

THE

WORKERS OF THE WORLD-UNITE!



# Communist

SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE RED ARMY

DISCUSSION FOR SEVENTH  
WORLD CONGRESS

SECOND INTERNATIONAL AND  
UNITED FRONT, ETC., ETC.

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# IN MEMORY OF THE LATE COMRADE V. V. KUIBYSHEV

**Statement by the C.C. of the C.P.S.U.**

**P**ROFOUNDLY grieved, the CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE C.P.S.U., the Party of the working class and of the toiling masses of the land of the Soviets and of the whole world, announces the death, on January 25, of VALERIAN VLADIMIROVICH KUIBYSHEV, member of the Political Bureau of the C.P. of the C.P.S.U., deputy president of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, chairman of the Commission for Soviet Control attached to the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union. The cause of his death was arterial sclerosis, affecting the arteries of the heart.

"Comrade Kuibyshev has died at his fighting post. He has been torn away in the midst of the most strenuous work for State and Party, for which he worked till his last breath. Comrade Kuibyshev set an example as proletarian revolutionist and consistent Leninist, irreconcilable towards the enemies of the Party and of the working class, a selfless fighter for the cause of Communism. His revolutionary activities commenced at the time of the first Russian revolution. During these years of work and struggle Comrade Kuibyshev experienced the torments of the tsarist prisons and of banishment. Through it all he remained a devoted fighter for the Party of Lenin. During the years of the civil war Kuibyshev was among the best political leaders of the Red Army. An excellent organiser, a leader of our economic construction, he devoted the whole of his powers to the cause of socialism. His limitless devotion to the Party, his selfless and indefatigable work in the service of the toiling masses, have set an example to millions of proletarians in their struggle for the victory of Communism.

**Statement Signed by Comrades Stalin, Molotov, and other Comrades.**

"Our Party has suffered a severe loss. Death has taken from the militant staff of our Party one of the most prominent leaders, an excellent comrade and our closest friend. Valerian Kuibyshev fought since his early youth under Lenin's banner. With great pertinacity he was untiringly at work, both in the period of illegality of the Bolsheviks, as well as at the fronts during the civil war and in the most important spheres of socialist construction. Already in 1905 Comrade Kuibyshev actively participated as a Bolshevik in the revolution in Petersburg. Later he worked as a professional revolutionary in the Bolshevik organisation of Siberia. In the period between frequent exile

and terms of imprisonment he performed Party work in leading positions in the Petersburg Bolshevik organisation. At the time of the outbreak of the February revolution Kuibyshev was on his way to his place of banishment in the Tuchanski district of Siberia. He worked as organiser of the Bolsheviks in Samara and led the October revolt there.

"Kuibyshev was one of the best political leaders of the Red Army in its fights against the Czech legions and Koltchak troops, and later at the front in Turkestan. Untiring and conscientious in his work, filled with boundless devotion to the cause of the proletarian revolution, Kuibyshev was the model of a Bolshevik statesman. He also worked as chairman of the Central Control Commission—the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—reorganised according to the directives given by Lenin; there he conducted a consistent and irreconcilable fight against all deviations from the general line of the Party. Kuibyshev, who was an excellent organiser of and had a profound knowledge of Russian economy, was placed at the head of the Supreme Economic Council; at the same time he was at the head of socialist industry. Later he became chairman of the State Planning Commission and guided the working out of the plans for the first and second Five-Year Plans. Kuibyshev's rich experiences in the sphere of organisational and economic work, his broad, statesmanlike outlook, were manifested during his activity as deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. He died at the fighting post, an untiring worker to his last breath. He sacrificed his whole life to the cause of the working class, the cause of our heroic people."

**Statement by the E.C. of the Communist International.**

"The Executive Committee of the Communist International deeply mourns, together with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and all toilers of the U.S.S.R. and the whole of the international proletariat the loss of Comrade Valerian Kuibyshev, member of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U."

**Biography of Comrade Kuibyshev.**

Kuibyshev was born in 1888 in Omsk (West Siberia). From his early youth onwards he took part in the revolutionary movement, and worked in the social-democratic circle in Omsk. From the very beginning of his revolutionary activities Kuibyshev fought in the ranks of the Bolsheviks against tsarist absolutism. In 1904—scarcely 16

years of age — he joined the Omsk social-democratic organisation. Here he went through the first school of Bolshevist revolutionary struggle, the first preparation for what was to be a life devoted entirely to the revolution. The revolutionary events of 1905 found Kuibyshev in Petersburg, where he took an energetic part in the labour movement and worked in the Petersburg Bolshevist organisation. Though only seventeen years of age, he was already known among the Party functionaries. The Petersburg organisation entrusted him with responsible militant tasks — Kuibyshev organised the transport and storage of arms. The whole of 1905 was spent by him in active Party work. When reaction won a temporary victory over the revolutionary working class, Kuibyshev remained at his fighting post. In 1906 he was working at Omsk again, and was elected to the local committee of the Bolshevist organisation. When the Party Conference in Omsk was raided he fell into the hands of the tsarist police, and was brought up for trial on the charge of belonging to the Party.

The Secret police were, however, unable to adduce any evidence against him, and the court had to acquit him. But from this time onwards the Secret Police kept a close watch on him. Soon afterwards he was arrested again and banished to East Siberia. He succeeded in escaping. In 1908 Kuibyshev was in the midst of active work again in the Bolshevik organisation in Petersburg. In July he was re-arrested and imprisoned in the jail at Kainsk till 1909. This was, however, only a brief interruption of his revolutionary activities. Once at liberty, he took up illegal work more energetically than ever. In April, 1909, he was again thrown into prison at Kainsk. Released again, he carried out intensive illegal work for some months, till arrested once more in Tomsk in February, 1910. The tsarist authorities sentenced Kuibyshev administratively to two years' banishment to the Narym region. But even in exile Kuibyshev carried on his revolutionary work. In November, 1910, he was arrested in Narym for organising a Bolshevist circle. On the expiry of his term of banishment, Kuibyshev returned in 1912 to revolutionary work in Omsk. He was arrested in Omsk for having organised a May demonstration in Narym in 1911. In 1913 Kuibyshev carried on political work among the miners in Petersburg, later in Volovda and Kharkov. In 1914 he was obliged to leave Kharkov in consequence of being dogged by the police after the May demonstration. He returned to Petersburg. For a year he worked as member of the Petersburg Committee of the Bolshevist Party and its propaganda collegium. In July, 1915, he was once more arrested, and sentenced to three years' banishment to the

Gouvernement of Irkutsk. In spite of the war conditions, and in spite of the unbridled police terrorism, Kuibyshev succeeded in escaping in 1916, and in reaching Samara, where he took up his Party activities again. He worked in the Samara metal tube works and was a member of the local Party committee. In collaboration with Bubnov and Schwernik, he organised the Bolshevist conference which met in September, but was raided by the police and dispersed at its first session. Kuibyshev was arrested again, and banished for five years to Turuchansk. But the tsarist gendarmes did not get the opportunity to carry out their orders. On the way to banishment, at the station Yenisseiland, through which so many generations of Russian revolutionists had passed, the February revolution intervened. Kuibyshev returned to Samara, where he became chairman of the Workers' Section of the Soviet and of the Party Committee. Under his leadership the Soviet power was established in Samara, and he was the first president of the Revolutionary Committee of Samara.

Now began the hard struggle for the maintenance of the proletarian dictatorship. In 1918, Kuibyshev led the proletarians who were fighting against the counter-revolutionary bands of Czechoslovaks and Russian White Guardists in the Central Volga district. Kuibyshev took part in the organisation of the armed forces of the proletarian dictatorship in the East, and was made Commissar and member of the revolutionary War Council of the 1st and 4th Red Armies. He was one of the leaders who took part in driving the counter-revolutionary bands out of Samara. When the Koltchak troops advanced in 1919, Kuibyshev became a member of the revolutionary War Council of the South group on the Eastern front, under Frunse's command. In this group he took part in the campaign which annihilated Koltchak. At this time Kuibyshev was appointed member of the revolutionary War Council of the 2nd Red Army, then sent to the Turkestan front, and took part in the liberation of Soviet Asia from the White Guardists and intervention troops. After the close of the civil war, Kuibyshev became deputy-chairman of the Turkestan Commission of the C.C. of the Party, and then ambassador of the Soviet Union in Bochara. At the end of 1920 Kuibyshev was made a member of the Presidium of the Central Trade Union Council and then of the Supreme Economic Council. At the same time he led the work of the electric industry. At the Tenth Party Congress he was elected as candidate to the Central Committee, at the Eleventh Party Congress as member. In 1922-23 Kuibyshev was the Secretary of the C.C. of the Party. At the Twelfth Party Congress, in 1923, he was elected

to the Central Control Commission, and was its chairman till 1926. Besides all this, he was at this time People's Commissar for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and deputy-president of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence.

After Dzerzhinski's death in 1926, Kuibyshev became president of the Supreme Economic Council of the U.S.S.R. From December, 1927, onwards he was a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, from 1930 chairman of

the State Planning Commission, and deputy-chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence. At the Seventeenth Party Congress Kuibyshev was elected chairman of the Commission for Soviet Control. At the same time he remained deputy-chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence. This, in brief outlines, was the life of Valerian Kuibyshev, who gave the whole of his life and his forces to the working class, for the triumph of socialism.

## THE LEADERS OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL, THE U.S.S.R. AND THE UNITED FRONT

IT is possible that among the members of the Paris Committee of the reformist "General Confederation of Labour," who voted for the resolution of "protest" against the shooting of "100 workers" in the U.S.S.R., there were people who honestly imagined that "100 workers" really were shot. But even the people who allowed themselves to be misled by the others, by the conscious liars, about THE FACT itself, were to blame for raising their hands in favour of this counter-revolutionary resolution and for feeling hostility if not hatred towards the Soviet Union. On this occasion the reformist trade union leaders repeated all that they have stubbornly, systematically and consistently done (and are continuing to do) in connection with the great republic of workers and peasants since the day when it came into existence in the fire of the October Revolution. Namely, they have made use of any excuse to make an onslaught on it, besmirch it with lies, and to attempt to discredit it in the eyes of the workers.

Yes, after the foul murder of Sergei Kirov, the leader of the Leningrad proletariat, the organs of the proletarian dictatorship, by sentence of the Military Tribunal of the Supreme Court, shot more than 100 counter-revolutionary terrorists. These were whiteguard bandits, everyone of them, who had secretly crossed the Finnish, Latvian and Polish borders, sent to the Soviet Union by foreign terrorist organisations with the aid of governmental institutions in certain states, their task being to organise the murder of those who stand at the head of socialist construction. There was not a single worker among these criminals, defeated by the sword of revolutionary justice. They were all recruited from among former Tsarist officers, from among the sons of the former landowners and bourgeoisie, and the whiteguard crew rotting in emigration. But even had there been

some among these hired terrorists engaged in preparing counter-revolutionary murders who were "workers" by origin, degenerate lumpen-proletarians who had sold themselves to the enemies of the proletariat, then still, what would have been the meaning of the demonstrative display of "class" solidarity with these bandits by the reformist leaders?

### Lenin and the Counter-Revolutionaries "From the Ranks of the Workers."

Such "class" solidarity with counter-revolutionaries "from the ranks of the workers" is nothing new. In 1919 Comrade Lenin wrote an article in No. 5 of the *Communist International* entitled "How the Bourgeoisie Makes Use of the Renegades," and exposed the real essence of this "argument." This is what Lenin wrote about the crocodile tears which Kautsky shed over "the civil war among the proletariat":

"A striking example will enable us to grasp the contemptible character of the argument. During the great French Revolution, a section of the French peasantry, the people of La Vendee, fought for the king against the republic. In June, 1849, and in May, 1871, there were workers among the troops of Cavaignac and of Gallifet respectively; there were workers among those who strangled the revolution. What would you say of a man who should declare—'I deplore the civil war between the French peasants in 1792,' or 'I deplore the civil war between the French workers in 1849 and in 1871?' You would say that he was a hypocritical advocate of the reaction, of the monarchy, of Cavaignac.

"And you would be right.

"One who fails to understand that what is now happening in Russia, what is germinating everywhere, is the civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, must be little better than an idiot. There never has been and never will be a class struggle in which part of the advanced class failed and will fail to take the side of the reaction. The same thing is true of the civil war. Some of the more retrograde among the workers come to the aid of the bourgeoisie for a more or less short period of

time. But only knaves will make use of this fact to justify their own desertion to the bourgeoisie."

This is what Lenin wrote in 1919.

And this irresistible argument of Lenin, so deadly for those who come forward in defence of those "workers" who shoot at the leaders of the proletarian revolution, deals a straight blow at the hypocritical "ouvrierists" (lovers of workers) from among the Paris reformist trade union committee.

And let them not attempt to dodge the issue by arguing that Lenin issued this sentence to such renegades during the period of the civil war, which is not in existence now. Yes, civil war and the first round of wars of intervention have long ago been put an end to, on the territory of the Soviet Union; by the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Yes, the workers of the Soviet Republics and the collective farm peasantry have rooted out the capitalist classes and are solidly united around their Soviet Government. They are directing all their energies towards the gigantic construction of socialist society. But has the Soviet Union no enemies, who are preparing to undertake an attack against it? Are not their agents attempting to penetrate every chink, and utilise all kinds of scum to undermine the proletarian state which they hate so much from within? And should not the proletarian government wipe out these scum who are working for a new war, so as to avoid an immeasurably greater number of victims?

Among the fourteen participants in the so-called "Leningrad Centre" who were executed (this was the terrorist group which directly organised the assassination of Sergei Kirov, and was financed by the diplomatic agent of a foreign state), among the several tens of participants in the Zinoviev "Moscow Centre" who were sentenced to imprisonment and who led the Leningrad terrorists politically, there were, side by side with decayed petty bourgeois elements, former workers as well. These former members of the proletarian Party, had foully betrayed it and taken to fascist methods of struggle. They resorted to terror against the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, having passed into the service of the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionaries engaged in preparing imperialist and counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R.

They met with the merciless punishment meted out by proletarian justice. And every trade union bureaucrat who raised his voice in their defence is defending in their persons, not "workers," but what fundamentally was a masked whiteguard counter-revolutionary organisation, composed of agents of fascism and instigators of war. He is defending people at whose instructions the terror-

ists fundamentally carried on their abominable work.

\* \* \*

If the Paris reformist leaders found it advisable to cover up their defence of the whiteguard and other counter-revolutionary terrorists—and did not hesitate to make use of the most outrageous lies—by a hypocritical display of "love for the workers," then the leaders of international social-democracy of ALL SHADES did not seek for even this fig leaf behind which to carry on their wild slander of the Soviet Union.

The signal for the anti-Soviet bacchanalia in which all the leaders of the Second International without exception, have taken part, was provided by the chairman of the International, the born enemy of the Soviet Union, Emil Vandervelde, who wrote an article entitled "The Domination of Force—Socialism or the Relapse to Barbarism." Russian mensheviks were drawn in as the main sources of "information," and they filled all the social-democratic papers, Right and "Left," with their "declarations" and articles.

#### Vandervelde's "Humanitarianism."

Vandervelde had the unheard-of impudence to bedeck his article (of December 16, 1934) in defence of the assassination of Comrade Kirov with a portrait—of whom?—of Rosa Luxemburg, who was foully murdered by his mercenary party colleagues, Ebert and Noske. Vandervelde, the man who (in 1922) defended the Right S.R.s, who murdered Volodarsky and made an attempt on the life of Lenin, builds his case in defence of Kirov's assassin, "juridically" above all. He is "shaken" to the bottom of his soul by the fact that the case of the revolutionary terrorists was dealt with by the Supreme Court behind "closed doors," as a result of which he, Vandervelde, was deprived of the possibility of checking the genuine nature of the evidence against the "accused"; his feeling of "fairness" (after the World War Vandervelde was the Belgian Minister of Justice and sent dozens of Flemish "activists" to jail) is horror-struck at this "complete negation of the elements of rights of the defence"; he is rendered speechless by the speed at which the trial was dealt with and especially by the fact that the criminals who were sentenced to be shot were deprived of the "right" to appeal for pardon. However, the "humanitarian" Vandervelde, to whom every human life is dear, and whose heart trembles at the thought of every drop of blood that is shed, this very Vandervelde, who was a Minister during the World War, and "enticer-in-chief" of the Belgian soldiers on all fronts and General Alexeyev's agitator during the offensive of June, 1917, a wild supporter of the imperialist war to its victorious conclusion, does

not limit himself to this apparently "purely humane," "non-political" defence of the white-guard terrorists. He supplements it by a direct political attack on the Soviet Union.

Vandervelde is "shocked" not only at the absence of "elementary rights, etc.," in the Bolshevik court—in the last analysis "the Bolsheviks remain equal to themselves," i.e., they remain Bolsheviks and nothing else can be expected of them. He is still further shocked by something else. He is indignant at the fact that public opinion in France is not "shocked" to the same degree as he is, by the affront which Soviet justice has dealt the terrorists caught in the act, and explains this "crime of moral sensitiveness" by the operation of the "Franco-Soviet alliance cordiale." Vandervelde goes still further. He is shameless enough to make a comparison between the improvement in the relations between France and the U.S.S.R., in the interests of preserving peace and against the ever-sharper growing danger of a new world war, and the pre-war Franco-Russian alliance. France, he complains,

"is just as little disturbed now by the internal policy of the Soviet Government, a friendly power if not an ally, as it was by the behaviour of the 'Father' Tsar Nicholas II., during the period of its alliance with Russia."

The foul nature of this onslaught does not consist in the fact that it is Vandervelde who commits it, the same Vandervelde, who as Belgian Minister of War Supplies in the years 1914-17, was himself the direct ally of Nicholas II., and urged the Russian workers to reconcile themselves with their Tsar so that the allied armies might secure victory. It is not a question of Mr. Vandervelde's brazen face. The political essence of this attack made by Vandervelde, directed against the present rapprochement between the U.S.S.R. and France in the sphere of foreign policy, as against the most aggressive imperialism of fascist Germany, Japan, etc., engaged in provoking war, and particularly counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, consists in the following: in whose interests, in the interests of which international policy is this attack being carried on. By making this attack, Vandervelde takes up his position on the side of the international policy of Hitlerite fascism, which openly preaches an imperialist alliance to carry through a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union.

After all this, it is not surprising to see the apparent carelessness of the Brussels *Peuple* (Mr. Vandervelde's newspaper) regarding the sources from which it secures its information about the Soviet Union. The majority of the telegrams published in this paper during the period of the campaign of the most foul lies and slander against the Soviet Union, which continued unceasingly for the two months following December 1st, came

from BERLIN. So as to give an idea of the character of this information, we shall merely remark that on January 3, 1935, the *Peuple* printed a telegram from Berlin regarding the introduction of the sale of bread without cards, and gave it an EDITORIAL heading of the following nature:

"Consumers in Moscow Demonstrate Against the High Price of Bread."

#### **The Anti-Soviet Line of the General Council of the T.U.C. and its Colleagues Abroad.**

His colleagues from other parties come forward in unison with the leader of the Belgian Labour Party and chairman of the Second International. The General Council of the Trade Union Congress in Britain and the Executive Committee of the British Labour Party adopted a resolution on December 21, 1934, in which they stated that they were "profoundly shocked and alarmed by the reprisals which followed" the murder of Comrade Kirov. In harmony with this, the London *Daily Herald* carried on a wild anti-Soviet campaign from day to day after the fashion of its Brussels colleague. On December 20, 1934, the Dutch *Het Volk* opened up an uninterrupted chain of attacks on the Soviet Union with an article entitled "Bloodthirstiness." In this first article it hypocritically stands up for "the technical and also the mental revolution carried through under its (that of the Bolshevik dictatorship) leadership," and then places a sign of equality between the Hitlerite and Soviet "régime of terror." The Swedish and especially the Danish social-democratic press beat all records in this anti-Soviet campaign. They are not left far behind by the social-democratic press of Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, and even by the social-democratic press in Sofia, which appears under the fascist censorship. The same "position" is taken up by the emigrant *Neue Vorwärts*, the organ of the German social-democrats, and by the social-democratic press in the United States. In New York things went to the extent of the leader of the Socialist Party speaking at a meeting organised by the Russian whiteguard monarchists against the Soviet Union.

\* \* \*

At the session of the Executive Committee of the Second International, held in the middle of November, there was a group of seven "Left" parties which issued a joint declaration in favour of united front on an international scale. Along with the parties which, under the pressure of the masses of the workers, were compelled to form a united front with the Communist Parties (France, Austria, Spain and Italy), this group also contained such parties as joined in this "demonstration" in favour of the international united front for "tactical" reasons, although at home they actually

turn down the united front with the Communists (Switzerland and the Jewish *Bund* in Poland). Finally, the declaration of the "Lefts" was also graced by the signature of the representative of the Menshevik counter-revolutionary elements in emigration.

It is characteristic that after the events of December 1, the leaders of the "Left" parties affiliated to the Second International FUNDAMENTALLY took up the same position as that taken up by Vandervelde, the British Labourites, and the Swedes, etc., only in certain cases maintaining a certain decorum in form, but outdoing their openly Right colleagues in hypocrisy.

