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# Report on the 3rd Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (Held in Moscow, June 12-23, 1923).

by Israel Amter

A press release sent to the WPA party press under a cover letter by C.E. Ruthenberg, August 3, 1923.  
Copy in the Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 212, ll. 146-160.

August 3, 1923

To all Party Editors:—

Dear Comrades:

You will find enclosed herewith a report on the sessions of the Enlarged Executive Committee, written by Comrade Amter, who was our representative at the sessions of this Committee.

You are directed by the Central Executive Committee to publish this report in your paper for the information of the Party members. It probably will be too long for publication in one issue, therefore, it should be divided into parts, and published from day to day in the dailies, and in the weeklies through several issues.

You are also instructed by the Central Executive Committee to discuss the actions of the Communist International editorially, of course supporting these actions.

Fraternally yours,

C.E. Ruthenberg,  
Executive Secretary

CER:RP

August 1, 1923

## **The Communist International, the Emancipator of the Whole People:**

*Workers Party of America Praised for Its Initiative  
and Work Since the Fourth Congress.*

The enlarged Executive of the Communist International was a Congress in the real sense of the word, and accomplished work that will be of great significance

to the Communist movement of the whole world. Issuing the slogan of the United Front on a more extended scale, and proclaiming the Communist International as the *“leader not only of the manual workers, not only of the brain workers, but of all strata exploited and crushed by the bourgeoisie — the Communist International, the EMANCIPATOR OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE”* — Zinoviev suggested the direction that the Conference would take — and the direction it did take.

The report of the Presidium showed the splendid work that the Communist International has performed in the six months since the Fourth Congress.

At the Fourth Congress [Nov. 5-Dec. 5, 1922] and later at the Leipzig Congress of the German Party, there was a wing of the Party that did not agree with the Workers' Government and the tactics in the Ruhr. The matter was reaching an acute stage at the time of the crisis in Saxony and the Ruhr, when the whole energy of the Party was required for work, and it threatened to cause disaster. The Communist International intervened and brought the controversy to a successful issue. Today the German party is the best fighter among the parties outside of Soviet Russia. It is a living, pulsating, virile unit and is gaining increasing influence and control over the German masses. The Social Democracy is slowly losing its hold, while even the Nationalists of Germany admit that the Communists stand not for the workers alone but have a program for the *whole people*. The intervention of the Communist International was timely and fruitful.

The solution of the French question did not produce the results that Frossard, who later left the Party, expected. On the contrary: the Party is stronger, more active than ever. With the exit of Frossard and his small group of troublemakers, there entered two men, representatives of groups of great value and importance to the Communist movement: Barbusse and Monatte. Especially Monatte, former anarchist and syndicalist leader, will add strength to the Party. Already the Party has done good work in the Ruhr crisis — and the coming months will reveal even greater initiative.

Italy has still needed the attention of the Communist International. The decisions of the Fourth Congress were not faithfully carried out. On the contrary, the Party did not help to bring over the Socialist Party to the Communist position — to fusion with the Communist Party, despite the fact that the Rome Congress of the Socialist Party declared for affiliation with the Communist International. Still harboring sectarian views, refusing to be “contaminated” with opportunistic tendencies, the Communist Party of Italy did not grasp the opportunity to create a solid front with the Socialists, thereby playing into the hands both of the right-wingers, the traitors to the workers, and of Mussolini. These right-wingers split the Party; they refused to accept the Rome decision. The ranks were broken and Mussolini with his black-shirts massacred and crushed the Communists and the militant workers, who, by the treachery of the right-wingers, were

left without leadership. By the reorganization of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, by inviting the Socialist Party of Italy to send a delegation to the Comintern to discuss the question of affiliation of the Socialist Party and of fusion with the Communist Party, and by sending an appeal to the workers of Italy to stand together against the reaction that rules Italy today. The Communist International has established the basis for the strengthening of the Communist Party and for the unity of all revolutionary forces in Italy.

### “Democratic Centralism” Misunderstood.

Several slogans of the Communist International have been misunderstood and consequently have produced confusion in the ranks of the Communist Parties. Thus, the issue of the “United Front” was misconceived, and as a result it was misapplied. “Democratic Centralism” has not been understood in Scandinavia, particularly in Norway. Norway, therefore, played a considerable role at the Enlarged Executive. The lessons that are to be drawn from this case will be wholesome for the entire Communist movement.

The Norwegian Labor Party is an anomaly in the Communist International. It is made up of trade unions, individual membership being an exception. Although instructions had been given to the Norwegian comrades to transform the party into one of individual membership, they continually asked for time — which was granted. But in seeking for time, the comrades were impelled by two different motives. One faction, of syndicalist origin, is instinctively opposed to centralism, even when it is qualified as “democratic,” with all the rights and privileges that democracy has within the field of centralism as understood in the Communist International. The other, an opportunist and not thoroughly Communist faction, opposes centralism, because of an unwillingness to accept instructions that will give uniformity to the Communist movement.

