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March 6th and the Preparation for May 1st

A COMPLETE picture has not yet been obtained as to how the International Day of Struggle against unemployment on March 6th was prepared and carried out. But the Communist International and each separate Communist Party must not pause while all the data relevant to March 6th is being collected. Class contradictions and the class struggle are developing at an accelerated speed. What is

needed from the Communist Parties now is not professional academism, but the ability to react and take up the correct orientation as rapidly as possible, the capacity for able and firm leadership,—the ability to concentrate forces at the right time and in the right place, in order by wrecking the plans of the enemy to deal them serious blows. Scientific research as to the results of March 6th will be completed sooner or later; meanwhile, the international situation urgently demands that immediate practical steps be taken on the basis of the March 6th lessons. If this is not done, the Communist Parties and the whole International will find themselves dragging in the wake of events.

The Communist Parties must above all utilise the lessons of March 6th, in their preparations for the First of May.

MAY 1st, 1930, will occur in the circumstances of a directly threatening war danger against the U.S.S.R. and of new imperialist wars. The Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. already placed on record that since the 1914-1918 war, the danger of new imperialist wars has never been so near as at the present time. But since the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the war danger has approached still closer. Now one can no longer say that the imperialists *are preparing* a new military offensive against the U.S.S.R.; they are about to complete these preparations. It is precisely this fact that explains the regrouping within the bourgeois camp. It is just for this reason that the ruling classes of France have thrown out of the French Government all those fascists who are not sufficiently intransigent, while the ruling classes of England and Germany have subjected their social-fascists to new tests—to ascertain the extent to which they are prepared

to carry out a more aggressive policy against the U.S.S.R. In general, the ruling classes of all capitalist countries are now with special insistence impelling social-democracy and the reformist trade union bureaucracy to act more energetically. There are taking place simultaneously, more intent consultations of representatives of the general staffs of the imperial powers and the military authorities of the countries bordering on the U.S.S.R., there is an intensified concentration of arms and other war equipment in the regions bordering the soviet frontier; an increase of espionage activity, armed raids and all kinds of hostile acts.

UNDER conditions of such an acute danger of imperialist wars and intervention, the workers' First of May demonstrations this year should be of a very impressive character, demonstrations against imperialist war and above all for the defence of the U.S.S.R. In order to ensure that they shall be irresistible manifestations of working-class determination, close attention is necessary to the following conditions:—

(1) Work must be started in good time in order to draw in wide masses of factory workers, and also unemployed and rural workers.

(2) The chief form of First of May demonstration should be the mass political strike, affecting the big factories in the most important industries, and above all the munition and armament works.

(3) The mass political strike must be combined with mass revolutionary demonstrations of unemployed, and fraternisation with soldiers.

(4) Street demonstrations should bear the clearly expressed character of a break with bourgeois legality, and a stubborn struggle for the workers' first right to the streets.

(5) All First of May demonstrations must be organised on the basis of a united front from below, through the various factory committees of action; but at the same time, all demonstrations must be directed in the sharpest possible way against social-fascism and the reformist trade union bureaucracy. There must be a wide campaign of exposure of the social-fascists as the chief prop of capitalist reaction! Also, the most persistent struggle to clear the factories of the fascist and social-fascist functionaries who have distinguished themselves as consistent

agents of the police and bosses (scabs, informers, etc.).

TO achieve these results, all the Communist Parties will need to exert the maximum effort, carry on the most self-sacrificing and intense work, the most ruthless self-criticism of existing weaknesses and defects in the work of all branches of the Party organisation, in the preparation for May 1st. The March 6th campaign showed that since last August 1st, the Communist Parties have made considerable progress in their ability to prepare and lead strikes and mass revolutionary demonstrations, but, on the other hand, the experience of the March 6th campaign shows that with all this success, the work of the Communist Parties still has many big defects, the repetition of which in preparing the May-Day demonstrations, might greatly militate against their success, and in certain cases might even make them useless.

The Communist Parties must, in the first place, review the work of their regional and district committees in connection with the March 6th campaign. In the preparations for the March 6th demonstrations the regional and district committees did not display the necessary militant activity. The most outstanding and the commonest defects in the work of these committees must without fail be anticipated and avoided in connection with the preparations for May 1st. These defects for the most part consist in the complete lack of live instructions to the factory and street cells, and the fractions in mass organisations, the preparation being restricted mainly to long and more or less abstract circulars; other defects are the absence of a proper check as to what the factory and street cells are really doing to prepare the campaign; the absence of a concentration of forces in the most important places (big factories, etc.), and the weakness of anti-militarist work.

TO remove all these defects, it is necessary for the Central Committees of all Communist Parties *immediately* to organise a check on what all party committees are doing in preparation for the First of May; the District Committee should do the same thing as regards the lower Party organisations. The most

important aspect of this work is to verify the activities of the leading workers in the Party Committees and in the fractions of mass non-party organisations (e.g., trade unions), to ascertain the degree in which these comrades proved during the August 1st and March 6th campaigns their ability to get contact with the workers in big factories and to organise strikes and demonstrations.

The reviewing of the work of Party committees and of the cell-leadership should not take the form of a personal examination by a representative of a higher Party organ; from start to finish it should be conducted on the basis of self-criticism from below, by means of discussing the lessons of the two last campaigns at general Party and cell meetings, conferences, etc. The most important task of the Party leaders participating in this work is to draw into this self-criticism the entire body of Party members and sympathisers, and to ensure that it is a constructive criticism, i.e., that it is accompanied by all the necessary organisational steps as regards opportunist or inept leaders of local Party organisations.

THE most important criterion of success in preparing for the First of May is the mobilisation of the factory nuclei in the chief enterprises, the attraction of sympathisers around them, the formation of committees of action based on all the workers in the given enterprise, and the linking up of First of May slogans with the current struggle of these workers for their immediate demands.

Another very necessary condition for the success of May 1st preparations is widespread press agitation, particularly through factory newspapers. Communist Parties should bear in mind that in many cases the ruling classes will take every step to deprive them of a legal press. They should therefore take preparatory measures to assure the publication of First of May literature. Parties who do not prepare for such a contingency (as, for instance, the Czecho-Slovak C.P., was not prepared for August 1st and March 6th) will thereby be responsible to the proletariat for the failure of a most urgent political campaign. In this connection there should be concrete preparatory work to prevent the Party being caught unawares by the bourgeois state repression, and to assure the Party

apparatus against being paralysed at the time of action.

IN regard to the preparation of mass political strikes, the August 1st and March 6th campaigns provided the following lessons: (1) The need to strengthen the cells in those factories which are of greatest significance in developing a political strike (factories, the stoppage of which would bring to a standstill other enterprises depending upon them); (2) The need to form strike committees based on shop representatives; (3) To link up the political strike slogans with the slogans for the immediate economic demands of the workers in the given enterprise (or branch of industry); (4) The issue of factory newspapers a month, or at least a couple of weeks, before the day of the strike, so that in these papers the strike slogans and the main organisational measures for carrying out the strike are given the most widespread publicity. It is important to explain the treacherous strike-breaking role of the social-fascists; (5) all Party members and sympathisers should be mobilised for organised preparation of the strike, particularly for the formation of a strong initiative group, with a firm plan of action, in every shop; (6) particular attention should be paid to arranging for the stoppage of work in the key shops, i.e., those shops the stoppage of which cause the stoppage of the whole factory; (7) it is necessary to clear the factories of workers and foremen (including the social-fascists) who have been detected communicating with the police, or in acts of provocation, with the demand that they be literally put outside the factory gates; (8) the need to organise workers' defence groups in the shops, uniting these shop groups into a factory workers' defence corps; (9) the strike movement should be connected up with the unemployed agitation (demonstrations of workless should march to the factory gates to join those on strike, and so forth).

MOST serious attention should be paid to the practical side when organising strikes; even the most trivial detail should not be neglected, as, with the ruling classes highly organised as they are, we cannot organise strikes by agitation alone; a most thorough, persistent and all-round preparation is therefore necessary. The chief factors in this activity should be the

formation of strong revolutionary initiative groups in the shops, the co-ordination of the strike movement in the various factories, and persistent work in order to transform the separate strikes into a mass political strike.

In the present stage of the international labour movement, strikes should infallibly be accompanied and supplemented by demonstrations which include the unemployed workers. The ruling classes are reacting to working-class revolutionary demonstrations with increasing nervousness. They are resorting more and more frequently to mass arrests, baton charges, and shooting. For the time being, the proletariat is not yet able to undertake the task of an armed struggle for the streets. But this by no means signifies that the workers should quit the streets under pressure of the armed forces of the ruling classes. On the contrary, it is the job of the Communist Parties on May 1st to organise the broadest possible working-class street demonstrations with revolutionary slogans.

Powerful revolutionary demonstrations repulsing the police oppression, undismayed by the laws of the bourgeois state, should act as a stern warning against the war plans of the bourgeoisie. The experience of August 1st and March 6th has shown that the Communist Parties really have the objective opportunity of organising mass revolutionary workers' demonstrations.

DURING the previous two campaigns, the workers created the following main forms of preparation for the demonstration ; (1) The existence of a strong, carefully selected central and district leadership ; (2) the final object being to get to the prisons, central streets, government buildings, etc., demonstrations should commence in the working-class suburbs at the largest number of points, so as to detach and scatter the police forces ; (3) as a rule the demonstrators should rally outside their own factory ; (4) each group of demonstrators should have its own (factory) defence force ; (5) the defence corps should also take steps to hold up and disorganise the movement of police automobiles ; (6) demonstrators as a rule should avoid collisions with big forces of police and should disperse as they approach, and assemble in another place ; small police detachments should not be allowed to hold up demonstra-

tions ; (7) preparations for the demonstrations should be accompanied by intensive propaganda work among policemen and their families ; (8) organised demonstrations on the widest possible scale throughout the whole country, appeals for strikes being issued even in districts where no Party organisations exist.

August 1st and March 6th aroused the whole capitalist state apparatus to action. The capitalist world must be shaken still more thoroughly by the political strikes and demonstrations of the First of May, 1930. This May-Day should be marked by the conquest of the streets by the workers ; should challenge the threats of capitalist terror ; and should deal a forceful blow at the main stronghold of capitalism—international social-fascism. If the First of May demonstrations achieve these results—and the Communist Parties should strive for this with all their strength—then May the First, 1930, will go down as an important step forward in the development of the working-class offensive—in the fight against capitalist wage attacks, against imperialist wars, and in support of the U.S.S.R

The Collapse of the London Conference

AS these lines are being written, the London Conference is still in session, although in actual fact it has already broken down. The pacifist web of lies about naval disarmament has been torn to shreds ; not that the bourgeois politicians ever seriously believed in disarmament—long before the conference began, at the time when MacDonald in America was piously proclaiming in God-fearing language the necessity of an understanding between the two great Anglo-Saxon Powers, when the result of the personal conversations between Hoover and MacDonald were made known, the *Economist** wrote :

“To represent this provisional agreement as an important step towards naval reduction is sheer mystification . . . the Anglo-American *entente* amounts to little more than an agreed programme of naval construction on a scale which may represent the minimum acceptable to ‘Big Navy’ opinion in each country.”

* *Economist*, “The Naval Accord” 21/9/29.

A leading newspaper of the American bourgeoisie expressed itself^c in equally clear language during the course of the conference: "It has been increasingly evident, as the Conference has proceeded, that whatever other agreements were eventually concluded, it was unlikely that there would be any actual reduction of present naval tonnage . . . The utmost, apparently, that is now to be expected of the Conference is that it may agree to some limitation of armaments, for a period, say, of five years, at the end of which time another Conference may be convened to attack the question of reduction."*

It is clear that not one of the bourgeois politicians who took part in the disarmament, even for a moment, took a single one of the pacifist phrases which they used, seriously. How often we have solemnly been assured that a war between England and America is "unthinkable." But when, during the course of the Conference, the American delegation put forward the demand that the U.S.A. should be allowed to build another warship of the most recent British type ("The Rodney"), the English press declared unanimously that such a demand was inadmissible, since it would mean that the number of cannon of the highest calibre carried by the American navy would be double the number carried by the British navy.† We are assured that a war is unthinkable, but both the ships and the cannon of the future enemy are carefully counted.

Throughout the whole of the Conference the British and American delegations have been manœuvring to achieve parity on paper and superiority in actual fact; all the delegations have been trying to thrust the responsibility for the breakdown of the Conference on to each other. For it is essential to maintain the pacifist deception, in order to convince the masses who, after the horrible suffering which they endured during the world war fear the possibility of another war, that their own particular government is anxious for peace and disarmament, but that the other governments are making peace and disarmament impossible.

An analysis of economic and foreign relations

will make it clear to every Marxist that the London Conference is doomed to failure. Only social fascists can manage to speak seriously of the disarmament of the imperialists.

Up to and during the world war, Britain did really rule the seas, supported by her extremely powerful navy (on the two-power standard). It mercilessly exploited its mastery of the sea during the war against all neutral states. Contrary to all international maritime regulations it declared the entire North Sea a blockaded area, forced ships of every nationality making for the North Sea to take their course along the east coast of England and to submit to an examination of their cargo; almost all commodities were declared contraband; under the war cry of "an uninterrupted journey," the cargoes of neutral ships, journeying between two neutral ports, which had broken, or might possibly have broken the journey at a German port, were declared contraband.* The United States which, by an extraordinarily rapid development, had far surpassed England in the economic sphere by the end of the last two decades, was unwilling after the war to submit to England's maritime supremacy. The Washington Conference was the first attempt, not wholly unsuccessful, on the part of the U.S.A. to compel England to accept parity at least as far as ships of the line were concerned. But the latest technical developments have made parity in only ships of the line an inadequate measure by which to abolish Britain's naval supremacy. This gave rise to the unsuccessful attempt to arrive at a naval agreement at Geneva in 1927. This was followed by the attempt to arrive at an Anglo-French naval alliance, made by the English Conservative Government, which would have assured Britain's naval superiority over the U.S.A. The American bourgeoisie answered with a tremendous programme of cruiser building, and England was faced by the alternative, either of making an agreement on further naval armaments on the basis of total naval parity, or of an open armaments competition, in which

* The following paragraph, taken from the official memorandum of the English Government to the Conference sounds sheer mockery to the rest of the world: "The policy of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom is to keep the highway of the seas open for trade and communication, and, in relation to the political state of the world, to take what steps are necessary to secure this." (Quoted in *The Times*, 8/2/30.)

* *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, 22/2/30, p. 1165.

† *The Times* of February 10th calculated that if the American proposals were accepted, the English fleet would possess 18 cannon of 16-inch calibre and America's number would be increased from 24 to 33.

America's economic superiority would assure to the U.S.A. the victory. Under this threat, the Anglo-French naval alliance was annulled; MacDonald took a trip to America and the comedy of "naval disarmament" began.

It would be senseless to deal in this article with the countless diplomatic manœuvres and shufflings indulged in by the five imperialist Powers represented at the Conference, both before and during the Conference. It is much more important to shed some light on their relative positions.

Anglo-American hostility is of paramount importance. The position of the United States can be summed up as follows: Economically, America is the top dog, and the times are in her favour. If, as both sides maintain, a war between England and America were actually impossible (this is one of the most barefaced lies spread by present-day diplomacy) then America would no doubt succeed in undermining the British world empire by making full use of her economic supremacy to subject to her own influence one by one the British colonies, as has already actually happened in the case of Canada, to thrust England entirely out of central and South America, to undermine England's positions in Asia, etc. The programme of the press lords—"Free Trade within the British Empire"—is in its essence an attempt to establish a defence against America's attack on the British Empire (and against the independence of the Dominions). War between the U.S.A. and England is inevitable, if the proletarian revolution does not break out beforehand, for otherwise the U.S.A. will break up the British Empire by peaceful means.

Considered from the strategical standpoint, America is very difficult to attack. Attack by means of invasion across the Atlantic Ocean is impossible in such a densely populated country possessing an excellently developed system of transport and an extraordinarily powerful industry; it is impossible even apart from the excellent coastal protection possessed by the United States. An attack from the Canadian frontier seems highly improbable; the Panama Canal has the most modern defences; the Central American States, including Mexico, are firmly controlled by the U.S.A. both in the economic and foreign policy spheres. As far as naval construction is concerned, it is obvious that

with her great wealth and her tremendous financial State resources, America will not be compelled to cut down naval expenditure for monetary reasons. On the other hand there are difficulties in the situation. Even if it is scarcely possible for America to be attacked on her own soil by England, the U.S.A. does not possess naval bases from which to attack England. Apart from the naval bases on her own territory and in the Carribean Sea, America has only one modern naval base in the Pacific Ocean. Furthermore, the United States has only an inconsiderable merchant service and is not therefore in a position, in the event of war, to get the required number of auxiliary cruisers by transforming her merchant ships. Closely connected with this is the deficiency of trained naval officers and men, which is a great obstacle in the way of the rapid development of the American navy. The American shipbuilding industry, it is true, is capable of turning out warships quickly, but without the necessary training in the merchant service, the selection of the necessary human equipment for the new fleet is a problem it is very difficult to solve.

The position of the British Empire is different. Its various ports are scattered over the world at great distances from the mother country. The distance to India, the centre of the British Colonial Empire, runs into thousands of miles and the way lies between foreign coasts. England herself, because of the most recent developments in military technique, has lost the advantage of an insular position as against France and Belgium, although not as against America. This means that the strategical position of England in a future war will be utterly different from what it was in the past. The British bourgeoisie, in its century-old imperialist policy, has always taken the scattered nature of the Empire into consideration by establishing naval bases and military strongholds along all the important ocean and sea routes. The most important chain stretches across Gibraltar, Malta, Suez and Aden to India, which is also protected from the east by Singapore, the largest military harbour in the world. In addition, England possesses the largest merchant service in the world, with a number of potential auxiliary cruisers running into hundreds; the speed of the merchant ships is equal to that of the cruisers, and when they were built it was

arranged, in consultation with the British naval administration, that they should be capable of carrying cannon and of being transformed into auxiliary cruisers whose fighting strength should not be inferior to that of the smaller type of cruisers. Moreover, the highly developed merchant service affords the possibility of recruiting, if necessary, the best officers and men for the navy.

The differences in their strategical world position make the establishment of parity between England and America an insoluble problem. The lack of naval bases makes it necessary for America to have large cruisers, and large naval units in general, with a big radius of action, for the struggle against England. For America, too, only such warships—destroyers and cruisers—are of real value as are decisively superior in guns to the auxiliary cruisers which can be easily obtained from the British merchant service in the event of war.

Parity with England can only be real parity as far as the United States is concerned, in the event of war, if England is deprived of the possibility of achieving superiority over the American fleet by making alliances with other naval Powers. Parity, we can see, is not merely a technical armaments question, but equally a problem of political alliances. This circumstance greatly diminishes the possibility of an agreement between England and America on the regulation of further naval construction because, to achieve this object, it would be necessary to have not only a technical military agreement, but also a political agreement at least among the five great naval Powers which signed the Washington Agreement.

Of the three other Powers concerned, Japan is essentially a Far-Eastern Power. In contrast to England, its insular position, its fortresses and good submarine equipment, make it very difficult to attack on its own soil, but its Chinese colonial possessions, without which Japan's imperialist development would be rendered impossible, must be very carefully guarded. At the present moment, so long as there is no immediate threat of the occupation of China, or of important parts of China in which Japan is interested, by England or America, an agreement between Japan and the Anglo-Saxon Powers seems to encounter fewer difficulties than an agreement between England and America.

The strategical position of France is much more complicated. At the present time France is the greatest military Power in Europe. She possesses a large colonial empire. The maintenance of contact with that empire, particularly with North Africa, is absolutely essential for France in the event of a war with Germany, which she has never ceased to fear; for with France's stationary population, and the rapid increase in the German population, Germany will probably, in the not very distant future, possess a population twice as large as that of France. The maintenance of contact with the African colonies is therefore essential for the French to be able successfully to defend the mother country. France, the victor in the last war, has always been dissatisfied with the outcome of the Washington Conference.

" . . . the French tonnage figures, large as they are, represent also a determination on the part of France to recover the relative position in naval strength of which it has always felt that the Washington Conference deprived it. It has been galling to French national pride to realise that, as a result of the Washington Agreement, France ranks as a naval Power below Japan, and the great personal popularity of M. Briand has not won him forgiveness for his lack of diplomatic skill at the Washington parley.*"

This explains the negative attitude which France has consistently adopted towards the idea of the London Conference; she has taken part in it while continually emphasising that it should be regarded as nothing more than preparatory work for a disarmament conference under the auspices of the League of Nations†. It explains also the indignation expressed because England and America, without previous consultation or discussion with France, published their respective naval programmes‡ and, finally, it explains the demand put forward by France

* *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, 22/2/30.

† Here is one of many examples: "Actually the present naval Conference should only discuss the methods of cutting down naval armaments and not the tonnage figures themselves. It would be more reasonable to postpone this latter question for the Geneva Preparatory Commission and the projected general disarmament conference, for land, sea and air disarmament are parts of one and the same problem, and can only be solved as one."—*Le Temps*, 3/2/30.

‡ Tardieu is reported to have asked MacDonald, in connection with this question: "Is this a conference of five Powers, or of four, or three, or two?" (*Financial and Commercial Chronicle*, 15/2/30.)

for a total tonnage of more than 700,000 tons, which would bring France's naval strength practically up to the level of Japan and would render worthless any agreement of the three chief Powers—the U.S.A., England and Japan—on the basis of the proportions agreed upon at Washington—5.5 : 3.75. France's great military strength on the European continent, her strategical position as against England, her superiority in submarines and in the air force, over the rival Powers, made it possible for French imperialism to regard with equanimity the breakdown of the London Conference.

Italian policy at the Conference made it still easier for France to adopt this attitude. Italy put forward the claim that it would agree to any reduction in its navy, however large, on condition of parity with the strongest navy of the European continent—that is, with France. The agreements employed on this question against each other by France and Italy bear witness to the irreconcilable contradictions between the imperialist Powers. In rejecting the Italian demand for naval equality, France—as the *Economist* of 15.3.30 correctly points out—uses the same argument as is used by England in support of her claim for a greater cruiser strength than America. France argues that, besides having to defend her Mediterranean coast, she has also an Atlantic Coast and the coasts of her colonies to defend, and contact to maintain with her colonial possessions scattered over the continents of the world. Parity with Italy—according to France—would leave France at the mercy of Italy in the Mediterranean Sea :

“It will be seen that the technical problems of Franco-Italian and Anglo-American naval parity are remarkably similar. Unfortunately, the political backgrounds are not equally so ; for, as between France and Italy, nobody can venture to assert that war is ‘unthinkable.’”

Attempts by England and America to exercise pressure on Italy to withdraw her claim to parity with France have so far been unsuccessful, and France has won the desired opportunity of putting the blame for the breakdown of the Five-Power Conference on to Italy. The fascist government of Italy, which for years past has been openly demanding a redivision of the world which shall take into greater account the “vital necessities” of rapidly developing Italian

industry—the fascist government, which entirely ignores public opinion, can, it is true, bear the blame for the failure of the Conference much more easily than the Governments of those countries where the bourgeoisie still rules partly by democratic-parliamentary means. And, in parenthesis, just as the English Press publicly admits the possibility of war between France and Italy, so the French and Italian Press, just as publicly and with equal justification, question the truth of Anglo-American pacifist talk, which declares that war between the two Anglo-Saxon Powers is impossible.

These are the principal imperialist contradictions which made a Five-Power agreement in London impossible. It is not only the political fact that a military alliance between England or America and one or another of the naval Powers can make the naval parity established after so many efforts politically valueless, but the establishment of parity itself is made an extremely difficult and complicated question by the extraordinarily rapid progress in military technique. There are a great number of unknown factors which should be taken into account in establishing parity or fixing relative naval strength, but which cannot be taken into account. Firstly, there is the problem of the present strength of submarines as a weapon of warfare compared with destroyers and cruisers. England, who hopes, if parity is established with America in destroyers and cruisers, to maintain her supremacy on the surface of the sea, in the event of war, with the help of the auxiliary cruisers drawn from her merchant service, has suggested that submarines should be altogether abolished. France and Japan decisively rejected this proposal, claiming that submarines were the best form of defence available to poorer and weaker nations—a claim which, by the way, is glaringly and completely fatal, since submarines are weapons of attack, not of defence. America, which would apparently have agreed to the British proposal, retreated before the resistance of France and Japan. The hypocritical humanitarian argument employed by England, that the use of submarines should be forbidden because the crew of a ship sunk by a submarine cannot be rescued, was answered by France with a derisive reference to the fact that warfare always involves the loss of human life.

During the Conference, the English spread

the rumour that their warships were protected from submarine attack by a new discovery,* a contention which found no belief in French circles, which regarded it merely as a manœuvre. In short—there is a great deal of uncertainty as to the real value of submarines in the coming war as compared with destroyers and cruisers, the more so as, at the present time, France is building giant submarines with a tonnage of 3,000, which makes them, not submarines, but small cruisers travelling under the surface of the sea.

