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## **SIXTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.**

(FULL REPORT.)

### **Sixteenth Session.**

30th July 1928 (morning).

## **Comrade Bukharin's Speech in Reply to the Discussion on the International Situation.**

### **I. The Positive and Negative Sides of the Discussion.**

Comrades, the discussion that took place here was a remarkable one in many respects. In the first place there is the large number of comrades who took part in it. There were nearly 90 speakers. Never has there been so large a number of speakers on any one subject at previous Congresses. Particular mention should be made of the speeches delivered by our Negro comrades, by the delegates from Oriental countries and colonial countries generally, and especially of the speeches delivered by our Chinese comrades. It is important also to note the active part that was taken in the discussion by Communists from the South American countries, for this is the first time since the Communist International was established that we have had so many representatives of these countries present. Reference should be made also to the speeches delivered by numerous comrades from small parties, to which we sometimes devote too little attention.

Taking the discussion as a whole I must say that it was of enormous positive significance. I would like to point out the characteristic positive sides of the discussion.

First of all, I want to mention the criticism and self-criticism that was displayed. Our theses, my speech, the work of the Communist International and of the various parties, were all subjected to criticism.

The stream of self-criticism that flowed through the whole of the discussion is particularly to be welcomed. Another positive side of the discussion was that the representatives of nearly every Party took part in it. A particularly pleasing

feature, I repeat, is that representatives of "new" parties in the colonies, in South American countries, etc., participated.

Many of the remarks that were uttered in the course of the discussion were undoubtedly correct. These remarks must be embodied in one way or another in the decisions to be passed by the Congress as well as in the future work of the Comintern. It is true that in the main these remarks were concerned not with questions of principle, but with secondary questions; nevertheless, extremely important problems were touched upon. Among these I include the points made on the peasant questions, the references to the need for more attention being devoted to the unemployed problem that were made in the course of the discussion of our analysis of the present period of capitalist development. A number of speakers also referred to the question of colonial work, the Negro question, and also to the day to day practical work of the various parties and of the E. C. C. I. Special mention must be made of the comments made on the organisational shortcomings of our apparatus.

But there is also a negative side to the discussion to which I must refer. In this I include the rather narrow limits to which much of the discussion was confined. The majority of

*The full report of the discussion on the Report of Comrade Bukharin which was concluded in the preceding sessions will be published in the next few days.*  
Editor.

the comrades who spoke here almost exclusively dealt with their own countries and not with the fundamental problems of the movement that arise from the present situation. Of course, I do not object to the various delegations analysing and discussing the questions that directly concern them. On the contrary, I think this is desirable because it facilitates an exchange of experiences and, as it were, the collectivisation of our experiences. Without such an exchange of experience the work of the Communist International and of its Congresses would be

impossible. On the other hand I think that the failure of many speakers to deal with fundamental questions was a drawback in the discussion.

I will not dwell on the verbal skirmishes that took place here, but will merely recall the words of Heine: "This is not a knightly bout for the hearts of ladies fair; tis but a wordy war twixt Capucian monks and their foes, — the Rabbis" (Laughter). And I do not think it is necessary to deal in detail with this monk and rabbi contest.

## II. The Stabilisation of Capitalism and the Controversy over the "Third Period".

### THE V. CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN AND THE QUESTION OF STABILISATION.

Comrades, I will first of all deal with the fundamental problem, the problem of the stabilisation of capitalism and with the question around which the controversy centred most, namely, the question of the so-called third period.

As you know, the term "stabilisation" did not appear in the discussion at the V. Congress of the Comintern. What happened at the V. Congress, and what estimate did we make then of the economic and political situation? In the theses passed on the world economic situation the V. Congress first of all took note of the collapse of world economy; the theses speak directly of the collapse of world economy, of the Chaos in the currency and of the crisis of European economy. At that time we said that European economy was moving in a vicious circle and was unable to extricate itself from its state of crisis. We also pointed to the world agrarian crisis. The Comintern at that time emphasised that the bourgeoisie was incapable of removing the chaos in the currency, etc.

On the report of Comrade Zinoviev the V. Congress passed a resolution on tactics. What was the essential feature of the analysis of the political situation contained in that resolution? The principal point stressed in that resolution was the existence of a "paciist-democratic era".

Thus, as a result of the analysis we made of the situation at that time we declared that world economy was in a state of collapse, that European economy was in a state of permanent crisis; and the political superstructure of that analysis was the "era of democratic paciism". This era, as you know, was reflected by the "Labour Government" in England, the victory of the "Left Bloc" in France, the "Labour Government" in Denmark, and the various coalition tendencies in other countries. Such was the general situation at that time, and such was the estimate made of it by the V. World Congress. Not a word was said about stabilisation. The word "stabilisation" was first uttered in our midst only in 1925.

At the V. Congress, I repeat, and thrice stress it, in order to mark the change in the whole situation, there was as yet no talk of stabilisation. Why do I stress this point so much? In order that we shall take special note of it so that we may clearly understand the changes that have taken place in the objective situation since the V. Congress. This is precisely why in the first part of our Theses we advanced the postulate of the third period. The postulate on the three periods was discussed by the delegation of the C. P. S. U. and there it was amended to make it more precise. Of course, the fact that the situation since the V. Congress has been divided into three periods by the delegation of the C. P. S. U. is not in itself a logical proof that this division is correct. We must substantiate it by sound arguments.

### WHY IT IS INCORRECT TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF A THIRD PERIOD.

The part of the thesis which deals with this point reads as follows:

"1. After the first period of the World imperialist War, the international labour movement passed through a series of historical phases of development which expressed various phases of the general crisis of the capitalist system.

The first period was the period of direct revolutionary actions of the proletariat, the highest point of development of which was reached in 1921. This period culminated in the victory of the U. S. S. R. over the forces of foreign

intervention and over the internal counter-revolution, with the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship and the organisation of the Communist International on the one hand and with a series of severe defeats suffered by the Western European proletariat on the other. The final link in the chain of events in this period was the defeat of the German proletariat in 1923. This defeat was the starting point of the second period, a period of gradual and partial stabilisation of the capitalist system, of the process of the restoration of capitalist economy, of the general capitalist offensive and of defensive battles fought by the proletarian army weakened by severe defeats. On the other hand, this period was a period of rapid restoration in the U. S. S. R. and of extremely important successes in the work of building up Socialism. Finally came the third period which, in the main, was the period in which capitalist economy exceeded the pre-war level and in which also the economy of the U. S. S. R. almost exceeded the pre-war level (the beginning of the so-called 'reconstruction period', the further growth of the Socialist forms of economy on the basis of a new technique). For the capitalist system, this was the period of rapid development of technique, accelerated growth of cartels and trusts, of tendencies towards State capitalism and at the same time a period of intense development of the contradictions of world capitalism operating in forms determined by the whole of the preceding process of the crisis of capitalism (contraction of markets, the U. S. S. R., colonial movements, growth in the internal contradictions of imperialism). This third period, in which the contradiction between the growth of the forces of production and the contraction of markets becomes accentuated with particular force, will inevitably give rise to a fresh series of imperialist wars: between the imperialist States themselves, wars of the imperialist States against the U. S. S. R., wars of national liberation against imperialism and imperialist intervention and to gigantic class battles. As a result of the accentuation of all the International antagonisms (antagonisms between the capitalist States and the U. S. S. R., the military occupation of Northern China — which is the beginning of the partition of China and of the mutual struggle between the imperialists, etc.); as a result of the accentuation of the internal antagonisms in capitalist countries (the swing to the Left of the masses of the working class, growing acuteness of the class struggle), and as a result of the outburst of colonial movements (China; India and Egypt), this period will inevitably lead, — through the further development of the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation, to the further shattering of capitalist stabilisation and to the severe accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism."

Those who are opposed to dividing the whole period into three periods assert that the second period in no way differs from the third; therefore there is no reason whatever for making a distinction between the second and third periods and therefore the third period is superfluous.

But suppose we assume for the sake of argument that there is no difference, how then are we to explain the fact that world economy has exceeded the pre-war level? In my opinion this is a very important fact. Why? Permit me to explain this in as simple a manner as possible. The importance of the fact just stated lies in that it reveals the dynamics of the development. Before the pre-war level was exceeded we had reason for assuming that the growth of the productive forces in this country or that, was due to accidental causes, that

this growth was not typical and was not the characteristic feature of the given period. But as world economy, or rather the capitalist sector of world economy has gone beyond the pre-war level and is developing on a new basis we must adopt a more cautious estimate of the situation and very materially modify our previous estimate. We are not so blind as not to see such material facts and pass them by.

Thus, there is no mistaking the fact that a difference exists. This difference is both technical and economic. We cannot ignore it.