### The Hypocrisy of the "Lefts."

The official organ of the Austrian socialists, who have a united front with the Communist Party, the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, published in Brun, was cunning enough not to utter a single word about the events in the Soviet Union during all the weeks and months that passed. Its editor, Otto Bauer, did not dare to explain his position in its columns for fear that the workers would be up in arms against him. But then, Bauer expressed himself, and expressed himself in Otto Bauer fashion, in the *Kampf*, the unofficial theoretical organ which he edits and which does not circulate among the workers, i.e., fundamentally he took up a position attacking the Soviet Union, merely covering it up by a thick pattern of foul and well-intentioned phrases.

"Of course," writes Bauer, "it is possible (!) that it may happen (!! ) that the whiteguard plotters abroad still (!!) send those who carry out attempts at murder in the Soviet Union . . ."

But

"the Soviet Government has replied to the assassination of Kirov by the mass execution of people who apparently had no connection with the murderer of Kirov, and therefore cannot be justified by a real situation of enforced defence."

Therefore, declares Bauer, and this statement exposes the whole counter-revolutionary character of his position,

"the struggle against fascism loses its moral merit, if even where socialism is in power, it makes light of the principles of modern (!) justice when the bitter necessity of revolutionary defence does not compel it to do so . . ."

And Bauer concludes:

"Such governmental terror renders it simply impossible for any person for whom socialism is the fulfilment of the highest values of mankind and humanity, to link up ideologically with Bolshevism, even if he has a very high estimate of the merits of Russian Bolshevism in constructing socialist economy, and the importance of these merits for the struggle of liberation of the world proletariat."

And so, apparently only one thing separates Bauer from Bolshevism, namely, "a light attitude to the principles of modern justice" on the part of

the Soviet Government to the whiteguards, who, "it is possible that it still happens," cross the Soviet border to carry out attempts of murder, but who have the right to demand that they be considered as the bearers of "the values of mankind and humanity." Therefore Bauer considers the Bolsheviks as "morally unworthy" of carrying on the fight against fascism, i.e., fundamentally continues the old social-democratic policy, which under the guise of a "struggle on two fronts," against Communism and against fascism, cleared the way for fascism, a policy smashed to atoms by the course of events in Austria itself.

Bauer HIDES his position from the working class readers of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, who have honestly linked up with the united anti-fascist front with the Communists. Our Austrian comrades—without a doubt—will do everything possible to bring this new manoeuvre of Bauer, who comes before them as an "almost Bolshevik," to the notice of the revolutionary working class socialists in Austria.

A more open anti-Soviet position is also adopted by the "Left" Nenni in the *Avanti*, the organ of the Italian Socialist Party, who impudently declares that he "very sharply condemns the action of the Soviet Government in the given conditions."

Ehrlich, the leader of the Jewish "Bund" in Poland aired his views in the "Bund" newspaper, the *Volkszeitung*, about the impossibility of justifying the events that took place in the U.S.S.R. after December 31, before "revolutionary morals" and "socialist honour."

The Zurich *Volksrecht*, the journal most widespread of all the papers belonging to the Swiss social-democrats, who also adhered to the "Left" bloc in the Second International, spreads the most shameless and filthy slander of the Soviet Union from issue to issue, and ladles out whole bucketsful of filth from the fascist cesspools.

Among the Menshevik products (the Mensheviks, as I have mentioned, also participated in the "Left" bloc) which fill the social-democratic papers in all languages and of all trends, we have to select just one. In a leading article printed in the German *Social-Democrat*, published in Prague on December 29, R. Abramovich goes so far as to OPENLY JUSTIFY THE ASSASSINATION OF COMRADE KIROV. He expresses complete sympathy with the band of Zinovievite scum who allegedly reduced to despair by "the lying policy of the leaders, determined to undertake terrorist acts," and adds: "And no doubt those who were reduced to despair were MORALLY NOT THE WORST." We must bear in mind the direct "moral" justification by this Menshevik hack, of the scoundrel who shot from behind at one of the most honoured builders of socialism in

the Soviet Union, when characterising the behaviour recently of the central organ of the Socialist Party of France and its leader, Leon Blum, in relation to the events in the U.S.S.R.

#### The Socialist Party of France—and the Soviet Union.

The Editorial Board of this paper published practically nothing in its own name. On December 7, Blum considered it necessary to declare the following in an article bearing his initials:

"There is nothing to show that he (the murderer of Kirov) acted as a weapon of the enemies of the Soviet Government, and the most probable motive for his crime at the present time is personal vengeance or hatred. But if this is the case, then how can we explain the hasty sentences and the mass executions by means of which, it would seem, the Soviet Government wants to suppress the danger of 'terrorism'."

(Blum ironically puts the word terrorism in quotation marks, Ed.). Then Blum asks the Communists to allay his doubts, or simply to give him some information.

This is all that Blum has written in his own name regarding the fundamentals of this question, for the whole period that has elapsed since December 1. This apparently "philistine" explanation of the "probable motives" for the dastardly counter-revolutionary crime, an explanation in reality directed towards the defence of the assassin, was rapidly refuted by the exhaustive information made available. The picture became blindingly clear. It was an enemy of the Soviet Government who fired the shot at one of the most prominent representatives of this Government. He committed this act on instructions from an organised gang of counter-revolutionaries who were in direct contact with the official agent of a foreign state. Blum received the desired information, but continued to keep silent in spite of this.

He did not, however, keep completely silent. Blum broke his strange "neutrality" by printing vile "declarations" made by the Mensheviks in the columns of his paper, written in the style of the article of Abramovich, already mentioned, adding in his own name that

"the most sincere and most loyal operation of the tactics of united front action cannot demand that the *Populaire* should refuse the hospitality of its columns to a party (!) which is linked to us by the fraternal ties of membership of one international, and which has signed a declaration in favour of the united front together with others."

And so Blum, the boss of the *Populaire*, was not altogether silent. Cravenly hiding behind the back of the "white" Mensheviks, Blum expressed himself in the form best suiting his ends. He chose this Jesuit form for very clear reasons; he knew that the overwhelming majority of the proletariat, including the readers of his paper, are not "neutral," and that the workers, led by their class instinct—are heart and soul on the side of the proletarian dictatorship which mercilessly

punishes those who dare lift their hands against it. Blum therefore preferred to utter the anti-Soviet filth which rouses the anger of the proletariat, not in his own name, but through his Menshevik customers.

Blum once invented the expression "the vacation of legality" as an elegant pseudonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat—a dictatorship short-lived, gentle, humane and liberal. The workers understand things in a more simple manner. Under a proletarian government, it is not a question of "vacations" and short "holidays" of legality, but of the substitution for bourgeois anti-proletarian counter-revolutionary legality, "democratic" or fascist, of proletarian, anti-bourgeois, revolutionary law and order which deals mercilessly and rapidly with the enemy. Blum or someone of his "humane" colleagues from the Second International once composed the following aphorism: "As long as prisons exist it is quite immaterial who of us sit in them." No, it is not immaterial to the workers. The workers prefer that the bourgeoisie, fascists, and counter-revolutionaries be imprisoned rather than that they themselves should be imprisoned.

No, Blum is not "neutral" on the question of his attitude towards the Soviet Union, towards the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat and victorious socialism and what is more, he never was "neutral." Blum always was in complete solidarity on this question with Vandervelde and with the most inveterate enemies of the land of the Soviets, among the leaders of the Second International. He never broke off this solidarity.

Over a period of some decades, from the moment when the *Populaire* was founded, Blum, day after day, conducted a systematic, consistent and biased line of slander against the Soviet Union in this paper. He entrusted the foreign department of this paper to a menshevik (the notorious Rosenfeld) and when the workers protested against the scandalous escapades of this individual, Blum defended him, declaring the following: "Rosenfeld is myself, there is no Rosenfeld policy. There is only Blum's policy." When the whiteguard general Kutepov disappeared from Paris, Blum headed the campaign which accused the "Bolsheviks" of Kutepov's disappearance, and threatened the Soviet Embassy in Paris, on the Rue de Grenelle, with the "indignation of the people" and pogroms.

Blum, as well as his colleagues among the leaders of the Second International, are not "neutral" as regards the Soviet Union. The French workers, especially the socialist workers, should know and remember this.

The I.L.P. *New Leader* also took up an infamous position. After a formal report on December 7th

of the Kirov assassination, and complete silence for three weeks, it published on December 28th a "plea for the facts" since the Soviet authorities "will cause grave doubts if they continue the policy of executions following secret trials." This was followed by a leading article on January 4th, which, apart from attempting to whitewash Trotsky, demanded a "public trial" of the whiteguards and expressed "regret that recent events have seriously disturbed the minds of many Soviet sympathisers outside Russia." It is characteristic that the *New Leader* considered it politically necessary to advertise on January 18th an article by the counter-revolutionary Trotsky, and on January 25th an advertisement of Trotsky's foul counter-revolutionary pamphlet about the assassination of Kirov.

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Only one person from among the prominent socialists raised her voice against the howling chorus of the enemies of the U.S.S.R. This person, Marguerite Nelken, is a Spanish socialist, a deputy to the Cortes.

She ends up her appeal, written in connection with the impending execution of twenty-six Asturian rebels, and addressed to "the proletarian parties, trade union organisations and anti-fascist organisation" with the following words:

"I do not want to end up without first emphasising with a bitterness which I cannot hide, how painful it is to see so much sympathy lavished on those in Russia, who after the murder of Kirov, were sentenced in defence of the Revolution, which every worker is obliged to defend and support, whatever his theoretical views may be. At the same time I wish to draw attention to the heavy silence reigning in connection with the death sentences (in Asturias, Ed.) dictated by the vengeance of the enemies of the proletarian class. I call upon all international and national organisations which represent the strivings of the toilers and the revolt of free conscience against fascist oppression, to honestly state whether the protests of indignation directed against the revolution which wants to defend itself—and woe to the revolution which could not defend itself!—WHETHER THESE PROTESTS would not be more appropriate, FROM THE LOGICAL AND HUMAN POINT OF VIEW, if they were directed against the counter-revolution which is preparing to cut short the life of twenty-six heroes!"

These simple and honest words uttered by this Spanish woman socialist are a sharp slap in the face for all the leaders of the Second International, especially for those who play with "Left" phrases.

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#### The Attitude of the Trotskyists.

As regards the Trotskyites and Trotsky, they must henceforth be designated as a legitimate component part of the Second International.

Until recently, the Trotskyist groups in various countries of Europe, composed of the scum thrown out of the Communist Parties at different periods, for acts not always bearing a political character,

and reinforced by open police agents (this has been proved in Greece, Poland and a number of other countries), attempted to depict themselves as a "Left" or "super-Left" opposition, as "sections" of the "Fourth International" which is coming into being. At that time already they enjoyed the open protection of a considerable section of the social-democratic leaders, who regarded them as convenient "allies," as special kinds of "experts" and "adepts" in the art of slandering the Communists and the Soviet Union. The bourgeoisie and secret police have always utilised the renegades in this way.

Five months ago, the French Trotskyites gave up their "independent" existence and merged with the Socialist Party, a section of the Second International, with the express purpose of working from within in a provocatory fashion to disrupt the united front of the Communist and Socialist workers established as the result of the powerful pressure brought to bear by the proletarian masses. And a considerable section of the Socialist leaders who agreed to the united front under pressure of the masses and against their own will, welcomed the Trotskyites with open arms, knowing full well that they represent nil among the working class of France, and that their only value lies in their boundless fury against the Communists, and in their just as boundlessly unscrupulous methods of struggle against the Communists and the Soviet Union.

The enemies of the Soviet Union, of Communism and of the united front inside the French Socialist Party did not miscalculate on their collaboration with the Trotskyites and with Trotsky himself. This collaboration was most glaringly displayed after the Leningrad events, when it turned out that the gang which organised the murder of Kirov consisted of those who had been trained by the Zinoviev-Trotskyite bloc of 1926-27, led by Trotsky, and that this gang was financed by a foreign consul who, by the way, is a former social-democrat and menshevik, and who offered his services in establishing direct contact with Trotsky. Trotsky tries to weaken the deadly character of these FACTS by attempting to undertake a "counter-offensive." Trotsky winks his eye, and with the foul smile of a born renegade-provocateur, who appears in a counter-revolutionary court as an expert witness, who from his own experience knows "how things are done," tells his "version" of what took place. A consul? First of all there was no consul at all. He was invented by the "Chekists," by the Soviet Court. What people with a grain of sense will believe them? Secondly, this consul (steps have to be taken to insure oneself in case the existence of the consul and his rôle in preparing the Leningrad crime

have been, so to speak, physically proved—which was actually the case) was simply a “G.P.U. agent.” And altogether the whole business was arranged—Trotsky “knows how these things are done”—with the express purpose of compromising him, Trotsky, and besmirching his snow-white reputation as a “great revolutionary.” As regards Zinoviev and Kamenev, his former colleagues in the “bloc.” Trotsky confirms their duplicity and provocative rôle in relation to the Party by showing that they “changed opposition in principle into dumb dissatisfaction and took on a protective hue” whilst continuing to pursue the very same Trotskyist-Zinoviev counter-revolutionary aims.

The “declaration of the Bolshevik-Leninist (!) group of the Socialist Party” (the French section of the Socialist International) addressed “to the Socialist Party and to all toilers” expounds the final “position” adopted by the Trotskyites. In this “declaration” the Trotskyites, who have declared in favour of the “defence and reform (!) of the Soviet state,” protest against the fact that Zinoviev and Kamenev were not tried by Party bodies, but by the organs of the dictatorship and protested against the “Soviet policy” which “bases itself on alliances with capitalist countries and not on the development of the proletarian revolution,” and proposed that the Socialist Party, of which they are members, should “demand that an international workers’ commission” be sent to the U.S.S.R., “which would ensure guarantee for all political tendencies.”

Trotsky and the Trotskyites who were characterised years ago as the “VANGUARD OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY BOURGEOISIE” have slipped down to the rôle of agents-provocateurs of the international bourgeoisie and at times of the direct secret police. Such are their functions when in one country or another, they, in opposition to the political struggle of the workers, on the basis of the united front, advance technical preparations for armed actions, and expound in detail in their press the “plans” for these preparations; such is their rôle when they attempt, in strike-breaking fashion, to disrupt the strike struggle of the workers, in the name of the “revolution”; such is their rôle when they attack the peace policy of the Soviet Government, and “demand” that it, the Soviet Government — the government of the country whose socialist construction is a mighty factor which urges forward the revolutionary struggle of the workers of all capitalist countries—should “develop the international proletarian revolution”; such is the job they fulfil when they attempt to wedge themselves between the united front of the Socialist and Communist workers in order to poison, contaminate and disrupt it from within. Finally, the provocative rôle of the Trotskyists and of Trotsky himself

are to be seen, first and foremost, in all its abomination in their methods of “struggle” against the Soviet Union and in all their criminal “exposures” and brazen purged “evidence” which bears the clear imprint of the “literature” of the secret police and police prefectures.

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The attitude taken by the leaders of the Second International and its various sections to the murder of Sergei Kirov, one of the leading architects of the construction of socialism in the U.S.S.R., and to the events which followed this—the measures taken by the government of the proletarian dictatorship—merits the most serious attention.

#### **The Second International as an “International Organisation.”**

The post-war Second International, which at the present time is in a state of crisis and decline, never was and never wished to be or could be—a uniform solid international organisation. It was torn from within by twofold contradictions. Its national sections, each of which on principle conducted a policy of collaboration with their respective national bourgeoisie, submitted to the interests of the imperialists of their countries in foreign policy as well. Hence, frictions, groupings and contradictions existed inside the International, which exactly reproduced the inter-relations between their respective “nations” and their governments. It was not for nothing that at the session of the German Reichstag held on March 17, 1933, of the Reichstag “elected” after the Reichstag fire of February 28, that Wels, a member of the executive committee of the Second International, when making “reservations” regarding the home policy of the fascist government took a solemn oath, on behalf of the then united social-democratic fraction, of loyalty to HITLER’S FOREIGN POLICY. During the whole period of its post-war existence, the Second International has been continually splitting at its “national,” i.e., imperialist seams.

The leaders of the Second International, however, remained united on only one international question—despite all the “national” contradictions which divided them—namely, on that of their attitude to the U.S.S.R. This attitude was determined by their hatred of revolution, of the October Revolution, of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of Communism. Even in those countries where thanks to the interplay of imperialist contradictions, the governments temporarily pursue a foreign policy which is not quite so aggressive towards the U.S.S.R., the social-democrats have remained irreconcilably hostile.

In addition to this, other contradictions of a different kind have been marked with varying

strength in the Second International, and especially in its various sections. The social-democratic parties, which are bourgeois and non-proletarian in the policy they pursue, have a leading apparatus (and connected with this a trade union apparatus) which is full of petty-bourgeois elements, and rest on the bourgeoisified sections of the aristocracy of labour. None the less, wide masses of workers are covered by their influence and their organisation and they have had to reckon with these masses, especially at times when the class struggle has become particularly intense. These masses have had to be sheltered from the influence of consistent class revolutionary ideology, against the influence of the Communist Parties and against the fascination radiated by the land where there is the proletarian dictatorship and where socialism is being constructed. Hence, particularly in the period when the working masses have spontaneously been moving leftwards, a differentiation has developed among the social-democratic politicians, disputes have arisen between the Rights and the "Lefts" based frequently on a direct "division of labour" and sometimes developing into real disagreements regarding the methods to be used to fool the masses. Hence, finally, the appearance of genuinely Left leaders, who, however, nourish the illusion that it is possible to win over the whole of social-democracy to the adoption of honest class tactics.

This friction and these rifts have become especially palpable during the years of the crisis, during the period of the offensive undertaken by fascism which has grown out of bourgeois "democracy" along the path laid for it by the entire activity of the social-democratic parties after the disgraceful collapse of the German and later the Austrian Social-Democratic Parties. The Second International and its various sections have begun more and more to leak at their class seams along the lines dividing the proletarian elements from the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements.

#### **The Urge of the Masses for the United Front.**

The lessons of the German and Austrian events, and later of the events in Spain, the menace of fascism which hung over France in 1934, the experience obtained by the workers themselves in all countries, have created among the widest masses of workers in ALL capitalist countries, a powerful urge towards unity of action against the offensive of fascism and the bourgeoisie and towards the united front preached by the Communists. The wall erected by the social-democratic leaders between the socialist and Communist workers has begun to totter, and wide breaches have been made in it in some countries. Despite the resistance and formal "prohibitions" of the official

bodies of the Second International, the united front has been brought about in a number of countries. The social-democratic leaders in these countries—just as hostile in spirit to the united front as are all the leaders of the Second International, the cornerstone of whose policy is to split the working class—have been compelled to consent to the conclusion of the united front under the threat that whole organisations, with their leaders, would desert the ranks of the Socialist Parties.

The united front has been concluded and is being put into operation, not always with sufficient consistency and energy, and suffers from vacillations and sometimes even from direct sabotage by dishonest elements who have agreed to it with dishonest aims. Nevertheless, the very FACT that the united front has been brought about, even though in an embryonic and imperfect form, while big concessions and sacrifices have been made by the Communist workers, has been of tremendous and decisive historic importance. The rapprochement and the joint struggle of the socialist and Communist workers even in the most primitive forms and on a narrow basis have become a GAIN of the working class which no one will be able to take away, whether they be enemies or hypocritical "friends." The operation of the united front, as yet only in a few countries, has become a powerful stimulus to the movement for the united front, to the struggle for the united front of the Communists and the honest revolutionary socialist workers in all countries.

The struggle of the workers for their vital and deeply felt economic and political interests, against the fascist offensive, and measures against the capitalist offensive on the standard of living of the toiling masses and the growing danger of imperialist war, constitutes the starting point, the primary basis of the united front. But this does not exhaust the tasks set before it by the historic development of events.

#### **The United Front and the U.S.S.R.**

A most important place among the questions which must be included in the sphere of action of the developing united front, is occupied by the question of the attitude to the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Union, as far as the workers—socialist and non-party—are concerned, is NOT simply one of the numerous countries in the world. It is the first and only proletarian state in the world. It is a state of a new type, a state which is the bearer of and the weapon of a new system—the socialist system—as contrasted to the capitalist system which rules throughout the rest of the world.

It is a state where we have the proletarian dic-

tatorship, as opposed to ALL other states where there is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the landlords, and the financial capitalists. It is a state where socialism has been victorious and where exploitation and unemployment have been done away with—as opposed to ALL other states where capitalism is collapsing and where there is brutal exploitation and frightful and hopeless unemployment. It is a state where socialist agriculture is flourishing tremendously as contrasted to ALL other states which doom millions of toiling peasants to ruin and starvation. It is a state where culture and science have risen to a level without parallel in history, as opposed to ALL other states which are killing science and culture. It is a country where democracy is most operative, drawing the entire toiling population into direct participation in the administration of the country, whereas in ALL other countries, only a handful of the financial oligarchy hold sway. It is a state whose structure, as Lenin defined it, was, from the very outset “a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic,” and which now at the very time when the bourgeoisie are casting away even the surface sham democratic form of government, is opening up a new epoch in Soviet democracy, by decision of its Seventh Congress of Soviets, following the proposals made by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. It is a country which has brought about the complete equality of all nations on its territory, having put an end to all national oppression and which actively encourages the development of the national culture of all nationalities, no matter how small, and links them up with great economic construction, whereas in ALL other countries, hundreds of millions of people are groaning under national and colonial oppression. It is a country which is fundamentally hostile to imperialism, and has a Red Army which derives its power from the conscious loyalty to their socialist fatherland, of its men and their commanders, all sons of the toiling people, and from the stupendous technical achievements of socialist industry which have been created for one purpose alone, namely, that of defending socialist construction, and of constructing classless Communist society. ALL the other countries, imperialist because they are capitalist, are striving towards a new partition of the world, the seizure of land and of peoples, and maintain armies led by officers chosen from the bourgeois and landlord classes, intended for the purpose of

conducting robber imperialist wars and violently suppressing the revolutionary indignation of the workers and peasants in their own country.

