

GERMANY AND POLAND—CENTRAL POINTS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FRONT

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A NEW feature in the situation since the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. is the wide sweep the resistance of the proletariat is taking to the furious capitalist offensive, and particularly the spread of strikes and their comparatively high political level. These are symptoms of the growth of big strikes on the basis of the everyday partial struggle and the sharp intensification of class antagonisms, strikes which, together with other acute forms of mass struggle, are bringing about profound *shifting of classes* and which, if the Communist Parties play an active leading rôle, will lead the masses to decisive battles for power. A new feature of the situation in countries with a revolutionary peasant movement and a national liberation movement, such as Poland, is *the combination of the general sweep of the proletarian struggle with the maturing elements of the agrarian revolution and with revolts for national independence.*

Although the revolutionary upsurge is uneven, although it has its rises and falls, in a number of capitalist countries such as Germany, Poland, the Balkan countries, etc., it has reached a higher level. The profound shifting of classes that is taking place in the various countries in favour of the revolutionary

proletariat is the best social and political symptom of the end of capitalist stabilisation.

The revolutionary upsurge is taking place on the basis of the *general deepening and the great intensification—in some places the catastrophic intensification—of the economic crisis.* The forecasts of the bourgeois economists that the crisis would soon come to an end have been utterly refuted. The slight improvement in the financial and economic situation due to the fall of the English pound and the rise of grain prices proved to be very brief.

Profound changes and landslides have taken place in the development of the world economic crisis which determine the regrouping of imperialist forces. The main phenomena are the sporadic sharpening of the economic crisis in the U.S.A., the rapid growth of the crisis in France despite reparation plunder, and the approach of financial bankruptcy in countries like Germany, Poland, etc.

Developing unevenly, the crisis has assumed catastrophic dimensions in the weakest links of the capitalist system, such as Poland, where the acute crisis is still further intensified by the heavy burden of inflated war budget. The close interweaving of

the industrial, agrarian and financial crises stand out most plainly here. We see stagnation bordering on paralysis in the chief branches of industry with the exception of the munitions industry, the extreme degradation of agriculture and the complete cessation of public investments.

In 1892, Engels wrote that : "Capitalist production is ceaselessly working to bring about its own destruction."

The deepening of the world economic crisis inevitably leads to the unprecedented sharpening of all antagonisms at home and abroad, which has already been described by Comrade Kuusinen. As a result the factors of a revolutionary crisis are maturing at a much greater rate in countries like Germany and Poland. Naturally we cannot set out in a cut-and-dried manner the order in which countries will enter the revolutionary crisis. The example of Belgium, which suddenly rushed ahead of other countries in the extent and duration of strikes recently, obviously contradicts such a formal approach.

The draft of the political theses correctly shows that *Poland is approaching closely to a revolutionary crisis*. This estimate completely coincides with the estimate given by the Central Committee of our Party. But we cannot on this basis, foretell where the revolutionary crisis will start earliest—in Poland or in Germany. That depends on a combination of internal and external factors, on the whole international situation. Although the German proletariat is ten times more numerous and more concentrated than the Polish proletariat, the latter, however, can find allies in the revolutionary peasants and the national independence movement, the strengthening of which is assisted by the proximity of the U.S.S.R.

THE GERMAN QUESTION AS THE KEY POINT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SURGE.

As early as 1924, Comrade Stalin, speaking at the Polish Commission of the Congress of the Comintern, said :

"The German question, next to the Russian question, is of the greatest importance. Firstly, this is because Germany is nearer to revolution than any other country in Europe, and secondly, because the victory of the revolution in Germany signifies its victory throughout Europe. Starting from Germany, the revolutionary outburst will spread through Europe. Only Germany will be able to take the initiative in this matter. The victory of the revolution in Germany will guarantee the victory of the international revolution."

It seems to me that in spite of the difference in the conditions prevailing then and now, Comrade Stalin's point of view, in the main, still holds good : *Next to the U.S.S.R., Germany is the most decisive keypoint*

of the extremely unevenly developing international proletarian revolution.

That is why the gaze of all sections of the Comintern is directed towards the great changes now taking place in Germany. That is why a precise estimate of these changes is now the key to the estimate of the international situation.

What has taken place in Germany in the recent period ?

In reply to this question we have received the most varied formulations up to the present.

In a letter dated June 25, the C.C. of our Party described the situation in Germany as follows :

"The Government which has come to power is in the main of a *fascist character*, a Government backed by finance capital, heavy industry and the Junker-agrarians, a Government relying on the Reichswehr and the Hitler Storm Troops. To regard this Government as a transitional Government *like the Brüning Government* would reveal a failure to understand the qualitative changes that have taken place in the situation and would thus be an under-estimation of the real fascist menace. The new Government came into power by the comparatively 'dry road' * which had been laid for it by Social-Democracy. But this does not mean that fascism has already firmly established itself, that the decisive struggles between the proletariat and fascism have already been fought out, and that the latter have won all along the line. It must be remembered that the Papen Government has come to power at a period of unprecedented economic crisis and revolutionary upsurge.

The coming of this Government is a symptom of the great intensification of all the antagonisms at home and abroad, including the antagonisms between Poland and Germany. The proletariat is not defeated. Therefore the rapid mobilisation of revolutionary forces under the leadership of the C.P. of Germany is the factor which determines the relationship of forces between revolution and counter-revolution, not only in Germany but on a world scale.

"In reality the Papen programme means the fascist offensive in the economic and political sphere against the toiling masses (new emergency decrees, the annulment of previous social gains, the delegalisation of the C.P. of Germany, the prohibition of mass meetings, and the suppression of workers' organisations). It also means that the Social-Democrats will be driven out of the Government apparatus and replaced by Hitlerite elements, which, however, does not change the rôle of Social-Democracy in principle as the main social buttress of the bourgeois among the worker". It seems to me that the fascist coup in Prussia and

* i.e., without bloodshed.—Ed.

the further development of events as a whole have confirmed the correctness of this estimate. *The German bourgeoisie have already begun to build up their military-fascist dictatorship.* The previous quantitative process of fascisation has changed to a qualitative process. This is the source of the great danger to the German proletariat.

This does not mean that the line of development of the basis of the fascist régime in Germany will be the same as in Italy or Poland. Historically, the situation is now very different. Instead of being at the beginning, we are at the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism and in a period of general growth of the revolutionary upsurge. Germany is a country with an extremely concentrated proletariat, and its revolutionary organisations are growing and are becoming steeled in mass fights which frequently involve bloodshed. The active resistance to fascist terror is assuming mass dimensions. In spite of the wholesale victimisation and the constant threat of suppression, the influence of the C.P. of Germany is spreading among the proletarian masses. This is shown by the great successes achieved in the Reichstag elections. Social-Democracy has not succeeded in driving the German proletariat along the path of capitulation.

