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# CORRESPONDENCE

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## SIXTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

(FULL REPORT.)

### Twenty-ninth Session.

Moscow, August 14, 1928 (Afternoon).

## Speeches of Greeting.

After the opening of the session the Chairman, Comrade **Bela Kun** announced that the Vistrel Military School had appointed Comrade Gruschevsky to make his report on behalf of the school.

Comrade **GRUSCHEVSKY**:

Comrades, the rifle and tactical improvement school for commanders of the Red workers' and peasants' army has completed its years course and its summer camp practice. As a result, the following officers have graduated: 63 regimental commanders; 69 vice-regimental commanders; 55 battalion commanders; 58 vice-battalion commanders; 107 company commanders, making a total of 352 commanders for the Red workers' and peasants' Army. All these commanders who have obtained their knowledge in the school will be ready at the first call of the workers' and peasants' government to join in the fight against the enemies of the working class. (Cheers.)

Comrade **PISKUNOV**:

Comrades, the commanders, the political commissars and the Red Armyists of the improvement school which bears the name of the Communist International sends you its hearty fraternal greetings (Cheers). All the decisions of the VI. Con-

gress of the Communist International will help to strengthen the Red workers' and peasants' Army.

Long live Communism!

Long live the coming world October Revolution and its General Staff the Communist International!

Comrade **BELA KUN**:

The Tver Cavalry School, has instructed Comrade Krivenko to convey greetings to the Congress. I want to say that Comrade Katayama is an honorary student of this school.

Comrade **KRIVENKO**:

The students, the Red Armyists, the commanders and the political commissars of the Tver Cavalry School have instructed me to convey to the Communist International their hearty greetings. We are convinced that the VI. World Congress, — true to the best traditions of the proletarian struggle for power and to the spirit of Lenin — will lay down the correct strategy and tactics for the proletarian struggle in this complicated epoch and will with the greatest energy and unanimity solve all the problems that confront it.

Three cheers for the VI. Congress of the Communist International! (Cheers.)

**Comrade ENGDAHL (U. S. A.):**

Comrades of the Red Army! It is very difficult to find words sufficient to express fully the overwhelming revolutionary pride with which we delegates to the VI. World Congress of the Comintern have today received through you the fraternal and comradely greetings of the workers and peasant soldiers of the Red Army School "Vystrel" (Shot) and of the Tver Cavalry School.

The revolutionary workers of all countries hail with glowing satisfaction the tremendous and growing strength of the Red Army. It was only a few months ago that the Red Army celebrated its Tenth Anniversary. In ten years of unceasing victory, it has grown from a small poorly equipped Red Guard, until today its successor the Red Army, is a powerful irresistible challenge to world reaction.

Our soldier comrades come to us today pledging the Red Army to new and greater victorious efforts under the standards of the Comintern in the next attack against the Soviet Union, that grows inevitably out of the now threatening war danger. We pledge in our turn, that our Communist Parties in all countries are better prepared than ever for the great demands of the trying days ahead, that we are capable of greater resistance than ever to imperialist war, to convert the imperialist war into a civil war. We know better today how to win the soldiers in the armies of reaction to your ranks, the ranks of the soldiers of the revolution.

We see in the Red Army a tremendous factor for the development of unity between the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union. We see in it a great educational institution that gives tremendous aid to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union in their everyday struggle. We see in it a school, an unmatched university that is helping to build stronger the might of the Soviet Union. We see workers from the industries, peasants from the land, come into the Red Army to be made better citizens of the Soviet Republic, better builders of a socialist economy, better fighters for the world revolution.

Therefore, we, as delegates of the Comintern, representing workers in all countries, gathered here at its VI. World Congress, greet with exceeding joy, you comrades who come to us from the Red Army, bringing the fraternal greetings of all Red Soldiers. We know that you will continue to strengthen your forces for new struggles; we know that you can be relied upon for more heroic efforts in the war danger that is facing us, yes, just as the revolution has relied upon you in the days of intervention, in the days of the Kolchaks and Wrangels, in the intervention of the great imperialist powers. Now support comes in the growing ranks of the heroic Red Army in China, of such militant organisations as the Red Front Fighters in Germany, and similar organisations in other countries that proudly hold aloft and carry forward the scarlet banners of the Communist International.

It is our duty, as delegates to the VI. World Congress, to go back to our various countries to tell the story of the Red Army of the U. S. S. R., so that we, too, in our final struggles against our class enemies, can build an irresistible Red Army in our own countries, that we too, will be able to carry forward to victory the struggle for the proletarian

dictatorship in our own countries. The contradictions within capitalist society are rapidly bringing the whole structure of capitalism to its knees, but it will be under the sharpshod hoofs of the Red Cavalry, under the wheels of the Red Artillery, that every vestige of capitalist resistance will be crushed for ever, as workers and peasants everywhere proudly raise the victorious standards of the world proletarian dictatorship.

The hand of our VI. World Congress, the hand of the revolutionary workers of the world, through you clasps the hand of the Red Army of the Soviet Union.

Long Live the Red Army!

Long live the Communist International!

Long live the World Revolution!

**Comrade SWONOW:**

Comrades. I greet the Congress in the name of the machine factory "Lenin". We hope that by your decisions, on the basis of Leninism, you will find ways to the final liquidation of the Right deviations in the ranks of the Communist International. We also hope that you will expose the treachery of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, the II. International with the determination displayed hitherto. We welcome with joy all the decisions of the VI. World Congress, in particular the decisions against the approaching war. We are fighting for the proletarian world revolution and hope that we shall find support in the ranks of the Communist International.

Long live the ruthless fight against imperialism under the leadership of the Communist International.

**Comrade KOTINYEVSKY:**

In the name of the Moscow Committee of the International Red Aid I greet the VI. World Congress of the Communist International. The I. R. A. is the red hinterland of the world revolution; it is ever ready to work for the defence and the release of revolutionary fighters from the dungeons of the bourgeoisie.

**Comrade VOSKRESENSKAYA:**

The Moscow Committee of the I. R. A. sends you fraternal fighting greeting in the name of 400,000 members. We ask you to convey to our foreign class brothers the summons to consolidate the red revolutionary hinterland, our call to victorious fights under the banner of the Communist International.

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Chairman: Comrade Bela Kun:

We are coming now to the fourth item on the agenda, the question of the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies. I call on the first reporter, Comrade Kuusinen, to address the Congress.

# The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies.

## Report of Comrade KUUSINEN.

### I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Dear Comrades I do not want you to consider my report on the subject of today's session, the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies, as a coherent report on the whole subject, but only as a supplement and concrete illustration of what is said on this subject in the draft theses. As you know, I do not possess the necessary knowledge to deal with the whole subject. Moreover, I have endeavoured to explain to you in the draft theses some parts, especially the tactical parts, even in greater detail than it will be necessary in the final theses, in order to make my main argument clear to you. But I think that one should — and I consider it my duty — endeavour also in my report to give this a more concrete form, or at least to illustrate it.

First of all, a few preliminary remarks. The defects of the draft Theses are partly of an inevitable kind. You probably remember that in the Theses of the II. Congress Comrade Lenin imposed on us the very important theoretical task of producing the theoretical substantiation of the possibility of non-capitalist development in the backward countries. This theoretical substantiation is not given in the present draft Theses, neither has an attempt been made to produce it. We have not had an opportunity to make a serious enough study of this question. I am even afraid that in connection with this defect something much worse has happened: the role of the peasantry in the revolutionary movement of the colonies and semi-colonies has not been given due prominence. As to the division of colonies and semi-colonies into various types and groups, it is a very difficult task which we are endeavouring to solve for the first time. That owing to this there are many defects in the first draft, is certain. I am fully aware of this. There can, of course, be diverse criteria according to which countries can be divided into various types. I hope that in the subsequent treatment of this draft we will succeed in developing better this division of the colonies into various types. But I am afraid that even in the best case only a beginning can be made with this work at the VI. Congress.

I would like you to consider as the most important, as the main matter in the present draft, firstly, the description of the character of the imperialist colonial policy. Tactical conclusions depend to a great extent on a correct understanding of its character. Secondly, I attach considerable importance in the draft to the designation of national reformism or the bourgeois-democratic tendency as the main political tendency of the national bourgeoisie in the most important colonies and semi-colonies. It seems to me that on the strength of past experience this description of the main tendency is likely to represent the matter much clearer than we have hitherto succeeded in doing by our former formulae. Thirdly, an attempt has been made in the draft to reproduce the various experiences of the revolutionary movement in China and in other colonies in a coherent form. That I have endeavoured in this connection to differentiate very distinctly between the various stages and phases of the revolutionary movement, is an attempt at popularisation on my part with which, I hope, you will put up. But I would like to emphasise once more that when determining our tactic, our political tasks in every individual country, our starting point must not be the abstract, a schematic division of the various stages, but the concrete situation.

As a supplement to the draft Theses I will report now firstly, on the main argument of the draft in the light of the concrete conditions of India and secondly, on some practical tasks of our movement in the most important colonies and semi-colonies. Why should Indian conditions be dealt with specially here? Of course firstly, because of the enormous importance of India among the colonies, because of the class

character of the colonial monopoly which is particularly noticeable in India, and also because I hold the view that a serious revolutionary crisis will develop in India in the not far distant future.

### II. INDIA — THE CLASSICAL COLONIAL COUNTRY.

I assume that many comrades in our Parties and perhaps even a good many comrades here at our Congress are not much better informed about Indian conditions than I was a few weeks ago when the Executive instructed me to report on this question. Therefore, I will give, with your permission, a few general facts concerning conditions in India, with the help of which I hope to bring India a little nearer to our Parties. Relatively much has already been said about China. China has been popularised. But very little is known about India.

What is India? Is it a rich or a poor country? A petty bourgeois German writer who visited India lately, Bernhard Kellermann, has said that India is a beggar. This is a wrong description, but a far more wrong description is that of the imperialists who say that India is a wealthy and well-developed country. Somewhere in "Capital" Marx reproduced a saying by a bourgeois economist that that land is rich where the people is poor. In this sense India is truly rich. If one considers that India is one of the biggest consumers of gold, that for instance in 1925 it purchased half of the total gold production of the world and that all this is being accumulated there as treasure, one must admit that it is a wealthy country. But if one considers on the other hand that the annual national revenue per head of the population is estimated at only 38 rupees, that is to say that even in Japan it is three times higher, in Spain 5½ times, in Germany 15 times, and in Britain of course much higher still (25 times as high!), one gets an idea of the poverty in India. One gets a lopsided picture if one takes only the absolute figures about Indian export: what India has achieved in regard to various branches of production, that India occupies first place in the world in the production of rice and jute, second place in the production of cane-sugar, tea and cotton, and third place in the production of wheat, or if one hears about the truly rapid rate of the industrial development in India during the last decade. All this can give a semblance of truth to the assertion that India is one of the greatest industrial countries in the world. Everyone knows, for instance, that the International Labour Office of the League of Nations has "recognised" India as one of the 8 leading industrial countries of the world.

But this is not in keeping with the actual situation. If one were to carry this logic a little further, one would come to utterly absurd conclusions. The yearly military expenditure in India, including indirect military expenditure, is twice as high as that of imperialist Japan. India exports even capital to other countries. On the strength of this one might assert with a certain amount of justification that India is on the way to becoming an imperialist country. This is approximately how the situation is represented in the official reports of the British imperialists. According to these reports an enormous "material and moral progress" is taking place in India which is in full harmony with the British imperialism. This is of course only an imperialist lie.

### The social pyramid in India.

Comrades, picture to yourselves the social pyramid in India. It is not an industrial country, but rather a big rural continent. There are 636,000 villages — I do not know if all these villages, not to mention the peasants who live there, have ever been counted. These peasants, most of whom are

something like the "poorest peasantry" in Russia, together with the 50—60 million Pariahs, constitute the broad lowest section of the social pyramid. On their shoulders rests in the rural districts a many-storeyed hierarchy of exploiters, up to the highest feudal landlords and princes. Finally, there is above the whole enormous population a relatively small group of white exploiters, approximately 103,000 adult white men, most of them Britishers, who in comparison with the Indian people are like a fly on the back of an elephant. To every white exploiter there are over 3000 Indians who are trodden underfoot by everyone of these whites.

Who are these whites? Most of them, approximately, 64,000, are officers, generals, soldiers, policemen, higher officials, businessmen, etc. The Indians call them Sahibs, the great white masters. Kellermann relates for instance that once when he entered a town in his carriage he met native aristocrats on horseback who immediately dismounted when they saw him and made a wide detour. His driver explained that they thought him to be a Britisher and were afraid that he would strike them with his whip. The white sahib gets as much space in a railway train as 50—60 Indians; who pay together of course a much higher fare than he. Any Britisher in India has the right to refuse to appear before an Indian court. This is of course very convenient for white criminals who elude punishment. At the head of these white exploiters is their most dangerous idol, the Viceroy. Of course he does not yet complete the pyramid. Behind him there are in London the Secretary of State for India, behind him the King and behind the King stands Lancashire and finally the group of the so-called "Big Five", the five biggest banks in Great Britain; this group is the sun of all the sahibs. This is the greatest pyramid in the world.

#### The British gain.

The British imperialists rule over this big people of over 300 millions by various traditional methods, among which for instance the enforced and militarily protected consumption of opium, which has been lately competing with the consumption of alcohol and cocaine, must be mentioned. An even more effective method is that of creating strife between the various religions, above all between Moslems and Hindus.

All this means of course an enormous yearly gain for the British bourgeoisie. Comrade Varga has estimated this gain at 167 million pound sterling. This amount includes the profit from Great Britain's trade with India which is entirely in the hands of the British and the profit from sea transport which is carried on almost entirely by British ships, the industrial profit, the tribute for the British capital invested in India as well as the big administrative expenditure which the Indian people must meet in Britain as well as in India for the "good administration". The Indian writers Shah and Khambatha estimate this yearly British gain at 146,500,000 pound sterling, not a much lower estimate than that of Comrade Varga. As an absolute sum it is very big; as part of the whole profit of the British bourgeoisie it is very considerable; in comparison with the number of the population it is not big, but in comparison with the annual revenue of the Indian people it is an enormous sum.

#### The Industrial Development of India and the British Colonial Policy.

Britain initiated its rule in India by prohibiting the native textile handicrafts. It was destroyed in a few years by cruel penalties. The industrial development of the country was systematically impeded and was given a chance only at the beginning of this century. During and after the war industry, and especially the textile industry, developed rapidly. Relative figures are certainly even more considerable in a few other branches of industry. For instance it has been ascertained that the number of workers employed in the metal industry increased by 100% in ten years, and in the chemical industry by 130%. But these branches of industry are still very weak, they are only beginning to develop. In the present industrial life of India the textile industry alone plays an important role.

As I have already said, the industrial development of India has progressed rapidly in the last 20 years. But if even several Communist comrades have been induced, on the strength of this fact, to assume that British policy is following an en-

tirely new course in regard to the industrial development in India, I must say that they have gone too far. A semblance of this was possible in the boom years 1921—23. Actually, no change has taken place in the course of the British colonial policy. Some of these comrades went even the length of holding out the prospect of a decolonisation of India by British imperialism. This was a dangerous term. The comrades who have represented and partly still represent this — in my opinion — false theory are comrades who otherwise deal very seriously with the problems of our movement — comrades **Palme-Dutt**, **Roy** and **Rathbone**. A certain relic of this wrong conception made its appearance even in Comrade **Rajan's** speech in the discussion on the first item of the agenda. I consider it my duty to elucidate this question. If it were really true that British imperialism has adopted the course of the industrialisation of India which leads to its decolonisation, we would have to revise our entire conception of the character of the imperialist colonial policy. I think that facts show that this is not the case.

#### The Decolonisation Theory.

I will give you a few quotations from the works of these comrades. Comrade **Palme Dutt** writes as follows in his book "Modern India":

"In the 19th century India was the most important outlet for the British manufacturers. In the 20th century India became rapidly industrialised under the control of British capital; by means of a colossal and irresponsible bureaucratic apparatus and owing to a semi-slave position of the workers, this capital has more profitable investment possibilities than at home."

Another quotation:

"The industrialisation of India under British control — at present India is recognised officially as one of the eight leading industrial countries of the world — means that as the situation gets worse in Britain, British capital exercises its power over the cheap labour power in India and establishes here enterprises which, by their competition are to reduce wages in Britain."

(Retranslated from the German.)

In his theses at the II. Congress, Comrade **Roy** represented utterly different views. In these theses, which had been perused by **Lenin**, Comrade **Roy** wrote at that time:

"Foreign imperialism which has been forced on the Eastern peoples has no doubt impeded their social and economic development and has deprived them of the possibility of reaching the stage of development which has been reached in Europe and America. Owing to the imperialist policy which endeavours to retard industrial development in the colonies the native proletariat has, in fact, begun only lately to exist."

But Comrade **Roy** holds different views now. In the draft resolution of October 1927 on the Indian question, Comrade **Roy** makes the following statement:

"The new imperialist policy implies a gradual 'decolonisation' of India which must be allowed to take its course so that India might develop from a 'Dependency' into a 'Dominion'. The Indian bourgeoisie, instead of being kept down as a powerful rival, will be conceded participation in the economic development of the country under the hegemony of imperialism. From a backward agrarian colonial possession India will become a modern industrial country — 'a member of the British Commonwealth of free nations'. India is in a state of 'decolonisation' in as far as the policy forced on the British imperialism through the capitalist post-war crisis has done away with the obsolete forms and methods of colonial exploitation in favour of new forms and new methods."

The description in Comrade **Roy's** draft resolution goes on in the same strain. But I must point out to the comrades that Comrade **Roy** has probably an inkling of the consequences of this theory. He says:

"This change in the economic sphere has also political consequences. The inevitable process of gradual decoloni-

sation is fraught with the embryo of the dissolution of the Empire. In fact, the new policy adopted for the consolidation of the Empire, a policy which wants to ward off the danger of an immediate collapse, shows that the foundations of the Empire have been shaken. Imperialism is a powerful demonstration of capitalist prosperity. In the present period of capitalist decline its basis is undermined."

Thus Comrade Roy sees that the decolonisation policy of British imperialism would lead to the weakening and dissolution of the British Empire. But he nevertheless believes that British imperialism is determined to pursue this policy. I will give you now a quotation from Comrade Rathbone's article "The Industrialisation of India" where he uses a new argument:

"... In the war period British finance capital recognised the mistake which was made by preventing the industrial development of the colonies, for the latter were unable to supply the mother country with munitions during the war... This was one of the main reasons for the industrialisation of the colonies."

(All quotations retranslated from the German.)

Now comrades, it is certainly very nice for the mother country if its colonies supply it during the war with munitions for war purposes. But if British imperialism should industrialise India for the purpose of getting munitions from it during the war, the danger will certainly arise that during the coming war these colonies might use these munitions first of all for the acceleration of their decolonisation. Engineering works, even if they be big, such as Tata in India, can be after all restricted in every possible way and controlled by British imperialism so as to prevent it becoming a danger. A few railway workshops, etc., can also be controlled, but comrades, the existence of a few such enterprises does not yet mean the industrialisation of India. Industrialisation means the transformation of an agrarian into an industrial country, it means a general, thorough industrial development, above all development of the production of means of production, of the engineering industry. This is not a question if any industrial development has taken place in India — this has certainly been the case — it is rather a question if it is the policy of British imperialism to industrialise India.)

#### What Do the Facts Show?

It is true that after the war British imperialism has made a few more or less important economic concessions in favour of the industrial development in India. The most important among them were the 15% protective tariffs for the cotton industry. But what is the explanation of these concessions? Comrades, to explain this one need not even visualise the needs and requirements of British imperialism in a future world war. It is sufficient to visualise the position of British imperialism and the situation in India itself at the beginning of the imperialist world war. Mutinies in the army, a big peasant insurrection in the Punjab, development of the national movement of the bourgeoisie, for the first time, unification of the Moslem League with the Indian National Congress. Then there was also Japanese competition on the Indian market and partly also the competition of the United States, — both endeavoured to make use of the war period for the consolidation of their position on the Indian market. There was also the Caliphate movement, the Ghandi movement, etc. All this combined placed the British Government before the alternative: either to lose India as a colony or to make certain concessions for the pacification of the Indian bourgeoisie and to take measures for protection against foreign competition. The necessity to do this dictated at that time to the British imperialism the economic concessions (raising the protective tariffs for the textile industry to 15%) and also the constitutional reform of 1919. The objective consequence of the facilities for industrial production in India was an acceleration of industrial development. These concessions were in themselves small enough; there is hardly a capitalist country which has effected its transition from an agrarian to a capitalist State with such low protective tariffs, of course except Britain, which was the first to effect this transition, at the time when no other country exported manufactured articles. But even these small concessions are being gradually reduced all along the line.

It is said in circles which believe in the decolonisation theory that British finance capital is looking for productive investment possibilities in the Indian industry in order to utilise there the low wage rates, etc. Of course much British capital was exported to India also after the war. But in this connection we witness the following significant phenomena. After the war the export of British capital was at first, of course, very small, but in the three years 1921—23 it increased considerably. After that a sudden big change took place. In the last years preceding the war the export of British capital to India amounted approximately to 13—16 million pound sterling per annum; then as I already said, the export of capital was very small in the first years after the war; in 1921—23 it rose to 25—30 and even 36 million pound sterling per annum, i. e. a fifth or a quarter of the entire export of British capital went to India. After that the export of British capital to India fell again to 2 and subsequently to 3 million, and in the last year (1927) it amounted only to 0.8 million pound sterling — a very small sum. In the last years British capitalism was not particularly inclined to make excursions to India. It finds its way into South Africa, Australia and even the Sudan, but not to India. If one takes the trouble to investigate for what purposes the capital exported from Great Britain to India in the exceptional years, 1921—23, was invested, one sees that most of it was certainly not invested for productive purposes, and by no means for industry. Of the whole amount (94,400,000 pound sterling) 70,000,000 pound sterling went to government loans. One can say that 10% at the utmost of the British export capital was invested in India in industry during and after the war. Between 1913 and 1924 India's national debt increased by 4,139 million rupees, of which 3,343 million rupees were used for unproductive purposes (mainly military). For instance, during the war the government of India simply made a present of 145 million pound sterling for British war purposes and maintained in addition considerable active armies on the various fronts of the world war. India fought entirely with its own means against Afghanistan and the independent tribes in Vasiristan. No wonder that up to 1925 the Indian State budget showed a big deficit.

If one considers the growth of capital, of the foreign joint stock companies (mainly British) in India, in the period between 1913—24, one must say that it was very considerable (452 million pound sterling, i. e. an almost treble increase), but most of these investments of capital went not to industry, but above all to banks, insurance and trading companies (405 million pound sterling). On the other hand, a much greater share of the increased capital of joint stock companies registered in India, in which probably more Indian than British capital is invested, went to industry: out of 1,900 million rupees over one thousand million.