For the workers in the capitalist countries, the U.S.S.R. is not a country like any other. Among the workers, the attitude taken towards the U.S.S.R. cannot be declared to be a “private matter.” For the working class and for every party which wants to call itself a workers’ party, its attitude to the U.S.S.R. is a class and party question.

The attitude of the workers who are loyal to their class and its interests can only be one, namely, an attitude of loyalty to the U.S.S.R., of determination to defend it against all its imperialist enemies, an attitude of practical support for its struggles against all who attack the socialist system which it is building up.

The Soviet Union, the land of the victorious October Revolution, the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism in construction (which is by its mere existence a challenge to the whole capitalist world and a mighty weapon in the struggle of the workers of all lands for their liberation) is the embodiment of the idea of practical internationalism. The proletariat of the capitalist countries, not only in the interests of the millions of workers and collective farmers of the U.S.S.R., but in their own class interests, look upon the cause of the U.S.S.R. as their own cause, near and dear to them.

This is how the broadest masses of workers, including the masses of socialist workers in all capitalist countries, really regard the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the toilers of the whole world.

In contrast to them and the socialist workers, the politicians who stand at the head of the Second International and its sections, continue one and all to remain enemies of the U.S.S.R., and at every opportunity, join the chorus of international bourgeois reaction and fascism and raise a howl against the land of the Soviets. This has become clear again in the most frightful forms in connection with the punishment meted out by the Soviet Government to the murderers of Comrade Kirov and the counter-revolutionaries who trained them.

The struggle for the united front, the ever-closer fighting rapprochement between the socialist workers and the Communist workers, must put an end to this crying contradiction.

There cannot be any place for the enemies of the U.S.S.R. in the ranks of the proletariat who are fighting in the united front.

# ON THE OUTCOME OF THE PLEBISCITE IN THE SAAR

By F. DAVID.

THE Saar plebiscite has occupied the centre of the attention of the whole of the working-class movement of the whole world for many months past. This small region of 800,000 inhabitants has of late drawn the attention of the workers of not only of Germany to itself, but also those far beyond its own boundaries. It was not so much the fate of the inhabitants of the Saar, as chiefly the influence that the outcome of the plebiscite would have upon the position of German fascism, that agitated both its enemies and supporters.

The voting took place on January 13th. There took part in it 529,000 persons, of whom 476,000 voted in favour of joining Germany, 46,600 for the maintenance of the régime of the League of Nations (status quo), and 2,000 for joining France.

Nobody doubted that the majority of voters would be in favour of joining Germany. One of the best informed journalists in France, D'Ormesson, on the eve of January 13th, wrote in the *Temps* as follows:

"If Hitler gets a majority not exceeding 75 per cent. in the Saar, then everybody will turn from him, including the present masters of Germany."

What was not clear was the extent of this majority. The voting showed that 90.8 per cent. voted in favour of Germany.

The Saar population has for many years borne upon its back the age-old quarrel of the French and German bourgeoisie. This little region, which can be traversed by train from one end to the other in half-an-hour, lies on the borders of France and Germany, and is one of the main causes of the imperialist contradictions in Europe.

## The Importance of the Saar.

The importance of the Saar for both Germany and France lies in the enormous wealth stored up in these bowels of the earth. There are 9.4 billion tons of coal beneath the surface of this small scrap of Europe. In 1933 the output of coal there was 10.5 million tons, i.e., more than was produced in the whole of Poland and approximately as much as the output of Czecho-Slovakia. There are 73,000 workers and employees engaged in the mines. These workers with the members of their families make up an army of 200,000 persons. The mines feed directly one-fourth of the Saar population. In 1933 only 8.9 per cent. of the output of coal (948,000 tons) was delivered to Germany, 4,000,000 tons were sold to France, and the remainder—over one-half—was used in the Saar itself for the requirements of the metal industry.

There are 36,000 workers and employees occupied in the iron and steel works of the Saar, and together with members of their families, they make up another army of about 100,000 persons. These works produce over 20 per cent. of the iron and steel produced in the whole of Germany. But in order to produce iron, not only coal but also ore is required. And this has to be brought from the neighbouring French deposits of Briey and Longwy. GERMAN COAL AND FRENCH ORE CREATE IRON, STEEL AND THE ETERNAL QUARREL BETWEEN THE IMPERIALIST ROBBERS.

This quarrel has dragged already over many decades before the world war. When, in 1871, Bismarck, at the point of the sword, dictated his Frankfurt Peace Treaty to vanquished France, he, of course, did not forget the interests of the Saar mining industrialists. Lorraine, with its rich deposits of ore, went over to Germany; it had to supply the Saar with ore. The Briey and Longwy mines, which lay 30 kilometres from the Saar, were left to France by Bismarck, since the ores from these mines contain a great deal of phosphorus and were therefore not suitable for production. But in the eighties of the last century a new discovery was made by the French chemist, Thomas, which made it possible to free the ore from phosphorus. The Saar metal industry began to use the French ores brought in from Briey and Longwy which lay close by.

Since then the Saar question has been a bone of contention between the "Comité des Forges" (the French Metal Industrialists' Union) and the magnates of German heavy industry. One side wants to own the Saar coal and the other French ores.

Questions of this sort are decided by the sword. And thus Germany was defeated in the world war and the Versailles Treaty was concluded. The coalmines of the Saar, which had hitherto been Prussian state property, became the property of the French government. The Saar was occupied by the French army. The motive for this given in the Versailles Treaty was to give France an opportunity of restoring the coalmines of Northern France which had been devastated by the war. After 15 years, as established by the Versailles Treaty, the population of the Saar had to decide by a general vote the question as to whom the Saar should belong to: To Germany or to France.

Before Hitler's advent to power there was no doubt at all as to whom the Saar population would vote for. All the political parties of Germany and

the Saar, without exception, although for different reasons, advocated that the forthcoming voting should be in favour of joining Germany, for the Saar population is purely German. But when Hitler came to power, the question arose as to how to vote.

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WHY IS IT THAT IN SPITE OF THE TWO YEARS OF THE HITLER REGIME, 90 PER CENT. OF THE SAAR POPULATION VOTED IN FAVOUR OF JOINING GERMANY?

#### For Germany—But Not For Hitler.

THE POINT IS THAT EVEN HUGE MASSES OF OPPONENTS OF THE HITLER REGIME VOTED IN FAVOUR OF JOINING GERMANY. In Germany itself at the last general elections, where fascist terror is after all considerably greater than it was in the Saar, a higher percentage of voters, according to the information of the fascists themselves, voted against Hitler. Huge anti-fascist united front demonstrations took place in Seltzbach (Saar) on August 26th, 1934, and in Saarbrücken on January 6th, 1935, in which many more took part than the number of votes cast in favour of the status quo. Huge masses of Hitler's opponents voted on January 13th in favour of joining Germany in order to express their national link with the German people and their protest against the Versailles oppression. Tens of thousands of those who voted for joining Germany will fight to-morrow in the anti-fascist front against the régime of the brown hangmen.

Workers in the mining villages said to those who agitated in favour of the status quo:

"We want to join our German brothers so as to fight against Hitler together with them. The status quo situation cannot hold out for long. If the Saar does not go to Germany it will in the long run go to France, and our district is populated by Germans exclusively."

The Saar Catholics said:

Hitler persecutes the catholics. But for the very reason that we are christians, we must join our brother catholics in Germany in order to suffer and fight together with them."

The Saar electors voted not in favour of Hitler, but on behalf of Germany.

Fir fifteen years the Saar has been under the heel of the French occupants. French officials and directors ran the mines, and behaved in a manner usual for conquerors. The mines were rapaciously exploited, the French bourgeoisie tried to get as much as possible and to give nothing in exchange. The most elementary safety measures to safeguard the lives of the miners were not observed. Consequently nowhere in the world was there such a high percentage of accidents as in the Saar mines. The majority of the stock of the Saar iron and steel industry is in the hands of French capitalists. NATIONAL AND SOCIAL OPPRESSION WENT HAND IN HAND. THE FRENCH OCCUPANTS WERE AT THE SAME TIME CAPITALISTS AND EXPLOITERS.

For long years the French bourgeoisie has been pursuing the policy of Frenchifying the district in the Saar. French schools were established to which the miners had to send their children, often under penalty of dismissal. The French capitalists, openly in the first few years, and then behind the screen of the governing commission of the League of Nations, gradually and step by step took away from the Saar toilers the few rights and liberties they had won for themselves. The population waited for January 13th, 1935, with a view to putting an end to this rule, to express by voting their protest, their hatred towards the oppressors, and to avenge all their wrongs. And thus the population acted, and as a result fell out of the frying-pan and into the fire.

#### Terror in the Saar.

For a whole year the terror of the German fascists has been raging in the Saar. The German capitalists of the Saar, led by Röchling, the steel magnate, who at one time fled from the German revolution and welcomed the advent of the French troops of occupation, of course, this time were not loth to play a patriotic tune. Röchling, in 1918, could not wait for the arrival of General Andlauer, the commander of the army of occupation, who was hated more than any other by the Saar inhabitants, and arranged for the French troops to occupy Velkingen, his residency, before the date established by the armistice; now he has become the leader of the "German Front," a united organisation formed by the fascists, which includes all the unified bourgeois parties of the Saar. The fascist terror knew no bounds, resorting to terror on the streets as well as to economic and moral terror. During 1934 the workers' districts and villages of the Saar were flooded with leaflets in which, among other things, it stated:

"At the last minute we appeal to you in grave words!

"You don't want to become a scoundrel!

"You don't want yourself and your children to be hated and anathematised!

"You don't want to be branded a traitor to your fatherland!

"You don't want to emigrate to Lorraine in 1935!

"Don't forget the year 1935!"

Landlords turned out the open supporters of the status quo from their apartments, who were frequently unable to rent rooms elsewhere. German employers and foremen in the factories invited the workers to join the German front, threatening to dismiss them if they did not.

During the last few months the same practice was used by German managers and foremen in establishments belonging to French firms. At the same time the government commission, appointed by the League of Nations and influenced to a considerable degree by the French, actually closed its eyes to the street terror of the fascist bands main-

tained at the expense of the German government. Long before the transition of power to the "Third Empire" in the Saar, the Hitler government, for which extra tens of thousands of votes in the Saar was of considerable importance, paid the French bourgeoisie handsomely for the right to terrorise the Saar population. The Franco-German agreement, concluded long before the plebiscite, concerning the regulations governing the purchase of the Saar mines, contains several secret, unpublished points, as we are assured by the English liberal press. It asserts that the Hitler Government has undertaken to make big concessions when the forthcoming Franco-German trade agreement is concluded, as well as several other very tangible concessions.

The demonstrative announcement about the agreement reached between the French and German governments and the transfer of the French management of the Saar mines to Lorraine a few weeks before January 13th, created the conviction amongst the Saar population that the affiliation of the Saar to Germany has already been decided and that the voting was a mere formality.

The Hitler government has spent many millions of marks on the Saar campaign. Besides payments to the French, millions were spent on agitation, bribery, the upkeep of a broad network of well-paid agents of fascist organisations in each town, in every workers' district and in every region, and on the maintenance of bands.

In the Saar, 72 per cent. of the population is Catholic. The influence of the Catholic priests in the Saar is very great. The party of the Catholic Centre, which took part in the unification and joined in the "German Front," had 14 out of 30 seats in the Saar parliament. In general, despite the exclusive industrial development of the Saar, the district is backward with all the narrowness of outlook characteristic of such a province. Only after the war did the population awaken to active political life. Before the war the Saar was the domain of Stumm, the well-known industrial magnate, and of the Catholic priests. Before the November revolution in 1918 the Saar was known in Germany as the "Konigreich Stumm," which had a double meaning: the kingdom of Stumm and the kingdom where nobody, except Stumm, had a voice; all were dumb (stumm, in German, means dumb). But even after the war only a small stratum, about 25 to 30 per cent. of the population, freed itself to a smaller or greater extent from the ideological influence of the capitalists and the Catholic church. The strongest trade union organisation in the Saar was the Christian Miners' Union.

The Catholic bishops, Treuer and Pflantz, under whose jurisdiction the Saar region was, called upon

the Catholics to vote for Germany. Catholics, who openly supported the status quo, were anathemised and banned from the church.

The regional organisation of the German Social-Democratic Party of the Saar joined the united front with the Communist Party, agitated on behalf of the status quo; the C.C. of the German Social-Democratic Party, however, openly sabotaged the agreement between the social-democrats and the Communists. This agreement and the whole campaign on behalf of the status quo was in sharp opposition to the whole policy of the Prague C.C., which aimed at an agreement with that section of the German bourgeoisie and generals of the Reichswehr, which is in favour of "reforming the Hitler régime," and of joint work with the social-democratic leaders. The Prague C.C. dared not come out openly against the united front and against the status quo in the Saar, but actually it did its utmost to sabotage it.

Although the leadership of the Saar social-democratic organisations declared for the status quo, they were against and hindered the organisation of proletarian self-defence.

The leadership of the Saar trade unions all along declared against the trade unions advancing the status quo slogan, arguing that the trade unions are, so to say, neutral and should not deal with politics. Only in the middle of December, a month before the voting, did they declare for the status quo.

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#### **The National Question in the Saar and the Problem of the Proletarian Revolution in Germany.**

The Communist Party advocated voting for the status quo. Was this a correct slogan? Undoubtedly, yes!

THE COMMUNIST PARTY APPROACHED THE SOLUTION TO THE SAAR QUESTION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE INTERESTS OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IN GERMANY. Quite independently of the chances of victory in the Saar, the Communists were obliged to unfurl the banner of irreconcilable struggle against German fascism in the Saar, the threshold of the Third Empire. The Communists linked up the problem of solving the national question in the Saar with the general problem of the German revolution.

The task consisted of demonstrating in the Saar the determined will of the German working class to struggle against fascism and thereby to deliver a blow against Hitler. There is only one way to freedom from national oppression and that is the road indicated by the C.P.G. in its programme for the social and national liberation of the German nation. A blow against fascism is a step in this direction.

On the March 30th, 1925, session of the Yugoslav Commission of the E.C.C.I., Comrade Stalin, with his characteristic conciseness, gave us the formula of the Leninist principle of approaching the national question. He said:

"The Bolsheviks never divorced the national question from the general question of the revolution, either before October or after October. The fundamental essence of the Bolshevik approach to the national question consists in the fact that the Bolsheviks always dealt with the national question in indissoluble connection with the revolutionary prospects."

Our slogan—in favour of the status quo—was dictated not only by the interests of the proletariat and the rest of the toiling population of the Saar, who, through the fact of the Saar being joined to Germany, lose all the miserable remains of those democratic liberties which remained after fifteen years' rule by the French. It was dictated by the interests of the organisation of the proletarian revolution in Germany. Our slogan, consequently, was also dictated by the interests of the struggle against national oppression. Only a Germany, freed from oppression by fascism and capitalism, only Soviet Germany will become a centre of attraction and will be able to unite together all toiling Germans residing outside of her borders.

At the beginning of the world war, when broad masses of the people were seized with chauvinist fervour, the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan of the defeat of the "fatherland" and the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war. During the first months of the war these slogans met with a very weak response among the masses. But this did not prevent the Bolsheviks from stubbornly and persistently agitating on behalf of their slogans. They were swimming against the stream.

In November, 1914, Lenin wrote:

"The war of our days is a people's war. It does not follow from this truth that one must swim with the 'popular' current of chauvinism. . . Propaganda of the class struggle even in the midst of war is the duty of a Socialist; work directed towards transforming the war of the peoples into a civil war is the only Socialist work in the epoch of an imperialist armed conflict of the bourgeoisie of all nations . . . If not to-day, then to-morrow . . . the proletarian banner of civil war will rally not only hundreds of thousands of enlightened workers, but also millions of semi-proletarians and petty-bourgeois who are now being fooled by chauvinism." (Lenin, *Imperialist War*, International Publishers, p. 88.)

To vote against joining the Saar to Germany meant to vote for the defeat of their own bourgeois "fatherland"—it meant to swim against the stream. In addition, the vote took place under conditions when there is no war, when the disarmed masses face the fascists who are armed to the teeth. To vote against their own "fatherland" under those conditions demands a high degree of class-consciousness.

The Communist Party was not successful in con-

vincing the electors of the Saar that to vote against joining the "Third Empire" means to cast their vote against Hitler, and not against Germany, the Germany of the toilers suffering under the yoke of Hitler. However, the Communist Party fulfilled its duty as an irreconcilable fighter against fascism; it showed to the whole world that under all circumstances it is the mortal enemy of fascism and will use the slightest chance to aim a blow against fascism.

#### Mistakes Made by the Communist Party.

A number of mistakes committed by the Communist Party of Germany, which had an influence upon the outcome of the vote, also must be pointed out. THE COMMUNIST PARTY DID NOT CONCENTRATE ITS MAIN BLOW AGAINST THE NATIONALIST, CHAUVINIST INTOXICATION WHICH WAS SYSTEMATICALLY ORGANISED BY THE FASCISTS. To the incitement against the Communists as "traitors to the fatherland," it was necessary to reply with widespread agitation for our programme of social and national liberation of the German people. It was necessary to fully raise the question as to what fatherland was being referred to. The fatherland of Krupp and Siemens, Schacht and Goering, Hitler and Goebbels, the fatherland of fascist terror and capitalist oppression, is not the fatherland of the workers and toilers of Germany. The fatherland of the German working class is the Germany which fought in the course of centuries for the liberation of the peasant masses, the Germany of the 75-year-old class struggle against capitalism, the Germany of Marx and Engels, the Germany of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the Germany of Thaelmann.

In an exceptionally complicated situation, the Communist Party was unable to direct its blows against chauvinism, to develop its programme for social and national liberation. This put its stamp upon the entire campaign. The campaign for the status quo in a united front with the social-democracy—developed by the Communist Party rather late, only in the summer of 1934—was mainly confined to joint rallies and meetings, but joint actions against the German and French capitalists were pushed into the background. The Communist paper, *Arbeiter Zeitung*, published in Saarbrücken, instead of a serious analysis of the situation, published sonorous "Left" articles that did not take the real state of mind of the masses into account.

The leaders of the Second International are rushing to use the outcome of the voting in the Saar as an argument against the united front between Communist and social-democratic workers. The inciter is the Swiss Social-Democratic Party, whose central organ, the *Zürcher Volksrecht*, published a devastating article on the subject of the Saar

plebiscite and against the united front and at the same time against the Soviet Union.

Swiss social-democracy, which is at the moment passing through an acute inner party crisis in consequence of its rejection of the united front, has seized upon this argument to aim a blow at the Swiss social-democratic workers who are rebelling against the policy of their C.C. The opposition in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party has assumed an acute form in recent months, reaching a split situation in the party. Ernst Walter, the leader of the biggest social-democratic organisation in Zurich, has been expelled from the Party and a considerable number of important workers in the Swiss Social-Democratic Party with him; the Zurich socialist youth organisation has been dissolved. The C.C. of Swiss social-democracy wants to split the Zurich organisation and expel a number of organisations throughout Switzerland.

The *Volksrecht* tries to explain the small percentage of votes cast in favour of the status quo by pointing to the existence of the united front in the Saar. It alleges that thanks to the united front,

"different electors supposed that not only the question of the return to Germany of the Saar would be decided, but also the question as to whether the Saar would then be under brown or under red terror."

It is difficult to imagine that in the whole of the Saar region one single voter could be found who would suppose that the status quo meant a régime of red terror!

It is true that the Communist Party in the Saar region developed the programme of the proletarian revolution, the programme of Soviet Germany. These are exactly the things the Swiss social-democratic leaders do not like. These leaders fear most of all a revolutionary struggle against fascism, the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power. The high percentage of votes cast for joining Germany evoked by entirely different causes, is explained by the social-democratic leaders as caused by the agitation of the German Communist Party for a Soviet Germany. This only shows the blind hatred of Soviet power by these gentlemen.

The article concludes with a defence of the terrorists who murdered Comrade Kirov, and declares that there is no essential difference between the fascist dictatorship in Germany and Italy and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union. The C.C. of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party that signed the minority statement at the plenary session of the Executive of the Second International calling for a united front with the Communists, were forced to print in their central organ, the *Berner Tagewacht*, a series of articles on the Soviet Union, where it was admitted that in the Soviet Union the working class rules, having

in its hands all the reins of power and building a new life. The provocative attack on the Soviet Union in the *Volksrecht* is the revenge for the favourable articles in the *Berner Tagewacht*.

The Prague C.C. of the German Social-Democratic Party, with the consent of the Second International, did its utmost to sabotage the united front in the Saar. Now the Second International is trying to use the outcome of the voting against the united front. The *Neue Vorwärts* writes the following:—

"The struggle in the Saar which has concluded has shown various questions in a new light. And serious thought must be given by those who have hitherto seen in the formation of the united front a might and magic means whereby to win the hearts of the entire proletariat and to smash all jails."