Such are the chief internal factors which determine the tactics of the present ruling group in the German fascist camp, led by Hindenburg. These facts compel the Papen-Schleicher Government to adopt more cautious and flexible manoeuvring tactics in developing the fascist régime as compared with the tactics of frontal attack adopted by Mussolini and even Pilsudsky. In Germany, flanking manoeuvres may sometimes take the place of frontal attacks. The difference in the rate of fascisation in Germany may be quite considerable compared with that in the former countries. The present ruling group in Germany wants first of all to obtain firm control of the apparatus of the State.

The same applies to the rôle of Parliament. At the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. it was emphasised that the question of parliamentary camouflage is not fundamental. "Pilsudsky and his Party," we said at that time, "when developing the Polish variety of the fascist system, had also the Italian type in mind. But it realises the differences in the conditions which determine its tactics in this sphere. Hence the preservation of the parliamentary-democratic decorations together with the Parties of the Seim *while the fascist regime is independent of parliamentary or party combinations.*"

In this respect the fascist régime which is rising in Germany will rather resemble the Polish variety of fascist dictatorship, including the considerable rôle played by the militarists in both countries, each with a marshal at the head. The military fascist dictatorship in Germany which is organically growing out of

the Weimar Republic may be accompanied by the outward forms of parliamentarism, *i.e.*, a certain amount of democratic decorations which will help to carry through the policy of the open deception of the broad masses of the people jointly with the policy of open violence.

Is the complete abolition of Social-Democracy necessary? Evidently not. The whole experience of the development of the fascist system in Poland has refuted the position of the Rights and the Trotskyists on this question, *viz.*, that the fascist dictatorship would mean the death of Social-Democracy. From this they drew the conclusion that Social-Democracy would willy-nilly have to fight against the attacking fascist régime. I think that the capitulation of German Social-Democracy after the so-called Prussian coup has confirmed the falseness of this position. For that matter, the thing is not so simple even in other countries. Take the country of so-called classical fascism—Italy. Even Italian fascism, did not begin with the "liquidation" of Social-Democracy. Or take the Polish variety of the fascist dictatorship. It has restricted itself to occasional fisticuffs with the leaders of Social-Democracy as a method of influencing the opposition.

The German bourgeoisie fully appreciate the important rôle Social-Democracy plays as their chief agent among the working-class. Not long ago I happened to read one of the very characteristic articles in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on the question of which is most valuable for the bourgeoisie—a Social-Democracy which has grown up historically, which is able to retain seven or eight million votes in spite of the fact that it formed the Government, or the petty-bourgeois quicksand on which the national socialists construct their mass positions.

Further, is it necessary to carry through the so-called liquidation of the other bourgeois parties in Germany? I think that it is not. Even the experience of Italy has shown that all kinds of zig-zags and compromises are possible. In Poland we find that national democracy, one of the biggest bourgeois parties, exists side by side with the ruling fascist party. The Pilsudsky gang has not violently liquidated the national democratic opposition; it has restricted itself merely to splitting off parts of it and to a policy of pin-pricks.

In Germany we see the process of disintegration of the old bourgeois parties, the process of their self-abolition and partial absorption by the National Socialist Party. On these grounds a regrouping of party forces is taking place in the bourgeois camp. The party which is most firmly holding the position is the Centre.

What is the main feature in the process of construction of the fascist dictatorship in Germany?

The main thing is the policy of suppressing and, destroying the revolutionary organisations and

above all, the C.P. of Germany. The chief thing is the system of government, which is independent of parliamentary and party combinations, the maximum concentration of power and the State apparatus, side by side with a mass fascist party and auxiliary armed bands, such as Mussolini's Fascist Guard or Pilsudsky's "Strelok," which are intended chiefly for the struggle on the home front. These decisive factors already exist in Germany, but in different proportions, to a different degree and in a different form. First of all the danger of the suppression of the C.P. of Germany and attacks on the revolutionary workers organisations exists already. It is true that even here the process is not taking place in a straight line. Secondly, the President's Government which is independent of parliamentary combinations exists. Parliament has been set aside in fact; although it lost its power long ago and only the mere semblance of a factor of power remained.

The fascist concentration of power is taking place, a clear example of which was the so-called Prussian coup. It is far from complete as yet. But is it a finished process in countries like Poland with its peculiar fascist dictatorship? Not by any means. The fascist Constitution has not been introduced yet; it has been postponed. Complaints are being raised in the fascist camp about the absence of a planned system in the sphere of State construction. Nevertheless, this process has made considerable advances in Poland.

In Germany there is not yet a *direct* combination of the Hitlerite mass basis and the State apparatus, but this basis is rapidly merging with the State apparatus, while the Government has at its command the voluntary armed detachments of the "Steel Helmet." The fact that direct union has not yet taken place makes it considerably easier for Hitler to manoeuvre before the masses, and to maintain the outward semblance of opposition to the Papen-Schleicher Government.

And in Finland, is there not serious friction between that mass basis of fascism, the Lapuas Party, and the present fascist Government?

A struggle for hegemony, for leading posts, is developing between various groups in the fascist camp.

You see, therefore, comrades, how varied and uneven the process of establishing the fascist system and the fascist dictatorship in Germany may be. There are some who always think of the fascist dictatorship as an abstract category, as a sort of classic, ideal fascist system. This is wrong, because no such harmonious and complete system exists anywhere. It is fundamentally wrong in the present concrete situation. The German bourgeoisie cannot mechanically imitate the Italian example in the present situation, when the economic crisis and class antagonisms have become so acute and when fascist

dictatorships are showing signs of disintegration. We should always remember that we are dealing with an *attempt* to form a special variety of the fascist dictatorship in Germany *under the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilisation*.

When I spoke of the "dry road" which Social-Democracy laid for the construction of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, I said "comparatively dry road," because in places, for example in Altona, sanguinary mass fights took place even before the Prussian coup, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that generally speaking there can be no such thing as a dry road. These fights will spread to larger and larger masses and will be more and more stubborn.

The further tactics of the present Government for the construction of the fascist dictatorship depend above all on the further growth of the revolutionary upsurge. We have already emphasised that the German proletariat is not broken, but that its forces are growing. But it would be a mistake to close our eyes to the difficulties which are rising before us and also to the fact that recently there have been increased tendencies in the camp of the bourgeoisie towards agreement between the various groups, an instance of which is the compromise arrived at between Hindenburg and the Centre Party.

It would likewise be premature to say that the first attack of fascism has been repulsed, that its further growth has been checked. Only *systematic mass resistance* to the bourgeois offensive, to their State apparatus and the fascist shock-troops, a resistance which will pass to the counter-offensive of the proletarian millions, a resistance that will give rise to wavering among the broad strata of the petty-bourgeoisie and their desertion from fascism, can hasten the disintegration of the broad basis of the fascist camp.

The latest information indicates that this desertion from the fascist camp has already begun. But one swallow does not make a summer, and it is mainly the unemployed who are deserting. The petty-bourgeoisie is not yet swinging in the direction of the revolutionary camp. The main task of the C.P. of Germany is to prevent this partial desertion of the unemployed masses from being intercepted by Social-Democracy, and to divert it to the revolutionary path.

