
Report to the 6th Plenum of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International, February 20, 1926.

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I. Introductory.

Comrades, you have already been presented with a written report of the Executive Committee containing considerable material in relation to my report. In addition you have received the theses which have been discussed and approved on the whole by the Presidium of the ECCI. As you are already somewhat acquainted with the extensive material connected with the theme of my report, I may assume that my task is somewhat lightened. I therefore take the liberty of confining myself to the bringing forward of only a few of the most essential figures and facts.

You all remember that at the Fifth Congress [June 17-July 8, 1924] we recorded the temporary advent of the “*era of democratic pacifism*” in capitalist countries. We may state boldly that the year 1924 was indeed thus featured. The year 1925, at the commencement of which the last Enlarged Executive of the CI took place [March 21-April 6, 1925], was a period of *capitalist “stabilization.”* The year 1926 is already a period of *wavering* and less firm stabilization. I presume that the reflection of this feature of the period through which we have just passed will be the point which will characterize the present Plenum. However, although the stabilization of capitalism is not firm, is very conditional, our first duty as revolutionaries is not to exaggerate this circumstance and not to draw incorrect conclusions therefrom.

I would like to make the following words of

Comrade Lenin the basis of my report:

“The greatest, perhaps the only danger to the genuine revolutionary is that of exaggerated revolutionism, ignoring the limits and conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can be successfully employed.... True revolutionaries will perish (not that they will be defeated from outside, but that their work will suffer internal collapse) only if they abandon their sober outlook... If they do this, their doom is certain.”†

We should not forget these words particularly at the present time when we have good grounds for speaking of the extreme instability of capitalist stabilization. If I appraise in advance the context of the work of this Plenum, I may say that its leit motif is the *idea of working class unity*, the idea of trade union unity. I will again remind you here of the well known words of Lenin which point out that “you must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link...”‡ I think that at the present moment this “link” is the slogan of the *unity of the working class, particularly in the sphere of the trade unions.*

Two Perspectives of Revolutionary Development.

As you know, comrades, commencing from the Fifth Congress we have been working constantly confronted with two possible perspectives. To some de-

†- N. Lenin, “O znachenii zolota teper’ i posle polnoi pobedy sotsializma,” *Pravda*, Nov. 6-7, 1921. Reprinted in: *V.I. Lenin Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, 5th Edition. (Moscow: Politizdat, 1964), v. 44, pg. 223. In English: “The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism,” *V.I. Lenin Collected Works*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), v. 33, pg. 111.

‡- *Ibid.*, Russian edition: v. 44, pg. 225; English edition: v. 33, pp. 112-113.

gree already at the Third Congress [June 22-Aug. 12, 1921], the decisions of which are extremely important and particularly opportune and vital at the present time — I will refer to this again in the second part of my report — since the Third Congress and in particular since the Fifth Congress all our work has been based upon the consideration of *two* possible perspectives. How is this to be understood? This is a matter of two perspectives in the question of the *tempo* of development (and to some extent also the *path of the proletarian revolution*), but not in any sense a question as to the inevitability of the proletarian revolution. We are certain that the dictatorship of the proletariat is on the agenda of history. Every stage of historical development confirms the soundness, the flawlessness of our course for the proletarian revolution. We consider that even our own generation is destined to experience the victory of the proletariat on a world scale. In this respect we have *one* perspective, which is absolutely immutable. But in respect to the tempo, period — and this is a factor of extreme importance for each Party — and partially also in respect to the path of the proletarian revolution, as I have already said, we should reckon on the possibility of two perspectives in our work, as was quite clearly stated at the Fifth World Congress.

On the Tempo of Revolutionary Development.

In the resolution of the Fifth Congress we indicated that in the given historical stage the Comintern must take into consideration two possible perspectives: (1) the *rapid* maturing of revolutionary conflicts, under which the victory of the proletarian revolution can be achieved in 3, 4, 5 years, and (2) the *slow* maturing, the *protracted* development of the world revolution.

It stands to reason, comrades, that the existence of two possible perspectives in our struggle and work has its drawback: at times it is estimated as eclecticism, is interpreted as the absence of a firm Comintern policy on the most important questions. At other times — and this is quite understandable from the point of view of the subjective moods of each of us, we would have preferred to start from a less rosy perspective, in actuality does not arise from our eclecticism, nor from the lack of farsightedness on the part of the Comintern,

but it is dictated by the trend of world historic development in the period which the Comintern has passed through. I might remind you, comrades, that in the history of Bolshevism and of the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin, there was also, before the Comintern was founded, a situation when we had to reckon with dual perspectives. After 1905, the Bolsheviks did not doubt the inevitability of a second revolution: after the defeat of 1905 they were firmly convinced that the second revolution would infallibly take place since the first had not solved the revolutionary tasks and since the revolutionary forces had remained. But with respect to the tempo and time of the second revolution — would it take place in 2 years' time or in 10 years' time? — on this question after 1905 we had to consider two possible perspectives for a very long period.

At that time, there were also attempts to characterize the Bolshevik position as a kind of eclecticism. Yet it was not eclecticism, but historic dialectics, Marxist-Leninist treatment of the question. In summing up the whole position, the Bolsheviks arrived at the conclusion that in respect to the tempo of development of the second revolution they would temporarily have to reckon with perspectives of a *dual nature*. And this factor by no means made the tactics of the Bolshevik Party opportunistic or insufficiently firm.

We are experiencing an analogous situation at the present time with the sole difference that on a world scale the situation is much more complicated than in a simple country; after the world imperialist war, after the victory of the Russian Revolution and in particular after defeats in various countries, the situation is very complicated and to predict in advance the tempo and route on a world scale is now much more complicated.

The time has come when we can analyze much more objectively and calmly *the causes and lessons of our defeat in Germany in 1923, of the two defeats in Bulgaria, and finally the last defeat in Reval* — the period during which these defeats were incurred was a very difficult one in the Communist movement. We should approach these events not as historians, but as revolutionaries. The defeat of 1905 served as a subject of study for Leninism in 1906, 1907, 1908, and the subsequent years. Immediately after the defeat, we did not have a sufficiently experienced and objective outlook for a sober and calm analysis of these events.

Comrades, while estimating at this time the lessons of the *German defeat*, and one might say those throughout the whole of Central Europe, we should first of all note that these lessons emphatically bring to the fore the question of the *necessity of winning the masses*. In this report I cannot deal specifically with these lessons, they should be a theme of independent study. For the time being I will confine myself merely to calling upon the Communist International to devote as much time as possible to these events and to ponder over them in connection with the task now facing us, *the task of winning the majority of the working class* on the one hand, and of *establishing correct relations between the proletariat and the peasantry* on the other.

I return to the question of dual perspectives dealt with at the beginning. If I were asked at this time as to whether we should not reject these perspectives in view of the infirmity of capitalist stabilization, and to confine ourselves to only one, I would reply: *no* — on the question as to the tempo of the revolution we still have to take into account *two* possible perspectives (and on the question of the route — still more so) and I will endeavor to show the necessity for this in my subsequent analysis of the present situation.

On the Path of the Revolution.

First of all *on the question of the path*. At first we were rather inclined to over-concentrate our vision on Central Europe. That was at a time of what we might call a German “distraction.” It seemed to us that after Russia, it would inevitably be Germany’s turn for revolution. At the last Enlarged Plenum in 1925 we had to devote more attention to Great Britain, putting off the German revolutionary perspective. By the end of 1923, the position of German capitalism was extremely difficult and therefore the change which occurred in 1924-25 as a result of the temporary stabilization also seemed particularly striking. Therefore, at our Enlarged Executive at the beginning of 1925, we took a rather sceptical attitude towards the question of the maturity of the revolutionary situation in German. Now again economic and political difficulties have swept over Germany and Central Europe. There is no doubt that capitalism has been relatively stabilized in the Balkans, but at the same time even now the Balkans may be for

capitalism a source of greatest surprises.

At the present time a new and exceptionally important factor has sprung up — the *movement in China*, which also holds many surprises.

You will see, comrades, how difficult it is even to make a general estimation of the situation or a determination of the geographical route of the proletarian revolution. While endeavoring to appraise the situation on a world scale we should say that obviously the revolution is preeminently upon the agenda in Europe and only slightly less so in the East. But we see that the European revolution is closely connected with the rise of the national-revolutionary movement in the East; both processes are closely interwoven and develop in parallel. Then comes America. (1) *Europe*; (2) *The East*; (3) *America*. At the same time, comrades, both in Europe itself and in the East and in America, one must also distinguish the special, mostly clearly significant points, particularly, in America, the important role which I think the South American states are destined to play. This is our presentation of the question of the possible future route of the revolution. I think, comrades, that here also we must take into account various possibilities, various perspectives. The growth and maturity of the Comintern should infallibly be shown in its ability to foresee and reckon with all possible routes of the proletarian revolution, and to draw the necessary practical conclusions therefrom.

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II. On the “Stabilization” of Capitalism.

The Menshevik Bourgeois Estimation of “Stabilization.”

How did this question stand a year ago? Almost as soon as we had pronounced the word “stabilization” the leaders of the Second International, in particular the German Social Democrats, began distributing leaflets in Berlin exultantly announcing to the world that “in Moscow it has been decided to renounce the revolution and the proletarian dictatorship.” As a matter of fact this never even entered our heads. It stands to reason that we have not for one moment renounced the revolution. We merely stated what corresponded to the true state of affairs and which to some extent

also remains in force at the present moment — a certain stabilization in the situation of capitalism, a stabilization that was relative and weak, but nevertheless a stabilization.

Wherein lay the difference between us and the Social Democracy on this question, between us and say, the school of Kautsky, Hilferding, and Otto Bauer? The difference by no means lies in the fact that we denied the existence of signs of a temporary, relative stabilization of capitalism in one country or another. No, we see these signs, we speak about them openly and will continue doing so. We are sufficiently strong so as not to build up illusions for ourselves, we are sufficiently strong to look dangers straight in the face, we are sufficiently strong to estimate the enemy and its forces in the proper manner. Wherein lies the difference? The real difference, comrades, is in that the Social Democrats view stabilization not as something relative and transitional — they see in it a whole new historic epoch of capitalism and consider that capitalism will continue to exist during a long period. “Yes, capitalism waged war, but now it is recuperating and possibly after the war it will only become stronger; it will still exist for whole decades, if not for centuries.” That is the attitude of the Social Democrats.

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The difference between us and the Social Democrats does not at all consist in our denial of the temporary, transitional, short-lived, and weak stabilization of capitalism in this or that country. We see this stabilization, we point it out and we will continue pointing it out in accordance with the actual condition of affairs. The difference consists in our predicting, as before, the death of capitalism. Our diagnosis is the same as before: the death of capitalism, dictatorship of the proletariat within a comparatively short time! The diagnosis of Social Democracy is different. It predicts the revival of capitalism for decades and even for a whole century, its existence during a new and prolonged epoch.

A Correct Criterion for the Appreciation of Stabilization.

Some comrades said quite correctly that at the 1925 session we did not define clearly enough the character of “stabilization.” We are not going to assert that

in the theses now before you the meaning of this term is fully elaborated. We will be only too glad to define it more precisely with the help of all comrades. But it is necessary to say at the outset what it is all about, what serves us as a criterion when we speak of stabilization.

When we speak of *the process of the reconstruction of world capitalism*, we must say with what epoch we are comparing the present epoch, if with the pre-war epoch 1913-14, or if we take as the point of issue 1919-20 — the years after the end of the war, when the bourgeoisie was confronted with greatest difficulties. We must differentiate between these two epochs, and in order to define exactly the term “stabilization” we must have both epochs in view. If we take as the point of issue the pre-war epoch 1913 or the beginning of 1914, we can say that, with the exception of America, hardly in any of the capitalist countries has the pre-war level been fully reached. Capitalism today is quite close to this level, but it has not reached it yet. Moreover, comrades, we must bear in mind that since 1913 the population has increased. In so-called “normal times” the growth of the population is supposed to be accompanied by a growth of the productive forces. But if we take as the point of issue 1920, namely, the epoch of the end of the war, we can say that relative stabilization has taken place in many capitalist countries.

However, world economics are a phenomenon too complicated for their different historical periods to be judged by simple comparative figures. If we take for instance *the world production of coal* in 1923 and in 1924, we will see at the first glance an extraordinarily satisfactory state of affairs: in 1924 the production of coal exceeded by 24 million tons the pre-war production. However, all of us probably know of the terrible crisis through which the British coal industry is going and with it the entire national economy of Great Britain. Coal troubles are also experienced by other countries. What is really the matter? The matter is that evidently a certain redistribution of productive forces has taken place throughout the world (this is also shown by the reduction in the world export of coal from 191.5 million tons to 146.7 million tons). Evidently a considerable number of countries which were consumers of coal have begun to use their own coal or forms of power other than coal. The war, which severed inter-

national economic relations, compelled many countries to adopt more economical machinery, with respect to fuel — white coal, peat, oil, etc. Before the war the percentage of vessels using coal was 87%, at present it is not more than 65%.