The leaders of the Second International say the same thing. This manoeuvre will not be successful. The leaders of the Second International, who by their policy paved the way for fascism, are the ones who are chiefly to blame for Hitler's advent to power in Germany and also for his coming to power in the Saar. Now, when in a number of countries in Europe the united front is making its first steps, they are trying to use the successes of German fascism in the Saar (the successes of the same fascism whose advent to power they helped along) against the united front of struggle of the Communist and social-democratic workers. The harm which the leaders of the Second International did to the interests of the working class, and the harm which they are continuing to do, and which led to the successes of fascism, cannot be rectified by the first endeavours of the united front. The lesson to be learned from the united front in the Saar is that it was set up too late, it limited itself in the main to rallies and meetings, joint actions against the German and French capitalists were relegated to the background. The conclusion that the workers of capitalist countries will draw from the outcome of the voting in the Saar is: to extend the united front still wider, to convert it into a front of joint action against the bourgeoisie.

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#### The Saar Result and the Situation in Germany.

How will the outcome of the Saar voting influence the position in Germany? German fascism—this time in complete unity with the French government—is trying to convince the world at large that the return of the Saar to Germany will help to bring peace to Europe. This argument had no little effect upon those who voted as well, for they imagined that the non-return of the Saar to Germany would in the long run lead to the Saar becoming a place d'armes of future war. Actually, the outcome of the voting will bring fresh fuel to the adventurist and provocative

foreign policy of the "Third Empire." Already by January 15th the *Volkischer Beobachter* had published a leading article which described in detail the plebiscites in those territories which had left Germany between the years 1920 and 1935. The article is written in a tone that is artificially calm, but points out, nevertheless, that frequently "these plebiscites failed to reveal the real mood of the voters." If the *Volkischer Beobachter* was cunning and diplomatic on the day when the figures of the Saar plebiscite were published, the *Deutsch Front*, organ of the "German Front in the Saar," published the same day an article inspired from Berlin, in which it says:

"Germany still has frontiers which are open wounds. The victory in the Saar is only the beginning of the retribution for the robbery which has been made of German territories. We are beginning, with the Saar, to rectify the injustices caused to Germany."

The newspaper gives a map illustrating the article, and showing Germany's adjusted frontiers, to make the letter press more precise. On this map of Germany the following territories are joined to Germany besides the Saar: Alsace and Lorraine, Eupen and Malmedy, the North part of Schleswig, Memel, Danzig, the Polish corridor, Upper Silesia, German Bohemia and the Southern Tyrol. The conclusion which the foreign policy of Germany under Hitler draws from the OUTCOME OF THE SAAR PLEBISCITE POINTS TO NEW SOURCES OF WARS IN EUROPE, NEW SOURCES OF A WORLD CONFLAGRATION. The slogan of national-socialism is TO CREATE A GERMANY ONE HUNDRED MILLION STRONG; and fresh fuel has been added to this slogan. These tasks were formulated in black and white in a secret document on the programme of foreign policy of the Hitler government, which was published last year in the *Petit Parisien*:

"The task of national-socialist foreign policy is to unite all the regions which surround Germany and where Germans are living, and to achieve the return of the German colonies."

Hitler is trying to use the Saar plebiscite for a new chauvinist campaign. A mighty Germany, one hundred million strong, which will become the mightiest power in Europe, and direct its policy of expansion into the East, into Soviet Ukraine. This is what German fascism at tens of thousands of meetings is trying to knock into the heads of its listeners. But very soon the victorious exclamations of the fascists will be drowned in the cries of hunger and need of the broad masses of the people who have been deceived by Hitler. Very soon those who voted for Hitler will become convinced of their fatal mistake. THE BLOOD OF THE WORKERS IS ALREADY BEING SHED IN THE SAAR. In Germany itself the whole of the labouring population is groaning under the yoke of brown slavery.

The outcome of the Saar plebiscite is a serious lesson to the Communist Party of Germany. The Communist Party must show the broad masses of Germans its road for liberation from the social and national oppression. The Party must concentrate its attack against the systematic incitement of chauvinism by the fascists.

The heroic German Communist Party will boldly and fearlessly unfurl THE BANNER OF PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM against the new wave of chauvinism, against new imperialist provocation on the part of the fascist régime, against the increasing danger of a new imperialist war and in particular war against the Soviet Union.

Against the fascist slogan of a greater Germany of blood and violence, the Communist Party will offer its programme of social and national liberation of the German people, which will open wide the gates of Germany for the free unity of all toiling Germans. To the slogan of a "mighty fascist Germany," the Communists will reply in the words of the programme for social and national liberation:

"We are internationalists, because our class, the proletariat, is enslaved on an international scale, because our enemy, capital, has international connections, because only in joint struggle with the whole of the international proletariat can we obtain true national freedom. Only we internationalists can achieve the unity of the whole of the German people, because we alone can give true self-determination, true democratic freedom, social freedom, to all the toiling population of Germany. Only the proletarian revolution, only the revolutionary working class under our leadership, can be the force that will smash the Versailles treaty and liquidate all the burdens of war indemnities, and will open wide the gates of Germany for the free unity of all toiling Germans."

The German Communist Party, which represents the interests of the whole of the German proletariat, will gather together all the toiling masses of the country into a people's front of struggle against the fascism of Hitler, and for its overthrow. The Communist Party will act as the organiser of the freedom of the whole of the toiling people of Germany from the yoke of fascist dictatorship.

The German Communist Party will widely extend the united front with the social-democratic and christian workers, putting forward demands and slogans, which the masses can understand and which they are ready to follow into the struggle, to suit every concrete case; the Communist Party, in organising this struggle, will lead the working masses and their supporters, the toilers in town and country, to decisive battles for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and a Soviet Government.

## THE SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RED ARMY

# (a) THE SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RED ARMY

(February 23rd, 1918—February 23rd, 1935)

### Introduction.

THE world is developing along two paths — along the path taken by the U.S.S.R., the land where SOCIALISM IS VICTORIOUS, and along that taken by the capitalist countries, a path of capitalism in decay, and where there is a growth of fascist oppression, unemployment, hunger and the impoverishment of the toiling masses. The capitalists are trying to find a way out of the crisis through fascism and war, and by intensifying their offensive on the toiling masses.

In the capitalist countries, extreme imperialist circles are coming to power, their object being to unleash new wars of annexation. Certain capitalist countries have passed to an active policy of annexation. The Japanese imperialists are lording it over China, just as though they were at home. Germany and Japan have withdrawn from the League of Nations so as to obtain a free hand in the armaments' race and the intensification of their war preparations. Diplomatic preparations for the war to divide the world anew are being intensified, as is also the search for allies, etc.

War between the capitalist states and a new anti-Soviet war are approaching. There is no more reliable stronghold of peace in the world than the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. In the light of this, the rôle and importance of the Red Army—the stronghold of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the sentinel of the Soviet frontiers, of the fatherland of the toilers of all countries—grows ever greater.

### The Red Army as the Weapon of the Proletarian Dictatorship.

The Red Army was born in the struggle of the proletariat for the conquest of power. "Only an armed people can be a real bulwark of the freedom of the people," wrote Lenin as far back as the beginning of 1905.\* The Red Army arose as an armed force, called upon to destroy the domination of the exploiters. The Red Army is an army of liberated workers and peasants, an army wherein fraternity exists between the peoples, an army for liberating oppressed peoples, and is a weapon of the proletarian dictatorship. It is the child of the proletariat revolution, its vigilant sentinel.

In his speech on the Tenth Anniversary of the

\* Lenin. Collected Works *The Beginning of the Revolution in Russia*, Vol. VI., 1st edition, p. 60, Russ. edition.

Red Army, Comrade Stalin characterised the special features which fundamentally distinguish the Red Army from all past and present armies in the world by stating that:

"All armies which have existed hitherto, no matter what their composition, were and are armies to confirm the domination of capital. As against these armies our Red Army has the peculiar quality that it is a weapon to confirm the power of the workers and peasants, a weapon to confirm the dictatorship of the proletariat, a weapon to liberate the workers and peasants from the yoke of the landlords and capitalists. Our army is an army whose purpose is to liberate the toilers."

### The Roots of the Red Army are in the Workers' Fighting Detachments.

The roots of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, to use Comrade VOZNESENSKIY's expression, "are in the workers' fighting detachments" which were established in the period of the 1905 revolution.

In 1905 the Party succeeded in organising armed detachments of workers in nearly all the proletarian centres of Tsarist Russia—in St. Petersburg (to-day the city of the great Lenin—Leningrad), Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, in the Donetz coal basin and in other big centres. These detachments, on more than one occasion, in the course of the revolution carried on a heroic struggle against the police and troops of Tsarist Russia.

The December uprising of 1905 in Moscow showed with particular force what these armed detachments of the working class were capable of doing; not more than 8,000 organised and armed workers resisted the entire military police force, which Tsarism was in a position to utilise for the suppression of the revolt, over a period of nine days. In 1905 these detachments fought with exceptional courage. Traditions of exceptional proletarian heroism were accumulated on the barricades of Krasnaya Presnaya (a working-class district in Moscow) in the fighting clashes of the workers with the police and the troops, and throughout the country, and these guaranteed the victories of the Red Guard detachments in October, 1917, and the victories of the Red Army in the subsequent years.

Along with the work carried on to create armed workers' detachments, the Bolsheviks at all the stages of their revolutionary struggle, both during the years of reaction and during those of the upsurge, during the war and after the February

revolution in 1917 really fulfilled Lenin's directives regarding the necessity for "a real STRUGGLE for the troops" and paid great attention to disintegrating the old army in a revolutionary manner, to winning the masses of the soldiers to the side of the revolution. In this connection Lenin wrote:

The first commandment for any victorious revolution—as repeatedly emphasised by Marx and Engels—was to smash the old army, to disband it and to replace it by a new one. The new social class which rises to power never could and never can reach this power and strengthen it other than by completely disintegrating the old army.\*

The years of tense work carried on by the Bolsheviks in illegal conditions to prepare the armed forces of the revolution and the tireless work of disintegrating the Tsarist army—all this forged the military cadres of the Bolshevik Party. This is why the Party was able, after the overthrow of the autocracy, to distribute splendid organisational forces among the factories and enterprises so as to consolidate the armed detachments of the workers, and the Red Guard detachments, and to send them into the army to lead the soldiers' organisations. The task of establishing Red Guard detachments went on in full swing in every town and every factory.

In Petrograd, just before the October days (October 22nd), there were about 20,000 armed Red Guards. The number of unarmed workers grouped around the Red Guards was considerably greater.

Besides the armed workers' detachments, the working class had at the time of the October revolution the support of several regiments soaked in Bolshevik propaganda and of various units of the old army, and of practically all the sailors in the Baltic.

These armed forces gained victory over the forces of the bourgeoisie in the days of the October Socialist revolution in Petrograd, Moscow and later in other cities.

Thus the Red Army was born in the struggle for Soviet power. The Red Army is the child of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In order to set up a reliable armed support of the Soviet state, to carry on the struggle against the counter-revolution which was already rearing its head in the Don region, the Urals and the Ukraine, a decree signed by LENIN was proclaimed on January 28th, 1918, regarding the formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

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#### **The Organisers and Leaders of the Red Army.**

"In the epoch of the disintegration of imperialism and of the growth of the civil war, it is impossible either to preserve the old army or to form a new one based on so-called non-class or national principles. The Red Army as the weapon of the dictatorship of the proletariat must of a necessity have an open class character . . ."

\* Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. XXIII., pp. 378-379. Russ. edition.

So reads the programme of the C.P.S.U. adopted at the VIII. Congress of the Party in 1919.

Even before the programme was confirmed the above-mentioned decree regarding the formation of a Red Army read:

"The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is constituted from the most class-conscious and organised toiling elements."

Thus the basic principle of the establishment of the Red Army as a class army of the toilers was set down in the first decree.

The fighting forces of the Red Army were got together and consolidated in the fire of the civil war, while intervention was taking place and while whiteguard armies were being established under cover of foreign troops, and the Party made use of the best old officers and military specialists to build up the Red Army, and carried on intensive work to prepare new forces of Red Commanders, of working class and peasant origin. The Party fought decisively against all who attempted to hinder the strengthening of discipline in the Red Army. The establishment of Political Departments, Commissars and Party cells in the Red Army led to the development of a tremendous amount of Party educational work among the Red Army and the population. Examples of unheard-of enthusiasm and heroism were often displayed by the poorly clad and hungry Red fighters.

LENIN, the greatest genius of mankind, personally led the work of constituting, arming and supplying the army.

Comrade STALIN, Lenin's closest comrade-in-arms, ensured by his personal leadership that the most decisive and militant tasks were fulfilled.

After the decree was issued regarding the organisation of the Red Army an All-Russian Tribunal was set up to establish the Red Army.

A particularly important rôle in developing the establishment of the Red Army was played by the organisational-agitational department of this Tribunal. This department was headed by L. M. KAGANOVICH, now secretary of the C.C. and of the Moscow Committee of the C.P.S.U. and Comrade Stalin's best co-worker.

In 1918 there was formed the famous detachment led by the old Bolshevik, K. E. Voroshilov, the beloved leader of the Red Army and to-day People's Commissar for Defence of the U.S.S.R.

"The fateful hour has struck," wrote Voroshilov (then working in Lugansk) in an appeal to the Donetz workers. "We have our fate in our own hands. It depends upon us to save our socialist fatherland, and thereby to hasten the international socialist revolution which has begun . . . To arms! All as one man! With arms in our hands, and fighting in well-formed iron ranks we will strike at the enemies of labour, at the drones, at the German, Russian and Ukrainian whiteguards."

In 1918, under the leadership of STALIN and Voroshilov, the heroic Red Army organised the

defence of Tsaritsin (now Stalingrad) which was surrounded by whiteguards from without and swarmed inside with officers who were preparing an insurrection. Tsaritsin is a most important railroad junction and a very big port on the Volga.

Comrade Voroshilov describes the rôle played by Stalin in the epic struggle round Tsaritsin in the following words:

"Comrade Stalin headed the newly created Revolutionary Military Council which began its work of organising a regular army. And only Stalin, with his magnificent organisational capacities was able, having had no previous military training (Comrade Stalin had never served in any army!) so well to understand special military questions in the then extremely difficult circumstances.

"I remember, as though it were to-day, the beginning of August, 1918. The Krasnov Cossacks were attacking Tsaritsin, trying with one concentrated drive to throw back the Red Army units to the Volga. For many days the Red troops, headed by the Communist division composed entirely of workers from the Donetz Basin, withstood the extremely powerful attacks of the excellently organised Cossack units. These were days of great trial. You should have seen Comrade Stalin at that time. Calm as usual, deep in thought, he literally had no sleep for days on end, distributing his intensive work between the fighting positions and the Army Headquarters. The position at the front became almost catastrophic. We had no way out. But Stalin cared nothing for this. He was inspired with one single thought—victory! To smash up the enemy whatever happened. And this indomitable will of Stalin was passed on to his closest colleagues, and despite the almost hopeless position, nobody doubted in our ultimate victory. We were victorious. The enemy was beaten and thrown far back in the direction of the Don."\*

Following the successes on the Tsaritsin front, the Party sent Stalin, Lenin's closest colleague, to the most responsible fronts: to the Eastern front (Kolchak), to Petrograd (Yudenich), to the Southern front (Denikin), and everywhere and under difficult conditions, the brilliant strategist of the revolution, Comrade Stalin, brought about a turn and decisive successes.

The armed forces of the proletarian revolution grew and became consolidated in exceptionally difficult conditions, in a country devastated by the imperialist war and literally under fire. These difficulties were rendered more acute by the fact that the building up of armed forces took place while an uninterrupted struggle was carried on by the Party against the biggest mistakes and shortcomings in the work of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic and Trotsky, who was at that time its leader.

"The difficulties in organising a regular Red Army in the first years of its existence cannot," Comrade Voroshilov has stated, "be explained away as being entirely due to objective reasons. Not a small rôle was played in this connection by subjective reasons. It was these very objective reasons which once compelled Comrade Stalin when he was sent to save the situation on one of the fronts to write to Lenin to the effect that he (Stalin) was

being transformed into 'a specialist in the art of cleaning up the stables of military headquarters.'"

It was in these words that Comrade Stalin aptly characterised the work of the then Revolutionary Military Council and the leadership of Trotsky.

The question of Trotsky's work was raised with the greatest sharpness and keenness as early as the 7th Party Congress at the beginning of 1919.

The military delegates were almost unanimously of the opinion that the work of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic in respect to organisational creative work was "too bad for words. They

"complained that they received no reinforcements from the centre," and there was "strong dissatisfaction with Trotsky for his unsympathetic and hostile attitude to the old Bolsheviks who were at the front bearing the whole burden of the hottest campaigns on their own shoulders."

At that time already Trotsky tried to have a number of responsible Communist fighters at the front, shot, and it was only the interference of the C.C. of the Party and the resistance offered by the responsible comrades at the front that prevented a number of people being put to death.

Everyone is aware of the very serious mistakes made by Trotsky on the Southern front, where it was only Comrade Stalin's interference which saved the situation resulting in the utter defeat of Denikin by the Red Army.

In the period following the end of the civil war, when the structure of the Red Army needed to be advanced to a higher level, Trotsky's complete bankruptcy became evident, as well as his inability to solve the new positive tasks.

The C.C. removed Trotsky from the post of People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs, not only as one who had shown himself to be an enemy of the Party, but also as a person incapable of fulfilling the Party work assigned to him.

The Red Army was built by the C.P.S.U. It was only thanks to the intense efforts of the whole of the Party, under the direct LEADERSHIP of the greatest strategists of the epoch, Comrades Lenin and Stalin, who "in a brief period became our real Bolshevik military specialists" (Voroshilov), that the proletarian dictatorship achieved complete victory on all the fronts of the civil war.

The Red Army had and still has its talented military leaders in the persons of Voroshilov, Budenny, Tukhachevski, Blucher, Yegorov, Uborevich, Yakir, Gai, Kutyanov, Fedko and many other famous soldiers of the revolution. It had such great world-famous military commanders as Frunze, Chapayev, etc.

The Red Army is a real army of workers and peasants. One of the chief causes which ensured the victory of the Red Army was the consolidation of the alliance of the working class with the middle peasants under the leadership of the working class

\* *Life of Stalin*, pp. 59-60.

and the Leninist Party. One of the special features of the Red Army is the fact that it is an "army of fraternity between the peoples, an army for the liberation of the oppressed peoples" (Stalin). The Red Army enjoyed the absolute support not only of the toiling masses of the U.S.S.R., but also of the broad masses of the toilers in the capitalist countries, including those countries which attacked the country of the Soviets.

In his historic speech at the 17th Party Congress regarding the results of the first Five-Year Plan, Comrade Stalin explained the causes of the victories achieved on the front of Socialist construction, and stated that

"the working class of the U.S.S.R. is not only strong in the fact that it has a very Leninist Party, tested in battle. It is strong not only because it has the support of the millions of toiling peasants. It is also strong because it is backed up and helped by the world proletariat. The working class of the U.S.S.R. is part of the world proletariat, its advanced detachment, while our Republic is the child of the world proletariat."\*

#### The Red Army and Socialist Construction.

After defeating the interventionists in open battle and cleansing the Soviet frontiers in the North, South and West and the Far East from the imperialist bandits (the last interventionists, the Japanese, were only driven out of the Far East in 1922), the Soviet Union won a breathing space for itself and set about the restoration and the Socialist reconstruction of national economy.

"Having started on our peaceful construction, we will use every effort to continue it without a break. At the same time, comrades, be on your guard, maintain the defences of our country and our Red Army like the apple of your eye,"†

Such were the behests of Comrade Lenin.

In 1929 the Red Army underwent a new test. The imperialists provoked the Chinese militarists in the Far East to test the strength of the Soviet Union frontiers with their bayonets. But they received a crushing repulse.

The workers and collective farmers in the land of the Soviets, and their Government, can well see the frantic preparations for new intervention being conducted by the capitalist world. The open anti-Soviet programme of "colonising lands in the East," as propagated by German fascism, has been estimated at its true worth by the toilers of the U.S.S.R.

"It must not be forgotten that there is now in Europe a ruling Party which openly declares its historic task to be the seizure of territories in the Soviet Union"—

So stated Comrade Molotov at the 7th Congress of Soviets. The extensive and thorough preparations which the Japanese imperialists are making for an attack on the U.S.S.R. cannot be hidden from the

eyes of every conscious worker, of every advanced collective farmer in the land of the Soviets. The toiling masses of the U.S.S.R. see and approve the insistent policy of peace which the Soviet Government has pursued throughout the whole period of its existence. But they also understand that the jungle law of capitalism allows respect only for the strong and that THE POWER AND MIGHT OF THE RED ARMY, AND THE GROWTH OF THE DEFENSIVE POWER OF THE U.S.S.R. ARE THE REAL GUARANTEE OF THE INVIO- LABILITY OF THE FRONTIERS OF THE SOCIALIST FATHER- LAND. This realisation lies at the basis of the unanimous approval of the measures taken by the Party and the Soviet government to strengthen the Red Army displayed by the whole population of the Soviet Union, as was demonstrated with such force at the 7th All-Union Congress of Soviets. "To fail to see the approach of a new war would be to close our eyes to an obvious danger," said Comrade Molotov at the Congress. And he was the spokesman of the whole country.

The successes of the Soviet Union in industrialising the country and in collectivising agriculture have played a decisive rôle in raising the power of the U.S.S.R. to defend itself.

In his book against Duhring, Engels wrote that "nothing is more dependent on economic preconditions than precisely the army and navy. Their armaments, composition, organisation, tactics and strategy depend above all on the stage reached at the time in production and communications."\*

The Red Army, the faithful guardian of Soviet territory, does not lag a single step, in its military perfection, behind the level of the development of the productive forces of the country. And how gigantic were the victories with which the land of the Soviets came to the 7th All-Union Congress of Soviets!