The same uncertainty prevails as to the relative fighting value of the warships, bound to the surface of the sea, and aircraft, which has been highly perfected in every respect since the end of the war. A further unknown factor is the "pocket dreadnought" built by Germany, a cruiser which has attained to the maximum speed and fighting value by the utilisation of all the latest technical achievements and which can, if necessary, do battle with a destroyer. The French consider this new German type of warship so dangerous that they are already planning to build a number of special warships designed for fighting the new German model.

This uncertainty as to the fighting value of the different categories of warships has induced France to reject proposals for limiting the navy according to the different categories and to put forward the demand for "global tonnage" within whose limites a free choice can be exercised as to the different categories. It also explains the origin of the clause in the official American proposals, according to which "in order to insure exact equality of opportunity, each country (England and America) should have the option of duplicating exactly the cruiser fleet of the other."† that is, England has the right to build a few large cruisers corresponding to the American type and America has the right to build a larger number of small cruisers, as is the intention of England at the present.

* For example, the *Daily News* wrote on 12th February: "In general, the danger to be feared from submarines is inclined to be over-estimated both by official circles and by public opinion. Actually the submarine is in decline; it passed the apex of its usefulness in warfare, and it would be better to abolish it. And if we are to abolish the relatively harmless submarine, why not the relatively useless big battleships?" (retranslated). An English admiral also maintained at the Conference that Britain's large battleships were protected against submarine attack by a new discovery.

† *Times*, 7/2/30.

Apart from the insuperable imperialist contradictions which made agreement in London impossible, these technical considerations played a less important, but still a significant, part.

Although the London Conference is still formally in session, its failure is already predictable. On 21st February *Le Temps* wrote: "There is no unity on any one of the points among the three chief Powers; no agreement has been reached as to the objective which can be immediately attained."

France's proposal to agree to parity with Italy if England and America conclude a "Locarno pact for the Mediterranean," i.e., if they assure to France their military protection against a possible Italian attack from the sea, means the actual end of all possibility of agreement, for it was obvious to all that England and America would never consent to such a proposal. Briand's declaration, after America's refusal to take part in any political agreement, and MacDonald's unambiguous statement against "military alliances," indicate, it is generally agreed, the end of the Conference. A few of the Paris newspapers are already composing its epitaph. They are, perhaps, somewhat premature, but it is no secret that negotiations have reached a crisis which, according to *The Times* of 13:3:30, may prove to be fatal.

It is not only that no disarmament whatever has been agreed upon—that, as we said at the beginning of this article, was never seriously intended—but that the organised limitation of further armaments has been unsuccessful. The real collapse of the Conference will no doubt be disguised by some sort of elastic formula, such as continuing the work of the Conference in the general League of Nations disarmament conference. The latest proposal of this kind was made at a conference between MacDonald and the Italian delegate Grandi, according to which the solution of the question of relations between the French and Italian navies shall be postponed for six months, while the three chief Powers work out an agreement between themselves, which, after the lapse of the six months, during which France and Italy have reached an agreement, should be extended at a new conference to a Five-Power treaty.* This, of course, indicates the actual failure of the Conference, for a Three-Power agreement, which does not include

* *Times*, 24/3/30.

France, is of little effect, Military and naval armaments will consequently be increased even more rapidly. It is absolutely essential to disguise the real failure of the Conference, because in the background of the London, as of every international conference, at the present time, stands the problem of fighting the Soviet Union. The impossibility of unanimity among the imperialists, which was clearly revealed at the Conference, urges them still more towards unity in regard to intervention in the U.S.S.R. which is actually the only matter on which the imperialists are agreed. Pacifist phrases must receive all due honour, in order not to open the eyes of the working population and to leave open the possibility of representing the carefully prepared attack on the Soviet Union as a war of defence forced upon the peace-loving capitalist states by the Soviet Union.

The breakdown of the Conference will also have important internal consequences. The English conservative Press, which has up to now dealt with MacDonald, in his capacity as peace-maker between England and America, not as a party man, but as the representative of the entire nation, is already asking why MacDonald did not take his trip to Washington via Paris, why, before he tried to reach an agreement with Hoover, he did not make sure of France's consent. And the English workers, who have so far refrained from energetically demanding the fulfilment of the promises contained in the Labour Party programme because of MacDonald's successes in foreign policy, will react against the Labour Government after the breakdown of the Conference.

On the other hand Hoover's position, which is in any case greatly weakened by the economic crises and particularly by the severe agrarian crisis, will be rendered still more insecure by the breakdown of the London Conference. The probability of a second Hoover presidency is becoming more and more remote.

The international economic crisis, which is ruining millions of small farmers and poor peasants, throwing millions of workers on to the streets, accentuating the contradictions between capital and labour, between monopolised and non-monopolised capital, between the industrial bourgeoisie and the landowners, and intensifying the struggle for markets to an extraordinary pitch—this international economic crisis is

leading to political crisis within the different capitalist countries; government crises, parliamentary crises, crises within the bourgeois parties, etc. The breakdown of the London Conference will further sharpen these contradictions. The character of the "third period" is becoming clearer and clearer. The idea of seeking a way out by war against the Soviet Union is making headway and taking more definite shape among the capitalists of all imperialist countries. The utmost vigilance and activity is required from the Communist Parties, particularly in the struggle against the imperialist preparations for war on the Soviet Union.

German Imperialism and the Preparation of the Anti-Soviet Offensive.

IMPERIALISM has started a big offensive against the Soviet Union. The characteristic feature of the present international situation is precisely that this spring has not been marked by the accustomed anti-soviet outbursts, but by *organised preparation for an organised anti-soviet offensive*. It is more than evident that the "moral" preparation of the anti-soviet offensive is already in full swing. The pope, the religious bodies of all sects and schools, the loud-mouthed pan-Europeans and the chatter-boxes of the League of the Rights of Man, social-fascists both of the Right and "Left" ilk—all these forces obedient to capital have been mobilised for a dastardly campaign against the Soviet Union. Religion is being employed with a new skill and a new shamelessness for the aims of the exploiting class.

But the "moral" preparation is merely the outward and most striking aspect of the anti-soviet work. One can say with full assurance that practical military preparations are proceeding no less energetically on the anti-soviet front. In publishing the sermons of the "holy fathers," the bourgeois press does not, of course, give any information as to the plans of the general staffs. But the various details which leak through into the newspapers, such as the supplying of Poland and Roumania with arms and ammunition, confirm that a serious military menace is arising on

the soviet frontiers. Whether this menace will assume the shape of an open military offensive in the form of intervention or in the shape of military diversions on the soviet frontier, it is difficult to foretell. The solution of that problem depends to a certain extent upon the mutual relations between the various capitalist governments.

IT should be borne in mind that the biggest imperialist Powers are showing great activity in bringing about the necessary international political pre-requisites for the anti-soviet offensive. The object of the imperialists is to create a situation such as would assure the participation of all capitalist groupings in a war against the U.S.S.R. From this point of view the work being undertaken to bring the *German bourgeoisie* into the anti-soviet front is of special interest. It is not, of course, a question of having to "persuade" the German capitalists to take action against the U.S.S.R. German neo-imperialism has just the same class nature as any other imperialist group. But the contradiction of interests existing between Germany (the country vanquished in the world-war) and the victors, the special position occupied by Germany as a debtor-state, numbering nearly all the big capitalist States of the world among its creditors—these causes demand certain preparatory work on the part of the anti-soviet forces in order to facilitate the open entry of Germany into the anti-soviet offensive at the right moment.

FRENCH imperialism, as is known, has long regarded the League of Nations as the European general headquarters in the fight with communism. It is, therefore, quite natural that as the anti-soviet wave grows, so this headquarters increases its work in preparing the League's apparatus and its international-juridical functions for the offensive against the U.S.S.R. That is precisely the aim of the recently concluded negotiations to co-ordinate the Kellogg Pact with the Constitution of the League of Nations. Both these treaties are thoroughly deceptive and hypocritical documents, serving as implements of pressure upon various countries in the interests of the imperialist robbers. The juridical chicanery engaged in by the Commission at Geneva, is characteristic in

that it should lead to further restriction of freedom of political manœuvring by the various governments at the moment when imperialism wants to start war. The Geneva Commission came to a decision the meaning of which is that the imperialist general staff in the form of the League of Nations Council, can declare a crusade against any State, if, according to this General Staff, such a State has infringed not merely the Constitution of the League of Nations, but even the Kellogg Pact. That is how they extend the juridical basis for the "shaping" of a war against the U.S.S.R., for making this war look like a "holy" League-of-Nations affair, and for the bringing of hesitating countries into the war.

It stands to reason, these juridical combinations cannot be of a decisive nature, but they are aimed at helping the various bourgeois Governments, in particular the German, to obtain an ideological basis for their support on the anti-soviet front.

THE German bourgeoisie knows very well that its participation in an anti-soviet action will be fairly highly valued on the imperialist money-market. Therefore, they are trying to get the highest possible price for their services. In France, England and Poland the development of events in this sphere is being very keenly watched. Not long ago there was even a special report made in the French Senate by a Senator who emphasised the "agreeable" circumstance that a turning point had been reached by the German Government in adopting the path of direct participation in the anti-soviet front. At the same time, the French Press keeps reiterating that only a further evolution by Germany in an anti-soviet direction will enable the German bourgeoisie to receive fresh morsels from the Versailles table.

It should be borne in mind that there are several factors impelling the German bourgeoisie to new steps in an anti-soviet direction. These factors are above all connected with the acceptance of the Young Plan.

In the sphere of Germany's foreign policy one must first of all take into consideration that Germany will become more and more dependent upon foreign finance-capital. It is absolutely indisputable that the transfer of reparations abroad in foreign currency is not possible from Germany's own currency reserves. Germany

has paid reparations by means of foreign credits, and in the future will also be compelled to obtain foreign loans. The matter is obviously not limited to viewing foreign loans, as there is actually taking place a systematic sale of German undertakings to foreign, particularly American, capitalists.

AT the present time certain new processes are to be observed in that sphere. France is becoming much more active on the financial market than in the first years following the acceptance of the Dawes Plan. French capital is energetically cutting itself a path into German national economy. An increasing struggle between French and American finance-capital is apparent. This struggle particularly concerns the furnishing of credit to Germany. This fact must be taken specially into account when analysing German foreign policy. With the strengthening of the French capitalist position in Germany, French imperialism gains increased opportunities for exerting pressure on the German bourgeoisie for the purpose of drawing Germany into the anti-soviet front.

The resignation of the former Reichsbank president, Schacht, also means facilitating the penetration of French capital into German national economy. During the whole period of his activity Schacht was in close collaboration with the director of the American emission banks. On drawing up the constitution of the International Settlements Bank, Schacht did not conceal the fact that he was co-ordinating his steps with American capital. It is curious that Schacht gave as the motive for his resignation, in particular, the appointment of a French banker as director in chief of the International Bank. Schacht's resignation, no matter how varied be its causes, also signified the increased influence of French banking capital on German industry. A strengthening of the position of those German circles which have long been striving to form a Franco-German anti-soviet bloc, is undoubtedly to be expected.

In Germany's internal policy the Young Plan is naturally causing a new attack of the bourgeoisie on the economic interests of the proletariat. The acceptance of the Dawes Plan, at the time, led to the carrying out of a financial reform which considerably redistributed the system of taxation. After the acceptance of the

Dawes Plan, mass taxes increased from 49 per cent. to 74 per cent. in the German budget. An analogous reform has been prepared and already partly carried out in connection with the acceptance of the Young Plan. The so-called financial compromise should increase the German budget income by 475,000,000 marks. Of this sum it is proposed to receive 320,000,000 marks in the most direct manner by increasing the tax burden on the toilers and by increasing the prices on articles of prime necessity—in other words, by lowering real wages.

THE German bourgeoisie, however, is undertaking far bigger tasks. *Der Deutsche Volkswirt*, a journal closely connected with big financial circles, in the March 7th issue, points out that the following three tasks have now to be solved: Aid in the creation of new capital, lowering of state expenditure, reform of unemployment insurance. If we briefly decipher these three objects it is easy to see the class substance of the new economic plans of the German bourgeoisie. New capital is to be facilitated, first by lowering the property taxes and taxes on profit, and secondly by decreasing wages and accentuating the direct exploitation of the proletariat. It is proposed to bring about the decrease in state expenditure mainly by decreasing the so-called social expenses. It is also proposed considerably to curtail municipal expenditure by augmenting the payments due from the broad strata of the population (rent, gas, electricity, etc.). The reform of unemployment insurance needs no explanation: that simply means depriving the larger part of Germany's three million unemployed army of any state benefit.

It is sufficient to enumerate the aims projected by the German bourgeoisie since the acceptance of the Young Plan to understand what a serious sharpening of class struggles must be caused by the putting of this programme into effect. The bourgeoisie is combining its economic offensive on the German proletariat with a political terror and strong reinforcement of the police apparatus. They are preparing the most serious political blows against the vanguard of the German proletariat, the Communist Party. The social-fascists at the head of the Prussian police are executing the urgent and most important work of their masters when, with

untiring energy, and applauded by the whole bourgeois camp, they "train" the police in bloody collisions and street fights with the proletariat.

IT goes without saying that the growing class struggles will at the same time mean an increase in the revolutionary mood of the working-class and increased activity and growing popularity of the Communist Party. The enemies of the proletariat are taking this fully into account. The two German parties still receiving working-class votes—the social-democrats and the Centre—are definitely menaced with loss of support amongst the proletariat. These two parties are already showing signs of great alarm, are trying hysterically to preserve their influence, competing with one another and also acting jointly with particular venom and hatred against the Communist Party.

This struggle against the revolutionary proletariat is the main cause of the increased anti-soviet campaign in Germany. *The campaign against the U.S.S.R., combined with the savage attacks on the Communist Party, arises directly out of the political situation now obtaining in Germany.* The present anti-soviet campaign in Germany is neither a chance episode nor a temporary manœuvre. The hatred of the U.S.S.R., the endeavours to break down Soviet-German relations, are inevitable elements of the serious class struggle taking place and developing in Germany, in a situation of increasing economic crisis, of the bourgeois offensive on the working-class, and of growing revolutionary moods among the latter. The accentuation of class antagonisms in Germany means bringing Germany more rapidly into the anti-soviet front.

THAT the German social-fascists and influential business circles are becoming more and more hostile to the soviets is seen not only from the monstrous newspaper campaign, but also in the definite demands as to foreign policy. German social-democracy, knowing no bounds in its treachery and vileness, has opened a violent campaign not merely of slander against the Soviet Union, but in favour of an actual rupture of relations with the U.S.S.R. We have already pointed out that the campaign of the social-fascists has been dictated also by serious internal-political considerations.

The growing revolutionary mood of the working-class, the profound discontent existing among the broad masses in regard to the treacherous policy of the social-democratic government, the increased influence of the Communist Party, the soaring unemployment and worsening of the economic crisis—all these factors are compelling the social-fascists to fight with their last grain of strength against the Socialist Republic, against communism. It was indeed the social-fascist Press, as represented by *Presse Dienst*, the official organ of the social democratic party, which first launched the slogan for a rupture of the Soviet-German treaties—to be followed, obviously, by a rupture of relations. One could cite innumerable examples of the disgusting anti-soviet hue and cry of the social-democratic Press. But most significant of all is the fact that the leading social-fascist organs are already advancing *definite anti-soviet political demands*. The provocative nature of this activity was displayed quite recently when the same *Presse Dienst* diffused false information alleging that the German government had uttered a special warning to the soviet government *à propos* the activity of the Comintern. The German government had taken no such step, but the social-fascists have already thrown out the hint for it to take such measures. Thus, social-fascism runs ahead, and draws up for German imperialism a programme of further activities against the U.S.S.R. German social-fascism openly calls on the German government to follow the example of the most aggressive capitalist forces in Europe—the English die-hards and the French chauvinists.

THE revolutionary activity of the German Communist Party in connection with these moves against the U.S.S.R. is not only an object of vicious attacks by the social-fascist press, but also of the usual questions in the German Reichstag. These questions are dictated not only by internal-political considerations, but also by the interests of those German capitalist groups which are particularly incensed at the successes of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. That is partly the reason why it was precisely the Democratic Party, connected with commercial capitalist interests and in close contact with the Social-Democratic Party, that introduced into the reichstag the

interpellation about the responsibility of the soviet government for the growing influence of the C.P. in Germany. Could one wish for further proof that the anti-soviet front is being extended to include Germany, than the fact that the same provocative attacks against the U.S.S.R. have commenced in the German reichstag as have already been made for several years in the British parliament? A further question has been raised in the reichstag—also on a favourite theme of the die-hard conservatives—the question of the Christian Nationalists as to “religious persecution” in the U.S.S.R.

The anti-soviet campaign is being conducted on an all-European scale, in accordance with a single plan and pattern. The working-class of the entire world can now plainly perceive this direct preparation for war against the U.S.S.R. The task of the Communist Parties, now more than at any other time, is to expose energetically the interventionist plans of the imperialists and to organise and lead the working-class movement *against* war.

THE German bourgeoisie is not merely restricting itself to a revision of its own relations with the U.S.S.R. The German government is at the same time changing the nature of its relations with the country that represents the advance-guard of imperialism in the anti-soviet fight, viz., fascist Poland. The Polish-German liquidation treaty introduced into the reichstag really represents the liquidation of the post-war policy of the German bourgeoisie in Eastern Europe. This treaty is nothing else but a manifestation of the preparedness of German capitalism to renounce certain of its aims in regard to Poland, for the sake of the joint Polish-German struggle, for the common class interests of the bourgeoisie of these countries, for the isolation of the Soviet Union. The political meaning of the German concessions in connection with the Polish-German financial agreement is that at the present time the German bourgeoisie is abandoning the struggle for the position of German capital in the regions previously German, and annexed by Poland after the war. The claims for compensation for losses on property taken from German citizens by the Polish authorities, and the opposition to further liquidation of German properties in Poland, had been an important

issue in the purely economic struggle between German and Polish capital in Silesia, Posen and other regions. As a result of the Germano-Polish agreement, the German bourgeoisie relinquishes, not all, but very substantial positions in this sphere. Following the German positions in this sphere. Following the Germano-Polish financial agreement came a commercial treaty between Germany and Poland. Agreement has been reached on such contentious questions as the importation into Germany of Polish coal and Polish pigs. A Polish-German syndicate for trading in rye has also been formed. The German agrarians are making sacrifices which formerly could never be wrenched from them; the German and Polish bourgeoisies have reached a compromise such as they never could formerly achieve. There can be no doubt whatever that, irrespective of the various economic causes, the main determining factor in the Germano-Polish rapprochement is the preparation of the attack on the U.S.S.R. We have already pointed out above that the biggest imperialist Powers are already energetically engaged in creating the needed international political pre-requisites for the anti-soviet offensive. The Polish-German rapprochement which has come about with the active support of France and Great Britain, is one of the important elements of this widespread anti-soviet political strategy.

THERE is yet another reason for the increasing anti-soviet moves in Germany, a reason that lies directly in the sphere of Soviet-German relations. In resorting to the policy of Rapallo and of peaceful relations with the U.S.S.R., the German bourgeoisie had reckoned on strengthening its position on the soviet market, outpacing its competitors and securing the exploitation of soviet national economy. These hopes have not been borne out. The soviet market has remained independent, and the Soviet Union is organising its economic relations with the outer world as dictated by the interests of socialist construction. The New Economic Policy has turned out to be not an evolution towards capitalism, as the enemies of the proletariat had hoped, but a revolutionary manœuvre which will assure the further *advance* of socialism in the U.S.S.R. This has caused extreme consternation among

the German capitalists. Despite the fact that the industrialisation of the U.S.S.R. and the development of its national economy by no means excludes the possibility of trade with the Soviet Union (for the U.S.S.R. needs machinery for industrial construction) the German bourgeoisie, filled with class hatred, is rapidly moving into an anti-soviet position.

These sentiments of the German bourgeoisie coincide with the plans of the international monopolist groupings. Big international finance-capital, industrial concerns, are in turn convinced that it is impossible to subject themselves to the soviet market, even though very big deals can be concluded with soviet economic organs. But these deals are not brought off by the monopolistic capitalists, in spite of their dimensions and importance, because the soviet market does not assure them colonial super-profits. *At the soviet frontier the rule of imperialism ends.*

THEREFORE the carrying out of the Five-Year Plan and the collectivisation of agriculture leads to an ever-greater community of interests between Germany and international capitalism, when it is a question of the U.S.S.R. It is highly characteristic that the various anti-soviet measures of the German bourgeoisie are supported and often inspired by definite groups of international monopolist capital. The closing of the German market to soviet matches was, in particular, a result of the activity of the Swedish Match Trust. The plans for curtailing the importation of soviet oil into Germany were drawn up with the energetic collaboration of the international oil trusts. It is typical that even such concerns as the Standard Oil, which were ready to come to terms with the Soviet Oil Syndicate in respect of various markets, such as India, supports in Germany the fight to oust soviet oil. The anti-soviet work of one of the strongest political groupings of Western Germany, and of the new fascist Conservative Party, is receiving the energetic support of the monopolistic Franco-German potassium trust. Finally, the process of Germano-Polish rapprochement, as outlined above, is being accelerated under the pressure of international capitalist groups. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs was compelled to admit that the conclusion of the Germano-

Polish liquidation treaty, and the co-ordinating of this treaty with the Young Plan, took place, in particular, under pressure from Great Britain and other participants at the Hague Conference. On that occasion, France carried out her old policy, while the Labour government, under the flag of creating peace in Europe, fulfilled the strategic tasks of international capitalism. We must allude to one further detail: according to the information of the Polish press, the conclusion of the Polish-German commercial agreement was also accelerated under the pressure of the Swedish Match Trust.

THUS, even a review covering by no means all the channels along which the anti-soviet front is being prepared—an analysis confined almost exclusively to the German sector of this front, compels one definitely to record a most serious accentuation of the acuteness of the mutual relations between the Soviet Union and the surrounding capitalist world. The workers of the world must clearly recognise that the time is approaching for a decisive onslaught against the U.S.S.R., in order to wreck the victorious construction of socialism. The proletariat must be mobilised both in defence of the U.S.S.R. and in defence of its own class interests in the political struggle at home.

The Communist Parties, now doing their "spade work" in organising the masses for the growing revolutionary advance, must prepare the workers so that in the event of an open bourgeois attack on the country of proletarian dictatorship, they will take equally open and decisive action both against the fascist dictatorship at home and in defence of the U.S.S.R.

The Policy of the C.P.S.U. in the Villages

M. GOLENDO

I. THE LESSONS OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

THE Soviet system of national economy, in the comparatively few years of its existence, has shown tremendous advantages in the utilisation of the forces of production. These advantages are due to the absence of non-productive expenditure, which is inseparable from the anarchic and unorgan-

ised system of capitalist economy, to the absence of a parasitic bourgeois class and to the great possibilities of raising the material and particularly the cultural level of the working masses.

It is therefore only under the Soviet system of national economy that it is possible to put forward in the U.S.S.R., with its low technical level, such a magnificent goal for the growth of productive forces as it set down in the Five Year Plan for the development of national economy, now famous throughout the whole world. Under the Five Year Plan the national revenue will be doubled, the gross production of industry almost tripled and the production of rural economy increased by nearly 60 per cent. This tremendous growth in the national economy, of course, appeared fantastic and impracticable to bourgeois economists. They could not imagine that in a backward country, with a comparatively uncultured population, faced by the hostility of the whole capitalist world, it was possible, on the basis of its own internal resources, to develop in the space of five years a rate of progress unknown in the whole history of capitalist economy within the space of many decades of its development.

The Five Year Plan of national economy, besides providing for great industrial changes, foresees even greater changes in the sphere of rural economy, on the basis of which great social advances are made possible. Under the plan it was calculated that about 15 per cent. of all peasant holdings would be amalgamated into collective farms and that the area under cultivation covered by the collective sector and the Soviet farms would occupy about 20 per cent. of the entire area under cultivation. But, as the collective sector of agriculture gives incomparably better results and bigger harvests than individual economy, the same 20 per cent. of the area cultivated will supply about 50 per cent. of the grain produced for the market. According to the plan 90 per cent. of the rest of the peasant holdings which have not yet introduced the collective method into any of the processes of production, will be amalgamated into producers' co-operatives.

The increase in the productive forces of national economy laid down in the Five Year

Plan, all the profound social changes which are to take place in the national economy, are dependent upon the extensive technical reconstruction of the national economy, and particularly of agriculture, foreseen by the plan. The eighteen months which have passed since the inauguration of the plan have given us sufficient material on the basis of which to examine, in actual practice, the methods and rate of development laid down in the plan. The results of the first economic year of the plan, 1928-29, show that the aims put forward in the plan relating to the growth of productive forces and Socialist construction will not only be fulfilled, but exceeded. The increase of 17 per cent. in the gross production of industry stipulated in the plan for the first year, amounted actually to 22 per cent., and that of heavy industry to 24 per cent. Not only were the plans of industrial production fulfilled but, what is more important, the programme of capital construction was carried out, and this will ensure the growth of productive forces, the growth of the national economy in the forthcoming years during which the Five Year Plan will be realised.