The partition of Europe itself with its numerous customs walls, with its protectionism, its as yet unstabilized valuta and unsettled debts, precludes the idea that the process of capitalist restabilization can be carried out on simple straightforward lines. Moreover, if we consider that there has been a general turn towards America on the part of world economy, that we witness the decentralization of the British Empire, that finally, the war has stimulated a powerful anti-imperialist movement in the East, we will understand that the “process of stabilization” is not such a simple matter for capitalism. It demands great expenditure, many sacrifices on the part of someone. Let us consider at whose expense this process of “stabilization” is taking place, how there can be achieved this new *consolidation*, this “equilibrium” which capitalism has as yet been unable to realize? Chiefly *at the expense of the toiling masses, at the expense of the workers as a whole.*

Stabilization at the Expense of the Workers.

In our theses we pointed out two main sources of stabilization:

1. Intense exploitation of the workers.
2. The so-called American “aid.”

Bourgeois stabilization is being achieved in the various countries. Among these methods...we must differentiate between the *German method*, which consists in the so-called “rationalization of production,” namely, its trustification and in the accompanying parallel process of bankruptcies. Here stabilization is mainly achieved at the expense of the toiling masses and has in its wake reduced production, unemployment, high prices, heavy taxes, etc. The other, the *British method* is the method by which “stabilization” is introduced in the interests of finance capital, but against the interests of industry, in *the form of deflation*, which is based on the desire to make the pound sterling “keep pace” with the dollar. To all intents and purposes this method is also applied at the expense of the workers, for it results in a stoppage of export and unemployment with their consequence — reduced

wages.

* * *

The *French method* is somewhat different: it is *the method of inflation*, which for a time affects the proletariat much less than the petty bourgeois elements. But here too, stabilization is in the end obtained at the expense of the workers.

Finally, the *American method* of stabilization consists in *levying interest on loans* when they are floated, e.g. by Morgan, and in reducing this interest almost to naught to preserve the paying capacity of the debtor, if the interest on these loans is to be paid to the American government. Such was the case last year with respect to the Italian loans: the Italian government will pay the American government on its war debt a lower interest than it will have to pay to Morgan for the recently floated “stabilization” loan amounting to \$100 million. In other words, the “magnanimity” of America towards “stabilizing” Europe is practiced entirely at the expense of the American petty bourgeoisie, working class, and farmers.

The question of who pays for the present “stabilization” can be explained by the *taxation policy* of the various countries. In Great Britain, last year’s taxes compared with pre-war taxes amounted to 258%, in the USA to 195%, in France to 293%, in Japan to 192%, etc.

To give a more or less clear definition of modern “stabilization of capitalism” several other items must be considered.

Firstly, *unemployment*. Five million unemployed in Europe is a fact of enormous importance. Unemployment has largely become a chronic status. Every child knows that there is chronic unemployment in Great Britain. It is as clear as day that we shall soon have the same situation in Germany. It is even possible that the figures which I have quoted are an underestimation. Chronic unemployment in Germany to the extent of one to one-and-a-half million is almost certain.

Here are *figures on unemployment* in the most important countries:

Germany	2,500,000
Great Britain	1,500,000
Poland	400,000
Austria	200,000
Czechoslovakia	100,000

Another important feature is the *question of wages*.

Official statistics in the various countries give exaggerated figures, and trade unions, when they deal with this question, included in their statistics only separate categories of workers, frequently in separate districts of the country, with the result that no exact dates are available for any country. Therefore, the figures given below are only approximate.

***Fluctuation of Real Wages
in the Main Countries of the World***

Taking 1913 as 100, we get:

	1923	1924	1925
USA	116.8	126.8	128.1
Great Britain	97.1	97.3	99.1
France (miners)	97.3	96.3	91.7
Germany	62.2	71.2	75.1
Italy		97.3	89.7
Romania/Bulgaria	<i>Wages in 1925 do not exceed 50% of pre-war level.</i>		

To sum up: *five million unemployed, a low level of wages, a heavier burden of taxation, and growth of European indebtedness to America*, etc., etc. — such is the “price of stabilization.” We are perfectly justified in saying that stabilization in its present form, even if it partially (and only for a time) consolidates the bourgeois order, is achieved by methods which in essence are tantamount to the revolutionization of the situation. If we take the most important countries and briefly analyze what has happened during this period since the moment when we first uttered the word “stabilization,” we will see that even in the foremost country of Europe, in Great Britain, there has been a change for the worse. It is true that during the last few months an improvement has taken place in the general economic situation. However, on the whole, the position of Great Britain in 1925-26 continues to grow worse.

A new feature in the existing situation is the extension of the crisis to another country, and to a victorious country at that — to France, which is going through a prolonged social, political, and financial crisis, gradually becoming more and more complicated.

Finally, an abrupt change has taken place in Ger-

many where, only a year ago, the state of affairs seemed brilliant. To many the change seemed abrupt, but in reality it was only what was to be expected. There you have also to do with an acute crisis, with an avalanche of bankruptcies, with severe unemployment — and this at the very beginning of the period when the results of the Dawes Plan became evident. Hitherto the effects of the Dawes Plan were hardly noticeable in Germany. This is only the beginning, and worse will follow. It is only this year that Germany will begin to feel the results of the Dawes Plan.

Fourthly, we have Poland, where the economic catastrophe has almost reached the breaking point. And Poland is very important, for it is the center of the colliding influences of Great Britain, France, and America, for it is an important center on which to a certain extent depends the trend of development on the one hand in Germany and on the other in Russia.

III. In the Various Capitalist Countries.

America.

Before the war the antagonism between Great Britain and Germany was the determining factor, and at present it is *the antagonism between America and Great Britain* which is becoming more and more that determinant. But it would be wrong to represent matters, as this is sometimes done, as if Europe in comparison with America is a mere pygmy. This is not so, if for nothing else, than by the fact alone that Europe has a population three times that of America. Europe has a population of 350 million, including over 100 million workers, while America has only a population of 115 million. This alone already means something. This antagonism must not be exaggerated; neither must it be underestimated.

One should not exaggerate the fact that America is at present *exporting* an enormous amount of *capital to Europe*. It is, of course, doing this, but the amount of the exported capital in itself is certainly no criterion. I am reminded of Comrade Lenin's book *Imperialism*, which gives the figures of the export of capital from Europe (before the war) — figures in many ways much more impressive than the present figures of the export of capital from America. At present the situation has been reversed. A decade sufficed to effect such

a radical change. But one should beware of underestimating this fact. One should above all bear in mind that we have to do here with differences between Great Britain and America which become more and more decisive.

I will quote a few figures. The *national yearly income* of the USA is \$60 billion. Of the \$9,720,000 worth of gold in the world, \$4,545,000 — almost half — belonged to America in 1924; at present, if I am not mistaken, it is almost 60%. All Europe is in debt to America. The latter can now permit itself the luxury of openly dictating political terms when granting loans. The most vivid example of this is perhaps the recent loan to Belgium. In this case America quite openly dictated the political conditions to Vandervelde and his government, namely, a reduction of the army, a slashing of the budget, and the “most favored nation” clause for the said loan.

The USA has a colossal share in the world production of the most important raw materials: 43.3% of the coal, 47.6% of the cast-iron, 49.3% of the steel, 70.9% of the oil, 50% of the cotton, etc. Of course one must not run away with the idea that this state of affairs is already a permanent achievement of the American economy. It is not so, for the post-war years with their alternating industrial crises and booms present an extremely variegated picture. During the last three years the USA share in the world production of the aforesaid raw materials has suffered a decline (coal 8%, cast-iron 16%, steel 12%, etc.). A further reduction of this share is not at all impossible. But nevertheless the share remains colossal. America needs a stabilized Europe, a stabilized world economy, otherwise there cannot be stability in its own affairs in spite of all its wealth. In other words: the limited success of world capitalism with respect to stabilization acts as a boomerang against America; perhaps not quite so strong, but it does hit. This is reflected in the instability of production, of international trade, with regard to international agreements and debts, and also in connection with the export of capital.

The USA is but one of the links of world capitalism as a whole (although the strongest link). Therefore the complaints of world capitalism, which after all have their root in the absence of real stabilization, will seriously affect the hegemony of America.

In conclusion, I must remind you that there are

in America symptoms of *another agrarian crisis* and in connection with this there is a revival of *the movement for a Labor Party*. The position of the upper stratum of the workers is not all bad, but considerable sections of unskilled workers have a hard life of it. Read for instance the article of such a man as Purcell in which he describes his trip to America. He has seen many things there and has come to the conclusion that the majority of the working class lives under fairly difficult conditions. Large sections of unskilled workers have a hard time of it. One must reckon with the fact that at present hegemony is in the hands of America, that the differences between America and Great Britain are becoming a determining factor, one that must be reckoned with and which predetermines our further decisions.

Great Britain.

I will deal now with Great Britain. Here we have an utterly different situation. Its loss of a privileged position in the world market is a fact. I refer to such a prominent person as George Harvey, former American Ambassador in Great Britain and now editor of the *North American Review*, one of the most influential economic periodicals in America. In an article headed “Dangerous Situation in Great Britain,” which appeared in that periodical at the end of 1925, he gives the following estimate of the economic position of Great Britain:

“The times when Great Britain was *the* manufacturing country are past. At present its functions are those of ‘mediator’ or industrial negotiator between the producers of raw material and the consumers of manufactured goods. Moreover Great Britain finds it more and more difficult to compete with others, as it has to reckon with enormous transport cost.”

In this article Harvey also refers to the statement in the British press by the chairman of the Administrative Board of the Federation of British Industries, Mr. Allan Smith:

“Thus we have reached a state when it will be necessary to consider the liquidation of our national income and to begin to live on our capital. If something is not done in time to revive foreign trade we will soon reach a state of national bankruptcy.”

When British capitalists themselves begin to talk

about the liquidation of their national income and about national bankruptcy, it is a serious argument that goes to show that capitalist development in Great Britain is on a downward grade.

Harvey winds up his article by appealing to America to help the ancestress of the Anglo-Saxon peoples.

This is what he says:

“Since it is said that we must help the whole world, our attention should be turned first and foremost to Great Britain. In the name of racial affinity the USA must give the question of Great Britain second place immediately after the question of its own country.”

What “manner of help” the Americans are giving to their Anglo-Saxon sister, however, is exemplified in one of the British Dominions — *Canada*, which has of late almost ceased being a British Dominion. I dealt with this already at the last session of the Executive Committee. Today I will merely quote a few figures concerning USA and British investments in Canada.

Before the war, in a period of 14 years (1900-1913) the investments of foreign capital in Canada can be expressed in the following figures:

Great Britain	\$1,743,118,000
USA	627,794,000

A proportion of 3:1. “Other” countries invested a comparatively small sum — \$162,715,000.

At present British and USA investments in Canada are almost equal — the share of each of the two countries is \$2.5 billion, viz. the proportion is now 1:1.

The very character of the investments of capital of these two countries differs. The British investors in Canada are rentiers (holders of bonds, receiving only interest) and the American investors are owners receiving not only interest but profit from their enterprises.

American “Anglo-Saxons” take the most active part in the process of the dismemberment of the British Empire, which we are now witnessing. The community of Anglo-Saxon interest is becoming more and more questionable and the fine phrases about help to the “ancestress” of the Anglo-Saxon peoples do not alter the fact that the “ancestress” is on the way to the

most serious economic convulsion.

However, it would be wrong to assume that this will happen very soon, that within a few months there will be a revolution in Great Britain. The main thing at present is that the trend of development, which a year ago was hardly discernible, is now assuming a quite distinct form. Moreover I must point out that the British bourgeoisie, the conservative bourgeoisie, is still perusing its plan to make war on the Soviet Union. You know the article published in the February issue of the British journal *Fortnightly Review* under the pseudonym of “*Augur*.” The rumor is that Mr. Augur is very intimate with Mr. Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary. This is what he writes:

“If the Soviets will not take advantage of the opportunity which is theirs at present, if they fail to join the concert of European nations, if they will ignore the necessity to show their desire to arrive at a peaceful agreement, they will inevitably be expelled from the family of European peoples, and in the event of bad behavior they will make themselves the object of the application of protective measures which in the interest of peace will be far from peaceful.”

This sounds almost like an ultimatum. What measures can be called “far from peaceful”? I think *military* measures! Let all the British workers hear this! They must, all of them, understand that just now, when the British bourgeoisie is rather uneasy on the eve of a conflict with the miners, it is again turning its attention to the plan of something like an armed attack on the USSR. I presume that we must now fully realize — if we want to be the World International — the fundamental difference in the position of the proletariat of these two countries.

The Attempt to “Americanize” the Labor Movement.

In Great Britain we witness a development of the working class which is favorable to *the trend of revolution*, while in America it is of *a reactionary character*. The best proof for this is found in the following two documents, one of which attests the revolutionization of the British Labor Movement — i.e. the resolution adopted at the Scarborough Congress, a resolution on imperialism which brings forward the slogan: “The right of all peoples of the British Empire to self-determination, including the right to complete severance

from the Empire.”† One must at least have a certain knowledge of the British Labor Movement to appreciate the significance of this fact. We all of us know that for a long time so-called “Labour imperialism” reigned supreme in Great Britain, that the colonial excess profits of the British capitalists have been the soil which nurtured and brought forth the labor aristocracy. But if we have before us a resolution adopted by the Trade Union Congress and framed in an almost Leninist spirit, this goes to show that *the development of the British Labor Movement is proceeding along the revolutionary path.*

The second document refers to America. It exposes very clearly the basis of the modern labor movement in the USA. This document is the proclamation of the American Federation of Labor to all American workers, adopted in October 1925 at its Convention in Atlantic City. This resolution contains the following statement:

“The American Federation of Labor stands firmly and irrevocably for democracy, for the people’s right to govern and to dispose of their own destiny by means of their own political apparatus.