The discussion of the Norwegian question, which was the discussion of “Democratic Centralism,” revealed several more spots. Within the Norwegian Labor Party is a group of students who issue a magazine called the *Mot Dag*. This group is only partially communistic, and yet has exerted considerable influ-

ence over the party. This had been an influence that not only demanded autonomy for the Norwegian Party, but also assumed a most dangerous aspect, in that some of its members manifest anti-semitism.

The discussion demanded evidence — and the evidence was produced. Articles, statements, and the arguments made at the Conference itself, particularly by a member of the *Mot Dag* group, demonstrated that an element was at work in the Norwegian party that would be harmful to the whole Scandinavian movement.

What are the limits of “centralism?” What are the rights of “democracy” within this centralism? It is clear that, since the expansion of imperialism on an international scale, it has become increasingly necessary for the proletariat to have an international organization and international direction, if it is to gain power. *The workers of the separate countries cannot fight their battles alone against the internationally organized capitalists.* It is extremely difficult to differentiate between national and international lines. Is the Ruhr question a matter concerning only the German party, or one concerning the French party alone? Or is it not rather an international question, involving not only these two parties, but the British, Belgian, Italian parties as well?

Who should coordinate the activities of these parties, if not the Communist International? To whom should be left the question of tactics and strategy: the separate parties — or should not rather the Communist International, as the sole body that has an international survey, direct the action? Did the Italian question concern only the Italian comrades, and therefore did not concern the Communist International; or did not the very failure of the Communist Party of Italy to get together with the Socialist Party lead to the violent reaction that dominated Italy and encouraged the White Guards of other countries to follow in the path of Mussolini?

### **Zinoviev Lauds Workers Party.**

And surely, as Zinoviev pointed out in his report, the influence and decision of the Communist International in the American question at the Fourth Congress, to the effect that the Communist Party of America, in obedience to the conditions prevailing in

the country, must come out into the open, were based on the idea of “democratic centralism”: on the *right and duty* of the Communist International to interfere in what appears to be purely national questions, when a settlement cannot be effected by the comrades themselves. The American delegates to the Enlarged Executive could only *confirm* and *applaud* the fact that the decision of the Communist International had reinforced and solidified the party, which today is working as a unit. *Zinoviev praised the activity of the Workers Party of America, which showed that it had the insight and will to lead the workers.*

What then are the rights of democracy? There are problems that are purely national — administrative and technical. The Communist International has not and does not intend to interfere in such matters — provided they can be settled within the country itself. But there are times when the Comintern is too mild, too unwilling to interfere. The Comintern has allowed the British Party to carry on without interference too long, so that today the British Party is unable to function. Well might the British comrades have asserted that the British affair is an affair entirely British. But they have taken a different view, and seeing that they cannot settle the matter and that the advice and experience of the Communist International, of the representatives of all countries and not the Russian comrades alone, will serve best in unraveling the entanglements into which they have fallen, they have come to the Communist International for the settlement of their problems.

Not grasping the nature of Democratic Centralism, the Norwegian and Swedish Parties demanded that the members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International be elected by the respective countries, and not by the Congress of the Communist International. This is a species of federalism that is intolerable and inconsistent with Communist principles, which demand that the Communist International be a REAL international and not one composed of federated bodies. It must have in its Executive not men who are responsible to their National Executives, but men responsible to the highest body in the world, the Congress of the Communist International. Hence the Executive must be composed of men who the Congress considers fit for directing the affairs of the whole revolutionary movement of the world.

The Norwegian question and the question of "Democratic Centralism" were the occasion of the most heated discussion, in which the Norwegian comrade, participant in the *Mot Dag* group, assumed a challenging and defiant attitude, and accused the Comintern of being responsible for any trouble that has arisen or might arise in the Norwegian Labor Party.

It was discovered, however, that he was riding on the wave of a majority of two votes (94 to 92) which his faction secured at the last convention of the Norwegian Party. Although his faction also included the syndicalistically-inclined comrades, it was clear that the syndicalists and especially their leader are an *integral part* of the life and history of the Norwegian Labor Party, with characteristics that time and experience will eliminate. In the opposition, however, were a large part of the Party and the Young Communists, who pledged their support to the Communist International.

The united demonstration of the Enlarged Executive, who accused the Norwegian comrade, Comrade Falk, of applying disruptive tactics and of being made of the stuff of which fascists are made, because of his anti-semitism, revealed clearly what the stand of the parties of the world is on this most vital factor in international revolutionary action and strategy — "democratic centralism."

### **Religious Question Cannot be Ignored by Communists.**

The support that the Swedish comrades gave to the Norwegian delegates was one of solidarity even though they disagreed with them in principle. The leader of the Swedish Party is an old revolutionist, Comrade [Zeth] Höglund. He assisted in the organization of the Young Communist International. He participated in the Zimmerwald Conference. He has been in the left wing for many years. But he not only has fallen from grace in the matter of the Norwegian Party, but also has assumed a completely unmarxistic attitude on the question of religion. Accepting the formula that *in relation to the State*, religion is a private matter, Höglund declared that religion is an entirely private matter, even as regards the Party. Members of the Swedish Communist Party have engaged in religious practices of the modern sort and have consid-

ered that, being that it was a private occupation, the Party had no right to interfere or protest. Höglund, deviating from the Marxist concept of history as a materialistic one, was found rambling in the fields of metaphysics in several articles which he wrote.