If, however, the objects of the plan were surpassed in regard to industry, transport, etc., in the sphere of agriculture the object aimed at was not reached. Total gross production showed an increase of 2.7 per cent. against the 8.4 per cent. laid down in the plan. This is a very real setback. But it would be wholly incorrect to arrive at an estimation of the extent to which the Five Year Plan has been carried out in the sphere of rural economy, without differentiating between its different sectors; if we examine the achievements won on the different sectors of the agricultural front we shall see that the Socialist sector made great advances which even outshine the successes won in Socialist industry. The area cultivated by Soviet farms increased by 28 per cent., against an increase of 20 per cent. laid down in the plan, while the increase in the area under collective cultivation increased by 307 per cent., against the 214 per cent. laid down in the plan. On 1st October, 1929, the Socialist sector of rural economy occupied about 5.6 per cent. of the total area under cultivation and produced about 20 per cent. of the grain intended for the market.

But the progress made in the Socialist sector of rural economy during the first year of the Five Year Plan is measured, not only and not so much by its quantitative extent, as by its quality. During the first year of the plan we were able to build gigantic grain "factories" which, in their individual extent and in their general development, far surpass anything that has ever been witnessed on the stage of universal economic history. The greatest contemporary capitalist country—the United States of America—has no more than fifteen farms whose area exceeds 15,000 hectares. In the economic year 1927-28 there were about fifty-five "grain factories" working in the Soviet Union, the average area covered by each being 50 to 60 thousand hectares, while the largest were working 100 to 150 thousand hectares. These have now been completely mechanised, and draught cattle or horses are no longer being used on them in any branch of agriculture.

The establishment of large cattle farms has also made great progress; these are mainly devoted to sheep rearing and to cattle intended for consumption. In 1927-28 there were about 55 such farms, with a total of about one million sheep, the wool being of a very high quality. Another 25 such farms have now been started, which would add another 150,000 sheep to the total.

Large scale State economy, built on a unified plan, on a single standard, utilising the most recent technical achievements, maps out the road along which the large collective farms are developing, and will develop in the future. The establishment of these large grain factories has already played a big part in the development of collective farms. In the first year of the Five Year Plan collective farms more than doubled in number, each farm covering an area of 100 to 200 hectares, and each including 30 to 40 farms. Although the average collective farm is comparatively small, there are about 1,000 large collective farms (each with more than 10,000 hectares under cultivation) which are almost as large as the grain factories. The extension of the collective farms took place on the basis of increasing mechanisation. Over the collective farms as a whole, thirty per cent. of the total power used was mechanical power; in the big collec-

tive farms the percentage was eighty and ninety. This improved technical basis made it possible to demonstrate the great economic advantages possessed by large over small scale agriculture. In the big farms, the yield is two or three times as great as in the small farms. This fact made the collective farms tremendously attractive to thousands and millions of middle peasants and in itself eliminated the economic authority of the kulak.

The growth of collective farms occurred mostly in districts producing grain. This can be easily understood, for grain cultivation is simplest in the nature of its processes of production and can be most easily mechanised. The successful management of mechanised collective farming in the grain areas brought about a great change in the attitude of millions of poor and middle peasants towards collective agriculture. By the 1st October, 1929, there were more than one million peasant holdings amalgamated into collective farms, covering altogether about six million hectares; the rate at which the peasants entered the collective farms increased very rapidly towards the end of the economic year. Numbers of middle peasants poured into the collective farms, peasants who had hitherto held back cautiously from the collective movement, trying to assure themselves, by experience, of the economic stability of the collective farms which had until then been composed almost entirely of poor peasants.

The collective movement developed, of course, with the active assistance of the proletarian State, which supplied material means and organisational forces. Nor could it have been otherwise. The State, under the leadership of the Communist Party, aiming at the construction of a Socialist society, should support, and must support by every means at its disposal, the beginning of that new society.

2. THE PLAN FOR THE SOCIALIST RECONSTRUCTION OF THE VILLAGE IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN.

The progress which was made in the fulfilment of the Five Year Plan for the development of national economy, particularly in the sphere of the Socialist reconstruction of the village, induced the Party to re-formulate its objectives and to revise the Five Year Plan in

several respects. As the goal marked out for the development of industry was surpassed, we have at our disposal additional resources and greater possibilities for the general development of national economy and particularly for the technical reconstruction of the village. The fact that it was precisely in heavy industry, producing the means of production for the whole of the national economy, including agriculture, that the greatest progress was noticeable, confronted the Party and the Soviet power with the question of the greater development of those branches of industry serving the countryside, of greater concentration on industry as it affects rural production.

The meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R., which was held in December, 1929, and January, 1930, received a report from the Supreme Economic Council on the revision of the Five Year Plan concerning the tractor and agricultural machinery industry. According to the first variant of the Five Year Plan, the production of tractors would be developed to such an extent that at the end of the five year period the Soviet industry could supply 90,000 out of the total of 180,000 tractors required; the new variant of the plan provides for such an increase in the output of tractors that at the end of the five year period there will be about one million tractors at work on the fields of the Soviet Union. With this object in view, two new tractor factories were begun in 1929-30, besides the two already provided for; they will be finished within fifteen months from the date on which they were begun, and by 1931-32 each factory will be turning out 30,000 tractors annually. The factories to be built in 1930-31 will also be able to turn out 30,000 tractors each.

It was not only the programme of tractor production, but the entire programme of machinery production, which was revised. First of all we planned to build three factories for producing the combination agricultural machine; by the end of the plan these will be turning out about 100,000 machines. The whole programme of machine industry serving agriculture was thoroughly revised. The factories which were producing small implements used in agriculture when cattle and

horses supply the power, and the new factories which are being and will be built, are being reorganised in order to fit in with mechanical power. The total expenditure on the agricultural machinery industry will amount annually at the end of the Five Year Plan to about 1,100 million roubles.

This grandiose plan for the technical equipment of agriculture is not fantastic, just as the Five Year Plan as a whole (as the bourgeois world is now convinced) is not fantastic; this has been demonstrated by the brilliant results obtained in the first year. The tractor and "combination" factories now being built are a fact which cannot be ignored.

The necessity of turning, as it were, the whole industrial face of the Soviet Union towards rural economy arises from the general economic situation and the strategy of the Party at the present time. It was quite clear, in drawing up the plan, that we should experience great difficulties in carrying out the plan on the agricultural front. Agricultural production, scattered among 25 million small peasant holdings, would not keep pace with the development in the large scale, better organised, and better equipped Socialist industrial production, which is making such gigantic steps forward.

"Can our socialised industry continue to advance, can it increase its rate of development, with agriculture as it is at present, so scattered and divided, incapable of greater production? It is impossible. Is it possible, for any length of time, for the Soviet power and Socialist construction to be based upon two wholly different foundations — one, large and unified Socialist industry; the other, scattered and backward small scale rural economy? It is impossible. Such a state of affairs would one day result in the complete collapse of the entire national economy. What is the way out? It is to enlarge rural economy, to make it capable of producing a surplus, of extending its production and thereby strengthening the agricultural foundations of the national economy."*

This necessity of transforming agriculture was made particularly clear during the first year of the Five Year Plan, although at the

* Stalin: *Problems of Agricultural Policy in the U.S.S.R.*

same time that year showed that there are possibilities in this work of construction of which we did not even dream before. With the necessary technical equipment, there lie before us wholly unforeseen possibilities of utilising millions of hectares of waste land, of utilising all the vast natural resources of the Soviet Union; unforeseen possibilities in the rate of national economic development, giving us the opportunity to achieve, in the shortest possible time, the object we have set ourselves—to overtake and to surpass the greatest capitalist countries of the world.

In drawing up the plans for the second year of the Five Year Plan, the changes in the national economy which occurred during the first year were given careful consideration. In addition to the programme of tractor factory construction already mentioned, the plan for this second year provides for supplying agriculture with tractors—mainly imported—with a total horse-power of 400,000, and for an extension of the entire agricultural machinery industry to the value of 400 million roubles. The progress of Socialist construction in the first year provided the foundations for the projected increase in the area under cultivation by Soviet farms from 1.8 million hectares to almost 4 million hectares, the total amount of land being worked by these farms increasing to 15 million hectares. In addition to the general plan for developing Soviet farms, the plan provides for the establishment of 200 machinery and tractor stations, covering an area of about 5 million hectares, and for the further growth of the collective movement by the sowing of 15 million hectares.

Besides these quantitative programmes, the plan provides for greater qualitative improvements—an increase in the productivity of labour on large scale State farms of 30 per cent., rising in some cases to 70 per cent., and a decrease in the costs of production of 20 to 30 per cent. Under the plan, made in September, 1929, the large scale Socialist sector of agriculture should provide in the economic year 1929-30 about 50 per cent. of the total grain sold on the market. This rate of development in the Socialist sector necessitates changes in our agricultural policy, in the whole system of measures taken in favour of the Socialist sector. In its programme of

Socialist construction in the village, the plan, in anticipation of a more intense class struggle in the rural areas and of greater resistance on the part of capitalist elements to our programme of Socialist construction, has made the measures to be taken to suppress this resistance more severe than they were in the previous year.

Six months have passed since the control figures for 1929-30 were drawn up; in those six months reality itself has far surpassed the most optimistic expectations. We have had to change the original programme several times in the direction of the further quantitative and qualitative extension of our objectives in the sphere of the Socialist reconstruction of the village. In the Soviet Union at the present time economic and political life is so active, so dynamic, such tremendous economic and social changes occur in short spaces of time, that we find it difficult to keep pace with them and with their development in our calculations. This, of course, is not an objection against a planned economy—on the contrary, it is because our national economy proceeds along planned lines that we are enabled to attain this dizzy pace.

The development of collectivisation in village economy during the first months of 1929-30 showed that the original programme will certainly be exceeded. Consequently, in deciding the plans for the spring sowing campaign, the Government extended the proposed programme of collectivisation from 15 million hectares to 30-33 million; this represents the amalgamation into collectives of about 8 million peasant holdings.

Together with the revision of the programme for agricultural Socialist reconstruction, changes were made in the plans laid down for production; the one, indeed, made the other inevitable. At first the suggested increase in the area under seed was 8 per cent., this was raised to 11 per cent. and later to 15 per cent.

How, when collectivisation is proceeding so rapidly, is this increase in production possible? Because the rapid collectivisation of peasant holdings is taking place principally on the same technical basis which existed in the small peasant holdings. Although the equipment of agriculture with mechanical

power will be doubled in 1929-30, nevertheless the total amount of mechanical power used does not exceed 6 to 7 per cent. of all the power used.

Everything that has been said above as to the necessity for the technical reconstruction of agricultural production as the essential condition for the Socialist construction of the village, would seem to be in contradiction to the facts which we can observe at the present time, when such gigantic changes as the collectivisation of half our rural economy are taking place, to a large extent, on the old technical basis. This, however, is only a formal contradiction. Actually the connection between the new technical basis and the extent of collectivisation is very close. First of all, it would have been absolutely impossible for such great changes in the outlook, attitude and psychology of the small individual peasant to have taken place—changes in favour of the collectives—if they had not seen in living practice, the advantages of collective, technically well-equipped agriculture. The new technique is not a thing of the vaguely distant future, but of the immediately forthcoming years, in some cases of the next few months. And the Party is preparing the rural population to accept the new technique; the peasants are amalgamating into comparatively simple collectives—the *artels*—on the basis of the existing technique.

Primitive as it is, the present technique offers tremendous advantages if utilised collectively. It is sufficient to quote the following facts: In Soviet agriculture there are about 24 million horses employed on 120 million hectares of cultivated land; that is, each horse is responsible for about 5 hectares. With collective economy, on the other hand, each horse can be utilised, and is in fact actually being utilised, for 8-10 hectares of land under seed. Consequently, if all the horses now being used in individual peasant economy were to be managed collectively, it would be possible, other things remaining equal, to extend the area now being worked by 80 or 100 per cent.

The same applies to agricultural equipment. The utilisation of equipment is much more rational in large scale economy; with the same equipment, a much larger area can be cultivated. To this must be added that amalgamation into collectives makes it possible to

extend the area under cultivation for another reason also, because it does away with the hedges, ditches, etc., separating the individual holdings and promotes the cultivation of virgin soil, waste land and so on.

This fact that, even with the existing primitive technique, collectivisation offers the possibility of its greater and better utilisation, enables us to lay down objectives for agricultural production much greater than would be possible if individual holdings were in the great majority. This is by no means the last argument in the great number of arguments which persuade the individual peasants of the advantages possessed by large scale economy over small. If collective economy did not possess these advantages in the utilisation of existing peasant technique and equipment, we could not understand what is actually happening before our eyes at the present time, the amalgamation of millions of peasant holdings into collectives.

We have already stated that the progress of collectivisation has far exceeded our most optimistic expectations. According to the control figures, collectivisation at the end of the second year should have extended to 13-14 per cent. of the total number of peasant holdings; actually, on the 20th January, collective economy had already embraced 4,400,000 holdings, representing 21 per cent. of the total and 31.5 million hectares, under collective cultivation. Moreover, the rate of collectivisation is increasing rapidly. The following figures, relating to ten-day periods, give an indication of the growth of collectivisation:—

Date	No. of Coll. farms in thousands	No. of peasant holdings included, in millions	Percentage of total agric. organised in collectives	Hectares under coll. cultivation in millions
20.1.30	54.9	4.4	21.6	31.2
1.2.30	87.6	8.0	32.5	52.7
10.2.30	103.7	10.9	42.4	70.0
20.2.30	108.8	13.7	52.7	82.6
1.3.30	110.3	14.6	56.0	88.0
10.3.30	106.6	15.0	57.5	92.0

The period from the 10th March to the opening of the spring sowing campaign varies in the different districts of the Soviet Union from two to six weeks. The further growth of the collective farm movement in that period will be slowed down for many reasons, the princi-

pal one being the necessity, for some time before sowing begins, to organise the collective farms that have just been established, to strengthen the positions captured so that, in seeking for quantity, we may not lose sight of quality. In some places, thanks to the excess of zeal displayed in carrying through collectivisation, several peasants had begun to leave the collective farms. The Party has already put a stop to this sort of enthusiasm, and consequently the peasants are again streaming back into the collective farms. We are fully justified in saying that by the end of the spring sowing campaign more than half the total number of peasant holdings will be organised into collective farms.

In these months of the rapid growth of collective economy, the grain districts have taken the lead, while the other districts, where the technique and the cultural level of the population are both very low, have been left behind in the development of collectivisation. In some districts, such as the central Black Earth region, the lower Volga, the northern Caucasus and the Crimea, the percentage of collectivisation has reached 70 to 80.

3. THE LIQUIDATION OF THE KULAKS AS A CLASS

Collectivisation has become such a powerful economic and political factor that the Soviet Union is confronted with entirely new problems of an economic, and principally of a political character. The collectivisation of whole regions and economic areas raises, first of all, the question of class relations and the class struggle in the Soviet Union. "Daily, hourly and on a mass scale, small scale peasant production gives birth to capitalism." (Lenin.) So long as private property in the agricultural means of production still exists, so long as small scale individual economy still exists, the inevitable consequences are economic inequality, the increase of the wealth of some at the cost of the poverty of others, class struggle and the divided village, the growth of the kulaks.

From the very first days of the seizure of power by the proletariat, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has consistently carried on a struggle against capitalist elements in the village; this struggle has assumed different forms in accordance with

the different stages of economic policy. But one red thread has run unbrokenly through all our policy of struggle against capitalist elements in the village—this was to limit the growth of the capitalist elements, but not to destroy them. The village capitalists had their importance in the economy of our country. Many figures give evidence of the part played by the kulak elements in agricultural production, particularly in the cultivation of grain. One thing is indisputable, that in 1927-28, the kulak section of the village was responsible for from 18 to 25 per cent. of the total amount of grain put on the market. The large State and collective farms managed together to supply 9 to 10 per cent. Consequently at that time we could not put forward the objective of eliminating the kulak elements in the village because we were powerless, economically, to substitute for kulak production the production of State and collective farms. If we had made up our minds at that time to liquidate the kulaks as a class, we would have been faced with an acute economic crisis and a grave shortage in agricultural products. Therefore the policy of the Party and of the proletarian State was concentrated on the problem of limiting the growth of capitalist elements in the village. Now, however, our attitude towards these elements is wholly different.

The successes won in the sphere of the Socialist reconstruction of the village, the growth of Soviet and collective farms which together, at the beginning of the spring sowing campaign, covered more than half the total area under cultivation and produced more than three-quarters of the grain intended for the market, afford us the opportunity, in reality, of tackling the question of transforming large scale kulak production into large scale Socialist production. There the Central Committee of the Party, taking into account all these factors, arrived at the conclusion that "at the present moment we have the material basis for transforming large scale kulak production into large scale production carried on by collective farms, vigorously promoting the establishment of Socialist agriculture; not to speak of the Soviet farms, the growth of which considerably surpasses all our planned expectations. This circumstance, of decisive import-

ance for the entire national economy of the U.S.S.R., fully justifies the Party in going over, in its practical work, from the policy of limiting the growth of exploiting kulak elements, to the policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class.”*

The liquidation of the kulaks as a class is actually proceeding only in fully collectivised districts by the decisions made at a general meeting of all the members of the collective farms—of the poor and middle peasants who have joined the collective farms. All the means of production which are still in the hands of the kulaks are taken away, confiscated and given to the collective farms for collective utilisation, while the kulaks themselves are evicted from their homes and are given poor pieces of land with the minimum of equipment necessary for carrying on work there. The kulaks, of course, are debarred from entering the collective farms, even if they agree to hand over all their possessions voluntarily. We are compelled to refuse their entry into the collectives because of the experience gained in the establishment of collective farms in the past few years, because of our experience in all our work of Socialist construction.

During the last few years there have been very many instances of sabotage in all spheres of national economy. The G.P.U. discovered a number of counter-revolutionary organisations, composed, as a rule, of former owners of factories and mills and former landlords, whose object was to injure and to hinder Socialist construction. The kulaks, who, as capitalists, exploit the poor peasants working for them, and carry on a fierce struggle against the collectivisation of agriculture, do not shrink from any method of sabotage. They go as far as incendiarism, as killing members of the collective farms, not to speak of their frenzied agitation among and their bribery and corruption of the poor peasants who still work for them. When they were convinced of their inability to stop the collective movement, they disguised their real feelings and crawled into the collective farms, in order to break them down from within. They started an agitation in favour of selling off cattle and

seed cheaply before entering the collective farms, explaining that in any case the State would provide the collective farms with seed and live stock from its own resources. All these activities show that the kulaks must not on any account be admitted into the collective farms, and that collectivisation can be successfully carried through only if the kulaks, as a class, are eliminated in the wholly collectivised districts. This policy we are resolutely carrying out. The kulaks in the wholly collectivised districts, who are to be liquidated, can be divided into three categories: the most harmful of them—those actively fighting against collectivisation—are sent to remote parts of the Soviet Union, having been given the minimum means of production. This is done in order to isolate them and to deprive them of the possibility of committing acts of sabotage. The second section of kulaks are sent to other parts of the district or economic region in which they lived, but are given land of a poor quality; finally, the third section—the least harmful—are allowed to remain in their own village, but are also given the worst land.

The liquidation of the kulaks as a class in the wholly collectivised districts has aroused tremendous enthusiasm among the poor and middle peasants. We could not have achieved our success in the work of collectivisation if we had not started on this policy of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class. This policy, however, intensifies the class struggle in the village a hundredfold. It has aroused the utmost opposition and resistance from the capitalists of the village and the well-to-do sections nearest to them; this resistance is directed against all the steps we have taken and are taking to collectivise the village. The kulaks have been killing our workers, setting fire to collective farm property, breaking machines and doing everything in their power to put obstacles in the way of our work. The proletarian State, of course, has enough strength and means at its disposal to break down the resistance of the kulaks and to continue our offensive on the agricultural front.

The liquidation of the kulaks as a class is a matter of universal historical importance. It is clear to all that in the Soviet Union, which is led by the Communist Party, whose pro-

* *Pravda*, 6/1/30. Resolution of the C.E. of the C.P.S.U. on *The rate of collectivisation and measures to further the establishment of collective farms.*

gramme is the abolition of classes in general, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, classes will sooner or later be abolished, and the kulak class is the last and most numerous class of capitalist society. Our enemies believed that this would happen in the more or less distant future. The world bourgeoisie nourished the hope that the acceptance of capitalist elements into the national economy of the Soviet Union, and particularly the growth of the kulaks, would gradually lead to the transformation of the Soviet power, to the victory of the capitalist over the Socialist system. They did everything possible to bring this victory nearer. The international counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie set up secret organisations, whose object was to undermine the growth of Socialist economy and to assist the growth of capitalist economy. The world bourgeoisie hoped for the transformation of the Soviet Union and for its later downfall; they hoped for the restoration of the capitalist system, and the soil on which these expectations flourished was supplied by the kulaks.

Now the capitalists of the world are convinced, by objective facts, that their hopes are doomed to disappointment. The Soviet power is marching forward triumphantly along the road of Socialist construction; it has already begun to accomplish its objective of liquidating the kulaks as a class, that is, of destroying the most important foundation and support of all counter-revolution. That is why we can hear, from every corner of the capitalist world, the enraged howling of the bourgeois press; this explains the new pressure on the Soviet Union, the attempts at an economic blockade, the more energetic preparations for armed intervention.

4. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE PRODUCTION—THE SPRING SOWING CAMPAIGN.

The rapid growth of collective economy this past winter occurred mainly before the beginning of the spring sowing. More than half of all the peasant holdings organised into collective farms will carry out the spring sowing on a collective basis, that is, will begin collective production. That is why the spring sowing campaign this year is of the greatest political importance. Its success will

strengthen and help forward the further victory of the collectivisation movement.

Apart from its political importance, the spring sowing campaign this year is of great economic significance. We pointed out at the beginning of this article that in the first year of the Five Year Plan the programme laid down for agricultural production was not accomplished. This failure to fulfil our programme must be made up for in the present sowing campaign. Therefore, it is quite clear that the Party must devote the greatest attention to the question of the spring sowing campaign.

Our first objective in the organisation of the sowing campaign is the economic organisation of the collective farms, their transformation from formal amalgamations, formally accepting the decision to organise the individual holdings, into real large scale collective farms capable of successfully carrying out the spring sowing.

The first thing necessary is to make these collectives into real economic units. The number of collective farms, as can be seen from the table given above, increased from 59,000 on the 20th January to 110,000 on the 1st March and fell to 106,000 on the 10th March, although the number of peasant holdings included grew steadily, increasing from 74 in one collective on 20th January to 140 in one collective on the 10th March. In three months the collective farms doubled in size. The process of enlarging the collective farms will continue, although it must be remembered that the extent of collectivisation will vary in different districts of the Soviet Union. The average size of the collective farms in such districts as White Russia and the north-west is about 150 hectares; while in the lower and middle Volga it amounts to 10,000 hectares. During the spring sowing campaign we shall not be able to carry out fully the organisation of large scale Socialist economy in agriculture because of the lack of adequate organisational and technical forces. Consequently the extent of organised collectivisation will vary from district to district and from village to village in the same district. The size of the collective farm is determined mainly by the amount of land controlled by the village Soviet. The collective farm, as an economic unit, covers

the area of land controlled by the village Soviet as an administrative unit. These economic units, recently formed, had to organise the land during the winter in preparation for the spring sowing, otherwise it would have been impossible to begin the work, for no decision would have been made as to which part of the land was to be used for spring sowing, which for autumn sowing, etc. Therefore, the Government sent all its agricultural forces into the country for the work of dividing up the land in preparation for the spring sowing. According to figures for the 10th March, the division had been carried out on about 40 per cent. of all organised collective farms.

The most urgent and important question arising from the preparations for the spring sowing campaign was the collection of stocks of grain sufficient to fulfil the object laid down—that of sowing the land sown last year on the peasant holdings now organised into collectives, the land acquired from the kulaks and to increase the area under seed by 30 per cent. The peasants agreed comparatively easily to amalgamate the land and to collectivise cattle and implements, but the collectivisation of grain encountered rather great difficulties. This can be understood if we consider the fact that stocks of grain represent the circulating capital of peasant economy, gathered and accumulated by the peasants when they still carried on their work individually, and that this grain can be sold or concealed fairly easily. Having given the basic means of production—land, livestock and implements—to the collectives, the peasants wanted to keep in their own possession the grain gathered in from the previous harvest so that, once they had sold it on the market, they might have monetary resources of their own with which to manœuvre at their will. They hoped to get the necessary seed on credit obtained from the State. Obviously, no State resources can meet the full requirements of seed necessary for sowing about 60 to 65 million hectares of collective farm land. At the same time, collective farms without collective stores of grain would be a mere fiction, for they would be unable to carry out the first and most important of their productive tasks—the organisation of the spring sowing. That is why the Soviet Government laid particular stress on

the question of organising stores of grain and we can say at the present time that the problem has been solved with the utmost success, for on the 10th March the amount of grain held collectively equalled 105 per cent. of total requirements. In all probability, however, a division of this grain into the different crops will show that we have too much of one sort, and not enough of another sort, in comparison with the plan. The same discrepancy will be found to exist in the different districts. This presents us with a further organisational problem, involving the careful and correct distribution of the grain among the different districts and the correct distribution of the sowing of those crops of which we obtained more seed than was required under the plan. This is a problem with which it is much easier to deal, because the grain is now under organised control, it is in the hands of the collective farms, and with the State machinery of distribution working well, this work will be accomplished by the beginning of the spring sowing.