After the war native capital has gained ground in India in various spheres where prior to the war British capital had almost a monopoly (the jute industry and tea plantations). In the same period Britain's share in Indian imports has considerably decreased: from 64% prior to the war to 47.8% in 1926—27 (in 1913—14 English imports to India amounted to 1,176 million rupees, in 1924—25, calculated according to pre-war prices, only to 720 million rupees). The main cause of this is probably the development of the Indian industry itself, but on the other hand, also the development of competition on the part of Japan, the United States, Italy, Belgium and Germany. It is but natural that British imperialism is not inclined to be a passive spectator of this trend of development. Thus we witness lately various counter-measures on its part against the industrialisation tendencies of India. I draw your attention for instance to the currency policy of the British government, to the artificial rise of the rate of the rupee to 1/6 d. (instead of 1/4 d.), which in practice means a premium of 12 1/2% for import. This means in fact that the existing protective tariffs lose a great deal of their value. The Indian bourgeoisie has been already a long time demanding the introduction of the gold standard. But the British bourgeoisie will not hear of it. Preferential tariffs for British goods are being introduced. Any demand which aims at the establishment of a real State Bank in India is violently opposed by the British government. Orders for railway carriages have been going lately again to Britain. The "big five" in London consider now all economic concessions to India rather risky. They carry on an aggressive economic policy against Indian industrialisation. Among these counter-measures was also the despatch of the Simon Commission to India which

certainly did not aim at the decolonisation of India but rather at the consolidation of the colonial regime.

Comrades, I of course do not mean to assert that we are face to face with a complete throttling of industrial development in India by the British imperialists. Even if it wanted to try this, it would not be possible. The industrial development of India will continue, although probably very slowly. But the further it gets the more it comes into conflict with the most important colonial interests of British imperialism. The latter stands in need of the Indian market more than ever before. Its own economic position demands peremptorily an increased exploitation of India, but it cannot achieve this without calling forth on its own part an accentuated conflict with the interests of the industrial development of India.

#### The Question of the Extension of the Internal Market.

Comrade Roy says that the Indian bourgeoisie will be granted "participation" in the economic power together with the British imperialists. There is no doubt that efforts are made towards a compromise between them. The British as well as the Indian bourgeoisie is endeavouring to arrive at a durable compromise. But the question is if this big durable compromise can be achieved or not. Various agreements between them are quite possible in certain spheres, but they will be provisional and partial. Such an agreement has been, for instance, effected between the Lancashire and Bombay cotton manufacturers: the latter are to produce only the coarser and the former only the finer qualities.

But is this kind of thing possible all along the line? Certainly not. Comrades, it would be perhaps possible only in one case: if the internal market in India were to extend at a rapid rate. In such a case exploitation by the Indian bourgeoisie and also by British imperialism could for a time develop in India parallel and to a certain extent without friction. But even in this case a subsequent collision between the forces of the independent development of India and the British imperialism could not be avoided. But by such agreements this collision could be certainly postponed for a certain period. But facts show that the internal Indian market is not extending. It remains stationary, and even a partial shrinkage of the internal market is noticeable. For instance, the consumption of cotton goods has decreased compared with the pre-war period. As the Indian textile industry has at the same time developed, this could only happen by the British competition being partly driven back. The internal market is too narrow for the two.

Therefore the problem of the development of the internal market in India is just as important for the British as for the Indian bourgeoisie. But can this problem be solved?

What constitutes the internal market in India? Mainly the rural districts. In this respect the peasantry is of decisive importance. Potentially, the Indian peasantry constitutes a powerful factor of the internal market, but in reality its purchasing capacity is infinitesimal owing to the three-fold exploitation under which it is groaning. By British imperialism and its tax collectors, by the landlords and by trade and usurious capital. As pointed out by Comrade Bukharin when dealing with the first item on the agenda, industry in India is unable to absorb the mass of the pauperised peasants, and instead of proletarianisation we witness there an ever-increasing process of pauperisation in the rural districts.

#### The Position of the Indian Peasantry.

Without attempting to place before you the entire Indian agrarian question or to describe the peculiar conditions in the various districts, I must nevertheless mention the most important points in regard to the Indian rural districts, so as to make it clear why the necessary extension of the internal market meets with insurmountable obstacles in India.

Thanks to British imperialism, which is the biggest landowner in the country, the former village communes and democratic peasant constitution "Panchayat" were destroyed. But instead of getting rid of the former feudal landlords, a new feudalism was created on a big scale. The biggest section of the present landowners and big tenant farmers, the "Samindars" (there are about one million Samindars, 8 million including their families), the main social support of the British bourgeoisie in India, is to all intents and purposes a class which has come

into being through the measures of British imperialism. These rentiers live themselves in the cities. Agriculture on a big scale hardly exists. Between the feudal Rajasin, the new feudal samindars on the one hand and the Indian peasants on the other hand, there is a whole hierarchy of sub-tenants who exploit the peasants. There are frequently 10-12 storeys (in exceptional cases even more) of such intermediate exploiters between the landlord and the poor tiller of the land. If the peasant cannot pay his taxes or ground rent he becomes the victim of usurers. About one half of the Indian peasantry is very much in debt. There are cases when the usurer exacts most of the peasants' harvest. According to the official government report, in some parts of India no less than 6 million hereditary debt-slaves were discovered in 1918, — such discoveries can only be made in India. It has been calculated that rent and interest on the debts amounts on an average to over 70% of the peasants' harvest. I cannot vouch for the correctness of this calculation. I mention it only as an illustration of the terrible exploitation of the Indian countryside. Owing to the enormously high land value, in many parts of India parcellation of the land has assumed enormous proportions. It is but natural that under such conditions the productivity of labour of the peasantry cannot develop. The best part of the year peasants are unemployed or partly employed. The returns of their harvest are very low (wheat returns per hectare only one half of the returns in Japan and one-third of the returns in Germany. In 1926 rice per hectare only one-third of the returns in Japan). The total harvest returns have not increased since 1900.

Of course under such conditions the purchasing capacity of the peasants is infinitesimal and their consumption very small. Since the war the difference between the prices of agricultural produce and industrial produce is even more unfavourable for the peasants.

Very competent writers assert that there are over 100 million people among the Indian peasant population who cannot satisfy their hunger even once a year. The death rate in India is the highest in the world (almost three times as high as in Britain). The direct or indirect chief cause of this high death-rate is starvation and destitution, which of course helps to spread epidemics (especially typhus).

#### Agrarian Reform or Agrarian Revolution?

What would, under such circumstances, be the premise for the required extension of the internal market? An agrarian reform on a large scale? Is this possible in India? When the British Government carried out an agrarian reform in Ireland, it purchased there those parts of the land where parcelling was greatest. But in India the ground is parcelled out to the utmost almost everywhere. There is no land fund on the basis of which one could carry out a land reform on a large scale. Politically, it is impossible for British imperialism to confiscate the land of the big landlords. Artificial irrigation by which the arable area could be extended — being in the hands of the government — is firstly utterly inadequate and secondly — being in the form of capitalist enterprises — is so expensive that the average peasant cannot utilise it.

An attempt was made in the Bombay Presidency to fix the minimum ground rent for small peasants. But this reform had to be withdrawn because one did not know on what the destitute peasants were to live. To carry out the necessary agrarian reform in India by bourgeois methods, one would have to drive not only millions but several tens of millions peasants from the country somewhere. Thus, an effective agrarian reform is impossible in India.

The whole development shows that not decolonisation nor agrarian reform, but agrarian revolution is in the course of formation. During the world war peasants from the Punjab and some other parts of India were sent as soldiers to the various fronts. There were altogether one million Indian soldiers at the European war fronts to fight against the white Sahib, although not the British Sahib. Every tenth man of them remained at the front, but nine-tenths have returned with the knowledge that the white Sahib is vulnerable... When this knowledge has spread throughout the Indian villages and when Indian soldiers and also their circles realise that they were donkeys not to have turned their arms first and foremost against their own oppressors, the time for the agrarian revolution in India will have come.

### Why Does the Indian Bourgeoisie Raise a Hue and Cry?

It is no wonder that in the face of this situation the Indian bourgeoisie is sounding the alarm. Pressure from below makes the bourgeoisie indulge in oppositional gestures: the Legislative Council has decided — of course against the votes of the British and of a few Moslem nobles — to boycott the Simon Commission. The Indian National Congress has decided to declare that "the aim of the Indian people is full national independence". When I am told that this is only on paper, that the people are only making a noise, that they are only indulging in "Moonshine politics", I say: quite so, but even behind moonshine one can discover a hard fact, namely, the moon itself. The hue and cry of the Indian bourgeoisie is a sign that something serious and important is maturing behind it.

There is an economic crisis at present almost in all the spheres of production in India, and by no means for lack of capital, for there is an abundance of capital in India. With the help of the British imperialists, the Indian capitalists endeavour to get rid of their superabundance of capital. They buy up State bonds and shares (but much more bonds than shares of industrial companies), they deposit their money in savings banks, they export capital to Brazil as recommended by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer in India, they purchase enormous quantities of gold and silver as treasure, etc. Why is not most of this Indian capital invested in industry? Because the British colonial system is an enormous obstacle to the industrialisation of India. For this reason most of the engineering works established after the war have gone into liquidation in the last few years. And yet there are comrades as for instance, Comrade Luhani, who gives a poetical description of the prospects of the industrialisation and decolonisation of India on the strength of the fact that India has even obtained diplomatic representation somewhere in the South African Government. Comrade Luhani shows his inability to distinguish the most important and substantial from the unsubstantial. The big revolutionary crisis, the maturing of which we are witnessing now in India, is the most important. The pauperisation of the peasantry, the retardation of the development of the native industry with the result that it cannot absorb the mass of the pauperised peasants, that peasants who migrated to the cities are returning to the villages, — all these are important and very characteristic facts in illustrating the development of India.

### National Reformism.

That the national bourgeoisie is raising a hue and cry is quite true. But it is important to understand the political character of the Indian bourgeoisie, its national reformist policy. That this policy is directed against the proletariat is as plain as that the bourgeoisie is the bourgeoisie. That the policy of the Indian bourgeoisie is not revolutionary, is also quite clear. I will refer only to a couple of very characteristic examples. In 1922, during the first wave of the semi-revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement, when the bourgeoisie began to be afraid of revolution because of its property, the Executive of the Indian National Congress capitulated immediately before imperialism. It adopted at that time the following resolution:

"The Executive Committee regrets the brutal behaviour of the crowd in Taschauri-Tschaure which murdered the policemen and burned down in its senseless fury the police-station", etc. etc.

The other points of this notorious resolution are in the same spirit. The chief organ of the national-reformist Swaraj Party "Forward" wrote once as follows in regard to the accentuation of the British-Soviet antagonism:

"Indian Statesmen should ask the British Statesmen if they intend to pay for Indian help in questions of international politics."

It was with such cynicism this organ announced the bourgeois bargaining with British imperialism in order to secure certain concessions as the price for support of British imperialism against the Russian revolution. I am not asserting that this is the subjective opinion of all Swarajists, but I say that this is symptomatic for the main national reformist tendency, the oppositional bourgeoisie in India and in the colonies in general. Of course, in this connection one must not forget that the objective conditions of the national revolutionary movement

do not depend on the subjective will of the bourgeoisie. The national bourgeoisie is, of course, also aiming at unlimited rule; it wants, so to speak, to achieve power like a thief. However, its opposition has in the present epoch a certain objective importance for the unchaining of the mass movement. More important still is a correct understanding of the importance which bourgeois leadership still has in India owing to the national-reformist deterioration of the mass movement. For the time being its importance is far greater in India than in China. One cannot simply deny the fact that the national-reformist parties have the greatest influence over the masses in India, not so much among the workers but certainly among the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. To undermine this influence, to overcome it, to get away the masses from the national reformists and the treacherous bourgeois opposition, such is our most important immediate task. It is more important to lay stress on this task than to talk about any diplomatic conquests of the Indian bourgeoisie or any unsubstantial facts which seem to bear out the decolonisation theory.

### Through what Forces will the Real Liberation of India be Achieved?

It is also very important to understand correctly the role of the urban petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. If one observes for instance the obvious alarm with which the British imperialists are watching the enormous unemployment among the petty bourgeois intelligentsia in India, one cannot dispute the possibility that in this stage of the revolutionary movement in India not only the peasantry but also the urban petty bourgeoisie, and to a considerable extent the petty bourgeois intelligentsia can play an important role in the national movement. Of considerable importance are also the present big industrial strikes in India. They are semi-revolutionary symptoms of the accentuation of the situation, of the imminence of a revolutionary crisis in India. I will deal later on a little more fully with the conditions of the labour movement in India. India is not like any other colony. The importance of its enormous population and the gigantic resources which the Indian people has in all spheres provided it can develop freely, carry an enormous weight in regard to the intensification of the revolutionary crisis. The industrial development of India is only in its initial stage. But it conjures up forces which can no longer be stayed by British imperialism. The policy of the latter consists in preventing this development by impeding the industrialisation of India. But the economic and social forces which are to free India from the British yoke, will nevertheless continue to develop, although at a very slow rate.

Above all the Indian proletariat will continue to develop. And if any of the Indian comrades have doubts as to the anti-industrialisation tendency of the British policy in India, I would like them to make up their minds on this question once and for all. It depends a great deal on this if the immediate main task of the Communist Party in India is correctly understood, namely, the task of relieving, by Communist agitation, the mass of the Indian peasantry and the proletariat of the illusion that the policy of British imperialism can make the decolonisation of India a reality, or can even bring it nearer. This will of course not be the case. Every Indian worker must realise that the British Sahib is a robber and will never carry out the decolonisation of India. The liberation of India is a mission for which history has destined the Indian proletariat and peasantry. The Communist Party of India is to play the leading role in this struggle, and its foremost task in the preparation of this liberation struggle is — to disperse any illusion in regard to decolonisation through imperialism, to expose and combat any illusions of this kind spread by the responsivists Swarajists and others before the eyes of the masses. In this manner it will be able to do justice to its present task.

### III. ADAPTION OF PAST REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCES TO OUR PRACTICAL WORK.

#### One Who has Learned Nothing.

The most important things to be said about the experience of the Chinese revolution have already been said in the draft theses. I will admit without any further ado that all of us have learned much from the Chinese revolution. Why should not we

admit this frankly? I know — at least on the enormous territory of the Soviet Union — only one person who has learned nothing new from the Chinese revolution. He bears the formerly not unknown name of Trotsky. This time, too, he wanted of course to teach us, but he has only shown that he himself has not forgotten nor learned anything.

A few words about his standpoint. He looks upon China as an ordinary capitalist country. He sees there only or almost only capitalist conditions. Anything different there does not exist for him because it does not suit his conception. He even fails to understand the character of the imperialist colonial policy in China; he does not want to understand it because this would bring forward once more the national question, which again does not suit his conception. He wants to be more radical than all the others. He wants to begin immediately the purely social revolution in China. The workers' and peasants' revolution, for which we carry on propaganda in this oppressed agrarian country as a transition form to the social revolution for which we are calling up the mass of workers and peasants and for which these masses have already fought, this transition revolution which we call, according to Lenin, the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution, is not radical enough for Trotsky. He rejects it most emphatically. He decrees that all political premises for the socialist revolution exist already in China, that a proletarian dictatorship, and not a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, must come immediately. The peasantry, which is hundreds of millions strong in China, does not seem very important to him. Worse still: his main slogan in China is at present, "struggle against the kulaks". He has suddenly discovered something which no one else could have discovered in China, namely, that in the ranks of the Chinese peasantry there is a big section of "kulaks", that, according to him, this Chinese kulak is the most general and numerous as well as the most hated exploiter in the countryside. He demands that the revolutionary movement should begin there with the "Committees for poorest peasants". I will quote him verbatim:

"While with us (in Russia) the committees of the poorest peasants made their appearance only in the second stage of the October revolution, in the middle of 1918, they will make their appearance in some form or other in China as soon as the agrarian movement is again revived. Dekulakisation will be the first and not the second step of the Chinese October."

Thus, no longer is the ordinary socialist revolution the order of the day in China, but immediately the second stage of the socialist revolution! According to Trotsky we should come forward in China with slogans for which the Russian revolution in October 1917 was not yet ripe, "as soon as the agrarian movement is again revived." Well comrades, is this ultra-revolutionary subjectivism of a crazy petty-bourgeois bordering on madness, or what else can it be? I do not know what it is subjectively, but I certainly know what objective significance such an attitude could have in practice. If one were to try something of this kind, this would be the surest method of bringing about the immediate collapse of the revolution, or at least of the "agrarian movement which is reviving", in China. At the present stage such a slogan could have only a provocative effect in China. Objectively, only a person who is subjectively unable to understand that it is disgraceful for a former revolutionist to have deserved exile from the first Socialist State of the world owing to agitation against the Soviet Power, is capable of such an attitude. That such a person does not at least keep quiet, exposes more and more his true character.

#### A few Experiences of the Chinese Revolution.

The most important has already been said in the draft resolution, about our general experiences in the Chinese Revolution, especially about the necessity of an independent policy for the Communist Party, about the failure to understand the transition of the Revolution from one stage to the other, etc. Apart from these general lessons, there are of course many special experiences of the Chinese Revolution which must be studied separately, for instance, the experiences of the Chinese peasant movement, new experiences in regard to the organisation of revolutionary mass struggles and insurrections, expe-

riences connected with the first Soviets in a country such as China, etc.

The question whether adherence of Communists to the Kuomintang was correct or not, has been answered in the affirmative in the Draft Resolution. But it is perfectly clear to us now that the inevitability of the disruption of this bloc was not soon enough realised by the Communists. But suppose that one had seen from the beginning as clearly as now the whole process through which the Revolution tried to carry through its tendency of going over from one stage into the other, the question would arise: how should and could the revolutionary movement have prepared itself still better for the coming stage? The policy of the Executive of the Comintern was no doubt correct. Correct political tasks were set: launching of the agrarian revolution, conquest of proletarian hegemony, conquest of leadership in the revolutionary process for the Communist Party. The most important organisational tasks were also pointed out in the directions of the Comintern, especially strengthening the positions of the revolutionary movement in the national army and, subsequently creation of a special revolutionary workers' and peasants' army. This was contained in the directions of the Executive of the Comintern. Another question is the extremely inadequate execution of these directions; I will not deal with this question just now, but will turn my attention to the following problem.

#### An Organisational Task.

In the stage when — according to the Leninist and not the Trotskyist direction — Soviets cannot yet be organised, when the time has not yet come to form Soviets as insurrection-organs, in what manner is the task to be carried out which was carried out in the interval between the February and October Revolution in Russia by the Soviets? This is a question of organisational forms for the capture of the masses in the preparatory stage of the movement, prior to insurrection and the seizure of power. What organisational forms for mobilisation of the masses, not only of the proletariat, but also of the peasantry can be considered by us, what organisations — even if they be loose ones — which the masses are likely to accept and recognise on the basis of elections or in any other form as their own representative bodies, through which not only revolutionary masses can be coordinated, but also the not yet revolutionary and even the reformist and hostile masses in order to carry on Communist work in their ranks and also an ideological struggle against our enemies before the eyes of these masses so as to get them away in this manner from petty-bourgeois illusions and reformist influence: primary organisational forms of the revolutionary bloc of workers, peasants and soldiers, the initial realisation of this bloc which is to be consolidated subsequently in the form of Soviets.

It was emphasised in the directions of the E. C. C. I. to the C. P. of China that Communists should work within the Kuomintang, and in the Wuhan period, within the Left-Kuomintang in order to get away the masses from the bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaders. But it was not made sufficiently clear what organisational forms the co-ordination of Communist influence within the Kuomintang should take. Communists were also to work in other mass organisations. In the Wuhan period, Comrade Stalin spoke about "preparatory elements of the coming Soviets" and pointed in this connection to such mass organisations as trade unions and peasant committees. No doubt these organisations must be considered as the practically most important organisational forms of the mobilisation of the masses in the preparatory stage of the movement. But can, perhaps, some other organisational forms be considered for the same purpose? They should of course also be "preparatory elements of the coming Soviets", namely, organisational forms capable of transforming themselves into Soviets at the time of the seizure of power.

For a time, some comrades considered the advisability of "labour and peasant parties" as a substitute for such organisational forms. It is now clearer than before that this form is not to be recommended, especially in colonial and semi-colonial countries. It would be an easy matter for the labour and peasant parties to transform themselves into petty-bourgeois parties, to get away from the Communists, thereby failing to help them



to come in contact with the masses. To consider such parties as a substitute for a real Communist Party, would be a serious mistake. We are for a bloc with the peasantry, but we will not have anything to do with fusion of various classes.

I have suggested certain other forms in the draft theses which represent my personal views. I will read you this part:

"For instance, carefully prepared periodical joint conferences and congresses of the representatives of revolutionary peasant committees and trade unions can be recommended as such loose organisational forms. Under certain circumstances it will be perhaps advisable for such conferences to elect joint revolutionary committees of action which would take the lead in various mass actions; representatives who have participated in peasant committees could report to the workers and peasants, etc. Provided that the Communist Party can exercise a leading influence in this movement, it is of the utmost importance, especially when the revolutionary wave is ascending, to endeavour to establish an adequate organisational connection — not only a connection by means of common slogans — between the revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement, already before the time has come to form workers' and peasants' soviets."

It is very likely that uniform organisational forms such as I have indicated here which would be suitable for various countries under various circumstances, do not exist. It goes without saying that such forms must be adapted to the concrete circumstances in the various countries, that they must be therefore elastic. But this organisational task is important enough in itself to be brought forward in the theses at the Congress.

#### Special difficulties of the revolutionary labour movement in colonial countries.

In China, not only the Communist Party but the entire proletariat has gained considerable revolutionary experience. In this respect, the Chinese proletariat is more advanced than for instance the proletariat in India at the present juncture, although industrial development has made more progress in India than in China. We have seen in China that during the high-tide of revolution the proletariat can increase its revolutionary experience more rapidly in a short space of time than otherwise in the course of several years. In Indonesia the revolutionary labour movement has also gone through an important stage of its development. It has also taken a firm footing in South-Africa. On the other hand, the development of the revolutionary labour movement is still in its initial stage in all other colonial countries.

In order to understand the difficulties in the organisation of the revolutionary movement, especially in connection with the construction of the Party, it is essential to point to the peculiarities of the colonial proletariat. Firstly, this proletariat is almost everywhere the first generation of the proletariat. It has mostly come from the rural districts and a considerable section of it goes back to these districts. There is much fluctuation in its composition. There are few skilled workers in its ranks, but a considerable number of women and children. The colonial proletariat is enormously over-burdened. The wear and tear of human labour power is very rapid there, wherefore, for instance, the question of occupational diseases, which is a very important problem in the labour movement of the capitalist countries, plays only a subordinate role in the colonies. It is said — I do not know if this is correct — that for instance in India the average human life is 24 years, whereas the average human life in the capitalist countries of Europe is double this number of years. It is difficult to organise the proletariat in the colonies. Its movements are sporadic and impulsive. This proletariat is as easily led as it is misled.

In the colonies proper, the main spheres of exploitation, insofar as it is exercised by the foreign capitalists, are plantations and mines; in some colonies (for instance Central Africa) these are almost the only capitalist enterprise. We know as yet very little about the conditions of work on these plantations and mines. They are spheres of actual slave labour. The work there is carried on on the basis of the contract system. In

India no factory inspector or doctor is admitted to the plantations. The workers are still entirely unorganised. A reformist leader invited once the owners of the plantations to a meeting in order to discuss the organisation of the plantation workers, but of course met with a rebuff. Neither have our comrades been able to do anything in this sphere. How these extremely difficult conditions in regard to the organisation of these workers are to be overcome, must be the subject of special study. Our comrades from the colonies should help us already at this Congress to clear up this question.