Thus an incident developed into an important episode. The Communist International has taken the stand that every Communist instinctively and logically must assume. Religion in relation to the State is a *private matter*, and Communist must fight against State support of the church, State interference in the right to believe or not to believe or to be an Atheist, as every conscious Communist is. In relation to the Party, however, every member must understand that religion is *not a private matter*. The Communist Party exists not merely to liberate the workers from economic and political thralldom, but to free them ideologically. Hence the work of liberation from old, fossilized ideas, from religious obscurantism, must begin within the Party ranks. Communists must understand that Marxism denotes a *clearly defined uniform concept of life, of which atheism is a consistent element*.

*Propaganda among the workers must be conducted most carefully.* The peculiarities of the workers, who have been under the domination of the church so many centuries must be taken into consideration. The Party will not exclude any member who still holds religious ideas, it will not refuse to admit any worker who is religious. In the United Front, it will cooperate with groups and organizations, even of Catholic and Christian workers, recognizing that education will dispel their religious fancies. But as a Party it will not fail to conduct educational work for enlightening the workers on the nature and content of religion, and to free them from its domination.

### **Bulgaria — A Lesson for the World.**

The Enlarged Executive took place at a time when the proletariat was faced with the overthrow of a government at the instigation of the British and Italian governments. The Bulgarian Peasants' Government, as it euphoniously was called, headed by Stambulisky, was overthrown in the wink of an eye, Stambulisky forced to flee and the reins seized by the Nationalists, who forthwith formed a coalition with all the other parties, with the exception of the Com-

munists and Peasants. The Peasants' Party was the largest and the Communists the second largest party in Bulgaria. What was the duty of the Communist Party in this crisis?

The Communists mistakenly conceived that it was their duty not to interfere in the quarrel between two bourgeois parties, but to remain neutral and await the outcome. And this was the *great* mistake. *There is no political event to which the Communists can be indifferent. On the contrary, it is the function and duty of Communists to utilize the contradictions within the capitalist system, as expressed also in the contradictions between the sections of the bourgeoisie and the quarrels that take place in all their political phases, to advance the cause of the proletariat.* As dialecticians, we must always apply such tactics as will win to our side the masses of the workers and farmers — the great majority of whom today belong to or follow the capitalist or social democratic parties. Hence we cannot be indifferent to the changes of capitalist governments. *These changes take place with the consent or against the will of the great majority of the population.*

What happened in Bulgaria occurred *against the will of the vast majority of the people.* The peasants polled a vote of 500,000, the Communists a vote of 220,000. And yet these two parties remained impotent. The Bulgarian Communist Party was in a position to seize power. For 25 years it has been training its forces for the moment when the revolutionary proletariat leading the masses of the workers and peasants would institute a government of the working masses. But the moment of action came — and the Communists proclaimed neutrality.

A section of the party at Plevno went into action, but was immediately recalled by the CEC of the Party — and mistakenly. What do events in Bulgaria indicate? One of three things will happen: either the Party will enter the struggle and a Workers' and Peasants' government will be established; or the Party will remain inactive, and either the government will destroy it by means of Fascist terror, or it will simply disintegrate; or finally, the masses will be driven into the struggle and the Party will split.

This is a question of great moment not only for the Bulgarian Party, but for all other parties, and particularly for the German and Czechoslovakian parties. Are we to gather our forces and then fail at the psy-

chological moment? *Or are we to increase the will to action and at the decisive moment assume the leadership?* The outcome of the struggle in several European countries depends on the will of the Communist Party to act. *Bulgaria is a lesson for Europe, and for the parties of the whole world: in all probability, Fascism will assume a more brutal form in Bulgarian than even in Italy. Let the sister Communist parties learn the lesson!*

### The Achievements of the Past Six Months.

In the last six months, the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions [Profintern] have made immense strides. On May 20 [1923], the Second and 2-1/2 Internationals united — in the formation of a corpse. The revolutionary fire and understanding of the two organizations is a thing of the past: this International is a thing minus the revolution. Today the Labour Party is the leader of the new organization — and Kautsky plays second fiddle. The Russian Mensheviks, formerly the left wing of the 2-1/2 International, are in the right wing of the new International. Only a small group, led by Ledebour, has understood the treachery of the 2-1/2 International and refuses to cooperate in the new organization, but they are impotent.

