to be transformed into a disciplined party, expelling from its ranks all those who were dissatisfied with the so-called "principles" of the reformist leaders and depriving them of the right to hold any responsible post. All toying with sympathy for the U.S.S.R. was cut short. Following on the break of diplomatic relationships with the U.S.S.R. the reformist leaders also broke up the Anglo-Russian Committee. In place of the "capital levy" slogan there was put forward the slogan of support for capitalist rationalisation, the slogan of "industrial peace." The Labour Party was reconciled to the anti-trade union bill

without putting up the least resistance—to a bill prohibiting sympathetic strikes and picketing, as well as the collective contributions of trade unions for political purposes. The Labour Party worked out a common programme with the Liberals, while the General Council conducted negotiations on "industrial peace" with the industrial magnate Mond on the basis of conditions which bind the trade unions, but do not bind all British industrialists in the least, so that the "industrial peace" thus serves only as a smoke-screen for the attack of capital.

**The Labour Party Goes Over**

Thanks to this open transfer of the Labour Party to the camp of the bourgeois counter-revolution, it is ceasing to reflect the mood of the working masses. After the defeat of the protracted miners' lockout there unquestionably followed a certain depression in the working masses, but now, following after other European countries, in Britain also many symptoms of the leftward trend of the working masses are being revealed, and in this connection it is extremely noteworthy that in the municipal elections the Labour Party is beginning to lose votes in those very areas where the militant proletariat live, and has won votes only in backward areas.

These are the profound changes in the situation which has induced the Executive Committee of the Comintern to lay down a new tactic for the British Communist Party in relation to the Labour Party, the Labour Government and parliamentary elections. From being the classic country of parliamentarism and social-reformism Britain is being transformed into an arena for ruthless class struggles; and from being a pacifist, disintegrated, federative party the Labour Party is correspondingly being transformed into a compact counter-revolutionary party. Formerly the Communists' road to the masses led through the Labour Party. To-day, having succeeded in winning popularity for themselves among quite extensive circles of workers during the period of the General Strike and the miners' lockout; and having earned the burning hatred of the entire British bourgeoisie, the British Communists can lay down their further road to the masses for themselves, and will be transformed into a mass party only in the struggle against the Labour Party and its leadership, only if it carries on an open struggle not merely with one camp of the enemy, but with two: with the Conservative Party on the one hand, and with the bloc of the Liberals and the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions on the other.

**Lenin and the New Tactic**

Even in 1920, when Lenin was indicating the old tactic of the British Communist Party, the Executive Committee of the Comintern foresaw the possibility and the necessity of changing this tactic in the future, and in its answer to the Independent Labour Party wrote:

"At the present moment there is a tendency among opportunist leaders to transform the Labour Party into a genuine party with local organisations and a programme. They are set-

**The Change in Tactics**—continued

ting themselves the task of establishing a broad opportunist party, which is to restrain the revolutionary development of the masses. If this tendency meets with success, the Labour Party will not in any circumstances allow the socialist organisations entering into its composition the right of carrying out their own revolutionary tactic, or of preaching the revolutionary struggle. They will tie their freedom of action hand and foot. Consequently it is obvious that no organisation striving to carry out a Communist policy could apparently enter the Labour Party. And then, after a short energetic struggle against this tendency, the necessity would arise of withdrawing from the Labour Party, and of striving to maintain a link with the working masses by means of extending the Communists' work in the trade unions, by means of wresting those trade unions away from the compromising Labour Party and their direct attraction to Communism."

That time is now arriving. It has not finally arrived even yet, since the Labour Party has not yet completely lost its federative character; but it is travelling that road at a swift pace. In correspondence with this the Executive Committee resolution does not withdraw the slogan of entering the Labour Party, but it declares that the struggle to enter it should now be transformed "into an offensive struggle against its traitorous leadership." In correspondence with this the time has come for a "resolute struggle against the discipline fastened on the Labour movement by the Liberal-Labour bureaucracy," and for the struggle to shatter this discipline. In correspondence with this the time has also come for an alteration in electoral tactics: for the Communists to put forward their own candidates and to support the candidates of left-wing organisations, excluded from the Labour Party, against the official candidates of the Labour Party.