It has been said that there is no difference between the second and the third periods. But if that is the case then I ask, why have we modified our estimate of the general situation? Not because we are cleverer than we were, but because the situation has changed. In the beginning of the process we had rudimentary manifestations of stabilisation and we had very serious grounds for believing that these were only of a casual character. Now we have no grounds for believing that. The situation has become much clearer; the facts speak much more eloquently. That is why we have modified our estimate of the situation.

A number of comrades denied that there was any difference between the two periods but in the very next breath they said that contradictions had become very much more acute. But why have these contradictions become more acute? Did they become more acute suddenly, like a bolt from the blue? These two points of view cannot be harmonised. One cannot say: "there is no change in the situation" and at the same time admit that contradictions have become more acute; for, these contradictions must have some basis. It has been said: no change has taken place in the situation; but a new war is going on in China. Is that a trifle? We in the simplicity of our hearts thought it was a fundamental feature of the world political situation. If we are so blind as not to see these "trifles", then our pretensions to leadership are not worth a brass farthing. What sort of a leader can he be who fails to see the change in the situation and for whom it is a matter of indifference whether the economy of Europe has sunk to the lowest depths or is making rapid progress; whether there is war in China or not; whether the imperialists are preparing to attack the U.S.S.R. or not, etc., etc. If we are unable to see these new facts then we are finished. In that case our new tactical line (in England, France, etc.) is inexplicable. If we are still marking time in the old place then the new tactical line is superfluous.

I have quoted the strongest argument that was advanced against the third period. But other less categorical arguments were put forward such as: the third period does not exist, but still, we must say something about it. I want very conscientiously and precisely to analyse this "argument".

I will first of all reply to Comrade Kostrijeva, of the Polish delegation who in her speech said:

"Reference is made to three periods, into which the post-war period is supposed to be divided. But we consider that the line of demarcation that is drawn between the second and the third period is not the line of technical progress, because the latter was the condition precedent to the restoration period of post-war capitalist development. What is the characteristic feature of the third period? The most characteristic feature is that the contradictions which accumulated in the course of the stabilisation process

due to the great development of the productive forces are now coming to the surface and are shattering the whole system of capitalist society."

I must confess frankly that I do not understand the logic of this reasoning. Not technical development, but contradictions! But where do these contradictions come from? Comrade Kostrijeva says that they are due to the "great development of the productive forces". But I ask comrade Kostrijeva, is a "great development of the productive forces" possible without technical progress? Hitherto I, like a good many other comrades, together with Marx, thought that the productive forces were the sum of instruments of production and labour power. That is why the "growth of productive forces" cannot be separated from "technical progress". This would be absolutely incorrect theoretically. To postulate a great growth of productive forces in the present period and at the same time to deny the great growth in technique in the same period; to insist that contradictions have become ever so much more acute as a result of the changes that have taken place in the productive forces and at the same time to throw away this very criterion reveals that something is wrong from the point of view of even elementary logic.

The second speaker who dealt with this question was Comrade Strakhov (China). He said: "we do not understand this question and therefore we believe that there is no third period. But we are in favour of having this period mentioned in the Thesis".

Modesty is certainly a virtue, and certain Communists should strive to cultivate it. With that I can fully agree. But, comrades, I cannot agree that this is a sound argument. When Comrade Strakhov said that there is no difference between the second and third periods someone in the hall shouted "hear, hear". I do not know whose voice it was but whoever it was he displays a capacity for logic that is, to say the least, peculiar. While there is a close connection between the development of productive forces and the development of technique there does not always seem to be a similar connection between logic and vocal capacity.

At the end of his speech Comrade Strakhov said that the third period should after all remain in the Theses. But if there is no difference whatever between the second and the third periods, then, dear comrade Strakhov, why put it in the Thesis. Do you merely want to waste paper? It is certainly not sound logic to say: there is really no third period, but we ought to talk about it in the Thesis. I agree that sometimes we put in Theses things that do not exist, but none of us will believe that such Theses represent the acme of tactical wisdom. If there is no third period then it is better to leave it out of the Thesis. But since you propose to leave it in the Thesis it shows that your conscience is not clear; you have a feeling that this unfortunate third period is of some use after all. Certainly it is of some use; it will help us to lay down correct tactics.

What is the meaning of the third period? What is the meaning of "these philosophies"? The meaning is that by taking note of a third period we emphasise that the stabilisation of capitalism cannot disappear from world economy in the course of a single day. And this must be emphasised. It is precisely on these grounds that our delegation supports the postulate of the third period.

### III. The War Question is the Central Question.

#### WAR DANGER IS THE PIVOT OF THE WHOLE SITUATION.

I come now to the second fundamental question which gave rise to an even more lively discussion than the first one. It is a pity that only a few comrades spoke on this point. First of all, however, I would like to put the following preliminary question: What is demanded of an E. C. C. I. reporter? Must he travel over the whole globe and then come back and report that in Mexico the situation is so and so, in the Argentine it is a little different, in Nicaragua it is altogether different; in the Co-operative Movement so and so and so and

so is going on? Must he report about absolutely everything: about the Co-operative Movement, about the Mexican Government, etc. etc.? Were he to do that, he would no doubt satisfy the wishes of all the comrades without exception. Had I done that, Comrade Murphy for example, would have been completely satisfied because I would have spoken about the Co-operative Movement (laughter). The Mexican comrades would have been satisfied with the few words I would have said about Mexico. Perhaps this would be a very good method, because all the comrades would be pleased with the fact that I would have mentioned "their" Movement. For a Marxist,

however, the important thing is to indicate the main tendencies out of the sum of facts and on the basis of these tendencies to lay down the principal tactical line. That is what I considered my task to have been. What is the pivot of the present situation? We have taken note of the great changes that have taken place in the world situation in many directions; but what is the pivot of the world situation, what is the key to our tactics? In my report I replied to this question quite openly and clearly. I said: the pivot of the whole situation is the war problem. The war danger — this is the core of the situation. In my opinion the war danger is the most characteristic symptom of the present situation as a whole.

#### IMPERIALIST AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COMMENTS.

I will take it upon myself comrades to "discuss" with the enemies of the proletariat, the imperialists and the Social Democrats. In their press they have commented on the speech I delivered here. First of all I will deal with the Polish imperialist press. "Epokha", the official Polish organ, in a leading article entitled "Soviet Loyalty" says the following:

"Bukharin's speech shows that the Comintern and the Soviet Government is one and the same thing. Up till now the Soviet Government has dissociated itself from the Comintern and this formula was accepted by those States who desire at all cost to maintain normal relations with the U.S.S.R. Poland is one of these States. Now, however, it turns out that this formula is unsound. The Soviet Government cannot disavow Bukharin, who is a member of the Political Bureau, i. e. the supreme organ of power in the U.S.S.R. The fact that Rykov is a member of the Presidium of the Comintern Congress (Bukharin: Apparently they have confused Rykov with an American or an Indian) and that Bukharin's report is published in all the Soviet newspapers indicate that the Soviet Government no longer dissociates itself from the Comintern and has removed its mask. Now we know that the Soviet Government and the Comintern is one and the same thing, that the Soviet Government is preparing for war against Poland and that in this war the Polish Communists must act as spies and create diversions in the rear."

Another Polish newspaper, "Polska Zbrojna", the organ of the Ministry for War writes:

"Bukharin's statement concerning the role of the Polish Communists in the event of a Polish-Soviet war is not an unexpected one. However, what deserves attention is the bold, one may say, the insolent tone in which this statesman, who occupies a number of high posts in the Camarilla that now governs Russia, speaks of the possibility of war with Poland and the fact that he does not think fit to conceal his plans and prospects. All that we wish to point to, however, is the senseless and destructive demoralisation which the mere fact of the existence of the so-called Communist system introduces in internal and foreign relations and the manner in which it is tolerated. Bukharin's declaration will compel those who up till now have demanded the legalisation of Communists to hold their tongues. For, the Communists are the enemy. The most dangerous enemy of the Communist system is Pilsudski, around whom all those who are opposed to Communism must rally."

Comrades, you understand perfectly clearly what all this talk means. It is by no means an accident that the point in my speech about the war danger is precisely the one that is selected for comment.

The Social Democratic press has also commented on my report. "Vorwaerts", the central organ of international Social Democracy, in its issue of July 27th, writes:

"This political belief in miracles is dictated by well-formulated theories at the Congress of the Communist International in Moscow; its prophet is Bukharin. The political belief in miracles has already taken many forms in the Comintern. The miracle was first expected to come from Germany, then from the Balkans and then from the

Pacific Islands. Now Bukharin swears by China, by the antagonisms between America and Europe, but above all he swears by war."