The policy of the United Front has been a tactical success for the Communist movement. Some of the comrades do not understand the tactic and its method. They ask: *Is the United Front a manoeuvre or is it a real desire to cooperate with the social democratic and nonpartisan workers?* The question cannot be put in this form. We surely want to cooperate with the social democratic and nonpartisan workers, for events and conditions demand that the *workers get together as a whole in the struggle against complete degradation. But the United Front does not signify organic unity with non-Communists, but cooperation in action.* In France and Germany, we have achieved splendid results with this slogan.

Is the United Front a manoeuvre? In the early period of the United Front, we tried to reach the workers over the heads of their leaders. We find that that method is unsuccessful. Hence, we appeal to the leaders, being fully conscious, however, that Scheidemann and Renaudel will not cooperate with us. But the workers will realize the treachery of their leaders and our

willingness and desire to cooperate and will bring about the United Front with us, *despite their leaders.*

### **Dangers of the United Front.**

It should not be assumed that the United Front tactic is not fraught with dangers: so is the revolutionary struggle, but we must face these dangers and overcome them. Trotsky once said that the United Front presents the menace of our parties becoming superficial, or degenerating. These dangers are ever present — and yet the tactic is correct, as events have proven. The United Front achieved in Berlin between the Russian Transport Workers Union and the International Transport Workers Federation demonstrates that our policy bears fruit and the workers are brought closer together for action against the imminence of war, of fascism, and the economic offensive of the capitalists. *In this cooperation the Communists take the lead, because they alone have a program, are willing to accept the struggle with all its consequences.*

### **The World Political Situation.**

Since the Fourth Congress, there have been four events of international significance: the agreement between America and Great Britain regarding the payment of the British debt; the occupation of the Ruhr; the Lausanne Conference; and the liquidation of the decisions of the Washington Disarmament Conference in the Far East.

The British government realizes the necessity of finding support in the West for its imperialist designs. The rivalry between England and France is such that today France is reaching out for the hegemony of Europe, while England is forced into a secondary position. The struggle is on. The United States, on the other hand, feels no compulsion to interfere in Europe. Prosperity reigns in America, and although the American farmers demand a market for their products, and the billions stored up in the bank vaults seek investment, still America is occupied more with seeking a foothold in the East than in Europe.

In making the settlement with America, Baldwin caused a shiver to run down the spine of every Englishman, as Lloyd George wrote, when he learned that for sixty years England will have to pay £30 mil-

lion a year to the United States. The United States, on the other hand, kept a free hand to secure the assistance of France, in case of a conflict between America and Great Britain. Hence, at the Washington Conference America did not insist on the limitation of aerial armament. As a consequence, France is at the head in this department, thereby threatening the whole defense organization of Great Britain.

England has tried to make up for the loss of prestige and power by the offer of support to Germany at a decisive moment. England believed that France would enmesh herself to such an extent in the Ruhr that she would come out broken and defeated. Poincaré, on the other hand, believed that he would be able to subject the German industrialists to the will of France without any great resistance. But both opinions have proven to be wrong. France has not broken on the wall of the Ruhr, nor has the German bourgeoisie succumbed without a struggle. On the contrary, the German bourgeoisie has been able to continue the struggle *by putting the whole burden on the backs of the German workers.* With the aid of the German government, speculation has been rife on the German market, whereby the mark at the beginning of the Ruhr occupation stood at 7,000 to the dollar and was driven down to 99,000 to the dollar. This meant tremendous suffering for the German proletariat and colossal gains for Stinnes. The Government began a reduction of wages, the German bourgeoisie offered to pay 500 million gold marks yearly, provided the eight-hour day, the transfer of the railways to private enterprise, and several other privileges were granted them. The fate of the German bourgeoisie has been sealed, *and in their desperation they have let the dogs of hatred loose against the Communists.*

The failure of England to offset the influence and power of France in the Ruhr induced her to incite France against Russia. The same day that Curzón sent his note to Soviet Russia, he sent a note to Germany recommending that Germany pay the reparation sum demanded by France. What was the method in this scheme? England thought that by handing Germany over to the mercy of France, she would be able to instigate France against Soviet Russia.

### **Soviet Russia's Growing Power a Menace to Great Britain.**

The greatest menace to Great Britain is the growing power of Soviet Russia. After the years of blockade and counterrevolution and the year of hunger, England thought that Soviet Russia would be forced to give up her Communist ideas and return to the fold of the capitalistic states. The introduction of the New Economic Policy was interpreted in this sense. But it was not seen that the New Economic Policy resulted in a strengthening of the Soviet regime. It helped the exportation of grain, which, if this year the crops are good, *will amount to 150 million gold rubles*. The light industries are constantly improving, the heavy industries still being somewhat hampered. Nevertheless, there is a general consolidation of all productive forces.

The situation in the Orient is reinforcing the Russian position. England has created such a situation in the Near East, in India and elsewhere, that the colonies are turning against her, and toward Soviet Russia as the only country that understands and correctly appraises the national question. Soviet Russia, too, has her national question, *but this national consciousness is part and parcel of the proletarian dictatorship, which takes these national differences into account and coordinates them*. Curzón, on the other hand, has driven the colonial peoples to seek a refuge. *These oriental peoples know very well that Comrade Vorovsky was killed at Lausanne as a representative of Soviet Russia fighting for their freedom*.