It must be stated that the C.P. of Germany has succeeded in creating a mass fighting anti-fascist front from below. To transfer this movement to the factories and the Labour Exchanges, to develop a wide strike movement, to adopt the weapon of the mass political strike—such are the fundamental tasks of the C.P. of Germany in the present period. We here must put up the strongest opposition to any attempt to shake the leadership of the C.P. of Germany. The tremendous task of fighting against

fascism demands that the correct general line be pursued with complete unanimity, and it demands iron Bolshevik discipline in the Party.

The wide strike movement combined with other acute forms of struggle is now the basic link of the revolutionary upsurge. This link has enabled our Party to pull the whole chain of mass fights, as a factor for accelerating the maturing of the revolutionary crisis.

This approach to the strike movement was adopted by Lenin, who by analysing the strike wave determined what were the "critical turning points in the whole social and political life of a country," because in the statistics of strikes he saw the movement of the class, which determined the general development of events. "The movement of other classes," said Lenin, "is grouped around this centre."

At the XI. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. we spoke chiefly of the strikes in small industry; at the present time, the strike movement has spread, to a more or less extent, to practically all branches of large-scale industry and all the employed sections of the proletariat.

An important feature of the strike wave during the last two years is the shifting of its basis from small and medium industry to large-scale industry.

Expressed in figures this shifting of the base of strikes presents itself as follows: in 1930 there were forty-seven strikers per factory, but in 1931 there were ninety-seven strikers. That is to say, though the number of factories in which strikes took place fell by 5 per cent., the number of strikers increased by 110 per cent. *This is the highest number of strikers per factory for the whole of the last decade.*

Simultaneously with the shifting of the strike wave to large-scale industry, the strike front has extended. Although the number of group strikes, *i.e.*, strikes which affect a number of factories simultaneously, dropped from fifty to thirty-eight in the year 1931, the number of strikers increased from 13,515 in 1930 to 43,717 in 1931, *i.e.*, more than three times as many.

In the first half of 1932 this process became still more intense. During the first half of this year there were 236 strikes with 779,000 strikers, of which 228 were economic strikes affecting about 300,000 workers. *It follows, therefore, that the total number of strikers in the first half of the present year is higher than at any time during the last ten years.* This figure for only half a year comes near to the highest figure for the last ten years, namely, 1923, in the period of inflation. In that year 879,000 workers in 7,451 factories were involved in strikes.

The qualitative change in the strike movement is confirmed by the figures for strikes in various branches of industry for the last half year. Although in 1931 there were fourteen strikes in the mining industry affecting 64,500 workers, in the first half of the current year there were forty strikes and 127,500

strikers. In 1931, there were nine strikes of municipal workers affecting 30,200 workers, but in the first half of the present year there were thirteen strikes affecting 126,160 workers.

As the strike wave rises and the economic crisis becomes more acute, strikes become more stubborn and assume an increasingly acute political character. The first miners' strike lasted only six days but the second one lasted a whole month. The first street car strike lasted two-and-a-half days, the second strike lasted four-and-a-half days, but the strike at Lodz lasted two weeks. In general the duration of strikes has increased several fold. Such examples as the Belgium strike which lasted a month and a half, the Belostok strike which lasted two months and the Petrokov strike which lasted forty days, are of international significance.

Equally eloquent proof of the militant stubbornness of the working-class is provided by the frequent repetition of strikes at various factories and branches of industries (three to eight times in a year).

In connection with this, the proportion of economic strikes to political strikes has changed also. According to incomplete figures given by the R.I.L.U., in the first half of the present year, out of 236 strikes affecting 749,000 workers, there were eleven political strikes in which 470,000 workers took part.

In spite of the growing stubbornness of the strikes, the proportion of unsuccessful strikes has increased. In 1930, the proportion of successful strikes was 69 per cent. and in 1931 it was 73 per cent., but in the first half of the present year the situation changed for the worse. In that period there were 137 successful strikes, but they only affected 130,000 workers, while the forty-four strikes which were lost affected 138,000 workers, and forty-nine strikes ended with indefinite results.

Thus the unsuccessful strikes in the first half of this year included a larger number of workers than the successful ones. *These figures reflect the growing difficulties of strikes.*

The greater success of strikes in 1931 was due to partial, seasonal improvements in the economic situation, while 1932 is the first year since the commencement of the crisis in which there has been no improvement in the economic situation.

A peculiar form of the strike movement is the *seizure of factories*. This is the second basic form of struggle against the capitalist offensive, especially against dismissals. The movement has assumed a mass character and is extending to a number of factories and tens of thousands of workers. Owing to our agitation and above all as a result of their own experience, the workers became convinced that it was not enough to remain passively in the factory, but that it was necessary to get into contact with the workers of other factories and the unemployed and to

carry the struggle beyond the confines of the factory which had been seized.

An example of the seizure of a factory accompanied by the struggle in the streets and sympathy strikes, was given recently by the workers in Pablianitz. While 800 workers occupied the factory, a crowd of 300 workers demonstrated and fought stubbornly with the police at the factory gates, after which the struggle was shifted to the territory of the factory.

From this we see how acute was the character of the resistance of the workers, which, in a way, contained the *elements of civil war*. Similar elements were observed in other actions of the working-class. The strike movement, bringing the working masses more and more sharply into conflict with the apparatus of fascist dictatorship, draws them into political life and sets before them the question of power, the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

In spite of the Right-Trotskyist theory that it is impossible to conduct strikes in periods of crises, and in spite of the tremendous unemployment and the brutal fascist terror, the strikes in Poland have proved that the working-class can resist the capitalist offensive, repulse individual attacks by the capitalists, make it difficult for them to carry out their bourgeois method of extricating themselves from the crisis.* This is the most important thing.

What were the weaknesses of our strike practice ?

Firstly, the selection of the time of calling strikes, especially in big strikes. Lenin said that we should choose the time irrespective of the will of the employers. The ability to do this is often lacking.

Secondly, there was insufficient concentration of forces in the large, decisive factories.

Thirdly, the decisions adopted in the factories were badly carried out. Sometimes we seem to think that it is enough for the workers to vote for a strike by an overwhelming majority for the strike to break out by itself.

Fourthly, there were cases of misuse of the slogan of the general strike as a slogan of practical action, which distracted attention from partial strikes on the basis of which we can lead the masses to bigger strikes, including general strikes of whole branches of industry. The Leftist use of the bare slogan of the general strike without preliminary preparations and without properly counting the forces, occurred in some of our organisations.

Fifthly, insufficient linking up of strikes with sympathy strikes, insufficient ability to combine and change the forms of struggle, on which point Lenin said :

“Marxist tactics consist of uniting various methods of struggle, of capably passing from one to another, of steadily raising the consciousness of the masses and widening the scope of their

collective activity, which, taken separately, is sometimes offensive and sometimes defensive, but when taken together lead to an increasingly deeper and decisive conflict. *The heightening of the forms of struggle must be a constant tendency.*”

Finally, the inability to end the strike in good time, to lead the masses out of the strike in good order so as to gather forces for a new struggle, and also inability to end a strike by a compromise when it comes up against big difficulties. In these cases the social fascists take the initiative.