Then comes the following "comment":

"Again we get a rehash of the old vulgar-Marxian theory: the growth of productive forces under capitalism leads to the struggle for markets; the struggle for markets leads to war — this prospect is inevitable and without any possibility of evasion... As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, so sure will war break out — soon and even very soon, for Bukharin says: war is the question of the day. If war breaks out then further consequences will inevitably follow: Imperialist war will give rise to civil war, to world revolution, to the victory of the Soviet system throughout the whole world! Long live the world revolution, or rather, as this is only the second act, long live war!"

(Bukharin: So it turns out that our slogan is "long live war!") "And so they believe in miracles; they believe that the continuity of development and the continuity of the activities of Social Democracy in the sphere of practical politics in the interests of Socialism — will be interrupted. History commences all over again from the year 1914. A new 1914, this is the illusion that is held out to the Communist Parties of the world in order that their eyes may be closed to the cheerless perspective and the hopelessness of the position that confronts them; and they cheerfully return to the thesis: War is the beginning of all beginnings."

Permit me comrades to comment on these comments. First of all in regard to the Marxian theory. It is enough to read the last resolution passed by all the Congresses of the Social Democratic parties immediately before the war to realise how thoroughly the Social Democrats have destroyed the Marxian theory which at one time determined their attitude towards war. I was present at the Chemnitz Congress of the Social Democratic Party. As far as I remember it was held in 1912 or in 1913. Haase delivered a speech in which these vulgar-Marxian theories were employed in order to define the position of German Social Democracy on the question of war. Take the resolutions of International Socialist Congresses, these too were based on this "vulgar-Marxian theory".

#### MARX, ENGELS AND LENIN ON WAR AND REVOLUTION.

Let us see what Marx, Engels and Lenin had to say on these questions. For example, the "vulgar Marxian" Karl Marx, in an article in the "New York Tribune" of February 2nd 1854 entitled "The European War" wrote:

"But we must not forget that there is a sixth power in Europe which at a definite moment will establish its domination over the other five so-called "Great Powers" and make every one of them tremble. This power is revolution. After a long period of calm and restraint it is now again called to the field of battle by crises and the phantom of famine.

At the required signal — the sixth greatest European power will come forth in shining armour, sword in hand... That signal will be the threatening European war..."

That is how the "vulgar Marxian" Karl Marx appraised the situation. And another well-known "vulgar Marxian", Friedrich Engels, in 1887 in a preface to Siegfried Borheim's pamphlet wrote:

"...For Prussian-Germany no other war is possible except a world war, and this world war will be of a power and magnitude hitherto unparalleled. From eight to nine million soldiers will be hurled against each other, and Europe will be laid desolate to a degree that no swarm of locusts has ever desolated a land. It will be the desolation caused by the Thirty Years War compressed into three or four years and over the whole continent of Europe, will rage — famine, starvation, the brutalisation of the troops as well as the general population, acute poverty caused by the hopeless chaos in the artificial me-

chanism of trade, industry and credit — all this will end in universal bankruptcy; in the collapse of the old States and their routine political wisdom, a collapse so complete that crowns will roll in the gutter in dozens and no one will think it worth while to pick them up. No one can foresee how all this will end, and who will emerge the victor. But there is one result about which there is absolutely no doubt whatever: General exhaustion and the creation of the conditions for the final victory of the working class.

"This is the prospect, when the system of mutual competition in armaments carried to the extreme, finally brings its inevitable fruits. It is to this, O Kings and statesmen, your wisdom has brought old Europe! and if your only alternative is to commence the last war dance, we shall not weep (uns kann es recht sein). What if the war does push us into the background for a time; what if it does rob us of a few of the positions we have already captured? If you unleash the forces which later on you will be unable to control then, no matter what turn events may take, at the end of the tragedy your power will be reduced to ruin and the victory of the proletariat will either have been achieved or at all events (doch) will be inevitable."

I have quoted this long passage in order to show what the "vulgar Marxians", Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels thought about the connection between war and revolution. But it may be objected: These forecasts have partly come about already. What you have quoted may be a very good argument against the Social Democrats. But can it serve to explain the present situation? Now here I would like to quote the opinion of another "vulgar Marxian", Comrade Lenin. He thought that the revival of capitalism after the first world war was possible. He thought and wrote about the prospect of the further development of the revolution. What did he say on this subject? Comrade Lenin wrote:

"We do not wish to ignore the deplorable possibility of humanity experiencing — at the worst — a second imperialist war if, notwithstanding the mass ferment and the numerous outbreaks of mass discontent and notwithstanding our efforts, revolution fails to spring out of the present war." (Vol. XIII, p. 455. Russ. Ed.)

As a result of the war revolution was victorious in a number of countries. In the U.S.S.R. the proletarian dictatorship is already established. But even after the victory of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. Lenin foresaw the possibility of another imperialist war. In his last work written a little while before his death he again emphasised this perspective. He spoke and wrote about a second series of European wars, of a second series of great revolutions, and I think that in this he carried on the traditions of Marx and Engels and of all those who were really capable of understanding the world situation.

#### IV. The External and Internal Contradictions of the Capitalist System.

##### UNDER-ESTIMATION OF THE WAR DANGER — THE MOST SERIOUS DANGER THREATENING THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

Thus, the imperialists say: We don't want war, the U.S.S.R. wants war. Pilsudski says: I don't want war, the U.S.S.R. wants war. Meanwhile, all of them are feverishly preparing for a war of aggression against the U.S.S.R. and for war among themselves. I do not wish to assert that this war will break out for certain within the next few months. No one can say in what month, or even in what year war will break out. But the point is not whether war will break out within a year or two or three. The point is that the danger of war is growing from month to month. I think that this is perfectly clear. It is to the imperialists' interests to obscure this thesis and the Social Democrats are interested in the same thing. But there is no reason why we should conceal this fact. Hence, I cannot agree to the significance of this fact

##### WHAT MAKES THE IMPERIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IRRITABLE?

Now I ask you, comrades, what makes the imperialists so irritable when the question of war is discussed? Why is there so much irritation in the Social Democratic camp precisely on this question? Why is there such a sharp, sudden and direct reaction to my reference to this question in my speech? Ponder over it. Why is the Thesis on the forthcoming world war primarily subjected to criticism? Why are the other protests I referred to, made against my "insolent conduct" and against my "insolent speech"?

It is because objectively, the war danger is the pivot of the world situation. That is why our opponents react so fretfully to our analysis.

And this is easily to be explained. We expose their criminal work, we tear down the veils that conceal them, we destroy their screens, we openly speak the truth and say that the imperialists are preparing for war and that they are already conducting war. Many comrades completely forget that war is actually going on in Eastern Asia. How can a fact like that be eliminated? Should we say that, as this war is being carried on against an "uncivilised" people, — against Chinese, — it does not exist as far as we "highly civilised" Europeans are concerned. Only the blind can fail to see that war is already going on in China. Only the blind can fail to see that the Japanese-American conflict has become more acute. Also it is perfectly clear that it is to the interests of the imperialists, to the interest of the Social Democrats and of all those who desire to support the world capitalist system to obscure this thesis by all the trickery they can muster. Imperialism is in action, it is manoeuvring, it proposes all sorts of "pacifist" pacts, for example, the Kellogg Pact; it is carrying out excellent manoeuvres, for example, the recent note addressed to the Nanking Government by the United States. It resorts to a number of other tricks: it organises Conferences of the League of Nations; it shouts about peace. In a word it is exerting every effort to obscure the fundamental fact — its own criminal work. And the Social Democrats? What is the principle role of the Social Democrats today? It is to throw a veil over this fundamental fact of present-day development, to ideologically obscure it and remove it from sight. That is why they shout from the house-tops that the capitalist States are craving for peace, that it is only the "cursed" land of the proletariat that is disturbing the peace. That is why they sing the praises of the League of Nations and all other pacifist inventions. Is not all this clear? We have said this a thousand times before. There is only one State which is really carrying out a peace policy, and that is the U.S.S.R. There is only one State that has made a serious proposal for universal disarmament, and that is the U.S.S.R. There is only one State that is not interested in the partition of the globe, is not interested in colonies and "mandates" and that is the U.S.S.R. And it is precisely for this reason that the imperialists and their lackeys try to turn the facts upside down.

being diminished in any form, even in the form of separating external contradictions from internal contradictions.

Several comrades, as it were, keep internal contradictions in one pocket and external contradictions in another. There were several comrades of our delegation who adopted the same attitude, but they received no support. Is this attitude correct? No, it is not. It is the reflection of an underestimation of the war danger. From the objective point of view it is the reflection of Right-wing dangers in the Communist International. The principal danger that threatens us is the under-estimation of the war danger. In view of the fact that this question is by no means a simple one, on the contrary, it is a very complicated one, I think it is my duty to explain it in the most elementary manner possible, in order to avoid any possible misunderstandings and in order to obtain a clearest possible picture of it.

