

Thalheimer (Germany):

Comrade Zinoviev said that he does not like to see diplomatic tactics used towards the Communist International. Well, I will not speak like a diplomat. Criticism here of the activities of the International has been too brief, although this is more necessary than ever now when we miss the authority and firm leadership of Comrade Lenin.

We have suffered heavy defeats in Bulgaria, as well as in Germany, and have criticised the leadership of the Bulgarian and German Parties very sharply indeed. But we must admit that in both cases the Communist International was also at fault. In both cases preparations were not made in time, and foresight was lacking. I will deal here only with Germany. The Executive Committee has not, as yet taken full advantage of the lessons of the German events. Of great importance for the future is the question of organizational interference by the Communist International in the leadership of the various Sections. None of us will deny that such interference is necessary

under circumstances. But neither in October, nor prior to October, nor in January, was this interference fruitful, but was fatal and detrimental to the Parties. I want to refer to Lenin's dictum on continuity of leadership: "Continuity of leadership must not be interfered with without a good reason."

The old guard in the Russian Party is held in great respect, and rightly so. But the International fails to see that it too has definite Communist traditions embodied in its various leading sections. And when it is said that these sections represent social-democratic traditions, we are compelled to declare that these are not only leading, but middle sections in the Party, who have built the bridge between the Second and the Third International. And there is a great difference between having accomplished this themselves, and having received it ready made. But there is also another set of leaders, who did not take part in the fight against Kautsky, and who even went with him part of the way. Can we here really say that one section embodies Social Democratic traditions, while the other section embodies freedom from such traditions?

The leadership of the Russian Party in the International is an historic necessity. The other parties will become equals only when they have established proletarian dictatorship in their respective countries. But there must be a transition period.

The main fight of the International must be the fight against reformism, against the democratic-pacifist wave which is again very strong to-day. But this wave, too, cannot be overcome merely by agitation, especially to-day, when this wave is also spreading in Germany. The Amsterdammers have certainly gained ground since the spring of 1924. The question is if the parties are adopting right methods for counter-acting this wave. I do not think they are.

There are, of course "right" perils in the Party. But it is not true that there is a right group. I do not see the left perils first and foremost in Boris, in Korsch, and in the extreme left, but in that which both have in common, namely, in their inability to overcome reformism. The fear of a spectre prevails in the International as though this would take the form of a right group in connection with the Russian opposition. This is a spectre which does not exist. We dissociated ourselves definitely from the viewpoint of the Russian opposition, on the Russian as well as on the German question. But I must protest against the talk of Radekism. Radek has served the German Party well in its most critical period.

I do not think that the present lines of the German Party and of the Communist International are correct, and I am afraid that it will lead the Party on to sand banks. I do not think that the organisational interference in the leading Party organs was right. I see dangers ahead, and I say, beware of these dangers. Nevertheless, declare that, as disciplined fighters, we will submit implicitly to the decisions of the Communist International, and that we shall do our work faithfully, wherever the Comintern will send us.