Our chief shortcomings in the sphere of organisation lie in that the revolutionary trade unions lag behind the Communist Party in initiative and in the leadership of strikes, in that we work badly in the reformist trade unions though they still have great influence and a comparatively large membership, in that we have not properly utilised and have not waged a *systematic, stubborn struggle* for the factory committees run by the reformists.

Our chief achievement in strike practice is that we have learned to put demands concretely, to combine economic and political demands *in the course of the struggle*, to combine strikes with demonstrations, the organisation of meetings, committees of action, strike committees, delegations as organs of the united front from below, organs for the preparation, development and leadership of strikes.

The necessity of enlarging and sharpening the struggle applies equally to the unemployed movement, the chief weakness of which is the insufficient co-ordination of the remarkably militant actions of the unemployed themselves, and also the insufficient connection between their struggles and the struggles of the employed workers, which creates a danger of scattering the forces of the proletarian army and making it easier for fascism to defeat it in sections.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MASS REVOLUTIONARY STRIKE.

A characteristic feature of the present period is the growth of economic strikes into political strikes and the close interweaving between economic and political strikes in the *present political situation*. This became most clear in the strike of 40,000 miners during which the masses were all the time in the streets and fought heroically for the streets against detachments of police armed to the teeth.

The chief factor in the development of political strikes is the growth of *big battles* that arose on the basis of partial strikes against the concentrated attack of capital. This was the rôle played by the miners' strike in Dombrov and Cracow. The stubborn struggle of the miners, which lasted a whole month, gave an impetus to vacillating sections of the working-class, roused their resistance to the capitalist offensive, drew them into the strike movement, gave rise to a

* By forcing down the standard of living of the working class.—Ed.

number of sympathy strikes and strikes of protest against the bloody violence of the police. On this basis the provincial general protest strike of March 16 broke out, which, in spite of the social-fascists, and thanks to the activity of our Party, assumed the character of a mass revolutionary strike in the chief proletarian centres, affecting a considerable majority of the employed proletariat (over 300,000), including the decisive sections of the working-class who formerly had not been in the strike movement (metal workers, railroad men, munition factories).

The III. Plenum of our Central Committee, held in August last year, foresaw the possibility of such strikes as an *immediate perspective* and took the line of leading the masses of workers to such strikes. In fact, we prepared the ground for this strike; but it was proclaimed by the P.P.S.*

The directives of our Central Committee were as follows: We were to seize upon the date March 16, draw all the sections of the proletariat, especially the railroad workers and metal workers into the strike, lead the masses into the street under our slogans, draw both the employed and the unemployed into demonstrations, expose the democratic phraseology of the P.P.S., set up strike committees everywhere, and keep them intact for the further struggle. Many of these directives were carried out. I will mention only three of the clearest examples. Warsaw—the metal workers' strike was entirely the result of our work. Cracow—in this stronghold of the social-fascists we succeeded in putting the P.P.S. workers against their leaders and organised a mass demonstration. Zhivets—a militant mass demonstration of workers and peasants took place here in spite of the P.P.S. I could quote more examples of a similar kind.

But the chief thing is, that our Party allowed the initiative to slip out of its hands. This disclosed the weakness of our leadership, the under-estimation of the situation and the manoeuvring powers of social-fascism. At that time we wrote:—

“The recent manoeuvres of the P.P.S. (the provincial protest strike of municipal workers and the general strike of March 16), caught our Party unawares. On this occasion the initiative was taken by the P.P.S. and this must be a serious warning for us in the future. *The time is coming when to be twenty-four hours late will mean that events will catch us unawares.* The task is not to expose the social-fascist manoeuvres after the event, but to paralyse these manoeuvres in good time. In this matter we are still weak.

“Of course it is easier for the social-fascists to approach the masses with their legal tentacles. It is easier for them to carry on a peaceful demonstrative strike than for us to develop a mass struggle. But

this cannot justify us in under-estimating the concrete intensity of feeling among the masses *at the present moment* and in being late in taking the initiative. We saw the tremendous importance of our initiative in the miners' strike. Immediately after the attack on social gains, we should have started to prepare for a one-day strike of the working masses over the whole province as a rehearsal for a general revolutionary strike. Then, the political initiative would have been in our hands and our rôle on March 16 would have been much greater.”

Thus, a new zone of political strikes is commencing, interwoven with economic strikes.

It is true that this interweaving is still weak, that most of our strikes are still economic strikes, that the number of workers participating in political strikes is still comparatively small. But the main tendency, which was described by Lenin long ago, is making headway and *putting the mass revolutionary strike on the order of the day* as a weapon for the hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle of the millions of toilers.

According to Lenin, political strikes grow, as it were, on the broad basis of economic strikes, and further “at the beginning of the movement, the economic strike plays the predominating rôle in drawing new strata into the movement, while, on the other hand, it rouses and stimulates the backward strata into action, enriches and enlarges the movement, raises it to a higher level” (*Lenin*).

According to this, the Party must develop political strikes on the mass basis of the economic struggle, especially against the bloody violence of the police, against the concrete manifestations of the fascist terror, which is striking more and more strongly at the broad masses of workers and peasants. The political strike can and should be used even now as a weapon of struggle against imperialist war. In the conditions now prevailing, the political strike is the best method of linking up the proletarian movement with the revolutionary peasant and national independence movements.

The wide sweep of the strikes of the proletariat, together with the general sharpening of the political situation, is producing an effect on the millions of toiling peasants. In the rural districts, the strike movement extends primarily to the agricultural proletariat. After dozens of strikes successfully led by the Communists, we organised the one-day demonstrative strike of April 18 in which 100,000 agricultural workers took part.

The broad peasant masses are beginning to resort to the strike weapon. Whole counties are beginning to strike; the peasants refuse to bring their produce to markets until market dues are lowered.

The peasant masses are following the example of the proletariat in passing from scattered actions to big

* Polish Socialist Party—*Ed.*

battles, which signalises the *acceleration of the maturing of the elements of the agrarian revolution* as part of the proletarian revolution. The revolutionary peasant movement is rising to a higher level, is assuming the character of mass revolts against the exploitation and oppression of the fascist Government and the landlords. This was the character of the armed struggle in Liska which involved nineteen villages and 10,000 peasants.

The mass basis of the revolutionary peasants' movement is becoming wider day after day. The catastrophic agrarian crisis, together with the robbery perpetuated by the moneylenders and tax collectors is not only putting the broad masses of poor peasants into motion, but also the basic masses of middle peasants who are being ruined by debts and taxes. According to the figures of the State Scientific Institute, 90 per cent. of the peasants receive practically no income from the sale of grain; 40 per cent. of their income is swallowed up by taxes and payments on debts. The mass expropriation of the peasants is being carried out by the landlords, the kulaks and the capitalist State. As a result of the fascist land redistribution schemes and the abolition of the peasants' right to the use of pastures and woods, the peasants are being deprived of the best lands. The number of peasant farms without horses is steadily increasing.