First of all, are there any persons in the Communist International who under-estimate the war danger? Undoubtedly

there are. Comrade Thorez, Semard, Ercoli and many other comrades referred to it. All of us have said and emphasised, for example, that the Chinese revolution and Japan's war against China have not been sufficiently reflected in the work of the Parties affiliated to the Communist International. Therefore, the objective situation reveals a continuous increase in the war danger, if the position of the imperialists and Social Democrats is absolutely clear, then we must take the under-estimation of the war danger seriously into consideration. This under-estimation of the war danger follows from the fact that the war danger is regarded as an ordinary problem, as one of many equally important problems. We do not link up the war danger with other questions in such a way as to subordinate all our other tasks to combating approaching war. And this is precisely what we must do if our actions are to correspond to the objective situation and to our tasks of the day. That is why I would like to enlarge on this thesis.

You know, comrades, that in his article on the Hague Conference, Lenin wrote, that in time of war or immediately on the eve of war a section of the Communist press will undoubtedly disgrace itself. Of course, it may be said that Lenin was a "pessimist". But the fact is, we have these words written in black and white by Lenin. Shall we say that this was an "incautious" expression to use? I do not know whether this forecast will be realised, but I do know that such a danger exists in view of the under-estimation of the war danger. I ask you what other danger is there to compare with this one? Almost none, for this is the fundamental question of the whole situation.

#### HOW THE QUESTION OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS SHOULD BE PRESENTED.

I ask you to verify the question as to whether this is the fundamental question or not. If you decide that this is the fundamental question then it will be easy for you to draw the necessary conclusions. In my opinion, attempts to transfer the centre of gravity from the question of the war danger to that of the Internal contradictions or to some other, imply a failure to understand the seriousness of the situation. This question is closely connected with the under-estimation of the intervention which has already commenced in China. I think also that it is connected with what I referred to in my speech: the inadequate internationalism of our Communist Parties.

The question of the internal contradictions and the connection these have with the external contradictions is a very complicated one.

I have already pointed out that some comrades, as it were, put the internal contradictions in one pocket and the external contradictions in the other. Such an attitude does not correspond to the objective state of affairs and must inevitably lead to erroneous tactical conclusions. Let us examine the question. First of all I ask you: is revolution possible without war? This is quite a legitimate question. The answer is: of course it is possible. It would be absurd to suggest that an immediate revolutionary situation can arise only in connection with war. It is true that history shows that in a majority of cases revolutions have been connected with war. Examples of these are: the Paris Commune, which arose during the Franco-Prussian war; the first great Revolution in Russia in 1905, which broke out immediately following the Russo-Japanese war; the February and October Revolutions of 1917 in Russia and a number of European and Asiatic revolutions, which broke out in connection with the world war — all these revolutions were closely connected with wars. But can it be asserted that in our times an immediate revolutionary situation in countries like Germany and Czechoslovakia can arise only in connection with war? Such an assertion would be absurd and from the practical point of view it would imply that we must "wait" for war to break out, and that we must take into account only one single perspective in our work. The question is: must we, as subjective factors, as a definite force, prepare for revolutionary situations under all circumstances? Of course we must. I repeat, it would be absurd to propose any other tactics. But, speaking generally, the degree of probability of revolution in either of these cases are not the same. I would formulate this in the following way: immediate revolutionary situations are possible, and perhaps even probable in Europe say, even without wars; but it is absolutely inevitable in the event of war. In the event of war revolution is historically inevitable; wars

will be inevitably accompanied by revolutions. Thus, it would be radically wrong to deny the possibility of an immediate revolutionary situation arising as a result of the development of internal contradictions alone.

Rejecting as I do the eclectic point of view of the comrades who isolate internal from external contradictions I must deal with the mutual relations of these contradictions.

What are the mutual relations between these two categories of facts, where is the function point, which is to serve as the starting point for the conclusions we must draw? In my opinion, world economic contradictions, the great world conflicts are of first class importance in this respect. Take England for example. Are the internal contradictions becoming more acute there? Of course they are. The growth of these contradictions in Great Britain are connected with the process of decline of the British Empire. But has not the process of decline of the British Empire its roots, in the majority of cases, in the international situation? Is it not due to the competition of the United States, to the centrifugal tendencies of the British Dominions and partly also of the colonies, and a number of other international factors? Picture to yourself a different international milieu for British capitalism, and the results will be altogether different.

Now take another example, the internal contradictions in Germany. Who does not know that it was American capitalism that facilitated the stabilisation of Germany. Can we in this case draw a sharp line of demarcation between internal and international factors? Just imagine for a moment America refusing to supply credits to Germany (a prospect that is held out by the Economist, Paish) — and internal collapse is inevitable.

Now take another category of factors: Why should we deal only with economics? I have in mind politics and partly also economic policy. We talk about "industrial peace", "Mondism", about the treachery of Social Democracy and of how it is becoming merged with the State apparatus, etc. All this is 100% true. But try and explain these processes merely from the point of view of the growth of internal contradictions. You will not be able to explain them. What is "peace in industry"? It is the most sharply expressed form of the class truce, — the best form of war preparations. Those who fail to understand that, lose sight of the very essentials of the question. Why was the Trade Union Act passed in Great Britain? Is it possible for us to understand this "internal" Act if we ignore external problems and completely lose sight of the preparations for war? If we ignore this point in this way we shall be incapable of carrying on any agitation whatever against this Act. Does not the new orientation of Social Democracy towards the internal question of class truce intensify the treacherous role of Social Democracy in foreign politics? Is this not clear to every infant? Is there anyone so foolish as to deny the connection that exists between Paul Boncour's military law with the internal situation in France as well as with its foreign relationships? I could quote numerous examples of a similar character. But the examples I have already quoted are sufficient to convince us that all other problems are subordinate to the central problem of the war danger, to the problem of war. This applies to the problems of internal politics and to internal contradictions. Any other approach to the question of internal politics and to the tactical problems connected with them are unsound and certainly not revolutionary.

#### THE FIGHT AGAINST THE WAR DANGER MUST PERMEATE ALL OUR DAY TO DAY WORK.

We all start out from the point that it is necessary to intensify our day to day mass struggle. Several Parties are limping along very badly in this respect. But everyone is agreed with the theory of it. What then is the difference between our day to day work and the day to day work of the Social Democrats? There surely must be a difference. What is this difference? The difference is that Communists must link up the day to day questions with questions of so-called "high politics". Take a British Communist for example. What sort of agitation must he carry on among the masses when, for example, he has to lead, say, a small strike? The fight against restriction of trade union rights in any form must be linked up with the fight against the Trade Union Act. In its turn the fight against the Trade Union Act must be linked up with the fight against

"Mondism" and with the fight against war. The fight against war must be linked up with the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. If he does not act in this way he is not a Communist. The broad masses of the proletariat who took part in the last world war know the "price" and know the incalculable suffering that the imperialist bourgeoisie inflicted upon humanity. In our day to day work we must point to the danger of war in connection with every day to day question of any importance. We could quite easily give up this trump card, but it would be a very silly thing to do from the political point of view. I want to put this question very clearly before the comrades and ask them to ponder over it. In my opinion we may make two estimations of the situation, and from each of these, different tactical orientations will follow. One orientation is that which does not co-ordinate general problems with everyday problems, and the other orientation which certainly does link up every day to day demand with the problem of war — the problem which in our day is the central problem. In their tactics Communists must unflinchingly link up every minor, everyday problem with the big general problems. It goes without saying that this calls for considerable ability. High-sounding phrases are not enough. We must employ astute methods of propaganda and agitation; not isolate but co-ordinate them and subordinate all problems to the problem of war. In criticising the Social Democrats (Rights as well as "Lefts"), who are the most subtle and most pernicious deceivers

of the working class) we must emphasise that "industrial democracy" and arbitration are not only of economic significance, but that they are also means for the preparation for war. We must open the eyes of the proletariat and the poor peasants to this fact. This is how we must carry on our propaganda, this is the direction towards which we must orientate the whole of our tactical line. We do not want a jumble of numerous facts; but from all the facts, from all the developing tendencies we must bring out the central point, the central problem of the war danger. In co-ordinating our partial demands with the problem of war, with the struggle against war, we must also link them up with the propaganda for the dictatorship of the proletariat. It may so happen, of course, that the immediate struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat will come to the forefront even if there is no war. But we must note the fact that the coming war is already casting its evil shadow before.

Thus, I have analysed the mutual relations between internal and external problems. I have emphasised that an eclectic approach to this question is impermissible. This analysis has brought out the necessity for a firm and determined line and the necessity for concentrating attention on the problem of war; the need for linking up this problem with all other problems, the need for special propaganda and agitation in order to prepare the proletariat for the struggle against the bourgeoisie and against Social Democracy. Such is our fundamental tactical line. It is the only possible line for the Communist International.