The most important phenomena of the labour movement in the most developed colonies are strikes. In some colonies strike movements are fairly big impulsive movements. But the number of active participants is not very considerable. As workers are still very closely connected with the villages, many of them go there during strikes to await the end of the struggle, and only a small active section carries on the strike. The workers who get into the villages through strikes or mass dismissals, carry the revolutionary slogans to the countryside. This is certainly a great advantage. An independent labour movement has in the colonies a much greater influence on the peasant movement than in the capitalist countries, and insofar as there is any under-estimation whatever among our comrades of the importance of the labour movement in colonial revolution, it must be combated most energetically.

#### The Task of Party Construction.

The foremost practical task in these countries is — construction of Communist Parties. We are justified in saying that the colonies are the weakest spot in the front of world imperialism. But we must also admit on our part that in regard to the position of our Parties, the colonies are also our weakest spot. We have in China a Party, even a mass Party. There are also a few other exceptions. But in most colonies and semi-colonies, even in very important ones, we have as yet no real Communist Parties. Why should we deny this fact? The imperialists know it as well as ourselves.

Who is to blame for this? If Comrade Lenin were alive, I am afraid that he would criticise also the Executive. We, of the Executive are also to blame for this. The Executive of the Comintern has of course paid considerable attention to all questions connected with the Chinese movement, but it has not paid sufficient attention to colonial questions. We criticise — and justly so — the West-European Communist Parties because they do not pay sufficient attention to the movement in the colonies. But when we look back on our long work in connection with the organisation of the Communist movement in most of the colonies, we are justified in demanding that henceforth the colonial work of the Executive be improved. In many important colonies we must begin our work from the beginning, with a serious study of conditions and problems of the respective colonies, in order to give there the necessary help to the Communist movement.

#### The Communist Party of China.

Our most important and relatively most experienced Communist Party in these countries, the Communist Party of China, has of course many merits. Apart from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union the Chinese C. P. has to its credit the biggest number of martyrs and revolutionary heroes. Tens of thousands of Chinese comrades have shown that they know how to fight for the Communist cause. But to know how to fight in a revolutionary situation is frequently easier than to understand well the art of victory. I am not speaking now about the former mistakes of the Chinese brother Party, but only about the Party as it is to-day. We have been given figures according to which it is approximately as big as the German Communist Party. Of course one must take into consideration that the Chinese Party is much younger, that it has not such old revolutionary traditions, that it has not behind it prolonged Bolshevikisation work, etc. But even if one takes all this into consideration, one cannot be satisfied with the present position of the C. P. of China. What is the Chinese Communist Party to-day,

with its 100,000 or more members? The Chinese Communists themselves say that the majority of the membership is not drawn from working class, but from peasant circles. (Interjection by Piatnitsky: Eighty per cent!). This social composition of our Chinese brother Party is of course abnormal. This Party must certainly work very hard so as to prepare and train for itself cadres drawn from the working class, which cannot be achieved without Bolshevik educational work. Apart from the necessary organisational consolidation of the Party, it has to pay special attention to its trade union work. It must work steadily also in the reactionary trade unions insofar as they contain working-class elements; in connection with this work one must certainly abstain from all coercive methods in regard to the workers; unfortunately, the Communist Party has been repeatedly discredited in the Chinese movement by such methods which are just as harmful as opportunist errors. Establishment of an adequate connection between the Communist Party and the trade unions, energetic work to persuade the workers and win them for the workers and peasants' revolution, exposure of petty-bourgeois national reformism, such are in my opinion the most important immediate tasks of the C. P. of China which must on no account be under-estimated now.

#### Immediate Tasks of the Communist Movement in India.

In my draft theses I pointed out the special difficulties of Party construction in India. The Labour and Peasant Parties which exist there are not parties which can constitute the basis of our Communist Parties. Comrade Lenin's theses at the Second Congress contain the following important direction:

"It is essential to carry on an energetic struggle against any attempt to give a Communist label to the not really Communist revolutionary liberation movement in the backward countries."

This danger of giving a Communist label to Parties which are in reality not Communist Parties at all, would exist if we wanted to replace in India the construction of an independent Communist Party by any labour and peasant parties. Modestly and yet perseveringly, must we begin in India with work in trade unions and during strikes, with the education of Party workers. In countries such as India and China the personal influence of every class-conscious Communist is of much greater value than in the old capitalist countries. If we consider that for instance in Germany, to judge by the last election results, every Communist has on an average influence over 25 workers, one can safely assume that in India and China this mass influence of the Communists will be ten times bigger. In the light of these facts the task of educating our Party cadres assumes enormous importance.

The Russian revolutionary labour movement, its initial development, existed for a time in the form of circles. One cannot of course recommend for the Indian revolutionary workers the circle system as a loose conglomerate of study circles which are neither coordinated nor controlled by the Party Executive. But serious propaganda work in Communist circles under the guidance and control of the Party is necessary and expedient also there in order to train and educate the Communist Party cadres (Piatnitsky: Not among the intellectuals, but mainly among the workers).

Quite so. For this purpose one should train instructors abroad as well as in India itself.

Comrade Mukherdschi who, by the by, has represented in the question of the industrialisation of India a more correct standpoint than some other comrades, has brought forward a queer idea in regard to Party construction, and has stubbornly defended it, namely the idea that the Indian and British workers should have one and the same Communist Party. In my opinion, such an idea is fundamentally wrong. This question is closely connected with what Lenin said in his theses at the Second Congress on the task of overcoming the distrust of the workers of the colonial countries. As this question is very important, I will read the part which refers to it:

"The centuries-long enslavement of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist Big Powers has created among the toiling masses of the oppressed countries not

only feelings of bitterness, but also feelings of distrust against the oppressor-nations in general, including also the proletariat of these nations. The abominable betrayal of Socialism by the majority of the official leaders of this proletariat in the years 1914—19, when the social-patriots used 'national defence' as a cloak for the defence of the 'right' of 'their' bourgeoisie to oppress the colonies and exploit the financially dependent countries, — this treachery was bound to confirm this perfectly justified distrust. As this distrust and national prejudices can be eradicated only after the destruction of imperialism in the advanced countries and after the radical reorganisation of all the foundations of the economic life of the backward countries, the elimination of these prejudices will necessarily be slow. This makes it incumbent on the class-conscious Communist proletariat of all countries to be particularly cautious and tactful in regard to the relics of nationalist feelings among the peoples who have been enslaved for such a long time. The Communist proletariat must also be prepared to make concessions in order to dispel more rapidly this distrust and these prejudices.

To dispel distrust is one of the most difficult tasks with which our comrades in the imperialist countries are confronted. It is most difficult of course in colonies as for instance in North and South America, where a white labour movement exists side by side with the movement of the coloured workers. It is only by an energetic ruthless struggle against the imperialism of their own countries and by giving genuine help to the revolutionary movement of the native workers, that Communists can overcome this difficulty. The British Party itself cannot of course create a Communist Party either in India or in Ireland. The tasks of the British and French comrades in the respective colonies is that of a helper and adviser to the Communist movement, and by no means of a leader of this movement. Their task consists in educating and training the comrades in the colonial movement so as to enable them to become the leaders of their movement.

The Indian workers have not yet been able to do such a simple thing as establishing a labour newspaper. One should really have there labour organs in three to four vernaculars. All that Lenin has said about the importance of a revolutionary newspaper as collective agitator, propagandist and organiser, applies particularly to such countries as India.

Everyone knows that the British reformist trade union leaders are now doing their utmost to bring the Indian trade unions under their influence. These unions are still very weak and undeveloped; in fact only the upper stratum of the Indian workers belongs to these unions. That is why these efforts of the British reformists are all the more dangerous as long as it is not possible to draw wider masses of the Indian workers into the trade unions. As soon as this is done, the influence of the British reformists will be less dangerous than that of the native Indian reformists. Thanks to the self-exposure of the MacDonald Government, the Indian workers have to a great extent been cured of their illusions in regard to the British reformists. The MacDonald Government, through the brutality of its Hunnish generals, has no doubt done very valuable "educational work" in this respect. Exposure of the Indian reformists and trade union leaders is the most important immediate task of the Left Wing of the Indian trade unions. It is only by drawing wide masses of workers into the unions, especially from the textile, engineering and mining industries and from the transport service, by energetic participation of the Left Wing in the everyday struggle of the masses and by organisational utilisation of these struggles, that this Left Wing can secure a leading position in the trade union movement. The Indian trade union movement must be connected with the international Red trade union movement through the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat.

Struggle against British imperialism and its tools and allies, exposure of bourgeois national reformism and agitation among the peasantry for the agrarian revolution, construction of independent political and trade union organisations of the revolutionary workers, — such are the most important immediate tasks of the Indian Communists.

### Reference to Supplementary Reports.

Comrades, I see that I must curtail my report considerably. I can very well do this because we will have several supplementary reports. Firstly, Comrade Ercoli will speak about the tasks of Communists in capitalist countries, especially about our struggle against the reformists in regard to the colonial question. Then we shall also have special reports on the **Chinese, Indian and Indonesian movements**, also on the movement in the **South American countries and the Negro question**. I hope that the comrades who have come from South America will speak about the conditions in their part of the world and that the French comrades will report on conditions in **Algiers, Tunis and Morocco**. Countries such as **Australia and Canada** I have not treated as colonial countries in my draft theses. These dominions are in fact not less independent than many European small States, and therefore the question of independence assumes there an utterly different form from that in colonial and semi-colonial countries. I attach great value to the experiences of the Indonesian revolution and the immediate tasks of the Indonesian movement being thoroughly discussed here. At present we can say that the Communist organisations there have been almost entirely destroyed. We must give the Indonesian comrades effective help so as to enable them to re-construct the Party under the present difficult conditions. There are also other fairly important colonies whose movements have been rather neglected by us, for instance **Korea**. In some respects Korea is as important in the East as Poland in the West, and it is much to be regretted that we have not yet succeeded in building up there a genuine Communist Party. The internal fractional struggle has had a very detrimental effect on the development of a proper party in Korea.

### IV. LENIN'S INJUNCTIONS WHICH SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

In my summing up I will draw attention to a few fundamental ideas of Lenin which he expressed already at the II Congress, but which have become much clearer and have assumed a bigger importance today through the revolutionary experiences of the last years.

Firstly, the difference which Lenin makes between the oppressed and the imperialist countries and the emphasis he lays on the necessity of Communists of the advanced countries supporting the genuine revolutionary movement, especially the revolutionary workers' and peasant movement.

Secondly, that "the Communist International must support the revolutionary movement in colonies and backward countries only for the purpose of rallying the component parts of the future proletarian parties — the real Communist Parties and not those which are Communist only in name — and educating them into a recognition of their special tasks".

Thirdly, that these special tasks of the Communist Parties in these countries consist in struggle against the bourgeois-democratic tendency, in other words, against national reformism in one's own nation.

Fourthly, that "in the present world situation, after the imperialist war, the relation between peoples, the world system of the States is determined by the struggle of the small number of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet powers. If we overlook this question, we will not be able to deal properly with a single national or colonial question, be it in the remotest part of the world".

This is a struggle between two world systems, and the liberation of the colonies is part of our great historical struggle for the Socialist world revolution. For instance, the Indian question is "our question", in every country. The Indian revolution can have the greatest influence on the revolutionary movements not only in Britain but also in the other European countries. If one realises that India is at present the focus of the various forces in the International world situation, that not only the clash of interests between the British imperialists and the

Indian people, but also the British-American antagonism plays an important role there, and that India is also the theatre of the clash of interests between the Soviet Union and imperialist Great Britain, one cannot certainly tolerate an under-estimation of the Indian question in our ranks. This is not only a question of the Indian movement, but a question of the movement in all the colonies. Just the same is the Negro movement our affair, and if this movement is very weak, it is all the more necessary for us to help with its development.

This has a strong bearing on what Comrade Lenin emphasised just before his death: that help for and association with the gigantic population of the enslaved East, which is struggling for its liberation, are of the utmost importance to the victory of the socialist world revolution.

I would like to draw attention to another of Lenin's ideas: the possibility of development of backward countries towards socialism without necessarily going through a period of the capitalist system, provided the victorious proletariat of the advanced countries gives its help in this to the backward countries.

We all know that idea is to be found already in the works of Karl Marx. Marx has certainly said in his **Indian letters** that, from the standpoint of the development of productive forces, it was better that the then most progressive state, Britain, has conquered India than if for instance Russia, Persia, Turkey, etc., had done so. In spite of the criminal colonial policy of Great Britain, British colonial policy had at that time, objectively, a certain importance for the development of the productive forces of India, in as far as it established the political unity of India and created there a material basis for the capitalist development. This is certainly true, but as true is what Marx also emphasises in his **Indian letters**.

"It is only when the great social revolution will have seized the results of the bourgeois epoch — the world market and modern forces of production — and will have subordinated them to the joint control of the progressive peoples, only then will human progress cease to resemble the abominable idol who wanted to drink nectar out of the skulls of the murdered."

What Marx has said about the objective role of the British colonial policy in the creation of a material basis for the development of productive forces in the colonies, certainly does not clash with what we have designated as the substance of the imperialist colonial policy. Today more than ever before, this policy is of a parasitical character and impedes rather than promotes the industrial development of the colonial countries. Moreover, Marx has never even hinted at a decolonisation of any one colony through the exploiting capitalism itself. Marx raised the question as a question of the liberation of the colonies, as a **question of struggle**. This is how we must deal with this question.

We speak about the dependence of the colonies, but in a certain sense there is an actual dependence of the imperialist powers on the colonies. Just as the workers of the world, colonial peoples are necessary to imperialism as objects of exploitation. After all the victorious revolutionary power of the workers as well as of the colonial trades rests on their productive role which is a social necessity. These slaves will awake and rebel everywhere. We have seen hitherto the first big wave of the colonial revolutionary movement: it began in India and Egypt on a modest scale and developed into something very big in China and Indonesia. It was suppressed. But a new wave is approaching. Through new and still greater struggles of the workers and peasants will the liberation of the colonial peoples be achieved.

The decisions of the VI World Congress also in regard to the colonial question are to serve as a certain guiding line in the liberation struggle of the workers of the world, side by side with the colonial slaves.

(Loud applause.)

## Thirtieth Session.

Moscow, 15th August, 1928 (Morning).

# Social Democracy and the Colonial Question.

## Co-Report of Comrade ERCOLI (Italy):

Chairman: Comrade Katayama.

Comrades, you all know that almost at the very time when we put on the agenda of the VI. World Congress the development, the present situation and the perspectives of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, the II. International likewise placed on the agenda of its Congress, which recently met at Brussels, the colonial policy of Social Democracy. A draft resolution drawn up and published by a preparatory commission of the II. International has just been approved with a few minor changes by this Brussels Congress.

### I.

#### WHY SOCIAL DEMOCRACY CONCERNS ITSELF WITH COLONIAL PROBLEMS.

It is of interest to observe this coincidence which is in fact not accidental. For ourselves, for the Communist International, there is nothing new, nothing extraordinary, in the fact that we place on the agenda of one of our international sessions the revolutionary movement in the colonies. This has always been the case. At the I Congress, Comrade Lenin declared that the Party which does not study the revolutionary movement in the colonies, which does not carry on a revolutionary struggle in the colonies for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, which does not systematically and practically support the revolutionary activity in the colonies, is not a revolutionary party, but a party of idlers and traitors. At the II. Congress we dealt with the revolutionary movement in the colonies from the general theoretical and political point of view. The nine years of our existence are at the same time nine years of continuous, systematic and intense efforts not only to investigate and solve accurately the problem of the revolutionary movement in the colonies from the theoretical point of view, but for the purpose of its practical leadership, to support and promote it and accelerate its final victory. We could say, and in fact we must say, that one of the most important characteristic features of the general political orientation of the C. I. consists precisely in the connection that we have succeeded in establishing between the development of the struggle of the proletariat in the big capitalist countries against class oppression and class rule and the development of the struggle for the liberation of the peoples in colonial and semi-colonial countries which are oppressed and exploited by imperialism.

You probably remember that during the first years of our activity in this sphere, the Social Democratic gentlemen made fun of us, of these poor Communists who were so foolish to declare that the struggle of the emir of Afghanistan or the struggle of Kemalism against the British Empire had a revolutionary significance and could support in any great degree the struggle of the proletariat in the ruling countries against capitalism; they laughed at the stupid Communists who attributed greater importance to the mullah of Kiva than to a Social Democratic Party in an advanced capitalist country.

Today the tone of the Social Democrats has changed. They do not make fun of us any more. On the contrary when they are touching this part of our activity, they do so with a certain bitterness, declaring that it is only we, the Communists, and the bourgeoisie who have any colonial policy, while they have none. This change is not without profound significance.

It might be said that we, too, at this Congress are not dealing with the revolutionary movement in the colonial countries in the same way as we did for example at the

IV. or V. Congress. The characteristic features of the internal contradictions in the capitalist world, the maturing of new international conflicts and the preparation for war against the U. S. S. R., the country from which the first rousing appeal was issued for the revolt of the oppressed peoples throughout the entire world, — the first symptoms of the second series of imperialist wars, — these facts cast strong reflections on all problems of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries which show up these problems today even for us in a different manner and with a very special acuteness.

Great crises are developing. We feel that the revolt of the colonial peoples is one of the greatest factors in these crises and that in the immediate future it can play a most decisive political and revolutionary role. These are the reasons why our debates on the colonial problems acquire such great importance. It might be said that in this sphere we have really entered upon the period when each day, each moment in fact, our principles and our general political lines are being transformed into the action of millions of men in revolt, a struggle, the outcome of which may decide the fate of the capitalist regime and the proletarian movement in the entire world.

But if we feel the immense significance at the present time of the development of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, the bourgeoisie, as well as its helpmate, the Social Democracy feels it also, — and is getting into action.

However, it would be entirely incorrect to say that Social Democracy did not have a colonial policy after the war. On the contrary, not only did it have a colonial policy in a general sense, — in that it always recognised the necessity of dealing with colonial problems in a positive manner — but it has had a very special, concrete colonial policy in each country — one which consisted in allying itself with or directly participating in the colonial enterprises of the bourgeoisie.

What is new is that formerly the Social Democracy always felt somewhat ashamed to show up this aspect of its activity; it concealed it as something which one does but does not mention; while now it displays its attitude on colonial questions without any embarrassment whatsoever. From this point of view the recent Brussels Congress marked a real step in the development of the international Social Democratic movement. The Brussels Congress, which took a definite colonial stand in the fullest sense of the word, which submitted the colonial problems to a special commission presided over by a so-called British Socialist who had been imperialist Governor of the Colony of Jamaica, — this Congress had no precedent in the history of the abdication of the principles of Socialism and the class struggle, or in the history of open, deliberate and avowed betrayal of the ideal of the emancipation of the workers and oppressed peoples of the entire world.

And there are reasons which cause the Social Democracy to display its colonial policy to the fullest extent.

The first of these reasons is, as the Social Democrats themselves admit, that the social democratic parties and leaders are today closer to power; consequently, they must demonstrate that they are ready to take upon themselves all kinds of responsibilities, not only the responsibility of being at the head of a portion of the working class in the big capitalist countries in order to check their struggle against capitalist exploitation, but also the responsibility of ruling a colony in the interests of imperialism and, by all possible means if necessary, to defend imperialism against the liberation movements of the colonial people.

The second reason, which perhaps is the most fundamental one, consists in the fact that the colonial revolution is growing and approaching like a storm that cannot be checked. The Social Democracy well knows that when this storm breaks down with all its force upon the capitalist world, it too will be hopelessly swept aside. It therefore feels the necessity, I cannot say of stopping the revolutionary movement, which would be impossible, but of attempting to check it, to ward off the storm. It is with this in view that the Social Democracy goes to so much pains to teach the imperialists of the different countries the best methods of barring the way to Revolution.

Have you not read what **Leon Blum** said on the revolutionary movement in the colonies? Dealing with the role played by the Communist agitators in this movement, he is forced to recognise that this role consists in nothing more than telling the colonial peoples the truth about imperialism and capitalism. The Communists open the eyes of the colonial peoples to the comparison "between their daily handful of rice and the fabulous profits of the companies which distribute their annual dividends which are greater than their capital". They make it clear that "these profits come from or at least are dependent upon their labour and that by their hard labour they enrich the distant, idle and unknown shareholder who has never risked anything more than his wretched money". The result is that the colonial peoples, says **Leon Blum**, are revolting against "us" and against the Socialists, against the good and faithful servants of colonial imperialism.

This then is the real danger for Social Democracy, the approaching colonial revolution. It is this danger which forces it openly to adopt a colonial policy.

That is also why the struggle between us and Social Democracy on this field is becoming more bitter, and why social democracy is attempting to mask itself more cleverly than heretofore, and is preparing new weapons to fight us with and to give a stronger support to imperialism. This is why we must fundamentally understand the position of the social democrats, know what they are saying and what they are doing in order to unmask them before the working class and show up their true colours to the oppressed peoples of the entire world.

## II.

### COLONIAL PROBLEMS AND PRE-WAR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

Allow me, comrades, to devote a few words now to the attitude of Social Democracy towards colonial questions before the war. This problem is of importance because it involves uncovering certain roots of the attitude and present policy of the Social Democrats.

The colonial question was dealt with at various congresses of social democracy before the war: at **Paris** in 1900, at **Amsterdam** in 1904 and at **Stuttgart** in 1907. A whole number of resolutions were adopted at these congresses. In these resolutions, especially in the earlier ones, good formulations of principle are to be found. For example in the **Paris** resolution we find the statement that:

"Colonial policy has no other purpose than to increase the profits of the capitalist class and uphold the capitalist system by drawing on the blood and strength of the proletariat."

In the resolution of the German party in 1900 it is said "The colonial policy aims at capitalist exploitation and the increase of military power", that it "causes conflicts between governments", that it "contains the germ of dangerous international conflicts."

These statements recur with more or less force in the subsequent resolutions of **Amsterdam** and **Stuttgart**. They are good statements on principle, but they contain merely a negation of colonisation in general. In these formulations we find no positive element, no indication of the basis for a positive colonial policy of the proletariat. They do not indicate what should be the concrete attitude of the workers and of the socialist parties in the capitalist countries towards the revolutionary movements in the colonies.

What is the basis for a positive colonial policy of the proletariat? It must consist first of all in the unconditioned

affirmation of the right of all peoples to self-determination. But this affirmation is not sufficient in itself. A colonial policy of the proletariat cannot limit itself to recognising this principle, cannot limit itself to the proclamation that the revolt of oppressed colonial peoples against their oppressors is an integral part of the proletarian world revolution and that consequently the proletariat of all lands must consider it as their own struggle and help it by all possible means. The positive colonial policy of the proletariat must arouse the spirit of revolt in the oppressed colonial peoples. This is the task that **Lenin** alone recognised and proclaimed openly before the war, while the whole pre-war social democracy never came up to this standpoint.

We find in the resolution of the **Paris** congress only the timid declaration that

"the organised proletariat should utilise all means at its disposal to combat colonial expansion (emphasis mine, E.) of capitalism"

as well as the instruction that

"wherever economic conditions render it possible socialist parties should be formed in the colonies which should maintain contact with those of the ruling country".

In limiting the creation of socialist parties to those countries "where economic conditions render it possible" and in the fact that it speaks of socialist parties and not of support to the national liberation movement of the colonies the germs of the future opportunist position can be clearly seen.

But even this timid reference is eliminated completely in all subsequent resolutions. It has never been developed into a complete and open statement of the duty of the workers in capitalist countries of rousing the spirit of revolt in colonial peoples against imperialist oppression and in supporting their revolt by all possible means.