In carrying out collective activities with regard to cattle and livestock, fewer organisational and political difficulties are encountered, but the technical difficulties are greater. We have already pointed out that the peasants, when entering the collective farms, willingly agreed to give up their cattle. But the essential condition for effective and not merely formal collectivisation is the possession of communal cattle sheds and stables. It is quite clear that these communal cattle sheds, etc., could not spring into existence immediately, on the establishment of collective farms, and so at first we have to utilise the larger and better sheds belonging to the individual peasants and to distribute the horses in groups of 10, 15 and 30 in different stables, to collectivise fodder and to organise collective labour for taking care of the collective's animals. This has not been done everywhere, and the majority of the horses belonging to the collective farms are stabled by the individual peasants themselves, who also look after them. Only the horses' labour has been collectivised according to the plan; if the permission of the collective is obtained, the horses may also be used for the personal requirements of the members of the collective

farm. On 1st October, 1929, of the total number of cattle possessed by peasants organised into collective farms, 81 per cent. were collectivised, that is, the overwhelming majority. We cannot, however, hide the fact, where horses have been collectivised, the fodder resources at the disposal of the collectives do not always suffice, and there is a danger that in the forthcoming sowing campaign there will not be enough fodder for all the horses. On this question, as on that of collecting grain, we shall have to do a great deal of work in collectivising all fodder resources so that the spring sowing campaign shall not suffer.

The only means of production in which collectivisation has proceeded easily and without any difficulty was agricultural implements. As the collectivisation of peasant equipment proceeded, we realised that in the majority of districts where, with individual holdings, there was a deficiency in the simplest agricultural machinery, there would be a surplus of implements after collectivisation, and we were faced with a minor sort of crisis in getting rid of superfluous implements. We can understand this if we take into account the far greater productivity ensured by the collective utilisation of equipment of which we spoke above.

After collectivisation, after the organisation of the means of production formerly owned by individual peasants, our most important task was to organise and plan production during the spring sowing. Collective economy, by its very nature and independent of its extent, is planned economy. And even the most elementary form of collective village economy cannot exist or work without plans of production. In order to carry out the work of drawing up the plans, in order to help the millions of semi-literate and illiterate peasants to organise the new collective production in the villages, we are mobilising all our available political and technical forces from the town. As far back as the November Plenum of the Central Committee, it was decided to mobilise 25,000 of our best proletarians, who have spent many years in the factories and workshops and who possess organising and political experience, and to send them to undertake permanent work in the villages. In ad-

dition, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. decided to send to the villages about 5,000 workers who have been active in the town Soviets. Thousands of Party workers have been sent to help the collective farms during the spring sowing period. They represent the organisational and political forces responsible for all the organisational and political work in the villages. This, however, is not enough. The organisation of large scale economy demands skilled technical forces. Therefore, the State decided that 90 per cent. of all agricultural specialists should be transferred from the town to the villages for the two or three months of the spring sowing campaign. This will give us an additional ten to twelve thousand experts to help the collective farms in organising agricultural production and particularly in drawing up organised plans of production. In this way we shall have about 50,000 workers, possessing organisational, political and technical capacities, transferred from the towns to the villages for the period of the spring sowing. They represent a proletarian army which has passed through a hard school of revolutionary struggle, which possesses great political experience and which will also do agricultural and cultural work in the villages. This will strengthen the bonds between the working class and the peasantry; it will establish more firmly the leadership of the towns over the villages, of the proletariat over the peasantry.

5. POLITICAL DEVIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL LINE AND THE MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST THEM

From everything that has been said above we can obtain a picture of the gigantic changes which are taking place in the most fundamental social aspects of Soviet economy in a period which, historically speaking, is extremely short—only a few months. It would be a great mistake on our part to see nothing but the bright side of this work, nothing but the positive achievements. In our work of the Socialist reconstruction of the village, we must pitilessly expose the mistakes we make in carrying out collectivisation so that we may be able to correct them in time and in doing so, give both to ourselves and to the world proletariat, new experience.

At the Central Committee meeting held in January, which decided upon "the rate of collectivisation and State measures to promote the establishment of collective farms," a warning was issued to all Party organisations against any "decree-making from above" in the collective movement, for this involves the danger that real Socialist competition in the organisation of collective farms will be changed into a game of collectivisation. The C.C. foresaw the possibility of an excess of administrative zeal in the organisation of collective economy developing into formal collectivisation, into an unhealthy competition between different districts to finish collectivisation quickly, to arrive at the imaginary goal quickly, instead of making sure of the successes won and the positions captured. In spite of this warning, such mistakes were made.

The tremendous attraction exercised by the collective farm over the poor and middle peasants, who had been prepared by all the previous work of the Party, turned the heads of some of our comrades who, intoxicated by these successes, made a number of stupid mistakes. These were pointed out by Stalin in his article *Some Are Made Dizzy By Success* and in the C.C. resolution on *The Struggle Against Distortions of our Party Line in the Collective Movement*, published in *Pravda* on 15th March. This C.C. resolution enumerated the basic mistakes committed in the establishment of collective farms. First of all, the principle of voluntary entry into the collective farms was violated. In many districts compulsory entry into the collective farms, under the threat of deprivation of the vote and under the slogan of "fight the kulaks," was substituted for the voluntary principle. As a result the "kulaks" referred to often included middle and even poor peasants. There have been instances of very rough, shameful, indeed criminal treatment of the rural population by some Party workers who were, it is true, themselves in some cases the victims of provocation on the part of counter-revolutionary elements. In some districts, too, the necessary preparatory work for collectivisation, the patient explanation of the basis of the Party's policy towards the poor

and middle peasants, was replaced by bureaucratic, official decrees imposed from above; the statistics given were, of course, unreal, swollen figures. In some districts the extent of collectivisation increased, according to those figures, from 10 to 90 per cent. within the space of a few days. This is in complete contradiction to Lenin's teaching that the collective farms can only be strong and vital if they are established on a voluntary basis. The decision of the Sixteenth Party Conference on the inadmissibility of compulsory measures to establish collective farms, was also violated. The statutes for agricultural *artels*, ratified by the Council of People's Commissars and by the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R., in which it is clearly stated that "the agricultural workers, poor peasants and middle peasants of the village of ———, do voluntarily unite into an agricultural production co-operative (*artel*)," were violated. In some districts the compulsory collectivisation of dwellings, small livestock, poultry, etc., was carried out; this was very harmful for our policy, and was stopped immediately. These distortions of our line were connected with a stupid policy of "jumping" from the *artel* form of collective economy, which is the foundation of the collective movement, to the commune form, forgetting that the chief problem of agriculture in our country is not concerned with birds or cucumbers, but with grain. It is the agricultural *artel*, and not the commune, which at the present time forms the chief link, the basis of our agricultural policy, and consequently the Party found it necessary to draw up model statutes, not for communes, but for *artels*. As a result of these stupid mistakes, the collective farm has been discredited in many districts and the peasants have run away from these hastily established and therefore absolutely unstable communes and *artels*. Those who were responsible for the mistakes ignored the decision of the C.C. of the Party concerning the present importance of the *artel* as opposed to the commune, and the conclusion drawn therefrom that there must be no hasty and thoughtless transition from the *artel* to the commune form of collective agriculture. The same decision of the C.C. of the Party laid down the methods by which these mistakes in the prac-

tical application of the general political line can be corrected.

The collective farm centre of the U.S.S.R. drew up model statutes for agricultural artels, and these were approved by the People's Commissariat for Agriculture and ratified by the Council of People's Commissars and the Presidium of the C.E.C. of the U.S.S.R. These statutes are based, firstly, on the voluntary organisation of peasants into collective farms and, secondly, on the collectivisation of only the principal means of production—land, agricultural implements, draught cattle and cattle producing commodities for the market—and of stores of grain and fodder to the extent necessary for the maintenance of the collective farm and animals. Dwelling places and cattle used in home consumption for the peasant and his family must not be collectivised. The collectivisation of live stock used for home consumption was forbidden from the first because of the necessity of concentrating all the attention of the collective farms on the production of the principal agricultural commodities required for the towns. In this way the attention of the members will not be distracted from the collective farm to questions of production for home consumption. Moreover, the collectivisation of live stock, particularly of the small variety, used for home consumption, would encounter great difficulties among the more backward peasants, particularly the women. And frequent cases have occurred where a well-organised collective farm has fallen to pieces because of the compulsory measures adopted to collectivise such live stock.

We have no doubt whatever that in a year or eighteen months, when the collective farms will have put land management on its feet and when the peasants have been convinced by experience of the tremendous economy of labour effected by large scale collective economy, the peasants will themselves adopt the collectivisation of the cattle and live stock kept for their own needs as willingly and eagerly as they are now collectivising their fields. At the present moment our most important task is to make sure of the positions we have won, and this will enable us to continue to advance successfully. All deviations from the political line, besides doing grave

political injury, have resulted in great economic harm; for example, the attempt to collectivise the peasants' live stock encouraged the kulaks to agitate among the peasants in favour of slaughtering their cattle; consequently, we may expect some diminution in the number of cattle in the spring of 1930.

As we have already pointed out, the Party is fighting vigorously both against the "left" opportunists and against those who interpret the correction of deviations from the Party line as a retreat.

It would be childish to imagine that the great social changes which are taking place in the Soviet village at the present time could be carried out without any waste of productive forces. Such things do not happen. But the inevitable waste incurred in collectivising individual peasant economy will be more than compensated by the colossal advantages resulting from the collective utilisation of those productive forces. We have already mentioned that the rational utilisation of draught animals on collective farms will enable us to increase the area under cultivation by 80 to 100 per cent. Even if the total number of cattle is diminished by 5, 10 or even 15 per cent., the increase in production which follows from the correct and collective utilisation of the remaining animals would more than cover the loss suffered during the process of collectivisation. The very fact of collectivisation affords us the possibility of achieving, in the coming year, a greater rate in the development of national economy than would be possible otherwise.

So we are not at all dismayed by the decrease in productive forces which may accompany the processes of collectivisation. The world bourgeoisie may rise and bellow forth its "scientific" and "considered" proof of the breakdown and degeneration of Soviet economy, just as it tried to demonstrate the decay of the Soviet order of society and the utter collapse of its economy in the first few months of the November revolution, when the towns were being transformed from centres of capitalist production to centres of communal Socialist production. Only opportunists and philistines would contend that great historical revolutions can take place quietly and smoothly, without class struggle, without

waste of productive forces, without some suffering and deprivation which must be lived through by those who take part in the changes effected.

To us, to the workers of the Soviet Union who have lived through a period of economic exhaustion and suffering, who have acquired great revolutionary experience, not only in breaking down the old capitalist society, but also in building up the new Socialist society, these frenzied prophecies of death and decay bring no fear.

The Communist Parties in capitalist countries should explain to the workers there the real meaning of our work for the Socialist reconstruction of the village, helping them to understand, from their proletarian outlook, what is really happening. The proletariat of the Soviet Union, with the fraternal support and sympathy of the international proletariat, will continue its work of uprooting the last vestiges of capitalism and of building up the Socialist society, despite all the enraged howling and slander with which the bourgeoisie seek to conceal the real significance of our work.

The International Agrarian Crisis.

E. VARGA.

IN China millions of people are starving; in North America numbers of farmers are being ruined, because they cannot sell their surplus wheat. In Germany the millions of unemployed and their children are starving, while the government is spending millions of marks in buying and storing rye, in order to prevent the price from going low enough for the very poor to be able to buy it. While millions are pitifully underclothed, the American Farm Board has ordered the cotton farmers to reduce cotton cultivation in the spring by 40 per cent. Thousands of workers are deprived of their cup of coffee, but the Brazilian government has sunk millions of sacks of coffee to stop the fall in coffee prices. The whole madness of the capitalist system, which allows millions of human beings to freeze and to starve in order that profits and rents may rise higher, is glaringly apparent. Every idea of a "planned economy,"

of an "organised capitalism," is revealed as deceptive fantasy in face of the murderous anarchy of the capitalist order of society, which puts everything which we have experienced up to the present completely in the shade.

The agrarian crisis, which for a few years past has existed in a latent form, has now entered upon an acute phase.* The prices of all agricultural products—grain, fodder, textiles, sugar, coffee, tea, rubber—are declining steadily, and have reached a depth at which masses of peasants and farmers are being ruined. There is great over-production in all agricultural commodities.† Over-production—not in the sense that there is nobody in need of bread, sugar or coffee, but in the capitalist sense, meaning that there are no buyers able to pay: hungry mouths mean nothing to capitalism if their owners are not in a position to pay a price for their food which will assure to the producers their profit and to the landowners their rent.

What are the causes of over-production? The following factors must be considered in this connection:

(a) During and after the war agricultural production in the great agrarian areas—U.S.A., Canada, Argentine, Australia—was rapidly extended.

Area under wheat cultivation in the U.S.A., Canada, Argentine and Australia.

In millions of hectares. †

1909-13	1916	1920	1921	1922	1928	1929
33.6	39.4	34.8	46.6	47.8	49.5	49.6

We see that the area under cultivation in these countries, most important for grain export, has risen by 50 per cent. since the pre-war period. In the U.S.A. it is true, the area under cultivation has diminished during the agrarian crisis, but this has not happened in the Argentine or

* Sering's judgment has proved incorrect. In a most valuable work (*International price movements and the agricultural situation*, Berlin, 1929), he wrote: "Since 1924 there has been a change in the price movement of agricultural products. The international agrarian crisis is being overcome, or at any rate most appreciably ameliorated." (p.47.) It was not a cessation, but merely a temporary amelioration of the crisis.

† Cattle products are an exception. This, however, is only of a temporary character. Low fodder prices have always been followed by an increase in cattle raising and feeding in order to utilise more profitably the cheapness of fodder. Hence the temporarily decreased supply of cattle and meat on the market; this will certainly be followed by over-production and consequently by a fall in prices.

‡ Figures taken from Sering and from the publications of the Roman Institute of Agriculture.

Australia where the area was extended despite the crisis (we shall return to the causes of this later on). The export from these countries was quite enough to cover the decline in Russian exports, although during the war the harvests in the rest of Europe were considerably diminished.

(b) Agriculture in capitalist Europe, the products of which declined greatly during the war, has in the last few years steadily increased its production.

*European products (excluding U.S.S.R.) of Grain and Fodder. In million tons.**

	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Maize
Average					
1909-13	37.1	25.1	15.4	28.2	23.5
Average					
1920-24	30.5	18.6	13.5	16.0	11.6
1926	32.9	19.1	14.7	25.7	16.6
1927	32.7	20.1	14.3	25.4	12.3
1928	38.9	22.9	16.2	27.4	9.7
1929	38.6	22.9	17.3	27.7	—

The table shows that in the last year or two harvests in capitalist Europe have almost reached the pre-war level. This explains the greatly decreased demand for imports in comparison with the years immediately following the war.

(c) The consumption of bread per head of the population shows a tendency to decrease in capitalist countries.

Consumption of Wheat (and Rye) per head of the population. In kilogrammes.

	1905-08	1909-13	1921-23	1924-27	1927-28
Great Britain	164.1	164.7	151.1	153.3	148.3
Belgium and Luxembourg†	308.9	336.0	242.7	248.0	250.0
Germany†	253.7	254.7	163.5	149.0	209

The tendency towards a decrease in the consumption of grain is most noticeable in the United States. The figures of consumption for the U.S.A. are as follow :

Consumption per head of Wheat and Rye.

1905-08	1909-13	1916-20	1921-23	1924-27
178.6	174.4	176.3	152.3	151.3

* Sources : *International Statistical Year Book 1926 ; Economic Forces of the World*, published by the Dresden Bank ; *Monthly and Annual Bulletins of the Roman Institute of Agriculture*. (Differences are apparent in the calculations of the various authorities, but these do not exceed the limits of variation to be expected from these generally unreliable statistics.)

† Wheat and rye.

(d) The consumption of fodder has decreased rapidly because of the replacement of draught animals by cars and tractors.

The result of this development is that in the last few years huge stocks of grain, sugar, coffee, etc., have been accumulated from one harvest to the next. In May, 1929, this led to a catastrophic fall in wheat prices in America (to less than a dollar per bushel in Chicago) ; but the bad harvest in North America—and the policy of the Canadian wheat pool—pushed prices up again for a few months.* But now over-production—in spite of all the measures taken by the capitalist governments—is making itself felt again in an abrupt fall in prices, which has affected all agricultural crop production without exception. To illustrate this fact we shall give a few figures relating to prices on the English market which, as the international centre of free trade, is least influenced by the artificial manipulation of prices.

The following table gives prices on the outbreak of war, at the end of February, 1929, and the end of February, 1930.†

	30 June, 1914	28 Feb., 1929	28 Feb., 1930
Manitoba wheat			
per 496lbs.	33/2	52/3	44/9
English barley			
„ 112 lbs.	7/1	10/4	7/11
Oats	„ 112lbs.	7/2	9/9
La Plata maize			
„ 48lbs.	25/9	45	25/9
Danish butter	„ cwt.	119	188
Potatoes	„ ton	73	140
Frozen meat	„ 8lbs.	3/9	4/3
			4/10

There has been a sharp drop in prices, particularly in fodder ; oats are cheaper than before the war, maize is no higher, and the rise in the prices of other important agricultural products, as compared with the pre-war period, is far less in general than the rise in the prices of industrial products. The “scissors” relating the price levels of industrial and agricultural products is again widening.

SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE FALL IN PRICES

The social effects of a fall in the prices of agricultural products are far more extensive and

* Before and during the Tenth Plenum I stated repeatedly that a new and acute phase in the chronic agrarian crisis was at hand. (See C.I., 1929, No. 20.)

† *Statist*, 22/2/30. *Times*, 28/2/30.

complicated than those of a fall in industrial commodities. More extensive, because the number of "independent" agricultural producers who suffer directly from a fall in prices—farmers and peasants—include the majority of the world population. Those directly affected by a fall in the price of industrial commodities are the less numerous capitalists; those indirectly affected are the industrial workers; hundreds of millions of peasants suffer from a fall in agricultural prices. More complicated, because of the peculiar part played by rents in agricultural production.*

We shall assume, on the part of the reader, a knowledge of the Marxist theory of ground rent, and shall confine ourselves to the part which ground rent plays in the present agrarian crisis.

Ground rent is that part of the surplus value appropriated in agriculture which does not enter into the formation of the average rate of profit, but which is taken by the landowner as rent. Theoretically it is assumed that the capital invested in agriculture (the capital of the capitalist renter) yields the average rate of profit, that the landowner receives as ground rent only that portion of the surplus value appropriated by the renter by which the profit of the capitalist renter would exceed the average rate of profit if the land were his own.

In actual fact the matter is more complicated. Ground rent is fixed in the tenancy agreement or on purchase of the land† on the basis of the results obtained in previous years. Once the agreement is concluded, or the land bought on credit and burdened with a mortgage, then the rent to be paid for the land is a fixed burden on the tenant or landowner for the future; it is an element, not in the social costs of production, but in his individual production expenses. If the prices of agricultural products fall, and he is unable to pay the rent or the interest on the mortgage, which was fixed too high, he is

ruined, although his real costs of production would still yield an average profit, if he did not have to pay rent, or such high rent (in the form of actual rent or mortgage interest).

The following figures, relating to America, show how great a part rent plays in agricultural "costs of production":

	1926*	Total costs per acre	Rent costs	Rent as % of costs
Wheat	21.33	6.12	28
Maize	23.10	5.95	25
Oats	17.99	5.48	30

Calculated on a bushel of wheat, rent amounted to 36 cents at a selling price of one dollar, that is, more than one-third of the proceeds. It is quite clear that if 33 per cent. of the proceeds from wheat fall to rent,† a sum which must be paid without reference to changes in prices, large numbers of farmers must become bankrupt if the prices of agricultural products fall greatly during the period covered by the tenancy agreement or the mortgage.

Therefore it is not only the "scissors" which is at the bottom of the present crisis (as those bourgeois writers maintain who ignore rent in trying to work out their problem), but actually the falling prices of agricultural products. It is obvious that even if the prices of agricultural and industrial commodities fell to an equal extent, that is, if no "scissors" were in operation, an agrarian crisis would certainly arise because the necessity of continuing to pay rent at a rate that was fixed too high, while prices are falling, means heavy losses to the producers.‡ If there is in addition, as there is at the present time, a "scissors" consequent upon a sharp fall in agricultural prices accompanied by temporary stability in industrial prices, then an acute crisis results.

Of course in the long run the fixed rent paid adapts itself to "pure" rent; tenants leave the farms, because they cannot pay the high rent,

* Bourgeois investigations into the agrarian crisis, even the best of them, such as Sering's or Seligman's (*Economics of Farm Relief*. New York, 1929) or Nourse's (*Recent Economic Changes*, Vol. II) arrive at incorrect conclusions, mainly because they either deliberately exclude, or else ignore, the part played by rent in the agrarian crisis; because they take as the type of the agricultural producer the large landowner working his own land, for whom, as Marx says, the monopoly of land, i.e., rent, does not enter into consideration.

† The price for land purchase is capitalised ground rent, in which capital expended for the improvement of the land is included.

* *Year Book of Agriculture*, 1927, p. 1135.

† The rent that is actually paid is not quite the same as rent in the economic context (absolute and differential rent) for it includes also interest on capital spent in improving the land and elements of monopoly rent; for the purposes of this investigation, which is intended to prove the importance of the fixity of rent (or mortgage interest) the separation of pure rent from rent actually paid (besides being arithmetically impossible) is unnecessary.

‡ The importance of rent as an element in the agrarian crisis was correctly emphasised by Comrade Picus in her article in the journal *On the Agrarian Front*.

mortgage interest is not paid ; the price of land and its rent falls, adapting itself to the changed conditions.* But this signifies the ruin of countless peasants and the critical acceleration of the process of differentiation among the peasantry, which is always taking place in capitalism, into landless proletarians and small and large agrarian capitalists.

For it is by no means true, as bourgeois writers maintain, that the present over-production of agricultural commodities affects all producers equally. The crisis affects differently the different sections of agricultural producers in each country ; and the social effects of the crisis in the individual countries vary according to their economic development and their position in world economy.

Examining the latter point first, we find that the crisis affects most acutely those countries and districts devoted to the specialised production of one particular agricultural commodity (so-called monoculture) the price of which has fallen sharply. Extreme examples of this are offered by Brazil, with its coffee cultivation, Egypt, mainly producing cotton, Canada and certain parts of the U.S.A. as wheat-producing areas. The peasants or farmers in these places produce mainly for the market, consuming only a small and decreasing portion of their produce in their own household, and they are therefore deeply affected by the fall in prices. In the countries and districts with mixed agriculture—grain, fodder, cattle, textile crops—in which the backward Asiatic-European type of peasant is predominant, the cultivator, who consumes a considerable proportion of his produce in his own household, the crisis, other things remaining equal, is of lesser effect. A few specialised areas—for vegetable and fruit cultivation, poultry raising, cattle rearing for meat of superior quality—are for the time being not at all affected by the crisis.

* The course of land prices in the U.S.A. is as follows :
Dollars per acre of land without buildings :

1920	59.36
1925	41.50

The total value of farmland (without buildings) amounted to
1920 55 milliard dollars
1925 38 " "

(Year Book of Agriculture, 1927).

The fall in the price of land was very unequal : in a few New England and Pacific States the price of land rose between 1920 and 1925 ; in the grain states it fell by more than 50 per cent.

EFFECTS ON RESPECTIVE STRATA OF AGRARIANS.

Of greater importance is the varied effect of the crisis on the different social classes of agricultural producers. It follows, from the part played by fixed rent, with which we dealt above, that, other circumstances being equal, the crisis falls with special weight on the tenants and indebted landowners, that is, on the poorer sections of the agricultural producers. The producers working on their own land, free from debt (for whom, as Marx says, the land monopoly is unimportant) are affected only by the scissors; tenants and landowners burdened by a mortgage are also affected by the height of rent.

There is a second and more important difference. Production costs on a large concern employing all the achievements of modern technique are lower than those of the small concern. Consequently, the large modern farms, in spite of rent payments, can still make an average profit even with the prices which have been current in the last few years, while the small concern has been ruined.