Thanks to the exceptional attention paid to the defences of the Soviet Union by the Party and its leader, Comrade Stalin, the strength and power of the workers' and peasants' army has been multiplied in recent years. The Soviet Union is now able to produce on a vast scale all the modern means of defence and to supply them in full to the Red Army.

The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Comrade Molotov, stated the following in his report at the recent Congress of Soviets:

"We consider it a great achievement that during the recent period the technical equipment of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army has considerably increased. This can be seen if only from the following fact: compared with the period at the time of the last Congress of Soviets, the mechanical equipment (i.e., the mechanical horse power) at the disposal of each Red Army man has increased four times." (Applause.)

This statement made by the head of the Soviet Government was illustrated by concrete facts and

\* Stenographic Report of the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., p. 36, Russian Edition.

† Lenin. Vol. XXVII., p. 120, Russian Edition.

\* Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, p. 190. Martin Lawrence, Ltd.

figures by the Assistant People's Commissar of Defence, Comrade Tukhachevski, and by a number of delegates in their speeches.

What are the basic facts regarding the growth of the power and strength of the Red Army?

During the last four years, the strength of the Soviet AIRFORCE has grown by 330 per cent. The qualities of the army planes' lifting power, speed and radius of action have also improved. The well-known aeroplane designer, Professor Tupolev, the originator of the plans and the constructor of the giant "Maxim Gorki" aeroplane, gave interesting figures in his speech at the Congress of Soviets regarding the growth of Soviet aviation.

Ten years ago Soviet aeroplanes were only able to cover a distance of 400 kilometres, but this year an "RD" aeroplane covered a distance of 12,400 kilometres without landing and without taking in fuel. Progress in construction has advanced from a single-seater with a 35 h.p. engine to the giant 7,000 h.p. "Maxim Gorki."

"AND I MAKE THE DEFINITE STATEMENT," he declared, "THAT ON THE BASIS WHICH WE NOW HAVE IN THE SOVIET UNION WE CAN CONSTRUCT AEROPLANES WHICH WILL BE FAR IN ADVANCE OF ANYTHING THE CAPITALISTS POSSESS." (Applause.) (*Pravda*, February 4, 1935.)

In respect to TANKS—this powerful weapon of attack and assault on land, Comrade Tukhachevski gave the following figures: Increase in the number of tankettes by 2,475 per cent., light tanks by 760 per cent. and medium tanks by 729 per cent. At the same time the speed of the tanks has increased three to six times. The Red Army has greatly strengthened and modernised its artillery, communications and navy.

The Red Army is strong and powerful not only as a result of its technical equipment, which is excellent in all respects, but also because THIS TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT IS MANNED BY SPLENDID PEOPLE—WORKERS AND COLLECTIVE FARMERS WHO ARE SOLID FOR THEIR CLASS, WHO ARE DEEPLY LOYAL TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

Communists and Y.C.L.ers constitute 49.3 per cent. of the strength of the Red Army; 68.3 per cent. of the commanders are Communists and Y.C.L.ers.

Faced with the open and widespread preparations of Japanese imperialism and German fascism to attack the U.S.S.R., the latter has been compelled to increase the strength of its army to 940,000 and to erect lines of defensive fortifications along its land frontiers and sea approaches.

The tremendous extent of the work done to increase the defensive power of the country compels the Soviet Government to increase the budget appropriations for the Commissariat of Defence in 1934 to the sum of 5,000 million roubles as compared with the sum of 1,665 millions which had

originally been voted. For the year 1935 the appropriations amount to 6,500 millions.

The toiling masses throughout the world should take note that in spite of the increase in the sums allotted by the Budget to strengthen the defensive power of the U.S.S.R., and to maintain the Red Army, these sums amount to only 10 per cent. of the total Budget for 1935 (as against 10.5 per cent. in 1934).

As compared with the expenditure incurred on maintaining the armies in the capitalist countries, that incurred for defensive purposes in the U.S.S.R. occupies a very humble place. Thus, of the Japanese Budget, 38.5 per cent. went to the Army and Navy in 1932/33, in Poland (1933/4) 13.6 per cent., in Germany 13.3 per cent., and Great Britain (1934/5) 15.6 per cent. of the respective budgets.

If war pensions are taken into account the proportion of the allocations by the Budgets for the armies and navies in the capitalist countries is much higher, in England amounting to 21.6 per cent., in Germany to 34.8 per cent., and in Poland to 39.2 per cent.

The Red Army men and Red Army commanders are successfully learning the use of their fighting technique, and the complicated forms of modern warfare.

"OUR WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' RED ARMY IS STRONG," said Comrade Tukhachevski. "ITS POLITICAL POWER, ITS REVOLUTIONARY POWER ARE INVINCIBLE, AND THIS REQUIRES THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO CARRY ON THE STRUGGLE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO UTILISE OUR TECHNIQUE SO THAT THERE WILL BE NO ARMY EQUAL TO OUR RED ARMY IN THIS SPHERE AS WELL."

This statement made by the Assistant Commissar of Defence was drowned in the applause of the delegates of the Congress. The workers and toilers of the Soviet Union do not conceal the efforts they are making to strengthen the Red Army. They know that the many years of struggle carried on by the Soviet Union for peace—from the first decree on peace it proclaimed the day after the October victory, to the insistent and consistent proposals it has made in subsequent years for complete disarmament and the creation of a safety system, is all known to the workers and toilers in all countries. The mighty Red Army of the Soviet Union is only dangerous to those who are preparing war against the international fatherland of the toilers. The Red Army is a tremendous factor in the struggle for the maintenance of peace, a mighty force which retards the outbreak of new imperialist wars and intervention.

At the same time the Red Army is the army of the world proletarian revolution. It surrounds the Socialist Republic of Soviets, the citadel of the world revolution, with an impregnable wall, and is

thereby fighting for the triumph of Communism throughout the world. Trained in the spirit of the deepest love for the workers who are pining in the fetters of capitalism in the capitalist countries, for the toilers of the colonies, imbued with a lofty spirit of internationalism to the centre of its being, it is the foremost armed detachment of the workers and toilers of the whole world. In characterising the special features of the Red Army which distinguish it from the armies of capitalist countries, Comrade Stalin said:

“THE STRENGTH OF OUR RED ARMY LIES IN THE FACT THAT FROM THE FIRST DAY OF ITS EXISTENCE IT HAS BEEN EDUCATED IN THE SPIRIT OF INTERNATIONALISM, IN THE SPIRIT OF RESPECT FOR OTHER PEOPLES, IN THE SPIRIT OF RESPECT FOR THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, IN THE SPIRIT OF PRESERVING AND CONSOLIDATING PEACE BETWEEN NATIONS. AND FOR THE VERY REASON THAT OUR ARMY IS TRAINED IN THE SPIRIT OF INTERNATIONALISM, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE UNITY OF THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, OUR ARMY IS THE ARMY OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION, THE ARMY OF THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES.”

#### **The Red Army and the Tasks of the Communist Parties in the Capitalist Countries.**

The toiling masses of the U.S.S.R. have a warm and unlimited love for their army. The Red Army is also loved by the proletariat and the exploited masses of the peasants throughout the whole world. The victories of the Red Army in the civil war are known to the toilers of all countries. The international importance of the civil war is tremendous. The Red Army defended the fatherland of the international proletariat during the civil war, no matter on what front or against what enemy it fought.

The lessons of the civil war must be made known to the broadest masses of the toilers in all countries, and primarily to the members of the Communist Parties in capitalist countries. The proletariat in capitalist countries who study the lessons and the experiences of the civil war will arm and inspire themselves for the coming struggle for the world proletarian revolution.

An end must be put to the situation in the Communist Parties, where anti-military work lags behind to some extent. Without abandoning resolutions, meetings and demonstrations in connection with anti-imperialist propaganda, the Parties have to pass on to every-day detailed work in the armament factories, etc. The objective possibilities exist—all that is required is that the boldest use is made of these possibilities.

The danger of war must be tirelessly explained to the masses, and propagandists and agitators have to be specially trained for the fulfilment of this task.

“We must tell the masses the real facts about the profound secrecy in which the Governments make their plans

for war and how impotent the ordinary workers' organisations, even those that call themselves revolutionary, are in face of impending war.” (Lenin, quoted in *Attitude of the Proletariat to War*.)

In the capitalist countries chauvinist sentiments are still powerful. Again and again they are inflamed by the fascist elements who are openly preparing the masses for a new war. The task of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries is to organise the struggle against chauvinism and nationalism, and to improve international education.

The entire fighting experience of the Red Army and its historic forerunners—the workers' fighting detachments, the Red Guards — shows that the proletariat can utilise the revolutionary situation and be victorious if it creates its own organised and firmly welded armed forces, only by breaking and destroying the military apparatus of the bourgeois states and by creating their own firm workers' and peasants' Red Armies, can the proletariat in the various countries DEFEND the gains of the revolution from the frantic attempts of the dispossessed bourgeoisie to restore their rule.

In spite of the treacherous activity of social-democracy, directed against arming the toilers, against the formation of a Red Army, in spite of the calumniations of our enemies to the effect that Communists are Blanquists, the idea of establishing their own armed forces is penetrating more and more into the minds of the broad masses of workers and toilers throughout the whole world, as a result of the victories and experiences of the struggle of the Red Army in the U.S.S.R. The experiences of the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat and the revolutionary peasants shows that the toilers cannot conduct a successful struggle for their own Soviet power unless they establish their own armed forces, and there can be no struggle to consolidate Soviet power unless a firm and disciplined workers' and peasants' Red Army has been formed. Such an attempt was made by the working class in Soviet Hungary, and Soviet Bavaria (1919). But is it not a fact that the insufficiently organised character of the armed forces was one of the causes for the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic? And is it not a fact that the existence of Soviet China which is successfully hurling back the Sixth Campaign of the combined forces of Chinese and international counter-revolution, is a new and brilliant proof of the mighty vital force of the revolution which has been able to create its own well-organised armed forces? The heroic armed struggle which the miners of Asturias (Spain), in spite of all the weaknesses of their leaders, carried on for many days against the superior forces of the government troops,

showed the power which the armed forces of the revolution are capable of displaying, if given correct organisation and leadership.

PERSISTENT WORK AGAINST THE REAL DANGER OF A NEW WAR AGAINST THE U.S.S.R. PROPAGANDA WITH A

VIEW TO CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE AND SYMPATHY FOR THE RED ARMY—THE FAITHFUL DEFENDER OF THE U.S.S.R. AND THE TOILERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD—THESE ARE THE FIGHTING TASKS FACING THE COMMUNISTS IN ALL COUNTRIES.

## (b) STALIN AND THE RED ARMY

By K. VOROSHILOV.

(Reprinted from the Symposium "Life of Stalin." Modern Books, Ltd.)

THE peaceful construction period of our history is fraught with events of vast significance. During recent years not rivers, but whole oceans, have flowed by. Enormous changes have taken place around us; entirely new prospects lie before us, and recognised scales and dimensions have completely changed. With all these events are indissolubly connected the many-sided revolutionary activities of Comrade Stalin. During the last five or six years Comrade Stalin has stood at the very focus of increasing and turbulent struggle. Only these circumstances can fully explain the fact that the significance of Comrade Stalin, as one of the most prominent organisers of our final victory in the Civil War, has to a certain extent been overshadowed, and has not yet received the estimation due to it.

To-day, on the fiftieth birthday of our friend, I want, as far as I am able, to fill up this gap.

Naturally, in a short article I cannot pretend to be giving a full characterisation of the military work of Comrade Stalin. I want just to try to refresh in comrades' minds certain facts out of the most-distant past, to publish certain little-known documents, in order by simple facts to show the truly exceptional rôle played by Comrade Stalin at the most tense moments of the civil war.

During the 1918-1920 period, Comrade Stalin was probably the only person whom the Central Committee despatched from one fighting front to another, choosing always those places most fraught with danger for the revolution. Where it was comparatively quiet, and everything going smoothly, where we had successes, Stalin was not to be found. But where for various reasons the Red Army was cracking up, where the counter-revolutionary forces through their successes were menacing the very existence of the Soviet Government, where confusion and panic might any moment develop into helplessness, catastrophe, there Stalin made his appearance. He took no sleep at night, he organised, he took the leadership into his own strong hands, he relentlessly broke through difficulties, and turned the corner,

saved the situation. Stalin himself wrote about it in one of his letters to the Central Committee in 1919, saying that "he was being transformed into a specialist for cleaning out the stables of the war department."

### Tsaritsyn.

Comrade Stalin began his military work on the Tsaritsyn front more or less by chance. In the beginning of June, 1918, Comrade Stalin with a detachment of Red soldiers and two armoured cars, set out for Tsaritsyn as director of food supplies for South Russia. In Tsaritsyn he was met with inconceivable chaos, and not only in the Soviets, trade unions and Party organisations; there was even more muddle and confusion in the organs of military command. Comrade Stalin at every step came across obstacles of a general nature, which prevented him from fulfilling the task for which he was directly responsible. These obstacles were due, first and foremost, to the rapid development of the Cossack counter-revolution, which was in those days receiving abundant assistance from the German troops in occupation in the Ukraine. The Cossack counter-revolutionary bands soon seized several points near Tsaritsyn, and thus not only defeated the plans for the collection of grain for the starving populations of Moscow and Leningrad, but also created a serious menace to Tsaritsyn itself.

The position was no better in other places at that time. In Moscow there was a rebellion of the Left Social Revolutionaries; Muraviev had betrayed us in the East; in the Urals, the Czecho-Slovak counter-revolution was increasing; in the far South the British were approaching Baku. Civil war was raging in a fiery circle. The revolution was being put to its greatest test. Telegram after telegram flew from Comrade Stalin in Tsaritsyn to Lenin, and back. Lenin warned him of the dangers, expressed approval, demanded that determined measures be taken. The position in Tsaritsyn became one of tremendous significance. With the rebellion on the Don and the loss of

Tsaritsyn, we risked losing the whole of the rich grain-producing districts of North Caucasus. And Comrade Stalin understood this only too well. As an experienced revolutionary, he soon came to the conviction that his work would have some meaning only if he could influence the military commanders, whose rôle in the circumstances of the moment was decisive.

"The line to the south of Tsaritsyn is not yet restored," he wrote to Lenin in a note dated July 7th, sent with the characteristic inscription: "Hurrying to the front, can only write on business."

"I am driving and railing at all who require it. Hope soon to restore the position! You can rest assured that we shall spare nobody, ourselves or others, and the grain will be obtained. If only our military 'specialists' (Cobblers!) would not sleep and idle, the line would not have been broken; and if we restore the line, it will not be thanks to the officers, but in spite of them."

And later, answering the anxiety of Lenin about the possibility of a rising of Left Social Revolutionaries in Tsaritsyn, he wrote briefly and to the point:

"As for the hysterical ones, rest assured, our hand will not falter, we shall deal as enemies with our enemies."

As he became closer and closer in touch with the military apparatus, Comrade Stalin became convinced of its absolute helplessness, and in certain sections of its direct unwillingness to organise resistance to the ever more insolent counter-revolution.

By July 11th, 1918, Stalin found it necessary to telegraph to Lenin:

"Everything is complicated by the fact that the Headquarters Staff of the North-Caucasus Command has proved to be absolutely incapable of fighting against the counter-revolution. It is not only that our 'specialists' are psychologically incapable of striking a decisive blow against the counter-revolution, but also that they, as 'Staff' workers, are capable only of 'drafting plans' and elaborating schemes of reorganisation, but are entirely indifferent to military operations . . . and, generally speaking, behave as though they were outsiders, guests. The military commissars could not fill up the gap."

Comrade Stalin did not limit himself to this crushing description; in the same note he himself draws the organisational conclusions:

"I consider I have no right merely to observe this with indifference, when Kalnin's front (Kalnin was the commander at that time of the North Caucasus), is cut off from supplies, and the North cut off from the grain district. I intend altering this and many other shortcomings in the localities; I shall take measures, even to the dismissal of those officials and commanders who are ruining the cause, despite the formal difficulties which, where necessary, I shall break through. Of course, I shall take full responsibility before all higher institutions."

The position became more and more strained. Comrade Stalin exercised enormous energy, and in the shortest possible time developed out of extraordinary plenipotentiary for food supplies into the actual leader of all the Red forces in the Tsaritsyn front. This state of affairs was recog-

nised in Moscow, and Comrade Stalin was given the work of

"restoring order, amalgamating detachments into regular army units, appointing the proper authorities, and driving out all the undisciplined."\*

By this time the remnants of the Ukrainian revolutionary armies, which had retreated before the attacks of the German troops across the Don steppes, had arrived in Tsaritsyn.

Comrade Stalin headed the newly created Revolutionary Military Council which began its work of organising a regular army. The turbulent nature of Comrade Stalin, his energy and will power, did that which yesterday had seemed impossible. In the shortest possible time divisions, brigades, regiments were created. The staff organs of supply and the whole rear was radically cleansed of counter-revolutionary and alien elements. The Soviets and Party apparatus was improved, and their work tightened up. A group of old Bolsheviks and revolutionary workers rallied round Comrade Stalin, and in the place of the helpless Staff a Red Bolshevik citadel grew up in the South, at the very gates of the Don counter-revolution.

Tsaritsyn at that time was full of counter-revolutionaries of all kinds, from Right Social Revolutionaries and terrorists to double-barrelled monarchists. All these gentlemen, before the arrival of Comrade Stalin and the revolutionary units from the Ukraine, had felt almost free, and lived in the hope of better days. To ensure the reorganisation of the Red forces on the front, it was necessary to sweep out the rear with an iron, relentless broom. The revolutionary Military Council, headed by Comrade Stalin, created a special Cheka,† and entrusted it with the duty of cleansing Tsaritsyn from counter-revolution.

The evidence of an enemy is sometimes valuable and interesting. This is how Colonel Nosovich (former Chief of the Operations Department of the army) who later betrayed us and went over to Krasnov, describes this period and the rôle of Stalin, in a White Guard magazine—*The Don Wave*—of February 3rd, 1919:

"The chief work given to Stalin was the organisation of food supplies to the northern provinces, and he was possessed of unlimited powers for the carrying out of his task . . . The Griazi-Tsaritsyn line was cut for good. In the North there remained one possibility of getting supplies and maintaining connections: through the Volga. In the South, after the occupation of Tikhoretskaya by White Volunteers, the position became exceedingly precarious. As for Stalin, who drew his supplies exclusively

\* From the telegram of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic countersigned: "This telegram is despatched by agreement with Lenin."

† Cheka—Extraordinary Committee, used for dealing with counter-revolutionary elements during the revolution and civil war.

from the Stavropol province, this state of affairs threatened an end to his mission in the South. But it was obviously not in the nature of such a person as Stalin to leave unfinished work once begun. We must be fair to him, and admit that any of the old administrators have good cause to envy his energy; and it would be well for many others to learn from his capacity to adapt himself to his work, and the local circumstances. Gradually, as his work became less, or rather, as his direct tasks became smaller, Stalin began to examine the work of all the administrative departments of the town, and the task of organising the defence of Tsaritsyn in particular, and the whole of the Caucasian, so-called revolutionary, front in general."

Further, describing the position in Tsaritsyn, Nosovich writes:

"By this time the atmosphere had become heavy at Tsaritsyn. The Tsaritsyn Cheka was working at full speed. Not a day passed without plots being discovered in what had seemed to be the most reliable and secret places. All the prisons of the town were full . . .

"The fighting at the front had reached its culminating point . . .

"After July 20th, the chief moving spirit and executor was Stalin. A simple conversation on the direct line with the centre, concerning the difficulties and unsuitability for work of the existing form of administration, brought a command along the main wire from Moscow, that Stalin was to take charge of the whole of the military . . . and civil administration . . ."

But Nosovich himself admits later than these repressive measures were well founded. This is what he writes of the counter-revolutionary organisations in Tsaritsyn:

"By this time the local counter-revolutionary organisations also, who adopted the Constituent Assembly as their motto, had become considerably strengthened and, having obtained money from Moscow, were preparing an insurrection to help the Don Cossacks to free Tsaritsyn.

"Unfortunately, the leaders of this organisation who had arrived from Moscow, Engineer Alexeyev and his two sons, were not well acquainted with the existing state of affairs and, as a result of a badly arranged plan, which included bringing into the ranks of the active participants a Serbian battalion which had lately served the Bolsheviks in the Extraordinary Committee, the organisation of this plot was discovered . . .

"Stalin's resolution was short: 'To be shot!'

"Engineer Alexeyev, his two sons, and a considerable number of officers with them, some of whom had been members of the organisation, while others were suspected of participation in it, were seized by the Cheka and shot without trial."

Regarding the raid and the work of cleansing the rear (North Caucasian Command Headquarters and its administrative offices) from White Guards, Nosovich writes further:

"A characteristic peculiarity of this drive was the attitude of Stalin to instructions wired from the centre. When Trotsky, worried because of the destruction of the command administrations formed by him, with such difficulty, sent a telegram concerning the necessity of leaving the staff, and the war commissariat on the previous footing and giving them a chance to work, Stalin wrote a categorical, most significant inscription on the telegram: 'To be ignored!'

"No attention was paid therefore to this telegram, and

the entire artillery and a section of the staff personnel continued to wait on barges at Tsaritsyn."

