

Comrade Pepper (On behalf of the American delegation):

The American delegation is in perfect agreement with that which comrade Dorsy has brought forward here on the ultra Left. Truly the ultra-Left danger is great. And the arguments given by comrade Dorsy are excellent, and have been submitted several times during the discussion here. We greet them with much pleasure and full unanimity as old acquaintances, but should like to carry the discussion a little further.

Comrade Dorsy has attempted to throw light, from the American point of view, upon the policy of the Communist International, and especially upon the situation in its German Section. The American delegation is of the opinion that when the Left danger is combatted from the American viewpoint, the Right danger should not be forgotten. Comrade Dorsy has not mentioned the Right danger by so much as a single word.

Is it possible to forget that at the present time the whole labour movement in America is making a great swing to the Right? Today this is the fundamental factor in the American labour movement. What is the situation obtaining for the Communist Party of America?

In the first place an exceedingly intense ultra-Left danger. Why? The danger arises that, when the whole labour movement marches to the Right, the communists stand still in desperation and hopelessness, or they run away from the labour movement, and to the Left. This danger is certainly most imminent for the communist movement of America. But are we therefore to forget the other danger? Is there not a danger that the communists simply join the general turn to the Right in the labour movement of America, that they succumb to the influence of the workers' aristocracy, and simply form the rearguard of a labour movement marching to the Right? If we analyse the policy of the Sections of the Comintern from the American standpoint, we must not forget that not long ago we had a struggle in our American Party against influential social democratic leaders, and that we were obliged to exclude Lore and his adherents from the Party. America has had its Lore, just as Czechoslovakia its Hula, Norway its Sundby, and France its Souvarine. I should like to make these supplementary remarks to Comrade Dorsy's declaration.

And now to the main problem which occupies us here. There is no doubt whatever that the ultra-Left danger is the chief danger in Germany. And I believe it to be an important sign of the process of clarification going on in the Communist International that the discussion on the German question has become a broad and really political discussion. It must be especially emphasised that the International is perfectly conscious of the extent of the ultra-Left danger, and that the International is fully prepared not only to take up the struggle against this ultra-Left danger, but to carry it through with the utmost determination. This is the whole meaning of the discussion here. The International now expresses its readiness to liquidate the ultra-Left danger completely, ideologically.

I should like to touch upon one point in the discussion. Comrade Scholem stated that the International is of the opinion that the ultra-Left now form a disturbing element, for the reason that at the present time we are passing through a period of relative stability. Is this assertion correct? It is somewhat remarkable that comrade Scholem, as a German comrade, simply fails to see the starting point of the German theses. The starting point of the theses is the statement of the fact that in Germany today and tomorrow it is not the relative stabilisation which forms the main factor, but the acute and profound economic and political crisis.

Scholem says that the International regards the ultra-Left as a disturbing element. But the International says precisely the contrary. The theses state that the ultra Left is a disturbing element, for the very reason that we are passing through a political and economic crisis in Germany, and for the reason that the ranks of the social democratic workers are, too, being shaken by a profound crisis. And truly, the ultra-Left is a disturbing element at the present time, since there is a crisis in the

social democratic party, and since opportunity now offers to break down the Chinese wall separating the social democratic from the communist workers. The International does not say that the ultra-Left is a disturbing element because we must pursue a "sensible" or "moderate" policy during the period of relative stability. But it says that the ultra-Left forms a disturbing element because it prevents us from making full use of the economic and political crisis, and of the crisis among the social democrats.

How are we to interpret the arguments of comrade Scholem? Either as a vulgar speculation on the feelings of the workers in the German Party who favour the Left. Or as a proof that comrade Scholem has grasped neither the purport of the German theses nor the actual situation in Germany. Scholem speaks here of a relative stabilisation, whilst in reality the actuality is the crisis. Despairing and hopeless he sighs pessimistically, with old Master Anton in Hebbel's drama: "I understand the world no longer". It need not be said that we are all aware that a relative stabilisation obtains at the moment all the world over. The recognition of this fact forms indeed the basis of our political theses. But in Germany we have perhaps the weakest point in this relative stabilisation.

Comrade Scholem does not comprehend this, he no longer understands things as they are in Germany. He does not understand the latest important processes going on among the social democratic workers. We may even say that he does not understand the latest processes going on among those communist workers who are really anxious to win over the masses of the social democratic workers for the revolution, for the class struggle. Yes, comrade Scholem, this is the process for winning over the social democratic workers for the revolution. And here we find the ultra-Left a disturbing element. We do not maintain that the ultra-Left are good for a revolutionary period of relative stabilisation.