We need not close our eyes to the fact that the road indicated by the Executive Committee of the Comintern is no easy one, for, as the Executive Committee resolution correctly remarks, "the British working class is continuing to move to the left only unequally and not without zigzags." A political differentiation in the British working class is inevitable if only for the reason that the economic situation of the British workers in various spheres of industry is different. While the basic spheres of British industry, working for export (coal, ironworking, textiles), are in a state of decline, there are new spheres of industry embracing 700,000 workers, working for the internal market, and especially in the manufacture of articles of luxury, which are at present in a comparatively prosperous condition. But a political differentiation in the British proletariat is inevitable at the present time also because, despite the experience of the last decade, among large circles of the British proletariat the parliamentary democratic illusions are still far from being outlived. Under

such conditions it is not difficult to foresee that when the Communist Party puts forward its own candidates or supports the left-wing candidates of organisations expelled from the Labour Party, against the official candidates of the Labour Party or of the bloc of Labourites with the Liberals, the Labour Party will raise a howl that the Communists are assisting in the victory of the Conservatives by splitting the working class; and this howl will unquestionably have an echo in important sections of the working class, and the Labourites will succeed in poisoning their minds against the Communists. All this is indubitable. But all this should not restrain the Communists from independent action at the elections, just as, on the eve of the world war, the analogical shrieks of the Liberals against independent candidates did not restrain the young Labour Party, whose candidates at that time assisted the victory of the Conservatives in some places. Under the conditions of the intensifying class contradictions and the final treason of the reformist leaders the British Communist Party cannot hang back from setting out on this independent road, for that road alone will lead to the consolidation of all the left wing elements of the British Labour movement around a single centre; that road alone can avert the disintegration of those elements and the complete decline of the influence of the Communist Party itself in the working class.

**The Question of a Split**

The Labour Party will accuse and is already accusing the British Communist Party of schism. That should not frighten the British Communist Party. In Britain, as on the Continent, the road to the transformation of the British Communist Party into a mass party and to the conquest of power by the British proletariat lies by way of a temporary split in the working class. In Britain the beginnings were different from those on the Continent, but the ends are the same. And this temporary split is already pre-determined by the tactic of the Labour Party, which stands on no ceremony whatever in expelling its own local organisations in their entirety for their leftward trend, which stands on no ceremony whatever in opposing its own candidates to the left wing candidates in those districts where the latter have a majority of the old local organisation of the Labour Party on their side. The question of a temporary split is pre-determined. In such conditions the British Communist Party can closely associate itself with its own masses, with the leftward moving working masses, only by taking the initiative of attack into its own hands.

The road lying before the British Communist Party is a difficult one, but that road promises it brilliant revolutionary prospects in the more or less immediate future; and the first pledge of success along that road consists in the fact that the British Communist Party transferred its train to the new line without an internal crisis, that after a discussion of the matter in all its aspects, the entire British delegation voted unanimously, with a good conscience, for the resolution of the Comintern Plenum.

# The Chinese Question in the Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

THE Plenum's resolution on the Chinese question summarises the results of a complete period in the development of the Chinese revolution, the characteristic feature of which period is the fact that the workers' and peasants' movement carried on under the slogans of the Chinese Communist Party. The inadequate forces of the Chinese Communist Party, enfeebled by the white terror and losses in innumerable struggles, did not allow it the possibility of placing itself at the head of the movement everywhere. This was especially the case in regard to the peasants' movement, which still largely bears an elemental character. None the less, one has to note that the peasants' movement was of the greatest strength and most widespread wherever the Communists were at the head of it.

## Communist Experience

After all this period, the Communist Party emerges enriched with enormous experience of the revolutionary struggle. A correct evaluation of this experience on the part of the Communist Party and the worker and peasant masses, provided the conditions of a sober estimate of the entire situation, the correlation of class forces in the country and the position of the workers' and peasants' movement be observed, is a highly important condition of the victorious development of the Chinese revolution. Meantime, it is the very fact that during the last stage of its development the movement carried on under the banner of the Chinese Communist Party, that the undivided hegemony of the Chinese revolution is now in the hands of the working class, that in its struggle against counter-revolution that class has already exploited the highest form of class struggle (armed insurrection) and during the course of that struggle put forward slogans which pass beyond the confines of a bourgeois-democratic revolution—it is these facts which have necessitated an attempt to reconsider the question of the very character of the Chinese revolution. Both in the documents of the Chinese Communist Party (the political resolution of the November Plenum of the C.C.P. Executive Committee) and in the speeches of individual comrades at the Chinese conference held on the eve of the E.C.C.I. Plenum the following theses were propounded: (1) the Chinese revolution is "developing or has already developed into a socialist revolution"; (2) the Chinese revolution is of a permanent character. This characterisation of the Chinese revolution at the given stage is erroneous not only by reason of the fact that it ignores many peculiar features of the Chinese revolution, and in the first place ignores its fundamental feature, namely that it is a revolution in a semi-colonial country, but also because it leads to highly dangerous and injurious practical deductions on the part of the Chinese Communist Party.