We shall give one concrete example of the foregoing, the effect of the combination agricultural machine on the production costs of grain. Brinkman gives the following data from Argentinian sources :*

In order to be able to utilise the combination machine for harvesting and threshing wheat, there must be at least 50 hectares under wheat cultivation, but it is best to have 130 hectares. The saving as compared with the use of the reaper and binder amounts in the various districts of the Argentine to 0.89—1.42 pesos per 100 kg. The price for 100 kg. of wheat in Buenos Aires to-day is about 10 pesos, but much less among the farmers in the interior. The saving of the large-scale farmers who can use the combination machine thus amounts to 10-20 per cent. of the price. They can therefore get along when prices are so low that the poor, small-scale farmers are ruined.

In its social effects, the agrarian crisis greatly intensifies the process of differentiation, and ruins large numbers of small, indebted peasants and tenant farmers.

This social process is reflected politically in the opposition of those bourgeois parties whose

* See Sering, *op. cit.* Seligman, *Farm Relief* ; Brinkman, *The Change in Argentinian Harvesting Methods* ; *Reports on Agriculture*, Vol. II., Book I.

main support comes from the peasant section of the electorate (the progressive wing of the republicans in the U.S.A., the German national party, the French radicals, etc.). This is an important factor in the government and parliamentary crises which follow each other rapidly in the different countries. The ruin of the poorer peasantry as a result of the agricultural crisis gives the Communist Parties the objective basis for extending their influence among the peasants.

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO REGULATE WORLD MARKET PRICES.

The sharp fall in prices in recent months has led to feverish attempts to maintain the prices of agricultural products. The methods which have been used varied according to whether the country concerned has an excess of imports or exports. Countries importing grain, such as France, Italy, Spain, Germany, have been able to keep prices above the world market level fairly easily by raising tariffs. In the last six months all countries importing grain have raised their tariffs; England alone insists upon the tax-free import of food, but even there the agitation for agricultural protection is becoming stronger and stronger.

For those countries with an excess of exports the problem is much more difficult to solve. In this case the world market prices themselves must be driven up. This is possible only if a proportion of the total quantity intended for export, is controlled by one body, and is so great that the demand on the world market cannot be satisfied without it.

The great Canadian wheat pool is an attempt to attain to this state of affairs; it controls 70 per cent. of the total Canadian wheat harvest. The situation appeared very favourable to such an attempt. The world export of wheat and wheaten flour, taken as a yearly average over the period 1924-28, amounted to 22 million tons, according to the Dresden Bank. Canada's share of this was 8.4 million tons, that is, more than a third of the total quantity of wheat on the world market. Canada's share, indeed, seems to be increasing, for in 1928 it amounted to 11.2 million tons out of a total of 24.3 million—nearly a half. This strong position, and the Canadian wheat pool, made it possible to keep

up the prices of wheat—and other grain—and to prevent the outbreak of an acute crisis.

But these relatively favourable prices led to an extension of the area under cultivation in Europe, and particularly in the countries which are of vital importance in the matter of wheat export. The area under wheat and rye amounted, in million hectares to :

	1927	1928	1929
Canada	9.4	10.1	10.6
Argentine	8.3	8.9	7.0*
Australia	4.8	5.7	5.9
Total	22.5	24.7	2.35

In order to maintain its price policy, the Canadian pool was compelled to carry over large stocks of unsold wheat from one harvest to another. In 1929 the breakdown would have begun—wheat prices fell to less than one dollar per bushel at the beginning of May—had it not been for the bad Canadian harvests and the prospects of a bad harvest in the Argentine, which led to a new rise of prices in the summer of 1929.

In the autumn of 1929 the pool continued its policy of withholding stocks from sale, although the stocks "on sight" increased tremendously.† The policy of manipulating world market prices by decreasing exports and piling up stocks broke down at the turn of the year. Prices in Winnipeg (the Canadian wheat market) began to fall, and the fall could no longer be stopped.‡ In three months wheat prices fell by one-third. The pool was faced with financial difficulties. The large banks refused to give further credits against the stored wheat. On the 5th February the Prime Minister for Manitoba state found it necessary to issue a state guarantee of 15 per cent. for credits granted by the banks. This did not help matters, prices continued to fall. All the elevators were filled to overflowing. Rail-

* This decline was due to natural and not to economic causes.

† Amount of wheat stocks on sight on the 1st of December, in million bushels :

	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
World total ..	257	300	346	459	553
Canada's share..	105	123	121	170	221

(Wheat Studies of the Food Research Institute, January, 1930.)

‡ Winnipeg prices per bushel, in cents, 1920 :

Jan. 2	Feb. 16.	March 5.	March 14.
149	129	111	103

ways cut down their transport ; demands were made for the abolition of the wheat pool.

The abrupt fall in the prices of wheat induced American finance capital to change its former policy of non-interference in price arrangements, the policy announced so emphatically by Hoover. From the 10th February the Federal Farm Board no longer contented itself with making loans against the grain stored by the farmers in order to prevent its sale, but itself bought up wheat through the Grain Stabilisation Corporation, in order to stop a fall in prices.* The Board bought wheat on all the exchanges of the U.S.A., and its first act of intervention on 11th February led to a rise in price of 7 cents per bushel. The 150 million dollars placed at the disposal of the Board by Congress has by now been entirely loaned or expended. Hoover is asking for another 100 million. The policy of non-interference has been thrown overboard. The prices of other kinds of grain, as well as of cotton, are also being artificially kept up.

Why has American finance capital changed its policy? Surely the exploitation of the farmer was one of the foundations of monopoly profits! American finance capital was compelled, in its own interests, to change its policy. Had the fall in prices not been at least slowed down, millions of farmers would have gone bankrupt, and their bankruptcy would have been followed by the collapse of thousands of small provincial monetary institutions, which might easily have led to a general credit crisis. This is what American finance capital wants to avoid, for such a crisis might be extremely dangerous to it. This explains the readiness with which the farmers were helped by millions of dollars out of state funds.

We shall not deal in detail with other attempts to stabilise grain prices ; the Australian attempt to form a pool, the German-Polish rye agreement, the Hungarian-Yugo-Slavian wheat export agreement, etc. Because of the tremendous over-production, these attempts have only slowed down the fall in prices. If the year 1930 gives prospects of good harvests, a further fall in prices will be unavoidable.

LIMITATION OF PRODUCTION.

In capitalism, there is no other way out of the agrarian crisis than by the limitation of produc-

tion. This in fact is the slogan issued by the spokesmen of capitalism. The Farm Board is agitating for a decrease in the area under wheat, maize and cotton cultivation. For the last-named crop, the required reduction amounts to 40 per cent., and the request is accompanied by a threat to withdraw the credits granted on cotton stocks.

The leading men in American agriculture are continually agitating for decreased production. On the 27th January the State Secretary for Agriculture, Hyde, spoke to the farmers by radio, asking them to decrease the area under cultivation this year : "Blind production for an unknown demand is the ruin of agriculture. The competition of six million individual farmers gives the buyers a great advantage. In the new decade that is opening, we must learn to act collectively if we are to master the situation . . . If we want to make agriculture more profitable we must produce not only at the lowest possible price, we must also adapt our production as far as possible to the future home demand. This problem has to be solved on the farm itself. It can best be solved by careful plans and by the broad organisation of agriculture."*

Legge, a member of the Federal Farm Board, is in favour of the afforestation of part of the farmlands. "If every American farmer would turn 5 per cent. of his present cultivated land into forest, it would be a great step forward in getting rid of over-production."

DIFFICULTIES OF EFFECTING LIMITATION.

To the individual farmer, however, a decrease in his area under cultivation is a very serious matter. A large part of his expenditure—rent, mortgage, interest, payment for machinery, etc.—is unaffected by such a decrease. It is well known that these overhead charges of agriculture form a very large part of the costs of production and do not decrease with a decrease in the area under cultivation. Nor has the individual farmer any guarantee that if he does diminish his own land, the millions of other farmers will do likewise : a rise in prices by getting rid of over-production is however only possible if everybody cuts down their production at the same time. Moreover, the whole machinery of agricultural policy is arranged for the purpose of

* *New York Times*, 11/2/30.

* *New York Times*, 28/1/30.

increasing production—premiums are paid for the greatest production per acre, the heaviest cattle, etc. All the agricultural schools and institutes are working for the same object. It is, as the American newspapers and journals say, extremely difficult to make a policy of decreasing production comprehensible to farmers.

In spite of this, the agitation in favour of limiting production in the U.S.A. is being carried on very vigorously. At a joint meeting of six important scientific institutions in America, Legge declared :

“After all, it is reasonable to assume that in a certain time the farmers will grasp the simple fact that they can get more money for four bushels of wheat than for five, and they will produce four instead of five ; and this is a typical illustration of the position we are in to-day. An average decrease of 20 per cent. in production would make the grain tariff effective, and would ensure higher prices for the farmers. I think that it is not an exaggeration to say that a 20 per cent. decrease in production would increase proceeds by 20 per cent. over that received from the present production.”*

The policy of cutting down agricultural production in order to secure the rents of the landowner and the profits of the agrarian capitalists is the best possible proof that the capitalist system of production is hindering the development of the forces of production.† Millions are hungry, are dying of hunger, but capitalist economic policy is directed not towards increasing the production of food, but towards its “regulated” diminution. Capitalism has accomplished its historic mission. Its decay is clear to all. It is the task of the revolutionary proletariat to liberate the forces of production from the bonds of declining capitalism by destroying the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The First Congress of Representatives of the Soviet Districts in China

By L.I.

IN 1925-1927, when, for a certain period of time, the Chinese Communist Party entered

* *New York Times*, 28/2/30.

† The limitation of production is demanded not only for American grain and cotton. The rubber plantation owners have decided to give their factories a rest during May ; the coffee crisis is to be met by decreasing the amount sown this year, and so on and so forth.

a bloc with the Kuomintang, the Chinese communists, in spite of big opportunist mistakes on the part of the then party leadership, were able to penetrate in amongst the masses of workers and peasants and lay the foundations for an independent movement of these masses. When later the Kuomintang, led by Chiang-Kai-Shek and Wang-Chin-Wei, betrayed the cause of the anti-imperialist fight and became the leading counter-revolutionary force in China, the betrayal was first and foremost dictated by the fear of this independent movement of the Chinese masses. The temporarily victorious counter-revolution was faced with the problem, on the one hand, of deceiving the masses by promises of reforms in order to stop the further spreading of the revolutionary movement, and on the other hand, in self-preservation of tearing by the roots the movement which already existed and was led by the communists. And the Chinese counter-revolutionaries, in alliance with the imperialists, bent all their energies to this latter task. The toiling masses of China replied with stubborn resistance. The worker of the industrial centres—Canton, Shanghai, Hankow and other places—defended their trade unions and other revolutionary organisations with arms in hand. In their wake followed the peasant masses, who would not allow the peasant unions to be destroyed. The culminating point of this struggle was the rising of the Canton proletariat in December, 1927.

The temporary defeat of the toiling masses and the victory of the counter-revolution, whereby tens of thousands of revolutionaries were killed and their organisations smashed up, was bound to cause a temporary lull in the revolutionary camp. But there was not long to wait before new events happened. The Chinese C.P., under the guidance of the Communist International, after recognising the mistakes made during the participation in the united national-liberation movement of 1925-27, purged its ranks of counter-revolutionary elements, such as Tan-Ping-Siang and removed from the leadership incurable opportunists like Cheng-Du-Siu. On the basis of the existing revolutionary mass movement, the Communist Party began the organisation of the workers and peasants under the new conditions, and in new forms. One of the big political and organisational achievements of this work is the *First*

Congress of Representatives of the Soviet Districts of China, being convened this year. The very fact that this Congress is being held is an expression of the growing new wave of revolutionary feeling in China.

AFTER VICTORY OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

The Kuomintang counter-revolution, after its victory, did not solve one of the problems that confronted it. The liberation of China from foreign imperialism, and the unification of the country, still remain on paper. The agrarian problem, which is most vital for 99 per cent. of the Chinese people, is not solved. The living conditions of the Chinese peasantry, the overwhelming majority of whom consist of landless or land-hungry peasants, have not merely not improved, but have become worse. The position of the peasantry is made still more disastrous by the continual wars of the militarists, the robbery of the peasants by the feudal lords, the landowners, gentry, Tukhaos, and the Kuomintang. Last year, according to the assertions of the imperialist and Kuomintang press, 60 millions of the Chinese population were starving. But that figure embraces only that part of the starving population which in one way or another makes its starvation known (risings, mutinies, emigration, etc.). No true general statistics as to starvation are to be found anywhere, for the various militarists only state the quantity that suits them. On the basis of separate information from the various provinces, however, the sum total aimed at, starving and semi-starving combined, reaches 200,000,000. Already in 1928 the crop of rice was 50 per cent. below the normal, while in 1930, the harvest in certain provinces has decreased to 30 per cent. In the provinces of Shansi and Shensi a terrible famine is raging. In certain districts of these provinces 90 per cent. of the population had died from starvation. According to official statistics, 30,000,000 of the starving population are doomed to extinction.

Such a situation to an ever greater degree entangles the Chinese peasantry in a knot of contradictions, insoluble within the framework of the existing order. The economic pressure of the ruling classes upon the peasantry is increasing. The triumph of Chinese reaction has brought the peasants increased tax oppression, new supplementary levies, punitive expedi-

tions, cruel repressions, starvation and death from famine.

All illusions as to the possibility of alleviating the agricultural crisis and improving the well-being of the peasant masses, while preserving power in the hands of the Chinese reaction, are now almost completely shattered. The sharpening of the conflicts between the main bulk of the peasantry and the exploiters sitting on their backs has furnished the prerequisites for a powerful new rise of the peasant movement. Already in 1928, after the reaction had been victorious for some months, peasant actions took place in various provinces. One of the biggest actions was the rising of Moslem peasants in April, 1928, in the province of Kansu. The fighting between these insurrectionary peasants and the punitive expeditions despatched against them lasted several months. Only at the end of October did the counter-revolutionary forces succeed in breaking the resistance of the rebels. These obdurate struggles of the Moslem peasants against the numerous and much better armed counter-revolutionary armies, shows their determination. But all these actions by separate villages, and even the heroic fight of the Moslem peasants were small affairs in comparison with the subsequent big peasant risings.

At the end of the first half of 1929, when militarist wars between the generals broke out anew, on the background of the growing political and economic crisis of the Chinese reaction; when the workers of the industrial centres (Shanghai, Hong-Kong, Tientsin, Tsin-Tao, etc.), having recovered from their temporary defeat, and led by the Chinese Communist Party, conducted numerous strikes, peasant risings started in a number of districts in the provinces of Fukien, Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hunan and Hupeh.

ROLE OF RED ARMY DETACHMENTS.

The detachments of the Red Army, which had been preserved in these provinces after the revolutionary fights of 1927, played a tremendous role in organising the peasant risings. On the boundaries of the Fukien and Kwangtung provinces a detachment of Red Guards has been continually in operation, under Comrades Mao-Kie-Tung and Chu-De. For two years the Nanking reaction fought unsuccessfully against these detachments. It has equipped three

expeditions against them. The fight of these detachments is a truly heroic epic: without cartridges, without money or food, they have fought an enemy overwhelmingly superior in numbers, hiding in the hills and staying there months on end, without ceasing their revolutionary work. In western Hunan and western Hupeh the detachments of Comrades Ho-Lung and Chau-I-Chung have been at work. Besides these forces, which derive their personnel mainly from the remnants of the revolutionary peasant armies of 1927 and from Canton proletarians, small detachments have also existed in various parts of those same provinces and in the province of Kiangsi. The detachments of Comrades Moa, Chu, Ho and Chau have worked under the political guidance of the C.C. of the Chinese Communist Party of China. They include a big percentage of Party and Y.C.L. members. The political guidance of the C.C. of the C.P.C., the revolutionary consciousness and devotion to the revolutionary cause shown by the direct leaders, comrades Mao and the others, provide the guarantee that these detachments will fulfil their revolutionary duty, and at the time of the rising wave of insurrection will become the backbone of the future All-China Red Army. Of this kind is Comrade Mao-Kie-Tung, member of the C.C. of the C.P.C. for several years, who himself grew up among the peasants and knows the life, the needs, the customs and the psychology of the Chinese peasantry.

When in 1927 the majority of the then leadership of the C.P.C. became confused, and in spite of the directness of the Eighth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. made concessions in principle to the Kuomintangites, very often holding up the actions of the workers and peasants, Comrade Mao-Kie-Tung in his report after a tour of Hunan in January-February, 1927, wrote: "The peasants, with their strong organisation (many peasant unions existed then—L.) have begun to bring about the overthrow of the shady usurers, the gentry, the criminal landowners, the officials and bribe-takers, and the abolition of the existing stupid village customs, in other words—everything that has been perpetuated these last thousand years. All this has been smashed to atoms." Further on in the same report, Mao wrote: "Their rough horny hands (the peasants'—L.) have been laid heavily on the heads of the gentry. Every day these may be seen strongly

bound with cords and being led through villages."

How well Comrade Mao understood the peasant movement is seen from the same report: "The peasant movement constitutes a very serious and big question. Soon, hundreds of thousands of peasants will rise up throughout the whole of China: in the central parts of China and in the Southern and Northern provinces. *This movement is developing like a storm. No force can stop it and suppress it. It will overthrow all the militarists, officials, grafters, gentry, cheating usurers, and bury them all in a dark grave.*"

NOT "HORRIBLE" BUT EXCELLENT!

When the Kuomintangites inveighed against the peasant movement as being "horrible," Comrade Mao not only did not give way before these counter-revolutionary howls, but said: "The rising of peasants in the hamlets and villages has spoiled the sweet dream of power of the town proprietors and their position has rapidly changed. When I had just arrived in Changsha they were talking about the rising at every street corner. From the middle and upper classes of society and from the Kuomintangites I only heard one word: 'Horrible.' Even advanced people said: 'Although it is inevitable in a revolution, it is 'horrible.' This little word 'horrible' in regard to the peasantry was on the lips of everyone, but what is the fact of the matter? The fact is that the peasants have awakened and achieved their goal. What Sun-Yat-Sen strove for during forty years, and what has not been done in a thousand years, has now been attained by the peasants. That is not horrible; it is excellent. The peasants are to receive seven parts of the fruits of the revolution and the urban population and the army—only three. "Horrible" is the slogan issued by the landowners in order to prevent the peasants from rising and to preserve the former order and the former situation. It is a counter-revolutionary word. Not a single revolutionary comrade should repeat such stupid things. Any true revolutionist who himself knows the situation in the countryside will undoubtedly experience a feeling of unprecedented joy. An innumerable multitude of slaves—peasants—are there overthrowing their man-eating enemies. The peasants are acting absolutely correctly.

Their acts are excellent. 'Excellent'—that is the slogan of the peasants and the revolutionaries!" Comrade Mao's slogan "excellent" came from a profound understanding of the significance of the peasantry for the revolution. "The revolution is not a banquet, not a piece of poetry nor of embroidery; the revolution requires varying methods and a turbulent movement. One class overthrows another. The revolution means at the same time that the peasant class overthrows the land-owning class. For this the peasants must resort to violence, otherwise they can achieve nothing. Responding to the criticism of the peasant movement on the part of the counter-revolutionaries, and foreseeing the treachery of the Kuomintangites, Comrade Mao replied: "All Kuomintang members and every Party will come before the judgment of the peasants and will either be chosen or turned down. To be their leader (the peasants'—L.) or to become their enemy—such is the alternative facing every Chinese. Everyone is quite free to follow whichever path he chooses."

Comrade Mao took the right course when the remnants of the present revolutionary armies and of the Canton proletariat were compelled to hide in the mountains in face of the pursuit by their class enemies. Comrade Mao retreated with these forces under the instructions of the C.C. of the C.P.C. In these mountains for two years, assisted by other comrades, he led these detachments, trained them politically and gave them military instructions. These detachments soon became the point of concentration around which all peasants pursued by the counter-revolution rallied. The detachments of Comrades Mao and Chu were the heralds of communist ideas in the neighbouring localities. The C.C. of the C.P.C. having at its disposition such true representatives of communism, was always able to feel the pulse of the rising movement in the countryside. The actions of Comrades Mao, Chu and others were always strictly co-ordinated with the instructions of the C.C. of the C.P.C. No complaints about difficulties; no special requests in consideration of "services," or "capability," no petty-bourgeois pretensions to substitute the Chinese C.P. and its C.C. by their own "I"—were ever heard from these comrades. Tracked down by the imperialists, by the Kuomintang, by the feudal lords and by

the landowners, by the whole pack of counter-revolutionary hounds, the peasants sought their defenders in these heroic Red detachments. Small in numbers, poorly armed, naked, half-starved and almost all ill from exhaustion, these Red heroes, on their own initiative, and often at the call of the peasants themselves, went to aid the peasants in their fight against counter-revolution. At every place occupied by the Red detachments, Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army delegates were formed. These soviets enacted the dividing up of the land and property of the wealthy. The eight-hour day was enforced and the remnants of feudalism abolished. Equal rights for women were introduced. All the poor sections of the population were given military training. Schools and clubs were opened. The trade unions and peasant unions were revived. Revolutionary newspapers were issued.

REVOLUTIONARY REVIVAL.

And, as we have already said above, at the end of the first half of 1929, in unison with the rising revolutionary movement in the towns, the revival of revolutionary risings in the villages also started. The leadership of the present movements taking place in localities adjacent to the areas where the Red detachments were operating, (the provinces of Fukien, Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi and Kwantung) passed into the hands of the communists. The C.C. of the C.P.C., taking this position into consideration, took up the following orientation in its political resolution at the Summer Plenum, 1929:

"After the defeat of the revolution in a number of provinces, the present movement has not died down, but in some provinces—Kwangsi, Kwangtung, Hunan and Hupeh—has continued and still continues to develop; big areas exist there in which a soviet regime has been established, and a Red Army is operating there. The fact that the soviet regime is continuing to exist in these provinces, must be attributed to the growing revolutionary fight of the peasants."

As a result of this, in June, 1929, the Party was already at the head of several soviet areas. This required that the Party should strengthen its leadership and influence. It was precisely for that reason that the Summer Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P.C. declared: "The Party must increase its propaganda still more in the soviet

districts, but it should not restrict itself to revolutionary slogans alone. . . In conducting propaganda in the soviet districts we must enlighten from all sides the weakness, the conservative nature and the local patriotism of the peasants; demand an improvement in their electoral representation, etc.; try to get the masses to understand the necessity for extending the struggle . . . and to develop mass activity. Here we must correct past errors, such as propaganda by orders or declarations, for that would confuse still more the views of the masses on the military-political regime. All propaganda work should be of a class nature, and should be linked up as much as possible with the everyday life of the masses, so that the masses themselves consciously accept the policy of the Party and fight for it with determination." Here we see that in June, 1929, the C.P.C. was not only faced with the task of organising and leading the peasant risings, but also the problem of organising a revolutionary regime of the workers and peasants. There now arose the problem of transferring the movement to a higher plane, *the problem of creating powerful soviet districts in China.*

The developing revolutionary peasants' movement, as expressed in armed risings, and in the establishment of a soviet regime, extended still more powerfully after the attack of the imperialists and militarists against the U.S.S.R. around the Chinese Eastern Railway. The same Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P.C. (June, 1929), discussing the raid on the Soviet Consulate at Harbin in May, 1929, stated in its manifesto to the toilers of China:

"The search at the Soviet Consulate Harbin, is a proof that the imperialists are taking further steps for an attack on the Soviet Union from the East." "The Harbin affair is merely an initial provocation against the U.S.S.R.; the imperialists and the Kuomintang will not be content with that; they will conduct a more serious offensive against the Soviet Union, until, finally, a violent war against the U.S.S.R. will be started." "A decisive crisis in the *national liberation of China* is approaching, and we must be ready to arm in order to support the Soviet Union. We must reply to the anti-soviet war by a revolutionary war." The C.C. of the C.P.C., orientating itself on the rising revolutionary movement in the towns and villages of

China, correctly estimated the position on the Eastern Railway question ("the imperialists and the Kuomintang will not be content with searching the Harbin Soviet Consulate"). It recognised that this was a "question of life and death for the national liberation of China," and exerted all the strength of the Party to explain to the masses the meaning of the seizure of the railway by the militarists and imperialists. It did everything possible to get the masses to take part in strikes and demonstrations and to form Committees of Defence of the U.S.S.R., also calling upon the peasants to join the Red Army, in defence of the U.S.S.R. This Party manifesto met with a response from the workers of the industrial centres. On July 14th, and July 16th, workers' demonstrations took place in several industrial centres, led by Shanghai. The demonstrations of August 1st and September 1st (Youth Day) were conducted under the slogan: Defend the U.S.S.R.! The Red Army, the stalwart supporter of the Communist Party in the countryside, built up of workers, poor peasants, and the sections of the urban population oppressed by the militarists, took the lead of the peasant risings organised by the C.P.C. Already in November-December, 1929, the partisan movement had reached in Fukien 16 out of 64 rural districts; in Kiangsi 40 out of 81 districts; in Hupeh, 30 out of 72; in Hunan, 40 out of 75; in Kwantung, 30 out of 94; in Honan, 7 out of 89. The total population of these districts is 60,000,000.