Let us take for example, the position of the social democratic leader who at the **Stuttgart Congress in 1907** took the most Left position and fought the revisionist standpoint in the colonial policy with the greatest bitterness, the position of **Karl Kautsky**. It is interesting to see how **Kautsky** — after criticising and demolishing the revisionist colonial policy, showing that under the capitalist regime every colonial policy is a policy of violence and oppression — when he is faced with the concrete problem of the liberation of the colonies becomes extremely prudent. He points out a number of reasons why the possibility of this liberation is doubtful, he shows that it is not such a simple matter, and finally arrives at the conclusion that if an agreement can be reached that the colonies must be liberated, then the problem of "how" they are to be liberated must still be discussed.

"The capitalists", he concludes, "are not going to give up a colony voluntarily". And then? Is the conclusion he draws from this fact an appeal for the revolt of colonial peoples against capitalism? No. The conclusion is that:

"The idea of emancipation of the colonies is a sort of border idea which shows us the course to be followed, but it is not a practical proposition for the immediate application of which we must work..."

Who then is going to liberate the colonies? **Kautsky** concludes that it is the socialist revolution, but he has never managed to draw up the process of development of the socialist revolution of which the liberation movements of the colonial peoples form a component part.

What then must be done?

"The right of the natives to self-administration must be extended as rapidly as possible" is **Kautsky's** answer.

The conclusion, as we see, runs counter to all the premises. It is an acceptance of the capitalist colonial policy, — it is a position of avowed colonial reformism. After rejecting the colonial policy he says that attempts must be made to modify it, that means with other words its acceptance. It is very easy to see that under such conditions it was extremely difficult for the so-called social democratic Left to elaborate the difference which separated it from the revisionist and colonialist Right. It is very easy to understand how after the **Stuttgart Congress** it was possible to make the famous statement that the discussion on the colonial problems was a discussion "for the Emperor's

Beard", but at the basis there was no actual difference between the two currents which were fighting against each other over this point.

The position of the II. International before the war was always then, an outspoken reformist one the principal points of which may be summed up as follows:

1) Colonisation is condemned and particularly the "existing" methods of colonisation are rejected;

2) The possibility is recognised of improving the system of capitalist colonial domination; certain general reforms for natives are demanded and it is considered to be the duty of the socialist parties to advocate these reforms;

3) In this way a limit is set to the right and the possibility of the colonial peoples to dispose freely of their fate and to separate from the ruling country.

Even in the most radical formulations which we find in the Paris resolution it speaks of independence of the colonial peoples which is to be acquired "through enlightenment and the example of modern culture and civilisation" and it speaks of liberty and autonomy to be demanded "to the extent of and according to the development of the natives". That is to say that the absolute right of the colonial peoples to self-determination is denied.

Comrades, why have I analysed the position of the Social Democrats before the war? First of all, to show where the roots are of a part, and perhaps the most important part, of the ideology and practice of contemporary social democracy; and secondly, to combat the opinion which seems to be still widespread in our ranks that pre-war social democracy took a consistent anti-colonialist attitude, a truly revolutionary position. This opinion, I have found expressed in an article by Comrade Doriot, in which he says:

"at its various congresses before the war, the II. International clearly condemned colonial oppression in all its forms"\*)

That is not true. In the attitude of the social democracy before the war there was the germ of its present attitude.

### III.

#### THE COLONIAL POLICY OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND ITS THEORETICAL ROOTS.

There is no doubt whatsoever that during the post-war period Social Democracy has gone a great way from its pre-war position of colonial reformism which is basically that of the Stuttgart Congress, to the present position taken at the Brussels Congress. In what direction has it gone? It has gone in the direction of "August 4th", in the direction of abandoning every Marxist and class position, — it has gone in the direction of betrayal of every socialist ideal, in the direction of openly joining the ranks of the enemy. But "August 4th", comrades, did not exhaust completely the source of betrayal. There is something much more serious than the abandonment of the socialist ideal which occurred on this day of error, bankruptcy and shame: the betrayal is becoming a rule, — the abandonment of Marxist traditions, the abandonment of class position has been made a theory and a practice, which is shamelessly lauded, a method which is declared to be the only possible method for a workers party.

In fact the first conclusion that we must come to in examining the post-war attitude of social democracy towards the colonial question is that the social democrats have become colonial politicians. They recognise the possession of colonies as something which their countries could never renounce and that, when their country has no colony it is up to them to demand a colony for it in a more or less open manner. In this field there is not a single social democratic party which is an exception. It is true some "radical" statements by leaders of the French Socialist Party can be found, in which it is said that colonial expansion "is not necessary to the development of French industry". But these statements are in contradiction to the fact that the French Socialist Party has always supported the colonial policy of the French bourgeoisie and its government, and that it has always voted for all credits for colonial enterprises. And in a programme approved

by the French Socialist Party in December 1927, it is stated that without colonies "the post-war problems cannot be solved."

Let us take the British party. In a programme which was drawn up immediately after the war in 1918, we find the statement

"that the Labour Party is against the egoistic conception of 'non-intervention' in the affairs of the various countries of the British Empire".

It is in favour of intervention, but to what purpose and for what reasons?

"To defend the rights of British citizens who have oversea interests."

We could not ask for a more open avowal of the imperialist policy of the British bourgeoisie. And in this same programme, it is further said that

"as for this community of races and peoples of different colours, religions and different stages of civilisation, which is called the British Empire, the Labour Party is in favour of its maintenance".

This attachment to the British Empire, this proclamation that the British Empire must be maintained, is the basis of the whole policy of the Labour Party in the colonial sphere, but it is at the same time the most patent negation of the right of self-determination of nations.

In the colonial programme of the Dutch Socialist Party, the question of the utility of and necessity for having colonies is not even brought up. The discussion is merely concerned with the method by which the colonies should be ruled by the capitalist government.

But what is still more interesting is to see the attitude of Social Democracy in those countries which have no colonies, such as Germany. At the Berne conference of 1919, — which was the first gathering of social democratic parties after the war — German Social Democracy openly protested against the fact that Germany was deprived of colonies. At the Marseilles Congress, through the mouth of Hilferding, it demanded colonies for Germany. Even now in a more or less open manner, the German Social Democrats are demanding colonies for Germany. But perhaps the best example is that of the Italian Social Democracy, the most rickety of Social Democracies — which showed no strength even in betrayal, and which not only betrayed the workers and the principles of the class struggle, but which miserably suffered shipwreck in carrying out collaboration with the bourgeoisie. At the beginning of 1928, Social Democracy approved a resolution in which it protested against the distribution of colonies as established by the treaty of Versailles and demanded a fresh settlement of the colonial problem, thus accepting the position of Italian imperialism.

This colonial position which is common to all the Social Democratic Parties has a theoretical source which must be examined. I believe that this consists in the assertion that, capitalism being historically inevitable, consequently everything which assists capitalism to "spread over the entire globe", as the Brussels resolution says, is also necessary and inevitable, not something to be rejected in principle, but to be accepted, supported and encouraged.

We find there a specific form of one of the most peculiar deviations from Marxism, a deviation which results from an absolutely vulgar, pedantic and ridiculous interpretation of some of the fundamental thesis of Marxism. Marxism maintains that all forms of production and all forms of social organisations are historically connected and reciprocally dependent upon each other. It declares at the same time that the forms of production and organisation of capitalist society are the objective preconditions for the formation of Communist society. These statements are an undeniable truth for every Marxist; but it is a peculiar way of reasoning which leads one to conclude from these statements that if we strive for Socialism, it is our task to support capitalism and assist it in its consolidation. Such a conclusion has no trace of Marxism, it is a caricature of Marxism. But this is the conclusion which the social democrats have reached.

What is completely eliminated in this conclusion is that, for Marxism, the development of the forms of production and of society does not proceed along peaceful lines but is a

\*) Doriot, Colonial Programme of the French Socialist Party in "Cahiers du Bolchevisme", Third year, New series, No. 2. p. 185.

dialectic and revolutionary development. Contradictions develop and break out within capitalist society. Our task is to work on the basis of these contradictions, to gather together and guide the forces of the working class which are all developing within capitalist society as its unavoidable opponent and enemy, and not to support or consolidate the capitalist regime, but to prepare for and accelerate its overthrow through revolutionary class activity.

Even Kautsky in the pre-war period defined our attitude towards the colonial question in a manner which might be the cause for all sorts of errors, when he said:

"When capitalist production comes into conflict with backward forms of production, we cannot and we must not place obstacles in its way."

There is but one step from this statement to the statement that we must not support the revolutionary movement in the colonies because it might hinder the development of the capitalist regime.

We find this deviation today in different forms throughout all the so-called theoretical formulations of the socialists on colonial questions. Thus for example, the French Socialist Zyromski, presented to the congress of the French Socialist Party a resolution in which he says:

"Socialism is directly interested in the development of all productive forces throughout the world. It demands an intensive utilisation of economic wealth and this of course brings up the problem of relationships and contact with the less highly developed economic systems."

In this formulation drawn up by a "left", there is something resembling a broadly humanitarian and progressive spirit. But from all this phraseology there follows as something inevitable the conception that we cannot reject in principle this specific form of relations with the more backward economic systems which is the colonial regime of capitalism.

The Dutch Social Democrats, who are the specialists on these questions in the II. International, have built up a whole theory on this basis, founded on the distinction between the economic exploitation and the political domination of the colonies. According to them economic domination is inevitable, while a struggle can be carried on against political oppression!

"A clear distinction", they say, "between the economic and political aspect which exists in the life of a colonial society offers the possibility of participation in the struggle of emancipation of the natives from an international point of view" (emphasis mine, E.).

How the Dutch Social Democrats, after recognising the necessity for economic domination, are struggling against political oppression, not from the national point of view but from the international point of view, is what we shall see later.

#### IV. FORMS AND METHODS OF THE COLONIAL REGIME.

We find a reflection on the position of the Dutch in the Brussels resolution, where it is said that the Socialists reject in principle "political domination" over the colonial peoples, but the question of so-called "economic domination", which is stronger, more perceptible and burdensome, and on the basis of which political domination develops, is left open. But the most patent manifestation of the position of the Social Democracy towards capitalist colonial policy is shown in the introduction of the Brussels resolution, which contains an open undisguised apology for capitalism and the capitalist colonial system.

"The colonial policy", says the resolution in its first lines, "was the means by which capitalism has been extending over the whole earth. It has opened up access to the natural resources of the backward countries, has developed production and modern means of transportation in these countries, and has thus very greatly increased the basis of raw materials for world economy and promoted the development of the international division of labour."

Here we find ourselves faced with a general theoretical declaration, which we must analyse first of all from a theoretical point of view: Does this apology for capitalism and its colonial expansion correspond to the truth, is it true that the role

of capitalist colonial policy is that of utilising the natural resources of the colonised countries and there to develop production in general? That is a problem which we must consider.

It is true, that in the draft of the II. International, after thus heralding the benefits of the colonial policy, it is said that these benefits could only be obtained at the price of great suffering, but this restriction does not in the slightest affect the general judgment expressed on colonial policy.

Now this judgment is wrong from the Marxist point of view. It suffices to have a moderate knowledge of colonial policy as it has always been, as it is at the present time and as it will be, in order to recognise that these social democratic assertions are incorrect.

I believe that we can say in general, that the characteristic of every system of colonisation is that it is determined in its forms and in its development by the internal requirements of the colonising country, and that these requirements are in strict and irreconcilable contradiction to the economic development of the colonised country. We could take the example of the first colonisers, of the first colonial policy, that of the Spaniards, which consisted literally in robbing the gold and precious metals in the occupied countries, because gold was then considered as the exclusive basis for the wealth of the countries. The same characteristic feature can be noticed in the regulations established for the exchange of goods and navigation between the colonies and the ruling country during the time immediately preceding the capitalist period. These regulations, — suffice it to recall the famous British "Navigation Act", which was the basis of British expansion during the 18th century, — greatly contributed to the development of trading capital and made ready for the development of industrial capital in the colonising countries; but at the same time, not only did they prevent the economic development of the colonised countries but they also prevented the positive consequences of the possession of the colonies from being felt by the other countries, the countries without great colonial possessions.

But we must bring this problem up in relation to the most recent forms of colonial exploitation. Our analysis must be made in greater detail, but the conclusion will be practically the same. What we must say first of all is that the aim of capitalism, in general, is not to develop the forces of production, but to pocket the greatest possible profit for each capitalist and for each individual capitalist country. The development of the forces of production is merely the consequence of conditions by which profit is created.

If we examine the colonial regime from the point of view of the necessity of realising as high as possible a profit on the capital which is interested in colonisation, there is no doubt that capitalist colonisation is entirely successful. There is no capitalist enterprise which offers such great profits as a colonial enterprise. I shall quote a few figures which were collected by Comrade Doriot. The dividends of the Bank of Indo-China reached in 1925, 50% of the value of the share. During three years the French Coal Company of Tonkin distributed 240 francs of dividends for each share of 260 francs. The distilleries of Indo-China in 1920 made more than 20½ millions in profits on a capital of 33 millions, etc. These are common phenomena. As for obtaining a profit on capital, there is therefore nothing better than capitalist colonial policy.

But we must now consider the matter from another point of view, the point of view of the development of the forces of production. And here, I believe that it is necessary first of all to avoid the error of representing the development of industry in the colonies according to a scheme which would correspond to that of the development of productive forces in the capitalist countries during the time of rising capitalism and original accumulation. You all recall the stirring picture that Marx and Engels gave us of the facts which accompanied the early development of industrial capital. But in spite of these facts, the essential characteristic of this period is a general and constantly rising development of the forces of production. This characteristic is lacking, or else it is found in an entirely different form in the picture of economic life and development of the colonies exploited by capitalism. And it is not difficult to discover the reasons for this. In fact, capital which gets control of a colony and enters the path of colonisation is already a highly developed form of capital, which is already accustomed to holding a privileged position in the

colonising country; it is capital with a particular greed for profits and one which is attempting to increase its profits by particular methods. In the colonies this capital enjoys a position of monopoly and, furthermore, it is assured of special privileges as a result of the continuous and extensive application of methods of political domination and oppression. The result of all these facts is a change in the whole process of the development of productive forces in the colonial countries. At the same time they determine the different forms of colonial exploitation.

There is first of all the elementary form of robbery of all the natural resources which are found in the colonies, to bring them over to the ruling country, to transform them and to obtain a profit. There are still colonies where this form exists and predominates.

Next there are the strictly capitalist forms which consist in exploiting the colonies as a source of raw materials which, on the one hand, are indispensable to the industrial development of the ruling country, and on the other hand, are indispensable for obtaining particularly high profits.

The development of this system of colonisation is not a simple matter. There is no system of exploitation which is the same for all colonies. On the contrary, there are very different forms of exploitation. We could even say, that there is no field in which capitalism shows more elasticity, more capacity to adapt itself to the most diverse objective conditions for obtaining the highest profits. In order to have a complete picture of capitalist colonial policy, it is necessary to consider: 1. The method of land appropriation; 2. the system of agricultural exploitation and 3. the exploitation of labour power. It is only after considering these three aspects of the same phenomenon that it is possible to arrive at a correct judgement of the nature of the capitalist colonial regime as a whole.

Great divergencies exist in the form of land appropriation. Consequently it would be incorrect, for example, to say that the capital which is penetrating into the colonies has a reactionary function because it generally bases itself on pre-capitalist forms of land appropriation and exploitation. This method is employed in certain countries (India, Eastern Africa, etc...) but not everywhere. In other countries, the predominant form is the establishment of private property for colonisers alongside great exploitation of the natives. Lastly, there is another form which consists under certain conditions in creating a system of private property for the natives. This form has been employed in certain sections of the African colonies and it is undoubtedly one of the most interesting, because, when we examine it attentively, we reach the conclusion that the introduction of private property for the natives, which could be in itself considered as an advance becomes a step backward because it is almost always bound up with the penetration of trading capital and with the creation of a strata of land speculators, agents of capital in the ruling country who are bound sooner or later to have the small native landholders or farmers in their grasp.

We find here an example of this fact which Marx pointed out for India, when he characterised the forms of land appropriation which the British had introduced into this country, as a "caricature".

But what are the motives which drive the capitalists to apply the various methods of land appropriation in the colonies? This investigation will assist us greatly in understanding the true nature of colonial policy. First of all, there are political motives. This is why in certain cases, the most backward and feudal forms are upheld. In such cases the feudal lords become the allies of the foreign capitalists. Another political motive is to prevent the formation of a native class capable of developing a spirit of independence and struggling for the expulsion of the imperialists from the colonies. At times an inverse process takes place. The capitalists provoke insurrections with a view to finding a pretext to expropriate the land of the natives which they need for their own use. In this field the political factor is always of the greatest importance.

If we now pass on to economic reasons, the fundamental reason is without any doubt the tendency to augment the total production. But it might be contended that there is in general a tendency to augment productivity. And it is only this second tendency which could be described as progressive. In the Congo, for example, there was recently a marked in-

crease not only in the total amount produced, but also in the productivity. Belgian capital finds itself in an embarrassing situation, first of all because the native labour employed in the enterprises was systematically decimated and also because of the difficulty of finding outlets. Now it is proposed to stop the import of machines into the Congo, to restrict the development of the productivity of labour and to revert to the former primitive methods of exploitation of the sources of raw materials.

Among the economic reasons which determine the forms of the colonial regime, we must then point out the necessity for capitalism to develop in particular certain forms of cultivation offering the greatest profits. And this development is promoted without a thought being given to the elementary needs of the native masses, who are almost always condemned to famine and physical deterioration. And now we touch upon the problem of the exploitation of labour power. In order to obtain the maximum profits, the exploitation of labour power is carried on in the colonies by methods of unheard of brutality (compulsory labour, etc.), the results of which is the undermining and at times the complete destruction of tribes and even whole races, which frequently takes place where the plantation regime is introduced. In itself, as an abstract economic form, the plantation can doubtless appear to be something advanced and "progressive". But what can we think of a "progress" which involves the destruction of great masses of human beings? Is it possible to say that a regime is developing productive forces when it involves the systematic destruction of great masses of workers?

If we examine the results obtained in this sphere by the colonial system throughout the entire world, we notice that the general total of the various methods which we have pointed out has had consequences which cannot generally be considered as progress. Countries which were formerly renowned for their fertility, such as India, and even China, are condemned to periodically recurring crop failures. Countries which used to have a highly developed agriculture, are showing symptoms of a permanent deterioration of cultivation. In other countries we find a systematic destruction of the population. Everywhere the creation of a class of landless and wretched peasants is taking place as well as the progressive pauperisation of the great mass of workers.

If we now consider the question from the point of view of development of industry and transportation, we observe that in not a single case can we say that capitalism promotes or favours a development of industry in general in the colonies. In certain cases it develops certain industries, but it is always and only with a view to obtain greater profit for capital in the ruling country. Thus, it is at times advantageous for the capitalists to subject the raw materials obtained in the colonies to a primary working up before sending them abroad. Thus, in certain countries of South-America, certain branches of industry were developed for satisfying the requirements of imperialism which is penetrating these countries, while, for example, this development does not exist in Korea, because the Japanese capitalists find it more advantageous to transport the raw materials to Japan and to work them up there. But in cases where an industry is developed, this fact does not contribute in the slightest degree to changing the character of the colony as a country economically subject to imperialism.

Evidently, during the war, the special conditions of capitalist economy promoted a certain development of industries in some colonies. But this process has now been stopped, and it is a serious mistake to maintain that the value of economic domination of the colonies by capitalism consists in its development and promotion of industry and modern methods of production in the colonies.

We can conclude this brief survey of the forms of capitalist colonisation with the statement: the capitalist exploitation of the national resources of the colonies is taking place in a manner which offers no possibility of considering as a characteristic of colonisation the development of productive forces in the colonies. If to this we add that the development of even those productive forces which have been promoted in the colonies with a view to creating an ever-greater profit, is taking place within the limits of an "anarchistic" capitalist world economy, the judgement which we must make of capitalist colonial policy, and which corresponds to reality, is the op-



posite of that given by the Social Democrats in their apology for the capitalist colonial regime.

The study of the political and social aspects, — in the strictest sense of the word, — of the colonial regime brings us to the same conclusion. In the resolution of the Second International, it is said on this point that, thanks to the development of production and modern means of transportation, a modern evolution of the social and cultural state of the colonised peoples is taking place, making them accessible to democratic ideas, etc. etc. . . . Of course, the colonies are not closed to progress in general, but what is the function of capitalism in this field? Just the contrary of the function assigned it by the Social-Democrats. Capitalism employs very different methods in the colonies in this field as well. At times it gets its support from the most backward feudal elements which still exist in the Colonies. This is the case in India, Africa and even in Persia, where Britain is looking for support among the backward feudal tribes. In other countries, imperialist capitalism is getting its support and trying to create a class of trading bourgeoisie which occupies a parasitic position in production and in the social life of the country (compradores). — But in any case, capitalism has not a progressive function; on the contrary it ever tends to check political and social development. The most striking example is that of Latin America, the principal countries of which, towards the middle of the 19th century, succeeded in gaining a relative political independence and are now in the process of retrogression, losing this political independence as a result of the penetration of imperialism.

But, comrades, the problem of the character of the capitalist colonial regime must be brought up and examined by us from a broader viewpoint. We must examine the present situation of capitalism throughout the world in order to see if the present function of capitalism is a progressive or retrogressive function.

If we accept as true the statement which we find in a collection of theoretical articles which was published by the II. International, at the time of its Congress, the statement that capitalism has definitely overcome the post-war crisis and is now stabilised, it is easy to draw from this the conclusion that capitalism today is playing a progressive role, and that, in the fulfilment of this role it must not be disturbed, on the contrary, it must be assisted, just as the Social Democrats are doing. But if we proceed from the position that there is a crisis in the capitalist world, — which is the final crisis of capitalism, — if we maintain that the process of development of this crisis is at the same time the process of the development of the revolution, if we proceed from these statements which are the only true statements, which correspond to the facts, we arrive at the conclusion that capitalism today has become a factor of reaction in all countries. Everything then, which contributes to strengthen capitalism serves to retard the process of revolution. And everything which contributes to the weakening of capitalism and the acceleration of its downfall is a factor of progress because it promotes the development of the revolution.

But the problem can be examined also from a more particular and concrete point of view. From the point of view of the character of the present crisis in the capitalist regime. We are going through the period of preparation of a new catastrophic crisis, we are perhaps on the eve of a new war. In the resolution of the II. International, every reference to the connection between the capitalist colonial regime and the development of war dangers has been eliminated. This connection between colonial policy and war, which is the basis of the capitalist regime and one of the principal features for the preparation of the "second series" of imperialist wars, has completely disappeared from the analysis made of the capitalist regime by the Social Democrats. The position which they openly adopt at a time when capitalism has become a reactionary force in all countries and is marching towards a new catastrophe, is the position of eulogy of and apology for capitalism in all its forms, even in its most detestable form, that of exploitation and oppression of the colonies and colonial peoples.

Comrades, it is evident that the logical consequence of this position of Social Democracy must be the negation of the right of nations to self-determination. We find this negation in the attitude of all the Social Democratic Parties, both in their theoretical attitude and in their practice. Of course we can find plenty of statements and empty phrases about the right

of nations to self-determination in all Social Democratic appeals etc. For example in the appeal of the II. International for May 1st. 1927, and in the above mentioned Zyromski resolution, the right of nations to self-determination is designated as:

"a principle which socialism is not disposed to renounce and to which the last war has given enormous expansion".