The American Federation of Labor, inspired by pure idealism, protests against despotism, bureaucracy, and dictatorship, be their character violent or benevolent.

The American Federation of Labor protests most emphatically against revolution and against the application of violent measures where democracy exists, and where the people have an opportunity to change their government by means of the constitutional rights granted them.

The American Federation of Labor condemns the philosophy of Communism, which is an attribute of the Soviet Government and which forms the foundation of its structure and policy.

The American Federation of Labor protests against the philosophy and dogma of Communism and against the dictatorship existing in that unhappy and oppressed country.

The American Federation of Labor declares war on it, not a defensive war, but war of the most energetic and offensive character.

The American Federation of Labor demands that the Government of the USA maintain its position of nonrecognition of the Soviet regime. We praise our government for its courage, for its determination to adhere

to the fundamental principles of democracy and not to allow itself to be influenced either by diplomatic intrigues or by business interests.

The American Federation of Labor will consistently take action against the spreading of Communist propaganda in any shape or form in the USA and on the Western hemisphere. It is proud of the pledge of the organized workers of Mexico to work in this direction jointly with us.

The American Federation of Labor declares that its structure as well as its principles are founded on democracy. Despotism and Democracy cannot be made to agree. To capitulate before the enemy is tantamount to playing into his hands.

The American Federation of Labor proposes also in the future to take adequate measures for the protection of its integrity against the destructive, disintegrating, and demoralizing doctrines of Communism and to do its utmost to protect from their pernicious influence the democratic institutions of our republic. We are for America, for a democratic America, and we want the whole world to know it.”

This proclamation was adopted by the Convention of the American Federation of Labor, and this, comrades, I consider the best illustration of the hypocritical and renegade mood of the “labor” leaders which they endeavor to piously conceal behind the “high” philosophy of democracy, “pure idealism,” the right of peoples to govern and to dispose of their own destiny, etc.

The USA is at present *the promised land of reformism.* “American” methods are beginning to be transplanted to European soil. I have a feeling that West European comrades are not yet fully aware of the important role this “*Americanization*” is bound to play. In Germany we already notice that the German Social Democracy is pitting America against the Soviet Union. In Germany a beginning has already been made with the establishment of labor banks, etc. The slogan of *Fordism* is already being brought forward there, and this slogan is becoming the ideal of the German Social Democracy in lieu of Marxism. Up till now this phenomenon is limited to Germany, but, comrades, we must realize that this “*Americanization*” is bound to progress in the near future. An effort will

†- “The Trade Union Congress considers the British government’s domination over non-British peoples as a form of capitalist exploitation for the purpose of guaranteeing to the British capitalists 1. cheap sources of raw material; 2. the right to exploit cheap and unorganised labour power and the utilization of the competition of this labour power to lower the existence level of the workers in Great Britain.

The Congress declares its determined opposition to imperialism and resolves: 1. to support the workers in all parts of the British Empire in the organisation of trade unions and political parties for the protection of their interests, and 2. to support the right of all the peoples of the British Empire to self-determination including the right of complete severance from the Empire.”

The resolution was adopted by 3,820,000 against 79,000. (*Daily Herald*, Sept. 14, 1925.)

be made to introduce so-called American methods in all countries with a developed labor movement. The propaganda in favor of the Soviet Union will be challenged by the propaganda in favor of imperialist America. Moreover, comrades, it is said — and we must not underestimate this — that these gentry will be able to hawk their goods throughout Europe.

It is true that in America there are big *labor banks* (as many as 40 banks with a capital of \$200 million) which are of course completely dependent on the banks of the big bourgeoisie and which are connected with them organizationally. An attempt is being made to represent this as a new epoch of the labor movement when capitalists and workers, having associated themselves for the realization of commercial profits from joint stock companies, will lead mankind along a new path without any social convulsions whatever. Thus we find in almost every number of the organ of the American Federation of Labor a whole page of advertisements of the *Rockefeller Oil Trust* under the sensational heading: “Who are the capitalists in the Standard Oil Company?”

The answer is: “The 49,000 shareholders including 14,000 employees. Among the small shareholders are manual and office workers, widows, orphans who are in this way utilizing their savings — maybe that among them you will find your milkman or your laundress.”

The advertisement winds up thus: “And this is called capitalism! Is it really capitalism?”

Thus this must be called “Socialism.” We find, for instance, in the organ of the American Federation of Labor a big advertisement of a labor bank: “The hand that writes this bank check is the hand that rules the world. Workers themselves can rule the world if they will take their savings to these banks.” At present these labor banks are the subject of a distinct school of thought.

* * *

In Europe, too, the workers are beginning to be fascinated by the labor banks, first and foremost in Germany. The German Social Democrats are now endeavoring to popularize Bernstein’s theory concerning small capitalists. In America the amalgamation between trade unions and capitalism is becoming more and more evident, the leaders of the American Federation of Labor speak quite openly of the “Monroe Doc-

trine” as applied to the labor movement. There are already big mixed trade unions of employers and workers. This movement is assuming a systematic character.

Destruction of capitalism through the participation of workers and small shareholders! The old, old story! Remember what Kautsky wrote against this! Bernstein in the days when Kautsky was a Marxist, what Hilferding and Rosa Luxemburg wrote about this “theory.” Perhaps it would be as well to compile an anthology on this question to freshen up our memory.

While in Great Britain we witness the revolutionization of the working class because of the objective situation, while the premises for the development of a labor aristocracy are disappearing there, in America we see just the opposite.

What is the American Federation of Labor? In reality it is the organization of the labor aristocracy. In America there are over 4 million skilled workers and in the ranks of the American Federation of Labor there are only 2,800,000 workers, including of course a certain number of unskilled workers. Thus of 30 million workers there are only 2.5 million organized. Of course, these are the cream of the aristocracy, as Comrade Pepper correctly said — *the labor aristocracy of the labor aristocracy*.

Such is the social basis of reformism in America.

In the epoch when in Great Britain the objective premises for the development of a labor aristocracy are disappearing, conditions favorable for the development of a labor aristocracy are springing up and becoming consolidated in America. These new American methods are transplanted to other countries, and we must take this into account.

We are on the way to becoming the *World International*. The labor movement is developing more and more. *West European workers are sending delegations to the USSR*, Social Democrats send their leaders to America. A Social Democratic Trade Union Delegation has already visited America and has found a common language with the American trade unions. An important member of the German trade union movement, Tarnow, made the following statement at the Convention of the American Federation of Labor: “Bolshevism is a good religion for starving and desperate people.” The American delegates, the “fat boys” (as they are called there) of the Federation agreed with

him. You can read in the *New York Times* that the American working class has entered upon a new era. "The trade unions in America have officially put an end to irresponsible methods of struggle and have cleared the way for collaborating with the employers for the solution of the industrial problem to the advantage of both sides." Thus at the time when in Germany these new tunes are only beginning to be acclimated, in America they have a quite firm foundation. In North America we are no doubt confronted with a prolonged period of *the bloom of the labor aristocracy and its ideology*.

I think that all our Parties are now interested in the study of this new ideology. What is said today in America will probably be said tomorrow in Czechoslovakia, Germany, etc. If we want to understand today the substance of reformism, if we want to examine the recesses of its heart, its very substance, if we want to read its innermost thoughts, we must certainly study the ideology of the American movement.

France.

I will now deal with France. I have already said that the new feature in the political situation of the current year is that France, one of the victorious countries, is on *the threshold of a crisis*. It is not merely a financial crisis, as some comrades assume, it is an economic, political and consequently also a *social crisis*.

The French crisis has its roots in the entire post-war economics of France. Its cause is the adventurous policy indulged in by France during the period of the occupation of the Ruhr. France, which played the role of universal creditor, is becoming herself a debtor. She had to cede the role of political leader of Europe to other more powerful bourgeois countries. These causes find their reflex first of all in the present internal position of France, and they show that the crisis is not only a financial crisis.

On the other hand, we cannot agree with the assertion that the present position in France can be compared with that of Germany in October 1923. This would be an extremely optimistic appreciation, not at all in keeping with reality. We must not lose sight of the tempo of the movement, we must see the situation in its proper light. I think that we have at present in France a situation extremely favorable for the pro-

letariat to assume a leading role.

We witness at present in France the development of *the struggle between the big and the petty bourgeoisie*, including, last but not least, the peasantry. The peasants and small rentiers are almost five-sixths expropriated owing to inflation and heavy taxes. Their position at present is such that, if we act cleverly, the labor movement will be given a great impetus towards further development. That is why I said in my introductory remarks that the French Party is going through a period when it will be able to make a mighty step forward, provided it adopts a correct policy. It will not only be able to become the leader of the entire working class, but it will also exercise influence on large sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. There is no way out for the bourgeoisie.

* * *

The crisis in France will be most acute when *the big bourgeoisie renounces inflation*. It is not yet willing to do so, for inflation is profitable to the bourgeoisie. It is saving the French capitalists from a trade crisis and gives an opportunity for the growth of big capital at the cost of the ruination of the petty bourgeoisie. It will endeavor to cling as long as possible to this juicy morsel, at least for another two months, and when at last it will be forced to surrender, the real crisis will begin.

France is in a peculiar position. Notwithstanding the financial and political crisis, there is hardly any unemployment there. Even the 2 million foreign workers who came to France during the first post-war years can earn money. As the crisis develops and when inflation is given up, the bourgeoisie will be compelled to restrict industry and to throw overboard first of all the 2 million foreign workers in order to save the situation.

Out of this another important task arises for our Party. It is absolutely necessary to bring *these two million workers under the influence of our Party*. Unfortunately it has done very little in this direction. In six months' time, they will probably be absorbed by Spain, Italy, Poland, the various countries where the misery is greatest and where the situation is objectively revolutionary. If we are a real International we must be able to take in hand these 2 million workers. They can become for us 2 million agitators and organizers of the proletarian revolution in all countries.

The present situation in France creates very favorable objective conditions for the development of the Communist labor movement. The petty bourgeois government as represented by the Left Bloc exposes to the whole population the robbery of the petty bourgeois elements and presents a classical example of parliamentary befogging of its electors. While the place to study reformism is America, the process of decay and treacherous character of petty bourgeois parties led by the Briands and Herriots — this “classical” bourgeois republicanism we must study in France. It is there in the example of the “Left Bloc” that we must show to the workers of the world what the “Left Bloc” really is, whereby leadership is actually in the hands of the big bourgeoisie. We must expose the “democracy” of a Briand to the proletariat of the whole world.

The French working class has no firm *organizational* traditions. There were no big parties in that country, no strong trade unions, but to make up for it it has a glorious tradition of revolutionary struggle. Comrade Lenin said more than once when he still lived in France that the French workers will sometime make a revolution “without noticing it themselves.” Organizational traditions are very weak in France. Only 10% of the workers are organized into trade unions there. This is a shame and the time has now come when we positively must organize at least 25%. Although there are no organizational traditions in the French working class, it has revolutionary traditions, and with the acuteness of the inevitable crisis much can be expected of France.

Germany.

I will deal now with Germany. Efforts are made to compare the present situation in Germany with that in 1923. This is, of course, also an exaggerated estimate of the acuteness of the present situation. But, comrades, we must admit that if anyone had asked us in March 1925, at the Fifth Enlarged ECCI, whether it were possible for the situation in Germany to reach its present stage of acuteness, the answer would have been in the negative. For did not we all assume that two or three years of relative stability were guaranteed, and some representatives of the ultra-Left predicted even a decade. (*Interruption by Scholem*: “Who for instance?”) This was said by Maslov. He said that one

would have to wait at least 10 years. We reckoned on two to three years relative stabilization.

But the contradictions of capitalism are so great that in spite of all its elasticity — and one cannot deny that as to the German capitalism, it is very elastic; it has learned much from the Versailles Peace, from the German Revolution in 1918, and also partly from our revolution — and yet we see that in Germany *the situation is much worse than we anticipated*. But I think the greatest peril for us would be to exaggerate the tempo of revolutionary development in Germany. Comrades, I think there is not as yet in Germany an immediately revolutionary situation. This certainly does not exist there! We must not harbor illusions. *Therefore, no concessions whatever to the ultra-Left*. Energetic struggle against them! It is just in situations such as this, when people are inclined to exaggerate, that it is easy to lose one’s head and *ruin the Party* without wanting to. This is the real “ultra-Left” peril. I think that everyone can see it. There will be henceforth in Germany *chronic unemployment* to the extent of one to one-and-a-half million unemployed. Even if Germany, perhaps this year in the spring of 1926, will emerge temporarily from this terrible crisis, even if the *parliamentary crisis* were to be solved there — although I fail to see how it can be solved, how they can get out of this blind alley — the situation is much more favorable for the work of our Party than we were led to assume not so long ago.