## V. Problems Connected with the Work of the Communist Parties.

### FIGHT FOR A CORRECT TRADE UNION POLICY.

I now want to take up certain separate problems, which in my opinion are very important. Permit me first of all to say a few words about our trade union tactics and our trade union work, which was discussed here. The Executive of the C. I. constantly emphasises in its resolutions, circulars, letters, and other documents, the necessity for persistent trade union work in connection with the united front tactics. Everybody knows this. The world situation, which I have analysed and described here makes this problem more acute than ever and brings the task of winning over the masses more and more to the forefront. In the present situation winning over the masses is the condition precedent for our struggle against the dangers of war, and against war as such. **The masses cannot be won over unless we work inside the trade unions.** From the point of view of our international relations we must repeat what we have already said, namely, that strenuous work in the trade unions is absolutely essential.

We must not lose the initiative in the struggle for trade union unity. In the present situation we stand particularly in need of strongholds among the masses. That is why an intensification of trade union work in general, and an intensification of Profintern work in particular, is now one of the major tasks in the work of the Communist Parties. In the course of the discussion of the trade union question a number of tendencies were revealed. Some comrades spoke of the necessity to organise the unorganised, to create independent organisations in opposition to the reactionary unions, and, under certain definite conditions, to link up with the Profintern unions those trade union organisations which have been captured from the reformists. That is the policy which we advocated and which was generally adopted by the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. However, in the discussion reference was made to tendencies to resist these decisions, to the absence of an independent Communist line in trade union work, to complete surrender to Reformism out of fear of expulsion from the trade unions. But another tendency was also revealed in the course of the discussion namely, a tendency to deny the necessity for working in the reactionary unions, and attempts were even made to develop a theory for the purpose of justifying this attitude. Sometimes this tendency is observed among the rank and file and arises from the difficulties which work in the reactionary trade union encounters. It is true that we are being expelled from the reactionary unions and for that reason greater firmness and a strong belief in our own policy is necessary to be able to work under such difficult conditions. The tendency to leave the reactionary unions is fostered also by the fact that large numbers of workers in many

countries are still unorganised. This is the case in the United States and also in France. Comrade Thorez pointed out in his speech that only a negligible section of the French workers are organised. It is absolutely clear that the task of organising the unorganised is one of the main tasks at the present time. But this is no reason why we should abandon our work in the reactionary trade unions, even in countries where dual unions exist. Some comrades try to prove theoretically that it is impossible to capture the machinery of the reformist labour organisations, trade unions, etc. They draw an analogy between the trade union and the governmental machinery. The slogan: capture the bourgeois State machine, they claim, must not be taken literally. They point out that Marx and Engels, and later Lenin in his "State and Revolution" explained that capturing the State means destruction of the State machine and its displacement by another; that this was the process of capturing the State.

The comrades apply this argument to the trade union question. There, too, there is a firmly organised bureaucratic machine similar to that of the bourgeois State machine. They say that it is impossible to capture that huge machine, it must be destroyed; but it is possible to destroy it only when the bourgeois State apparatus is destroyed. From this they conclude that it will be impossible to capture the reactionary trade unions before the capture of political power. On these assumptions it is easy to arrive at the conclusion that it is not necessary to work in the trade unions now under a Reformist leadership. However the argument that it is impossible to capture the reactionary unions cannot be proved. True, it is a very difficult task and it is probable that a final victory all along the front will be scored in many countries only in the process of the Social Revolution and after the capture of power. We have had cases like that in Soviet Russia, but we never abandoned our work in the Menshevik trade unions. To say that it is impossible to capture the unions is to take too pessimistic a view of the situation. The bourgeois State apparatus does not consist of workers. But the trade union machine is so constructed that only its upper layer consists of the so-called bosses while the lower strata consist of the masses of organised workers. If it is impossible to "capture" the entire machine it is possible to capture the rank and file, the factory committees and certain separate parts of the machine. Having broken through the front at one point it will be possible to proceed further. With the help of the masses it will be possible to break through the trade union front at several points. Can this be called breaking up the machine? In a certain sense, yes. By removing a reformist leader and placing our own man in his place, we are re-

organising the apparatus. The capture of any part of the machine means the "cleansing" and reorganising of that machine. This is clear. To make a theoretical comparison between the trade unions and the State is unsound.

In his famous pamphlet "Left Wing Communism — an Infantile Sickness" Lenin very bluntly raised the issue of the necessity for working in the reactionary unions. The arguments he used are generally known. We must not go from one extreme to the other. We must combat the opposition to the decisions of the IV. Congress of the Profintern. Abominable facts were related here of what occurred in the German Party on this point. But we must also fight against the slogans of workers' control of industry and the like if they are advanced at a moment when there is no revolutionary situation (such slogans are pregnant with most serious dangers). Certainly we must combat these what are in fact right wing tendencies; but we must not fall into the other extreme and deny the very possibility of fruitful work in the reactionary unions.

### WORK IN THE MASS ORGANISATIONS.

The proposition we advanced in the discussion on the Youth question fully applies also to trade union work. We demanded from the Youth that they carry their mission into all mass organisations where workers are to be found even if these organisations are non-Communist or non-revolutionary. In this epoch of intense struggle against Social Democracy (we can make no headway without such a fierce struggle) and the prospects of war, our penetration into the masses of the proletariat is an absolutely necessary pre-requisite for success. Without creating this pre-requisite our existence as a Communist Party is generally impossible. To hope optimistically for the growth of our influence is not enough. We welcome this growth but the disproportion between the influence of our Party and the organisational consolidation of that influence is notorious. In order to remove this disproportion we must carry on strenuous work in the trade unions and other mass organisations. Comrade Willi Münzenberg quite correctly said that we must devote serious attention to the mass organisations. The forms of these organisations are multifarious but nevertheless we must take our positions in them. By the way, Comrade Münzenberg unjustly rebuked me for under-estimating the significance of the Anti-Imperialist League. In my report I argued precisely against the liquidatory tendencies of some comrades in relations to that League. Attempts are being made to give a theoretical basis to these liquidatory tendencies. The followers of this tendency say that they are not purely Communist organisations, they are not even proletarian organisations; they contain many intellectuals and many representatives of the national revolutionary movements who may betray us tomorrow, etc. The opponents of participation in these organisations fear that these amorphous non-Communist organisations will "displace" the Communist Parties. These organisations include the Anti-Imperialist League, the Unity groups, the labour and other delegations to the U.S.S.R. with and without participation of intellectuals, etc. Some comrades are afraid that the Communist Parties will be crowded out by these organisations. Of course to assign to these organisations a role by which they would displace the Communist Parties would be a betrayal of Communism. This is a self-evident fact. But who assigns to them such a role? We do not regard these organisations as substitutes for the Communist Party, but as a means for spreading our influence among the broad masses. Comrade Münzenberg said that Comrade Bukharin, perhaps because he is insufficiently informed, has failed to note the great actions of the League in Mexico. Comrades, it is true that I did not mention this point. But does Mexico atone for all sins? For instance, I do not think the League has done sufficient positive work in connection with the Chinese question. In this connection it has done very little. Comrade Münzenberg knows better than anyone else the organisational weaknesses of the League. I mention the shortcomings of the League not because I propose to deprive it of our support, but because I want it to be supported. Willi Münzenberg alone is not to be blamed for this; we are all to blame. We gave very little assistance to the League, we did not supply the League with adequate forces. Our Parties did not sufficiently co-operate with it. Such are the unembellished facts, on the basis of which we must draw our conclusions.

The problem of mass organisations is one of the most important problems and the next Plenum will have to work out a series of practical measures for its correct solution. The line is clear, but our experience is inadequate. We have already adopted many resolutions on this question and have debated on it many times. We have resolutions to show but our deeds do not correspond with these paper resolutions. This is a fact.

### UNEMPLOYMENT.

The unemployment problem was touched upon, and quite rightly. Several comrades spoke on the question and particularly Comrade Hannington from Great Britain. This question must be elaborated in the theses and the most serious attention must be paid to it.

The unemployment problem was discussed here yesterday in connection with the special problems appertaining to America. Comrade Lominadze raised several objections to the case presented by Comrade Varga. He said on the one hand that Varga revises the fundamental principles of Marx by speaking of a decline in the number of workers employed in industry. He thinks this is not the case nor can it be. On the other hand Comrade Lominadze says that he does not agree with me when I say that this is the first time anything of this kind has occurred, for Marx has given numerous examples of such cases.

I think one must choose one of these two propositions. Either something of the sort has existed and exists now or nothing of the kind can exist. (Lominadze: There is no law of development).

Quite right. There is no law of development. (Lominadze: I said this against Varga). But you are arguing also against me.

The second proposition excludes the first. But Comrade Lominadze wants to have it both ways.