The character of the Chinese revolution is defined by those objectively historical tasks which arise out of the economic and political state of the country. In no circumstances is it permissible to draw the deduction that the actual character of the revolution has been

changed from the fact that the Chinese bourgeoisie has passed over to the camp of reaction, that it has become the intellectual and practical protagonist of counter-revolution. The transfer of the bourgeoisie to the camp of counter-revolution simply signifies that the fundamental driving force of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is now the proletariat, which is called, together with all the mass of peasantry, to resolve the tasks of the revolution. Not one of these tasks is yet resolved and they will have to be resolved against the bourgeoisie, who have passed into the camp of the counter-revolution. It is obvious that in order to paralyse the opposition of the bourgeoisie, in order to strengthen the basis of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, the proletariat may find itself forced to confiscate the large enterprises. But to take these measures, indispensable as they may be in the process of carrying through a bourgeois-democratic revolution against the bloc of militarists, imperialists and Chinese bourgeoisie, as measures defining the character of the Chinese revolution at the given stage would imply the committing of a theoretical and practical error: would imply leaping over a large stage of development, the basic content of which are the agrarian revolution, the annihilation of the vestiges of feudalism, the uniting of China and the winning of its independence by the establishment of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

## The Nature of the Chinese Revolution

The definition of the Chinese revolution as one which has already developed into a socialist revolution arises from an extraordinary simplification and schematic treatment of all the prospects of development in the revolution. The question of the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one will be decided in face of an extraordinarily complicated situation, both internally and still more internationally. The decisive factor in regard to the possibility of that development, and in regard to its tempo will be the question of the degree to which the working class will, by way of a radical accomplishment of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, succeed in drawing the great masses of Chinese toilers into the struggle against reaction and counter-revolution, and the degree to which the Chinese revolution will be safeguarded by the support of the world proletariat, and similar issues.

The characterisation of the Chinese revolution as a permanent revolution is still more erroneous. The significance which it is attempted to attach to the resolution of the November E.C.C.I. Plenum takes the following line: as there is no class in China other than the proletariat which can head the struggle for the achievement of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, as the bourgeoisie do not represent serious class forces, as the objective situation is driving the worker and peasant masses on to a decisive struggle, the Chinese revolution will develop unbrokenly along a rising line,

**The Chinese Question**—continued

going on from victory to victory. The Comintern starts from the assumption that the Chinese revolution is actually developing along a rising line; but that does not mean that certain phases of the revolutionary struggle in which victory will be replaced by defeat and vice versa are entirely excluded. But meantime the characterisation of the Chinese revolution as a permanent revolution has already had its effect in an under-estimation of the consolidation of the forces of reaction and in an incorrect evaluation of the correlation between the workers' and peasants' movements. The characteristic of this very period in China is the fact that the first wave of the workers' and peasants' movement to rise under the slogans of the Communist Party has now fallen and that, as the E.C.C.I. Plenum resolution defines it: "At the present moment a new mighty rise of the masses' revolutionary movement on a national scale is not yet in being, although a number of symptoms indicate that the workers' and peasants' revolution is moving towards such a rise." The characteristic of the present moment is just the fact that while a further growth and development of the peasants' movement is taking place, the workers' movement is living through a temporary depression. Meantime, it is absolutely obvious that without a genuine rise in the workers' movement the victory of the Chinese revolution is impossible, for only a rise in the workers' movement can guarantee victory in the strategic points against the chief enemy of the Chinese revolution. While the adherents of the definition of the Chinese revolution as a permanent revolution set the chief emphasis on the question whether a direct revolutionary situation exists or does not exist in China, the resolution of the E.C.C.I. Plenum notes as the characteristic feature of the Chinese revolution that the movement is developing extremely unequally, both geographically, and in the sense of the correlation of the various columns.