The economic crisis which is causing the degradation of agriculture, and the predatory fiscal policy of fascism are transforming the survivals of feudalism into a veritable system of robbing the peasant masses. Various forms of exploitation in kind have become more extensive such as working to pay debts and tithes, "sharwark," *i.e.*, forced labour on road-making, etc., which amount to tens of millions of days of compulsory labour every year. Various tolls are being introduced on entry into the towns.

The resistance of the poor and middle peasants to all these various forms of plunder reveals a considerable degree of organisation, and is already beginning to develop into spontaneous revolts.

The guiding factor of the peasant movement is land hunger. All the forms of peasant struggle arise out of this question which is *inseparably connected with the question of power*. All the revolutionary actions of the exploited peasants lead to the active struggle for and without compensation. The task of the Communist Party is to seize this main link of the struggle in the countryside and to join it with the everyday struggle and our slogans of action.

Tremendous reserves for the growing proletarian revolution are moving up to the proletariat as its allies in the struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Of course, in the peasant movement there is much more spontaneity than in the proletarian movement. However, in spite of all the

differences in the conditions of the struggle, we may state that the disproportion between the two movements has diminished, that the hegemony of the proletariat has become stronger, that the alliance between the workers and peasants has become a real factor.

The wide sweep of the proletarian strike movement is drawing the masses of urban petty bourgeoisie into the struggle against monopolist capital and the bourgeois State. The population of some towns are resorting to the boycott—the strike against the rise of the cost of electricity. This movement has extended to hundreds of thousands of the urban petty bourgeoisie and is a serious symptom showing that the petty bourgeois masses are deserting the big bourgeoisie and gravitating towards the proletariat.

The strike as a form of struggle is being adopted by thousands of municipal officials who are being robbed by the bourgeois Government and are being ruined by the tactics of the bourgeoisie to pass on the burdens of the financial crisis to them. As a result, the mass basis of the Pilsudsky Party is sharply contracting. Polish fascism is tending to replace the masses by its own reliable cadres. The lower government apparatus is showing signs of disintegration. Symptoms of discontent are observed in the army which is being drawn into the struggle on the home front. Finally, ideological confusion reigns in the ranks of the Pilsudsky Party, a reflection of which is the rise of a group of "National Communists" who advocate planned economy.

It is not because things are going well with Pilsudsky that he is resorting to manoeuvres to retain his influence over the disillusioned elements of the intelligentsia, among whom the influence of Communism is rapidly growing.

Thus, the wide sweep of the proletarian struggle is a *profound shifting of classes*, which is altering the relationship of forces in favour of the revolutionary proletariat. But this process is not taking place in a straight line, without any vacillations and zig-zags. If that had been the case, the revolutionary crisis in Poland would have been an accomplished fact long ago.

The process of the maturing of a revolutionary crisis is very uneven, not only because of the relative weakness of the Communist organisations, but also to a considerable extent because of the growing objective difficulties which the revolutionary movement encounters on its path of development. It is a two-fold dialectical process, the basis of which is the fact that the growing proletarian revolution causes the bourgeois counter-revolution to rally its forces, causes the bourgeoisie, to increase its resistance in spite of their disintegration, mutual antagonisms and internal friction.

THE INTENSIFIED MANOEUVRING OF SOCIAL FASCISM.

Simultaneously the bourgeoisie is trying to perfect and enrich its system of deceit, in order to restrain the process of revolutionisation of the masses, in order to bring these masses into the system of Social-Democratic diversions with the aid of social-fascist tricksters, in order to drive them, under radical-democratic slogans, along the path of the capitalist way out of the crisis.

The manoeuvres of social-fascism and its left sections are becoming more flexible and subtle. Comrade Thälmann has already spoken of them here. It would be mere empty chatter to decide at present on the objective limits of these manoeuvres. As the objective possibilities of manoeuvring diminish and as the new round of wars and revolutions approaches, the manoeuvres of social-fascism will increase and become more "perfect." The extremely flexible strike-breaking tactics of the social-fascists are not only accompanied by anti-capitalist phraseology, but by *anti-reformist phraseology*. And this is something new in their manoeuvres. The P.P.S. leaders are already talking about the overthrow of capitalism. For example, in the resolution passed by the Central Council of the Miners' Union the following passage occurs :

"The idea spread among the working-class that the present crisis can be overcome without the overthrow of capitalism is harmful because it distracts attention from the necessity of fighting against the capitalist system, supports its sickly existence and deepens the poverty of the masses."

The anti-reformist phraseology of the P.P.S. proves most eloquently how utterly bankrupt the former programme for healing capitalism is, in the eyes of the masses. The P.P.S. cannot now come to the masses with its bankrupt slogans of parliamentary democracy in the form of a centre-left Government. It preaches the restoration of democracy, the formation of a "workers' and peasants' government," and advances the slogan of a Polish People's Republic.

The masses of workers and peasants have no desire to return to the Republic of Pilsudsky, Dashinski, Vitos and Co., from which the fascist dictatorship arose. In view of this, the Polish social-fascists, like the German Social-Democrats, shout "Long Live the Second Republic based on 'pure democracy' and 'growth into socialism.'"

With this alleged programme, the Polish social-fascists link up the slogan of planned economy. They note the tremendous popularity of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. among the masses in Poland and they are compelled in words to recognise its achievements and to put on the mask of objective well-meaning critics. "Our attitude to the Five-Year Plan," say the leaders of the P.P.S., "is without irony or hate. In principle we are in favour of a socialist

planned system, but only without the Soviet system (*Laughter.*), i.e., not on the basis of the serf-like dependence of the masses on the dictatorship, but on the basis of Social-Democracy which is inseparably connected with political democracy." In addition, they try to frighten the masses with the danger that Poland will lose its "independence" if, as they say, "the Five-Year Plan extends to Poland as well" (*Laughter.*)

Recently the social-fascists have also begun to manoeuvre with the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat."

The sympathy displayed by the toiling masses for the U.S.S.R., their hatred of imperialist war, their readiness to defend the socialist fatherland, and also as a result of the successful anti-war congress campaign (hundreds of meetings were held and resolutions passed, a number of anti-war committees were set up and a provincial conference was held at which delegates from 260 factories, villages, trade unions, mass gatherings of working youth attended, etc.) all this is compelling the social-fascists, in words, to oppose anti-Soviet intervention, which does not prevent them, however, from reviling the anti-war campaign of the Communists and socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

Thanks to these cunning manoeuvres, which sometimes perplex our Party organisations, social-fascism is able to restrain the strivings of the masses towards Communism and retards the disintegration in its own ranks. The rate at which this disintegration is taking place does not correspond to the favourable objective conditions.

The process of disintegration of social-fascism is not so simple as those comrades are inclined to think who over-estimate the "self-exposure" of Social-Democracy and conceive it as a sort of spontaneous process which frees the Communists from the obligation of carrying on persistent and able work to expose it. These comrades usually substitute vulgar phrases for the exposure of the extremely complex manoeuvres of social-fascism and strong language about the social-fascists for strong arguments. Our task is not merely to shake the confidence of the Social-Democratic workers in their leaders, but also to *convince* these workers that we are right, to urge them along the path that will take them away from the leaders and from the *Socialist Party*.