We must enter to the credit ledger of the revolution everything which is in our favor, but at the same time we must remain calm and must take the sober view that an improvement of the capitalist situation is not out of the question in Germany. It is self-evident that America will not abandon Germany. If October 1923 were to be repeated in Germany tomorrow, do you really imagine that America would remain indifferent to the fate of Germany — where it has invested so much capital? On the other hand, it is self-evident that in spite of America’s desires, Europe is becoming revolutionized. On the one hand, America is “stabilizing” Europe, on the other hand, it is *revolutionizing* it — without inverted commas. Taking into consideration the pace of both processes, we can say definitely that at first America will not leave Germany to her fate. It will endeavor once more or even twice more to save her. This must not be underestimated, but one

must also consider that compared with 1925 the situation in Germany is much more revolutionary.

The East.

I will not deal at this time with the other countries. A few more words about the East. We are convinced that we have achieved much there, and this is correct. I have already said that one half of our attention must be turned to Eastern questions because we are a world Party — the World International. But there are “Left” exaggerations on this field. I am not surprised when a Chinese revolutionary who appears in our midst at the height of the struggles in this country imagines that he speaks for the Chinese people as a whole. In reality this is not as yet the case.

One of our main bases will be and should be the South American countries also. I will deal with this subject quite briefly. It is self-evident that the North American states which nurture the labor aristocracy, which have the whole of Europe in their grip, do not live only on the colonial, semi-colonial, and European excess profits but also on the South American countries. We are not yet accustomed to look upon the South American states as oppressed countries, but objectively this is their position.

We need not, of course, cherish illusions and lose our heads. *Our success is considerable.* The First International, the International of Marx, dared not even dream of such connections in the East. That the Kuomintang Party, which has 400,000 members, which the historical “tomorrow” will place at the head of the whole of China, is identifying itself ideologically with us already constitutes a very great success. In former times, proletarian revolutionaries dared not even dream of such things. This is enough to make one lose one’s head. But the Communist International must not cherish any illusions. *The success of the USSR*, which is building up Socialism, its role in the modern labor movement, its prestige in the ranks of the whole working class — all these are enormous successes which are apt to make one lose one’s head. We may well consider the growing movement of the peoples in the East as one of these successes.

Big work is in store for us in this part of the world, for we are making only *our first steps in the East.* The best confirmation of the correctness of Leninism,

to mention the latest factors of world historical significance, may be considered in our epoch *the unification of the national-revolutionary movement with the proletariat.* This mingling of two revolutionary streams guarantees us victory.

We are also achieving our first successes in the sphere of the *labor movement in the East*, where an extensive process of industrialization is taking place. This process is of enormous historical importance. If we succeed in capturing the colonies for socialism, and in rallying them behind us *before* the bourgeoisie of those countries has time to consolidate itself, we will be able to avoid the capitalist stage there. But, historically, another perspective is not out of the question. On the strength of this we must attach particular importance to the existence of an organized nucleus of the working class in the countries of the East.

At present, the labor movement is weakest in Japan. We must take measures towards the development of a mass movement in that country. There are opportunities for this, and at all costs we must take advantage of them.

If we take the present world situation as a whole, we must without exaggeration and without overestimation admit the correctness of our analysis made last year.

We look then as our starting point the possibility of two perspectives, and we shaped our tactics in a manner adaptable to the slower as well as to the more rapid pace of revolutionary development. In each case we had, of course, to take as our starting point the perspective of the slower development, utilizing the flexibility of our tactics to introduce the necessary corrections whenever a more rapid pace set in. On the main, the entire trend of events has borne out the correctness of our analysis. Developments in Great Britain, France, Germany, and Poland, as well as in the Balkans and in Central Europe, in the East and in the USSR, have negated all the assertions of our opponents and have shown the correctness of our analysis and the total absence of any ground for pessimism.

In America, the labor movement will probably find itself in very difficult straits for quite a number of years. The new American reformist methods are being transplanted to Europe, and this we must take into account.

A general survey of the picture shows us that we

are preparing gradually to change from *the defensive position* in which for a time we historically found ourselves in a number of countries, to *a new offensive*.

IV. Struggle for Unity and New Factors in the Labor Movement.

One of the Injunctions of Lenin to the Comintern.

I am coming now to the *tactical part* of my report. With your permission I will again be guided in what I say by the words of Comrade Lenin. This will be the best prologue to the subject before us. At the 3rd World Congress Comrade Lenin said:

“In Europe, where almost all the proletarians are organized, we must win the majority of the working class and anyone who fails to understand this is lost to the communist movement; he will never learn anything if he has failed to learn that much during the three years of the revolution.”†

I think it very appropriate to remind you just now of this statement by Comrade Lenin. I have already said that the slogan of “The Unity of the Working Class,” viz. of the capture of its majority, is at present the most important “link” of the chain. I am reminded of Max Adler’s article dedicated to Lenin’s death and published in the columns of the *Kampf*. After giving Lenin his due, Max Adler declares openly that a real Socialist spirit is to be found only in Bolshevism, that reformism and bureaucracy reign supreme in the Second International, etc. But he considers that Lenin’s greatest mistake was the overestimation of the revolutionary forces of the world proletariat. In his article, Adler writes as follows about this “mistake”:

“This was primarily the mistake of overestimating the revolutionary forces of the world proletariat which, because of inadequate information on world events at that time, seemed to him really well prepared. However, at that time he did not stand alone in this supposition, because of the Russian proletarian revolution and because the indignation of the proletariat in all the other countries was feverishly quickened by the war.”

It this accusation were correct, it would mean that the foundation of the Third International is rotten to the core. But this accusation is not correct. Adler also makes another statement in this article which interests me most of all at the present juncture. It is as follows:

“These were serious errors on the part of Lenin, the effects of which are felt in the Socialist movement even now. But Lenin was just the man who could have overcome this if his prolonged illness and premature death had not prevented him.”

Thus Lenin is just the man who could have re-established the unity of the working class throughout the world and could have led the proletariat along the right path. Comrades, I think that the same task is at present before the Communist International as a whole. This task devolves on the Comintern by the right of inheritance, and we take it upon us.

For a considerable period we, the Communist International, have had to struggle for *the very existence of the Communist Parties*. It was impossible for us not to leave the Social Democratic Parties.

Now we have entered upon another stage and we take upon ourselves *the task of reestablishing the unity of the world proletariat* as a whole. The task is of greater magnitude than our former task. During the first stage of Comintern activity, our task consisted in gathering together the *best revolutionary elements*, who everywhere constitute a minority in the working class and in all the workers’ parties, and in creating independent parties even if we had to resort to splitting parties already existing. Now we have before us a task of a higher order — the task of reestablishing world proletarian unity. But on what basis? This is the crux of the matter. I think that we are approaching a period when we will be able, generally speaking, to reestablish the unity of the world proletariat on our basis, *on the basis of Communism*. The United Front is nothing more or less than tactics of the reestablishment of real unity in the working class, of the unification of the entire working class with the exception of those sections of it which are alien to us, sections which will march together with the bourgeoisie right up to the social revolution. United

†- N. Lenin, “Rech’ v zashchitu taktiki Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala,” July 1, 1921. Published in *Biulleten Tret’ego kongressa Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala*, No. 11, July 8, 1921. Reprinted in *V.I. Lenin Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, *op. cit.*, v. 44, pp. 25-26. In English: “Speech in Defence of the Tactics of the Communist International,” *V.I. Lenin Collected Works*, *op. cit.*, v. 32, pg. 470.

Front tactics are tactics of the reestablishment of working class unity on the basis of revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Workers Delegations in the USSR.

There has been much talk in our circles lately about so-called “new phenomena” in the labor movement. It should be said that what we frequently erroneously call “new phenomena” are really old recurring “phenomena.” One thing is certain: we must carefully study everything that is new in the labor movement, in every corner of Europe, in every corner of the world. The first effort in this direction was made recently by Comrade Pepper in his article and also in his report. I consider his effort a very successful one.

We must compare seriously and thoroughly all the new facts and we must analyze them. However, there must be no exaggeration in this respect. It is erroneous to imagine that the new 2-1/2 International is on the point of being born, that the Left Wing of Social Democracy is stronger now than it has ever been before.

The *delegations to the USSR can be called a new phenomenon*. It is to a certain extent new. It is true that we had already one delegation with us in 1919 — a *British delegation*, but after that there was a long interval. Now delegations are again coming to us. This is new and significant because on the whole this movement is developing over the heads of the Social Democratic leaders. Already in August 1925 Jouhaux said at the Congress of the General Confederation of Labor in France when the question of sending a delegation to the USSR was raised: “I fully understand the Russian Revolution, and I forgive it, but I do not think it is worthwhile to send delegations to Russia, for they will inevitably come back from this tour with the impression of the complete impotence of the Soviet order.” Thus in August 1925 Jouhaux had still the cheek “to forgive the Russian Revolution,” and to point out the futility of delegations which could only get an impression of impotence of the Soviet Union.

The situation has changed since then. This movement is new and very important. It is as yet in an embryonic state and it is bound to develop. It is bound to assume new forms. Later on, *peasant delegations* will also find their way to the USSR. We have news from

Germany that even the police want to send their delegation to Soviet Russia. Our answer to them was, why not? But perhaps a little later. The tie is not quite opportune at present. There will also be another possibility — the dispatch of delegations from the USSR to Europe.

* * *

I think that the movement for the sending of delegations is as yet in an embryonic state. It will assume entirely different forms. However, these delegations are already something new, they are an interesting symptom of the epoch.

The other new phenomenon is *the establishment of the Anglo-Russian Committee for Trade Union Unity*. This important fact is closely connected with the position of world capitalism. If we did not witness in Great Britain the decline of imperialism and the decay of the labor aristocracy and consequently the revolutionization of the labor movement, the formation of such a committee would have been inconceivable. We were right when we said at the XIV Congress of the VKP(b) [Russian Communist Party] that the Communist International is now proceeding in its activity along two paths: the old path (formation of Communist nuclei and Communist Parties) and the new path (dispatch of delegations to the USSR and formation of the Anglo-Russian Committee).

The Left Opposition in the Second International.

The third phenomenon which is not quite new, but is looked upon as such, is a sort of *crystallization of the Left Opposition in the Second International*. Something of this kind also happened before. The new characteristic of the present position is its predominantly *trade union character*. I am not going to assert that the present Left groups are stronger than the late 2-1/2 International. Politically speaking, the 2-1/2 International was stillborn, because there can be no intermediate organization between the Socialist and Communist Internationals. But just at first the 2-1/2 International represented a mass movement — suffice to remind you of the Independent Socialist party of Germany with its 500,000 membership and several million votes at elections. A similar big movement represented by the 2-1/2 International was also to be found

in France. The present left groups of the parties of the Second International are considerably weaker than the late 2-1/2 International. One can hardly compare these groups with the 2-1/2 International, and its revival is hardly possible. Such geniuses as Balabanova and Steinberg will not succeed in concocting it a second time. Such comedies are not repeated in history. Therefore, Left oppositions will assume new forms, they will follow new paths — I think, above all, the trade union path. This is an interesting and characteristic peculiarity of the present situation. It is a sign that the present opposition is very close to the proletariat, for the reformist trade unions, in spite of their negative sides, are after all mass organizations and mouthpieces of some sections of the proletariat. Taking all this into consideration, we come to the conclusion that we must watch very carefully the oppositions which are assuming definite form in the respective Social Democratic Parties.

In connection with this, Otto Bauer's attitude is particularly interesting. I assume that all of you know his speech on the USSR. It is very characteristic and interesting. On the whole, the Austrian Social Democracy deserves careful study; firstly, it is a strong, and secondly, a clever counterrevolutionary party. In contradistinction to the British reformist leaders, one cannot possibly call the leaders of the Austrian Party simpletons. They know what they are about. This serious mass party constitutes the cleverest and the most elastic section of the Second International. Otto Bauer is the most prominent figure in the so-called Left Wing of the Second International and therefore his attitude is extremely symptomatic. It is self-evident that Otto Bauer's speeches on the USSR are made under the pressure of the Austrian Social Democratic workers. This is felt in every word he says. Bauer's speech is sugared, it flows like milk and honey. But we have not yet forgotten that this leader of the Left carried a resolution at the Marseilles Congress of the Second International [Aug. 22-27, 1925] which contains the following statement:

“The Communist International is spreading the illusion that it will be able to bring freedom to the workers on the points of the bayonets of the Red Army. The Comintern is of the opinion that a new world war must be stirred up if world revolution is to be victorious. The Communist International supports the revolutionary movement in Asia and Africa

hoping that with the support of these countries it will be able to deal a deadly blow to capitalism by the means of war.”

What does this mean, comrades? This is actual poison. What does the bourgeoisie want? War, of course! What is the meaning of the League of Nations? Also preparations for war! What are the toiling masses mostly afraid of? War! What are the peasant masses mostly afraid of? War! What is the working class mostly longing for? Peace! With what does the worst part of Social Democracy accuse the Communist International? “Red Imperialism.” In what consists the greatest attraction of the Soviet government? In its peace policy! This is our strongest point — our struggle against war. We are the only organization capable of seriously fighting for the prevention of war!