**The Prospects—and the Position of the Chinese C.P.**

The E.C.C.I. Plenum indicated the following immediate prospect for the Chinese revolution. The Chinese revolution is moving on to a fresh rise of the revolutionary movement throughout the whole of China.

"This rise inevitably confronts the party with the immediate practical task of organising and accomplishing a massed armed insurrection, for only by way of insurrection and the overthrow of the present government can the tasks of the revolution be resolved."

The soundness of this prospect is confirmed not only by the fact that the peasants' movement is developing irresistibly in certain provinces, and that the revolutionary peasantry have succeeded in establishing a soviet government in certain provinces, but by the fact that the Chinese bourgeoisie, despite the support of the imperialists, has not succeed in dealing with the workers' and peasants' movement to the extent of preventing it from rising again. Despite the serious defeats which the working class has suffered, despite the fact that these defeats have made great breaches in the ranks of the Communist Party and the working class, the basic proletarian forces of the revolution are preserved. The Canton insurrection showed that these proletarian forces have grown to the extent of being able to provide

examples of the greatest heroism, and that the Chinese proletariat have actually attained a genuine leadership of the Chinese revolution.

The prospect of a new rise in the Chinese revolution and of a preparation for mass armed insurrection demands an attentive and sober estimation of the correlation of forces inside the country and the situation of the workers' and peasants' movement. At the moment we are faced with the undoubted presence of a certain consolidation of the reaction in China. This consolidation is revealed not only in the fact that the forces of the counter-revolutionary camp have grown, thanks to the transfer of the bourgeoisie to the counter-revolutionary side, but also in the fact that despite all outbreaks of the workers' and peasants' movement the reactionary camp, though far from united internally, and torn by internal contradictions, acts compactly. There is also undoubtedly present a certain depression in the workers' movement, evoked by defeats, by the extraordinary worsening of the position of the working class, the white terror, the disintegrating activities of bourgeois agents in the workers' movement, and a weakening of Communist leadership. All the signs indicate that the chief danger threatening the workers' and peasants' movement in China consists in a split between its separate component elements; in a split between the Communist advance-guard and the working class, and in a split between the workers' and the peasants' movement. These splits are assisted by the mood which has developed inside the Communist Party, a mood which consists in the failure to understand the true relationship between the advance-guard and the masses of the proletariat. Only by preserving to themselves the support of the millions and dozens of millions of the Chinese workers and peasants can the Communist Party count on a really serious victory over the counter-revolution and the imperialists. But the simple fact that the Communist Party is the sole party actually struggling for the interests of the workers and peasants is insufficient. The Party must have continual contact with these masses, must educate them, organise and teach them to conquer. Meantime, the failure to understand this frequently leads the Communist Party in practice to the situation that, as the result of under-estimation of the counter-revolutionary forces and the over-estimation of the importance of direct action, the Chinese Communist Party often organises a movement, a strike, demonstrations, insurrections, guerilla struggles which are foredoomed to defeat by reason of their inadequate connection with the masses and of work among those masses, by reason of the absence of a co-ordinated attack of the separate parts of the movement, and by reason, finally, of the absence of a sound combination of the political and technical preparations for the attack. Facts of this kind have been observable recently in various provinces of China. Hence arises the fundamental danger for the Chinese Communist Party: a danger which consists in their exposing their main forces to the blows of the reaction before the new wave of the workers' and peasants' movement is prepared and begun. For this reason the central point of the E.C.C.I. Plenum's resolution is the question of the necessity for every-day steady activity among the great masses and their organisation around the Chinese Communist Party.

The main attention of the Chinese Communist Party must be given to the strengthening of their link with

**The Chinese Question**—continued

the working class. The E.C.C.I. Plenum indicated that the Party must resolutely put an end to the practice of exerting pressure on separate sections of the working class and must transfer all its energies to the work of convincing, of educating the working masses. Those elements of disintegration which are at present to be observed in the workers' movement in China, their withdrawal from the revolutionary trade unions, the organisation of so-called brotherhoods, and in some places their going over to Chiang Kai Shek and other trade unions, confront the Party with the extremely difficult task of penetrating into these organisations and winning the workers over to their side. It is characteristic of the workers' attitude that while they are not refusing to take part in direct attacks, at the same time they avoid maintaining an every-day connection with the revolutionary organisations or assisting them in their every-day work. This tells of the extraordinarily difficult conditions in which the Chinese Communist Party has to work, but it means that the Communist Party must establish such forms of contact with the masses of the working class as will not afford the counter-revolution the possibility of striking at sections of the revolutionary organisations.