But comrades, these empty phrases cannot mask the real contents of the Social Democratic policy. Let us take this same resolution of Zyromski. After the phrase which we have just quoted, he puts the problem of right of nations to self-determination in the following manner:

"Nothing", he says, would more contradict socialism than the acceptance of certain formulae inspired by a narrow petty and egoistic individualism. Socialism owes it to itself to break down all Chinese walls. It cannot tolerate self-sufficient nationalism, and the intervention of higher economic countries constitutes the corollary of its principles."

You see how in this remarkable statement by a left Socialist, "self-sufficient nationalism" is not the nationalism of the imperialist colonising countries, but that of the suppressed peoples who strive for emancipation.

But Zyramski is not an exception. In the official documents presented by the different parties of the II. International to the Brussels Congress for the study of colonial questions, negation or limitation of the right of nations to self-determination is the general rule.

The Dutch Party, of the II. International, whose principle that "the interests of international (!) humanity set up limits to the right to free determination" is defended by the so-called theoreticians, openly declares in its report that the slogan "separation of Indonesia from the Netherlands" is not its slogan. For this great country where the revolutionary movement is already in process to break down the domination of the imperialists the Dutch Socialists are partisans of "evolution towards autonomy in preparation for independence". In other words, this means being in favour of maintaining the present situation. Fimmen is of the same opinion. At the Congress of the Dutch Social Democracy he declared that the socialists cannot "simply support the slogan of an Indonesia independent of Holland".

There is no difference on this point between the Right and the so-called "Left".

In a resolution submitted by the Left of the Labour Party (Maxton Group) the problem of the right of nations to self-determination is "solved" in that sense that "as rapidly as possible the less advanced peoples should be prepared for self-government", a standpoint which in no way differs from the programme of the avowed supporters of the imperialist colonial policy.

As to the Labour Party, in all the material presented by this party to the Congress of the II. International, it is maintained that the right of self-determination is not applicable to any of the British colonies. And in the same way all the other socialist parties of countries possessing colonies express themselves.

One question faces all workers in this attitude of the Social Democracy which denies oppressed peoples the right to liberty, namely, is this the spirit of Socialism? Does it contain a spark of the spirit which we recognise and which must be an absolute rule for us, the morality which consists in proclaiming the right of all oppressed to break their chains and the right of all exploited to rise up against their oppressors?

What is left of this spirit which made Marx say that a class which is the accomplice to the oppression of another class cannot be free? In the attitude of the Social Democrats, there is nothing left of Socialism, there is nothing more than the spirit of imperialism, the spirit of the bourgeoisie in the ruling countries, who are basing their wealth and their forces in the slavery and destruction of peoples and entire races.

But the most perfect form of the denial of the right of nations to self-determination we will find in the resolution of the Brussels Congress. In this resolution it is said that Socialism

"supports the aspirations for independence of the colonial peoples who have up to the present reached the level of a modern independent civilisation."

The right to independence, then, is admitted only in a limited manner and under certain conditions. Proceeding from

this limitation and these conditions, the "socialists" arrive at basing their whole attitude towards colonial problems on a division of colonial countries into definite categories. It is the same distinction which is at the basis of the constitution and statutes of the League of Nations, which, after dividing the different countries according to the degree of their so-called civilisation, recognises and declares that the most "civilised" countries have the right to "determine the fate" of the others, that is to say, to submit them to an economic exploitation and political oppression. It is the monstrous principle that the II. International is attempting to conceal with the mask of Marxism and Socialism!

But we must examine the question in detail and pass on to the examination of the manner in which the Social Democrats apply the principle that they uphold. For the most advanced colonial countries then, they demand "complete liberation from the foreign yoke". But also in the most developed countries, there is a distinction to be made on the basis of their historic and objective situation. Among them, there are countries where the struggle for national liberation has already begun and has reached a very high stage of development. Such are China, India and Indonesia. What do the Social Democrats demand for these countries? For China, the resolution is explicit. The resolution demands "absolute independence and equality of rights, the abolition of unequal treaties which oppress the Chinese people".

As a statement this is alright, but what about the facts? Let us take the last of the demands, the smallest, the demand of abolition of unequal treaties. Before the assembly of the League of Nations, at the moment of the victorious advance of the Chinese revolution and of military intervention in China, who took the floor to defend the right of capitalist Belgium to oppress the Chinese people? A Social Democrat, M. de Brouckère.

"We are," he declared, "against the abrogation by China of the treaties of 1863, against this patent violation of international law. We are fully conscious of our rights. Not only Belgium but all Europe and its future are at stake in the Far East."

This is already an example of the manner in which the Social Democrats defend the right to independence even of the most advanced nations.

But even with regard to China there is something more interesting to note, namely, the attitude of the Labour Party on the Chinese question. At the time when England has intervened in China to strangle the revolution, the men at the head of the Labour Party recognised and proclaimed the necessity for defending the "economic and political interests" of the English bourgeoisie in China. It is the first step towards justification of intervention. In fact, when the problem of military intervention by England in China came up, a timid resolution against this intervention was adopted by the parliamentary labour group with a majority of 2, that is to say, that half of the parliamentary fraction of the Labour Party declared itself in favour of sending the war fleet and armies of British imperialism against the Chinese people. At the same time, MacDonald, dealing with the problem of intervention in China, declared that

"the liquidation of unequal treaties by a mutinous mass is something which cannot be tolerated",

that in case the abolition of unequal treaties is achieved as a result of the action of "a mutinous mass", a conflict "will be as inevitable as the rising of the sun", and that the responsibility for the conflict "will not be borne by us". Is it not remarkable that the socialist leader, when he says "us" means the British imperialist government which is sending its warships to drown the Chinese revolution in blood? And MacDonald concludes by saying:

"I believe that the outcome of events does not depend upon us but upon our opponents".

In an article by a member of the Labour Party, which appeared in the "La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste" I found something still more interesting to characterise the attitude of the socialists towards the Chinese revolution. It is Roden Buxton, who, after declaring that in China,

"there is a certain number of privileged foreigners established on the sea-coasts and along the river banks", declares that he can

"well understand the sentiment of these people who call for a few bullets to sweep away the difficulties in which they find themselves"!

And his conclusion is that the relations between Europe and China must be determined by "prudence, humanity and justice". If we put these two passages together, we can see what actually is the position of this "socialist". He calls for "bullets" to be used against the revolting workers and peasants of China, but says "do it with prudence". Is this a personal and individual attitude of the author? Can the responsibility for it be limited to the poor fellow who wrote these lines, or is it the position of the whole II. International? To be convinced that the latter assumption is the correct one, it suffices to recall that the II. International has decided to invite the Kuomintang to its Congress only after it has become a counter-revolutionary party which practises terrorism against the Chinese workers and peasants. At a time when the Kuomintang was playing a revolutionary role, MacDonald tried to characterise it not as a "national" party but as an "anti-British" party, and he made fun of the Communists who at this time were considering the possibility of supporting the Kuomintang. Today the Kuomintang is no longer anti-British, because it has massacred the revolutionary workers and peasants. It can be recognised as a national party, even as a socialist party, and it can be accepted into the II. International. The hangmen of the Chinese revolution have the right to sit beside Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler at the Brussels Congress.

Let us now pass on to another country, to India. For India the demand of the II. International is no longer a demand for "complete independence". In the Brussels resolution, it is merely said:

"The L. S. I supports the efforts of the Indian people to obtain autonomy."

The formula is very cautious and thoroughly equivocal. It is adapted to cover the most varied and the most liberal interpretation of the integral demand for the right of self-determination. It is therefore of greatest interest to see how the problem is put forward by the party of the Socialist International which must carry out this policy. Now the Labour Party, in its report to the Congress, dealing with the question of the independence of India, refers to what MacDonald, as Prime Minister, said to the Indians in 1924:

"Have faith in the British Government. An investigation is being made by the government, which signifies that this investigation will be serious."

There is a tremendous gap between these statements and the "right to independence"!

Let us take also the Blackpool resolution of 1927, which shows the line that the Labour Party must follow in its attitude towards the revolutionary movement of India. In this resolution we find the acknowledgement of the "right of the peoples in India to free determination", then it says:

"For this reason the Labour Party is of the opinion that the policy of the British Government must be a policy of continuous collaboration with the Indian people, with a view to making India as quickly as possible an ally having equal rights to the same title as the other members of the community of British nations!"

I believe that it would be impossible to find a resolution in which the imperialist point of view is more shamelessly expressed. What dominates is the preoccupation of maintaining the British Empire. Everything else is subordinated to this necessity.

In the resolution of the II. International, Egypt is also mentioned, and complete independence is demanded for it. In the report of the Labour Party to the Brussels Congress, on the contrary, there is not a single word about Egypt. The problem of Egypt is ignored, which means that the Labour Party wishes to carry out towards Egypt the same policy that MacDonald carried out when the Labour Party was in power. Then the national revolutionary movement of Egypt had reached a critical point. The Labour Government at this time played a quite definite, concrete and specific role. First of all it rejected all the demands presented by the representatives of the Zaghioul

Government, namely, the withdrawal of British troops, the withdrawal by England of its economic and political "advisers" and freedom of the Suez Canal. For this attitude, the Labour Party received the compliments of the great British imperialist press. But there is more than that! At a time when the Labour Party was in power, a revolt for independence broke out in the Sudan. The Labour Government sent warships down to terrorise the insurgent population and instructed the British authorities to suppress the movement and to do everything necessary to maintain order. An imperialist government would not have acted differently.

Another country for which the resolution of the II. International demands complete independence is Syria. But in the report of the French Social Party to the Brussels Congress, there is not a word about its attitude towards Syria, which means that the French Socialist Party will continue to maintain with regard to Syria the same attitude which led it to vote for the war appropriations for the French imperialist expeditions to Syria, — to enable the French generals to massacre the population of Damascus and other towns.

After having given special place to the above mentioned three countries the resolution of the II. International declares in general that it demands the immediate introduction of autonomy for all "culturally developed" colonies. The most important country in this category is Indonesia, because there has been a revolution and because a powerful revolutionary movement is developing there. But note the jesuitic spirit in which the resolution declares that the independence of Indonesia must be realised "to the extent to which this country demands it"!

Why this jesuitic clause? Evidently to remain in harmony with the attitude of the Dutch Socialist Party. And in fact the Dutch party says openly in its report that the slogan "liberation of Indonesia" is not its slogan.

What did this party do when the mass of the Indonesian people took up arms in the struggle for its liberty, and when the Dutch government employed every means to repress the insurrection? The report is explicit and clear. Before the outbreak of the movement, the Dutch Socialists considered it their duty to call to their government "beware!" When the movement broke out they "did not defend in parliament this bloody revolt", but they severely condemned the spirit of revolt "whether it originated in Moscow or in Canton". Afterwards, when the people of Indonesia had to suffer unheard of repressions and numerous death sentences were pronounced as punishment for its struggle for liberation, the Socialists boasted of having made a distinction between the "guilty ones" and for having maintained that the death sentences merely for propaganda were not justified. They therefore recognised the death sentences as just for the others, for the workers and peasants who revolted. Furthermore, this is what Stockvis, the specialist of the Dutch party on the colonial question, dared to write in an article on the subject of the repression of the Indonesian insurrection. After exonerating the governor of Indonesia of all responsibility for the revolt, he concludes:

"Justice has also something to say and death sentences cannot be avoided."

This is how the social democrats talk and act. This is the true nature of social democracy!

I have analysed this part of the resolution of the II. International in which the theory and practice of the parties of the II. International are confronted with each other, but I wish to avoid the impression that it is a question of two separate things. It is the theory of the Social Democrats which is in accordance with its practice. In fact, can the problem of the right of nations to self-determination be considered today in the same theoretical and general principle way as before the war? Can we consider, as Lenin did, in an article written before the war, that it is possible for a country at a given moment to obtain the right of self-determination in a peaceful manner, as was the case with Norway, for example. From the theoretical point of view, we doubtless can, but from the concrete political point of view we cannot.

The problems of the right of the nations to self-determination confronts us today in a particularly acute manner. The entire world is today divided in two: on the one side there are the peoples which are struggling for the right of self-determi-

nation and on the other side there are their oppressors, whose domination is being more and more shaken. These are the facts. And those who are demanding their liberty do not demand it by peaceful means, — they are struggling with weapons in hands. There are vast sections of humanity who are struggling, there are barricades which divide the entire earth; there is bloodshed, there are millions of workers and peasants who are giving their lives for freedom from the yoke of imperialism.

Well, comrades, in this situation, when the relationships have reached such a point of tension, is it still possible to set any limit whatsoever to the right of nations to self-determination without going over completely to the other side of the barricade? It is impossible. There is an internal logic which forces anyone who attempts today to justify in any way the position of the oppressors and to deny the right to revolt to fall into the same morass into which the Social Democrats have sunk, a logic which forces him to send aeroplanes to bombard the villages of the Arabs, as MacDonald did in Iraq, which forces him to send warships to terrorise the people of Sudan, to prepare for armed struggle against the attempts at insurrection of the Egyptian fellahs, to exonerate the bourgeois hangmen from the responsibility for the death sentences and to justify these sentences, a logic which forces him, like Mr. Varennes, Socialist Governor of Indo-China, to set up a defence on the frontiers of his colony, when a national revolution threatened Indo-China, that is to say to prepare to drown this insurrection in blood.

The theory and practice are not contradictory, the two things are bound together. The slightest restriction pushes you over the edge of the precipice and forces you to collaborate directly with capitalism in the most despicable forms of its oppression.

## V.

### "GOOD" COLONIAL POLICY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

Comrades, what I have just dealt with is not the full extent of the position of the Social Democracy. Generally speaking, the function of the Social Democracy, does not consist in strengthening the position of imperialism. This would be too simple a function. The social democracy strengthens the positions of imperialism, but in a very peculiar manner, in a manner which is adapted to the task which the Social Democratic parties set for themselves, the task of deceiving the masses, of hiding from them the true aspect of capitalist colonisation and in checking the revolutionary movement in the colonies.

We thus arrive at the second part of the colonial position of the Social Democracy. After denying and limiting the right of nations to self-determination, after limiting and denying even the immediate granting of autonomy, the socialists set themselves a concrete practical task. They recognise that the capitalist colonial regime is something which actually exists, nevertheless, it has its bad aspects, because it subjects the natives to a brutal domination although in general it is of benefit to humanity. What are we to do against these bad aspects of colonial policy? The socialists reply: "bad" capitalist colonial policy must be transformed into 'good' capitalist colonial policy." And here the social democrats — who have just accepted colonial policy in all its most revolting forms, even in the bloody repression of revolts of oppressed peoples and in death sentences — put on the mask of "good colonisers". The meaning of this "good" colonial policy is something which changes according to the country, that is to say according to the interests which must be recognised and defended in each colony. But there is a general form of political domination of colonies which is recognised as "just" by nearly all the social democratic parties of the imperialist colonising countries. This form of domination is what the French socialists call "assimilation". In the report of the French socialist party to the Brussel Congress a general definition of this system is given with the statement that "the French Socialists, particularly the Socialists of the French colonies, faithful to the old democratic tradition of the Revolution of 1789, look upon the problem (methods of governing the colonies) from the point of view of the political assimilation of the natives, and of their civil and political equality with all French citizens." In the same sense the reports of almost all the other parties are drawn up.

But we cannot limit ourselves to a general formula. We must examine the real meaning of the assimilation regime. This meaning is explained to us by the official resolution of the II. International where it says that for the backward colonial peoples, it demands a "systematic education directed towards preparation for the independence of these peoples".

All possible stages are included in this formula. But what is most important is that first of all an "education" is demanded which will enable the backward peoples to enjoy the benefits of modern civilisation. After that the question of their autonomy or their liberty can be discussed.

The characteristic feature of the assimilation regime is, therefore, that the colonial peoples must be brought up to the same level as the colonising peoples. And this is the immediate conclusion that our good socialist colonisers draw from this statement. They declare that

"a fundamental form of assimilation is the participation of the natives in the colonial governments. Natives must be brought into some of the higher political bodies in the colonies".

On what basis? On the basis of a right to vote, they say, but they at once add that it is not a question of universal suffrage according to the old democratic traditions, but a right to vote. — says the programme of the French socialist party, — which must be extended only to that section of natives who can "read and write French". (!) When the natives have reached the point of being able to read and write French, they will have proved that they have arrived at a stage of culture which justifies the granting of certain liberties to them. For the others, the colonial programme of the French socialist party says openly that the native regime must not be abolished. Now the native regime is a regime which deprives the native of all political and civil rights, which reduces him to the position of a slave of the white colonisator. This is the regime which the good socialist colonisers of France demand for the great mass of the native population.

In the same sense, or in approximately the same sense all the other socialist parties likewise express themselves.

The most interesting case in this sphere is that of the labour party, which submits a report of the Trade Union Federation of South Africa in which it is stated that the right to vote of the natives must be granted only very gradually, and here are the conditions for its application:

"The right to vote must be conditional upon education or property, but it is untenable and — in our opinion — for any length of time impossible to make this right dependent upon the colour of the skin."

That is to say that not only are education and property admitted as a condition, but at the start "the colour of the skin" is also admitted. The good coloniser here shows himself up for what he really is, a **masked slaveholder**.

The aim of the assimilation regime reduces itself then to the corruption of a very small section of the natives — those who know how to read and write — fettering them to the colonising imperialism. This attempt corresponds to the most cunning policy of the representatives and agents of capitalism in the colonies, to the policy which tends to break up the forces of the national revolutionary movement and prevent its development.

But good colonial policy has also its economic side. Social democracy demands something also for the natives in the economic sphere. But what? You all know that the most important problem in the revolutionary movement in the majority of the colonies is the agrarian problem. The natives have been robbed of their land by the whites. The agrarian revolution therefore, will have as its chief point in almost all colonial countries the seizing from the whites of the land which they have stolen. Now the social democrats demand that all land which has not yet been ceded to Europeans should be recognised as native property. These are the very terms of the Brussels resolution when it deals with the solution of the agrarian questions in the colonies! The land of the whites must not be touched!

As for taxes, the Brussels resolution states that no tax shall be imposed upon the natives nor charge of any sort beyond the expenses for administration and public service which also benefit the natives. It suffices to recall what is understood by "public services" in the colonies: construction and maintenance

of railways, harbours, roads etc. . . . everything which serves the expansion of capital in the colonies — if we wish to understand the real meaning of this demand.

As to forced labour, this disgrace of colonialism, the resolution of the II. International is radical. It says that "every form of forced labour shall be abolished".

But what is actually the opinion of the social democratic leaders of the countries which have colonies where forced labour is the chief form of exploitation of the natives? I quote first of all **Leon Jouhaux** who writes in **Le Peuple**, organ of the French C. G. T., a body which still claims to be for the class struggle:

"For the sake of justice it must be recognised that forced labour of natives has several good reasons for existence. In the backward countries voluntary labour could scarcely be expected from the natives . . . philosophically speaking, it can be said that there is no excuse for forcing labour upon men. But as a matter of fact, the necessity for resorting to forced labour is unavoidable."

These are the words of the good coloniser **Jouhaux**. And the International Labour Office, an auxiliary organisation both of the II. International and the League of Nations, in a report on forced labour in the colonies takes a stand against "certain excesses in forced labour which endanger or shorten life and produce scarcity of human labour in the colonies". In both these cases it is slavery pure and simple, and it is this hideous reality which the Brussels resolution attempts to cover over with a radical denial of forced labour.

We find nothing, then, in the system of good colonial policy which is favourable to the natives or which distinguishes this system from the capitalist colonial regime pure and simple, such as it is, such as it has always been. Reading the reports of the various socialist parties on this subject gives us a fairly exact idea of it. In these reports there is a great number of humanitarian and progressive phrases and statements which are very moving and interesting. Thus the Belgian socialists declare that "thanks to the introduction of a christian spirit, the atmosphere has changed". If you consider the fact, which is proved by all the reports on the Congo, that in this colony there are Negro tribes which are in the process of dying out as a result of the abominable regime to which they are subjected, you will understand the meaning of this socialist-christian spirit lauded by the Belgian socialists.

But we find the full programme of the good coloniser in one of the reports presented by the Labour Party where "the essential points of a sane policy" towards the natives are set forth. Among these points we find, — and these are the fundamental points, — "the improvement of family life through suitable nourishment and through the knowledge of the food value of products . . . the hygienic utilisation of leisure, and the development of independence of character".

I consider it superfluous to illustrate the atrocious irony of the fact that the good socialist colonisers want to teach "the food value of products" to the natives who get their nourishment from a few handfuls of rice and who die of hunger by the thousand, the atrocious irony of the fact that a fundamental task is considered to be that of the development of the independence of character of the natives who are refused the right to liberty and the right of suffrage and who are thrown as prey to the imperialists for the practice of the most brutal forms of oppression and exploitation and who are subjected to forced labour and sentenced to death if they revolt.

The crowning of the theory of good colonial policy is that the colonies must be subjected to the tutelage of the League of Nations as a guarantee against the degeneration of the capitalist colonial regime. A few concrete examples suffice to show the hypocrisy of this assertion of the "civilising" role of the League of Nations. Is the regime of countries subject to a "mandate" different from the regime in other colonies? Was not Syria under the protection of the League of Nations when French imperialism sent down its armies to crush the insurrection, when it bombarded the town of Damascus? The protection of the League of Nations cannot change matters, because the League of Nations is merely an organ of capitalist society.

Now comrades, after examining the colonial policy of the socialists, we must investigate one last aspect of this policy, which will show us the value it has and the dangers which it involves. In the Brussels resolution there is a statement which we should consider most carefully. It says:

"The Labour and Socialist International calls upon all its affiliated parties to get into touch with the independence movement of the oppressed peoples in order to support them ... and to assist in the development of the political and trade union labour movement in these countries, influencing them in the spirit of democracy and socialism."

From the political point of view this is the most important point in the resolution. Are we really today faced with the danger of a development of reformism in the colonies? The problem can be examined from a general theoretical point of view. If it is true that the basis for the development of reformism in the ranks of the working class is to be found in the fact that the bourgeoisie, by enjoying special profits and especially surplus profits from the colonies, is in a position to corrupt a section of the working class, we must also state that there are in the colonies very special conditions which favour the formation of a labour aristocracy and its liaison with colonial imperialism. This phenomenon may perhaps offer an even greater danger in the colonies than the reformist movement which is developing in the ruling countries.

First of all, and in the first stages of its development in general, the labour movement is much more inclined to subject itself to the influence of another class than in its more advanced stages. Consequently it is necessary to take into consideration the particular character of the labour movement in the colonies, and the fact that the colonial proletariat is still bound up with certain strata of the petty-bourgeoisie and that it includes a vast number of gradations among which the imperialist bourgeoisie finds sections which it can corrupt and make tools for its domination.

Reformism, then, exists in the colonies as well as in the advanced capitalist countries as the result of an influence which is exercised upon the proletariat by another class. In all colonial countries in recent times we may observe this tendency to the formation of a reformist movement. It works side by side with the tendency of the colonial petty-bourgeoisie to desert the camp of the revolution at a given moment and to ally itself with the imperialists. I do not wish to go into details, but the problem exists and we must deal with it.

The problem is at bottom that of our work in the colonies in general. It is true that at this last Congress the II. International has unmasked itself more completely than ever before as an agency of imperialism. In the material of the Brussels Congress we can find the best arguments for the struggle against social democracy. But the process of unmasking the socialist agents of imperialism before the masses is not yet completed. There are masses which we still must reach in order to show them

what social democracy really is, in order to draw them along with us and in order to make them understand that the struggle against social democracy is part of the struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. These masses exist today not only in the capitalist countries but also in the colonies. We must therefore multiply our activity in this field.