How does the matter actually stand? Is a reduction in the number of workers employed in industry possible or not? It is possible. It is possible as were the various cases which Marx cited in volume I of "Capital". Not a "certain" but a fairly well known French economist, Ganil to whom Comrade Lominadze referred, developed a whole theory on this subject as follows: as capitalism develops, the number of workers employed declines and the number of capitalists increases. Hence, the workers become capitalists! Marx said that this was nonsense, that it was a ridiculous and worthless theory. But is this the point involved in the "American" case? Did Varga express his agreement with Carver (and Ganil)? Did Varga say that the workers become capitalists? God forbid! Varga said that they become unemployed. There is nothing in this to suggest Ganil's theory. Hence, Ganil must be left to lie in peace. Further, Marx cites several cases of individual factories in which the number of workers employed declined. Is it possible for the same thing to happen now (for the first time!) in a whole country, at least for a certain period of time? I think it is possible. A certain country may occupy an exceptional position in world economy, may be distinguished by certain specific features of development just as certain individual factories or districts of Great Britain were distinguished in the days of Marx. It would be imprudent and wrong to advance a new "natural law" of capitalist development at the present time. Firstly we have too little empirical material with which to make such generalisations, but it is quite permissible to speak of positive facts. There is a country that occupies an exceptional position in world economics and that country is the United States. It is quite reasonable to suppose that a country with such enormous economic resources and where technical progress has made such rapid strides should not develop along the general, average line but should develop in leaps. That is exactly what is happening in America.

What does that mean? For our analysis as a whole it means the following: We see various processes giving rise to growing unemployment. These are — growing unemployment caused by depression and crisis; growing unemployment as a result of rationalisation, and finally a spasmodic reduction in the absolute number of workers employed in industry due to the very rapid technical development that is taking place in the United States.

I absolutely disagree with the argument advanced here by many comrades to the effect that the internal possibilities of American imperialism have been "exhausted". They have not yet been exhausted and in general I am on principle opposed to this point of view. It is wrong both in theory and principle, it is the **Luxemburg theory** (Voice: This is what Varga said!). Yes, Varga said it but I disagree with Varga on this point. It is wrong; it is a reiteration of Rosa Luxemburg's theory. What is true is that under the present market conditions in a country like the United States, consecutive investments of capital are not as profitable as for instance in South America. And this problem is not as simple as some comrades think. It is a very complicated one. Our general deductions are as follows. There are now various causes of unemployment and these causes must be analysed. There is the unemployment that arises in time of depressions; there is unemployment called forth by the process of rationalisation, even in the period of the upward trend of development; there is a rapid growth of unemployment at the time of a marked upward trend of development accompanied by extremely rapid technical progress. Take for instance unemployment in Great Britain and in America. These are two different types of unemployment. It goes without saying that we, as Communists regard all these types of unemployment as a product of the development of the contradictions in capitalism. We utilise these contradictions with the object of sharpening the class struggle.

### THE PEASANT PROBLEM.

New a few words on the peasant problem. The critical remarks made on this question by Comrade **Kolarov**, by the Italian, Balkan, South America, Persian and several other comrades I think are absolutely justified. But, in my turn I can hurl the reproach at all these comrades for not having said a word about the agricultural proletariat. As a matter of fact this problem is one of the most serious problems in the capitalistically developed European countries.

How does the peasant problem as a whole stand at the present time? I think the formulation we adopted in 1925 still holds good. With the beginning of partial capitalist stabilisation, work among the peasantry in the highly-developed West-European countries has become objectively more difficult for us.

The broad masses of the peasants — not the pauperised peasants of the Chinese, Russian or Roumanian type, but the "middle" and "lower middle" West European type (Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, etc.) — became restless when considerable disturbances take place in the entire capitalist system. No analogy can be drawn between the Chinese peasants and German peasants, between Russian peasants and the German middle peasants. They represent totally different social categories, they are quite different types of peasants. Lenin spoke of this at the II. Congress, and strongly emphasised this distinction. In times of war and great disturbances in Western Europe, these sections were also moved. But under the present conditions of stabilisation, work among the peasants in the large capitalist countries will in my opinion be very difficult.

All the more reason therefore, why we must stress the significance of our work among the **agricultural labourers**. In a number of countries at the present time an **offensive** on the agricultural proletariat is observed all along the line. At the same time in a number of countries of a different type, the **agrarian problem** is becoming accentuated — the events in the **Balkan countries** and particularly in **Roumania** have shown us that this problem is assuming special significance and we must therefore regard it as the most important issue for us in these countries. The same thing applies to those **colonial countries** in which an immediate revolutionary situation may be expected in the near future. For instance, the peasant problem in **China** is now an urgent and the central problem of the revolution. Special attention must be devoted to the peasant problem in the **South-American countries**. The structure of the State in almost all South-American countries is of a peculiar type (big landowners, and owners of latifundia are at the helm). In some of these countries we find latifundia on which a mixed regime of capitalist exploitation and feudal relations exist. We find similar conditions in some colonies with their plantation systems, where extraordinary laws exist, for instance against the **Negroes**, etc. The peasant problem in **Indonesia**, **India** and **South Africa** (where the natives are being divorced from the

land) plays an enormous and even a decisive role. For our Parties in those countries the peasant problem is the chief and principal problem. In **Poland** — I come now to European countries — this problem is also of the utmost importance.

However, the comrades who spoke on this question made almost no concrete proposals as to what is to be done. Of proposals that were made I will mention only one, which reduces itself to the suggestion that we should revise the point of view we adopted in 1925 in regard to the peasant parties. The comrade who made that suggestion believes that under the existing objective conditions (the extraordinary importance of the peasant problem in several countries) we ought to organise peasant parties.

I do not agree with that and I believe that there is no reason to accept the suggestion. The arguments advanced in its favour are not convincing enough. We are told that since we must devote more attention to the peasant problem, particularly in the various colonial and semi-colonial countries, in the South-American countries, etc., it naturally follows that we must organise peasant parties. Why? We have already discussed this question and decided that it was necessary to organise **peasant leagues**, to gain influence in them and to control them through our fractions. It seems to me that this position was absolutely correct and that it holds good also today. Why are separate peasant parties necessary? What does it mean to create a new party in the light of the prospect of development of bourgeois national revolutions in the colonies and their transformation into social revolutions. It means that we would set up parties to compete with the Communist Parties of the proletariat. We cannot say: up to a certain point we "favour" such parties, but after that we "eliminate" or liquidate them without ceremony. No, comrades, such parties would grow and eventually would compete with the Communist Parties. Of course, in cases where peasant parties already exist we must seek to win them over and to bring them under our influence. But wherever the question of organising a peasant party is raised for the first time it seems to me that it would be much better for us to organise peasant leagues, because by doing so we shall be able to organise broader sections of the peasantry and create a surer means by which to lead the toiling sections of the peasants. Such a form of peasant organisation may attract a larger membership and will be much easier to bring under the influence of the proletarian Communist Party. All these political considerations argue against this proposal. We decided this question in this spirit before and gave the same motives for this solution. There is no reason whatever why we should relinquish this position.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK IN SOUTH AMERICA.

Allow me to deal with a few other questions.

First of all I want to lay stress on the problem of the **South American countries**. We have already mentioned the fact that this is the first time that the **South American Parties** are so well-represented at our Congress. Of course, this shows that our movement has extended to the South American countries. These countries are now particularly important for us as they play a very important although peculiar role in world politics. We have already pointed out the growing aggressiveness of North American capitalism in South America; we have also pointed already to the war of liberation **Nicaragua** is waging against the imperialist invasion of the U. S. We are all perfectly well aware of the greatest importance of Mexican resistance and we also know that such resistance and a powerful popular movement against North American imperialism is now developing in several countries in South America. We know perfectly well that this problem is intertwined with certain internal problems in the respective countries, particularly with the agrarian problem and the struggle against Fascism. On the question of tactics in the South American countries there are various currents among us. I cannot deal now with all the controversial points. I would like, however, to emphasise the point that from the viewpoint of struggle against war and against imperialism and in general, from the viewpoint of the development of powerful national revolutions and powerful agrarian revolutions, — which most likely will reveal the tendency to become transformed into social revolutions, the whole gamut of South-American problems is assuming increasing significance from day to day.

### THE NEGRO PROBLEM.

I want also to stress the importance of the Negro problem. The Comintern has already passed a number of resolutions on this question. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the Parties concerned have not yet paid the necessary attention to this issue. Almost all Negro comrades say in addition, that the survivals of race prejudice are still to be observed in some parties. I do not deny this fact. If on minor national issues, there is friction within the Communist Parties, for instance in Western Europe, what reasons have we to believe that great cultural and radical distinctions leave no traces upon the Communist Parties? Even on the Commissions of the Comintern a wrong note is detected when questions concerning the Negro problem are discussed: I myself noticed this during a discussion on the South African question. We must put an end to this once and for all. In our Theses we must declare in the name of the Comintern that it is the duty of all our comrades to adopt a correct policy on this question and fight mercilessly against the slightest manifestations of race prejudice. The Negro problem must not be studied merely from the point of view of the situation in North America, but also from the viewpoint of the situation in South Africa, etc.