**Organising the Peasants**

Despite the fact that the peasants' movement is steadily growing, the task of organising the peasant masses is no less difficult than it is in relation to the working classes. The E.C.C.I. Plenum indicated the necessity of intensifying the work of setting up peasants' organisations, while cautioning the Party against an increase in the guerilla attacks if they are inadequately prepared, do not have certain chances of success, or if they are not connected with the workers' movement in the towns. Unquestionably the Chinese Communist Party must place itself at the head of the spontaneous movements of the peasantry, but its basic line of approach should be that only with a rise in the revolutionary wave both in the towns and in the villages can such movements be crowned with success. The Chinese Communist Party has to reckon with the peculiarity of the situation in various provinces, varying their tactic, adapting themselves to the special features, and so on.

The Chinese Communist Party, which during the comparatively short period of its existence has come through great trials, and having on the whole successfully outlived the great opportunist errors committed by the past leadership of the Communist Party, having succeeded in placing themselves at the head of the workers' and peasants' movement after the bourgeoisie had passed into the counter-revolutionary camp, having, despite a series of big defeats, succeeded in withstanding the pressure of the counter-revolution, is now faced with extremely complex tasks. Their achievement demands the maximum consolidation of the Party itself. That consolidation must take the line of outliving the "putschist" deviations in the Party and the advance-guardist deviations in the commission, and of consolidating the ranks of the Party, which have been seriously weakened in the revolutionary struggles, and increasing the size of the Party itself by drawing on those workers and peasant groups which have already developed and been tempered in the struggle against

counter-revolution. The Party will have to correct its attitude in regard to the trade unions, adjusting their position when the party and trade union apparatus is in fact a single unit, and when the Communists compose the great majority in the local nuclei of the trade unions. The Party will have to continue the task of increasing the working class elements in its apparatus, guaranteeing an everyday connection with the workers and peasants. The Party must strengthen the discipline in its ranks, while at the same time establishing opportunities for taking stock of the attitude of the rank and file party masses and for their expressing their will. Also great ideological work will be necessary in order finally to outlive those moods which distract "its attention from preparing the millions of the masses for a fresh extensive revolutionary rise, preparation which provides the central task of the moment."

**The Canton Rising**

The E.C.C.I. Plenum subjected to consideration the question of the lessons arising from the Canton insurrection. The supplementary information on the course of the insurrection since received entirely confirmed the estimate which was made before the Plenum at the E.C.C.I. Chinese conference. Unquestionably the Canton insurrection has and will have enormous importance in the development of the workers' and peasants' revolution in China. It demonstrated the great revolutionary maturity of the Chinese proletariat; despite all the errors which were committed in the preparation and carrying out of the insurrection it is an heroic example for the entire Chinese proletariat. But at the same time it revealed the existence of the following errors: "An inadequate preliminary activity among the workers and peasants, as well as among the army of the opposition; an inaccurate approach to the workers who were members of the yellow trade unions; an inadequate preparation for the insurrection on the part of the Party and the Young Communist organisations themselves; a complete lack of information on events in Canton on the part of the all-China party centre; a feeble political mobilisation of the masses (an absence of extensive political strikes, the absence of an elected soviet as the organ of the insurrection in Canton). The prospect of a new rise in the revolutionary wave and of preparation for a mass armed insurrection obliges the Chinese Communist Party diligently to study the experience of the Canton insurrection and to make the results accessible to the broad mass of members of the Chinese Communist Party and to the workers and peasants of China.

The defeats suffered by the Chinese revolution provide food for the Trotskyist renegades, who declared the Canton insurrection to be a "putsch on the basis of a falling revolutionary wave." This attitude is also to be found in smaller degree inside the Chinese Communist Party, but chiefly among those groups who were excluded from the ranks of the Communist Party for their Menshevik errors. At present liquidatorial attitudes find their expression in attempts to establish a new Menshevik party under the flag of the workers and peasants. If the renegades succeeded in creating such a party, its fate would be certain: in the situation of an intensified class struggle this party would inevitably be transformed into a plaything in the hands of the counter-revolution. The struggle against the counter-

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# The Struggle for Industrialisation in the U.S.S.R.