Otto Bauer knows all this perfectly well, but he is endeavoring to confuse the workers by subtly poisoning their minds. This assertion of Bauer is dastardly poisonous and treacherous. He offers you milk and honey, adding to it at the same time a big enough dose of a very strong poison. Thus, the best, the most prominent leader of the contemporary Left Social Democrats, a man with a past in the Socialist movement, is bringing such accusations against us. Scheidemann, Vandervelde & Co. have nothing more to lose, the only thing which can happen to them is to be for a time without salaries paid them by the bourgeoisie, but they are done for in the Socialist movement. It is different with Otto Bauer, he has still some remnants of socialist prestige. Therefore he parades as a person who has thoroughly understood the Russian Revolution and who, under certain conditions, is prepared to join the workers and “even” to come to Russia. Just imagine how happy Russia will be! There is a rumor that Mr. Lloyd George is also ready to come to Russia soon. In reality Otto Bauer is doing the work of the *Right Social Democracy*. He is *doing the work of the bourgeoisie*, he is adding grist to the mill of “Augur.” At the Marseilles Congress *Otto Bauer did a great service to the militarists and imperialists* of the worst type, of the type of “Augur.”

The “Left” Wing of the Germany Social Democracy is now much weaker than before. Perhaps just at present the Left Wing of the French Social Democracy is the strongest. The French have their Otto Bauer

— Compère-Morel. But neither must French Left tendencies be exaggerated. The French are magnificent orators, from their lips everything sounds much more impressive than from the Germans. Listening to Compère-Morel's speech one can really imagine that he is within five minutes of being a Communist. It was not for nothing that at the Congress of the French Socialist Party he was told: "Well, go to the Communists." But what is the objective role of Compère-Morel? Is he really a champion of radical policy? Nothing of the kind. The whole dispute at the Congress was — *in what proportion* Socialist participation in a bourgeois government is admissible. By their "Left" phrases, Left Wingers are only preventing workers from leaving the Social Democratic Party. They say: our Party is the opponent of the National Bloc, it favors a Socialist policy, etc. This is their objective role.

I do not, of course, mean to say that the very fact of the formation of a Left Wing of the French Socialist Party is of no importance whatsoever. But what really matters is not the astuteness of Monsieur Compère-Morel or of Otto Bauer, but the fact that the masses are veering leftward. The reasons for this turn to the Left are indicated in the theses, and I think it superfluous to repeat them here.

Relapses of Reformist Illusions.

I think that reformist illusions in the labor movement go in cycles — to a certain extent like the economic crises in capitalist development. I am not going to assert that the sections of the proletariat who have emancipated themselves to a certain extent from the influences of reformism are rid of it for good. Relapses are possible and inevitable. When we review the historic past of the labor movement we can see that the 1907-1917 period was a decade when reformism reached its highest development. I mention the year 1907 because it was then that the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International [Aug. 18-24, 1907] took place. At this congress on all main questions *the Right Wing was victorious*. At that time we failed to understand this, but now it is perfectly clear. The Stuttgart Congress, which adopted several Left resolutions on the colonial question (but only by a slight majority and thanks to the support of the Japanese), represented in reality the complete victory of the Right Wing in

the Second International. The period between 1907 and 1917, viz., the period preceding the Russian Revolution, was a decade of greatest bloom of open and hidden Right and Centrist reformism.

This was followed by a period when reformist illusions waned in the labor movement — about 1917-1920. These 3-4 years were times of terrible hardships for the masses, and of their rebellion against the war. This was a time when the Russian Revolution had a maximum attraction for the workers, when everyone was inclined to believe that world victory over capitalism was on the point of being won.

This was followed by a second cycle of reformist illusions in 1921-1925. As you see the duration of the cycle is not longer 10 but only 4 years. The infection was now not so great. The epidemic did not spread to the entire working class because we already had a Communist International, because we already had the victory of the Russian Revolution. I reiterate this epidemic was less destructive this time than in 1917, but nevertheless, the new cycle of reformist illusions was a fact.

I am inclined to think that just at present we are on *the brink of a new decline of reformist illusions*. The years 1925 and 1926 signalize the beginning of a new cycle in the modern labor movement. It would be wrong to imagine that the present development of the Left groups is greater than the 2-1/2 International, but it would be equally wrong to underestimate this phenomenon. It does not at all mean that even those sections of society which have been already captured by us, which vote for us, are definitely secured for us. This is not so, and I foresee a new cycle of reformist illusions. It will be perhaps shorter, for historical experience is accumulating, for the masses learn from it on a national as well as international scale. There is no doubt whatever that when Germany for the *third time* will be on the threshold of a revolutionary situation, the masses who have learned by experience will not be swayed by reformist illusions as strongly as before. But a new temporary revival of reformist illusions is more than probable. It will certainly happen in America and possibly also in Europe.

The Bankruptcy of the Opponents of the United Front.

It is with this perspective in view that we must approach the old and the new factors of the labor movement. We are justified in saying that the past year has not been in vain, that our tactics in spite of many mistakes were fundamentally right and contributed to the development of these new factors. They contributed to the differentiation in the ranks of the opponents and they also contributed to our consolidation, although not as rapidly as it should.

This perspective must also be considered when we approach the question of *United Front tactics*. I have already said that the tactics of the United Front is not an episode in the process of our struggle, it is the tactics of the whole epoch right up to our capture of the majority of the proletariat in the most important countries. I have endeavored to reconstitute for myself the history of the United Front on the basis of Comintern documents. In my opinion it is high time for some comrade to write a book on the history of United Front tactics, pointing out our mistakes and achievements and enumerating the evidence in favor of the campaign. Is there anyone among us who remembers that the question of the United Front was first raised in 1922, and that in the beginning our tactics met with opposition from the Ultra-Left as well as from the Right? This is rather interesting! Who opposed the tactics in 1922? At first it was Souvarine, but he soon gave way. Then Frossard became a determined opponent of these tactics. The then CC of the French Party criticized the United Front tactics from the Left viewpoint and branded it as treason. Do you remember how Comrade Roberto opposed these tactics on behalf of the Italian Party? I do not know where he is now, it would be as well to learn from the Italian comrades to what tendency he now adheres and if he is still in the Party.

(A voice in the audience: "He is still in the Party, but does not adhere to any particular wing!")

At that time, Comrade Roberto opposed United Front tactics on behalf of the then Bordiga CC of the Italian party, criticizing these tactics from a "Left viewpoint." Such was the state of affairs at that time. Was this a chance occurrence? I do not think it was. Tranmael, who at that time was still a member of the

Communist International, was also against United Front tactics and the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, and he too opposed these tactics from a "Left viewpoint." We all of us know where Tranmael is now.

What I have been telling you are facts. It would be well for Bordiga to remember where Tranmael is now.

For a long time *Humanité* fought against United Front tactics, and headed by Grossard endeavored to represent them as an attempted fraternization with Social Democracy.,

Against the Revision of the Fifth Congress.

In spite of all difficulties and impediments, United Front tactics prevailed. But we are not justified in saying that they have become finally consolidated; even now we have to overcome serious difficulties of the same nature. History to a certain extent is repeating itself.

The Third Congress was of exceptional importance. This Congress signaled the turning point, it intervenes between two epochs in the history of the Communist International. At that time up to the Third Congress [June 22-Aug. 12, 1921], we were all convinced of the proximity of the victory of the proletariat. We thought that it will be with us in a year or two. Lenin also believed that victory was near. In this respect the Third Congress represented the turning point. By that time we could already see that matters are not moving so fast. Lenin probably saw this sooner than the others.

But it does not follow from this that we must "revise" the decisions of the Fourth [Nov. 5-Dec. 5, 1922] and Fifth [June 17-July 8, 1924] Congresses. Both these congresses, just as the Third Congress, represent important stages in the history of the Communist International. A "revision" of their decisions would be a mistake. If anything in them require amendment, such amendments would be of a trifling nature. A revision of the decisions of the Fourth and Fifth Congresses we designate in our theses by the name of *liquidatorship*. And we must insist on this. Many matters by which the Fourth and Fifth Congress omitted settling will be settled by the Sixth Congress. But in substance the resolutions of the Fifth Congress are

perfectly correct.

At times the question arises: Was our appreciation of the Social Democracy correct? I think it was. Some people are pleased to make it appear as if the Fifth Congress placed fascism and Social Democracy on the same level. If it had done so, it would have embarked on the vulgarization of Bolshevism, but it did not say so. This is what it said in its resolutions:

"In America a hue and cry is raised in connection with the formation of a 'Third Party' of the bourgeoisie (the petty bourgeoisie). In Europe Social Democracy has in a certain sense become the 'Third' Party of the bourgeoisie. This applies particularly to Great Britain, where in addition to the two classical parties of the bourgeoisie, which formerly ruled the country alternately without any friction, the so-called Labour Party has become a governing factor. In reality its policy is very close to that of one of the wings of the bourgeoisie. There is no doubt whatever that the opportunist leaders of the British Labour Party will, for a number of years, in this or that combination of forces, do their share in the consolidation of the power of the British bourgeoisie.

There is also no doubt whatever that in France, in Great Britain, and in a number of other countries the leaders of the Second International are playing the role of bourgeois ministerialists while in reality they are the leaders of one of the fractions of the 'Democratic' bourgeoisie.

Social Democracy has long been going through the process of conversion from the Right Wing of the Labor Movement to the Left Wing of the bourgeoisie, and in some places into a wing of fascism. That is why it is historically wrong to speak of the 'victory of fascism over Social Democracy.' Fascism and Social Democracy (in as far as it is a question of the leading strata of both) are the right and the left hand of modern capitalism, which has received its coup de grace from the first imperialist war and the workers' first struggles against capitalism."

This is quite a different matter. Of course if we were to ignore the dialectic method, if the Fifth Congress applied to the Social Democracy a term which would be applied only to its upper stratum, if without any further ado fascism and Social Democracy were placed on the same level — this would constitute a very serious mistake. But the Fifth Congress did not commit such a mistake. Those who attribute to the Fifth Congress this mistake are vulgarizing its resolutions. Both the Right and Left have sinned in this respect. But in reality everything said by the congress was and is absolutely correct: In some places leaders of Social Democracy support the fascists. Is that not so? For instance in Bulgaria, where the Social Democrats openly participate in a coalition together with Tsankov? And are not the Social Democrats in Hungary con-

nected with the fascists? I ask you: how is one to interpret at present in France the Right Wing of the Socialist Party? What is its actual role? I reiterate, this is perfectly correct, the whole of 1925 is a confirmation of the viewpoint of the Fifth Congress.

The greatest change has taken place in Germany. But is it not true that a section of the leading upper stratum of the German Social Democratic Party is even now endeavoring to help the bourgeoisie, even in such an elementary question as *compensation to ex-royalty*? This is a question of making a gift of 2 billion marks to the former ruling princes. Don't you think, comrades, that any honest bourgeois republican would be against such compensation? In the given case, even a republican could well support the working class, and yet when one deals with the so-called Social Democracy, one must fight to persuade it to oppose openly any payment to ex-royalty. With such an example, can you really say that the upper stratum of the German Social Democracy is not a wing of its bourgeoisie?

I would perhaps understand the attitude of the Social Democrats if the throne had not been overthrown, if the puppet were still sitting on it. But as the puppet has been driven away, as the throne no longer exists, why, even from their point of view, should it be necessary at a time of terrible unemployment to give them a whole billion marks only because of "juridical" arguments for such compensation? What can we call this? Are we not confronted with the worst bourgeois elements in Germany?

Where are, then, the mistakes and exaggerations of the Fifth Congress? I already dealt with America. These quasi-socialist leaders declare that they welcome the refusal of the American government to recognize the USSR. They are openly opposing the present labor movement. Are not they the Third Party of the bourgeoisie? The appraisal by the Fifth Congress of Social Democracy was and is correct, and we have no reason whatever to alter it. At previous congresses Lenin's characterization of Social Democracy was even more harsh.

Today Comrade Pepper gave me a copy of the *Vorwärts* in which there is a description of Stampfer's speech in the German Reichstag on the question of fascism. This is what he said:

"It is the hard luck of fascism in all countries that it is

always looking for a leader without being able to find one. If fascism stands in need of a leader it must wait until some Socialist has gone crazy.”

Precisely. Very witty indeed. However, I do not know which of them is more crazy — Mussolini or the Social Democrats who just now are intent on giving Wilhelm & Co. a billion marks. Mussolini has not yet deprived himself of “princely domain,” and is looking after his affairs fairly well. In this quotation there is much more than Stampfer wanted to say, namely, that two subjects — fascism and the leaders of the Social Democracy — are not so very far apart. In some places they are phenomena of the same nature.

If anyone were to say that the fundamental appreciation of Social Democracy by the Comintern was not correct, he would be on the wrong path, and he should be dealt with as a liquidator. The appreciation was and remains correct and we have no reason whatever to alter it.

V. Errors and Successes in the Application of United Front Tactics.

Fundamental Errors of the Ultra-Left.