Hence, the fear and hatred of Soviet Russia, which England thought she could crystallize by breaking off relations with Soviet Russia, causing a new blockade and driving the border states and the Petalura bands to renewed attacks on Soviet Russia. England speculated on another factor — the absence of Lenin from the affairs of state. Can Soviet Russia last without the guidance of Lenin?

Every Communist, every worker and peasant of Soviet Russia knows what Lenin has meant to the Russian Revolution, and to the cause of Communism throughout the world. But England does not know the history of the Russian Communist Party. She does not know that the Party has just finished 25 years of its history — a history made up not only of individuals, but of mass movements. Although, therefore,

Lenin's direction in these hard hours would be of inestimable value to the Soviet Government, the spirit of Leninism has taken such deep root in the masses that the masses themselves give the best answer to Curzón's insolence. The spontaneous demonstrations on the receipt of the Curzón note and the assassination of Vorovsky should be the best lesson to the frivolity of the western powers.

### **The Mohammedan World an Enemy of Occidental Power.**

The Mohammedan world also sees in the powers of the West their enemy. They have perceived the treachery with which France and England have tried to subject them. Especially Turkey, who is too weak to resist the intrigues of the Western powers alone, has been the object of their machinations. But Soviet Russia has recognized that the workers and peasants of Turkey are the natural allies of the Russian workers and peasants and has not hesitated to support them. Hence the alliance between Soviet Russia and Turkey, which has brought about a change of front among the Allies. France, first regarded as the friend, has been shelved and England is now being feasted as the "friend" of Islam. But above all, Turkey and Islam know that their only real friend is Soviet Russia, who is the only power that has helped them in the dark hours.

### **The Decisions of the Washington Conference Derided.**

The situation in the Far East is a most interesting one. The decision of the Washington Conference meant the throttling of Japan. By fixing a ratio of battle-ships at 5:5:3, it put Japan in a place of inferiority to the other two powers. Japan took advantage of the decision to build a large number of fast cruisers and submarines. This led the United States to undertaking the same manner of construction, while England established a large naval station in Singapore. Seeing herself isolated and in danger of being degraded to a second-rate power, Japan has turned to Soviet Russia for assistance. When the Washington Conference took place, Soviet Russia was not invited, since it had no basis in the East. But since that time, the Red Army has moved into Vladivostok, so that Soviet Russia must

now be reckoned with.

What are the conclusions of this review of the world situation? *Serious conflicts and struggles will soon take place in Europe.* Capitalism has not been able to restore any balance. Only in America and England has a *temporary restoration* taken place. *The number of men under arms is greater than before the war, and the war budgets far exceed the pre-war budgets.*

The Soviet Government faces great dangers, for the imperialist powers recognize the might of that government and will do everything in their power to destroy it. But Soviet Russia will not surrender. *The workers and peasants of Soviet Russia are a unit in defense of THEIR revolution. The workers of other countries, however, must be prepared to render assistance when the call sounds.*

The German workers must not use the slogan: “Comrades, do not let them provoke us into action” — the German Party will have to *act*. The French comrades must give their best support to the German Party in its struggle against German fascism and French imperialism. The movement in the Orient is in danger. Word has been received that an anglophile government has been established in Teheran and the elements in Turkey favoring an understanding with the Entente are growing in numbers. Bitter and hard days of struggle are ahead.

### **“Workers’ and Farmers’ Government,” the New Slogan.**

The situation in Europe demands that the workers prepare for struggle within the near future. Capitalism is in decay. The workers are being robbed and crushed. Fascism is rampant, the bourgeoisie is determined to place the whole burden of the war debt and the “reconstruction of Europe” on the backs of the workers. The workers must prepare not merely to enter into struggle, but to *secure victory and assume power*. Can the workers accomplish this task alone?

When the United Front tactic was announced at the 3rd Congress [June 22-Aug. 12, 1921], it was not fully understood. When the Slogan of the Workers’ Government was taken up at the 4th Congress [Nov. 5-Dec. 5, 1922], there were many voices against it. But events have proven that the slogan was a correct one. Even in the German Party there were com-

rades who did not comprehend its meaning and who protested against its application. But Saxony has shown the merit of the idea: the slogan of the Workers’ Government has forced the Social Democratic leaders into an uncomfortable position. They have had to yield to the force of the Social Democratic workers, who perceive that the workers must be united against the bourgeoisie and that the natural expression of this United Front is a Workers Government — for which now the best elements in the Social Democratic Party are cooperating with the Communist Party.