K. Krumin

**S**ERIOUS difficulties arose during the last few months of the present economic year in connection with marketing grain, which constitutes a very important branch of economic work. These difficulties affected one of the most vital points of contact between the socialist town and the peasant village; they did not extend to any other sphere of national economy, nor develop into a general crisis, which might easily have been the case. The difficulties connected with the grain market during the first quarter of the economic year occurred at a time when contact between town and country had greatly improved and conditions for industrial development promised well for the future.

The following table, illustrating the value of agricultural products, will give a clear picture of the actual position (in million roubles, at current prices):

Month	1926-27	1927-28	1927-28 % of 1926-27
July ...	34.8	54.3	156.0
August	66.2	98.9	149.4
September	117.8	154.5	131.2
October	250.8	290.6	115.9
November	168.4	167.0	99.2
December	147.6	118.2	80.1

This table demonstrates the course of the turnover and the tendencies which marked this year as compared with the preceding year. In the beginning of the agricultural economic year there is a tremendous increase from 54 million roubles in July to 290 million roubles in October. The returns for certain months of the current year show a 30, 40 and even a 50 per cent. increase over those of last year. This increased volume of turnover is fully in accordance with the higher standard of economic life in the Soviet Union, which is bound up with the satisfactory harvest of the present year and the considerable increase in agricultural technical products. However, in the month of November we meet with a decline in the general turnover, which is caused by the difficulties in the grain market, and in December the turnover is only 118 million roubles as compared with 148 last year. These figures prove that serious difficulties had arisen in one of the branches of economy which constitute the contact between town and country.

The amount of the turnover in cereals was 103 per cent. (80 million roubles) of the turnover of last year, but dropped to 52 per cent. (31 million roubles instead of 75 million roubles in the preceding year) in the month of December. In the months of November-December cereals constituted 20 to 25 per cent. of the general turnover as compared with 48 to 50 per cent. in the previous year. These basic figures for the present economic year give a clear picture of the tendencies of the development of the exchange of goods between town and village.

For a number of reasons, which will be examined in the course of this article, one of the most important branches of economic work has been faced with very serious difficulties. These difficulties began in the month of December to spread to other branches of economy and we find the flax-growing districts beginning to hold up their flax in imitation of the grain-growing districts. But a stop was put in good time to this spread of difficulties in the marketing of agricultural products, and already in the month of January there was a record supply of grain on the market. During the months of December and January State industry made great strides in increasing production, and this fact made itself felt in the turnover. The results attained in the month of January show that the Soviet Government has overcome the difficulties that threatened the grain situation.

It was only to be expected that these economic difficulties should raise certain general questions connected with Soviet economic construction. There is not the slightest necessity to dwell on the reports which appeared in the foreign economic press. There was, and still continues a general howl about crises and the failure of Soviet methods; in the bourgeois and white-guard press one crisis followed the other and the difficulties in the grain situation were represented as a complete rupture between the town and country. These economists proved in a most convincing way that the Soviet Union had with the greatest difficulty partially attained the pre-war level of production, but that it was not capable of maintaining this level, nor could it develop further for want of capital. Therefore, they unanimously came to the conclusion that the only hope for the Soviet Union was a foreign loan, which would of course necessitate radical changes at the expense of the attainments won through the October revolution.

(Contd. from p. 197.)

revolutionary party, as also the struggle against all forms of liquidatorial attitude, is one of the chief tasks of the Chinese Communist Party. The overcoming of the leftist-putschist deviations is a prerequisite to the swift, energetic and resolute suppression of all attempts to create such a Menshevik party.

None the less this touching union of the social-democrats, of Tang-Ping-Shen and the Trotskyists in slander against the Chinese revolution is by no means accidental. The sole force in the whole world which is actually in practice assisting and will continue to assist the workers and peasants of China in their heavy struggle against the militarists, against the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and against world imperialism, is the Communist International; and the Communist International will have to exert all its energies in order to organise the masses of the world proletariat around the task of assistance to and support of the Chinese revolution.

**The Struggle for Industrialisation**—contd.

At the moment there is not the slightest use of considering these statements; facts and figures are the best argument against them.