We easily forget that there is a fairly solid difference between the attitude of the Social-Democratic workers to their party, and their attitude towards their party leaders. When a Social-Democratic worker curses his leaders who have gone yellow, he, in his heart of hearts, still believes that Social-Democracy, in itself, is a good party of the workers and only the bad leaders need be changed. This is the sentiment on which the "Left" charlatans play, especially in Poland.

However, our methods of *convincing* the Social-Democratic workers are not as good as they should be and still weaker are our efforts to organise the discontent in the P.P.S. The necessary persistence and concentration is lacking in this work. The splitting of individual workers and groups from the P.P.S. takes place without a mass campaign, and does not lead to bigger mass splits in the P.P.S.

Owing to the growing objective difficulties and the manoeuvres in the strike tactics of social-fascism, which has the monopoly of legality, our struggle for the leadership of the strike movement becomes much more difficult.

These difficulties affect the proportion between the strikes led entirely by the Red Trade Union Opposition and those in which a stubborn fight for the leadership has occurred. Whereas in 1931 we led 80 per cent. of the strikes and the strikers involved, in the first half of 1932 the R.T.U.O. led 159 economic strikes affecting 206,000 workers, while the reformists led twenty-three strikes affecting 130,000 workers, including the one-day protest strike of 100,000 municipal employees; while in twelve strikes affecting 67,000 workers, we carried on a struggle against the reformists for the leadership. These figures show that the R.T.U.O. had unchallenged leadership of the strikes which occurred mainly in medium and small industry.

This is why the process of disintegration of the social-fascist parties is slower than the general radicalisation of the masses. With the help of flexible manoeuvres, social-fascism not only succeeds in reducing the rate at which the workers are deserting Social-Democracy, but here and there it is able to intercept elements who are deserting other parties and to prevent the further progress of these elements towards Communism.

There are also zig-zags in the contraction of the mass basis of social-fascism which is taking place in the chief proletarian centres. *Our task is to accelerate the collapse of Social-Democracy by the competent, systematic, persistent, exposure of social-fascism, especially on the basis of the experience of the everyday struggle.*

The wide masses are already following the revolutionary vanguard, the Communist Party. In the course of the everyday struggle, the Communist Party of Poland has made great advances along the path of winning the majority of the proletariat and the basic masses of the peasants. The acceleration of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in Poland requires that the Party should concentrate all its efforts upon the rapid fulfilment of the main strategic task of the present period. This task can be fulfilled only in the course of a consistent and persistent struggle against social-fascism and national-fascism.

TOWARDS DECISIVE STRUGGLES FOR POWER.

I want to make a few remarks on the question of the *general strike*.

In organising partial strikes, the Party never dropped into Economism, never lost sight of revolutionary perspectives.

The Party linked up the policy of extending the strike front with the policy of *steering a course for the general strike*. The general protest strike of March 16 roused tremendous enthusiasm among the masses for the slogan of the revolutionary general strike. Of course, it would be a kind of Economism to regard such a strike as the mechanical continuation of partial strikes, as the normal sum of partial strikes.

It is clear that such a strike requires a suitable sharpening of the whole political situation and a high level of revolutionary activity on the part of the broad masses. The path towards such a strike leads through the further extension of the strike front, especially among the decisive sections of the proletariat—the metal workers and railwaymen—through an extensive interweaving of economic and political strikes, through street demonstrations, through the co-ordination of the actions of the unemployed, through big united fights and partial revolts in the rural districts.

The popularisation of the slogan of the general strike must be linked up with the prospects of the direct struggle for power, with the propaganda of armed rebellion. This does not mean that every such strike will automatically and immediately develop into an armed rebellion. A general revolutionary strike is possible even when the situation has not yet matured for a revolutionary uprising, which does not spring automatically out of a general strike, but is the result of a whole series of big class battles. We learn this from the experience of 1905 revolution. Lenin put the question of the general strike in the same way. The directive which applies most of all to every circumstance can be found in the resolution on strikes passed by the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks in 1913 (when the revolutionary tide had reached a higher level than it is at in Poland now) approximating most closely to the present situation. In this resolution we read:

“The meeting welcomes the initiative of the St. Petersburg Committee and a number of Party groups in Moscow which raised the question of the general political strike and took steps in this direction in June-September this year. The meeting recognises that the movement is approaching the time when an All-Russian political strike will be on the order of the day. Systematic political agitation for this strike should commence everywhere immediately.”

This presentation of the question of the general strike excludes the linking up of this strike with

armed rebellion, automatically, when the objective situation is not ripe for it.

On March 16, certain comrades in Poland wanted to advance the slogan: "Long live the general strike to complete victory." Such a slogan would have simply hung in the air; it would have remained merely a paper slogan.

It is difficult to foresee what the concrete process by which the general revolutionary strike will develop into a direct struggle for power will be like. But even at the present time, these perspectives must give a political direction to all partial struggles. We must remember that in the conditions of a revolutionary crisis, the general strike under our leadership brings the masses point blank up against the task of the direct struggle for power and brings the Party up against the task of organising the forces for the armed rebellion.

While taking the line of leading the masses to the general revolutionary strike, we must even now reckon with the possibility of every big strike developing into a short general protest strike. Bearing the experience of March 16 in mind, we must always be ready to take the initiative without delay and to lead this strike from the very start.

In this respect, the example of March 16 undoubtedly is of international importance. Similar strikes have taken place in Hungary and Greece. They are symptoms of the maturing of the conditions for a general revolutionary strike in those countries which are approaching closest of all to a revolutionary crisis.

It is quite plain that a general revolutionary strike represents a component part of our revolutionary strategy in its concrete operation. The rôle of this strike in various countries may differ. In countries like Poland and Italy, the general revolutionary strike may be a means of bringing about a big break in the chain of the fascist dictatorship, cause millions to come out in the streets, and serve as a means of uniting the scattered sections of the proletariat as the revolutionary class, a means for strengthening its hegemony and a test of the relationships of class forces before the general engagement.

In his book on Germany, Trotsky opposes the slogan of the general strike. He says:

"It would only become necessary to fight against fascism in Germany by means of the general strike if fascism was already in power and was in firm control of the apparatus of the State . . . If in Germany the struggle breaks out as a result of partial clashes caused by the provocation of the fascists, the call for a general strike will hardly suit the circumstances. A general strike would mean, above all, the separation of town from town, section from section, and even factory from factory."
(*Laughter.*)

"It is more difficult to find and gather together

workers who are not at work . . . Under these conditions, the fascists, who are not short of staff officers, may obtain a certain superiority of force owing to their central leadership."

In the opinion of Trotsky, the question of a general strike can only rise when fascism is firmly in control of the apparatus of the Government. This completely expresses the rank opportunism of the Trotskyist position.

(MARTINOV: "It is not a mistake but a calculation.")

The draft political theses correctly set the C.P. of Germany the task of "leading the masses to the general political strike" by "developing economic and political strikes" as one of the central tasks of the present moment. It seems to me that the same tasks must be set the C.P. of Poland and other countries such as Spain, where the development of economic and political strikes has moved furthest ahead.