But there are the masses of the peasants who today are suffering the same pangs of hunger and the same oppression. They must be brought into the ranks of the fighters. The Workers’ Government must gain their support. The communists must arouse them against the system under which they are suffering. They must point out to the peasants and farmers that today they are exploited by the capitalists and are under their political dominion. It is in the interests of the peasants and farmers to unite with the workers of the towns in the struggle for power. *This struggle is not merely an election scramble for offices. It is a struggle that will enroll all the forces of the workers and farmers — a struggle go down the consolidated forces of the bourgeoisie.*

This was the slogan issued by the Bolsheviki in 1905, which brought large masses of peasants into the fight for power. And it was the slogan which finally resulted in the formation of the Soviet Government. Is there any danger in the use of this slogan? No more danger than in the use of the slogan of the Workers’ Government. Neither the Workers’ Government nor the Workers’ and Farmers’ Government is a substitute for the Proletarian Dictatorship. The Workers’ and Farmers’ Government is a natural extension of the idea of a Workers’ Government — as a natural absorption and utilization of all elements in opposition to the rule of capital — a United Front of all workers, of all categories on farm and in the city.

### **Workers Party of America, Creator of the New Slogan.**

The fight for the establishment of a Workers’ and Farmers’ Government will meet with the united opposition of the whole bourgeoisie. The struggle for power will begin — a struggle that will not and can-

not be confined to the parliamentary field. Saxony is revealing what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government will resort to in order to nullify the efforts of the workers. The fascists are growing in power, the German Federal Government is waiting for the favorable moment to send the Reichswehr (Federal troops) into Saxony to disrupt the movement and the Workers' Coalition Government. The idea will have to be extended in all Germany. The Social Democratic leaders must take a stand. The struggle for power will begin — the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as the goal.

Will the peasants and farmers as a backward element not form an obstruction in the process of the revolution to the Proletarian Dictatorship? No, the workers are organized with the Communists as their most valiant and farsighted vanguard. The farmers are not organized in the same way: they will accept the more militant leadership of the Communists, recognizing that a *government together with the workers, WHO WILL NOT EXPLOIT THEM, is far better than a government under the capitalists, whose power is based on the exploitation of workers and farmers alike.*

In making his report on the new policy, which, after considerable discussion was accepted almost without dissent, Zinoviev stated that the *Workers Party of America was the creator of the new slogan.* Without any suggestion from the Communist International, but deriving the tactic from the very conditions under which the Communists of America have to work and the political and economic conditions obtaining within the country, the Workers Party realized that a government of the workers without the farmers would be impossible.

### **Fascism, the Immediate Menace.**

The capitalist system is in decay. All attempts to reconstruct it have failed. The destruction wrought by the war was so great and the imperialist rivalries have been so intense that a disintegration of capitalist power has set in, which cannot be stopped. Seeing that regularly constituted government no longer satisfies their needs and demanding a "strong" government irrespective of its "democracy," the bourgeoisie has organized all the elements that have suffered from the war — the ex-army officers, the petty bourgeoisie (which has been ground to pieces by the after-war troubles), the flot-

sam and jetsam of society, and above all the small peasants, as the backbone of a movement and of a capitalist, dictatorial, military dictatorship which calls itself a Fascist government. Sections of the workers yield to the siren call, especially the renegade and right-wing socialists, as in Italy.

As a matter of course, the fight is directed against the organized workers and their most militant section, the Communists. It is unnecessary to repeat the deeds of vandalism and destruction committed in the name of "law and order" by the Fascist government of Italy, and by Fascist organizations in Germany, Austria, Hungary.

But one fact must be remembered: *Fascism becomes dominant where the workers are not revolutionary and are not organized.* Where they are not revolutionary, the workers and the petty bourgeoisie see their safety in what appears to be a "strong" government. Thus Fascism is rampant in Bavaria, which has a weak revolutionary movement (it was destroyed in the overthrow of the short-lived Soviet Government of Bavaria), but hardly raises its head in Saxony. *This means that the organized labor movement has as one of its immediate and urgent tasks the organization of counterforces to deal with Fascism in its various manifestations.*

But even Fascism must disintegrate owing to the very contradiction of the elements composing it. There are many elements under the spell and guidance of Fascism who naturally belong to the working class. The momentary discouragement arising from the failure of the revolutionary movement to seize power has driven them to the embrace of a capitalist military dictatorship. The small peasants, the exploited and crushed intellectuals, teachers, etc., must be won away from the influence of Fascism. We must begin a militant campaign of education and propaganda, explaining the nature of Fascism. *It must be exposed as an act of desperation of the sinking capitalist system, which no longer trusts its own institutions and resorts to naked violence in order to regain control and power.* It must be shown that, as in Italy, where agrarian capital stands in opposition to industrial capital, when in a moment of despair the two unite in a struggle against the workers, dissolution must eventually take place, owing to the very antagonism between agrarian and industrial and financial capital.

Hence the struggle against Fascism is also an

ideological one. *The natural allies of the working class must be won over, or at least neutralized.* This is essential for the establishment of the Workers' and Farmers' Government, which is the surest safeguard against Fascism.