### THE SITUATION IN INDIA.

A few words on India. Some Indian comrades raised some points against me and I must reply. For instance, Comrade Rasur objected to my description of the present economic situation in India. He regretted that I did not say something about the industrialisation of India. I must state here that in elaborating their theory of the "de-colonisation" of India the Indian comrades sought support in a statement I made in the course of which, while I made no reference to the de-colonisation of India, I nevertheless, pointed to the large investments of foreign capital to be observed in India.

Is it true that I made no reference to the industrialisation of India in my report? I may not have employed the term industrialisation. But I spoke of big capital investments during the war and post-war periods; is that not industrialisation? However, this is not a decisive factor in analysing the present situation in India. A decisive element is the following: Has the policy of British imperialism changed in regard to India or not? Is there any change to be observed in the economic policy of British imperialism? I think the flow of capital to India has greatly diminished of late. We no longer observe the feverish investments of capital; there is no longer an upward curve of large investments such as we saw before. That is why the surging process of economic development that was observed some time ago is not observed now. Hence, the impoverishment and pauperisation now in progress which is converting the peasants not into urban workers on all sides, semibeggars on the land, robbed and enslaved on all sides. This retards the development of the home market and therefore the development of industry which has to contend against

bitter competition, which is made all the more severe by the "preferences" Britain is able to secure for herself by the privileged position she occupies in the country. Such are the peculiar features of India today. Comrade Rasur said that Britain is trying to bribe the upper strata of the peasantry. This is true. But it seems to me that Comrade Rasur somewhat exaggerates this process. In reality we see the process of further pauperisation and this is a basis for the coming revolutionary battles. This is also a basis for bourgeois manoeuvres against British imperialism. In regard to the tactics that must be applied in India, I have dealt with them already.

### THE VIENNA INSURRECTION AND THE "LEFT" SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

In dealing with the smaller Parties I think a few words must be said regarding the Austrian question. Some comrades asked me whether the fact that I did not mention the July insurrection in Vienna is to be taken as indicating a change in our opinion on this question. As you all know we discussed the Austrian question some time ago and expressed ourselves very strongly against the position of the Austrian Party. In the resolution we adopted it is pointed out that the Vienna uprising was a powerful revolutionary mass movement and that our Party should have advanced the slogan of Soviets and should have led the insurrection under this slogan. No doubt all of you are familiar with that resolution. It seems to me that there is no reason why we should depart from the opinions we expressed at that time. It is another question as to whether that movement was not isolated somewhat at the stage which it had reached. The masses of the German or Czecho-Slovakian proletariat could not be called out for a general strike and no decisive mass action could be effected then. From this point of view the Vienna uprising was to a certain extent isolated. However, with the further development of events we might have attained a different situation. That was quite possible. Who can say that if the events had developed further we would not have had great ferment in Germany and Czechoslovakia? Such a possibility was not entirely out of the question. The argument that the rising was isolated, or rather, relatively isolated cannot be brought in as an argument against our revolutionary tactics in Austria. Did the Austrian Party at that time have the opportunity to develop the movement? I think it did. The Party made a mistake in not helping to create mass organisation in the form of Soviets. It had the opportunity for doing that, but it committed a grave mistake in not acting in the right way in the right time. I think the resolution of the Plenum of the E. C. C. I. was absolutely correct. It is another matter as to how far similar events are possible in the existing situation. I do not consider such a prospect very likely. But this is an entirely different matter.

The Austrian events emphasised with particular force the correctness of the thesis on the role of the "left" Social Democrats when it says, that they are the most dangerous enemies of the revolutionary proletariat.

## VI. Tactical and Inner Party Problems.

### THE CHANGE IN TACTICS AND THE RIGHT WING DANGER.

Comrades, now a few words about inner-Party affairs. It is quite clear that now, after the defeat of the Trotskyist Opposition, which represented a bloc of the Right and ultra-Left, the chief danger is undoubtedly the Right wing danger. This danger is fairly serious both from the standpoint of current tasks as well as from the standpoint of the future. This danger has been frequently referred to from the standpoint of current affairs, in regard to the German Communist Party in connection with activity in the trade unions; in regard to the Czech Party in connection with the Red Day; in connection with the Opposition against our "new tactics" in France, and so forth. The Right wing danger is a fact, a dangerous fact not only from the standpoint of the present situation, but also from the standpoint of tomorrow. We must not lose sight of this.

Take the Czech question. The Party tried to mobilise its forces, but proved incapable of accomplishing this. The result was a poor rehearsal on the eve of future events. The diagnosis of the internal ailment has been made; the disease proved to be fairly serious. Now we must calculate quite calmly. I am not a particular believer in alarms about the Right danger and Left deviations. I believe that during the last year the Communist International has effected a big change, — mind you, a big, not a little change — primarily in regard to the British and French Parties. Comrade Lominadze was quite wrong when for some reason he thought fit to assert that only a slight change has been made towards the Left. It seems to me that a big change towards the Left has been made particularly in regard to the British Party. Any one who knows the inner life of the British Party will realise that we have broken with all the old traditions of the British labour movement which exercised great influence upon our Party too. (Voice: "The same in France!") Yes, in France as well. But I cannot speak about two countries

at the same time. The strongest traditions in the British working class was that of the unity of "organised labour". Such "unity" has been a big trump in the hands of the reformists: by deceptive use of this slogan they were able to combat revolutionary ideas, the revolutionary Party, and so on. This "unity" (of the revolutionary workers with the reformist wolves) proved to be the most formidable obstacle to the emancipation of the proletariat from the influence of the reformists who have openly resorted to the outrageous policy of expulsions and splits. On the one hand they enjoyed the protection of the police, and on the other hand they shielded themselves by cries about unity. This tradition is so deeply rooted among the British proletariat that some of our best comrades could not conceive of a fight being waged simultaneously against the Baldwin Government and the Labour Party. The chief danger, they said, was the Baldwin Government against which a united front of the whole working class was to be formed; but the whole working class was in the grip of the Labour Party, consequently, the Baldwin Government could be overthrown only with the help and support of the Labour Party. Such was the original position. Hence the slogan adopted at the Congress of the British Party, of "a Labour Government under the control of the Executive of the Labour Party". Then our British comrades, not without the influence of the E. C. C. I., made a sharp turn. How is it possible to fail to appreciate the importance of so important a change for the whole life of the Party? We effected this change without a lot of noise, and without bandying epithets against each other, effected it by conviction and frank and open discussion. This will render it all the more durable, notwithstanding the friction that must inevitably arise. This change in tactics constitutes a big event in the history of the British labour movement.

All of us have known all along that in the French Party there were also deeply rooted parliamentary traditions. Only a few months ago the parliamentary traditions were revealed, for instance, on the question of loyalty towards the State (the question of the arrests). Was this a mere accident? Was this merely a surface phenomenon? No, these tendencies were deeply ingrained in the ranks of the Party. And yet, within the short period of two months or so we took a sharp turn and hurled forth the slogan of "class against class", the slogan of Don't vote for the Socialist Party, this implies not a little, but a big change in the tactics of the French Party. Here again the change was effected without superfluous noise, by relying upon the rank and file, by comradely reasoning with those who hesitated, and stern combat against those who were stubborn. These tactics have not been carried out without friction, not without internal conflicts, not without internal difficulties; nevertheless, the change effected by the French Communist Party is one of principle. It is a change which relates to principle to a larger extent than any change effected in the French Communist Party since the time of its foundation. I do not mean to say that the French Communist Party, the British Communist Party, and the Communist International, have accomplished a great "feat". However, looking at this question objectively, don't you find that a big change has been effected in the tactics of both of these big Parties? I believe that is the case. And does not this change constitute a decisive blow to the Right danger? Of course, it does. Does not this tactical change help us to focus the light upon the hidden danger from the Right? Of course it does. This very fact accounts for the opposition from the Right, this explains the misgivings expressed as to the correctness of these tactics. This accounts for the fight which has been waged against these tactics. The best means of combating the Right tendencies both in the French and in the British Parties is the consistent application of the so-called "new tactics".