The whole face of Tsaritsyn was very shortly quite unrecognisable. The town, where so recently military bands played in the public gardens, where the streets had been crowded with the bourgeoisie and White officers who had floated in, now became a Red military camp, where the strictest order and military discipline reigned over all. This reinforcement of the rear immediately produced the desired effect upon the morale of our regiments fighting at the front. The commanders and political staff, and the entire Red Army rank and file, began to feel that a strong revolutionary hand was leading them, which would carry on the struggle in the interests of the workers and peasants, mercilessly punishing all those who stood in the way of that struggle.

The leadership of Comrade Stalin was not limited to work in his study. When the necessary order had been restored, when revolutionary organisations had been put into order, he set out for the front, which then stretched over 600 kilometres. And only Stalin, with his magnificent organisational capacities was able, having had no previous military training (Comrade Stalin had never served in any army!) so well to understand special military questions in the then extremely difficult circumstances.

I remember, as though it were to-day, the beginning of August, 1918. The Krasnov Cossacks were attacking Tsaritsyn, trying with one concentrated drive to throw back the Red Army units to the Volga. For many days the Red troops, headed by the Communist division composed entirely of workers from the Donetz Basin, withstood the extremely powerful attacks of the excellently organised Cossack units. These were days of great trial. You should have seen Comrade Stalin at that time. Calm as usual, deep in thought, he literally had no sleep for days on end, distributing his intensive work between the fighting positions and the Army Headquarters. The position at the front became almost catastrophic. The Krasnov troops, commanded by Fitzhalaurov, Mamontov and others, by a well-planned manoeuvre, were pressing our exhausted troops, who had already suffered great losses. The enemy front, formed into a horseshoe, with its flanks resting on the Volga, pressed closer every day. We had no way out. But Stalin cared nothing for this. He was inspired with one single thought—victory! To smash up the enemy whatever happened. And this indomitable will of Stalin was passed on to his closest colleagues, and despite the almost hopeless position, nobody doubted in our ultimate victory.

We were victorious. The enemy was beaten and thrown far back in the direction of the Don.

## Perm.

At the end of 1918 a disastrous situation arose on the Eastern front, and particularly on the sector of the 3rd Army, which had been compelled to surrender Perm. This army, surrounded by the enemy in a semi-circle, was finally demoralised towards the end of November. As a result of six months' continuous fighting, in the absence of any reliable reinforcements, with a weak rear, the food supply in a hopeless condition (the 29th Division stood out for five days literally without a piece of bread), in 35 deg. of frost, with no roads, along a huge drawn-out front (more than 400 kilometres), with a poor staff, the army was not in a condition to stand out against the excellent forces of the enemy.

To get the full, disconsolate picture, one must add the mass desertions of the "old" officers, and the surrender of whole regiments, as a result of the poor class selection of reinforcements and the futility of the Army Command. The 3rd Army, in such circumstances, broke to pieces entirely, retreated in disorder over a distance of 300 kilometres in twenty days, and lost on the way eighteen thousand soldiers, dozens of guns, hundreds of machine-guns, etc. The enemy began to advance rapidly, seriously menacing Viatka and the entire Eastern front.

The Central Committee was compelled, as a result of these events, to consider the causes of these catastrophes and bring the 3rd Army into order again. Whom to send to fulfil this difficult task? Lenin telegraphed to the President of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republics:

"There are several Party despatches from Perm concerning the catastrophic condition of the army and drunkenness. I propose sending Stalin—am afraid Smilga would not be firm enough in his attitude towards . . . who also, it is said, drinks and cannot restore order."

"To appoint a Party Investigation Commission, composed of members of the Central Committee Dzerzhinsky and Stalin, to minutely investigate the causes of the surrender of Perm, the recent defeats on the Ural front, and also all circumstances connected with the incidents indicated. The Central Committee instructs the Commission to take all necessary measures for the speedy restoration both of the Party and Soviet work in the whole region of the 3rd and 2nd Armies.\*"

This decision apparently limited the functions of Comrades Stalin and Dzerzhinsky to an "investigation of the causes of the surrender of Perm and the recent defeats on the Urals front." But Comrade Stalin made the centre of his "Party investigation" work the taking of actual measures to restore the position, to reinforce the front, etc. In his first telegram to Lenin, of January 5th, 1919, concerning the results of the work of the Commission, Stalin said nothing about the "causes of the catastrophe," but raises the question on the spot of

what must be done to save the army. This was his telegram:

"To the President of the Council of Defence, Comrade Lenin.

"The investigation has begun. How the investigation goes on we shall inform you from time to time. For the time being we consider it necessary to inform you of one requirement of the 3rd Army which brooks no delay. The point is that out of 30,000 previously in the Army, there remain only about 11,000 tired, exhausted men, who can scarcely hold out against the attacks of the enemy. The units sent by the Commander-in-Chief are not reliable, some are even hostile to us, and need seriously combing out. To save the remnants of the 3rd Army and avert the rapid advance of the enemy towards Viatka (according to reports received from the commanders at the front and the 3rd Army, this is a very real danger) it is absolutely necessary to send immediately from Russia at the disposal of the Army Commander at least three absolutely reliable regiments. We urgently request you to bring pressure to bear in this direction on the military institutions concerned. We repeat: without such measures the fate of Perm awaits Viatka; this is the general opinion of the comrades on the spot, which we share on the basis of all the information at our disposal.—(Sgd.) Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, 5th January, 1919, Viatka."

It was not until January 13th, 1919, that Comrades Stalin and Dzerzhinsky sent their short preliminary report on the "causes of the catastrophe" which amounted in short to the following: weariness and exhaustion of the army at the moment of the enemy attack, absence of reserves, absence of connections between the staff and the army, the disorganised methods of the Army Commander, the outrageous and criminal methods of controlling the front employed by the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, which actually paralysed the front with its contradictory instructions, and which deprived it of every possibility of coming to the speedy assistance of the 3rd Army, the unreliability of reinforcements from the rear, which is explained by old methods of formation, and the absolute instability of the rear, consequent upon the complete helplessness and incapacity of the Soviet and Party organisations.

Simultaneously Comrade Stalin indicated, and put into immediate practice with his usual speed and determination, several practical measures to raise the fighting capacity of the 3rd Army.

"By January 15th, we read in his report to the Council of Defence, 1,200 reliable infantry and cavalrymen have been sent to the front; a day later, two squadrons of cavalry. January 20th, the 62nd Regiment, 3rd Brigade (after being carefully combed out). These reinforcements made it possible to stop the advance of the enemy, roused the spirits of the 3rd army and opened up the way for an attack on Perm, which up to now has been successful. In the rear of the army a serious cleansing of the Soviet and Party institutions is taking place. In Viatka and other provincial towns revolutionary committees have been organised. The formation of strong revolutionary organisations has been begun in the villages, and still continues. The entire Party and Soviet work is being reorganised on a new basis. The military control department has been cleansed and reorganised. The provincial Extraordinary Commission has also been cleansed and

\* Telegram of Sverdlov, No. 00079.

reinforced by new Party workers. The unloading at the Viatka Junction is proceeding, etc. . . . ”

As a result of these measures, not only was the further advance of the enemy stopped, but in January, 1919, the Eastern front took the offensive and on our right flank Uralsk was taken.

This is how Comrade Stalin understood and carried out his task of “investigating the causes of the catastrophe.” He investigated, he discovered the causes and there, on the spot, with the forces at his disposal, made an end of the trouble and brought about the necessary change of heart.

#### **Petrograd.**

In the spring of 1919 the White Army of General Yudenich, in accordance with the task set him by Koltchak of “taking Petrograd” and drawing away the revolutionary troops from the Eastern front, began an unexpected attack, with the help of White Esthonians, White Finns and the British, and became a real menace to Petrograd. The seriousness of the situation was the more marked by the fact that in Petrograd itself counter-revolutionary plots were discovered, the leaders of which were military specialists serving in the staff of the western front, in the 7th Army and the Kronstadt naval base. Parallel with the attacks of Yudenich on Petrograd, Bulak-Balahovich was gaining several successes in the direction of Pskov. Treachery began on the front. Several of our regiments went over to the enemy: the whole garrison of “Red Hill” fort and “Grey Horse” fort openly came out against the Soviet Government. The whole 7th Army lost its head, the front wavered, the enemy had advanced almost to Petrograd. It was necessary to save the situation immediately.

The Central Committee again chose Comrade Stalin for this work. In the course of three weeks Comrade Stalin succeeded in stemming the tide. The low spirits and confusion of the army units was quickly liquidated; the staffs were pulled together, mobilisations of the Petrograd workers and Communists took place one after another, the enemies and traitors were mercilessly annihilated. Comrade Stalin interfered in the operations of the military command. This is what he telegraphed to Lenin:

“On the heels of ‘Red Hill’ we have liquidated ‘Grey Horse’; their big guns are in complete working order; there is taking place a rapid [illegible] of all forts and strongholds. The naval specialists assured us that the capture of ‘Red Hill’ from the sea would overthrow all naval science. There is nothing left for me but mourn the loss of this so-called science. The speedy capture of the ‘Hill’ was the result of the most brutal interference on my part, and of civilians generally, in the operations, including the cancelling of orders on land and sea, and giving our own instructions. I consider it my duty to declare that I shall continue to act in this way, despite all my reverence for science.—Stalin.”

Six days later Comrade Stalin reported to Lenin:

“The turning-point in our units has arrived. For a week there has been no single case of individual or group desertion. The deserters are returning in thousands. There are more frequent desertions from the enemy to our camp. In a week 400 men have deserted to us, the majority with their weapons. We began the attack yesterday afternoon. Although the promised reinforcements have not yet arrived, it was impossible for us to remain on the line we occupied—it was too close to Petrograd. The attack so far is successful; the Whites are running; to-day we took the line Kernovo-Voronino-Slepino-Kaskovo. We have taken prisoners, two or more guns, automatics, cartridges. The enemy ships have not appeared; they apparently fear the ‘Red Hill,’ which is now entirely ours. Urgently send the two million cartridges for the 6th Division.”

These two telegrams give a full picture of the huge creative work done by Comrade Stalin in liquidating the most perilous situation before Red Petrograd.

#### **The Southern Front.**

The autumn of 1919 is remembered by all. The decisive turning point in the whole civil war was about to take place. Supplied by the “Allies,” supported by their staffs, the White troops of Denikin advanced on Orel. The entire huge southern front, slowly, step by step, was falling back. The inner situation was no less difficult. The food supply difficulties had become extreme. Industry was coming to a standstill for lack of fuel. Inside the country, and even in Moscow, counter-revolutionary elements were stirring. Danger threatened Tula, danger hung over Moscow.

The situation had to be saved. And to the Southern front, once again, the Central Committee sent Comrade Stalin as a member of the Revolutionary Military Council. There is no need now to hide the fact that prior to his appointment, Stalin put three important conditions to the Central Committee:

1. That Trotsky should not interfere in the affairs of the Southern front, and should not cross its boundary line.
2. That a number of workers whom Comrade Stalin considered unsuitable for the work of restoring the position among the troops, were to be immediately withdrawn, and
3. That new workers, to be chosen by Comrade Stalin, should be immediately despatched to the Southern front, who would be capable of fulfilling the task.

These conditions were accepted in their entirety.

But, in order to cover this huge expanse (from Volga to the Polish-Ukrainian frontier), calling itself the Southern front, composed of several hundred thousand troops, an accurate plan of operations was necessary, a clearly formulated

objective for the front had to be drawn up. Then this objective could be presented to the troops and, by re-groupings and concentrating the best forces in the most important places, it would be possible to deliver a blow at the enemy.

Comrade Stalin found a very indefinite and difficult state of affairs at the front. We were being beaten on the main line of Kursk-Orel-Tula; the eastern flank was helplessly marking time. As for the plan of operations he was offered the old (September) plan of making the principal attack on the left flank, between Tsaritsyn and Novorossisk, across the Don steppes.

"The main plan of attack of the Southern front remains unchanged; namely, the main blow will be delivered by the special group of Shorin, with the object of annihilating the enemy on the Don and in Kuban."\*

Having acquainted himself with the position Comrade Stalin immediately took his decision. He categorically rejected the old plan, drew up new suggestions and proposed them to Lenin in the following note, which speaks for itself. The note itself is of such interest, so clearly shows the strategic talents of Comrade Stalin, is so characteristic in its decisive method of dealing with questions, that we consider it valuable to quote it in full:

"Two months ago the Commander-in-Chief made no objection in principle to a drive from the west to the east, through the Donetz Basin, as the main task. If the blow was not delivered, it was only because he referred to the 'heritage' left by the retreat of the Southern troops in the summer, i.e., the spontaneously-created grouping of troops on the south-eastern front, the rearrangement of which (grouping) would result in much loss of time, to the advantage of Denikin . . . But now the circumstances and the resulting grouping of forces have changed fundamentally; the 8th Army (the main force on the late southern front) has moved towards the southern front and faces the Donetz Basin; the cavalry corps of Budenny (the other main force) has moved to the southern front, and a new force has been added, the Lettish division, which in a month's time, refreshed, will again be a menace to Denikin's forces . . . What then makes the Commander-in-Chief (Headquarters) cling to the old plan? Apparently obstinacy alone, or, if you like, factionalism of the most stupid and most dangerous kind to the Republic cultivated in the Commander-in-Chief by his 'strategic adviser.' . . . A few days ago Shorin was ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to make an attack on Novorossisk across the Don steppes, along a line which might be convenient for flight by our airmen, but is quite impossible for our infantry and artillery to wander over. There is no need to prove that this hare-brained (proposed) advance into the midst of a population hostile to us, with absolutely no roads, threatens us with utter defeat. It can be easily understood that this advance on the Cossack villages, as was shown in practice recently, can only rally the Cossacks against us to the side of Denikin, in the defence of their villages; can only put Denikin in the position of Saviour of the Don; can only result in the creation of an army of Cossacks for Denikin; in other words, can only strengthen Denikin's position. It is just for this reason that it is essential now, without

\* From instructions of the Commander-in-Chief, September, 1919.

delay, to change the old plan which has already been changed in practice, and to replace it by a plan for a main blow through Kharkov—the Donetz to Rostov; here, firstly, we shall be among a sympathetic, and not a hostile population, which will simplify our movements; secondly, we gain thereby a most important railway system (Donetz), and the main artery feeding Denikin's army, the Voronezh-Rostov line. Thirdly, by such a movement, we cut Denikin's army in two, leaving the Volunteers to be eaten up by Makhno, while we threaten the Cossack armies, with an attack from the rear. Fourthly, we get a chance of creating trouble between the Cossacks and Denikin, since the latter, should our advance be successful, will try to move the Cossack units to the west, which the majority of Cossacks will refuse to do . . . Fifthly, we get coal, and Denikin remains without coal. There must be no delay in adopting this plan . . . In short: the old plan, which is already no longer being acted upon, must not be galvanised into life under any circumstances; it is a danger to the Republic, and will certainly ease Denikin's position. The new plan must take its place. Circumstances and conditions here are not only ready for this, but urgently demand a change . . . Without this my work on the southern front is simply futile, criminal, useless; which gives me the right, or rather forces me to go anywhere, to the devil even, rather than remain on the southern front.—Yours, Stalin."

This document requires no comment. The measure by which Stalin estimates the shortest route to attain the goal deserves particular attention. In the Civil War simple arithmetic is not enough, and often is incorrect. The road from Tsaritsyn to Novorossisk may turn out to be much longer because it goes through an environment of class enemies. On the other hand, the road from Tula to Novorossisk may prove much shorter, because it goes through working-class Kharkov and through the miners of the Donetz Basin. In Stalin's estimation of the correct direction can be seen his main qualities as a proletarian revolutionary, a real strategist of the Civil War.

Stalin's plan was accepted by the Central Committee. Lenin himself, with his own hand, wrote the order to the Field Headquarters for the immediate withdrawal of the obsolete instructions. The chief blow was directed by the southern front in the direction of Kharkov-Donetz Basin-Rostov. The results are well known: the turning point in the Civil War was passed. Denikin's hordes were rushed into the Black Sea. Ukraine and North Caucasus were freed from the White Guards. In all these events we find the magnificent services of Comrade Stalin.

It is worth while to dwell also on one important historical moment connected with the name of Comrade Stalin on the southern front. I have in mind the formation of the Cavalry Army. This was the first attempt to bring together cavalry units into such a large unit as an Army. Stalin saw the might of a cavalry mass in the Civil War. He concretely understood its great significance as far as a crushing manoeuvre. But nobody had in the past had the peculiar experience of a cavalry

army in operation. Nowhere was such an experience to be found in modern scientific works either. Consequently such an idea called forth either astonishment or direct antagonism. But this was not Stalin: once convinced of the usefulness and correctness of his plan, he always plunged into the work of accomplishing it. So on November 11th, the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic received the following report from the Revolutionary Military Council of the southern front:

"To the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. The Revolutionary Military Council of the southern front, at its meeting on November 11th, on the basis of existing conditions, has decided to form a Cavalry Army of the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Corps and one Rifle Brigade (later on to add a second brigade).

"The composition of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Cavalry Army to be: Commander — Comrade Budenny; and members—Comrades Voroshilov and Schadenko.

"Authority: Decision of Revolutionary Military Council of the southern front, November 11th, 1919. No. 505/a.

"We request your confirmation."

The Cavalry Army was created, despite the wishes of the Centre. The initiative for its creation belongs to Comrade Stalin, who quite clearly saw all the necessity for such an organisation. The historic consequences of this step are well known to everyone.

And one more characteristic was shown absolutely clearly on the southern front—Stalin's way of working with "shock troops," his way of choosing the main direction for the army to take, concentrating the best sections of the army, and crushing the enemy. In this respect, and also in the selection of the direction for the army to take, Stalin achieved great skill.

After the rout of Denikin, the authority of Stalin as a first-class organiser and military leader became indisputable. When in January, 1920, as a result of serious mistakes on the part of our command at the front, our offensive was seriously held up near Rostov, when again the danger was imminent of the White Guards, recovering from the blow, reducing our successes to nil, the Central Committee sent Stalin the following telegram:

"In view of the necessity of instituting genuine unity among the commanders on the Caucasus front, of supporting the authority of the front commanders and the army commander, of utilising as widely as possible local forces and resources, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee has resolved that it is absolutely necessary that you enter the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasus Front . . . Inform us when you leave for Rostov."

Comrade Stalin conformed, although because of his health he considered he should not have been moved. Then he began to get anxious, feeling that this constant shifting from one place to another would be incorrectly interpreted by the local party organisations, who would be inclined to

"accuse me of frivolously jumping from one sphere of army activity to another, in view of the fact that they are not informed of the decisions of the Central Committee."\*

The Central Committee agreed with Comrade Stalin, and Lenin on February 10th telegraphed him:

"I have not yet lost hope . . . everything will come right without your transferring."

When Wrangel, under cover of the White Polish campaign, crawled out of the Crimea and constituted a new terrible menace to the recently liberated Donetz and the whole of the south, the C.C. passed the following resolution (August 3rd, 1920):

"That, in view of Wrangel's successes and the alarm in Kuban, the Wrangel front be considered as of vast dependent importance, and be treated as an independent front. That Comrade Stalin be instructed to organise a Revolutionary Military Council, and to concentrate his entire forces on the Wrangel front, Egorov or Frunze to be appointed Commander of the Wrangel front, by agreement between the Commander-in-Chief and Stalin."

The same day Lenin wrote to Stalin:

"The Political Bureau has just finished dividing up the fronts, so that you are engaged exclusively with Wrangel."

Comrade Stalin organised the new front, and relinquished his work only on account of sickness.

During the White Polish campaign, Comrade Stalin was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the south-west front. The rout of the Polish army, the liberation of Kiev and West Ukraine, the deep penetration into Galicia, the organisation of the famous raid of the First Cavalry Army—Stalin's infant—to a large degree were the results of his competent, skilful leadership.

The rout of the entire Polish front in the Ukraine and the almost complete annihilation of the 3rd Polish Army near Kiev, the crushing blows near Berdichev and Zhitomir and the movement of the 1st Cavalry Army in the direction of Rovno, created circumstances favourable to a general attack along the whole of our western front. The subsequent activities of the south-west front brought the Red troops up to the gates of Lvov. And only the defeat of our troops near Warsaw prevented the Cavalry Army from carrying out the attack planned upon Lvov, from which it was only 10 kilometres distant.

However, this period is so rich in events, and to relate it all would require such a careful analysis of the documents concerned, that it would lead us beyond the limits of our article.

This short account of the military activities of Comrade Stalin does not give even a complete idea of his fundamental characteristic qualities as a military leader and proletarian revolutionary. What is most apparent is Comrade Stalin's capa-

\* Stalin's telegram of February 7th, 1920.

city of quickly grasping the concrete circumstances and acting in accordance with them. The most relentless enemy of mental slovenliness, indiscipline and individualism in warfare, Comrade Stalin, where the interests of the revolution so demanded, never hesitated to take upon himself the responsibility for exceptional measures, for radical changes; where the revolutionary situation so demanded, Comrade Stalin was ready to go against any regulations, any principle of subordination.