In an analysis of economic development during the current economic year we must not forget one very important fact, which was bound to have its effect on the marketing of the harvest. We refer to the change in the international situation at the beginning of last summer, which was marked by a considerable increase in what is termed "pre-war demand." The outcome of this was that when the peasants wanted to make their purchases with their harvest money the country had little more than famine reserves of industrial goods. This situation was bound to cause difficulties amongst a certain social set in the countryside. We already mentioned the fact that there was a marked growth in the production of technical products and in cattle breeding during 1927. The village, especially the rich peasants, had now the possibility of providing for their wants through the disposal of products of secondary importance and consequently of withholding their grain. Since there had been a certain slackness in collecting various taxes in the village, the rich peasants, who had become strong as a result of three consecutive good harvests, now had the chance of disposing of products of secondary importance and at the same time wanted to put the strength of the Soviet policy to the test, primarily as regards the price policy. The middle peasants also began to withhold their grain, since they, too, had produced a greater quantity of technical products and had developed cattle breeding and were unable to satisfy their requirements in view of the shortage of industrial products in the villages.

**The Goods Shortage**

A big factor in the cause of the difficulties was the shortage of industrial products and a certain lack of provision of such goods during the early part of the economic year. During the summer months the holidays and repairs, which are carried on everywhere, help to curtail the production of goods, and this year certain innovations in methods of production delayed the output of goods generally. Only in December this year had State industry sufficiently reorganised its forces so as to be able to make considerable strides forward in the development of production. Under such conditions grave mistakes were made in the village in the distribution of industrial products; goods did not reach the village, but were kept back in the towns. Only as a result of the combined efforts of the Party and the Government was the village finally supplied with the necessary goods; the entire extra production in industry was sent to the village, especially to those districts which are large grain-producing areas. The distribution of industrial products has improved considerably and the countryside has greatly gained thereby. Another factor which contributed to the difficulties in the marketing of grain was the tendency to expect that the corn supply would be automatic without any preparatory campaign. This campaign should have been carried out on the lines of our most important national economic campaigns, bound up as it was with special social-economic conditions—the further absolute growth of exploitation in the vil-

lages by the rich peasants. The State and co-operative organs have now made a united front in the matter of purchasing grain and have succeeded in ousting the most dangerous competitors.

In analysing the grain situation the most important factor to be considered is the absolute growth and a relative increase in the strength of certain exploiting elements as a result of three consecutive good harvests. With the situation as already described and the shortage of industrial products, etc., it was to be expected that a struggle would arise in connection with the prices of agricultural products. We have never concealed from ourselves the fact that in a period of transition differences about current questions are bound to arise amongst workers and peasants, whereas general agreement prevails on fundamental questions. The main point of disagreement is the question of prices. The most important task before the workers' Government is to convince the peasant by experience that it is in his interest to establish economic union with socialised industry.

**The Village Exploiters**

There could be no doubt that the grain market would suffer as a result of the existing increase of exploiting elements in the village, who held considerable reserves of corn in their hands, since they could provide for their needs by the sale of agricultural products of secondary importance, and who carried on a policy of holding back grain from the markets, speculating on the possibility of higher prices later on, and thereby increasing their strength from the social-economic point of view. Another contributing factor to this state of affairs was to be found in the combination of the shortage of goods in the village and the laxness of the Soviet apparatus, both in collecting taxes and in preparing for the harvest campaign. All these causes were instrumental in making the middle peasant take example by the rich peasant. The rich peasant began to buy up grain in order to hoard it until spring, when he hoped to get a higher price, or to sell it immediately to his friends in the towns at a high price.

A few examples from correspondence in the "Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn" ("Economic Life") will best illustrate the situation:

"Let us wait till spring," the big grain dealers say. In the village of Ikseyev in the Krasnoyarsk district, the kulaks are combining for the joint sale of their surplus products in the spring. For this purpose they are even building their own boats to bring the grain to Krasnoyarsk." (Ek. Zhizn, No. 40.)

A correspondent from Stalingrad writes that the real speculating kulaks store their grain in warehouses and scour the country buying up grain to sell again at a profit. In one village there are five to six speculators, but there are thousands throughout the country. In Nikolayevsk county they buy wheat in the bazaar at nine roubles a hundredweight, and cart it to Djanibek and further to sell it at 14 to 15 roubles a hundredweight. (Ek. Zhizn, No. 13.)