I do not know whether or not it can be said that the inadequate activity of our parties in the colonial field can be considered as a symptom of certain social democratic survivals. This is probably true. But what is beyond doubt is that this inadequacy exists. It exists particularly in the failure to seek all forms and methods of establishing the most far reaching and closest possible relationships with the colonies and especially with the native movement. Now we must thoroughly understand that it is in the colonies themselves that we must struggle against reformism, and unmask these agents of capitalism on the basis of their acts. There we must work to show not only the proletariat of the "civilised" countries but also the proletariat which is in the process of formation in the colonies, the natives, the great mass of peasants as well as certain strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, which is the true path which they must pursue if they wish to struggle effectively for their liberation.

We have witnessed the spectacle of representatives of certain colonial countries who came to the Congress of the II. International leaving this Congress because they recognised that here were only agents of imperialism. It was not a question of representatives of revolutionary movements, but of representatives of strata of the petty-bourgeoisie who are continually vacillating between the revolution and compromises and renunciation of the struggle. But the fact is all the more significant, for it shows us what great possibilities we have for our work of unmasking the socialists in the colonies.

Let us not separate the two things! Let us struggle against social democracy while we struggle against imperialism and for the victory of the revolution in the colonies! By our propaganda, our agitation and our direct revolutionary activity, we must succeed in showing all the oppressed peoples of the world that there is only one course open before them if they wish to liberate themselves from the yoke which oppresses them, — the course of revolution to which we call them, and that there is only one banner under which they can fight, — the banner of the working class, and we must show them that in struggling for their liberation they are struggling for the liberation of the entire world, and that this banner is ours, the banner of the Communist International.

## The Situation in Indonesia.

### Co-Report of Comrade SAMIN:

Comrades, the Communist Party in Indonesia succeeded up to the rebellion in November 1926 to win the leadership in the national movement and to diminish very considerably the influence of the various national parties. The first mass proletarian attack upon Dutch imperialism in Indonesia, the general railway strike in May 1923, was led by Communists. The uprising in November as well as the uprising in West Sumatra in January 1927 were also led by the Communists. No other Party had such authority and influence among the broad masses of the people as the Communist Party.

This was by no means an accident and was not of a merely transitional character, as the reformists and Indonesian nationalists declare. I am sure that the good revolutionary traditions that prevail among the masses about our Party will be revived, notwithstanding the defeats we have suffered, and that our Party will once again be able to lead the masses against Dutch imperialism and next time to lead the struggle to a victorious conclusion.

Comrades, I think it will be difficult to find another country in which there is such a large number of various stages of development as will be found in Indonesia. Each one of the islands comprising what is known as Indonesia is on a separate

stage of development. In New Guinea, where about 3000 comrades are in banishment, the ordinary population still lead a nomadic life and among them cannibalism is a common practice.

For imperialism and for the Communist movement the following islands represent the most important: Java, Sumatra, Celebes and Borneo. Of these Java is the smallest island and the most densely populated. In area Java represents only one-thirteenth part of Indonesia, but in 1920 the population was 35 millions out of a total population of 50 millions for the whole of Indonesia. According to present estimates the population of Java has risen to 40 millions. This density of population renders a rapid economic development of Java possible. The shortage of labour which hinders the rapid development of the "outer territories" — as Sumatra, Borneo and Celebes and the other islands are called — does not exist in Java. Another reason why Java has forged ahead of the other islands in her economic development is that, for example, in the year 1924 the exports of produce from the large agricultural enterprises in Java was three times as much as the combined exports of those of the other islands. The enormous rise in the price of rubber in the years 1925, 1926 and even in 1927 has

changed the situation somewhat in favour of the outer territories.

In Java a tendency is observed for the exports of produce of native enterprises to diminish, whereas in the outer territories a tendency is for the time being observed towards an increase. In Java it is the big capitalist enterprises that predominate whereas in the outer territories, for example in Sumatra, peasant economy has still a future before it. Nevertheless, there are symptoms showing that even in Sumatra the position of the native farmers will be seriously menaced by the rapid increase in the development of foreign capital.

In 1925 the total exports of the outer territories exceeded that of Java. This was due to the heavy exports of rubber. In that year the price of rubber was extraordinarily high. This year, however, the price of rubber has fallen considerably, and it must be expected that Java will again occupy first place in the economics of Indonesia.

The disintegrating influence of the rapidly increasing investments of foreign capital in Java is affecting the system of the communal ownership of land.

From 1882 to 1922 the number of villages declined from 29,518 to 21,539 as a result of the merging of small villages with larger villages. Notwithstanding this merging of villages, the diminution in the number of the villages with purely communal land ownership and the increase in the number of villages with purely individual landownership can be taken as a clear expression of the great change that is taking place in the rural districts. This change is naturally accompanied by a process of differentiation among the peasantry, which means the impoverishment of the majority and the enrichment of a small minority of the peasantry. Between 1892 and 1902 the number of villages with purely communal landownership declined from 11,136 to 7885. This period marked the entry of the period of imperialism, of export of capital.

The development of foreign capital in Java has caused widespread impoverishment. Writing in "Handelsberichten", H. L. Haight, a representative of the Dutch importers in Indonesia, says the following about the impoverishment of the Indonesian population:

"In order to have a clear idea of the unfavourable conditions that prevail for imports account must be taken of the low purchasing capacity of the natives employed on the plantations, whose daily wage is about equal to the hourly wage of a Dutch worker. With a few exceptions there are hardly any native capitalists. The conditions of life of the Javanese might be described as an hand to mouth existence!"

After the uprising "De Courant", a liberal Dutch newspaper, in an article entitled "Unrest and Prosperity" had to admit that the so-called poll-tax, which the population regarded as very unjust, would now be repealed. But even the other taxes that the Javanese peasants had to pay were very heavy burden upon them. The paper wrote:

"A section of the rural population of Java (we hope that it is only a small section) is so overburdened with taxes and is therefore compelled to live on such a small income that, in the event of a revolt against the State, it has nothing to lose, except the life of poverty, care and deprivation, a life that the majority of us would attach little or no value to. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Communist leaders have won thousands of adherents, particularly in the rural districts, who were prepared to conduct armed warfare against the representatives of the State."

This means that the masses of the Javanese people live under conditions that the European comrades could hardly conceive of. An official report of an investigation into the burden of taxation of the population of Java showed that the taxation per head in Java represented 42.86 gulden, or 71 marks per annum. Although the cost of living is not very high in Java, nevertheless, the amount left to the peasants after this sum has been paid is not sufficient to cover the barest needs. And yet the above figures rather understate the case than otherwise.

It is quite impossible to expect that the conditions of life of the masses of the Javanese people can be improved under the capitalist system. On the contrary, we must expect that their conditions will become worse, because the government

is placing the overwhelmingly greater part of the taxes upon the impoverished population. This is shown from the following figures. In 1927 private export amounted to 809,234,745 gulden and private import amounted to 563,016,432 gulden, so that exports are about half as much again as imports. The import duties in that year, however, amounted to 28 times as much as the duties on exports. This means that an extraordinarily heavy burden of indirect taxation is imposed upon the masses of the people, for the taxes are imposed almost exclusively upon goods consumed by the people whereas no duties are imposed on imported machinery, etc. The exports of the produce of big capitalist enterprises are duty free.

This ruthless taxation policy inevitably leads to the impoverishment of the people in Java and compels them to migrate to the other islands like Sumatra and Borneo where, owing to the shortage of labour power, the development of big capitalist plantations is not so rapid. About 60,000 Javanese peasants emigrate yearly in this way.

The process of class differentiation set in only after the outbreak of the war. This differentiation proceeds in one direction towards the creation of a growing landless and, therefore, radically minded peasantry, and in the other direction towards the creation of a thin stratum of prosperous peasants, who, however, are not sufficiently strong ideologically to influence the other sections of the population.

The process of mass impoverishment is, in the final analysis, the result of the policy of Dutch imperialism which is commonly known as the policy of the "Open Door". This policy means that foreign capital is allowed to enter Indonesia as freely as Dutch capital, i. e., no protection is given to Dutch capital. The object of this policy is to play off the big powers against each other and in this way to make Holland's possession of Indonesia more secure. But the effect of it is that Indonesia is becoming industrialised with exceptional rapidity, particularly in the case of Java, which in its turn results in the rapid rise of a proletariat which literally has nothing to lose but its chains and is therefore very revolutionary.

Sumatra. This island has an area 3.6 times that of Java, and has a population barely amounting to 6 millions. Sumatra is the land of the future for capital in Indonesia. Peasant farming and small industry predominates here. The "Open Door" policy will have the same effect here as it had in Java. In 1925, owing to the high price of rubber, a small section of the population in Southern Sumatra rapidly became rich. The rubber plantation industry has excellent chances for expansion because there is plenty of free land, but labour power is insufficient. But capital attracts labour power from Java, China, and partly also from India. On the plantations about 300,000 indentured labourers are employed, working under most horrible conditions. For years already the politicians have been striving to introduce a law prohibiting indentured labour, because the conditions of these plantation coolies are no better than that of slavery. So far, however, these efforts have not met with success.

In addition to plantations there are coal and gold mines in Sumatra as well as modern industries for the winning of oil. Railways and roads are being laid down in order to accelerate the economic development.

In Sumatra the Communist Party has considerable influence among the peasantry, because the peasants are discontented with the government's taxation policy. Owing to the shortage of labour power, the peasants, in addition to their heavy burden of taxation, are compelled also to put in a period of enforced labour on road building.

In Indonesia political power is in the hands of big capital. Consequently, everything that is unsuitable for big capital can be removed in a "legal" way. The exports of the outer territories, i. e., Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, etc. were smaller than that of Java. This applies to the exports of the produce of the big plantations. The exports of the produce of the peasant plantations are still very considerable on this island. In 1927 import duties on imports in the outer territories amounted to 26,490,759 gulden, and export duties to 12,779,434 gulden. Thus, in that year import duties in the outer territories were only twice as much as the export duties, whereas in Java import duties amounted to 28 times as much as export duties. This shows the enormous burden that is borne by the peasants in the so-called outer-territories.

As is the case in Java, it will be impossible under these conditions for a strong native peasantry to arise in the outer territories. The policy of the "Open Door" will have the same effect on these islands as it did in Java, namely, the oppression of the overwhelming majority of the peasantry and their transformation into proletarians (coolies) which are so necessary for the development of big capitalist plantations.

The export duty on the produce of the native producers is all the more brutal for the reason that no such duties are imposed on the exports of the produce of the big plantations with the result that the latter can far more successfully compete on the foreign markets with the native producers.

The development of Indonesia is proceeding very rapidly, and the peasantry know from the impoverishment that goes on in Java whither capitalist development is leading. Hence, the discontent of the peasantry with the Dutch Government and its sympathy for the Communist Party; for they know that the Communist Party is the only Party that takes up a consistent struggle against the government. In Java the process of class differentiation has gone the farthest. But this does not mean that the other Indonesian islands are of less significance; the peasant movement in the outer territories is of extreme importance for the movement in Java. In order to weaken the power of Dutch imperialism, we must mobilise the peasants against foreign domination in the outer territories, i. e., in Borneo, Celebes and the other islands also.

In Java there are large modern enterprises owned by a few banks, and for that reason the Communist ideas can be far better understood in Java than in those districts where no such large enterprises exist. In Java we not only have large agricultural enterprises, but also other branches of industry, such as, the oil industry, printing, modern docks, metal works, railways, etc., which employ wage workers. The class enemy stands out in a much more palpable form in Java than in the other islands.

Many comrades are not well informed about the Communist movement in Indonesia, and moreover, Indonesia does not play the same role in world politics as is played by China and India, so that it does not attract so much attention as these countries do. The role that Indonesia can play is that of a meaty bone for which the dogs of imperialism will struggle.

The Communist Party is young. It was formed in 1915 under the name of the Indian Social Democratic League by Dutch Social Democrats of the Right and Left wings, for the purpose of studying the political and economic problems of Indonesia. It was not the intention then to carry on agitation among the broad masses of the Indonesian population, but merely to carry on propaganda for Socialist ideas. The existence of a proletariat in Indonesia that could serve as a vehicle for the Socialist ideas, as was the case in Europe, was denied. Subsequently, this Socialist study circle grew up into a mass Party. The outbreak of the war suddenly caused a rise in the cost of living of 400%. In the cities strikes for increases of wages broke out. The industrial boom that prevailed in Indonesia at the time enabled the workers to win these strikes, with the result that the strike became a popular method of struggle. These strikes were led by our comrades, and so they came to the forefront when the class struggle broke out in Indonesia for the first time.

The native comrades, at that time, worked in the Sarekat-Islam, which was very strong then. This League was founded in 1913 by native small shopkeepers and originally pursued the aim of combating Chinese competition. In its further development the Sarekat-Islam became transformed into a political organisation and during its most prosperous period had a membership of two millions.

The growing influence of our comrades in the Sarekat Islam and the spread of Socialist ideas among its members led to the expulsion of the Communists in 1923. It should be mentioned here that the Indian Social Democratic League in 1920 was reorganised into the Communist Party. The expulsion of the Communists resulted in a considerable weakening of the Sarekat-Islam, for the majority of the members went with us. On the initiative of our Party, the Sarekat-Rajat — the Peoples League — was founded in the same year, which was opened for membership of all Indonesians irrespective of nationality or religion. The defeat suffered by the Sarekat Islam in 1923 must be attributed to the acute economic crisis that prevailed from 1921 up to about 1925. This crisis resulted

in the ruin of numerous independent petty bourgeois. In the same period the government carried out a very stern taxation policy for the purpose of preventing the hoarding of gold which also resulted in the ruin of a large number of the petty bourgeoisie. Not only were these petty bourgeois discontented, but so also were the workers and employees in government and private offices and the intellectuals, who, as a result of the economies introduced by the government, lost their jobs. The discontent of the masses found its outlet in May 1923 in the general raliwaymen's strike and the attempted assassination of the Governor-General. This general strike was the first important mass attack of the workers against imperialism. The general strike was suppressed, an Anti-Strike law was passed and freedom of assembly was annulled.

This railway strike was the first experience of the masses proving the correctness of the Communist view that the State was nothing more than an instrument of coercion in the hands of the capitalists, and in Indonesia in the hands of the imperialists. The strike, therefore, had a revolutionising effect upon the further development of the popular movement in Indonesia.

The Government shut down our schools because the teachers whom we elected were Communists. Further proof of the hostility of a capitalist government towards the masses of the people was given in the persecution of the Communists and the suppression of the strikes in 1925 and the beginning of 1926. These proofs of the accuracy of the Communist views greatly increased the authority of our Party among the masses. In 1923 not only was the Sarekat-Islam eclipsed by our Party, but so also was the National Indian Party which up to that time was to some extent the vehicle of national revolutionary ideas. Owing to its considerable loss of membership, this Party was dissolved in 1923 and the revolutionary elements either joined our Party or the Sarekat-Rajat which was influenced by our Party.

The decline of the Sarekat-Islam and the dissolution of the National Indian Party, in my opinion, marked the conclusion of the period of the petty-bourgeois leadership of the national movement. The victory of the Communist Party signified that from 1923 onwards, the proletariat took the hegemony of the Indian revolutionary national movement and that from this time onwards it became the mission of the proletariat to lead the liberation movement of Indonesia to victory.

In 1923 the leadership of our Party passed into the hands of the native comrades because the Dutch comrades were deported one after another by the Government. The Government believed that by deporting the Dutch comrades, the Communist Movement would automatically disappear. But it had the very contrary effect. The very fact that the leadership of the Party was in the hands of native comrades still further raised the prestige of the Party in the eyes of the masses, for we must not forget that in a colonial country like Indonesia, the masses are somewhat prejudiced against the Dutch comrades.

In June 1924 the first Congress of the Party, since the capture of the leadership of the national movement, was held. At this Congress the slogan was advanced: enough of agitation; organise and strengthen Party discipline. This slogan was called forth by the fact that as a result of our increased agitation, the masses streamed into the Party in large numbers, and it was necessary to consolidate these masses organisationally.

After this Congress our Party grew very rapidly. New trade unions were formed and the existing unions were strengthened. Our numbers increased so rapidly that six months later, in December 1924, a special conference was called in order to discuss the situation and to take the necessary measures. At this conference we discussed the possibility of capturing power. At the same time the Central Committee made a proposal which bore a distinctly ultra-Left character. This proposal was to the effect that the Sarekat-Rajat, which was affiliated as a body to our Party, be dissolved on the ground that it was a petty-bourgeois organisation and that our members could not carry on a consistent Communist line of tactics in that organisation. This proposal, however, was defeated by the overwhelming majority of the Conference on the ground that the petty bourgeoisie in Indonesia was a revolutionary force with which our Party must co-operate.

The unrestrained growth of our Party eventually compelled the government to take action against us. The Communist Party had the leadership of the most important trade unions, likely the Railwaymen's Union, the Dock and Transport Workers' Union, the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Employees' Union, Printers Union, the Metal Workers' Union and the Plantation Workers' Union. Every strike that broke out was regarded by the police as a Communist strike and as such suppressed. The strike leaders were arrested and imprisoned. The measures taken by the Government against the strikers served only to stimulate the hatred against foreign domination still more.

In January 1925 the government tried to introduce a sort of Fascist regime by hiring criminals to intimidate the members of our Party and to remove the leaders. But this led absolutely to nothing. Our comrades organised defence corps and within a few weeks this pseudo-Fascism was dissolved.

After this setback the government was compelled to come out openly itself as the suppressor. The measures taken against our Party became more and more brutal. Again freedom of assembly was annulled and our Party was compelled to carry on propaganda illegally.

The intensified terror finally led to an armed uprising against the Government. We believed that it would be better to die fighting than to die without fighting. The uprising in Java spread to other parts, but in the meantime our leading comrades in Java were arrested and many of our members were discovered by the soldiers and the police and killed.

The rising broke out in Java on November 13th, 1926. The plan was to organise a general railway strike which was to serve as the signal for an uprising in Java and Sumatra. This plan was not carried out, however, because all the capable and experienced comrades were arrested. The rising in West Java lasted for about 3 weeks. In other parts of Java, however, no big movements took place. Only here and there conflicts took place with the police and acts of sabotage were committed.

The Government was completely taken by surprise, and feared that the rising would spread over the whole of Indonesia. This is shown by the fact that only 600 soldiers were sent to West Java to suppress the rising there, and that is why it lasted so long there. In the capital, Batavia, the rebels tried to storm the prison, but were driven back. For several hours they occupied the Central Telephone Station. In Batavia the rising did not last for more than one week.

The rising in West Sumatra broke out two months later, in the beginning of January. It lasted four weeks, and was finally suppressed by the military.

The constant changes in the leadership of the Party due to the arrest and banishment of our leading comrades, resulted in many mistakes being committed by the leadership. One of these mistakes was that the rising in West Sumatra broke out two months after it broke out in West Java, which enabled the government easily to suppress it. Before the uprising all the native population were friendly or at all events not hostile to our Party. During the uprising in West Java in some places the members of the Sarekat-Islam, which was hostile to us, prayed for the victory of the uprising. The overwhelming majority of the Chinese population, and their newspapers which in Indonesia exercise considerable influence, adopted an attitude, if not friendly, then at all events not hostile, towards our Party, before, during and even after the uprising.

Another serious mistake we made was that we failed to draw the masses of the workers into the struggle. The masses of the workers in the cities, as well as on the plantations, adopted an attitude of indifference towards the rebel movement.

The local character and the weakness of the uprising at the outset made no impression upon the native police and soldiers, and therefore they were not inspired by it. Only a huge insurrectionary movement in which the great masses take part will make the soldiers and the police unreliable for the governing class. It has been stated here that the army and police consist largely of State employees and that 97% of them were natives. In Indonesia as a whole there are 32,000 soldiers and 28,000 police.

Still another mistake made was that inadequate organisational and political preparations were made for the uprising. The slogans were not sufficiently clear to enable the masses to understand them.

Our Party had only very loose contacts with the Comintern and with our brother Parties. We were very badly informed about the movement in other countries. The few books we had on Communism were confiscated by the police. We had not the opportunity to obtain sufficient theoretical knowledge. Our Party to a large extent developed independently, and under these circumstances mistakes were inevitable. On the eve of the outbreak of the rebellion our Party had a membership of 9000, while the Sarekat-Rajat had a membership of 100,000. Our Party could have many more members, had we not made the conditions of entry more stringent. Only those who thoroughly understood the principles of Communism were eligible for membership, and before he was made a full member he had to pass through a period of probation.

The Party programme adopted at the Party Congress in 1924 revealed extreme ultra-Left tendencies. It contained the demand for the immediate establishment of a Soviet Republic in Indonesia. In my opinion, the demand for nationalisation in itself is a correct one. In Indonesia we have 2100 large plantations owned by a few banks. In addition we have modern railways, coal and gold mines, oil enterprises, and other modern undertakings.

After the Communist Party had won a leading position we were confronted by the difficulty that, bearing in mind the isolated geographical position of Indonesia, it was tactically foolish to put forward demands like that. Indonesia is surrounded by imperialist colonies and a successful Communist movement would be suppressed by the international imperialists who have invested their capital in Indonesia.

Let us now examine the prospects of the Communist movement in Indonesia and whether the Communist Party will be in a position again to lead the Indonesian national movement. The Dutch Social-Democrats in Indonesia regarded the leading position occupied by the Communist Party on the outbreak of the rebellion as a passing episode, and that was the attitude also of the nationalists. I personally do not think that our Party's success over the nationalist parties was a mere accident. I think, on the contrary, that it proves that the period of petty-bourgeois leadership of the liberation movement has now come to an end in Indonesia. The victory of our Party cannot be ascribed to the energy of any particular Party leader or leaders, for in Indonesia there is no other Party that has so constantly changed its leaders as our Party has done. In spite of this, our Party has won the confidence of the broad masses it can only be due to the fact that it points out the straight road to the struggle against Dutch imperialism and because the programme of our Party, although it reveals certain ultra-Left tendencies, nevertheless clearly and distinctly expresses what we want and how we propose to get it.

It is true, comrades, that the proletariat in Indonesia is not the same kind of proletariat that you have in Europe. It is a proletariat with a peasant ideology. But because this proletariat works on the plantations under the dictatorship of the big capital, this agricultural proletariat can easily appreciate Communist ideas. On the plantations they work collectively and are collectively exploited.

To my mind it is not an accident that the Communist Party alone succeeded in spreading its influence over the whole of Indonesia. No other Party managed to do this.

In April this year, a nationalist writing in the nationalist organ "Ssoloch Indonesia Moeda" tried to contrast nationalism to Communism. Like the reformists, he regarded the Communist movement as an intrusion in the national movement. The Communist movement was merely an intermezzo according to this writer. He wrote:

"Communism during the past few years is the cause of the setback of nationalism in our country. It has not only penetrated the cities and the villages, but also the workshops and the factories. In accordance with their principles, the Communists made their base in the trade union movement, which compelled Dr. Fock (the Governor-General) to introduce Par. 161 (the Anti-Strike Law). The severity of the laws, however, achieved the very opposite to what was intended.

At the same time we saw that as Communism grew in influence in the cities and villages, in the workshops and in the factories, nationalism was compelled to remain quiet and refrain from carrying on nationalist propaganda. Everywhere Communism was discussed and even at the



risk of losing popularity nationalism had to be content with the role of onlooker. It dared not undertake any activity..."