PEASANT ARMIES PENETRATING COUNTRY.

And now, even according to bourgeois press figures, we know that the insurrectionary peasants, supported by the Red Army detachments and led by communists, are penetrating into the heart of the country, occupying big towns like Lu-chow and Fuwan in the Kwangsi province, the town of Kanchow, with a population of 100,000, and the town of Nankow, a big centre in the southern part of the Kiangsi province. The imperialists and Chinese reactionaries are now talking of the fortunes of the counter-revolution against the insurrectionaries. The district of Luchow has already been attacked by four French aeroplanes, which dropped many bombs. It is characteristic that the imperialists and militarists have been compelled to write about the Red Army. The correspondent of the

imperialist paper, *North China Herald*, writes from the Hupeh province: "The communists are trying to put an end to fortune-telling. Their leaders are not only prohibiting gambling games and opium-smoking, but also the smoking of tobacco. Robbery is not allowed. No oppression of those who obey the communist regime is permitted. . . . Towns are usually taken by means of treachery (i.e., a revolt inside the town itself) or else by previously sending their own people into them, disguised in peasant clothes (agitators.—L.) . . . Women, as a rule, are not sent in. When a town or village is captured, attempts are made to destroy all merchants' papers and accounts, and most important of all, all official papers and documents" (leases, peasants' bills, lists of debtors, etc.—L.).

There is no doubt whatever that in the provinces of Kwangsi, Kwantung, Fukien, Kiangsi, Hunan, Hupeh, Szechwan and Honan, a soviet regime exists in a whole number of districts, guarded by a Red Army of 30,000 and many thousands of insurrectionary peasants. This is a great achievement on the part of the C.P.C. in the matter of developing the national liberation under its leadership. The C.P. of China is the unifying factor of the anti-imperialist revolution. It enters actively into the struggle, develops and organises partisan movements, takes the leadership of peasant risings, helps the peasants to establish a soviet regime, arms them and brings about the agrarian revolution. But at the same time, the C.P.C. and its leadership realise that the communists must not be transformed exclusively into a general staff of the partisan movement, for, the peasant movement can only be successful on condition that decisive action is taken by the working-class in the industrial centres. The revolutionary disturbances taking place in the industrial centres provide a guarantee that the C.P.C. will be able to link the peasant movement up closely with the workers' movement, that the movement will be developed *along parallel lines* in the towns and in the villages. But the C.P.C. also realises that the peasant risings, now set moving, will not remain in one place, that the soviet districts will extend more and more widely. The development of the soviet districts will call forth all the hatred of the imperialists and militarists. It must be reckoned that in spite of all the contradictions

and the wars between the militarists, these latter will unite in the endeavour to wipe out the soviet districts.

THE CONGRESS.

That is why the C.P.C. and its leadership is faced with a task of first-rate importance: to exert every effort to dominate the peasant movement, to link it up with the movement of the working-class, to make the fullest possible use of everything that is now taking place in China, in order to spread communist ideas. Only then will the militarist and imperialist counter-revolution, on attempting to destroy the soviet districts, encounter the adequate resistance of the toiling masses in town and village.

It is for this purpose that the coming First Congress of Representatives of the Soviet Districts of China is being convened. This Congress will be representative of all the soviet districts. There will be representatives of the workers' trade unions and revolutionary organisations from all the industrial centres of China, and also representatives of the peasant unions. The Congress will help the C.P.C. and its leadership to utilise the tremendous experience of the direct participators in peasant rising, and the builders of soviet regimes in the localities. The draft programme for the work of this Congress, drawn up by a specially-convened conference of representatives of the most important soviet districts—with the participation of representatives of the C.P.C. and Red trade unions, embraces the following points:

I. GENERAL PROGRAMME OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENTS.

- (1) Overthrow of the imperialists' power;
- (2) confiscation of enterprises and banks belonging to foreign capitalists;
- (3) unification of China; right of self-determination for peoples;
- (4) overthrow of the government of Kuomintang militarists;
- (5) the formation of soviets of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies;
- (6) putting into force of the eight-hour day, increased wages, aid to unemployed and social insurance;
- (7) confiscation of the landowners' lands and their transfer to the peasantry;
- (8) improvement of living conditions of the soldiers; their provision with land and work;
- (9) abolition of all taxes introduced by the various militarists and rulers;
- (10) introduction of a single tax;

unity with the world proletariat and the U.S.S.R.

II. WORKERS' LEGISLATION.

(1) Introduction of the eight-hour working day ; increased wages ; (2) introduction of workers' insurance and unemployed benefits ; (3) equal pay for equal work ; holiday for working-class expectant mothers one month before and two months after child-birth, with payment of wages ; (4) abolition of the "system of foremen" ; (5) not more than six-hour working day for adolescents ; not more than one year apprenticeship ; abolition of loans to relatives of apprentices ; payment of wages to apprentices ; (6) abolition of dismissal of workers without trade union sanction ; (7) organisation of workers, co-operatives ; (8) confiscation of property of the reactionary bourgeoisie ; organisation of workers' and peasants' banks ; (9) holidays on Sundays and fete-days with retention of wages ; (10) dispersal of the reactionary armed forces ; formation of workers' and peasants' troops ; (11) prohibition of money-lending at high rates.

III. AGRARIAN LAWS.

(1) Overthrow of the power of the gentry, landowners and old officials ; disarming of counter-revolutionary detachments and arming of the peasantry ; establishment of a regime of peasant deputies in the villages ; (2) confiscation of property and land of the gentry and landowners, and their transfer to peasant soviets for redistribution among the propertyless and poor peasants ; (3) transfer of the property and lands of the pagodas and temples, also of official, uncultivated, and uneconomical lands to the jurisdiction of peasant soviets for redistribution among the peasantry ; (4) apportioning of a part of the state lands in the various provinces for settlement and colonisation, and for assignment to demobilised workers and peasants ; (5) declaration of all loans and advances at high percentages to be invalid ; (6) annulment of all exploiting land contracts ; (7) withdrawal of all taxes introduced by the various militarists and local authorities ; abolition of the system of arbitrary taxes ; abolition of the *likin* ; introduction of a single agricultural tax ; (8) state aid to the peasantry (a) in land tillage, (b) in land improvement schemes, (c) in protection from pests and natural disasters, (d) in granting credits

through peasant banks and co-operatives, (e) in resettlement schemes ; (9) unification of the coinage and weights and measure systems ; (10) afforestation and waterway improvements to be transferred to the soviet state.

IV. LEGISLATION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN.

(1) Equality of men and women, politically and economically ; (2) abolition of the system of purchasing wives ; freedom of marriage and divorce, with state registration ; (3) prohibition of concubinage and the system of adopting girls as future wives.

The First Congress of representatives of the Soviet Districts of China will discuss this project in all its details ; will put the programme on a concrete basis in accordance with conditions in the districts ; will elect a Central Executive Committee for all the soviet districts and provide the toiling masses of China with a platform, on the basis of which, guided by the proletariat under the leadership of the C.P.C., these masses will carry on the revolutionary struggle for their liberation from the yoke of the imperialists and militarists and will establish the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants in the form of soviets.

Long live the First Congress of Representatives of the Soviet Districts of China!

Between Passive Resistance and Revolution

By G. SAFAROV.

A STUPID journalist who was present at the Indian National Congress records his impressions as follows in *The World To-morrow* :—"On the whole, my impressions are that Mahatma Gandhi absolutely excels all other political leaders in India, that those Nationalists convinced of the necessity of resorting to violence are capable of getting the upper hand and ousting Gandhi, if the fight continues ; that the political rule of Great Britain in India is probably radically undermined, that India is faced with a decade of fighting and disorder before a stable and firm national government is formed, that the underlying motive of the nationalist leaders' conduct is the love of liberty that urged

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson to the heroic acts of 1776.”

One cannot, of course, expect such persons to understand the complicated mechanism of historical development. As merely casual spectators, hailing from a country where patriotic conceit is so easily substituted for mental effort, these journalists confuse political factors, situations and classes, and, naturally allow their inquisitive vision to be distracted by the most sensational figures, names which can be published in the papers the next day in large-sized heavy type. Gandhi, in general, attracts the sympathy of the international bourgeois for the simple reason that he is a representative of bourgeois moderation and a crafty class outlook. The American bourgeois, now energetically besieging the domains of British imperialism with the object of capturing them economically, display a considerably wider vision than their British competitors, as they may be able to “clean up” something from the national-liberation movement in India. The American bourgeois, nevertheless, observe proper moderation in their opinions in so far as the real victory of a peasant revolution in India, a revolution growing broader and stronger under proletarian leadership, does not inspire them with joyful hopes. The scepticism of the dollar is also justified by the American economic crisis.

But no matter where it happens, a fact remains a fact. Even a casual American journalist ought to have recognised that in India such historic forces have arisen as could not be driven underground for whole decades, even if world capitalism were able to remain master of the situation over the whole world for these decades.

Those whom *The World To-morrow* calls Nationalists really represent the great mass of the Indian working-class, peasantry and lower sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie. They were not represented, of course, at the Lahore Congress. One cannot consider as their representatives various delegates of the revolutionary students, who a couple of weeks after Lahore almost knelt before Gandhi and Co. These masses stood beyond the walls of the Congress; the demonstrating Sikhs were merely a chance fragment of these masses.

At Lahore, if not at the Congress, at least in the Congress Hall, it was Gandhi and Nehru who ruled with their grimacing. During the Congress, Mahatma conceived the bright idea of offering prayers to the “All-Highest,” at four o’clock in the morning and at half-past seven at night. This produced a particularly great impression on the American yellow-pressman. But despite the fact that the Lahore Congress outwardly ran smoothly for Gandhi and Nehru, it was affected by the reverberation of the revolutionary struggle. All speakers at the Congress had their eye on the streets, with a badly concealed fear of the intervention of the masses. After the Congress, there commenced a long series of attempts by Gandhi and the rest to distract the attention of the agitated masses from the struggle, to delay the struggle for so long that it would become impossible, and so forth. Gandhi vowed to the Viceroy that he is ready to pack-up the whole fight for Indian independence if only the Viceroy agrees to the most moderate demands of the Indian bourgeoisie. The “passive resistance” of Gandhi, Patel, Nehru and the others is reduced to mere conversations.

GANDHI SPEAKS “FIRMLY”

This treacherous behaviour is coming to an end, thanks to the revolutionising of the masses. Much firmer notes are to be perceived in the voices of Gandhi and the rest. In an interview with the *Matin* correspondent Gandhi declares with obvious despair that: “Red ruin, revolution and a complete break with legality would be better than the present state of affairs, as all these afflictions are showered on us every day in the name of government and social order.”

It would be a grave mistake, however, to conclude from this that Gandhi has thrown himself into the struggle. That is not so, could not be and will not be. He was and remains a willing tool of the Indian bourgeoisie, seeking compromise with British imperialism at the cost of suppressing the Indian revolution. Gandhi has carried out, and still carries out, the counter-revolutionary policy of the Indian bourgeoisie. In announcing the beginning of passive resistance, he is trying to replace the revolutionary indignation of the

masses by foolish gesture, by disjointed outbursts of mass discontent in no way dangerous for the British, and by "passive resistance," which is as like as two peas to complete conciliation with British imperialism. However, the Indian National Congress and its leaders will have to adapt themselves to the *mass* sentiments. They are bound to take these feelings into consideration, they are bound to adapt the *forms* of their activities, the *tone* of their speeches and various gestures, to the sharpening mass struggles which, with sweeping effect, are now embracing the railways, the Calcutta jute factories and the villages of the Punjab. The waves of the developing world crisis, are in turn, undermining the peaceful trend of life and compelling the Indian capitalists to feign revolutionary indignation, in their demands to British imperialism.

One need only listen to a certain Mr. Walchand of the Makharasta Chamber of Commerce: "Do we require further proofs of unity, when political leaders and practical business-men equally recognise as many as seven points out of the eleven demands put forward by Mahatma Gandhi, while not a single practical business man will object to the remainder?" (*Bombay Chronicle*, February 10th, 1930.)

Although Gandhi does try to give himself the appearance of a semi-mystic, the evenness and the co-ordinated nature of his "spiritual movements" show that he will not diverge one iota from the behests of his capitalist masters. He does not utter a *single word more* than is dictated to him by the Chambers of Commerce. And the Chambers of Commerce transform their indignation at the high rates of bank interest into "truly revolutionary" passion. Here, for instance, are the actual words of Wadia, a big-wig, to the correspondent of the *Bombay Chronicle*: "The textile manufacturers have lost all credit. Banks grant them loans very unwillingly; and I know a number of cases where factories have paid 7 per cent. for a loan on working capital, although providing the creditors with absolutely reliable securities, whereas usually the banks have advanced for 1 or 2 per cent. This percentage has ruined the Bombay industry and also had a destructive effect on Ahmed-

abad. The Ahmedabad factories are already working short time. I had occasion to examine the balances of Ahmedabad factories and was convinced that whereas in 1925 they showed a profit of 400,00, in 1928 they only earned 200,000. It is indisputable that Bombay has earned nothing and has suffered terribly from strikes. Bombay began to lose from the year 1925. We import annually up to 20 per cent. foreign goods as a result of the high parity, and India has to use this extra 20 per cent. of goods or else decrease her production by 20 per cent., for the benefit of foreign goods." (February 11th.)

We hear the same speeches from Meta, secretary of the Chamber of Indian Merchants, which did considerable work in recruiting strike-breakers during the great Bombay textile strike. Meta states: "The epidemic of strikes throughout the whole country and other working-class disturbances cannot be explained away by the mere assertion that communism is their cause. The cause lies in the economic disparity caused by the compulsory introduction of the new rates, which has led to acute economic depression, and to labour disturbances which represent merely the outward display of this depression. . . Silver has now fallen, it would appear, to the very lowest price, and its fall during the last three years from 70 rupees to 46 rupees means depriving the Indian peasantry of a very large part of their wealth — approximately one-third." (February 13th.)

The British double book-keeping keeps the Indian money-market constantly in tension, and renders the changing of rupees into gold a money-lending operation.

The fall of prices on cotton and other colonial products hits Indian national economy very severely. British imperialism is shifting on to the shoulders of India the consequences of economic depression, and this is felt all the more, as the symptoms of the approaching world economic crisis become clearer.

II.

The growth of mass discontent and revolutionary feeling accentuate the struggle for hegemony proceeding between the working class vanguard and the bourgeoisie. The centre of attention is now the strike on the

G.I.P. railway which employs 125,000 workers. The sifting out which took place in the very first days of the strike, between the official leadership of the Railwaymen's Union and the supporters of a consistent revolutionary policy, goes to show that the All-India Trade Union Congress was only a first step in the establishment of political and organisational unity of the Indian working class. In November last at this Congress the Indian national-reformists, led by Bose, supported the representatives of Girni Kamgar.* In other words, they could not bring themselves to hinder the advanced workers in dissociating themselves from direct agents of British imperialism like Joshi and Chaman Lal. Ruikar, now heading the reformist leadership of the railway strike, made "left" speeches at the T.U. Congress, and advocated the proletarian method of the general strike, as against bourgeois-compromise methods of passive resistance; although it is true that at the same time he beat all records in kow-towing to Jawaharlal Nehru. As a result of the Congress, Bose became president of the All-India T.U. Confederation, and Deshpandhi its secretary. This outward alliance of the national reformists with the best elements of the Indian labour movement could deceive no one, in so far as bourgeois national reformism, under the conditions then prevailing, when the heroic fight of the Bombay textile-workers was still fresh in everybody's memory, *dared not* openly and directly oppose the Girni Kamgar. Now the picture has completely changed. As was to be expected, the servants of Nehru and Gandhi, the Ruikars and similar gentlemen, at once emerged in their true light as soon as they had to act instead of talk. Ruikar commenced his betrayal of the revolutionary struggle of the Indian workers by sending a telegram to the MacDonald imperialist government with the request that the fascist law on compulsory arbitration be immediately applied to the conflict on the G.I.P. Railway. The strike commenced in February and continues to this day, despite the fact that the administration is paying double wages to the blacklegs and utilising every means of terror to break the resistance of the masses. But it should be remem-

bered that the strike is proceeding in spite of the reformist leadership, which from the very start did everything possible to cut it short, to make it "acceptable" both to MacDonald and to the Indian bourgeoisie. The leaders of the Congress, knowing full well that the extension and intensification of the class struggle will finally undermine their rule over the masses, are trying to use this strike on the one hand as a means of politically advertising the decaying National Congress, and on the other hand as an example to oppose to the strike of Bombay textile workers. The struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat for hegemony can be discerned very clearly in every mass movement, in every street demonstration, in every strike. The Indian bourgeoisie is utilising the Ruikar leadership to counterpose the railwaymen's strike to the revolutionary strike of Bombay textile workers, which has raised the struggle of the Indian people for emancipation to a new historic level.

THE "LEFTISM" OF YOUNG NEHRU

This is clearly apparent, if only in the appeal of the young Nehru to the bourgeois public. "He asked the public to show patience and sympathy in the present situation. It was not enough to sympathise with the strikers; the demands of the workers should be actively supported in every way, financial assistance be rendered and meetings and demonstrations held. The merchant classes, who must now suffer particularly big losses in trade, should assert every pressure on the Indian Government and the railroad administration so as to bring the conflict to an end as soon as possible." (*Bombay Chronicle*, February 8.)

The young Nehru thus quite openly gives away the secret of bourgeois policy in relation to the strikers. The *Bombay Chronicle* hints with emphasis, that "the Railwaymen's Union is generally recognised as being a responsible organ, working on sound trade union lines, under the direction of responsible leaders." (February 8.)

The bourgeois Congress leaders, in the usual way, "accuse" British imperialism of destroying "sound" trade unionism.

A leaflet was issued on behalf of the "Workers' and Peasants' Party" which

* Red Flag: the revolutionary textile workers' union, Bombay.

stated: "Railway workers should see that Ruikar supports the strike, and does not go back. Ruikar has already sent a telegram to Ramsay MacDonald. It is an error on his part to appeal to the imperialist premier with the request to put into action the law on compulsory arbitration, which is a strike-breaking machine. Railwaymen should link up with the railwaymen of the other lines and call for a general struggle. Workers of the Bombay-Baroda Railways and of the Central India line! Your position is just as intolerable as your comrades of the Peninsula Line. Your complaints are the same. Join in the fight!"

Ruikar immediately hastened to reply to this appeal by sharp attacks on "Deshpandhi and Co.," earning the applause of the whole bourgeois public.

Whereas the Bombay textile strike took place under the leadership of tested proletarians and was an open struggle against the national bourgeoisie, against whom the strike was directly aimed, one can say without the slightest exaggeration that the present railway strike is an arena of struggle, wherein the bourgeoisie is trying to turn the workers into obedient tools. The whole authority of the Indian National Congress, all the noise of public opinion, all the vacillations of the petty-bourgeois careerists have been thrown into the scales. Nehru and Co. create their own atmosphere of "sympathy" around the strike, having already sold it in advance, with the aid of Ruikar. The same old story! The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and its agents take the leadership of the movement in order to deprive it of a real leadership. But they did not succeed very well. Despite the fact that Ruikar, in collaboration with Joshi and Co., the direct agents of British imperialism, negotiated with the railway administration for the termination of the strike, his "compromise" was, nevertheless, nullified by the workers. The workers refused to recognise Ruikar's deal, and are continuing the fight with still greater determination. The entire preceding trend of events has brought India to that juncture where proletarian means of struggle have acquired indisputable authority among the masses.

BOURGEOISIE "GOES TO THE PEOPLE."

The bourgeoisie is trying to make use of the closing of a number of Bombay textile mills, the pressure of the economic crisis on the working class, and the weak organisation of the workers, in order to get the political initiative in their own hands. They "go to the people," to the ranks of the working class, as it is that class which has boldly entered the path of the revolutionary liberation of India. Only under proletarian leadership can the national-colonial revolution in India be victorious; only proletarian leadership can guarantee to it the firm support of the peasant masses, that decisive force without whose aid no emancipation is conceivable. The bourgeoisie goes to the people in order to disorganise and disarm the working class it hates so much. One need only glance at the Indian newspapers to be easily convinced as to what a powerful weapon of deception and betrayal the press is in the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the Indian National Congress. The monopoly of legality enjoyed by the bourgeois politicians with the permission of the British, and in opposition to the working class, allows them to exaggerate to Herculean magnitudes any trite liberal gesture, any patronising nod of the Viceroy to Gandhi, and to represent as an insignificant factor the Indian proletariat, which is the real basis and the main driving force of the present-day revolutionary wave. The Bombay textile strike was conducted as a struggle against all the forces of imperialism and bourgeois society. The very same press which now, in innumerable articles, praises Ruikar and indicts the Girni Kamgar leaders as evil shepherds, published at the time of the Bombay strike huge advertisements for the hire of blackleg labour at high rates. Strike-breaking was then almost proclaimed as a national mission. At that time, however, the bourgeoisie were endeavouring to eject the working class from their positions by a direct frontal attack. But they used mistaken tactics. They had not learnt that on the crest of the revolutionary rise, the working class can only be attacked from the rear, the weakest links in their organisation being selected for the blow. Now they are waging a struggle on behalf of their counter-revolutionary deal with British imperialism—on the broad arena

of the labour movement. They are conducting this fight through the actions of Ruikars, rendering financial aid to the strikers and at the same time drawing them beneath the arbitration guillotine, beneath the bludgeons of the British police. They are trying to suffocate the workers in "national-social" embraces. Merchants and mill-owners, students and money-lenders, small shopkeepers and backward workers, smooth-tongued lawyers and professional politicians — all these are to embody national unity, the "sacred unity of all classes." The railway strike is disclosing the true political meaning of passive resistance under present conditions: it consists in reducing the aims of the strike to compulsory arbitration, *i.e.*, suicide in the interests of peace between the British and Indian bourgeoisie.

REVOLUTIONARY IMPLICATIONS OF GENERAL RAILWAY STRIKE

The masses, of course, are fighting, and fighting seriously, but what is going on below is in glaring contradiction with the schemes of the leaders, with what is being enacted on the legal surface. The extension and deepening of the movement would perforce flood the dams raised by the traitors and reveal the true revolutionary physiognomy of the working class. The Indian revolution cannot proceed without embracing the transport system. *A general railway strike under present-day conditions, given a genuine proletarian leadership, would be the beginning of a catastrophe for British rule in India.* This is realised by the enemies of the working class. Gandhi, Nehru and the rest are doing all they can to warn the British bourgeoisie that they are marching on the edge of a precipice. The thick mist of mysticism and pacifist fanaticism, the ineffaceable features of Gandhi's entire masquerade, can of themselves no longer deceive anybody. It is no exaggeration to say that a couple of months back Gandhi was still in the background, merely feeling the pulse of the revolutionary upward surge, in alliance with British imperialism. At the front of the stage was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who made "Left" gestures towards the Soviet Union, the Communist International and the Indian working class. True, even then, at the Trade Union Congress, he made it clear that Chiang-Kai-

Shek was much "nearer and dearer" to him than the October Revolution. The wily Ruikars, however, stretching like india-rubber gloves, tried, by clapping to the right and to the left, to conceal the growing gap between the "Left" wing of the National Congress and the revolutionary labour movement.

Since then the position has changed. Gandhi has once more come into the limelight as the symbol and personification of a single national front, uniting all classes of the population. For tactical reasons a new rôle has been given him. Instead of the rôle of super-diplomat in negotiations with British imperialism, he is given that of a prophet on the eve of a national miracle, who is to "render superfluous" or, rather, ward off the National Revolution. Gandhi is no longer hiding behind the scenes. He has now come right down to the footlights. The British bourgeoisie is no longer clasping hands affectionately with Mahatma Gandhi, but has sent him a farewell blessing, saying that they will always be able to appreciate his counter-revolutionary rôle, even if he pretends to stand on the other side of the barricades.

"A TEST OF STATESMANSHIP"

The Indian National Congress, the Indian bourgeoisie and their petty-bourgeois hangers-on, are now treading on difficult ground. And British capitalism is not unaware of this. The *Daily Herald*, that extremely dull and untalented organ of British social-fascism, remarks knowingly: "The campaign of civil disobedience in India sets the Labour Government a great test of statesmanship." The *Daily Herald* speaks, of course, on behalf of its master, MacDonald. Why did we not hear such statements when there was a discussion in the House of Commons on the promise of dominion status to India? On that occasion the *Daily Herald* appealed solely and exclusively to the good sense of the police! The change of position is explained by the realignment of class-forces in India. The Indian working class with its new methods of struggle, its influence over wide strata of non-proletarian toilers and petty-bourgeoisie, has come to the fore as a spontaneous force. But it is lacking in a central political leadership — an organised and political vanguard. That

vanguard does exist, inasmuch as the preceding struggle has already produced, moulded, and to an extent consolidated, advanced proletarian cadres. This vanguard, however, which is best represented in the ranks of the Girni Kamgar Union, has not yet completely appreciated the significance of a proletarian political party, has not yet succeeded in forming this party, although there already exist all the pre-requisites not only for its formation, but also for the decisive spreading of its influence over the entire mass of the Indian working class.