Immediate measures must be taken, however, to combat the violent methods of the Fascisti. In Germany the most effective organization has been found in the "Factory Hundreds." All workers, irrespective of party and trade union membership, are formed into bodies of 100 and put under military discipline. Although unarmed, their very formation is the best protection against the Fascisti. To protect their labor temples, presses, meetings, clubs, they carry on systematic propaganda against Fascism and by their solidarity convert the vacillating elements. The Communists must penetrate the farmers' organizations and bring them close to the Party and the trade unions. Solidarity of all working people against the violent phase of the disintegrating capitalist system must be preached and cultivated.

As Fascism is an international phenomenon and is *internationally organized*, the workers and farmers must present international organization to fight against it. The workers of every country must support the workers of other countries where Fascism rules. The American workers, *in particular, should fight for a boycott of all shipments of grain and coal to Italy. This will be the best help against Mussolini and his blackshirt gangs.*

The thesis and address on Fascism was delivered by Comrade Zetkin, the "Grand Old Woman" of the Proletarian Revolution. Owing to an injury to her leg, she was unable to stand. Sitting in a gilt chair once occupied by the Tsarina, Comrade Zetkin, with the fire and eloquence of a young agitator, inflamed her audience and made one wish that the movement possessed many more of her ability and enthusiasm.

In the midst of the discussion, Radek delivered an address that is destined to remain as a brilliant star in the vast galaxy of speeches and writings of this brilliant thinker. "Schlageter, the Wanderer of the Void" was an episode of clear thinking couched in the language of a poet. This story of the young Fascist, who thought he was serving the German fatherland by fighting first against Soviet Russia and then against the workers in the Ruhr, to be shot down by French imperialism, the ally of Stinnes and his colleagues, who

themselves are the patrons of German Fascism — is a lesson for the misguided.

### **Trade Union Work, One of Our Most Important Tasks.**

Since the 4th Congress, important events in the industrial field have taken place. The reformists are gradually being unmasked. Their refusal to engage in action, despite their revolutionary assertions is being clearly shown to the struggling masses of Europe. The occupation of the Ruhr, which meant war on Germany without a declaration of war, demanded action on the part of the Amsterdam International. It promised to call a general strike in such a case. But then action was required, the Amsterdam International failed.

But the oppressed masses demand action. The Frankfurt Conference was well attended not only by Communist workers, but by Social Democrats as well. The resolutions adopted there indicate that the masses will not tolerate the treason and cowardice of the reformist leaders much longer. There is forming a left wing in the Amsterdam International, which prefers the United Front with the Communists to the coalition with the capitalists (of which Samuel Gompers should take note.)

The conference of the International Transport Workers, which was attended by the Russian transport workers, was an event of tremendous significance. It is the first important step in the forming of a bridge between the revolutionary workers of Russia and the reformist workers in Western Europe. *It means the restoration of the unity of the labor movement.* It does not mean peace with the reformist leaders: it does not mean that we shall cease our criticism of the Amsterdam International or any leaders who fail to lead the workers into action. It signifies what the Communists have always proclaimed: *we shall unite with them in action, confident that through action the masses will force the leaders into real leadership, or to withdrawal from the fight.*

The Transport Workers Conference adopted a platform calling for the defense of Soviet Russia, for struggle against Fascism and the menace of war, for control of the transportation of munitions, for the unification of the labor movement not only nation-

ally but internationally, for the formation of Committees of Action, and for the calling of a world congress of the transport workers. A similar tendency was noticed in the conference of the Metal Workers, even though it was not so pronounced.

As a matter of course, the reformist leaders are trying to sabotage the decision of these two conferences; but the condition of the workers is so critical in Central Europe and is becoming so serious in other parts that united action of all organized workers is the immediate issue.

### Unity in the Trade Union Movement.

The reactionary officials of the trade unions are continuing their practice of expelling all elements not submitting to their control and fighting for revolutionizing the trade union movement in the light of the events and experience of today. *We repeat that we are against splitting the trade union movement and will fight to preserve its unity and integrity.* There are instances where even the revolutionary trade unions split up, as in Czechoslovakia, where there are two textile unions affiliated with the Red International of Labor Unions. The origin of this split seems to be nationalist — Slovenians against the Germans. (It was later shown at the RILU Conference that the cause of the split was an organizational and not a nationalist factor, which the RILU Conference settled). The splitting of the unions on racial lines is to be condemned, which signifies for America that Communists must continue their fight for the admittance of Negroes into the regular unions.

In this regard, said Losovsky, the “merit of the Trade Union Educational League is that it has overcome the pernicious custom of parallel trade union organizations. *The League is performing a great work....* The important thing is to concentrate the opposition movement everywhere, to put an end to division, and to pass from the unity of the revolutionary movement to the unity of the trade union movement.

“If individuals, groups, or whole unions should be expelled from the federations, they must be kept united and every effort be made to have them reinstated. Under no circumstances should the oppositional elements who sympathize with the expelled be withdrawn from the old unions.”