I have already spoken here of the errors involved in the application of United Front tactics. These errors are really considerable. Which were the most important among them? We have tried to enumerate them as follows:

The most serious error is *a formalist interpretation* of the tactics as a whole. Some comrades are of the opinion that United Front tactics consist in writing two or three open letters — whether they are good or bad is a secondary consideration. The letter has been written and there is an end to it. No answer is expected.

The second error is *overexposure*. They want to expose the Social Democratic leaders, but by the way they do it, they expose far more their own incapability. We had examples of this particularly in the German Party under the leadership of Comrade Ruth [Fischer]. I want only to remind you of the story of the Hindenburg elections.

(Scholem: “Hear, hear!”)

If Comrade Scholem says, “Hear, hear!” it must be so. We were holding an Enlarged Plenum during

the Hindenburg elections. To be fair one must admit that the comrades who were here, including Comrade Ruth, very soon recognized the correctness of our warnings against this error. Thereupon the comrades returned to Germany. Hindenburg was elected. The day after the elections, the CC of the Germany Communist Party wrote an open letter to the Social Democrats, in which it said: “We propose this and that, but we know that you will not do it, and the working class will then see how reactionary the Social Democratic leaders are. In other words, we are making these proposals with the full conviction that you are scoundrels.” This is the most classical example of how one should *not* expose. If you are actually convinced of this — and I am also convinced of it — keep our this subject in your official correspondence. Remember that if you abuse them you are giving them a loophole out of the situation.

The third error is *the proposal of unacceptable conditions*, unacceptable not for the leaders — this would not matter so much — but for the progressive section of Social Democratic workers whom we want to draw to our side. In connection with this we have a number of examples from France and America.

In France a very interesting illustration is the question of Morocco and Syria. Some of our French comrades came forward with the statement: “We are against war, we are for evacuation and therefore the condition for a United Front with the Socialist workers is the demand that they should immediately recognize our slogans of fraternization with the Riff troops, etc. We are in favor of the conversion of the Moroccan war into civil war.” The excuse for this was that in the book *Against the Stream*, for which I am partly responsible, Lenin brings forward in concrete form in a number of articles the slogan: “Conversion of the Imperialist War into Civil War.” Hence this must also be applied to the Moroccan war. They forgot all about the “little” differences between the present Moroccan war in France and the World War of 1914-1918. The *fraternization slogan* in itself is correct. One must, of course, call upon armies fighting for somebody else’s cause to fraternize. But it is a mistake to bring forward this slogan as *a condition* for the United Front with reformist workers whose mood is as yet Social-Patriotic.

We have also an interesting example in America

— the story of the Trade Union Educational League. I will not say that the entire blame for it must be put at the door of the American comrades. In the heat of factional struggle it was said: Foster alone is to blame. I think first of all that all of us bear a share of the blame and secondly, that the situation was such that pressure of the majority of the American Party sometimes compelled Foster and other active workers in the American trade union movement to go as rapidly as possible to the Left. This was a mistake. I am not going to investigate who was actually at fault. But it is a fact that our trade union organization (the League) which has to carry out the United Front in America now has also officially *the same program* as our Communist Party, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat and support of the Workers (Communist) Party. This means that one of the conditions of the United Front tactics is to a certain extent also recognition of the proletarian dictatorship. The only thing lacking are the 21 points.

The fifth variety of errors is *an incorrect interpretation of the question of the Labor Party*. This complaint is deeply rooted. Already at the Second Congress [July 19-Aug. 7, 1920] Comrade Lenin had to fight against some of the British comrades who advocated severance from the Labour Party. This was in reality a struggle over the interpretation of United Front tactics. The British were against them. I remember that several comrades supported this view — Serrati, I believe, and Bordiga. Do you think we should have achieved the successes which we at present witness in Great Britain if the British comrades were not inside the Labour Party? Just now we are so firmly established there that the Right elements want to expel us from the Labour Party. We are dangerous to them and there is a struggle over this question. In Norway this question takes another form. Those who do not know how to apply United Front tactics in a proper manner will be against the Labor Party.

On the other hand we meet with deviations when comrades imagine the advocacy for the Labor Party is tantamount to *liquidation of the Communist Party*. I do not know which of these two deviations is worse — probably they are equally bad. If the Communist Party were to act according to this second viewpoint, Communists would become only the Left tail of the Labor Party. Both errors are inadmissible and we must

fight against them.

There are also some psychological survivals of former errors. Here is an example: During the campaign for the expropriation of royalty, a Social Democratic worker offered to make common cause, but the Communists said: “You are a Social Democrat, and I do not want to have anything to do with you.” We will never achieve the United Front if we are going to use such methods as free fights with Social Democrats, such as took place in Berlin. Such things are certainly inadmissible.

Frequently it is discussed abstractly in our circles in what manner United Front tactics should be applied — “from above” or “from below.” Some comrades say: “From below — yes, but certainly not from above.” All these are the machinations of the *Ultra-Left*, intended to water down and bring to naught the tactics of the United Front. The Fifth World Congress gave a very clear answer to this question. It said: The United Front from below is always essential except only in the event of armed actions when sections of workers, befooled by the Social Democrats, fight on the other side of the barricades. In all other cases, always, United Front from below. Under certain concrete circumstances, it is perfectly admissible to have the United Front from below and at the same time from above. But one should always bear in mind that the Fifth Congress rejected the “United Front” carried out only from above, namely *parliamentary combinations*.

Ultra-Left Phraseology and Opportunist Actions.

Such are the Ultra-Left errors in connection with United Front tactics. There are also *Right errors*. A classical example of them is the *Saxony policy in 1923*. This is an example of the interpretation of the United Front as a direct political alliance with the Social Democrats. The hard lesson taught by the Saxony experiment to the Germany Communist Party and to the entire German working class will guard us from such errors in the future. We will not tolerate a repetition of such an experiment.

Here is another example from the recent life of the German Party — I am speaking of Zeitz. This error must be laid at the door of a small local organization. That is was a small and local organization is par-

ticularly characteristic of the Ultra-Left. It is dangerous to underestimate small, local organizations — it is they which sometimes expose very vividly sore spots. When it is a question of the upper stratum, that is quite another matter. There you have trained parliamentarians. They know how to speak in a manner not to be understood by anyone, and this is the main thing. But when a little local group makes itself heard, it will probably show better than anything else what is wrong with some of the Ultra-Left tendencies. I think that Zeitz's example is very convincing. More convincing than some of the long Ultra-Left declarations of recent weeks and days. I do not attach much value to these declarations. I sincerely wish that the Ultra-Left complaint should at last be cured — then there will be no need for declarations. The Comintern does not really need a Right and an Ultra-Left tendency. This symmetry serves no purpose. It would be all the better if it were really to disappear. But for the time being, *the Ultra-Left peril is very great in Germany*. We will struggle against it sharply and to the end.

Thus, the Zeitz example is more interesting than many declarations. The Zeitz organization, headed by the Ultra-Left, resolved to have a United Front with the Social Democrats and signed an agreement that Communists and Social Democrats must put a stop to mutual struggle by words or deeds or in any form whatever. What does this mean? It is reminiscent of the "Saxony" method in 1923. I think that this disease must be diagnosed and thoroughly liquidated. It is high time to investigate and overcome Ultra-Left as well as Right errors in connection with the application of the United Front tactics.

United Front Successes.

And now I will deal with the successes achieved in connection with United Front tactics. Did we have such successes? We did, and very considerable ones.

I think that the greatest successes were achieved, first of all, in Great Britain. What is done by the British Party is really United Front tactics.

Also successes in Germany. You all know of the magnificent demonstrations of the movement initiated in Germany for our permeation of the masses.

There were also successes in Belgium, which together with Austria deserves special attention. In Bel-

gium we have one of the strongest and most important parties of the Second International, not because His Excellency, Mr. Vandervelde, is reigning there, but because nearly all the workers are organized. But our Party, although small, is strongly welded together and has to its credit considerable achievements on the field of trade union and political unity.

There are also successes in the Scandinavian countries, especially in Sweden. We know of the Conference in Götenbourg. This is a prelude to a real gathering together of massive component sections of the proletariat under the banner of Communism. The Höglund abscess, which was the cause of the disease of our Party in Sweden, has been lanced. The Party has been purged of unhealthy elements and is now on the road to the capture of the masses. And where is Höglund now? Comrade Kilboom told that Höglund is editing a collection of works — what do you think, by whom? — by Branting. Höglund is the right man for this work. And "Uncle" Ström (Höglund's friend, as Kilboom says) heads a bureau for the combatting of Soviet Russia. Such is the fate of these leaders.

I should like to mention that the policy of the Chinese Party is another very characteristic and energetic application of United Front tactics in other than labor circles, in spheres of different social composition.

And other successes, which must be emphasized again and again, are the *delegations to the USSR and the Anglo-Russian Committee*, of which I have already spoken.

I think that our position is such that we need not trouble ourselves with an endless criticism of errors. We have also considerable successes to our account. This shows that United Front tactics are correct tactics, all that is needed is to see the difficulties and obstacles and to overcome them. The path we are following is the right path. We have with us all the objective conditions for the further application of United Front tactics.

The Struggle for the Masses.

As mentioned in the theses we must, precisely in this period of relative stabilization, be able to make ourselves the chief (if not the only) party of the working class. Is this possible? I think it is.

In this respect the example of the Czech Party is very instructive. A year ago there was a crisis in our Czech Party. Under the influence of this crisis, some of our Czech comrades thought the present period unpropitious for the application of United Front tactics, that it was utterly impossible, as uncompromising Bolsheviks, to continue to be a mass party. Some comrades said: Either Bolshevization, and then we will become a small party; or we become a big mass party and then Bolshevization goes by the board. Many thought that Bolshevization was fine in principle but that this was not the season for such fruit. We brought forward the slogan: *Through Bolshevization towards the Mass Party*, as Bolshevism is alien to all sectarianism. We said: It is just through intelligently conducted Bolshevization that we will become the party of the toiling masses. Our viewpoint has been fully confirmed by the Czechoslovakian example. The Czechoslovakian Party is becoming the main party of the working class of Czechoslovakia. Why was this possible? Because the Social Democratic Party is ceasing more and more to be the party of the working class. Comrade Paul Froelich, in his work on the German Social Democracy,† gives very interesting data:

Of the 844,000 members in March 1925 — 1,200 were leading party officials; 7,000 trade union officials; 600 members of the national and local parliaments; 6,600 members of municipal councils; 30,000 members of municipal administrations; 1,500 town mayors; 2,890 members of juridical bodies, etc. His investigation has shown that there are over 50,000 Social Democrats in the government apparatus and in that of labor organizations. In addition to these there are in the Social Democratic Party 100,000 small tradesmen and housewives (not wives of working men); 10,000 innkeepers; 70,000 intermediate and minor civil servants; and 100,000 technical and commercial employees. According to this computation, there are in the present Social Democratic Party 350,000 proletarians. But although the proletarian element predominates in the German Social Democratic Party, the petty bourgeoisie plays a decisive role in the party and trade union apparatus.

A few days ago I received interesting material from Comrade Varga about Bremen — a full investigation of the Social Democratic Party in Bremen,

which, although a local organization, is one of the best. In it we see the same picture.

The statistics refer only to 7,465 members out of 8,643; namely, 1,178 are entered in a file headed "Occupation unknown." The chief groupings are as follows:

Independent artisans	274
(bakers, hairdressers, bookmakers, tailors, etc.)	
Innkeepers	101
Small traders and merchants	65
Office workers, free professions	950
Civil Servants	307
Employees in private enterprises ...	162
Foremen	92
Shop assistants	84
Railway employees	83
Officials in trade union and party organizations	71
Engineers and technicians	46
Housewives	1,356
"Other professions"	31
Skilled workers	3,336
Unskilled workers	1,447

Total	7,465

If we are to count the first five groups as belonging to the petty bourgeoisie, we obtain the following picture:

Petty bourgeois elements	2,862	35.8%
Skilled workers	3,336	44.6%
Unskilled workers	1,447	19.3%

We witness the same process also in the other countries: *Social Democracy is becoming the party of the labor aristocracy*, merging more and more with the petty bourgeoisie. In America this process is taking a very vivid form, but in Europe too we witness the same phenomenon.

†- Paul Froelich, "The Present Role of the Social Democratic Party of Germany," *Die Internationale*, issues 10-12, 1925.

With such a state of affairs, the Social Democrats go the length of proposing a gift of a billion marks to their former rulers. We have an opportunity, by using United Front tactics cleverly, to capture the majority of the working class. We would be simpletons were we unable to do this. In a situation when Social Democracy has already lost 50% of the workers, and morally even more than this number, we have excellent chances for success. They will, of course, still poll a heavy vote at election time, but we have behind us the USSR, which is growing and developing, and the Communist International. We are *the only party which is sincere in its endeavor to organize* not the labor aristocracy, but the *working class*. We should be able to become *a real proletarian mass party*.

But this will require proper application of United Front tactics. There has lately been in the most important parties, for example in Germany, a dispute about joint lists of candidates at the Berlin municipal elections. The tactics of the CC were absolutely correct. The growth of unemployment, wage reductions, the fact that the economic position of the toiling masses is gradually becoming worse, the degeneration and treachery of Social Democracy, create a situation favorable to the application of United Front tactics. If under such circumstances we are not able to capture the majority of the working class, we must be simpletons and without initiative, or else we are making such mistakes which are utterly impermissible.