A correspondent from Simferopol records the following interesting conversation:

"Have you got any wheat at two roubles a pood?" an agent asked a peasant, who was unwilling to sell his grain.

**The Struggle for Industrialisation—contd.**

"Oh, there's plenty to be got at two roubles."

"And for 1.50?"

"For 1.50 there is just as much to be had."

"Well, how about 1.15?" (the State-regulated price).

"Oh, we buy it ourselves at 1.15," he replied.

Of course, these statements about the kulak activity during the present marketing season do not go to prove that the middle peasant ceases to be the chief controller of grain. The report made on this matter a year ago still holds good. Let us recall the statistics on summer grain reserves for the 1926 harvest; according to these the poor farmers had 5 per cent. of the summer reserves, the middle peasants 73.3 per cent. and the exploiters only 21.7 per cent. The power of the exploiters varies according to the district and in some districts they held more than 21.7 per cent. of the grain reserves. Therefore our task is to approach each district separately. What is more we must not forget that the role of the exploiters has increased to a certain extent since 1926. In our present task we should not lose sight of the fact that during the second half of the economic year, the rich peasants play a more important role in the matter of holding up corn. On this account the Party and Soviet organs must rigorously insist on the class policy being carried out correctly in the village.

**The "War-Communism" Rumour**

Rumours have been circulated, especially in the foreign press, that there has been a recrudescence of the methods of "war-communism," because a certain amount of pressure has been brought to bear on the speculating kulaks and also because of mistakes made by our lesser officials.

Such statements are simply counter-revolutionary nonsense. Nobody will succeed in applying repressive measures to the kulak speculators through the methods of "war-communism." Nobody will succeed by using the methods of "war-communism," in carrying out the systematic attack on the kulaks and the private capitalist section generally which the Fifteenth Party Congress formulated and which is being put into practice. We have had different stages in N.E.P. First there was a retreat and then a rallying of forces. The present stage of N.E.P. is the stage of systematic application of the socialist attack on capitalism.

Thus the question of the supply of grain leads right up to the correct application of the class policy in the village. If the class policy is correctly realised in the village there is found to be an intensification in the economic contact between socialist industry and peasant economy, in other words, there will be an increase in the turnover of goods and a speedy improvement in the grain

marketing campaign. Our policy in the village must be carried out on the lines of a general socialist attack. We have overcome the anti-middle-peasant tendency which prevailed in our Party. Under the leadership of the Party the workers have learned to establish contact with the middle peasant, the central figure in the village. At the present stage of development they should be able to strengthen this contact, to raise the level of the poor and middle peasants by a thorough reorganisation of small peasant farms, and to limit the economic and social-political strength of the exploiting class in the village.

The mistakes which were made at the beginning of the agricultural campaign in respect of the supply of industrial products have been rectified by the Party. A campaign has been started, although a little late, for the mobilisation of the savings of the population for the purpose of industrialisation and increasing co-operative funds, etc. The realisation of the peasant loan was one of the most important campaigns carried out recently. The realisation of the 200 million loan for industrialisation has generally speaking been successful. This loan is found to ease the economic situation and to help to overcome economic difficulties.

**The Tasks of the Party**

At the present juncture the entire Party, Soviet, trade union, and co-operative apparatus should be mobilised for the work of popularising peasant loan bonds among the peasantry. In the interests of socialist construction in our country State credit generally should be developed without delay and the purchase of peasant loan bonds should be greatly increased. This loan cannot remain without having a favourable effect on the entire economic situation in the country. Generally speaking, we must admit that we are only beginning to mobilise the accumulated resources of the population for the development of the country.

In the month of January the grain situation showed a marked improvement as a result of the measures taken. The quantity of grain marketed increased to 1,248,000 tons, thus exceeding the supply during the first months of the season (December 598,000 tons, November 564,000 tons, and October 1,043,000 tons) and also in January of last year (951,500 tons). During the month of January there was also a considerable increase in industrial production; 26.8 per cent. as compared with January last year and 2.1 per cent. more than the previous December. The results for the first 25 days in February are still more astonishing; the supply rose to 1,685,851 tons as compared with 877,947 for the same period in October. Therefore, there can be no doubt that the Party and the Soviets have been most successful in coping with the economic difficulties of the present year.

(To be concluded.)