Comrade Stalin was always an advocate of the most strict military discipline and centralisation in conditions, however, of thoughtful and steady direction on the part of the superior military organs. In the report given above to the Council of Defence on January 31st, 1919, Comrade Stalin together with Comrade Dzerzhinsky wrote:

"The army cannot work as an air-tight, entirely autonomous unit; in its actions it is entirely dependent upon adjacent armies and primarily upon the instructions of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic: the best fighting army, other things being equal, would run the risk of crumpling up in the event of wrong instructions from the centre and the absence of any live contact with the adjacent armies. A régime of strictly centralised action on the part of individual armies must be instituted on all fronts, and primarily on the eastern front, for the carrying out of definite, seriously thought out, strategic instructions. Arbitrary action and thoughtlessness in the defining of instructions, without a careful consideration of all data, and the rapid change in instructions necessitated thereby, and also the indefiniteness of instructions themselves, as the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic often lets pass—all this makes it impossible to lead the armies, causes waste of time and energy, and disorganises the front."

Comrade Stalin always insisted on personal responsibility for work undertaken, and was physically incapable of tolerating "departmental red tape."

Comrade Stalin paid great attention to the organisation of supplies to the troops. He knew and understood the meaning of good food and warm clothes for the soldiers. At Tsaritsyn and Perm, and on the southern front, he left no stone unturned to guarantee supplies to the troops and thus make them stronger and steadier.

In Comrade Stalin we find the most typical features of the proletarian organiser of the class front. He paid special attention to the class composition of the army, to ensure that workers and such peasants indeed remained in it "as do not exploit the labour of others." He attributed great importance to the development of political work in the army, and was more than once the initiator of the mobilisation of Communists, considering it essential that a considerable percentage of them be sent as rank-and-file fighters. Comrade Stalin was very particular about the selection of military commissars. He strongly criticised the then existing All-Russian Bureau of Military Commissars for sending "mere boys." He said:

"Military Commissars should be the soul of military action, giving a lead to the experts."\*

Comrade Stalin also attributed great importance to the political condition of the army rear. In his report on the 3rd Army he writes:

"The weak spot in our armies is the instability of the rear, chiefly due to neglect of Party work, incapacity of the Soviet departments to put into operation the instructions of the centre, and the exclusive, almost isolated, position of the local extraordinary commissions."

Comrade Stalin was extremely strict on the question of the selection of personnel. Regardless of position, and genuinely being "no respecter of persons," he swept away in the roughest way all useless experts, commissars, Party and Soviet workers. But at the same time Stalin, more than anyone, always supported and defended those who, in his opinion, justified the revolutionary confidence in them. Comrade Stalin acted in this way with well-known Red Army commanders who were known to him personally. When one of the true proletarian heroes of the Civil War, afterwards commander of the 14th Cavalry Division, Comrade Parhomenko, killed in the struggle against the Makhno bandits, was at the beginning of 1920 sentenced through a misunderstanding to capital punishment, Comrade Stalin, hearing of it, demanded his immediate unconditional release. Similar cases could be given in numbers. Comrade Stalin, better than any of the other big leaders, knew how to appreciate deeply workers who had devoted their lives to the proletarian revolution; and the commanders knew this, as everyone else knew it who at any time under his leadership had carried on the struggle for our cause.

This was Comrade Stalin in the Civil War. He is still the same, and will remain the same in the years of struggle for Socialism to come.

The Civil War demanded an enormous expenditure of energy, will-power and brain-power from Comrade Stalin. He gave himself entirely and undividedly. But at the same time he gained in the Civil War great experience for his later work.

In the Civil War, in varying complicated circumstances, Comrade Stalin, with an enormous talent for revolutionary strategy, always correctly estimated the chief directions to be taken for the main blow at the enemy; and, skilfully using the tactical method appropriate to the circumstances, obtained the desired results. This quality of proletarian strategist and tactician has remained with him since the Civil War. This quality of his is well known to the whole Party. Trotsky and his friends could best relate about this, who have paid in full for the attempt to substitute their petty-bourgeois

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\* Telegram from Tsaritsyn, 1918.

ideology for the great teachings of Marx and Lenin. The Right opportunists, who only quite recently suffered complete defeat, also know this only too well.

Comrade Stalin in peace-time also, together with the Leninist Central Committee of the Party, is conducting a no less successful and relentless struggle against all the voluntary and involuntary

enemies of the Party and of the building of Socialism in our country.

But at the same time, while long ago he ceased formally to be a military man, Comrade Stalin has never ceased to occupy himself most seriously with questions of the defence of the proletarian State. Now, as in past years, he knows the Red Army and is its nearest and dearest friend.

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(Continued from page 184)

cular historical moments one or other imperialist power may not be anxious for TACTICAL reasons (and not for reasons of PRINCIPLE) that war should take place. The Soviet Union naturally supports such temporary striving for peace, as being of advantage to the workers, in giving the workers an additional breathing space for the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union and to prepare to overthrow the capitalist governments as the only way to abolish war.

It is therefore only Trotskyist counter-revolutionary slander when Miss Wilkinson introduces into her article the allegation that the Soviet's peace policy is "hardly helping the world revolution." Similarly, it is a counter-revolutionary statement when Miss Wilkinson declares in her article that "the necessary corollary of united fronts between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties in the countries whose friendship is sought (by the U.S.S.R., T.D.) presumably to DILUTE THE REVOLUTIONARY ARDOUR OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (my emphasis, T.D.), which might otherwise be inconvenient to a friendly government."

#### **The United Front.**

As long as the Soviet Union is surrounded by capitalist states (fascist or non-fascist), where the working class have not yet seized power, the Soviet Union does everything possible to avoid conflicts with these states, to be on friendly terms with them. At the same time the Communist Inter-

national is engaged in rallying the workers and toilers in all these capitalist countries to the fight to smash the capitalist system in these various countries, for the power of the working class is the only guarantee for the workers. One of the most important levers now for the development of this struggle is the building up of the united front in all these capitalist countries (fascist or non-fascist). France is a particular example where a year ago it was the united front of the working class which, led by the Communists, organised a mighty general strike, and gave the fascists their rebuff, and where ever since the Communists have been fighting for the united front. A glance at the reactionary press in France and other capitalist countries should soon convince anybody who is not a blindly hostile enemy of Communism that the united front of the working class, advocated by the Communists, is least of all meant to aid capitalist governments, "friendly" to the U.S.S.R. Miss Wilkinson's statement to the contrary is a sufficient indication of her political position.

In her short article in *Plebs*, Miss Wilkinson has confirmed what we indicated in our review, namely, that the booklet alleging to deal with "Why War?" is actually a cover for slander against the Soviet Union and the Communist International and can only be of service to British imperialism.

# DISCUSSION ON QUESTIONS FOR THE VII CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

In preparation for the VII Congress of the Communist International the editors are publishing discussion articles and materials connected with the questions on the agenda of the Congress.—Editorial Board.

## PREVIOUS ARTICLES WERE :—

<b>PROBLEMS OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE WORKING CLASS</b>	No.
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By Sinani. Vol. XI	20
<b>THE QUESTION OF THE MIDDLE STRATA OF THE TOWN POPULATION</b>	
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<b>BASIC LESSONS OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE C.P. OF ITALY.</b>	
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<b>RESOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE C.C. OF THE C.P. OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.</b>	
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<b>THE STRUGGLE TO ESTABLISH INNER SOVIET REGIONS IN THE SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES.</b>	
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## (a) DECISIONS OF THE C.C. OF THE C.P. OF THE U.S.A. REGARDING PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE C.I.

**Statement of Central Committee, C.P.U.S.A., to Party Membership and to All Party Organisations.**

**T**HE Central Committee of the Communist Party, U.S.A., instructs all Party organisations to prepare for the carrying on of a systematic campaign in the Party and among the broadest mass of workers and toilers in preparation for the 7th Congress of the Communist International as a Congress of struggle for the fighting unity of the working class. The basic link in the real mass preparation for the Congress must be the intensification of the struggle for the united front of all toilers against fascism and the danger of war.

Every Party organisation will have to carry

through a most careful analysis of our experiences since the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, to check up the policy of the Party, its tactics and slogans, from the point of view of the penetration of the Party's influence among the toiling masses and primarily among the working class; also from the point of view of the organisational consolidation of this influence, the political growth and training of Party cadres, and the ability of the Party to organise and lead the struggle for the defence of the interests and rights of the workers and all toilers. Proceeding from the Open Letter and the 8th Convention decisions, this check-up of the entire work of the Party must be conducted from

the point of view of the necessity of building up the united proletarian front and of bringing about trade union unity on the basis of the class struggle.

At the plenums of the District Committees, Section Committees, unit meetings, etc., and at meetings of Party functionaries, the discussions should be carried on not only on the results of the work of the Party during the past five years, drawing lessons from this for forthcoming work, but there should also be discussions on the outlook for the growth of the Communist movement in the U.S. This should be done on the basis of the analysis of the economic and political situation in the country, the alignment of class forces, the changes taking place in those parties and organisations which have influence among the masses (Socialist Party, A.F. of L., etc.), the level of the mass movement, taking especially into account the all-round strengthening of the U.S.S.R. and its increasing international rôle.

While concretely analysing the strength of the existing fascist movements and formations, and the fascisation of the rule of the American bourgeoisie through the N.R.A., while analysing the fascist methods of work and demagogy, the Party organisation should discuss the question of how best to organise the struggle against fascism and fascisation in accordance with the concrete conditions and from the point of view of building up the widest anti-fascist front of the toiling masses. The Party organisation must carry on a wide campaign of enlightenment on the question of struggle for the united proletarian front as the most essential condition for victory over fascism. At the same time we must carry on a concrete and persistent criticism of the social-democratic policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie which is the cause of the splitting of the working class, and, consequently, of its weakening in the face of the class enemy.

The Party organisations must draw into this discussion and campaign the non-Communist workers (Socialist Party members, members of the A.F. of L., etc.). We must invite these workers and non-Party workers generally to the meetings for discussion of the questions on the agenda of the 7th World Congress of the Comintern and its significance for the entire working class.

All this preparation for the 7th Congress must be utilised for intensified recruiting of new members into the Party.

#### **Outline of Topics to be Discussed in Connection with the Forthcoming Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.**

(1) The general tendencies of capitalist development since the Thirteenth Plenum of the Communist International.

(2) The specific characteristics in the United States of

the "depression of a special kind."

From the old deal to the "New Deal."

The crisis of the "New Deal."

The bankruptcy of all theories of American exceptionalism (bourgeois, Lovestone, Trotsky).

To what extent and in what forms was the transition to the depression accomplished at the expense of the (a) workers, (b) farmers, (c) negroes, (d) urban middle classes, (e) colonies.

Plundering the public treasury to subsidise the monopolies—inflation—war preparations.

(3) The question of the relations between fascism and social-democracy. Before the advent of Hitler and subsequently.

S.P. and struggle against fascism.

(4) The crisis of the Second International.

The present rôle of the Socialist Party of America (analysis of its various groups and tendencies).

The rôle of the reformist leadership of the A.F. of L.

(5) The concrete application of the Leninist principles of anti-war struggles in the present world situation.

Present rôle of U.S. imperialism in relation to the war danger and to the peace policies of the Soviet Union.

America's war preparations.

The struggle for the postponement of war.

The struggle against the present chief war incendiaries (Germany, Japan, and the most reactionary circles of monopoly capital in all imperialist countries).

The struggle for the defence of the U.S.S.R. and support for its revolutionary policy of peace.

The struggle for the defence of Soviet China. Support for the anti-imperialist struggle in China.

(6) Our programme of the revolutionary way out.

The relation between the Socialist revolution in the U.S. and the colonial revolutionary movement in the Caribbean and South America.

(7) The significance for the U.S. of the Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and of the existence of Soviet China.

The effects upon the revolutionisation of the class struggle and the fight for Soviet America.

Bourgeois "planning." Socialist planning.

(8) The struggle for unity of action and for the unity of the working class.

The struggle for the majority.

In the unions.

Socialist Party and Communist Party.

League against war and fascism.

Unemployed movement.

Farmers.

Negroes.

Youth.

I.L.D. and general struggle for civil rights.

Protection of foreign-born.

Cultural.

(9) Trade union work.

The major problem of building the rank and file movement in the A.F. of L. unions, of winning the local organisations, of winning the decisive sections of the A.F. of L. membership.

Forms of organisation and methods of work of the rank and file opposition in the A.F. of L.

Problems of work in the independent unions.

Problems of building the revolutionary unions.

Problems of work in the company unions.

(10) On the struggle against opportunism on two fronts.

(11) The fascisation of the rule of the American bourgeoisie.

The Roosevelt N.R.A. as a method of masked fascisation and war preparations.

The growth of more open fascist movement and formations.

(12) The specific characteristics of the growth of the revolutionary upsurge in the U.S.

Strike struggles of a class war nature.

Sympathy strikes, general strikes.

Mass urge to trade union organisation, especially semi-skilled and unskilled.

Movement from below for the united front.

Resurgence of unemployed struggles and of the movement for H.R. 7598.

Maturing forces for mass breakaways from the old capitalist parties and toward organised working class independent political action.

Significance of Communist Party vote increase in the last election.

Third bourgeois parties as a capitalist and reformist way of checking this process of mass breakaways from the old capitalist parties.

Our experience and policies in linking up the Communists more firmly with the mass movements and organisations for the purpose of directing them into channels of independent political action and revolutionary struggle.

(13) The allies of the proletarian revolution.

Toiling farmers. Problems of penetrating their mass organisations and of unfolding the daily mass struggles of the toiling farmers under the hegemony of the proletariat.

Negroes—Negro proletariat. Sharecroppers. The problem of the organisational crystallisation of our political

influence. Our experience in the struggle for Negro rights and self-determination. The review of the Scottsboro' struggles. The rôle of American imperialism in Liberia and in the West Indies.

Urban middle classes. Methods of work. Exposure of the reformist assertion of the decreasing rôle of the proletariat (Thomas).

(14) The special rôle of the youth and women in the struggle against fascism and war.

(15) The political education of the armed forces of the bourgeoisie (Federal Army and Navy, State militia, American Legion, etc.). A thorough survey of the social composition of these forces and their commanding personnel.

(16) Problems of Party Building.

Recruiting.

Struggle against fluctuation.

Building of cadres.

The contents of work of the Party units.

Special characteristics of work in the factories and the special problems involved.

Concentration (methods and experiences).

The Agit-Prop Commission of the Central Committee has been instructed to immediately take up the organisation of all available forces to collect the information and to build up the necessary outlines for these discussions.

## (b) THE CONDITIONS FOR ESTABLISHING SOVIET DISTRICTS IN THE INTERIOR IN SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES

By LI.

### A Reply To Comrade Myro.

**I**N his article, "The Struggle to Establish Inner Soviet Regions in the Semi-Colonial Countries," Comrade Myro presents one of the most acute problems facing the colonial revolution.

While disagreeing with the author on several of the problems raised in the article, we are in absolute agreement with him on the MAIN QUESTION. We agree with Comrade Myro that under certain conditions the most probable "territorial differentiation" of the contending class forces, or to put it in other words, the "route" to be taken by the revolution in semi-colonial countries will, to a certain extent, resemble the "territorial differentiation" or "route" taken by the CHINESE Revolution. This means that the revolution can be victorious first of all over a certain section of the territory of a given country. This will most probably be in the interior of the country concerned. Organs of revolutionary (Soviet) power and a revolutionary army can be organised there. They will be followed up only after a new relation of class forces (including the military forces) has

been established by the extension of the revolution over the whole country, or the decisive districts. We also recognise that this peculiarity (the possibility not only of establishing, but also of consolidating a number of revolutionary strongholds in the interior of semi-colonial countries for a relatively long period) provides the revolution with certain advantages which more than repay the ADDITIONAL DIFFICULTIES inevitable when the revolution is victorious in relatively backward regions. Here we refer to regions with an overwhelming peasant population, and where the proletarian stratum of the population is a weak one, and is consequently weakly represented in the organs of power, in the revolutionary army and in the Party.

The establishment of such (Soviet) districts in the interior will be of immense (and perhaps of decisive) importance for the development of the revolution on a national scale.

Finally, we agree with Comrade Myro that the recognition of the possibility and, moreover, of the probability of the repetition of the Chinese way

of the development of the revolution (through its victory first over a portion of the territory of a semi-colony) demands from the Communist Parties of the countries concerned that they work out all the necessary measures for the fulfilment of this possibility, including also measures of a military-technical character. The advice given by Comrade Myro regarding such preparations for the struggle to establish Soviet districts in the most favourable conditions is worthy of careful attention and study.

It is thus obvious that while disagreeing with Comrade Myro on essential points we nevertheless accept the basis of the problem as presented and elaborated by him.

#### **First Remark.**

Comrade Myro presents the question of the possibility of establishing only SOVIET districts, as though presupposing in advance that the revolutionary movements in all the colonies and semi-colonies have already reached the stage where the realisation of the main slogan of the Communists, viz., the slogan of Soviet Power, has become a practical question. In such a general form this is hardly correct.

It is true that the development of the Soviet, agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution in China has to a considerable extent changed the political situation throughout the whole of the colonial world. The toiling masses in other eastern countries are also beginning to accept the experiences of the Soviet Revolution in China. Thus, for example, the Soviets in Indo-China that grew out from the anti-imperialist and agrarian movement in 1932 originated under the direct influence of the Chinese Soviets.

On the other hand, the national-reformist bourgeoisie in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries also take the Chinese experiences into account. Faced with the danger of a new wave of the revolutionary movement "at home," the national-reformist bourgeoisie unite with the imperialists for joint counter-revolutionary struggle against the plebeian uprisings of the masses of the people. These uprisings are not only capable of overthrowing the domination of the imperialists and of the native landlords, but also of removing the bourgeoisie from participation in the government and establishing workers' and peasants' soviets along the lines of revolutionary China.

#### **Changes in the Development of the Revolutionary Movement in the Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries.**

However, it is not only and not even so much a question of the influence of the Chinese Soviets. Considerable class changes occurred in the course

of the development of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries during the years that have passed since the first round of colonial revolutions in these countries. These changes have taken place in a definite direction. FIRST OF ALL, THE NATIONAL LIBERATION AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENTS IN WHICH THE NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE FORMERLY PLAYED A LEADING ROLE, ARE NOW DEVELOPING IN THE MAIN AS MOVEMENTS OF THE TOILING MASSES IN WHICH, THOUGH THE PEASANTRY ARE NUMERICALLY SUPERIOR, THE PROLETARIAT PLAYS AN EVER-GROWING POLITICAL ROLE. IT IS CARRYING ON A SUCCESSFUL STRUGGLE TO BRING ABOUT ITS HEGEMONY IN THESE MOVEMENTS. SECONDLY, the national-reformist bourgeoisie who still continue to exert influence over the masses, ARE INCREASINGLY EXPOSING THEMSELVES AS A FORCE WHICH COMPROMISES AND MAKES AGREEMENTS WITH THE IMPERIALISTS. They are revealed as a COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY force irreconcilably hostile to a really consistent revolutionary struggle for the independence of the colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism and for the sweeping away of the tremendous remnants of feudal barbarism from these countries. THIRDLY, the national-liberation movement IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE INTERWOVEN WITH THE AGRARIAN-PEASANT REVOLUTION, and is more clearly displaying a tendency to grow into a NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY WAR AGAINST IMPERIALISM. It is thus being more closely connected with the proletarian revolutionary movement and becoming THE MOST STEADFAST ALLY OF THE WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION.

Under these conditions it is absolutely clear that the slogan of Soviet Power must be the CHIEF slogan of the Communists in the colonial countries. That is why the "programmes of action" of the Communist Parties of India, Indo-China, the Philippines, Egypt, the Arabian countries, etc., advance as their chief slogan of agitation and propaganda that of the struggle for Soviet Power in these countries. However, under definite conditions (more details of which will be given below) even in China (where the Soviets have been victorious and are carrying on the struggle over a considerable section of territory), namely, in Manchuria, which has been torn away from China by Japanese imperialism, the Communists are refraining from advancing the slogan of Soviet Power as A SLOGAN OF ACTION, and are calling for the organisation of AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST, PEOPLE'S-REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT. This people's-revolutionary government is being established in territories occupied by partisans who are under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.

Similarly in Cuba, where the Communist Party is operating under the slogan of the struggle for

Soviet Power, Soviets have not yet been established in a district occupied by the insurgent masses of workers and peasants, revolutionary power being operated by REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES, which are carrying out the slogans of the agrarian and anti-imperialist revolutions. In his article, Comrade Myro indicates first and foremost the districts in Southern and Caribbean America, "populated mainly by Indian peasants," as possible districts for the establishment of Soviet Power. We understand, of course, that Comrade Myro cited these Indian regions simply as one of the possible examples, and that the selection of this example is of no decisive importance as far as his argument is concerned. But this example helps us to formulate the thesis that the PERSPECTIVES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REVOLUTIONARY BASE OF OPERATIONS IN THE COLONIAL OR SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES MUST NOT ESSENTIALLY BE LINKED UP WITH THE IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET POWER. In other words, the political situation, the degree of hegemony in the movement won by the proletariat, and the level of the class-consciousness of the masses may as yet be INSUFFICIENT for the establishment of a SOVIET region. Nevertheless, IT MAY PROVE TO BE POSSIBLE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY BATTLE GROUND to come into being (as a result of either a peasant revolt or of an outbreak of sharp anti-imperialist struggle).

It seems to us that in discussing the question of Soviet Power, especially when we are dealing not with propaganda and agitation, but, as in the case in point, with a SLOGAN OF ACTION, as to how to proceed in practice to establish Soviet districts, we must bear in mind, above all, the DIVISION OF THE COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES INTO TWO TYPES, as is done in the programme of the Communist International.