What does this statement imply? It implies nothing more nor less than that the nationalists were incapable of leading the masses and had to leave this leadership to our Party. It proves that the nationalists in Indonesia are incapable of leading the struggle for liberation to its victorious end.

After the rebellion was suppressed, the nationalist organisations, partly because of the government indulgence towards them, and partly because of the fact that our leading comrades were either in prison or in banishment, began to revive. The Sarekat Islam has once again achieved a certain amount of influence, and the Party "National Indonesia", which was formed in 1927 has won a certain amount of popularity. It is usually the case that reaction sets in among the masses after a defeat, and that they come under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois influence. But it must be expected that as soon as the masses have recovered from their defeat and again enter into the arena of battle, they will throw off the leaders of the nationalist organisations in the same way as they did in 1923.

In Indonesia the Governing class, that is Dutch imperialism, is weak because it exercises little or no ideological influence upon the broad masses. The masses are illiterate and therefore the Government cannot influence them intellectually. The hatred of the broad masses towards the Government is not only a class hatred; this hatred becomes more intensified by the policy of the "Open Door" by which they hope to another religion. All these circumstances taken together make the domination of imperialism in Indonesia very unstable. The Dutch imperialists try to secure their possession of Indonesia by the policy of the "Open Door" by which they hope to obtain the support of the other imperialists. The development of this policy, however, leads to the growth of the "internal enemy" the proletariat.

Our primary task now is to restore our broken Party apparatus. We must restore also the trade unions, because without the trade unions the Party can never play a leading role. This is all the more important for the reason that, in our opinion, the nationalist parties will be incapable of leading the masses when the latter once again take up the offensive. This work is important also from another point of view. We must prevent the traditions of the other parties becoming deep-rooted among the masses. We must do all in our power to foster the well-deserved traditions of the Communist Party among the masses and to develop them in order that the Party may set the masses into action at the decisive moment.

These are very difficult tasks, comrades, because owing to the geographical isolation of Indonesia, we can only with difficulty maintain contacts with our other brother Parties. We must, however establish permanent contacts with our brother Parties in order to be able to make use of their experiences and in order to avoid making mistake after mistake for which we have to pay very dearly.

As I have already said, we lack well-trained active members. We must do all in our power to give our members a good Marxian-Leninist training. Lenin said that a revolutionary movement without a revolutionary theory is impossible. The agricultural industry is the principal industry in Indonesia. This facilitates the development of anarchistic tendencies. The poor city petty-bourgeoisie are also inclined towards anarchism. There was a time when the propaganda of our theories was mocked at. We were told it is not theories, but deeds that change the world. On the basis of these ideas, bomb-throwing and other acts of individual terror were engaged in, as was the case in Russia at the end of the last century. A Communist Party with a theoretically trained leadership will be able to overcome this anarchistic ideology.

The Communists must now work in the various nationalist organisations. They must compel the leaders of these organisations to carry out a revolutionary policy or else expose them.

Particularly important is it to carry on work among the peasantry. The peasants must be organised in peasant leagues or peasant committees in order to prevent the imperialists from utilising them. The struggles in West Java and Western Sumatra showed that the peasants are ready to join a struggle against the foreign domination.

The Government is continually striving to create confusion in the national movement by promising political reforms which, however, the masses cannot understand and which will certainly not improve their economic conditions.

In our draft theses we have put in the following slogans as a means for rallying the masses: Right of combination; freedom of assembly and free press; general amnesty for political prisoners; abolition of death penalty; improvement of the conditions of life of the broad masses. These demands of course are to be achieved through the principal demand: Indonesia free from Holland.

Comrades, our Party has made many serious mistakes. I hope, however, that through our closer contact with our brother Parties, we shall obtain their advice and the benefit of their fighting experience. We have not the slightest doubt that with the support of the Comintern and of our brother Parties our Indonesian Section will fulfil its revolutionary duties.

### Thirty-first Session.

Moscow, August 15, 1928 (afternoon).

## The Development in India.

### Co-Report of Comrade SIKANDER SUR (India):

Comrades, the theory of decolonisation is very harmful to the colonial movement and especially to the Indian revolutionary movement. This theory can be promulgated only by those who are sitting far away and have lost all contact with India. If we consider the social composition of India, it is easy to understand that this decolonisation theory falls to the ground. We have in India, landed aristocracy and feudal remnants, a numerically small but good developed big bourgeoisie. Urban petty bourgeoisie-intelligentsia — the so-called middle class; vast masses of peasantry; and an industrial proletariat that numbers with families, 12 millions.

Comrades, in spite of the development of modern means of production in India, the backwardness of the country is marked by the fact that the middle classes are united with the landowning class in a bloc. The British imperialists, taking advantage of the situation, make a united front with the landed aristocracy subordinating the bourgeoisie, against the bour-

geoisie's interests. British imperialism is developing the reactionary forces and not the forces of the bourgeoisie, and therefore the decolonisation theory falls to the ground.

The industrial development of India dates back as far as 1850, but only during the war a more systematic industrialisation took place. The textile industry is the main industry of India, which employs about one million hands. The textile industry is mainly in the hands of the Indian capitalists. During the war and the years immediately following the war, when the import from Manchester and Lancashire was cut down, huge sums were accumulated in the hands of the Indian capitalists as a result of enormous profits running as high as 600%. In spite of all this the industry developed at a much lower rate than in China and Japan. This factor indicates a drawback in the industrial development of India and speaks against decolonisation.

During the period from 1913 to 1927 the Indian textile industry developed on a large scale. As far back as 1927 India supplied nearly three-fourths of the internal market, while the import from Lancashire had decreased by 60% in the same period. This indicates a rivalry between British and Indian capital, and is not devolonisation. The Indian textile goods meanwhile found access to the markets of Persia, Mesopotamia and Africa, and this was a definite check to the British capitalist policy. The imperialist interests and textile producers from Manchester entered into an agreement with the Indian textile producers, and limited the importation of Indian goods to undeveloped countries. As compensation, the imperialists granted a tariff protection to the Bombay industry against Japan, which resulted in a reorganisation of the Indian textile industry. In spite of all this the industry has been running at a loss for the last three or four years.

The iron and steel industry developed seven times over between 1914 and 1927. India had not only freed itself from the import of pig iron, etc., but was actually exporting it to the U. S. A., Japan and England. When by the 1919 political Reforms a favourable fiscal policy was introduced, the bulk of the Indian capital was invested in this heavy industry, but as Indian capital could not be got to an adequate extent, foreign capital was attracted, and as this happened at a period when Britain had no surplus capital to invest in India, American capital flowed in to run these enterprises. Thus Indo-American capital relations threaten the British imperialist monopoly over India.

Another problem for British imperialism was, how to regain the Indian market when normally, British production could not compete with the better organised German and American industries. These factors led to the tightening of the British grip upon India. The sham, industrial concessions granted in 1919 were withdrawn in 1925 when the Balfour reports indicated that the most dangerous development affecting the British economic interests in India was the development of the iron industry in that country. Since then British imperialism has introduced Imperial Tariff Preference and a new Exchange Policy, by which it got 12½% protection over Indian prices, and a brake has actually been put on Indian heavy industry. The iron and steel industry is now reduced to a bare war minimum and is under the strict control of British imperialism. This forcible destruction of the iron industry has thrown a large number of skilled and qualified workers into the ranks of the unemployed. In Bombay and other industrial centres, this accounts for the breaking up of Indian industries and ultimately for the strike wave.

It would be un-Marxian to say that there is no industrial development in India, but those industries are being developed which are profitable to Britain rather than to India. These industries are the hydro-electric and aviation industries, which constitute a market for the British-produced machinery and materials necessary for aviation and hydro-electric works.

Further, British imperialism wants to reconstruct agrarian economy, but only for its own interests and that of course is harmful to Indian interests. For instance, India and Canada are the wheat exporting centres, whilst Africa and India are cotton producing centres. Both these groups are at logger heads. Canada cannot stand the competition of the Indian wheat, and Africa cannot stand the competition of Indian cotton. These groups are now demanding concessions from British imperialism and as a result we find that large parts of the agricultural areas in India are being transformed into fruit producing areas and a systematic reduction in wheat and cotton production takes place. Comrades, this has proved to be extremely injurious to the Indian peasantry as well as to the small traders and petty bourgeoisie who work in these trades.

The petty bourgeoisie whom we find organised in the radical groups were striving to utilise the Bardoli peasants for their own ends. But as soon as British imperialism gives them some concessions, the movement ceases. In India, there are at present two waves—revolutionary and quasi-revolutionary movements. As a matter of fact the national quasi-revolutionary movement is not a real movement because as soon as British imperialism comes to terms with them they readily make a compromise and betray the movement. The other one is the movement of the working class. From time to time the national bourgeoisie are adopting

a revolutionary attitude towards British imperialism and are proposing a bloc with us, but we cannot rely on their support during the intensified struggle. The organisation of this class is the Republican Party which was formed during the last Congress Session at Madras. This party advocates the complete independency of India by non-violent methods. In this century of machinery and iron, neither India nor any other country can be freed by non-violent or non-aggressive means. So long as this Party facilitates our way to the masses and offers us the chance of developing our revolutionary movement, we can utilise it but it would be harmful to think that these people can be utilised to a great extent for our cause. This is impossible.

Comrades, the policy of British imperialism is closer union with the landed interests. In 1919 a reform system was introduced and the capitalist class was granted some concessions for industries. In this way, British imperialism was getting the support of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the revolutionary movement inside the country as well as in some political crises in which British imperialism may be involved with some foreign power.

The Indian proletarian movement which has developed recently has absolutely no similarity with that of 1920—22. In the period of 1920—22 the proper leadership was lacking, and besides, the masses did not yet understand the significance of the revolutionary movement. But now, under the iron heel of British imperialism and as a result of the treachery of the leadership, they have come to understand class solidarity.

The Indian working class now realises that unless it sets up a united front it cannot successfully fight against the two powerful enemies, viz. British imperialism and the native bourgeoisie.

The new strike wave of 1928 has done much in awakening the latent consciousness of the working class. The workers organise meetings and emphasise the necessity of continuing the strike to a victorious end. It is the beginning of a new era full of revolutionary hopes for the Indian workers' movement.

The visit of the Simon Commission in India gave an impetus to the Indian bourgeois movement, but this movement can in no way be a real revolutionary movement. All their protests were of a peaceful character and had no other aim than to force British Imperialism to give some concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie for the development of the Indian industries. The working class which understood the significance of the Simon Commission adopted other methods. They arranged demonstrations, not only against the Simon Commission, but also against the imperialist policy of the British and the Indian bourgeoisie; while at the same time they were attacking the pacifist Congressmen.

In the strikes in Calcutta, the workers were not only standing up against British imperialism, but even against the Swarajist leaders to whom they refused to listen. The only difficulties in the Indian movement are: first of all, the lack of leadership. British imperialism, whenever it sees that there are some revolutionary leaders of the working class developing, seizes them and throws them into prison. British imperialism is trying by terrorism to nip in the bud the rising revolutionary tide. British imperialism is also bringing pressure to bear upon the working class by means of Indian national reformists who declare that in every struggle against imperialism, or in struggles against capitalism they will try to come to terms. The Indian national reformists repeatedly interfere with the workers' movement and use all means to put a brake to it. They advise the workers to use peaceful means and that they should not demonstrate in such a way that may lead to the rise of class antagonism. But comrades, in this fight, and in all these recent strikes and developments it is quite evident that the movement is greater than British imperialism, or its lackeys in the shape of the Indian bourgeoisie and the reformists can crush.

The necessity at present is to form a strong Communist Party in India. There exist already many small groups which should be welded into a well disciplined single party.

In conclusion, I will say that there is a great deal of misunderstanding about the situation in India. Comrades who have been here for about ten years cannot properly deal with the situation. They therefore grope in darkness and formulate such absurd theories as 'decolonisation'.

# The Lessons of the Chinese Revolution.

## Co-Report of Comrade STRAKHOV.

The national and colonial problems were clearly and unambiguously formulated under Lenin's leadership at the very beginning of the foundation of the Communist International. But sometimes we get an idea about China that everything happens there in a peculiar way, in a purely Chinese fashion, and that China is a real Chinese puzzle. Doubts begin to arise even among Chinese comrades themselves, and they wonder whether it is not perhaps necessary somehow to adopt the Marxian theory to the peculiar conditions prevailing in China.

Our young Chinese Party must first of all find the points of contact of this "Chinese Puzzle", of a country with an ancient culture, a country which Marxians have never seriously studied, with other countries. It is first of all necessary to prove that China is not an exception when regarded from the Marxian viewpoint.

### I. FEUDALISM AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION.

#### Is There Feudalism in China?

We have heard arguments that there is no feudalism in China, that there is no bourgeoisie and that there is even no proletariat. But the Chinese revolution has been going on in a zig-zag fashion in the course of 18 years. Not only are generals fighting among each other, but there are mass uprisings, the homes of landlords are set on fire — in short, there are pure revolutionary phenomena to be observed in the country. But we have not as yet properly understood the significance of these events.

When we joined the Kuomintang in the summer of 1923, that organisation was in power in Canton. The Canton government was maintained by the military forces of several generals who, under the banner of Sun Yat-senism, fought against the so-called Peyan militarists of the north. Then we said that a war was going on between Sun Yat-sen and the north and that that war was of a revolutionary character. Was that correct? I think it was correct. What is it that constituted the revolutionary character of that war? To clear up this point, I must touch upon the question of feudalism in China.

Attempts have been made to deny the existence of feudalism in China. It has been said that there is no feudalism there. But this is wrong.

Of course, generally speaking, we had no landlords in the west European sense, or such as existed in Russia, in China. But we do have big landlords, or landowners, in the country. We have landowners who possess as much as 500,000 moos of land, who exploit the peasants as tenants.

It is on this basis, i. e., on the basis of the fact that big landlords have existed in China for quite a long time, that the political institution known as the Mandarin system has arisen in China. It is true the Mandarins were not typical landlords and did not rule directly as feudal lords over their territories. They represented a class of aristocratic officials of the emperor. They possessed also a certain amount of power in their territories. The custom still prevails that the Mandarin or landlord has the right of being the judge over his peasants.

Even in the province of Kiangsu, the most capitalistically developed province, there are still certain survivals of mediaeval feudal methods of exploitation. These methods cannot be simply called "Asiatic" methods. Their class content must be analysed. With the penetration of imperialism in China the Mandarins as a ruling class gradually became compradores in the broad sense of the term. We would call them state compradores because they, together with the Manchurian dynasty, had concentrated in their hands everything — the "nationalised" railways, mines, banks, big factories, heavy industry and large landed estates, especially in the northern provinces of Shantung and Chili. It is these compradore Mandarins who constituted the Peking government.

Why do we call them Peyan militarists? Because there was a military school in Peyan similar to that of the Chang Kai-shek

school in Wampu. In that school and in the militarist schools of Japan all former aristocrats, i. e., the former state officials who now became military officers, received their military education. The Peyan militarists beginning with Yuan Shi-kai and ending with Wu Pei-fu and Feng Yu-Hsiang were blood relatives and had a common schooling. During the rule of this class consisting of the compradores of imperialism, a revolutionary struggle began in China directed against its domination.

#### Who Conducted the Struggle in China?

Who took up the struggle? This question must be answered as follows: Apart from the fact that the workers, artisans, coolies and peasants took part in the struggle, there were also such forces pushed into the struggle by the force of development of trade and money relations which relied chiefly on the usurers, merchants and small landlords. These comparatively new forces that had risen as a result of the changed economic conditions were objectively directed against the Peking Government, against the government which monopolised, so to speak, the right to sell out the country. The Peking government received all surplus revenue from the customs tariffs and the salt tax of all provinces. A struggle began on this basis because the new local governors, beginning to feel a certain economic basis behind them, did not want to give up this surplus to the Peking Government. The former feudals began to become militarists. Basing themselves on more or less developed local markets which were independent of Peking, these feudal lords entered upon a struggle against the national government the government of the Mandarins and national compradores. Sun Yat-sen was not accidentally supported by the southern provinces where money relations were most highly developed and where the militarists, who were also big landowners, engaged in commerce, and created their capitalist enterprises while preserving at the same time the mediaeval methods of exploitation. It is these forces — the gentry, the landlords and bourgeois landowners — who fought against the north at the outset. This struggle could not but give rise to a mass movement, inasmuch as it took place in the period of world social revolution, i. e., in the epoch when not only the proletarian revolution in the U. S. S. R. was a fact but also a whole series of great revolutionary movements were in progress in the west.

### II. THE PROLETARIAT AND THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION.

#### Some Historical Data.

Thus new forces, namely the proletariat, began to rise in the Chinese Revolution. Sun Yat-sen at first relied exclusively on the military forces. Having the opportunity to organise the ruined peasantry into a mercenary army the bourgeoisie tried to avoid the necessity of resorting to the aid of the mass popular movement. But when the revolutionary students movement arose in China during the period of 1919—25 all social forces of the country became active factors. It is precisely in that period that the Chinese proletariat, which was still very young and numerically weak, found itself compelled to enter upon the political scene. The first strike of the Shanghai proletariat took place in 1919. That strike was directed against Japan as a protest against the annexation of Tsintou. It is true the strike was organised by the overseers under the leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and the Students' League. But it was a great factor considering that all foreign factories in Shanghai were closed in the course of 7 days.

There was a big seamen's strike in 1921 or 1922 which compelled the British to sign a collective agreement affecting all steamers sailing on the Pacific. The same year there was a railway strike on the Peking-Hankow line which laid the beginning of a strike movement in China under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Although the Peking-Hankow railway workers suffered big defeats in 1923, the strike movement since then began to develop and brought into the revolutionary struggle entirely new forces such as had been unknown in the history of China before.

#### How the Question of Agreement with the Bourgeoisie was Solved.

From this brief historical sketch we can see that the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie were involved in the revolution in China. There is no need to go into a discussion here as to whether it was necessary to establish a united front with the bourgeoisie or not. Life itself has shown that under Chinese conditions close relations between the proletarian movement and the nationalist bourgeois movement were inevitable, but it was just as inevitable for these relations to be short-lived. It was only a question as to what the strategic line should be. I think that the conditions for an alliance and an agreement with the national bourgeoisie were clearly and unambiguously laid down by Lenin, who pointed out that we can compromise with the national bourgeoisie for a struggle against imperialism on condition 1) that we retain our independence, 2) that we have an opportunity to organise and mobilise the masses of workers and peasants, 3) that the bourgeoisie really conducts an anti-imperialist and a revolutionary anti-militarist struggle.

These conditions existed in the first period of the Chinese revolution, there is no sense in denying this now. It is superfluous to try to prove here the fallacy of Trotsky's theory that it was in general inadmissible to conclude compromises with the bourgeoisie on the ground that capitalist economic relations prevailed in China and that the revolution should have adopted the forms of the proletarian dictatorship at the very start. This is absolutely contrary to the facts. Had the national bourgeoisie in China been in power at the time it would have been an entirely different matter and the history of the Chinese Revolution would have been entirely different now.

But it is not at all a question as to whether or not an agreement with the national bourgeoisie was admissible, but rather a question as to how the proletariat should have carried on the struggle so that it might have been directed against imperialism and retained its class character. The fact is that the national bourgeoisie is not a reliable ally in the national revolution and, therefore, our chief attention should have been directed towards the peasantry.

Lenin said that in the colonies and the backward capitalist countries the peasantry constitute the basic mass and that it is a pure Utopia to think that the proletarian party can pursue a real Communist policy there without a definite attitude towards the peasantry. From this we can draw only one conclusion, namely, that while entering into an agreement with the national bourgeoisie, the proletariat of the colonial countries must rely chiefly on the peasantry so as to lead the masses of peasants forward and to paralyse the national bourgeoisie from the very beginning of the struggle. From our experience in China we know that the first revolutionary wave which began with the movement of May 30, 1925, showed at the very beginning that the national bourgeoisie will betray the revolution, that the national bourgeoisie is fighting for leadership and the capture of the masses against the proletariat. The national bourgeoisie wanted and wants to utilise the masses for its own purposes.

#### The Chinese "9th of January".

What was the situation at that time in Shanghai? Prior to May 30, 1925, a strike had taken place in the Japanese textile mills. The Japanese manufacturers, after signing an agreement with the workers, declined to keep to that agreement, as a result of which clashes took place between a workers' demonstration and the administration during which the Japanese shot one worker.

The firing of that shot caused a still greater protest demonstration and roused the entire mass of workers in Shanghai and later all over China. A joint committee of labour organisations, small business men and student organisations was set up in

Shanghai, which led the strikes in the factories, universities and shops. The committee drew up 17 demands which were submitted to the British authorities in Shanghai.

At that moment the Chamber of Commerce of Shanghai, which represented the Shanghai bourgeoisie, kept silent. It did not come out against the movement at the beginning, and under the pressure of the masses even declared a trade strike. The traders kept silent for not more than a week and when they began to speak they immediately betrayed themselves. They started to negotiate with the foreigners, declaring that the workers advanced too radical demands and that they, the businessmen, stood for moderation. They said: We only want representation in the municipality, i. e., in the municipal government of the foreign concessions of Shanghai. We only want the convocation of a conference to discuss the question of customs tariffs. We only want that a conference be called to discuss the question of extra-territorial rights of the foreigners in China. But as far as the question of evacuation of the foreign troops from Shanghai, the question of the right to strike, freedom of speech, press and assembly, etc., are concerned, these demands were rejected by the Shanghai trading bourgeoisie.

A representative of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce openly declared before one of our comrades, a representative of the Shanghai Trade Union Council, that they cannot demand the right to strike because if we had that right "then you will strike also in the Chinese factories".

Immediately after this, several conflicts broke out between the Trades Council and the Chamber of Commerce. The national bourgeoisie tried to regulate and to control the labour movement for the time being on a local scale. They began to close the revolutionary organisations, not only the trade unions but also the student leagues and the organisations of small businessmen, in Shanghai.

The events of May 30 in Shanghai were of tremendous significance for the Chinese revolution. That was our 9th of January, 1905. Notwithstanding the efforts of the national bourgeoisie to restrain the masses from further action, the movement developed throughout the country. You know about the strike in Hong Kong which lasted almost 2 years. You know that during that strike a strike committee was set up in Canton which served as a basis for the nationalist government in Canton, the government of Wan Tin-wei, Chang Kai-shek, etc. Parallel with this a wave of the peasant movement swept the province of Kwantung. A great realignment of forces within the army of the nationalist government began precisely at that moment. There were fairly strong Left organisations in the Wampu school and there were many Communists among the lower officers at the time.

All these forces combined with the Hong Kong strike and the peasant movement and comprised the basis of the first Canton government. In a word, beginning with May 30, to the end of 1925, we experienced the honeymoon of the united national front, although a fairly open struggle, fairly sharp relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and also between the Communists and Lefts on one hand and the Rights on the other, existed within the Kuomintang. That honeymoon ended with the Chang Kai-shek putsch of March 20, 1926.

#### Prerequisites for the Putsch of March 20, 1926.

Before then, already in the autumn of 1925, a conference took place in Sisian. That Sisian conference was an expression of protest and a beginning of the concentration of the extreme rights against the united national front, against the Canton national government, against the struggle of the workers and peasants. The gentry and the landlords began to organise their resistance. They insisted from the very beginning on the expulsion of the Communists from the Kuomintang. A new Right wing began to shape itself within the Kuomintang headed by Tai Tsi-tao who advised the Communists to leave the Kuomintang voluntarily, promising that if they did so good and friendly relations would be maintained between the Kuomintang and the Communists.