III.

“If we look at the history of the last decade we become convinced that the liberals have collaborated with the government, declaring that they were practical politicians in spite of the wishes of the people. What are the fruits of this collaboration with the government? Our ruin and the ruin of the country’s industry and trade, prison for those who really take the interests of the fatherland to heart, titles for the liberals, and high salaries for the members of the legislative councils.”

Do not imagine these lines are borrowed from a proclamation by immature students. They are from the declaration of the chairman of the Union of Bombay Bankers, Desai. They can sniff revolution in the air. As the sound of the class struggle increases, so the footsteps of the approaching revolutionary upheavals can be heard more distinctly. It was not for nothing that they were heard even by an American correspondent on the spot. When bankers made subversive speeches, factory owners give financial aid to strikers and counter-revolutionary politicians suddenly appear as revolutionaries, this means that revolution is knocking at the door and demands either to be let in or abandoned. The Indian National Congress has but one desire—to abandon and suppress the revolution. But it is not yet strong enough to do this; and in the meantime plays for time, for room to manoeuvre in and to struggle against the revolution. That is why it is engaged in “going to the people”—not only to the railway strikers, but also to the peasants of the Punjab, Oudh, etc. “The conditions of the Oudh peasants are intolerable; the crop

failures of the past three years have made the position disastrous. In spite of this the talukdars have tried to impose new burdens on them and have now increased rents considerably. Illegal attacks and evictions from the land are a common occurrence. The cup of the rent-payer is full, and an end must be put to this state of affairs. Let the peasants adhere to the Congress, form groups and prepare for action. If Congress summons them they should stop paying taxes, but this should only be done in an organised manner, and *should on no account be done individually or without the permission of Congress representatives.*” (February 7.)

PLAYING WITH FIRE

Such was the debut of the young Nehru before the peasants of Oudh. The peasants are a force with which the bourgeois politicians have to reckon, the more because they are much easier to deceive than the urban workers, and can even, on occasion, be set against the latter. For the time being the peasant discontent is only breaking through in little isolated bursts, which, however, are becoming more and more alarming and threatening. The approach of a peasant wave and a peasant war is felt by all. It is characteristic that in trying to justify and defend the well-known betrayer of the Bardoli peasant movement and close colleague of Gandhi, Patel, the marionettes of the Legislative Assembly made special reference to the fact that “the appeal to millions of peasants to refuse to pay their land levies is a punishable revolutionary act.” (*Times*, March 11th.) It must not be thought that the National Congress has adopted the policy of preaching a peasant revolution. It is merely trying to get a hold on peasant discontent, in order to paralyse the fight and direct it against separate groups of Moslem landowners and particularly savage Indian feudalists. They have to *play* with fire, as there is no other means of putting it out.

A turn in the peasant movement has now definitely been reached. The peasant conference in the Punjab, which made a worthy estimate of Congress policy, was a very important event. But the peasant masses have not yet come openly to the surface, and therefore we

come up against zig-zag vacillations among the urban revolutionary petty-bourgeoisie, particularly the students. The lack of self-assurance of these elements causes them at every sharp turn in the situation either to seek sympathy with the proletariat or else to lean helplessly on the bourgeoisie. Is it long since the *Young Liberator* vehemently rebelled against the Swaraj of Sassoon and Birl? Is it so long since it called Gandhi a servant of imperialism and threatened the young Nehru with a complete break if he went to the Right at the Lahore session of the Congress? Now this journal of petty-bourgeois student youth has forgotten much, and in spite of the urgency of the situation, lets fall words of moth-eaten sagacity: "Although the left wing, the representatives of the Youth, were unable to carry through their programme and views at the Congress this year, nevertheless, there can be no doubt that they will win at Karachi, and if the cause of independence be not won now, with the aid of the present programme, a more radical programme will most certainly be adopted by the Congress with the object of the final overthrow of British imperialism and its allies and the establishment of complete independence." (*Young Liberator*, January, 1930.)

These young people are evidently not yet aware that a revolution is not made by prescriptions—one tablespoonful twice a day; and that the path from one resolution of an impotent and treacherous Congress to another resolution of the same institution, which has become still more rotten, is a path of continuous falls and defects without end. Those who drag the mass movement on to this course are playing an objectively counter-revolutionary rôle. After all, in the Russian Revolution there were also numerous examples of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-revolutionary elements drawing nearer and nearer to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the process of the struggle against Tsardom and the landowners.

VACILLATIONS SYMPTOMATIC

The sugary statements of the student-youth organ should not, of course, be interpreted as the capitulation of the mass student move-

ment to the National Congress. The heads of any petty-bourgeois movement are always worse than the rank and file, are always more undermined by faint-hearted hesitations and doubts, always more inclined to capitulate to the bourgeoisie. However, in the present crucial period, these vacillations of the *Young Liberator* are highly symptomatic. They are symptomatic because they show that only by its own forces will the proletariat be able to conduct and complete its struggle against the bourgeoisie for hegemony. The petty-bourgeoisie, headed by the peasantry, is the essential ally of the proletariat in the national-democratic revolution. But the proletariat can only establish its hegemony by becoming clearly class-conscious and self-reliant—by acting as an *independent revolutionary vanguard*. There is nothing surprising in the fact that in the epoch of the national-democratic revolution, bourgeois-democratic aspirations and aims in India as in other countries are painted in socialistic shades. There is nothing astonishing or accidental in the fact that bourgeois democracy willingly combines the idea of the fight for independence with that of the fight for socialism, thus reinforcing their historically restricted aims with the grandeur and inspiration of the proletarian class struggle. There is nothing strange or unnatural in the fact that bourgeois democracy confuses the interests of the working class and petty-bourgeoisie, and identifies the working class with the entire peasantry. All that is the direct consequence of the intermediary position of the petty-bourgeoisie, its economic and political instability. But it is not enough to supply an explanation for various phenomena; the practical conclusions must also be drawn from the explanations given. The proletariat can only assure its hegemony of the national-peasant movement in India on condition that it places its own class-education and unification on the right lines. Pseudonyms, such as "Workers' and Peasants' Party" have long since become obsolete, and the Indian proletariat now, more than at any other time, needs to realise the necessity for the definite formation of its own Communist vanguard.

COMMUNIST PARTY A FUNDAMENTAL NECESSITY

The matter of forming a Communist Party of India has become a fundamental problem of the Indian Revolution. The Indian proletariat has reached the struggle for political hegemony in the emancipation movement by other means than the Russian working class. In the infancy of the Russian labour movement there was formed the party which afterwards became the Bolshevik Party. In the Revolution of 1905 the working class followed its banner. During the Revolution, the Party grew by the masses rallying around it; it grew up with the mass of the working class. We find a different position in India. There the spontaneous development of the class struggle brought the masses to a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for hegemony in the liberation movement. Only in the process of the fight against imperialism, inside the nationalist ranks, was the proletariat able to emerge as an independent class force. Only by passing through a long series of detours in the national-emancipatory struggle was the Indian proletariat able to grow up into an independent class force. Manabendra Nath Roy, one of the has-beens, now vehemently attacks the Communist International for its ill-disposed attitude towards Gandhi, Nehru and the Ruikars, at the same time trying to belie the revolutionary history of the Indian working class, in which he has been unable to find a place for himself. With the shamelessness of a renegade, to whom principle is much cheaper than wounded conceit, he writes: "When Lenin wrote the resolution of the Second Congress, he only had very incomplete conceptions on the position in the colonial countries." (*Gegen den Strom*, March 1st.) Mr. Roy, imitating Trotsky and other incarnations of unrecognised genius, tries to turn the history of the development of the Indian labour movement into a kind of small-talk history of how he, the great Roy, taught Lenin. At such rubbish one merely snaps one's fingers, of course. Of the same worth are the accusations of another careerist,

a Max Schachtman, in the *Militant*, who accuses the Communist International of "resisting the formation of a Communist Party in India." (*Militant*, February 8th.) Both the Right and the "Left" renegades ignore the real facts, for the birth of the revolutionary working class in India in 1928-1929 is an indisputable fact. That did not and could not take place until the development of the class struggle had aroused the masses, until the slogans of the Comintern had been turned into class reality. They could only be embodied in the real life of India thanks to the self-development of the working class, in the process of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. Roy and the other knights for an hour (and renegades for life) can console themselves as much as they like with statements that "Moscow is not a geographical conception." (As a matter of fact this individual wants a *Kuomintang for India!*) They are already, be it noted, not far from declaring that the defence of the "geographical frontiers" of the Soviet Union is one thing, but the "political defence of Moscow" is another! In the rotten bog in which they are stranded all revolutionary conceptions are turned into their own antithesis—into the marked cards of a counter-revolutionary game.

The Indian labour movement is ascending with difficulty to the height of a revolutionary wave, by means of the railway strike, by means of the strike of 30,000 jute workers, by means of innumerable actions of separate sections of the working class. The achievement of working class political and organisational unity is the order of the day. The formation of a Communist Party of India, drawing its forces from the broad trade union organisation, and the manifold contacts with the peasantry, is the order of the day. The Gordian knot of contradictions in the present changing period will be cut by the further development of the Indian working class struggle, by the preparation of decisive battles, the path to which lies through the revolutionary general strike, led by the genuine proletarian vanguard.

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The First Arab Workers' Congress in Palestine and the Anti-Imperialist Fight in the Arab Countries

By NADAB.

ON August 23rd, 1929, an anti-imperialist rising broke out in Palestine—on January 11th, 1930, the first Arab Workers' Congress met at Haifa. There is a close inner connection between these two events. Without the August rising, the Congress would not have taken place; the Congress, in turn, will greatly influence the further development of the class and anti-imperialist struggle in Palestine. And not only in Palestine. This small British colony is strongly linked up with the Levant, Syria, Iraq, Egypt—a connection which found expression tumultuously during the time of the August rising. It is for this reason that the Congress deserves the special attention of the international revolutionary working-class. It must be appreciated not as a local Palestinian affair, but as an important new turn, the beginning of a new stage in the anti-imperialist struggle of the working and peasant masses in the Arab countries.

I. THE WORKERS' CONDITIONS AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES.

In all the Arab countries enumerated (except Egypt) capitalism began to develop comparatively recently. In all these countries, the feudal elements in economy are very marked. The Arab working-class is very young. The largest group among them consists of agricultural labourers. The industrial proletariat is poorly developed, and is strongly connected (as indeed are all urban workers) with the peasantry. Under pressure of imperialist and capitalist-landowning exploitation, the Arab peasants rapidly become pauperised and flock to the towns in search of work. Industry, the development of which is retarded by imperialism, is unable to absorb any considerable section of the "surplus" village population. The reserve army of labour in the Arab countries is tremendous. All these factors taken together have led to the extremely serious economic position of the Arab workers, who have grown considerably in numbers, particularly since the war.

Before the war, trade unions were practically non-existent in the Arab countries, with the

exception of some purely craft-unions. After the war, under the influence of the revolutionary crisis, the organisation of unions was commenced in Egypt and later in Syria and Palestine. It is natural that the strongest unions were formed in Egypt, where in 1921, a congress of revolutionary unions was held which formed a confederation embracing several score thousands of workers. This confederation, which grew up on the crest of a revolutionary wave, but which had neither trade union cadres, nor a politically mature leadership (the Egyptian Communist Party was then very weak) soon fell to pieces (1924). It was replaced by yellow unions which were completely in the hands of the Egyptian bourgeoisie—tobacco workers, textile workers, tramwaymen and dockers. The Syrian workers commenced organising later than the Egyptian, although a First of May strike was organised in Beirut as far back as in 1913. The Syrian trade unions (tobacco workers, printers and motor-drivers) are numerically weak, have never conducted a militant policy and are now led by national-reformist elements. The trade unions are made use of by the Syrian bourgeoisie. In Palestine in 1923-1924 the big capitalists organised a so-called "Arab Workers' Party of Nablus," in 1924, a "Union of Arab Workers in Haifa" was formed, and in 1927 Unions of Printers and Porters. The Palestine Arab Workers' organisations were much weaker even than the Syrian. They did not endure for long and made themselves felt very little. By the time of the Congress both the organisation in Nablus, as also the unions of printers and porters formed by the Palestinian C.P., had collapsed.

Despite the absence of trade union organisations, or their extreme feebleness and opportunism, strikes have broken out relatively frequently in the Arab countries during recent years. They have taken place spontaneously, have generally been leaderless, or under the lead of national-reformists, and in the majority of cases have ended in defeat or in compromise unfavourable for the workers. A number of these strikes, particularly in Egypt, have been very turbulent and accompanied by serious

collisions with the police. These spontaneous class fights showed the fighting qualities of the workers, and also the absence of any organisation whatever capable of a struggle. The formation of independent class trade unions by the weak Communist Parties of Egypt, Syria and Palestine, which are working under exceedingly hard conditions, was a very difficult matter, and only just lately has the Palestine C.P. attained certain successes in this direction.

2. THE ARAB WORKING MASSES AND THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION.

The Arab workers have participated in revolutionary anti-imperialist fights, but not as an independent organised force, merely as an amorphous mass spontaneously following the leadership of another class.

Neither in the revolutionary movement in Iraq in 1920-1922, in Palestine in 1919-1926, nor during the Syrian revolution of 1925-1927, did the Arab workers take action as an independent factor. Whereas the peasants' demands did find a reflection—even if distorted—in the demands put forward by the nationalists, the workers' demands were not only hushed up by the nationalists, but were not even put forward by the workers themselves. *That the workers were absolutely not class-conscious was indeed the characteristic feature in the epoch of anti-imperialist struggles of 1919-1927.* In those years the militant and rebellious masses were led by bourgeois (Egypt) or bourgeois-feudal (Syria, Iraq, Palestine) groups, while any noticeable workers' organisation was completely lacking. And it should be observed that the bourgeois-feudal groups made excellent use of the working masses, getting them to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the capitalists.

Various bourgeois parties took well into account the utility they could derive from the political exploitation of the proletariat. For instance, after the Mohamed Mahmud *coup-d'état* in Egypt, the dictator made it widely known to the workers that reforms were imminent: workers' housing, labour legislation, sanitary assistance. Not a single one of these promises was kept. Mahomed Mahmud hoped, by means of promises and solemn gestures alone, to draw away from the Wafd the organisations existing in Egypt, and if not to win them to his side, at least to neutralise them.

Since 1925-1927 (in some countries earlier, in others later) the Arab bourgeoisie has taken an open course for rapprochement with imperialism. The Egyptian Wafd, which has never been a revolutionary party, has taken the course of a definite agreement with England. The Palestine Arab Executive Committee since 1926 has practically renounced the slogan of "non-co-operation," the leading Syrian bourgeois-feudal circles, after the defeat of the rising, made every effort to attain peace. The reasons that led the nationalists to take this national-reformist course are: (1) a study of the Chinese experience, (2) the fear of arousing and bringing into action their own workers and peasants, (3) certain economic bribes and political promises held out by the imperialists.

However, the deal between the national-bourgeoisie and feudal elements and the imperialists does not by any means signify a modification of the actual contradictions between the basic mass of the colonial population and the imperialists. Quite the contrary. The rapprochement of the Arab bourgeois-land-owning classes with imperialism is undoubtedly a proof of a further sharpening of these contradictions. At the present time, after the occurrence of an American crisis attaining a world-wide scale, after an accentuated agrarian crisis, after revolutionary upheavals in a number of colonies, there can be no doubt that a new rise of the revolutionary wave in the colonies has started.

Who will assume the leadership of this rising tide? Only sheer opportunists could place any hopes in the revolutionary capacity of the bourgeoisie. Then perhaps the petty-bourgeoisie (above all, the intelligentsia)—as represented by the various Left radical groups, will lead the masses in the fight?

As far as the Arab countries are concerned, the weakness of the so-called "Left" nationalist groupings, and their extreme lack of independence, is a very striking phenomenon. In Egypt, in spite of an exceedingly acute political situation, in spite of a fairly well-developed political differentiation, in spite of the absolute treachery of the "Wafd"—there is no "Left" nationalist Party capable of fighting. The "National Party," which pretends to the title "extreme left" is a lifeless sect; it is led by feudal elements. During the dictatorship of

Mohamed Mahmud it completely disgraced itself by carrying on intrigues behind the scenes with the British puppets.

In Palestine the "Left" nationalist group of Hamvi-Hussedin, whose role has been of some significance in the anti-imperialist struggle, is organisationally weak. In Syria and Irak, as also in Trans-Jordania, the "Left" nationalists constitute a kind of feudal aristocracy. (In Transjordan, the most backward of these countries, the feudal aristocracy has been somewhat late in its evolution from "non-co-operation" to complete collaboration with imperialism.)

This extreme weakness, this lack of independence, this tendency to drag at the tail, shown by the "Left" nationalists in the Arab countries is not an accidental phenomenon. Its causes are to be found in the social origin of the national intelligentsia who constitute the leading cadre of the petty bourgeois radical elements. In the Arab countries, (at any rate in Syria, Irak, etc.) the intelligentsia come from the declassed impoverished aristocracy. To this very day this aristocratic intelligentsia is bound by family ties to the feudal landowners, they are still proprietors of small plots of land *which they lease out to the fellahin*; the impoverished intelligentsia are often connected with the big landowners by means of a joint family "Vakuf." All these factors taken together, plus the fact that the most important intellectual profession is a post in the imperialist civil service, has caused the petty-bourgeois radical movement in the Arab countries to be extremely sparse, timid, lacking in independence, incapable of leading revolutionary fights.

The sole class, which, owing to its objective position, is capable of occupying a leading place in the revolutionary movement, is the proletariat. But it is not yet subjectively ready for this—its class-consciousness is only now developing. Can the working-class of the Arab countries succeed in organising themselves in time for the revolutionary battles, or even for the first stage of these battles? If they can, the spontaneous rising of millions of fellahin, which approaches nearer every day, can be turned into a victorious revolution; if they cannot, this rising will degenerate into disconnected revolts, with which the imperialists will be able to cope fairly easily. The reply to this question is supplied by the

recent events in Palestine—the August rising and the January Workers' Congress, which is the prelude to powerful revolutionary fights in the Arab countries.

3. THE AUGUST RISING AND THE WORKERS.

The Palestine Arab workers were unprepared for the August rising. At the time of the rising the workers proved to be unorganised and were not politically independent. Consciousness of the necessity for class struggle, a struggle against their own bourgeoisie, of the need for an independent leading action against imperialism, only penetrated into a very small circle of workers. At the time of the rising, the C.P. of Palestine found itself extremely weak, as a result of its national composition, which isolated it from the Arab masses, and its absolute unpreparedness for the insurrection. Moreover, owing to its isolation from the masses (especially the fellahin), and also owing to certain Right errors which it committed, the C.P. of Palestine absolutely failed to foresee the oncoming events, and therefore, while recognising the accentuation of the political situation in general, undertook no concrete steps whatever in connection with the then mature insurrection.

For these reasons, the masses came under the leadership of bourgeois-feudal elements, who set themselves the task of scotching the anti-imperialist movement of the fellahin, Bedouins and urban poor, directing it into the channels of an Arab-Jewish national struggle. The counter-revolutionary manoeuvre of the leadership did not succeed. An insurrectionary movement broke out in the country. But the masses, (mainly Bedouins and fellahin) who had risen up were left without a revolutionary leadership and were broken up by the counter-revolutionary bloc of imperialists, Zionists and national-reformists.

However, immediately following the defeat of the armed Bedouin-peasant action it became evident that the movement had not ended with this defeat, but had only just commenced. After the ruthless suppression of the rising, there was no social reaction, no passiveness, no apathy on the part of the masses, but an increase in the activity of these masses, new strata being drawn into the movement.*

* This is further proof of the fact that the August rising is not a single "chance" local phenomenon, but was simply *the first wave of a rising revolution in the Arab countries.*

The August rising had a particularly profound influence on the Arab workers. The working masses became active and revolutionary. In the light of the rising, not only the political servitude but also the economic exploitation of the workers was more clearly perceived. The intensified social-political activity of the bourgeois-feudal and petty-bourgeois groups, also had a stimulating effect on the working masses. At the same time, the open treachery of the bourgeois-feudal leadership discredited it in the eyes of the working masses, and, in turn, stimulated the workers to organise themselves independently. Thus, whereas the first days of the August rising to a certain extent proceeded along the lines of previous Arab risings (revolutionary fellahin and petty-bourgeois urban masses with a bourgeois-feudal leadership, sooner or later betraying the rising) in the November-January period, a new current in events was to be observed: considerable masses of workers began to break away from the nationalist leadership, sharper class differentiation took place and a tendency manifested itself towards independent organisation.

The Palestine Arab workers, though unable to prepare for the rising, have, since the defeat, begun to overtake events.

4. THE ARAB WORKERS' CONGRESS.

Only the rising provided the slogan for the convention of an Arab Workers' Congress with a real meaning and a real basis. The desire for an independent workers' organisation became so strong that already in December the Haifa national-reformist labour organisation decided to convene a congress. Not only the Palestine workers were informed about this congress, but also the workers of the neighbouring countries. In Palestine a broad preparatory campaign for the congress was started. By means of legal and illegal meetings, trade union manifestoes and personal agitation, fairly wide sections of workers were reached in a number of towns (Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa, Lud, Akka, Nazareth) and villages (Ayin-Karem, Beth-Safafa, Yehudiya, Tyre, Shafamir). There were altogether 61 delegates at the congress representing 4,000 to 6,000 Arab workers. The communists took most active part in the voting, and had a fairly strong group at the congress. At the beginning of the congress the nationalists took up a rather benevolent

attitude, being sure of their own complete hegemony. The overwhelming majority of the delegates were workers, but at the same time there were several business men and intellectuals present at the congress among the nationalist leaders. A delegation was to have attended from the Syrian trade unions, and was duly elected. The Syrian government, however, refused to grant visas and therefore only two workers who came illegally were present at the congress.

The opening of the congress attracted the attention of the Haifa workers. The hall of the conference was filled with worker visitors, and numbers more who could not be admitted stood in the street. The government permitted the congress only on condition that it remained completely non-political. The congress agenda included the following points: (1) the position of the international working-class and the position of the Palestine workers, (2) discussion and resolutions, (3) elections to the C.C.

From the start of the congress to the finish there was a persistent struggle between the communists and nationalists for influence over the non-party workers. The discussion centred round the following questions: (1) Are political speeches permissible at the congress; (2) attitude towards the Arab bourgeoisie and their demands; (3) eight-hour working day and wage increases; (4) a workers' newspaper; (5) greetings to the Indian workers. The communists presented a militant political declaration: estimation of the insurrection and the treacherous role of the nationalist-reformists; summons for a struggle, not only against the Balfour declaration (for the creation of a Jewish national home), but in general against the British mandate; for the agrarian revolution; for the necessity of supporting the partisan detachments; for launching the slogan of a workers' and peasants' government. The Right-wingers demanded that the communist speaker should not be allowed to proceed, on the grounds that the government had prohibited politics. After prolonged obstruction the political declaration was defeated by a majority of 35 against 22. The nationalists won, but their victory was gained exclusively by means of intimidating the delegates by the prospect of governmental intervention. The feeling of the overwhelming majority of the delegates was undoubtedly in

favour of "politics" (politics meant anti-imperialism). When the communist speaker after the voting, ended his speech with the slogan: "Long live the Workers' and Peasants' Federation of Arab countries!" the workers replied with triumphant shouts and a storm of applause.

On the second question, the nationalists also succeeded in scoring a partial victory. Although a number of their proposals, aimed at defending the monetary interests of the Arab bourgeoisie, were not carried, they carried their resolutions for the giving of concessions to the Arab capitalists, for proportional distribution of public works, among the Arab and Jewish workers, etc. On the remaining questions the Rights were defeated. To our slogan for an eight-hour day they opposed their demand for a fourteen-hour day "for the strengthening of national industry." This demand was met by cries of dissent and was rejected. On the question of publishing a workers' newspaper, the nationalists proposed that the workers' organisation should simply link up with one of the existing nationalist newspapers. The congress resolved by an overwhelming majority, to start the publication of an *independent* workers' newspaper. After heated debates we also carried our proposal for greetings to be sent to the Indian workers, the demand for introducing the political regime for political prisoners, and a protest against the imperialist terror (levies, death sentences, etc.).