### Every Communist Must Join a Union.

The work of the Communists in the trade unions is not intense enough. “Every Communist must recognize that our most important and most immediate task is the conquest of the trade unions.” How can this be done when large numbers of Communists still do not belong to a trade union?

On the recommendation of the American delegates, the following paragraph was inserted in the Trade Union Resolution: “It is the duty of every member of the Communist International to join a union and work actively with the Communist faction, i.e., in the revolutionary opposition movement. The activity of the Communists in the trade unions must conform to the theses and resolutions of the RILU. The sections of the Communist International must exert all efforts to unite all the organized workers of the world under the banner of the Red International.”

*This is imperative* — and the American Party will see to it that it is realized.

To “work actively” means more than mere membership. It means that each member must be thoroughly acquainted with the affairs of his union. The Communist nuclei must meet regularly and discuss the union affairs. It means that the Party must inaugurate trade union courses on the history and tactics of the trade unions. Even when we get control of a union, we must continue our work, by the retention of the opposition group, whose work consists also of winning over the very last member of the union.

We must show by our activity and our interest in the union that we are the best leaders. We must be willing to assume every manner of task: we must be willing to do the dull routine work. We must engage in individual propaganda and convince the rank and file of the correctness of our methods. In this way we will win over large masses and defeat the reactionaries in the control of the unions.

Communists must be willing to make many sacrifices for this work — even monetary sacrifices. Experience in all countries has confirmed the experience in America. The reactionary trade union officials answer efforts to raise funds for the support of the opposition movement in the unions by regular dues, by expulsion from the union. *The Communists, therefore, must support the left wing movement by regular dues,*

*as is done in Germany.* Altogether the work of the German Communist Party in the trade unions and in the shops should be studied attentively by all Communists.

### **Factory Nuclei (Groups) and Factory Councils.**

The factory, mine, and shop are the places where the workers feel the oppression of capitalism most. As good tacticians, therefore, we must meet the workers where their distress is keenest. The Communist Party must endeavor to organize in the factories, in order there to carry on the work of political education on the basis of the daily struggle. The German Party has decided on this transformation of the Party organization, as the Executive Council of the Workers Party decided.

As the struggle is steadily becoming keener, it is necessary also to organize Shop Councils, in order more readily to obtain action from the workers. These Councils also will help us to fight the trade union bureaucracy and to further the amalgamation movement. The Shops must be our next goal, but it must not be thought that we intend to replace the union organization by the shop organization. Such a move would merely lead to a weakening of the labor movement. Shop councils will mean greater activity, more virility, more militancy.

The Communist press does not devote sufficient attention to the trade union movement. It must exploit all situations and especially explain the intentions and methods of the Left Wing opposition and interpret trade union activities in political terms.

### **Fifth Anniversary of the Communist International.**

The program of the Communist International, its structure and content, its universality and application to immediate demands, was delineated by Bukharin, and will be decided at the next Congress of the Communist International.

March 24, 1924, will be the fifth anniversary of the Communist International. This will be a day of international demonstration. As the date fixed for the Fifth Congress, it will be celebrated in Moscow and in

every country in which a Communist Party exists. Its history, its achievements will be portrayed in the press, and in special literature.

Resolutions on the cooperatives, on work among the women, resolutions dealing with situations that arose in the Austrian, Czechoslovakian, Swiss, Dutch, and Danish parties completed the work of the twelve days of the sessions.

The Enlarged Executive decided that a Negro Conference should take place at the time of the Fifth Congress — a matter of tremendous import not only to the 12 million Negroes in America, but to the 140 million in Africa still under the iron oppression of the imperialist nations.

These sessions of the Enlarged Executive, which had the significance of a World Congress, were free from demonstration. It was a working class congress meeting at a time when the workers of Europe face a crisis, when the sound of the war drum is loud. The workers are rising out of the lethargy that followed the end of the War; they are taking the offensive under the goad of hunger. *The workers in capitalist Germany, whose industry is one of the most highly developed in the world, are suffering hunger, and facing despair while the workers of Soviet Russia, blockaded and starved and refused the products of industry are on the high road to prosperity. The workers and peasants in Italy and Bulgaria are in violent struggle with their fascist governments, which are the idol of American financiers and industrialists.*

International working class solidarity is again manifesting itself, despite the treason perpetrated in Hamburg by the Social Democrats of the 2-1/2 and Second Internationals, who have declared war on the workers in the Communist International. The Council of Action formed at the International Transport Workers Conference in Berlin must be duplicated by other international councils of action. National councils must be set up in every country to bring about the United Front of the working class against the exploiters.

Solidarity must be our slogan. This solidarity was beautifully exemplified in the presentation of a banner by the workers of the Tula Munition Works to the workers of the Krupp Works in Essen, and to all workers in the Ruhr. In presenting it to Comrade Zetkin, the Tula worker said that he hoped the day was not

distant when the Krupp Works, once used for the manufacture of munitions and guns for war against the French and now in the hands of the French army, would be used by the German workers not for the production of arms for the defense of imperialism, but for the defense of the working class.

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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