We replied that we do not want to withdraw from the Kuomintang, but that we intend to fight for leadership within it.

At the same time, however, we adopted another decision, namely, to follow the strategical line of fighting together with the national bourgeoisie against the bad gentry and against the Siansi group, even if for this it were necessary to restrain the strike and the peasant movements, and to invite the new Right wing to the II. Congress of the Kuomintang. That was a very big mistake under the circumstances which then existed in Canton. Wan Tsin-wei and Chiang Kai-shek, under the pressure of the masses, conducted an energetic struggle against the British imperialists and partly against the local gentry and landowners. Their policy was to satisfy the Communists as much as possible so as to secure a firm footing. They saw that the strike committee and the tens of thousands of workers are entirely under the leadership of the Communists. They saw the peasants rise and the beginning of an armed struggle against the landlords under the leadership of the Communists. But on hearing that we were willing to make concessions to the national bourgeoisie they changed their tactics. They intensified their political and military preparations and together with the generals started an attack on the peasants. Chiang Kai-shek decided to act and began to rally his forces for action.

We overlooked the fact that in going together with the bourgeoisie as an ally we must never forget that this ally may at any moment become our enemy. Only our own strength, our independent class policy on the basis of mass work and mass action, can force the national bourgeoisie to be on our side for a certain length of time and to fight together with us against the imperialists.

Even after March 20 we did our utmost to get along with the March 20 regime so as to keep up the united front with the bourgeoisie, with Chiang Kai-shek, with the nationalists. As far as the masses were concerned they could not be reconciled to the March 20 regime. After a short period of depression a new wave of big strikes broke out in Shanghai and the labour movement in Canton assumed still wider dimensions. The workers organised their delegate assembly which during the Canton uprising served as the basis of a Soviet. The peasants organised their provincial centres. The small businessmen all over China, particularly in Canton, organised separately from the Chamber of Commerce and established contact with the revolutionary movement. The Left wing of the Kuomintang launched an attack on Chiang Kai-shek from all sides. At a joint session of the C. C. and the provincial committees of the Kuomintang in October of the same year, a platform was adopted which later became the platform of the Wuhan Government. In that platform or programme, they spoke of rent, the agrarian problem, the 8-hour day, and declared that if the Northern Expedition will be victorious in one district or province, it will be necessary to call a national delegate assembly, and to hand over power to it. The government must not be in the hands of Chiang Kai-shek as the commander in chief.

### III. THE SHANGHAI UPRISING AND WUHAN.

#### The Struggle Between the Proletariat and the Bourgeoisie for Hegemony.

Thus, after March 20 we had two tendencies in the Kuomintang. On the one side were the gentry and landlords, the so-called old and new Right wingers, the representatives of the national bourgeoisie headed by Chiang Kai-shek; on the other side were the workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie. The struggle between these two forces continued up to the Shanghai coup d'état. In some places democratic dictatorships of the workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie were set up. In many districts of the provinces of Hunan, Hupeh and Chai-angsi, after the occupation of Shanghai, power was in the hands of the peasants' leagues and local Kuomintang committees which were also under our leadership. These dictatorships were meant to spread all over the country and to subordinate the Wuhan government. Chiang Kai-shek perfectly understood what it was all about and he definitely refused to go to Hankow, insisting that the capital be transferred to Nanchang. He rallied his forces with the object of reaching Shanghai at top speed and unite with the Shanghai bourgeoisie who were on his side. But the workers, students and small business men of Shanghai had already established their own govern-

ment. The Shanghai workers were better organised, they had more revolutionary experience, and did not wait for the arrival of our forces as the Hankow workers did. The Shanghai workers with 200 rifles rose against 8000 regular troops of the northern militarists, captured the arms and organised armed pickets of 2000 workers. Their detachments also had many machine guns which constituted a formidable power capable of resisting Chiang Kai-shek.

To disarm the workers Chiang Kai-shek had to do some stubborn preparatory work, and he decided to act only after he had received money from the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce which enabled him to buy the other generals of Nanking and Chekiang.

The Shanghai example shows that the struggle for hegemony between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was very fierce and that it took the form of a struggle between two governments — on the one hand the army of Chiang Kai-shek and on the other the national delegate assembly which relied on the armed workers. But the leaders wavered. The same thing happened in Wuhan.

#### Opportunism.

Wuhan was compelled to fight against Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Tso-lin at one and the same time. Wan Tin-wei and the other petty bourgeois politicians were scared by the blockade of the imperialists and the gentry who had contact with Chiang Kai-shek. At that moment, when it was so necessary for us to develop the agrarian revolution, when it became necessary to unfold a mass class struggle, we ourselves began to fall under the influence of the petty bourgeois politicians, we ourselves began to believe that perhaps it was really true that the workers and peasants went a bit too far.

When the peasants began to confiscate the landed estates and to arm themselves and take power wherever they could, we thought that the time had not yet come for that. The masses went forward but the leaders remained behind and wanted to pull them back for the sake of preserving the united front with the petty bourgeoisie. Although we were then already fighting against Chiang Kai-shek and the national bourgeoisie, we had not yet realised the inevitability of a disruption of the united front with the petty bourgeoisie for the sake of which we obstructed the development of the mass struggle.

In the beginning of the Wuhan period, when the movement of the Lefts started out against Chiang Kai-shek, the slogan "Down with the Tuhweis and the bad gentry" was advanced. The "bad gentry" only. When Wan Tin-wei came to Hankow he reminded us that we had agreed to fight against the bad gentry while now we wanted to fight against all gentry. This, he said, was no good. On the other hand, inasmuch as the industrial proletariat of Hankow fought almost exclusively against the imperialist employers, the imperialists closed up their enterprises and left Hankow. 120,000 workers were thrown out of work. From that moment the struggle in the towns was directed only against the shop-keepers and the question of the shop assistants became a serious question. Wan Tin-wei came to one of our sessions and rebuked us for continuing the strike from which the small business men suffered and for the confiscation of factories and works. We replied that we did not confiscate the factories and that the workers themselves did it. This happened because the employers closed up their enterprises and we had to undertake the organisation of production together with the trade unions. He said that we were deceiving him and that while we have a resolution of the Communist International saying that the revolution in China is a bourgeois-democratic revolution, we at the same time probably have a secret telegram to the effect that the revolution is already as socialist revolution.

We wanted to satisfy Wan Tin-wei somehow. We promised Wan Tin-wei to do something in the morning, but in the evening he came to us and said that we promised to keep the workers from arresting people and only a few minutes ago a pioneer had arrested his employer. He said that when we promised things we did not mean to fulfil them. This put us in a predicament. We wanted to re-establish the former good relations with the Kuomintang and to restore the already broken united front by means of concessions. But this produced no results.

### The Agrarian Revolution.

As far as the agrarian revolution is concerned, the most important fact to be remembered is that there are no big landed estates in China; the tenant system is widely developed, in which connection the small landlords living in towns or villages are state officials or teachers and receive very small salaries. They live chiefly on their income from land and are interested in squeezing the last drop of blood from the peasants. But for the peasant it does not make the slightest difference as to whether he has to pay rent and usurers' interest to big or small landlords. When we realised the necessity for an agrarian revolution in China, we, together with Tan In-kai, Tan Shan-chi and others, discussed the question together in a Commission as to how many moos of land make a small landlord. But none of us ever went to the villages to find out the true state of affairs, although a merciless struggle was already going on for land in the rural areas against both the small and big landowners.

At this moment, when the Party was so confused, and when the imperialist blockade and intervention, and the general objective situation, exerted their pressure on the Wuhan government which sympathised with Chiang Kai-shek, the gentry and the landlords ventured to organise their counter-revolutionary coup d'etat in Wuhan.

At the moment when we had already to do with a counter-revolution in Hunan (May 21, 1927) and when the masses of peasants had organised their own detachments for an attack on Changsha, the centre of counter-revolution, we told the peasants that the suppression of the counter-revolutionary forces must be left to the Wuhan government. The same thing happened after the Li Ti-sin coup d'etat in Canton (April 15, 1927). When the peasants rose in the districts of Wuhua and Heifin, and the railway workers and engineers of Canton revolted against Li Ti-sin, our C. C. had no part in the matter. It was simply afraid to take a hand, and we suffered defeat. On learning about the organisation of workers and peasants detachments in Kwantung, we invited them to Wuhan, without, however, giving them instructions as to how to fight against Li Ti-sin and how to consolidate their positions in the villages so as to gather their forces for a new attack on Li Ti-sin.

After it had become clear that a united front with Wan Tin-wei was no longer possible we decided to withdraw from the Wuhan government. But even then we still thought this to be a manoeuvre, as a move to improve our relations with Wan Tin-wei. The fact that the Communists are in the Wuhan Government, we thought, gives the reactionaries an opportunity to say that the Wuhan Government is Red, therefore, we argued, we must withdraw so as to make it clear that the Wuhan government is a national and not a Communist government.

All these were disastrous mistakes committed in the Chinese Revolution. We decided to announce our withdrawal from the government and called upon the masses of the Kuomintang to undertake a struggle against the C. C. of Wuhan and Nanking. This was a clear anti-opportunist move and under its influence we witnessed the Ho Lun and Ye Tin insurrection which was defeated near Swatow and which did not put a stop to our opportunist vacillations and errors.

## IV. THE SOVIET CANTON UPRISING.

### Differences Within the Kuomintang.

This marked the end of the Kuomintang period. That period may be defined as a period of the weakest Party leadership and gravest mistakes. Of course it cannot be said that were it not for these mistakes, the Chinese revolution would have invariably been victorious. We must take into consideration also the forces of the imperialists and especially the peculiar correlation of class forces within the Chinese revolution. But we certainly did not mobilise and utilise all the forces which we had at our disposal.

Now that the Revolution had suffered a heavy defeat and the reaction felt it had a free hand, it began to act. The extreme Right reactionary Sinsian clique took power in Nanking. It declared: "We were the first ones opposed to the Communists.

Even Chiang Kai-shek was against us, even Wan Tin-wei was against us then, but now, they have become convinced that a struggle against Communism is necessary in the interests of the nation and the Kuomintang."

The fact of the matter is that Li Ti-sin, the so-called Kwantse clique, representing the most reactionary elements of the gentry and landowners, had his connections with the compradores in Canton and Shanghai. The British imperialists brought Li Ti-sin into power regardless of Chiang Kai-shek who was driven out, for the British thought him too Red and they could not forgive his promulgation of the so-called Customs autonomy demand. As to Wan Tin-wei he, having started a struggle against the Communists, had to urge also a fight against Chiang Kai-shek to save his radical appearance. Actually, he was already an instrument in the hands of Tan Shan-chi.

### The Preparatory Period.

You know that after the rupture with the Communists very complicated internal differences arose within the Kuomintang. That period of "atomisation" of the Kuomintang militarists was a period preparatory for the Canton insurrection. In November 1927, following on the Chang Fa-Kwei putsch in Canton, there took place clashes between small generals in the various districts in the province of Kwantung. Peasants revolts became general. Even in Nanking they began to speak of a realisation of the peasant demand for a 25% reduction of rent. The same thing happened in Wuhan. Immediately after the coup d'etat Wan Tin-wei issued a decree concerning a reduction in the amount of rent. By this he wanted to show that he meant to realise the agrarian revolution without the Communists. At the same time they were considering the labour and capital arbitration law in Nanking. Each one wanted to show that he is more radical than the other in relation to the workers; because the revolution was again getting on its feet. This became more obvious in Canton. Within a week after the defeat of Ho Nun and Ye-Tin a big seamen's movement broke out in that city.

Beginning with that day, October 14, up to the very insurrection in Canton, strikes did not cease. In that period the workers themselves declared that the Kuomintang flag had become the standard of white terror, and that the only revolutionary flag is the Red banner with the hammer and sickle. That slogan was advanced by the workers even before the Party had officially decided to stop dilly dallying with the Left Kuomintang. The masses advanced the slogan "Down with Wan Tin-wei" when the Party had not yet definitely decided its attitude towards him and Chang Fa-kwei.

### The Revolutionary Situation in Canton.

The situation prior to the Canton insurrection shows that the insurrection had a social basis and was of a class character. I think that the Canton comrades will give you greater details as to what the circumstances were. I will merely say that after the Wuhan coup d'etat the Party leadership openly recognised its opportunist errors and started an energetic struggle against all remnants of opportunism. It was precisely in that period that the need for an agrarian revolution was recognised, and it was decided to organise a series of local uprisings in Hunan, Hupeh and Canton, wherever this might be possible and really necessary.

As to Canton, the C. C. of the Party adopted a decision on the 18th or 19th of November. That decision said that a direct revolutionary situation had arisen in Canton and that it was time for an insurrection. That insurrection was to be so organised that the workers and peasants would rise and that work would be carried on in demoralising the enemy forces. It was necessary to organise the masses in Canton, to organise at least delegate meetings of workers which would act as the organs of the insurrection, to organise the peasants in the neighbourhood of Canton which were in revolt since the establishment of the Soviet Government in Hailifun (November 1st.)

Wan Tin-wei found out about our decision before the insurrection took place. It was easy for him to do so because revolution was imminent and everyone could feel it coming. We had information that an attack was being organised for

the 10th or the 12th against the labour organisations and for the disarming of a regiment in which we had a strong nucleus. The day of the insurrection was, therefore shifted. After the suppression of the insurrection we witnessed a whole series of uprisings on the 13th and 14th of December in several districts of Kwantung and near Canton, uprisings in which workers and peasants took part. These uprisings were suppressed just as their centre, Canton, had already been crushed.

#### Our Greatest Mistake.

All these facts go to show that we were to a certain extent prepared for the Canton insurrection. Of course, there could be no question of a bone fide election of Soviets on the eve of fierce street battles. We had a more or less legal assembly of workers delegates at which about 70—80 people participated. That assembly elected the Executive Committee of the Soviet consisting of 6 comrades; the soldiers' nuclei and the peasants of the Canton district held their separate elections. The Executive Committee of that Soviet did not accomplish much during its short period of existence, but it was a real organ of the insurrection. The conditions were there for the mobilisation of wider sections of the masses and for better organisation, but what we actually did gives us a picture of how courageously and bravely the workers fought.

It is now claimed that there were very few people at the mass meetings in Canton. This is true, but there were about 4—5 thousand workers constantly crowding about the general staff of the insurrection in the course of two days clamouring for arms. We told them to go to the mass meetings and to hail the new government, but they insisted that we give them arms first. In a situation when workers demand arms it is only a question as to how best to organise them and to move against the chief enemy. Our greatest mistake during the Canton insurrection, apart from the inadequate political preparation and inadequate general organisational preparation, was the fact that we did not chose the central position of the enemy as the chief point of our attack and that we wasted much time, almost 12 hours, in the attack.

#### Suppression of the Insurrection.

This gave Li Fu-lin time enough and an opportunity to cross the river and to put us on the defensive. That was our chief mistake. After the Canton insurrection the revolution suffered a crushing defeat. That defeat was much greater than in Wuhan. Why? Because the insurrection took place at a moment when the ruling classes could not by any means come to an agreement within the country while the imperialists had mobilised all their forces, Li-Fu-lin had to resort to the services of the British fleet in order to carry his troops through the river as all sailors were on the side of the revolutionaries. Of course the imperialist forces were much stronger than ours. They were strong not only because they had in their possession a fleet and guns, but also because they energetically and politically organised the Kuomintang counter-revolutionary forces. That is why Wan Tin-wei immediately disappeared after the Canton defeat as the spokesman of the intermediary group: The Wan Tin-wei group completely surrendered to Chiang Kai-shek.

Thus we were now confronted with a complete and clear polarisation; on the one hand, there was the united counter-revolutionary camp, while on the other the flag of the Soviet government had been raised, around which rallied all forces of the revolution — the workers, peasants and even soldiers.

After the Canton insurrection, terror ensued throughout the country and the arbitration law and all agreements concluded between the employers and the trade unions were annulled by decree. All achievements of the working class were destroyed. Even the rent reduction law was cancelled. A situation arose such as existed only prior to the broad revolutionary movement.

After the suppression of the Canton rebellion, the reaction began to mobilise its forces for an attack on the workers, this time with the support of the imperialists. An organisation was set up in Shanghai consisting of British, Japanese and Chinese textile manufacturers for a joint attack on the workers.

A new northern expedition was undertaken. But this time the war was no longer a revolutionary, but a counter-revolutionary war as far as the masses of workers and peasants were concerned.

#### V. A REVIVAL AND THE COMPLETION OF THE NORTHERN EXPEDITION.

##### Chiang Kai-shek again in Power.

The only remnant of nationalism with Chiang Kai-shek in his new Northern expedition was his ambition to seize Peking as the capital of the National Government. All other Kuomintang slogans had been thrown overboard, not a single one had been realised. The petty bourgeois masses received nothing of the old promises. The great discontent among the petty bourgeoisie was caused by Li-Ti-sin's attempt to destroy the monument to the victims of 1925 in Canton and also the Japanese provocations, against which the so-called National Government of Chiang Kai-shek did not dare to protest. A new wave of anti-imperialist movements and peasant uprisings broke out not only in Kwantung, Kiangsi and Hunan, but also in the North. Although these actions have no decisive importance for the victory of the revolution, they menaced the power of the gentry and the landlords. The latest reports tell us that the militarist armies are being demoralised and that the soldiers are deserting them.

Great indignation was caused by the Tsinan events. Instead of a struggle against the Japanese, Chiang Kai-shek on arrival in Tsinan, ordered the stoppage of the anti-imperialist mass movement throughout the country so as not to give the Communists an opportunity to utilise it. To save the situation the Kuomintang had to raise the question of a National Assembly and to speak about the unequal treaties. But when the Japanese refused to recognise the annulment of the treaty, the term of which has expired, Chiang Kai-shek immediately agreed that the treaty remain in force for the period of diplomatic negotiations.

As to Customs autonomy, this question was not quite correctly elucidated in the press. It is not a question of Customs autonomy, but of the observance of a treaty signed by the powers at the end of 1925 granting China a rise in the tariffs, beginning with January 1, 1929.

America now magnanimously agrees to keep to that agreement of 1925 which Chiang Kai-shek calls Customs autonomy.

##### The Role of National Reformism.

Nationalism has now become a perverted nationalism. It cannot be said it plays exclusively a counter-revolutionary role, but at best, it is national reformism. This national reformism already ceases to play a revolutionary role; it is beginning to help the imperialists consolidate their power in China and in all colonies in general. The national bourgeoisie offers its assistance to the imperialists. It says: If you will rule over us in the colonies the workers and peasants will drive you out, give us, therefore, some power. Of course there is no need to destroy the unequal treaties immediately, but give us some improvements so as to show the people that Chiang Kai-shek is a hero; this will pacify them and imperialist domination will become more stable. A struggle against this national reformism, against the reformist illusions of the petty bourgeois parties, let alone the dominant national bourgeoisie, is becoming our main task. Without this no mass work will be successful. If we act under the slogans advanced by the so-called third party we merely help the petty bourgeois parties and repeat our own opportunist errors. First of all we must work energetically for the organisation of trade unions, drawing them into the anti-imperialist movement, and lead the petty bourgeois masses in their struggle.

Secondly, and this refers not only to the working class of China, but to the proletariat the world over, we must define our attitude to the Chinese peasantry which is fighting for land, against feudal survivals, against the militarists and against militarist wars. Only a real Bolshevik attitude will be able to liquidate the putschist ideas prevailing among us, the wrong notion that we must rise everywhere without any preliminary preparations. Correct tactics are necessary on the peasant question and on the partisan wars. Some members of our Party say that they stand for socialism, i. e. for an equal distribution of land, as

socialism is understood among the peasantry. Other Party members stand for propagation of the agrarian revolution.

In order to prepare the forces for the coming revolutionary upheaval, it is necessary to take into account the regrouping of class forces which has taken place in the country. The regrouping was very rapidly, very complicated and very radical. But the object of the revolution and its content have remained the same; China has not been unified. In words we have a united Chinese republic, but every province is an independent State. At the head of these States there are five strong Kuomintang militarists. Apart from these five big rulers, there are also small feudals, small landowners, who vacillate between the big imperialist groups.

### The Tasks of a Democratic Dictatorship.

As to the agrarian revolution, we must say that without an overthrow of the national bourgeoisie, which is closely bound up with the gentry and with feudal and semi-feudal agrarian relations, there can be no agrarian revolution or agrarian reform.

We know that even Wan Tin-wei, this petty bourgeois politician, said that part of the land of the big landlords can be confiscated, but that it is impossible to fight against all the gentry. The gentry are not kulaks as was once stated in the "Pravda". Gentry is an English word which has acquired an entirely different meaning in the revolutionary literature of China. In the Chinese language we call them Shanshi. A gentry is a man who has actual power in his hands and certain privileges over a given territory. He has the power to put people in prison without trial, he has a right to have people whipped for the very reason that he belongs to a higher order (caste) and because he is a landlord. He has connections with the Yamin i. e., the head of the government and even drinks together with him. The gentry has a monopolist right to buy the right to collect taxes. If Wan Tin-wei does not want to put a stop to this, what is to be said of the national bourgeoisie, the economic roots of which lie in the villages?

As far as the tasks of the democratic dictatorship are concerned there is not much to be said about that.

We see in Turkey and China that the national bourgeoisie begins with a dictatorship and not with democracy. If it does take power it prefers the dictatorial method of government rather than democratic elections. Is it possible to have now elections in Turkey, or in China under the Kuomintang regime? Of course

not. Why? Because for the development of home industry the national bourgeoisie of these countries must invariably resort to state capitalism. Only if organised by the state can industry hope to be able to withstand the competition of foreign capital. It is this that compels the national bourgeoisie in the colonial countries to strive for strong governments opposed to any form of class struggle. It cannot allow any class struggles. When the revolution in a colonial country reaches its decisive moment, the question arises — either, or? — either a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords or a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. If the revolution is defeated, i. e., the bourgeoisie takes the upper hand, democracy is out of the question. The national bourgeoisie "supplements" its national reformism by "national fascism".

I think that the question of national reformism, which simultaneously means national fascism, must be taken up at this congress in all its acuteness and in its full scope, on the basis of the experiences of the Chinese revolution. (Applause.)

### Declaration by Comrade R. ALPHONSO (Indonesia):

Comrades, Referring to my critical speech against the programme of the Communist International, Comrade Bukharin in his concluding speech yesterday declared that I made secret propaganda for Trotskyism. This is not correct. I was not and I am not doing it. There was a proposal of a colonial comrade to have a special meeting to discuss the colonial problem and to discuss the theory of Trotsky regarding the worker and peasant union, with which he dealt in his counter-programme. According to the information I received from that Comrade, the proposal was permitted by the Secretariat of the Congress.

Secondly, Comrade Bukharin accused me of being a Trotskyist. This is not correct. I have nothing to do with Trotskyism. I never was a Trotskyist but I belong to the Left Wing.

Thirdly, Comrade Bukharin also accused me of having neglected in my speech the role of the petty bourgeoisie and rejected the idea to make a temporary agreement with them. This is also not correct. In my speech I said the following: "We will make a temporary agreement with the petty bourgeoisie but our agreement with them does not mean that they may utilise us for their own benefit, but we should rather utilise their revolutionary energies for the proletarian revolution."

Fourthly, Comrade Bukharin said that in my speech I had declared that everything is wrong with the programme. This is also not correct. But I said that are some parts which in my opinion are wrong.

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