The comrades who think that the task of popularising the slogan of the general strike and the task of leading the masses up to the general strike is a premature task, are clearly under-estimating the situation in an opportunist manner and are belittling our tasks. They do not understand the character of such a big preventive manoeuvre of social-fascism as the proclamation of the strike on March 16th in Poland. To fail to understand that such manoeuvres are called forth by the rapid maturing of the revolutionary crisis means failure to see the qualitative changes in the whole situation and the immediate revolutionary perspectives.

Thus we see that the wide strike movement is the main link in the revolutionary upsurge in all capitalist countries.

The fact that the strike movement is weak in Germany does not contradict the general line of development. This weakness is one of the signs that the subjective factor is lagging behind the objective conditions. It is true that the development of strikes in Germany encounters special difficulties (the tremendous power of the reformist trade unions and the Social-Democrats, the fact that the capitalist offensive is conducted directly by the capitalist State, widespread unemployment, the pressure of nationalist ideology caused by the fetters of the Versailles Treaty, etc.). However, the unceasing capitalist offensive undoubtedly strengthens the sentiments for resistance among the working masses. The development of strikes among the German proletariat depends on the forms of work, the forms of the organisational contacts of the Party and the R.T.U.O.

The chief difference between the *practice* of the Communist Party of Poland and the Communist Party of Germany—I am not speaking about the line—is that while the Polish Communists, when preparing to resist the capitalist offensive along a wide front, right from the start organised the struggle

in the various factories, the German Communists, when preparing for the fights, did not, in a number of cases, pay sufficient attention to partial strikes in reply to every actual attack of the capitalists. While the Polish Communists exerted every effort to make the workers affected understand the necessity for the strike, the German Communists, in spite of the line of the Party leaders, sometimes attempted to call forth strikes by word of command; the decisions to call strikes were not voted on in the factories and at conferences of factory delegates, but at conferences which had no connection with the factories, and they did not attempt at first to rally the workers by means of preliminary meetings and mass factory meetings. We are not speaking here of individual good examples of strike practice in Germany. The insufficiency of persistent preparatory work, the failure to concentrate forces on the decisive factories, the attempts to act from above instead of widely mobilising the masses from below, were bound to restrict the scope of the strikes in Germany. The absence of *systematic* resistance by the working masses made it easier for the German bourgeoisie to introduce a number of "emergency decrees" backed by the whole apparatus of the bourgeois State. The strike wave in Poland, however, hindered the Pilsudsky Government from following the German example. The Pilsudsky Government was compelled temporarily to withdraw its first attempt to abolish social insurance by the mere threat of a general protest strike. But this manoeuvre did not after all help the Government to avert the strike.

We do not mean to assert that strikes must everywhere play the same rôle as in Poland. In view of the present degree of political development of millions of the German proletariat who have been drawn into the vortex of the political struggle by the home and foreign situation of Germany, by the acute economic crisis, by growing political oppression, by the partial political crises among the ruling classes, the strike movement may not play such a big rôle in comparison with other forms of the political struggle as it does in Poland. The heroic example of physical mass resistance to fascist gangs, as in Altona, is one that other countries should follow. But by rousing the consciousness among the workers, political battles will stimulate the strike struggle of the working masses against the economic offensive of capital. On the other hand, economic strikes give rise to political strikes. Under the influence of these two factors, mass political strikes will rise to the point of the general revolutionary strike, the noble traditions of which live among the German proletariat.

Taken on the whole, the general line of development of the revolutionary upsurge in Germany is the same as in Poland—not an automatic leap to decisive battles for power but an accelerated approach to them

in the course of varied everyday fights (the systematic resistance to the terror of fascist gangs, economic and political strikes, demonstrations, etc.). In order to leap forward we must first take a run, and the proletariat can take this run only in the persistent everyday struggle. The poor leadership of this struggle was the cause of the weakness of the Party on July 20.

The best method of bringing about the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses is still the tactic of the united front from below. Comrade Kuusinen set out plainly and clearly the basic methods of this tactic in our work in the future. In spite of the various mistakes committed by the Communist Party of Germany, it has recently shown examples of Bolshevik application of this tactic, which must serve as lessons for other sections of the Comintern.

Only the broad united front, the starting point of which is the spontaneous striving of the masses towards unity in the struggle against the capitalist offensive and fascism, can serve as the lever to put into motion millions of the proletariat. Only the tactic of the united front, free from illusions concerning social-fascism, free from the capitulation of the Rights and the belittling of our independent leading rôle, and free from "Left" domineering over the masses, will enable us to win over the masses who are following the Social-Democrats, to counteract the influence of Social-Democracy among the proletariat and finally defeat it.

The united front as a method of mobilising the working masses for the *revolutionary struggle* has nothing in common with the policy of coaxing the Social-Democratic leaders, which is based on the opportunist view that Social-Democracy is ceasing to be the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie in the working-class.

I will read two quotations from the factional platform of our Right hypocrites which is being distributed in the country at present: "Monopolist capital and fascism are our chief and most important enemies at the present stage of the development of class battles in Poland. As the revolutionary situation matures in Poland and we win over the majority of the working-class for the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat, our chief enemy will become the P.P.S." In other words, at present it is not the chief enemy in the working-class.

"The bankruptcy of the tactic of the united front which has been employed hitherto has caused a spontaneous reaction among the Party masses in the direction of the Leninist united front." And further: "The terror used against the leaders of the 'Central Left' (*i.e.*, towards the leaders of the P.P.S. and the peasant kulak parties during the Brest trial), and particularly against the leaders of the P.P.S., or, to use the terminology of Lenin, towards the representatives of the democratic petty bourgeoisie, was

the expression of the sharp *conflict in the camp of the bourgeoisie*. According to Lenin, in order that our Party may become the leader of the masses, it should have taken advantage of this conflict to split away the masses which still follow the Central Left. How should we act? According to Lenin's directions, *We should agree to compromises, manoeuvres, agreements and zig-zags . . . with temporary and unstable allies.*"

The essence of these Trotskyist ideas is clear, namely: the Comintern tactic of the united front is "bankrupt." What we need is a united front with the representatives of "petty bourgeois democracy" which can be "pushed" along the path of revolutionary struggle.

The tendency to go part of the way with Social-Democracy, to replace the united front from below by a united front with the Social-Democratic leaders, is now the chief right danger. This tendency, like the sectarian attitude toward Social-Democratic and non-party workers, leads to our separation from the masses.

One of the typical Leftist mistakes committed in the work of the united front, not only in Poland but in other sections also, is the demand that Social-Democratic rank and file workers, should immediately display complete revolutionary maturity, the demand for immediate splits from the Party and the acceptance of all Communist slogans. Instead of leading by issuing *decrees*, we must show our ability to *lead* from below, boldly put Social-Democratic workers on to the leading united front bodies. The Leftist fear of these workers at conferences, in strike committees, etc., leads to isolation from the Social-Democratic masses. We must bring into the united front those Social-Democratic delegates who are prepared to fight together with us in spite of their leaders, but we must take care not to have any illusions about Social-Democratic delegates who carry out the instruction of their leaders.