As I have already said, the Right danger may grow in the future. Why? We must expect the phenomenon referred to by Comrade Lenin in the article which I quoted, namely, that a section of our press may not prove equal to the task. Such a possibility is not at all excluded. Another question is, to what length may the wrong position be carried? It is not merely a question of the press, but also of Party organisations. Where is the guarantee that at a period of immediate danger of war, when we shall have to decide upon still another change in our tactics, that some "deviations" will not be discovered? A number of changes will be required in our tactics, on

organisational questions, in our attitude towards legal and illegal work, and upon many other issues. Where is the guarantee that there will be no schism in some parties, no facts and phenomena resembling a crisis? Such things are quite likely to happen. They will come, naturally first of all, from the extreme right circles in the different parties. And for this reason, if we thoroughly analyse the existing situation and the outlook, we must arrive at the conclusion, as regards the question of our inner Party policy, that we must hit at the Right wingers all over the front, all along the line.

### INNER PARTY QUESTIONS.

Breaches of discipline, in which the Right danger is hidden, certainly cannot be tolerated. Against this we must wage the most strenuous fight. Nevertheless, I must say: the task of conducting a vigorous struggle against the Right wing danger within the Party by no means removes the tasks of internal Party unity, the task of reasonably conducting given campaigns and of developing a sort of inner Party tactfulness. In Germany we have a right danger. We propose in the Theses to wage a vigorous fight against this Right danger. In the Theses we propose to combat systematically any conciliatory attitude in regard to right dangers. Yet, at the same time we must by every means in our power rally all the comrades who stand on the platform of the Essen Party Congress, of the decisions of the Comintern and who promise to wage a relentless fight against the Right danger. (A voice: "This is what we are doing".)

I am instructed by the delegation of the C. P. S. U. to declare — in so far as the German Party is concerned — that we are opposed to any attempts to oust Comrade Ewert from the Party leadership. I must say, however, that leading German comrades have no intention of doing that. At this Congress we wish to create the pre-requisite conditions for a situation which will make even the slightest fissure in the leading bodies of the Party impossible. All the comrades must act upon the basis of the strictest discipline, the strictest subordination of the minority to the majority. Without such a pre-requisite condition it will be impossible to carry on a political fight. Further splits, further schisms either in the leadership or within our Parties, would lead to the most fatal consequences. I take it therefore that the essential pre-requisite for our successful activity should be discipline. We have seen how actually the question stands in Poland. Consolidation, unity, and discipline are absolutely essential for the victorious development of revolutionary events. Lately we have had moments of crisis in the Comintern. Such critical moments, experienced by some of the Parties, have a highly detrimental effect upon the masses of the workers. It is possible to get rid of such crises only by pursuing a firm and definite political line. This constitutes the fundamental postulate for the whole of the subsequent development. For instance, among the minority of the German Party there is a striving towards effecting a change in the leadership. I believe such aims to be improper. We must do nothing of the kind, as this would lead to internal strife in the German Party. The E. C. C. I. fully and entirely supports the historically formed nucleus of the Polbureau of the C. C. with Thälmann at the head. I believe that questions like that of inner Party democracy, for example, questions of the new cadres of the Party, of raising the theoretical level of the Parties, of livening up the rank and file groups, of mass activity, etc., should be raised as big Party questions. The Parties should learn to live more of a real political life, and eschew all politics without principles.

Take the Polish Party for example. There are no great political differences in that Party and yet a furious factional strife is raging in it. Or take the American Party. Quite lately, at least so it seemed to all of us, the American Party appeared to be overcoming the internal friction; but now we find that the controversy is flaring up again. The internal Party struggle has "revived" to such an extent that attempts are being made to utilise the present conjuncture for the purpose of continuing the struggle in the acutest form. Are there any really big political differences in the American Party? No, they are petty. Are these differences so important as to warrant the formation of factions? I believe they are not. For instance, take the question concerning the attitude of American imperialism. Some say that American imperialism has grown stronger; others claim that their opponents, i. e. those who say, so, are advertising American

imperialism. Such an expression should not be used. No good can come of it, and it does not help clear up the question. I must confess that I do not entertain hopes of a revolutionary situation arising in the United States in the near future. I say this quite frankly. In no country in the world is capitalism so strong as it is in the United States of America, where it has reached its zenith. Is it a terrible thing to say that there is little likelihood of an immediate revolutionary situation? It is, if this is used to contradict the argument that there is positively no ground for activity among the American masses. As far as I know, however, no one has made such an assertion. Unemployment is a fact; changes in American industry are also a fact, and so is also the growing discontent among the unskilled workers. Is there any ground for the growth of the Communist Party? Yes, there is. Does this furnish any justification for an acute factional struggle? Of course not. All steps must be taken to avoid such a struggle.

It seems to me that the Czechoslovakian Party presents the most difficult problem. Perhaps we are not yet in possession of the necessary data for a correct analysis of the situation and for drawing up the proper measures; nevertheless, the case of Red Day is highly symptomatic. Something is wrong in the Czechoslovakian Party, not only among the leaders, but also among the rank and file, and the Party as a whole; there is something wrong from the standpoint of the political line, of the fundamental orientation of the Party, and of grave social democratic survivals. It is essential therefore after this Congress, or during the Congress, for the E. C. to take up the Czech question specially in order to frame the necessary measures not only in regard to the leading bodies, but also in regard to the orientation of the whole Czech Party. Lately the Czech Party committed a series of mistakes in connection with the Factory Committee Bill, for example in the plan to vote for Massaryk in the presidential election, and in a whole number of other questions which revealed the passive attitude of the

Party. Just now we are witnessing even something more than mere passivity. This imposes upon us the task of thoroughly analysing the situation and of taking efficient remedial measures.

At the present time, when everything must be done to strengthen our ranks, it seems to me we are confronted with a tremendous task — the task of ideologically educating the Party. We do not yet show sufficient energy in this work. To my mind, it is one of the tasks of our Parties to force the pace of mental activity, of the ideological struggle, of ideological discussions, etc. This corresponds to the general line of the whole of our development. For instance, if we desire to prepare against war, we must carry on big propagandist activity both among the Social Democratic and among our own workers; yet we have very little agitational and propagandist literature for the purpose. We cannot get the Social Democratic workers under our influence merely by shouting. Therefore, at a period when war is approaching, it is absolutely necessary to live up to the inner work of our Parties, to increase the activity of the rank and file members of our Party, to promote the conditions for their growth and for raising fresh cadres of active workers. Discipline, this is our commandment. Nevertheless, comrades, I should like to allude to an unpublished letter addressed by Comrade Lenin to Zinoviev, and myself in which Comrade Lenin wrote as follows: "If you are going to expel all the not very obedient but clever people, and retain only the obedient fools, you will most assuredly ruin the Party."

I believe Comrade Lenin's view to be perfectly correct. We need a firm hand in the leading bodies of our Party, a hand which will not hesitate to expel every blackleg from our movement. At the same time we need in our leading Party bodies people — and I hope we have them — who will quite tactfully plead the cause of every "not foolish" member of the Party with the view to getting him back to the proper line of the Party and of the Comintern.

## VII. Conclusion.

There is no doubt but that the international situation is going to become more and more acute. We are heading for a second imperialist world war. This does not mean that tomorrow, say, the war will be started against the Soviet Union. But if we are to speak of the time we have at our disposal to prepare, I must say that we have very little. This is an incontestable fact. The brief respite which we still have, whatever its duration, we must utilise with all our energy, with all our revolutionary zeal, in order to strengthen our Parties and consolidate them, in order to win over to our side the large masses of the proletariat and to attract the large masses of the peasants.

These are huge and important tasks. These tasks we cannot achieve without persistent work, without working every day, every minute, and every second. All the comrades are aware that in the instructions he gave to the delegates to the Hague Conference, Comrade Lenin wrote: "Not the cry of the general strike, etc., is important; it is important to prepare systematically against the event of war, systematically to combat the danger of war, to fight systematically against social democracy, systematically to expose its sophistry, systematically to prepare the organisation, etc." This we cannot do without straining the forces of our Party to the utmost. From our Parties and from the E. C. of the Communist International we

must demand increased ideological activity, greater energy in recruiting members, better work in regard to the day to day questions, further strengthening of the Parties, greater efforts on the part of our youth organisations to recruit new members, more energetic activity in the colonies, in the army, and preparation for the eventuality of our Parties becoming illegal. To believe that we are going to continue such a relatively "tranquil" existence as we are now enjoying, is to indulge in illusions. Moreover, we must take all steps to prevent other Parties from repeating the Red Day experiences of the Czechoslovakian Party.

Comrades, the Communist International was born out of the war. The Communist International has scored many a big victory. The largest achievement of the world proletariat is the establishment of the Soviet Union. In the final analysis, if the bourgeoisie unleash the dogs of war, the proletariat will capture the world. This is by no means a pessimistic view. On the contrary, together with Friedrich Engels, we, the Communists, say to the whole of the ruling class: Gentlemen, unleash your spirit of war if you will. The Communist International will reply by closing its ranks for the revolution, for civil war, for the triumph of the proletarian dictatorship! (Loud and prolonged cheers. All the delegates rise and give the speaker an ovation.)