The same applies to the question of the expropriation of ex-royalty. The Ultra-Left maintained that this is a purely parliamentary question. Who is there now who believes this? Everyone can see that this is the road which leads to the masses, and we have not many such roads as yet, for many of them are barricaded by the Social Democrats. The roads accessible to us and enabling us to approach the Social Democratic workers are very important and we must make a maximum use of them.

VI. Opposition to Ultra-Left and to Right Tendencies!

The Ultra-Left in Germany.

In recent years there has been in some of the parties a certain relapse into Ultra-Leftist tendencies:

in Germany, Poland, partly in Italy and in France, to some extent in Norway. We had a very vivid example in Germany and Poland where this disease became very pronounced. I think that it is not by any means a chance occurrence that Ultra-Left errors are making their appearance just in this present transition period. It is quite clear now that 1925 was, to a certain extent, a transition year, for instance with respect to the question of stabilization, the question of the development of the Left Wing of the labor movement, the question of the degree of the downward curve of reformist illusions. In some countries our influence had begun to spread, there were signs that stabilization was after all instable. This was the very moment for the Ultra-Left relapse and it made its appearance in an extremely virulent form. It cannot be said that the Ultra-Left camp was unprepared and unorganized. In any case, *there was very evidently agreement between the Ultra-Leftists of Poland and of Germany*. Some Polish comrades always made a "timely" appearance in Berlin in order to defend the "Polish" Ultra-Left point of view. I do not think that the Ultra-Left campaign against the Comintern policy was spontaneous. It was to a certain degree *organized*. This was particularly evident in Poland where the Ultra-Left CC of the Party came out in opposition to the French Party, the German Party, and the Bulgarian Party and to all intents and purposes against the Comintern as a whole. We had to fight against this and we did.

What is going to happen now? There are present in this hall representatives of all sorts of Ultra-Left tendencies, and we are very glad of this. We have here Bordiga, Ruth Fischer, Rosenberg, Scholem, and Domski. They will have their say and we will answer them. I will not forestall events. It is possible that we shall hear new theories. I followed with extreme interest the latest news from Germany about the Ultra-Left. I can gather from this that the Ultra-Left are beginning to split up. We are not saying this in a spirit of malevolence, for they are our comrades of the International. Our policy is not such as if we had to deal with a class enemy. Comrades who have sincerely recognized their errors will, I think, be able to work under the guidance of the Central Committee if they are willing to follow the path and the political line of the Comintern. But this must be shown by deeds and not merely by declarations. As to the others — *fight to the*

bitter end. We want to have clearness on this point. Thus this relapse into the Ultra-Left disease was one of the most important events in the life of the Comintern during the last year. We had to fight against it and we did.

Comrades, as you know, in our theses we state that the *Right deviation* showed itself in its most virulent form in France, the *Ultra-Left deviation* in Germany. The path of the International is at present determined by the struggle against the Ultra-Left tendency in Germany and against the Right tendency in France. We must not forget that the success of the United Front tactics can at times foster Right perils. The present leaders of the German CP, whom we support, are fully aware of the fact that in the near future, when we will fully apply the United Front tactics, the Right peril is bound to appear. It has made its appearance in a number of countries. *In France it is the chief peril.* In Italy some comrades show signs of it. At the Party congress some of them even defended the theory according to which the state is above the class. There are Right perils in Norway and Holland, where such leaders as Wynkoop and Ravenstein have taken an inadmissible position. Ravenstein has migrated to the bourgeois newspapers and is attacking from there the Communist Party of Holland. We see also Right errors in Romania, where Christescu, one of the prominent leaders of the Party, is guilty of them.

We must also take these perils into account. We know that in a country like Germany such tendencies are quite possible.

Thus, comrades, our tactics concerning the question are the same as before: *no concessions, either to the Right or to the Ultra-Left.* We must take every section separately and we must ask ourselves: which peril is the greatest in Germany, in France, in Italy, and in accordance with the degree of the peril we must attack and fully expose it.

I think that we followed the correct line in these theses of the Communist International. We could not, of course, enumerate everything. But we enumerated what was most important: the Ultra-Left peril in Germany, the Right peril in France. Some people will say: You have forgotten the Balkans, you haven't said a word about the YCI [Young Communist International], about women, too little attention has been paid to Norway, etc. But we cannot stop at all these details,

we can only point out what is most important and we can lay down the general line. I think that everything goes to show that there is a Right peril in France and an Ultra-Left peril in Germany.

The last days have brought us something *new*. It is said that Rosenberg and Scholem *are beginning to solidarize with us*. We have Weber's statement and that of other comrades that Scholem is no longer Ultra-Left. We have not yet become convinced of this. We must wait and see how work will develop after the Plenum, but hitherto the fact has been that the Ultra-Left peril was strongest in Germany, and that is true even today. It seemed to me of late — and I said so at the session of the Presidium of the ECCI — that there is in Germany even the danger of the formation of a parallel Ultra-Left Party. Perhaps I was exaggerating this peril. If so, all the better. An Ultra-Left Party under present conditions would be historically doomed to destruction, but it certainly could do harm to our cause.

There were also other unhealthy symptoms in the German party. All of you will probably remember Schönlink's article and his expulsion. It is sometimes said that one person doesn't matter. But just as with the story of Zeitz, this is not a personal question. Some comrades say that Schönlink is an honest fellow, that he cannot be bought. No one here ever said so, but he is a person who understands what it is all about and who expressed what other people thought. The CC expelled him and one comrade, Comrade Scholem, abstained from voting on that occasion. (*Scholem*: "Because I had no confidence in the CC.") I do not know from what viewpoint there can be lack of confidence in the CC which expels a person who has openly declared himself a follower of Social Democracy. It is strange that just at that time Scholem thought it necessary to express lack of confidence in the CC. (*Scholem*: "This was at the time of the letter of the ECCI.") the letter of the ECCI is one of the best documents of the Comintern. (*Scholem*: "I do not think so.") If you do not yet acknowledge this and if you do not become convinced of it in the near future, then you are hopeless. Do you think that the further favorable development of the German Party would be possible without this letter? I don't say that letters make history, but in this case and under the existing circumstances, we have achieved a great deal, and the letter has fully

justified itself.

The Right Peril in France.

In spite of the laments of the Right Wing about the disintegration and downfall of the French Party, *objectively its position is favorable*. The Right in France is raising a hue and cry that the PCF is “dying.” They literally repeat what was already said in 1910 by the Russian liquidators. Our enemies have shown that they can better estimate the situation.

A very competent and authoritative personality in the political world who is now in Paris has given the following appreciation of the Communist Party of France and of its work:

“Communism has of late achieved visible and indisputable successes in France.

Side by side with street disturbances there have been visible signs of disintegration in the ranks of the army and police forces. All the misfortunes which befall the country the Communists endeavor to use for their agitation to the detriment of France and its prestige.

How has it been possible for the Communists to achieve such successes?

Because they found in the country a fertile field to foster discontent.

The differences between the various groups of the ruling party, the seriousness of the financial crisis, the growing dissatisfaction of the middle and lower sections of the population caused by the imposition of new taxes, but mainly the prolonged and sanguinary Moroccan adventure, which France has been carrying on many months for the defence of its interests in Africa and in the Mediterranean, provide prolific material and favorable atmosphere for Communist anti-governmental agitation. The war in Morocco has been used by French Communists and Italian Communists living in France for anti-militarist agitation in the country and in the army. This agitation has met with considerable success. There were manifestations of enthusiasm in the streets in honor of the independence and the leaders of Morocco. Desertion is becoming the order of the day in the army and refusals to take an active part in the war or to go to the front have been frequent.

A general protest strike against the war was declared for August 2nd. Mass desertion has assumed such proportions as have hitherto never been witnessed in any war. There have even been cases of whole detachments going over to the enemy. Side by side with this there have been strikes and mutinies in Brest among crews of several vessels. Bolshevism is beginning to permeate the ranks of the political and civil administration, especially the ranks of postal servants and bank clerks.”

This is said by our class enemy, who seems to possess a considerable amount of discernment. It is

quite impossible to suspect him of sympathy for us. The Right Opposition, however, which is not homogeneous, estimates the situation quite differently. We have already said in the theses that there are three tendencies in the ranks of the Right Opposition.

The first are the former syndicalists who are going through a retrogressive “development” from Communism to reformism. Nothing can be done here. I remember that at the time when Rosmer declared that he would join the Party, I had a bet with a comrade, a friend of Rosmer, that he wouldn’t. I was convinced that Rosmer was not going to join the Party. I lost the bet. Rosmer did join the Party, but 18 months later he left it. He is too much a syndicalist to become a Communist. We are going forward and the Right wants to go backward.

The second tendency is that of Souvarine. By its nature this tendency is so permeated with anti-Communist and reactionary moods that it reminds one in many ways of Bubnikism. I do not mean to say by this that Souvarine in his outward appearance resembles Bubnik. Bubnik has sold himself to the bourgeoisie. I do not say this of Souvarine. But the objective intent of this group is the same: the disintegrate the Communist Party.

The third group (Loriot) represents the retrogressive development towards Social Democracy. A comrade explained to me the viewpoint of Loriot concerning the Comintern. This viewpoint deserves attention. Loriot says: When the Russian Revolution was in peril we foreign revolutionaries had to protect it at any cost. At that time we Socialists of other countries adopted the 21 points, the Leninist principles, we recognized everything, because the Russian Revolution was sacred to us, and it was in danger. However, now that it has become consolidated, the time has come to revise everything, to take full advantage of freedom of criticism.

I have no documentary evidence to bear out these words. Perhaps they are not correct. If so, Comrade Loriot can refute them if he wishes. But as far as I know Loriot, such a conception is quite possible with him. According to Loriot it would seem that Leninism was right at the time when the Russian Revolution was in danger, and it is wrong when the peril is no more. Generally speaking, this represents a retrogression towards Social Democracy. It goes without

saying that everything must be done to bring the Lorient group back into the fold of the CCI and to overcome these unhealthy moods within this group. But if we do not succeed in this, our attitude must be that it could not be helped.

Within the French Right there are good workers, dissatisfied with the regime of the Party and to some extent hostile to the CC. There was too much mechanical neutralization within the Party. Some of the workers supported the Opposition only as a protest against such conditions. I am glad to be able to say that the CC of the French Party acknowledged on its own accord all these errors at the Conference in December 1925. The situation in Germany required an open letter from Moscow. In France, the comrades in the CC came of their own accord to the same conclusion and wrote a letter themselves. Of course, this is much better. The CC realized its errors and I think that this is of utmost importance and that by this means the best elements of the Opposition will again be won by the Party.

The Right Principle.

I will deal now with the principle on which this Opposition is based. First of all, the Right Opposition is fighting against the reorganization of the Party on the basis of factory nuclei. You are of course acquainted with the letter of the Right to the ECCI, a letter bearing 250 signatures. I will begin by dealing with the views of the Opposition concerning organizational questions.

They say:

“At present nuclei cannot be the basis of the Party in France. To say the contrary means not taking into account the economics of the country and the structure of the modern capitalist states, means to deceive one’s self concerning the true correlation of social forces which drive the Party toward a rapid and complete liquidation. But not only these causes show the inconsistency of the new regime of the Party. Favoritism finds its way easier into a nucleus. Moreover, nuclei meet with internal difficulties which can ruin them, we have learned by experience that the existence of a nucleus depends on the capability and steadfastness of the secretary.

However, it is difficult to find in a given locality a sufficient number of secretaries able to put new political life into inactive nuclei. That is why the comrades limit themselves entirely to current business, distribution of leaflets and handbills, dealing with questions of interest to the factory to

which they belong. From time to time they receive reports from the district delegate and ask him to be short, for everyone is in a hurry to get home, as it frequently happens that workers live a long distance from their place of employment. The most important questions receive only superficial attention. Frequently, the meeting adjourns without making any decisions. Nothing is done towards the education of Party members, as the conditions are not propitious for it. It is futile to increase the number of propagandists as the results will be exactly the same. Nuclei will continue to disintegrate as there is no one to put life into their activity. To save the Party it is essential to abandon the methods used in the last year. The CC proposes to develop the apparatus and also to form both street nuclei and ‘sub-districts.’”

To hell with all these inventions! They only augment the evil instead of remedying it.

“In this letter we do not pretend to deal fully with the question of the organization of the Party. We will limit ourselves to the declaration that an immediate return to the organizational basis of the party is essential. This can be done without abolishing factory nuclei. On the contrary, efforts should be made to extend the network of such nuclei.”

You can judge for yourselves the experience in the construction of factory and workshop nuclei in our foreign sections if you study, for instance, the work done by the recent *Org Conference of the ECCI*. Since the Fifth Congress, when we took up this question in a businesslike manner, for the first time we have done much in this field and experience has shown that we are on the right track. We will adhere to this system with a few necessary corrections, for we find that it is the correct and proper system. It is interesting that the Ultra-Left in Italy as well as the Right in France are up in arms against this system. Why? Everyone understands that factories and workshops and the nuclei within them constitute the basis for activity, but the Right and the Ultra-Left contend that it is not so.