We must not mechanically transfer the extension of the scope of the united front in Germany, which is called forth by a special situation, to other sections, irrespective of the concrete methods of manoeuvring employed by the Social-Democrats, irrespective of the position Social-Democracy occupies in the apparatus of government, irrespective of the relation of forces between us and the Social-Democrats, and irrespective of the degree of disintegration among their rank and file.

What is the difference between political conditions of Germany compared with those of Poland which call for different methods of applying the united front? First of all, the difference in the line of development of fascism. In Germany, until recently, this line indicated a rising curve; in Poland it indicates a declining curve. On the eve of the declaration of martial law in Berlin, we wrote that as

German fascism has only a short historic period of time at its disposal, it is trying to destroy, not only the Communist organisations, but also, in passing, the other workers' organisations, and even certain Social-Democratic trade unions. There can be no doubt that finance capital still regards Social-Democracy as its furthest outpost among the masses against revolution. Therefore it is not in its interests to destroy Social-Democracy; whereas the C.P. of Germany is threatened with suppression at any moment. But the counter-revolutionary sweep of the enormous army of Hitler, which is now intended for the home front, the logic of the intense class struggle, the desire to paralyse the whole working-class, and particularly against Communism, are sometimes turned against the mass organisations of the workers who follow the Social-Democrats. In Poland, after the unsuccessful attempts to create direct mass transmission belts for the fascist dictatorship and after the beating up at Brest, the P.P.S. became a recognised part of the fascist system. The fascist terror now strikes chiefly at the rank and file P.P.S. workers who have violated Social-Democratic discipline. In Poland, now that fascism is bankrupt, social-fascism is acting in the rôle of the saviour of capitalism; but in Germany, fascism is acting as the saviour of capitalism, while the Social-Democratic-Centre coalition is bankrupt. In Poland, the illegal position of the Communist Party helps the social-fascist leaders to deceive the masses by hindering the work of the Communists to expose them.

Hence it follows that in its tactical methods the Communist Party of Poland must observe the greatest caution, and apply the tactic of the united front towards the lower links of the P.P.S.—to the factory committees and to the oppositionally inclined branches of the reformist trade unions, and protect the P.P.S. workers against the blows of the fascist terror. In our present concrete conditions, it is not advisable to appeal to the P.P.S. Party organisations. This would only serve to raise the prestige of the P.P.S.

I wish to make a few remarks about our *slogans*. The draft of the Political Theses correctly emphasises the necessity for "central slogans of action which, through the whole period, must be steadily inculcated among the masses with special insistence." The question is about two categories of slogans—partial slogans which lead the masses up to the direct struggle for power; and central, strategic slogans. These slogans must be so formulated that they will be understood by the broad masses, by the millions of workers and peasants, and not only by the revolutionary vanguard. The strength of Bolshevism has always been the ability to put forward promptly the slogans which arise from the concrete situation, which are seized upon by millions of toilers and which put them into motion. Such a rôle was played by the

slogan : "Down with the Ten Capitalist Ministers," "All Power to the Soviets," etc.*

At the III. Plenum of our Central Committee we specially considered this question in connection with the general estimate of the situation and in defining the immediate outlook. The Plenum drew up a platform of sharp partial slogans which *corresponded to the level of the revolutionary upsurge* in Poland, which, as the resolution states, "will bring the masses into direct conflict with the fascist Government apparatus, set before them the question of power and make it easier to pass to higher forms of struggle." These slogans unite all the forms of struggle, often spontaneous, against taxes, against the fascist terror, for the liberation of prisoners, for the disarming of the police and fascist gangs and for the withdrawal of Polish occupational troops from West Ukraine and White Russia, slogans of struggle such as the seizure of food, and the unauthorised use of pastures and forests. Around all these questions, struggles are already developing. It becomes more and more imperative to systematically put forward slogans which correspond to the circumstances of the sharpening of the economic crisis, the tremendous poverty of the masses and the aggressiveness which is growing among them, as the conditions for carrying them out become ripe. The most popular slogan among the masses has become "Not a cent for the government of starvation, terror and war," a slogan which unites the struggle of millions of workers and peasants against the fascist regime.

In the sphere of central strategic slogans, the thesis on the report of Comrade Kuusinen lays before the C.P. of Poland the task of "explaining to the masses the revolutionary way out of the crisis by popularising the propaganda of (1) the Soviet system, which offers genuine democracy for all the toilers, (2) the confiscation of big capitalist enterprises by the Soviet State, (3) the confiscation of the land of the landlords with the aim of giving them to the very small peasants, the village poor and the farm labourers." It seems to me that these formulations should be made more exact. The most important thing is to have a very distinct definition of the slogan of power which determines the character of our revolution, which represents the dividing line between the camp of the proletarian revolution and the bourgeois counter-revolution, between Communism on the one hand and fascism, and social-fascism on the other. The popularising of the Soviet system naturally implies carrying on propaganda in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The formulation of the slogan must include the element of the Soviet power as the

only form of workers' democracy, *i.e.*, the element which is the definite contrast of the slogan of so-called democracy and the workers' and peasants' Government which is advocated by the social-fascists. This formulation should read as follows : "Long live the workers' and peasants' Government—the Government of Soviets, of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies !"

Our programme for a revolutionary way out of the crisis must impress on the minds of the masses that the only way out for them is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Polish Soviet Republic. We must systematically expose the falsity of the social-fascist talk about a democratic way out of the crisis and show that it is the synonym for the capitalist way out, a means of concealing the attempts of the bourgeoisie to throw the burdens of the crisis on to the toilers.

Finally, I come to the question of *perspectives*.

The draft political theses, pointing out the "peculiar swaying of antagonist forces, taking place rapidly in one place, slower in another" correctly emphasises that "in extremely important key points, the antagonistic forces are already being released for the struggle." This general formula must be made more concrete, must be adapted to the conditions of the rapid maturing of the revolutionary crisis in countries like Germany and Poland. We must remember the words of Comrade Stalin that there is no insurmountable barrier between the revolutionary upsurge, the revolutionary crisis and the revolutionary situation, that one phase imperceptibly passes into the other. The whole point is to make sure of this transition and not to be caught unawares.

In Poland, extensive breaches may even now be made in the fascist regime, there may be big proletarian battles and mass outbreaks among the peasants, which will grow into a revolutionary crisis.

The Polish bourgeoisie well realise this. One of the bourgeois papers wrote as follows :

"Everywhere we hear only what will happen to-morrow. Everyone has the feeling that we are standing at the edge of a precipice. Under such conditions, a small event may play a decisive rôle. Events may happen which the supporters of order will not be able to control."

Of course, the power of the bourgeoisie, to use the words of Lenin : "will not fall unless it is pushed over." The bourgeoisie understand the dynamics of the sometimes spasmodic development of antagonistic forces for decisive conflicts. They are preparing intensively for them. *We are sure that the XII. Plenum of the E.C.C.I. will considerably advance our preparations for the decisive struggles for power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

* In Russia, after the February Revolution—*Ed.*