In appraising this congress it must be said, in general, that the nationalists dominated the congress and gave it a purely national (national-reformist) tendency on all those questions where they were able to hide behind nationalist phraseology, to play on the chauvinist instincts of the delegates, or else to threaten government intervention. But on a whole number of questions, the class significance of which was clear, the revolutionary delegates beat the nationalists. Despite all its defects, the congress is a serious step towards the formation of an independent workers' organisation. The hope of the nationalists that they would secure for themselves yet one more auxiliary organisation was smashed—and therein lies the great significance of the congress. The creation of an independent workers' organisation will further accentuate the class differentiation, will spur the

proletariat on to a more active economic and political struggle.

5. THE STRUGGLE AFTER THE CONGRESS.

Immediately following the congress a fierce struggle began around the workers' organisation. The Arab nationalists understood that the further development of the union along the lines proposed at the congress augured great danger for them.

In the nationalist press a campaign was started against the congress and against the Central Committee of the Arab workers' organisation elected there. "The Congress was dominated by the communists"—was the slogan beneath which they started their campaign of slander. The congress was also pictured as an implement of Jewish nationalism. Wildest of all were the "Left" nationalists who sensed the direct danger.

The Zionists were also on the alert. They tried to discredit the congress in the eyes of the Jewish workers as being a scheme of the Arab nationalist reactionaries, while they informed the government that "the hand of Moscow was present at the congress."

Meanwhile, the MacDonald Palestine administration could hardly have been surpassed—even by the Tories! Immediately after the congress it instituted an increased police surveillance, mass searches and arrests "on suspicion." Eighty workers were dismissed from the government stone quarries, where there had been a live election campaign prior to the congress.

A fight also flared up inside the unions. In order to strengthen their position, the nationalists tried to introduce employers and even policemen into the unions. At the same time they sabotaged the formation of new trade unions and hindered the work of the existing ones. Certain leaders of the reformist trade union executives came to terms with the Zionist trade union bureaucrats who are trying to disintegrate the Arab workers' organisation. All these attacks from without and within have so far been successfully repulsed by the workers. The congress aroused tremendous enthusiasm among the working masses. Hundreds of new workers have joined the unions. New organisations have been formed in Jaffa, Haifa and Nazareth.

Simultaneously, economic action has started: two days after the congress a partial strike (of 120 workers) took place at the big "Mabruk" tobacco factory; in Jerusalem the workers went on strike at big government building jobs. At the government quarry at Aklit one of the dismissed workers shot at an Englishman in charge of the work. The fighting mood of the workers is rising.

The congress also aroused great interest among the Syrian workers. In spite of the slanders of the nationalist newspapers, the representatives of the Syrian workers have intimated that they welcome the Palestine Congress, and intend following in its same footsteps.

As a result of the rising, the Palestine Arab workers are entering the path of organised revolutionary struggle. The workers of Egypt, and possibly of Syria also, in the event of a revolutionary crisis, will adopt this path even more rapidly and determinedly than those of Palestine.

6. TASKS OF THE C.P. OF PALESTINE.

The fairly rapid tempo of organisation of the Arab workers under conditions of an intensified internal struggle—the very acute political situation, the imperialist terror, the increasing revolutionary ferment among the fellahin (beginning of a partisan movement) and the complete treachery of the national reformists—confronts the C.P. of Palestine with extremely important and responsible tasks. It will be sufficient here just to enumerate them: (1) Fight for the organisational strengthening and development of the "Palestine Arab Workers' Organisation," (2) drive the employers definitely out of the unions, (3) fight the influence of the national-reformists, particularly the "Left" nationalists, (4) fight for the international unification of Arab and Jewish workers, and against the intrigues and manoeuvres of the Zionist Amsterdamites, (5) bring about an alliance between the workers' organisation and the impoverished fellahin mass, (6) proceed rapidly to the creation of a trade union federation of the Arab countries.

The Revolutionary Rise in Greece and the Tasks of the Communist Movement

(From the Report of the E.C.C.I. Delegation)

I.—THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION OF THE COUNTRY.

WE are only going to deal here with the most important features of the situation and the deductions to be drawn.

A profound and serious crisis prevails in the entire economic system of Greece, and is inevitably bound up with corresponding phenomena of crisis in all spheres of social life and of the class struggle.

As a consequence of this situation, there is a general bourgeois offensive on wages, working hours, and the various conquests of the working-class. (This is the significance of the employers' memorandum of January, 1930, the wave of strikes, etc.)

The most important cause of the crisis is the failure of the attempts of the bourgeoisie to heal the wounds made upon the economic system of this small country by the four wars conducted during the last twenty years (two Balkan wars the world war and the Greco-Turkish war) and

their consequences. The bourgeoisie has tried to bring about stabilisation. This stabilisation has always been thoroughly shaky, more unstable, in fact, than the partial stabilisation achieved in other countries. At the present time it is clear, even to a large section of bourgeois economists, that in Greece these attempts have failed.

All sections of the bourgeoisie are now primarily occupied with the question of this crisis, its causes, its consequences, its prospects, and the ways of overcoming it. Every day sees the organisation of conferences of bank directors, chambers of commerce and industry, and various other institutions—all on the theme of the crisis. Even the government theoretical economists openly admit that the country is experiencing a serious economic crisis which has not yet reached its zenith.

This state of affairs naturally leads to accentuated contradictions and struggle, between the bourgeoisie and the working-class on the one

hand, and between the bourgeoisie and various strata of the peasantry (including considerable sections of the middle peasantry) on the other. More than one-third of the entire working-class was affected by the growing strike wave in 1929. In that year there were, throughout the country, sixty big strikes, in which more than 50,000 workers took part, if we also include the August 1st demonstrations, 300,000 days were lost owing to strikes. Mass strikes broke out even in those branches of industry (such as textile production), where we have hitherto had practically no influence, and where 97-98 per cent. of the workers were not organised. During the strikes, in the majority of cases, there was almost 100 per cent. stoppage of work.

NEW STRIKES IMMINENT.

At the present moment there are no big strikes in progress, but all the Greek comrades think it would be wrong to assert that the strike-wave has slowed down. A number of new strikes are to be expected in the immediate future. A strike of agricultural labourers is now in progress at Volossa, while in the Piraeus there is a movement in the tobacco industry, where unemployment is still rampant despite the fact that seasonal unemployment has usually already ended by January. Furthermore, in the next few days, or at any rate the next few weeks, a strike of workers is expected on the island of Mitylene and a railwaymen's strike in the Peloponnessus (over more than 700 kilometres of the line). In general, the position of the railwaymen is very serious; they have not received wages in the Peloponnessus for several weeks. (All the railway system of Southern Greece is in the hands of one company, which now, as a result of the failure of certain banks, is itself faced with a crash.) On railways in other parts of Greece wages have also been in arrears for a long time. This is a highly important factor, because as is known, our influence among the railwaymen is at present extremely small, and if we work on the right lines in connection with this movement we can considerably increase it.

The employers are preparing a brazen attack on the working-class. They demand (in their notorious memorandum) reductions in wages and social insurance, increased working hours, intensification and "better" organisation of the

labour process (rationalisation), etc. This will undoubtedly cause an increase in the strike wave during coming months.

Ferment also continues amongst the peasantry. The chief problem of this peasant movement is the tax question, and the demand for material assistance for ruined agriculture. Cases of exacting taxes and debts by force are becoming more and more frequent, so that on this question even the bourgeois opposition is conducting a "fight" against the government.

This prolonged and growing peasant movement in many cases is of a spontaneous nature, although it often happens that in a particular village this movement is led by communists. The Agrarian Party (reactionary party of rich farmers) who put forward a demagogic programme of reformist partial demands and slogans (cheap credits, agricultural co-operatives, reduction of taxes, rationalisation of certain branches of agriculture) are trying to get the upper hand in this movement. They are often unsuccessful in this. While their basis among the peasantry is extending, the movement as a whole is proceeding sporadically, often being of a purely local nature; and it would therefore be erroneous to conclude that the whole movement is under the influence of the agrarians. But the possible conquest by the agrarians of the leadership of this movement, and their temporary suppression of revolutionary tendencies, constitutes a very great danger.

It is important to note that of late there have been increasing cases of peasants fleeing to the mountains and woods. The bourgeois press speaks of these events in a very calm manner.

EFFECTS ON BOURGEOISIE.

On the other hand, the crisis was bound to have a serious influence on the bourgeois camp and on its directly ruling class. The governmental bloc, which until recently had been very strong, and was led by the old fox Venizelos, has already split up. The influence of the Venizelists, who have an absolute majority in parliament, has declined considerably. The oppositionist Monarchist Party (headed by Zaldaris) has intensified its struggle against Venizelos, apparently not without some success. The supporters of General Kondilis, who played a leading role in the overthrow of the dictator Pangalos (1926), have left the government.

Inside the Venizelos party a strong opposition wing has crystallised, operating with "Left" phrases and headed by the second party leader, Kafandaris. In the Venizelos Party there exists yet another wing, which in words is still more "Left" than the Kafandaris wing (those grouped around the paper *Imeithis Tipos*).

Venizelos is doing everything possible to keep afloat. Every day he is holding conferences with bankers, industrialists, business men, etc., in which he speaks on all questions, makes appeals to all classes of the population (including the working-class) and endeavours to camouflage internal difficulties by imaginary and negligible successes in the realm of foreign policy (for instance, a certain reduction in Greek indebtedness, obtained at the Hague Conference).

The opposition movement against Venizelos is headed by General Kondilis, mentioned above, who returned from France two months ago, where he had been sojourning for a long time, challenging the government with a fascist programme. He charges the Venizelos policy with being incapable of solving the crisis, asserts that another method must be found, and appeals, on the one hand, to his "friends of the army," and on the other hand—to the people. His programme is: "Every Greek must be well-fed," and he is trying to put the programme into action. He thinks that Greece is weak as a military force, that she should be considerably strengthened, and puts forward an openly imperialist programme. At the same time, he uses extremely demagogic "Left" phraseology. He speculates in particular on the peasant movement, and has already entered into a bloc with the Agrarians. He has a strong influence over the army officers. It is very probable that with the support of French military circles (as opposed to Venizelos, the direct agent of British imperialism) he will prepare a military *coup d'etat* on fascist lines ("Left" demagoguery, and alliance with the rich farmers). Unfortunately, until we arrived, our Party did not understand this danger. We will describe below the attitude of the Party on this question.

In any case, this fact, in our opinion, is of great importance. If the Party fails to realise this danger, and does not mobilise the broad masses against these fascist groupings, at the same time not slackening its fight against Venizelos, the very real danger will arise that we

shall have in Greece in the near future, an open fascist regime under Kondilis, that Greek expert at military *coup d'etat* and proclamations.

II.—THE CONDITION OF OUR MOVEMENT.

In estimating the condition of the Party in Greece, we must say that after having studied the position on the spot, conferring with many comrades there, and investigating the state of our organisations (it is true, only superficially so far, but sufficiently for our conclusions) we have arrived at the following opinions: There is a correct appreciation of the general position in the country, both economically and politically. But the position of the Party and the trade unions,—their strength, their line, their efficiency and their preparedness to lead the struggle (which is bound to be developed by the objectively favourable situation)—are worse, feebler than we expected.

The Party leadership is very weak, and many big opportunist mistakes have been made. A number of strikes and workers' and peasants' movements have developed without the knowledge and without the intervention of the Party. The problem of a general strike or of a political mass strike is very hazily understood, even in Party circles and among the T.U. leadership. After putting forward the slogan for a general strike, the Party has done practically nothing for the last two months in order to prepare itself and the working-class for the putting of such an ambitious slogan into operation. A few leading articles were written, and that is all. The comrades wanted to continue a rather abstract discussion for two months, and only then to commence practical work among the masses. Such a situation and such errors naturally had an unsatisfactory effect organisationally. The Party has 1,500 members. The influence of the Party in the factories has organisationally declined. The circulation of the Party newspaper, which in July last was still 3,000, has now fallen to 1,666. Absolutely no work has been conducted among the peasantry, and in the army and fleet it has only improved in the past few months. In response to the prohibition of the Unitary trade unions, no counter-action was undertaken. The Party knew that various strikes were about to take place, but until the Plenum of the Central Committee, nothing was done in preparation for them, or to assure our

leadership of them. Everywhere one comes up against an under-estimation of organisational work, opportunist practices and often an opportunist standpoint. "Left" phrases and sectarianism are also frequent. What surprised us most of all was that there were no signs of the Party and trade unions being in the state of mobilisation which was demanded not only by the situation, but also by the estimation of the Greek comrades themselves.

To all this must be added the fact that self-criticism, particularly among the party leadership, is almost non-existent in the Party.

The trade union newspaper comes out irregularly, while the peasant paper no longer appears at all.

There was no systematic plan of preparation for the general strike. It is highly characteristic that the Party C.C., ever since the appearance of the open letter (November, 1930) and to this very day, has not issued a single instruction to Party organisations, has not sent out a single circular, on the tasks connected with the general strike.

In Athens the Party has only 170 members and in the Piraeus (one of the most important working-class centres) only 70 members.

III.—THE MAIN ERRORS OF THE PARTY AND TRADE UNIONS.

We consider that in spite of all these shortcomings the slogan for a mass strike can be put into effect. It is true, the time of the mass strike will have to be postponed for a month or two (in accordance with the development of the movement, etc.). It would be a very big mistake, if, owing to subjective errors and weaknesses, no attempt was undertaken to make the fullest possible use of the objectively favourable situation. Moreover, the pre-requisites for a rapid improvement in the condition of the Party—given a correct policy, correctly carried out by a good leadership—already exist. It should also be borne in mind that in Greece the factor of spontaneity plays a fairly large part. Even in the history of the last two weeks, cases have been observed where an active movement of the unorganised masses has led to a considerable improvement in the work of the Party organisations.

The general standpoint of the Party on the question of the strike must be recognised as

correct, but we would emphasise that it is not sufficient merely to confirm this general standpoint, but to emphasise its errors and defects, and to elucidate the means of removing them. We now wish to acquaint you, in general terms, with the chief omissions and mistakes.

(1) *Confused notion as to the nature, objects and stages of the general strike.* The comrades have acted, one might say, fatalistically: We will announce a general strike, and the trend of events will show what the result will be. It was quite correct to adopt the resolution for the preparation of mass political strikes. At the same time the partial demands were not linked up with the slogan for the overthrow of Venizelos.

(2) *The so-called theory of stages.* Comrades pictured a general strike and the preparation for it in the form of pre-conceived and arbitrary stages. They produced the slogan. Then they resolved that it should be discussed for several months in the Party and trade unions: that was the first stage. Then Party conferences were to be convened everywhere—the second stage; *and only after that was the real mass work, election of councils of action, etc.* (the third stage), *to commence.* With this theory of stages is closely connected—

(3) *Schematic manner dealing with the general strike question.* The comrades resolved precisely when the respective stages of this programme should end and when the general strike should begin.

(4) *Failure to understand the importance of the general strike slogan.* Leading comrades have not sufficiently clearly understood what a serious question the conducting of this strike is. They issued the slogan and during two-and-a-half months did absolutely nothing in practice (except as above-mentioned, a few newspaper articles and platonic statements about solidarity at some workers' meetings) in order seriously to prepare for the carrying out of this slogan. Apart from the open letter, the C.C. did not send out a single organisational or political instruction to Party organisations. Preparatory work in the factories was not undertaken at all.

(5) *The estimation of the general strike as the only means of overcoming the weaknesses of the Party.* In the open letter of the C.C. there is one passage which practically states that the problem of the general strike is at the same time the problem of

turning our organisations into mass organisations. The view even exists in the Party that in the Second Period the Party could not be a mass Party, but that the Third Period provides this possibility. It is true, that this view was disputed by the Party leadership.

(6) *Under-estimation of partial strikes and partial movements.* We will not deal here with the numerous errors committed by the Party in regard to the many strikes that took place prior to the issue of the general strike slogan. It has been established, that certain big strikes (such as the chemical workers'—5,000 out, and the textile-workers'—8,000 out, etc.), broke out quite unexpectedly for the Party, that in certain strikes Party work was more than feeble, etc. But it is also clear that the comrades did not take up the right attitude on the question of partial strikes, even after the general strike slogan had been launched. At any rate they did not do so in practice. Their resolutions never spoke of the necessity to *organise* partial strikes, extend them, and join them up with the general strike. The formula they contented themselves with, however, was approximately as follows: we should not counterpose partial strikes to the general strike. In practice this attitude to an extent led to the *postponement of partial strikes* (as in Mitylene, Lorian) and *at other times to passivity in the matter of organising partial strikes*. Such an attitude is dangerous in so far as a number of such partial strikes are imminent in the near future.

(7) *Failure to react to the prohibition of the trade unions and to the recent blows of the government against our movement.* The Venizelos government is conducting very clever tactics in regard to our movement: to break it up piecemeal before we are in a position to conduct the general strike. At first the trade unions were only prohibited in certain places (Drama, Arginion). The prohibition emanated from the local authority, and supposedly owing to "local" causes; then the Unitary Confederation was prohibited, i.e., not separate unions (which still continue to exist legally), but the Unitary Confederation uniting them. Then came the prohibition of the I.C.W.P.A. Now they are preparing to prescribe the Tobacco Workers' Union (our strongest source of support). There came the prohibition, not of the actual publication of our newspaper, *but of its circulation by*

post or rail. Thus gradually, noiselessly, and outwardly "innocently," one blow falls after the other and our comrades have not understood this plan, and have not reacted to it even now. *The Political Bureau has not even discussed this question.* The Central Council of Trade Unions issued a statement saying, in rather mild and concealed phrases, that the Unitary Confederation, despite the prohibition, would continue its work and that the working-class would respond to the ban by intensively preparing for the general strike. And that was all. At various workers' meetings, called for other purposes, resolutions of protest were passed. Only at Salonika and a few other places in Northern Greece did matters go as far as mass-demonstrations *on the initiative of the localities.*

(8) *There was no political consideration of the question of the alliance of working-class peasantry.* As is known, the wave of the peasant movement has not yet broken. According to approximate calculations, about 40,000 peasants took part in this movement (peasant meetings, demonstrations, armed encounters). After the Party had advanced the slogan of the general strike, it did not bring up the question of the alliance of the proletariat and peasantry as a necessary pre-requisite to victory. *Up to the present day the Party has no programme of demands for the peasant movement.* As we have already pointed out, it has sometimes happened that our organisations or our comrades have played a leading part in peasant risings. But the C.C. has no good contacts with its organisations in the countryside. For the most part, it does not know the attitude of our comrades in such events, or only finds out about it from the bourgeois press. There have been cases where our comrades *collaborated with representatives of the reactionary agrarian Party.* Until recently there has been repetition of such errors as the *demanding of cheap credits for the peasants, etc.*

(9) *Insufficient work in the army and fleet.* During the last few months this work has deteriorated. In connection with the general strike there was no political or economic presentation of the question of a united front between the workers and peasants in the barracks and the navy. Up to now work has been conducted mainly from the viewpoint of the solidarity of soldiers and sailors with the workers on strike. Very little has been done to develop

simultaneously a soldiers' and sailors' movement with *its own* demands.

(10) *Belated appreciation of Kondilis' fascist movement.* Only when we had arrived, and on our insisting, did the Party leadership make a correct estimation of the growing fascist movement, led by Kondilis. The work of exposing this movement before the masses had not yet begun. It is interesting to note that in discussing this and other questions in the Polit Bureau, a mechanical viewpoint was revealed. Very little comprehension of real dialectics and of the concrete class struggle was shown. The comrades were inclined to try to fit it into rigid schemes constructed on the basis of books, or of international resolutions; but as to any specific features which were not to be found in these schemes, they were very unclear. As we have already said, the Party will continue in the future to concentrate all its efforts against the Venizelos government, but will at the same time expose no less energetically the fascist nature and plans of Kondilis and the Agrarians.

(11) *Passivity on the national question.* Up to now the Party has not conducted practical work among the oppressed nationalities and minorities being content with merely putting forward the slogan: "An independent and united Macedonia and Thrace." in all the official Party documents. We should not only support the fight of the oppressed peoples, but *stimulate* these masses to this struggle, taking the lead of it, and endeavouring to combine it with the struggle of the working-class. This does not mean that we should organise a national revolutionary party. We are organising the mass struggle of the oppressed nationalities.

(12) *Absence of an illegal apparatus* and of increased preparations in view of the illegal position which will become inevitable with the further development of the fight.

(13) *Absence of self-criticism of the Party leadership.* Comrades in the Party leadership favour self-criticism, but only criticism of the Party organisations! Criticism in respect of themselves, recognition of their own errors, is a weak spot in the work of the Party leadership.

(14) *Sectarianism and under-estimation of organisational work* is to be observed in the Party. This is particularly so in the trade unions—from top to bottom. The Greek comrades are capable of talking for hours and

days on political themes, of continuing abstract discussions, of discoursing endlessly about the "problems of the third period," etc., but the work of the organisation down below, among the masses, in the factories—this is the weakest aspect of our Greek movement.

It stands to reason that all the above errors are closely connected one with the other, in fact, one develops out of another. A number of errors have been committed in various strikes and in the trade union work in general.

The question naturally arises—What remained after all those errors? Was the attitude of the Greek comrades in general, in principle, correct in regard to the general strike? To that we reply most decidedly in the affirmative. The position of the workers' and peasants' movement is such that it is absolutely essential to bring their fights up on to a higher plane, and in that the Greek comrades were quite right. For this reason, their main standpoint on the question of the general strike, despite all the omissions, must be confirmed.

IV.—INNER PARTY LIFE.

The critical situation in our movement was bound to cause an inner-Party discussion. Inside the Polit Bureau in which only a few months ago there were no differences whatever, two groupings have recently arisen, we all have fought each other, although there has not always been an open fight.

We are firmly convinced that there do not exist between the two groups any cardinal political differences such as would justify an internal-Party struggle. Apart from trivial matters, we were able to distinguish the following four questions on which differences existed: (1) Estimation of the line of the Fourth Party Congress, (2) self-criticism and collective work, (3) nature of the revolution in Greece; (4) differences on trade union questions.

Only on the first two points are the differences of political importance. As to the nature of the revolution, the comrades have not yet a firmly-established and thoroughly thought-out view; in our opinion, *all* the comrades are extremely confused on this question.

Differences on the first point (estimation of line of Fourth Party Congress) arose in estimating the present unsatisfactory position of the Party and its causes. Some comrades asserted

that the cause of the present position and of all the errors made, was the fundamentally incorrect general line of the Fourth Party Congress. Other comrades, on the contrary, held the view that the Party line has all the time been correct in its essence, and that the main source of these evils is the practical opportunism with which the Party is saturated through and through.

Great mistakes were indeed made at the Fourth Congress, the majority of which were criticised in the letter from the Executive Committee in May, 1929. At this Congress the Party leadership opposed those comrades who wanted to emphasise still more the instability of stabilisation. There was in general, no reference to the Third Period in the decisions of the Congress. We consider that these errors of the Fourth Congress are the fundamental and prime cause of other mistakes made subsequently.

ABSTRACT DISCUSSION NOT NECESSARY.

The danger existed, however, that the comrades would concentrate their attention on a rather abstract discussion (with long quotations and general theoretical arguments as is customary in Greece) instead of getting down to the question as to why the Party did not advance, though it had a line approved by all comrades, and what should be done so that the Party could accomplish the tremendous tasks facing it. It was for that very reason that the above-mentioned C.I. letter pointed out categorically that despite many Right errors, the main lines of the Fourth Congress (which, for example, quite correctly resolved to exclude the right wing Maximes group, and the conciliators) were correct. It was thus all the more necessary to oppose an abstract discussion at the present juncture. On this controversial question both groupings were wrong. The basic line of the Fourth Congress was correct, but the Congress laid the foundations for a number of errors which were sharply criticised by the C.I. The Party

was too late in detecting the commencement of the revolutionary wave, too late in detecting the elements of decline in the attempts at capitalist stabilisation, committed a number of serious political errors, and, most important of all, until quite recently, was opportunistically passive in practice and actually conducted a policy of "dragging at the tail of the movement." The main cause of that situation consists in the incorrect handling of the Party organisations and incorrect guidance of the Party membership by the leadership, who, even after grasping the situation, drew no conclusions as to practical work. In addition to the recognition of these errors, discussion should be centred on an examination of the immediate political and organisational tasks.

On the question of self-criticism, we think the reproaches levelled against the leadership of the Polit Bureau, are on the whole, justified.

The Polit Bureau works badly, its contact with the organisations is weak, and it is dominated by a spirit of politics for politics' sake, as a result of which the workers, who constitute its majority, cannot sufficiently well get down to their work. There is no division of labour, in the true sense of the term, and no departments or commissions in the Polit Bureau.

As we plainly informed the comrades, we consider that in spite of all their differences, *a fractional struggle is impermissible*. The Party has made very grave errors, and for these errors the whole leadership is responsible. All the comrades should therefore finally and consistently recognise these mistakes, and, on the basis of the Plenum decisions, should conscientiously carry out their work wherever the Party has sent them. The delegation cannot support either of the two groupings. There are no political grounds for justifying an inner-Party struggle. In discussing the questions in dispute, both sides displayed unhealthy tendencies which must be energetically rebuffed.