However, what is more interesting in this Right declaration is their view of political questions and particularly of the Moroccan War.

This is what they say:

“The CC wanted to enforce at all costs its ideas of evacuation of Morocco and of fraternization, which under existing conditions are nothing but words which lead nowhere.

Why not indeed bring up the question of the evacuation of Nizza, Savoy, and Corsica? Hitherto, the slogan of evacuation has only mitigated against the slogan of the

United Front against the war in Morocco, a slogan which approached realization.”

May I be forgiven by the comrades who are signatory to this “historical” document, but I cannot help describing such a viewpoint otherwise than as Social-Patriotism. (*Voices in the hall: Hear! Hear!*)

If they can speak with such abandon of the annexation of Nizza, etc., and about the necessity to adapt oneself to the policy of the bourgeoisie, they are Social-Patriots pure and simple. For this means: that bourgeois doings are law to us. In this respect, this group shows its opportunist hooves, and this is what makes me so indignant.

In spite of all its errors, our Party is fighting courageously against the war, and just at such a time the Opposition comes forward in the service of the bourgeoisie by writing a letter against the Comintern in which it says mockingly and contemptuously: “Why shouldn’t we indeed demand the evacuation of Nizza, etc.?” This is *the language of Social-Patriots*.

The CC of the French party may have been guilty of all sorts of errors, but it never made concessions to Social Democratic principles.

The Anti-Party Policy of the “250.”

I see that the letter concludes:

“The Party is suffocating, the Party is dying, and meanwhile there is a revival of the Socialist Party thanks to its 100,000 members, it is recapturing the influence it lost after the split in Tours. Capitalism is consolidating and stabilizing itself and looks with confidence into the future.”

Thus it would seem that our party is dying, that the Socialist Party is growing, that capitalism is looking with confidence into the future. I must say that the authoritative person to whom I referred a little while ago understands the situation in France better than does Lorient.

Of course, it is essential to do everything possible to win over for the Party good comrades and proletarians from the opposition ranks, but against the Right tendency one must fight to the bitter end. If we were to make such concessions, what would remain of the Communist International except the label? The Party must learn to carry on practical work, to initiate a comprehensive discussion and must at the same time

be able to fight the Right Wing and to raise the question of discipline. We must realize that a regular mutiny took place in our French Party. Proclamations with 250 signatures were issued against the Party, leaflets were published, etc. The decisions of the central organs were flouted. A number of Party members from the Opposition collaborated in journals published by Rosmer, Souvarine & Co., who were expelled from the Party, journals with a decidedly anti-Party trend. We have with us here a worker from the Opposition. I ask him how can he defend such things, allow the publication of such letters, how can he tolerate collaboration with Souvarine? Some people say they signed without having read the statement. Quite possible, such things do happen.

But read the statement now. What does it mean? You are being dragged back to Social Democracy. The Party is criticized, it is said that from the Left attempts are made to exploit every error and to put the entire life of the Party on the wrong basis. Just at the time when the Party is really getting back into touch with the masses, when it is succeeding in this and is becoming the only mouthpiece of sentiment of the French proletariat, it is told here that the Party is dying. But this is an old, old story, also to us Russian Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks were always saying the same thing and ended by themselves dying politically. The people who are now raising a hue and cry on this subject in France are political corpses and our Party will make big strides forward in spite of all the errors it has permitted, just as did our German Party.

I do not imply by this that everything is for the best in our French Party. We will have a commission which will deal fully with this question. Therefore, I need not do so here. There are in France also certain signs of an Ultra-Left peril. This was particularly evident at the last session of the Enlarged CC, and these symptoms must be carefully studied. Our most serious consideration is claimed by tendencies which without aligning themselves with the Ultra-Left, are in reality committing mistakes of the Ultra-Left type. By this allude especially to work on the trade union field. What does this mean objectively? It is a tendency tantamount to failure to understand United Front tactics. It is essential to get rid of the negative sides of the organizational regime, it is essential to fight against everything which was bad in the Party, it is essential to

take away the ground from under the feet of the Ultra-Left on the field of trade union work.

But first of all *we must fight against the Right Opposition in France*, for if our Party had made any principal concessions to it, it would not be a Communist Party.

V. Conclusion.

The Trade Union Question.

As to our tasks, they are explained in a special section of the theses. I am not going to repeat them, since they have been already formulated.

I think that there should be more clarity with respect to the questions of *partial demands*.

All our sections should be asked to elaborate programs of action for a definite period, on the basis of partial demands. They must be elaborated together with the Executive Committee. First of all, we must concentrate our attention *on trade union work*. It is stated in the German resolution that 75 percent of our attention should be devoted to the trade union question. This must also be repeated on an international scale, this must become the lever of our United Front tactics.

In connection with this, I should like to say a few words on the question of whether *a separate affiliation of the Russian Trade Unions to the Amsterdam International is permissible*. I sound a note of warning against raising the question of the possibility of the Russian trade unions' affiliation only on a national scale. This is clearly an international question and cannot be solved merely from the French, German, British, American, or Russian viewpoint. If there is an international problem which is international *through and through*, it is this problem. It is quite possible that it would be more convenient for this or that country and probably for a very important country if the Russian trade unions were to join the Amsterdam. But if the question is treated on an international scale, for the whole Communist International, it cannot be contemplated even for a minute that Russian trade unions would affiliate separately to Amsterdam. We must confirm what was said on this question by the CC of the VKP(b) (and what is included in our theses).

The Youth.

A few more words on the question of the Youth. The organizations of the Youth are committing the same errors as are the Parties, and to a certain extent achieve the same successes. We can record that a successful application of United Front tactics resulted in strengthening the position of the Youth, especially owing to the four Youth delegations which visited the USSR, and also to the desertion from the Social Democratic Party by the Independent Socialist Youth in Vienna, etc. As to the British YCL, its best recommendation is what the *Daily Mail* has said about it:

“Members of the Young Communist League, who are supposed to be specially trained for propaganda among children, are sent into the parks, into the streets and children's playgrounds. They are advised to say to the children when they are a little tired of play: ‘Shall we learn a new little song?’ At first the kiddies will be rather suspicious, they will feel shy, but in the end they will join in the singing of ‘The Red Flag,’ ‘The International,’ or some such revolutionary song.”

If our British Young Communist Leaguers are really showing such activity, we must welcome it as a great success of the YCL and we must congratulate our young British comrades.

The Italian Youth was at first following the Ultra-Left, but at present it has adopted the policy of the Comintern.

The task of the YCL now consists in a correct application of United Front tactics, first of all in trade unions, in order to draw into our ranks large sections of working class youth.

Let our wish for the YCL be: Fewer theses, closer to the everyday life and the everyday interests of the Youth!

Party Democracy and the Comintern.

I should like to deal quite briefly with *internal tasks*....

We have a special thesis on the questions of the internal regime of the Party, about the *democratization of the Party*. I think that this question has be

sufficiently elucidated. Communist workers must insist on the realization of democracy within the Party.

As to Comintern leadership, I should like to deal with it in a little more concrete form. You know that at the 14th Party Conference of the RKP(b) [April 27-29, 1925], the question was raised that the time has come to draw representatives of the Sections into the practical leadership of the Comintern much more than heretofore. I think that there was every reason to raise this question and that it is essential to arrive at a definite decision on it. We have previously had decisions calling for the sending of the best available forces into the leading organs of the International. But this remained on paper and far from sending the best available forces, no one was sent at all. Sometimes it happened that people like Katz were sent. I think that the time has now come no longer to leave our decision on paper. *Leadership in the CI must assume a more collective character.* Our tasks are growing, they are enormous and complicated. They can only be solved on the basis of collective leadership, only if the best available forces can remain here for half a year and not only a few days or weeks.

More Independence!

One more thing: at the last Plenum [5th: March 21-April 5, 1925] we told the Czech Party that we would help them to find the proper political line for their activity, but that all the rest they must do for themselves. The Czech Left had to find the way to the masses without any assistance from us. Moscow has broad shoulders, but one cannot be always sheltered behind these shoulders. In this way the Czech Left, by its own efforts, took deep root in these masses and did its best to capture them. Now is the time to tell all our Parties: "*More independence!!*" Nearly every Party has had its own experience, its achievements and errors. Now is the time for more independence, and not merely for waiting to hear what Moscow has to say. When I say this, my words have nothing in common with the anti-Moscow position which was taken by some Ultra-Left and Right elements for such an attitude is tantamount to a denial of proletarian dictatorship. Such moods among the Ultra-Left and Right are enthusiastically welcomed by the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy. I realize that sometimes these moods

have their origin in a strong nationalist feeling, and Comrade Lenin has always warned us of this danger.

We also encounter a trend of thought which is about as follows: Russia is a peasant country, a backward country, etc., how can it lead the Comintern? We have already stated that as soon as a second victorious proletarian revolution has taken place in a big country we will consider the desirability of changing our organization. But until this happens, the maximum amount of influence in the Comintern must remain with *the Party of the country of the First Proletarian Dictatorship.* It is essential to fight against such moods, to check them at the outset. On this question we must be perfectly clear.

But a feeling of self-reliance and independence must grow in our Parties. They must themselves *choose their leaders.* The Comintern has been frequently obliged, the next day after the Party Congress, to dissolve some CC and to appoint another in its place. Of course there can be situations when this cannot be helped. But under more or less normal conditions this should not be. We must organize our affairs in a manner that the leading cadres should really be drawn from the Party itself, that the Party itself should select its best forces for its own leadership. It is essential to create a new generation of leaders. In this respect every Party must develop a maximum of energy.

If we had made these proposals three or four years ago it would have been empty phraseology. Why so? Because at that time the Parties were too weak, they were still suffering from infantile disorders. Now the situation is utterly different, the Parties are stronger and have developed, they have overcome and are overcoming a whole series of crises. Therefore: more democracy within the Party, more collective work in the leadership of the Comintern, and more independence of the various Parties in choosing their leaders and in deciding their political policy. But at the same time, the Comintern remains *a centralized World Leninist Party, without which we cannot fulfill the tasks before us.* This is as clear as day.

Thus no one should by any means jump to the conclusion that we contemplate a revision of the 4th or 5th Congress, even though we lay the greatest stress on the importance of the 3rd World Congress. Our slogan, the slogan issued by Lenin, is — *To the Masses!* This slogan is not always rightly understood, it is fre-

quently interpreted in too mechanical a manner. Many comrades imagine that going to the masses means only telling the workers: "Join the Communist Party." No, comrades, the question is not as simple as that. This slogan means that we must *look for the masses* on all the highways and byways — through the trade unions and cooperatives, through the youth organizations and non-Party organizations, such as sport leagues, educational societies, etc. We must learn to look for the masses and we must also learn to find them. Comrade Kilbom said in one of our commissions that some comrades in Sweden have the peculiar notion — I think a proverb has already been coined in connection with it — that those who have not developed into Communists in a couple of days "should be spit upon." If it is really necessary to use such strong expressions in this case, I think they should be applied the other way around. A person who becomes a Communist in a few days' time is very cheap goods.

To the Masses! For Workers' Unity!

What we need now is patience and ability to capture the masses. We have plenty of time.

Some comrades think that capturing the masses on the highways and byways is tantamount to going to Amsterdam and withdrawing our appraisal of Social Democracy. They say that if this is not done, we will be "at the mercy of Ultra-Leftist tendencies," etc. The theses deal with the fundamental stages of the international proletarian labor movement as they appear to us. A number of methods for the improvement of our work have been found, and we have also found formula capable of linking up with the masses. We have been able to put into more concrete form the fundamental paths pointed out by preceding congresses, especially those which were under Lenin's direct leadership.

The only real champions of working class unity

are we, *our Communist Parties, our Communist International*, which has behind it the first workers' government. It is we alone who take upon ourselves the task of uniting the international working class on our basis, on the basis of the Communist International, on the basis of the interests and great tasks of the working class.

Just now in some countries Left reformists are beginning to talk about the amalgamation of the Third International with the Second International. We have received a letter from the British Independent Labour Party proposing to us such an amalgamation. We will of course not ignore this letter, but will send a very full reply to it. We will write a letter which should have an educational influence on the British working class. To the question itself, as to whether there is a possibility of amalgamating the Second with the Third Internationals, we can say unhesitatingly: "*There is not!*" The Communist Party is the most important weapon of the working class in its struggle for emancipation. The establishment of independent — even though they be small — Communist Parties is of paramount importance to the working class. Even if a Communist Party is very small and is guilty sometimes of great errors (we will correct these errors), it is the only historical lever of the liberation struggle of the working class. Thus our reply concerning the amalgamation of the two Internationals must be an emphatic "*No!*" — and not only on an international scale, but also for every separate country.

In the present situation, we have a fundamental task before us — to establish the unity of the working class on the basis of Leninism, of the Communist International, which as yet has not the majority of the workers behind it, but which will capture this majority and will free the working class from the yoke of capitalism.

(Long and prolonged applause. Delegates rise to their feet and cheer.)

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Lenin quotations have been brought into accord with their contemporary translations.

Asterisks mark editorial deletions for reasons of space and continuity of the published text.

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