Comrade Zinoviev characterised these new ultra-Left currents in the International correctly when he stated that at the III. World Congress we had a Left group actuated by revolutionary impatience causing it to commit errors; but the present ultra-Left group has nothing more to do with revolutionary impatience. It has something rotten about it. The new ultra-Left is not a child of revolutionary impatience. On the contrary, it is a product of non-revolutionary hopelessness. If anyone can fail to observe the crisis through which Germany is going and if anyone overlooks the profound crisis among the social democratic workers, this can be attributed to one of two causes only: either to physical blindness or — and here we must speak politically — to a non-revolutionary hopelessness. In pointing out this fact I hope to show the capital sin of the ultra-Left group.

It is this non-revolutionary hopelessness, and not lack of character, which is the cause of the remarkable spectacle here offered us, of ultra-Left comrades changing their opinions several times before our eyes. First came comrade Ruth Fischer and said: *Mea culpa, forgive me, I am a great sinner*. This was most effective, comrades. It was almost staggering. Then came comrade Scholem and said: *Mea culpa, ten times mea culpa, I am an even greater sinner*. This was equally effective. We had the feeling that here errors were being sincerely and earnestly recognised. But note the sudden change. The penitent sinners of two days ago have become abruptly converted, before our very eyes, into public accusers. Only the day before yesterday they did penance, but today we find them claiming to be the best revolutionaries in the International, and entrusted with the mission of saving the Communist International from the perils of the opportunist Right.

If the latest speeches and declarations made by comrades Ruth Fischer, Scholem, and Urbahns, contain any import whatever, then this is their import.

These chameleons have changed their colour here, quite publicly, before our eyes, before the whole Communist International, and not only once, but several times. The change has been effected rapidly and skilfully, but still it has been possible to ascertain the ground colour: the colour of non-revolutionary hopelessness.

A great danger lies in ambush behind the arguments of these comrades.

What is the actual thought concealed beneath their viewpoint? Comrade Scholem has admitted quite openly that the thought

behind it all is that one should never acknowledge past errors. In other words: The making of errors is converted into a revolutionary virtue, into a heroism of obstinacy.

Scholem declared: How can I repudiate my past now, how can I deny my old contentions? I should be declaring myself to be a renegade! This is an idea entertained by the ultra Left comrades, and even by many of the Right — that it is possible to become a renegade within the International.

What does this mean? Is it really possible that a comrade within and on the basis of the Communist International can become a renegade? I believe this assertion to be the greatest possible slander against the International, and a complete denial of the revolutionary role played by the Communist International. The International must tell these comrades that precisely the contrary is the truth, that the Right and ultra-Left comrades, having had their errors corrected by the Comintern, and having acknowledged these errors, are not thereby made into renegades, but on the contrary to real Leninists, to citizens with full rights in the Communist International.

Comrade Semard (France):

After the speeches made by various of the ultra-Left who insist upon maintaining their standpoint, the French Party is compelled of definitely expressing its standpoint with regard to the German question, and with regard to those ultra-Left elements in the various Parties who are attempting to carry on their false policy and their fractional struggle within the ranks of the International.

Last night our comrade Doriot stated the point of view held by our Party with respect to the German crisis. I must emphasise that our C. C. condemned the double book-keeping carried on by the Fisher-Maslov group at once, on the day following the X. Congress of the German C. P., that further this condemnation was extended to all ultra-Left elements in the C. P. by our General Secretary who was delegated as representative of the C. C. to two session of the German National Council and to the X. Congress; and that finally by voting for the resolution of the German commission our Party expressed its confidence in the C. C. of the German C. P. that it will conduct a correct policy in the spirit of this resolution and of the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I.

The C. P. of France has energetically condemned every ultra-Left attempt to constitute a fraction, and to carry on a fractional struggle within the International.

Let us now consider the character of the Left danger within the C. P. of Germany. It is true, that a certain Left tendency exists among the communist masses which were trained in this spirit for a year by the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group, and among which the remembrance of the events of 1923 has not yet died out. It is thus incumbent on the C. C. not only to defeat the Left deviations of certain leaders from the political standpoint, but to eradicate these errors from among the members as well. The political defeat of the Ruth Fischer-Maslow group is the imperative premise providing for the present central body the possibility of carrying on their work well, and securing a successful development for the German C. P. For the tendency permeating this group is the same as that of Souvarine — it is the same defeatist spirit, the same under-estimation of the importance and the power of action in the working masses. In view of the present position of the German Party, and of the political and economic crisis in Germany, this defeatist tendency must be combatted with the utmost energy.

Does a Right danger exist in Germany? Yes, it exists among some few non-assimilated elements, who withdrew after the defeat of Brandlerism, and enwrapped themselves in silence. But without doubt the greatest danger is the ultra-Left.

The manoeuvres aiming at distracting us from the actual question, made here by various obstinate ultra-Lefts, must not be permitted to influence the decisions arrived at by this Executive Session with respect to the combatting of the Left danger in Germany and the Right danger in France.

Does a Left danger exist in France? Yes, it exists in the ranks of the communist masses themselves. Here the anarchist tendency has not yet completely disappeared, and may be enhanced by events. Some of our active members have such a tendency to commit such errors.