True, the countries which Comrade Myro has in view are relegated by the programme to the first group of countries which

"have the rudiments of, and in some cases, considerably developed industry . . ."

and where, consequently there is a proletariat which is able to give the bourgeois-democratic revolution PROLETARIAN FEATURES. But in dealing with the question of Soviet districts in the interior, Comrade Myro has in view not these countries as a whole, but special NATIONAL INDIAN regions—and peasant regions at that. It is, however, well known that in Brazil, for instance, there is almost no Indian proletariat (in contradistinction to Peru and Bolivia, for example, where the majority of the miners are Indians). These national Indian districts are considerably nearer to the second group of colonial and semi-colonial countries, as defined in the Comintern programme, viz., countries

"where there are no wage workers or very few, where the majority of the population still live in tribal conditions, where survivals of primitive tribal forms still exist, where the national bourgeoisie is almost non-existent, where the primary rôle of foreign imperialism is that of military occupation . . ."

In these most backward colonial and semi-colonial countries

"the struggle for national liberation is of central importance." (C.I. Programme.)

It should be added to this that in the present instance we are faced with a most complicated NATIONAL combination of circumstances where the Indian people are under the yoke not only of foreign imperialism, but of a great-power nation which is in power in Brazil. This additional factor of the national oppression is clearly characterised for example by the American investigator Jefferson.

"I think," writes Jefferson, "that the South American excludes his Indian fellow citizen from his understanding of nationality just as much as we (i.e., the great-powered Yankee—Li) exclude the Negro from our conception of the ideal American."\*

Can we presume that the Indian toiling masses who live under these conditions are TO-DAY already capable of rising to the struggle, under the slogan of Soviet Power (or under the slogan of peasants' Soviets, Soviets of toilers, about which Lenin spoke at the Second Congress of the Comintern and which must be untiringly popularised in these countries as well) and of proceeding to establish a Soviet region in their own territories? Is it not more probable that an ANTI-IMPERIALIST INDIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY STATE AFTER THE TYPE OF THE MODERN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC will be established in these national Indian districts as a result of a victorious national uprising? And if the Communists do not wish to isolate themselves from the Indian toiling masses among whom class contradictions are subordinate to remnants of tribal relations and the dual national yoke, should they not advance under the slogan of the establishment of an independent Indian People's Revolutionary State? What is said here about Indian national regions also holds good for the remaining backward regions of central Asia, central Africa, etc., etc.

#### **The Broad United Front in the National Revolutionary Movement.**

But besides the necessity for drawing a distinction between the two types of colonial and dependent countries, it must also be borne in mind that under the present conditions of the maturing of the world revolutionary crisis, there is an expansion of the possibility FOR ESTABLISHING A BROAD UNITED FRONT IN THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION-

\* Re-translated from the Russian collection of *Problems of Southern and Caribbean America*, p. 201, published by the Institute of World Economics and Politics, Moscow.

ARY MOVEMENT in the countries subjugated by imperialism. Proof of this is to be found in the events in China, and especially in Manchuria, where, in conditions of a predatory onslaught by Japanese imperialism, endangering what little remains of the national independence of the Chinese people and the very integrity of China, not only are the great masses of the petty-bourgeoisie of the cities taking the road of the national-liberation struggle, but, as the defence of Shanghai (1931) and the establishment of the buffer Government of Fukien (in the spring of 1934) show, certain sections of the officers of the lower and middle rank in the Kuomintang army have also chosen this road of struggle. At the same time, both during the events in Manchuria and the defence of Shanghai, the relation of class forces, the degree of organisation of the proletariat, and the support it received from the toiling masses of city and village, proved to be insufficient for the Communist Party of China to be able to issue a call for the immediate organisation of Soviets. Under these conditions the Communist Party, which never for a moment stopped its agitation for the Soviets as the only form of power capable of fulfilling the programme of national and social liberation, issued the slogan (in Manchuria as well as in Shanghai) calling for the establishment of an anti-imperialist, people's revolutionary government.

The intensification of imperialist aggression and the sharpening of the forms it takes is not accidental. It follows consistently from the attempts of the finance capitalists of the imperialist countries to transfer the burden of the economic crisis on to the colonial countries; it follows from the sharpening of the imperialist struggle for a new division of markets.

It is therefore quite probable that a situation may be brought about in other colonial and semi-colonial countries when the IMPERIALIST OFFENSIVE in one form or another (intervention, shooting down of mass demonstrations, etc., etc.) may SUDDENLY CREATE A SITUATION OF NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS, and may even raise very wide masses to armed struggle, to a NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY WAR against imperialism, AGAINST THE WILL OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY NATIONAL REFORMIST BOURGEOISIE. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PROLETARIAT ITSELF IS ORGANISED, THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE TOILING MASSES RALLY AROUND THE PROLETARIAT, AND THE LEVEL OF THEIR POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS WILL STILL BE INSUFFICIENT AT THIS MOMENT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO BE ABLE TO ISSUE THE CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

### Where the Slogan of a National Revolutionary Government is Necessary.

In such a case, both in the colonies and semi-colonies where industry is relatively well developed, and where there are considerable numbers of workers, the slogan calling for the establishment of a NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT will be politically very appropriate. Such a government will be primarily ANTI-IMPERIALIST, WILL BE ONE OF THE FORMS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY, or one transitory to it, as a government capable, if the Communists pursue a correct line, of developing into SOVIET power in the course of major class battles and by consolidating the leading rôle of the proletariat and developing the agrarian revolution.

Hence the following conclusions must be drawn. In dealing with the question of the possibility of establishing revolutionary place d'armes in the semi-colonial countries, we should not, as Comrade Myro has done, link up the perspectives of the development of such a place d'armes (battle-ground) with the immediate organisation of Soviet power.

The concrete form assumed by this revolutionary power will depend upon many factors: upon the level of economic development of the given country, on the revolutionary traditions of the territory in which the rebellion has been victorious, on the extent to which the anti-imperialist movement is linked up with the agrarian-peasant revolution, and what is most important, upon the proletariat winning the leading rôle in the revolution and upon the strength of the Communist Party. In other words, it will depend upon a number of factors which cannot be forecast beforehand for all colonial and semi-colonial countries.

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### Second Remark.

Comrade Myro writes as follows about the conditions under which it is possible to establish inner Soviet districts:

"FIRSTLY, it is essential that at least in some regions in the country a situation of REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE (my emphasis, Li.) should have developed which ensures that broad masses of toilers are rallied for the armed struggle for Soviet power. Should there be an absence of sufficient revolutionary movement among the masses IF ONLY IN SOME REGIONS IN THE COUNTRY, attempts at ARMED UPRISINGS (my emphasis, Li.) would be of a putschist and adventurist character, and would only lead to a useless expenditure of the revolutionary forces, and would compromise the very idea of the armed struggle for Soviet power. THIS, HOWEVER, DOES NOT IMPLY THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INNER SOVIET REGIONS ONLY BECOMES POSSIBLE IF THERE IS AN ALL NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS (my emphasis, Li.) Herein precisely lies the special feature of the situation in certain countries (primarily SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES), where the state apparatus is shattered and unstable, namely, that here IT IS POSSIBLE for the revolution-

ary classes to seize power in CERTAIN regions PRIOR to it becoming directly possible for them to seize power on an ALL NATIONAL scale."

To complete Comrade Myro's argument we must note that he considers the second condition to be that

"a certain co-ordination should exist between the level attained by the upsurge of the working class movement and the level attained by that of the peasant movement."

His third condition is that

"the movement should be headed by a Communist Party sufficiently firm and able to carry on the struggle."

We shall deal with these two conditions in the third remark we shall make.

We cannot, however, under any circumstances agree with such a conception of the conditions under which it is possible to proceed to the establishment of Soviet districts, i.e., an armed uprising even in a part of the territory of the country.

It is true that sharp points of contradictions between imperialist states and semi-colonial countries "DISORGANISES THE STATE APPARATUS AND WEAKENS ITS POWER TO RESIST THE REVOLUTIONARY REVOLT OF THE MASSES OF PEOPLE." The internecine war between the local bourgeois-landlords' cliques leads to the same consequences.

These peculiarities of the political situation in the semi-colonial countries make it EASIER for the revolutionary elements of the population to seize power, especially at the beginning, over a section of the territory of the given country. This must not be ignored.

However, in estimating how far the situation is ripe for a victorious struggle for Soviets and Soviet districts, what must be borne in mind first and foremost is the SITUATION IN THE REVOLUTIONARY CAMP (and not only among the ruling classes, as Comrade Myro does). We must also bear in mind that where there is a serious danger that Soviet power will be victorious, the imperialists, notwithstanding their contradictions, will render direct aid to the bourgeois-landlord counter-revolutionary forces.

In defending his thesis that it is sufficient if there is a "revolutionary upsurge" in part of the country for the armed uprising and struggle for Soviets to be successful, Comrade Myro can only refer to the ONE historical example of the establishment of SOVIET districts, namely, to the example of China (the other numerous examples of revolutions in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries in Turkey, Mexico, South and Central America, etc., by no means indicate the establishment of Soviets, but only characterise the "route taken by" or the "territorial division" of the fighting forces in BOURGEOIS REVOLUTIONS or peasant wars). But the experience of Soviet China is indisputable proof against his arguments.

Indeed, Soviets grew up in China not as Comrade Myro would have us believe, as a result merely of a "revolutionary upsurge" in "certain districts" while there was no "national crisis." The Soviets have grown in China in the PROCESS OF THE REVOLUTION, which has lasted several years in China and passed through several stages prior to this. It was only as a result of radical changes in the class groupings and in the relation of class forces, of the PROLETARIAT GAINING THE LEADERSHIP of the movement, and liberating the peasantry from the influence of the national-bourgeoisie (who at the beginning participated in the movement and later became traitors and went over to the imperialists and feudalists) that it became possible to establish bases for Soviet power and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

The beginning of the establishment of these Soviet districts in the interior took place in a situation where there was a very deep revolutionary crisis on a national scale, where the whole of central and southern China were the scenes of a wave of revolutionary uprisings (the Nanchang uprising, and the advance of Ye-tin and Ho Lung, the miners' and peasants' uprising in Honan-Kiangsi in September, 1927, the establishment of Soviet districts in Heifing and Lo Fin in Guandong, and finally the Canton Commune). The Canton Commune was the completion of a whole series of heroic struggles of the retreating revolution. And at the same time it gave the banner of the Soviets to the new stage of the revolution.

In the period "between two waves of revolution" (see resolution of VI. Congress, C.P. of China), i.e., in 1928-1929, the small and weak bases of Soviet power were able to maintain their existence not only because of the shattered state of the Kuomintang State apparatus, but primarily because a partisan peasant movement continued to rage throughout the South of China. The Soviets and the Red Army became a mighty force only in a situation where there was the new revolutionary crisis on a national scale which began at the end of 1929 and in the first months of 1930. The Soviets and the Red Army were one (but only one) of the factors in the maturing of this crisis. The other factors of this revolutionary crisis on a national scale were, FIRSTLY, the bankruptcy of the attempts of the Kuomintang to establish and consolidate a national-bourgeois centralised government on the basis of the temporary victory of counter-revolution (bankruptcy which found its expression in a new outbreak of internecine war between the militarist cliques, in the collapse of the attempts to attract foreign capital, and in the complete failure of the whole of the internal policy of the Kuomintang, etc.). The SECOND factor was the new wave of the working-class movement when

the working class assumed the rôle of leader of the new revolutionary upsurge.\*

#### How the Sun Yat-Sen Government Originated.

It is well known that the total number of strikers in China was 750,000 in the year 1929, 730,000 in 1931, and 1,215,000 in 1932.

We might still allow that for the establishment of a basis for a revolutionary government and revolutionary army, a "revolutionary upsurge" would be sufficient at the stage of the united national-revolutionary front when the national bourgeoisie has come forward as one of the driving forces of the revolution. This, for example, was how the Canton government of Sun Yat-Sen was established in 1920 and 1923. But this government (as distinct from a SOVIET Government) did not come forward as an open enemy of the old social order, of imperialism and militarists, from the beginning. The Sun Yat-Sen government originated rather as a result of a MILITARY COUP, and was for a long time dependent upon militarist forces (Sheng Tsui-ming, Yan Sen, etc.) in Guangdong until the famous revolutionary movement of "May 30th," 1925, and the Hong-Kong, Canton anti-imperialist strike which lasted a year and a half, events which laid the BEGINNING for the CHINESE REVOLUTION, and supplied this government with the BROAD MASS BASIS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT. But surely the period when the national-bourgeoisie in the colonial and semi-colonial countries (China, Turkey, etc.) participated in the revolution as one of its driving forces, is a matter of the past.

Can it be supposed that Soviet districts can arise, and, moreover, become consolidated as a result of such an unnoticed military coup (as the FORMATION of the Canton Sun Yat-Sen Government was), districts the formation of which will be taken by the imperialists, landlords, and national-bourgeoisie as an open challenge to their class rule? Can it be thought that the establishment of districts in the interior where the Soviet revolution is victorious will progress along lines similar to the establishment of revolutionary battle-grounds in the BOURGEOIS REVOLUTIONS or PEASANTS' WARS of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, numerous examples of which Comrade Myro cites to support his assertions?

We emphasise further that in the question under discussion it is not a question of SPONTANEOUS REVOLTS, but of the aim CONSCIOUSLY PURSUED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY, i.e., the establishment of Soviet districts in the interior by means of an

\* See E.C.C.I. letter to the C.C. of the C.P. of China, December, 1929, where the presence of a revolutionary crisis on a national scale is admitted for the first time. (*Strategy and Tactics of the Comintern in the National-Colonial Revolution*), Russian Edition, p. 252.

uprising on part of the territory of the given country.

The road to victory and the consolidation of the successes of the SOVIET Revolution undoubtedly contains CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULTIES. This is so because, in this case, in spite of the bourgeois-democratic character of the current stage of the revolution it is a question of a decisive step towards the complete abolition of all exploitation of man by man, whereas in the bourgeois revolutions it was simply a matter of changing one form of exploitation by another (or of doing away with foreign national oppression, and maintaining the entire old landlord-bourgeois order inside the country, the masses of which have risen to the national-liberation struggle). If this is so, then it is clear that the forces of the workers and peasants who have come forward in an organised manner under the leadership of the Communist Party, for ARMED STRUGGLE against imperialism and the landlord-bourgeois governments, FOR SOVIET POWER, must be adequately strong from the start, so as to achieve EVEN PARTIAL VICTORY in the sense of capturing power in one section of the territory of the given country, and utilising this district as a jumping-off ground for further rallying the forces of the revolution, and establishing organs of Soviet power and detachments of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

If the Communist Parties in the semi-colonial countries listen to the careless advice given by Comrade Myro and raise an armed rebellion with a view to organising Soviet power in a section of their territory, with a revolutionary upsurge in this part of the country only, but with no national revolutionary crisis, and no general revolutionary upsurge, then the armed forces established under these conditions will have to resort to the tactics of "permanent evacuation" in all probability. Comrade Myro considers these a NEGATIVE example of what should not be done. These tactics were adopted by the Brazil rebels in 1924-1927 (the so-called "Prestes column") when the revolutionary army undertook an uninterrupted cavalry advance covering 25,000 kilometres, with the enemy at its heels, and did not succeed in establishing any districts where the revolutionary movement was stable.

#### Some Conclusions.

Hence, the following conclusions:

1. In order to proceed to establish SOVIET DISTRICTS by organising ARMED UPRISING, it is not sufficient that there is a revolutionary upsurge in a part of the territory of the semi-colony concerned. AS A GENERAL RULE, it is not sufficient if there is a revolutionary upsurge throughout the whole country. What is needed is that there should be a situation of REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS.

This by no means implies that a revolt becomes possible throughout the whole country, including its centres, where the power of the imperialists and bourgeoisie and landlords is strong. It simply means that THE NEWLY FORMED SOVIET DISTRICTS WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE IMMEDIATE SERIOUS HELP FROM THE MASS MOVEMENT IN THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY THE ENEMY DURING THE FIRST, MOST DIFFICULT "ORGANISATIONAL" PERIOD.

2. If the growth of the peasant movement leads to a SPONTANEOUS MOVEMENT OF REVOLT and to the formation of PARTISAN DETACHMENTS in the absence of a revolutionary crisis, THE COMMUNISTS MUST CERTAINLY TAKE THE LEAD OF THIS MOVEMENT, CONSOLIDATE IT AND ATTEMPT TO SPREAD IT TO NEW DISTRICTS. The advisability of undertaking the organisation of Soviets in such a situation depends upon many factors (the degree to which the Communist Party and the proletariat have influence, the experience and class-consciousness of the masses and the perspectives for the development of the movement, etc.), and cannot be foreseen beforehand. Our line of conduct in a situation where the superior forces of the enemy approach such a partisan district must be twofold: if the Communists calculate on the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in the very near future, they take measures (at the same time avoiding a decisive clash with the enemy forces) to maintain these detachments as units of the newly formed revolutionary army by transferring them to other provinces, etc.; alternatively, if the territory covered by the movement is not extensive while the armed forces of the enemy are powerful, and if the general situation in the country does not give grounds for calculating on a rapid development of the revolutionary crisis, the Communists organise the withdrawal of these partisan detachments from battle.

### Third Remark.

In dealing with the question of the conditions necessary and the steps to be taken to establish Soviet districts in semi-colonial countries, Comrade Myro does not deal with the question of the HEGEMONY OF THE PROLETARIAT (as the BASIC political condition for the establishment of Soviet districts) or of the AGRARIAN PEASANT REVOLUTION. But it seems inconceivable to us that Soviet districts could be established in the interior regions of semi-colonial countries (as a general rule, not industrial but agrarian regions), and still less could they become consolidated in circumstances where there is no agrarian revolution, and where there is not a very sharp struggle of the peasantry taking place for the land, against the landowners, against the bourgeois-landowning state which protects the property rights of landowners. But if these two

problems (the problem of winning the hegemony of the proletariat and the agrarian-peasant revolution) are left out of account, then the question of ISOLATING THE BOURGEOIS NATIONAL-REFORMIST PARTIES FROM THE MASSES will inevitably be left out of account. This is the basic force which prevents the masses from undertaking the revolutionary path of struggle and which attempts to hold the movement within the bounds of peaceful protest, within the bounds of the policy of "non-resistance" to imperialism, and the native feudal landlords, etc.

In his article Comrade Myro does not mention one word on this question. It is, nevertheless, obvious that it is impossible for the masses of workers and peasants to proceed to undertake an armed struggle and the establishment of Soviets unless the national-reformist illusions that exist among the masses are seriously undermined, and these masses are welded together under Communist leadership. When the question of the conditions necessary for and the steps to be taken to establish Soviet districts is dealt with without due consideration being given to these three mutually and indissolubly connected tasks, then it assumes a NARROW MILITARY-TECHNICAL ASPECT. But it is obvious that the military-technical elements of the preparation for an armed uprising and for the struggle to establish Soviet regions cannot be regarded apart from the political preparations, which, in the last analysis, DECIDE the success of the struggle.

To show that our attitude is not without foundation let us examine the arguments presented by Comrade Myro.

"IN THE COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES," says he, "THE MOST IMPORTANT CLASS BATTLES HAVE IN THE PAST, AT LEAST IN THE FIRST STAGES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE, BEEN FOUGHT OUT NOT SO MUCH IN THE CAPITALS OR OTHER BIG CENTRES AS IN OUTLYING REGIONS. The far-distant outlying regions have, in many cases, become the main base of support for armed uprisings. Prior to being victorious on a national scale, the revolution has embraced the outlying regions, on the outskirts." (Emphasis by Comrade Myro—Li.)

To confirm this, Comrade Myro cites examples of the armed struggle of the North-American colonists against Great Britain (1775-1783), the "Wars of Independence" of the South and Central American countries against Spain (1810-1826), the Teiping revolution in China (1850-1864), the Sepoy Rebellion in India (1857-1858), the Persian revolution (1908), the rebellion of the Young Turks (1908), the Mexican revolution (1910), and the Kemalist revolution in Turkey (1919). One can agree with Comrade Myro that in all of the cases cited, the forces of revolution in the "centre" were weaker, and the forces of counter-revolution stronger than in the "outlying regions."

In all of the revolutions cited by Comrade Myro, the relation of forces was either a result of the

fact that the LEADING ROLE in the movement was played by the NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE and the sections of the peasantry closest to it as well as by the army (as in the case of the war of the U.S.A. against Great Britain, the Kemalist revolution in Turkey, etc.). Their strongholds were in the interior of the countries concerned (whereas foreign occupation forces were concentrated in the coastal "centres"), and the compradore (intermediary) capitalists were powerful and opposed to the national-revolutionary movement or as a result of the fact that the movement was a TYPICAL PEASANT WAR (as, for example, the Teiping revolution).

It is obvious that the grouping and relation of class forces in contemporary SOVIET bourgeois-democratic (anti-imperialist and agrarian) revolutions in the colonies and semi-colonies are absolutely different, and the examples quoted above can only serve as a lesson from the point of view of studying the possible "routes" to be taken by or the "territorial divisions" of the opposing forces. However, in the present epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, the conditions under which such a "territorial division" of the fighting forces may originate, are absolutely different from what they were in the revolutions of the 19th and even the beginning of the 20th century.

Comrade Myro does not see this difference when he enumerates all the above-mentioned bourgeois revolutions and proceeds directly to deal with the Soviet revolution in China.

"If, for instance," continues Comrade Myro, "we take the present (Soviet) stage of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution in China, then it contains among other features, the following which are CHARACTERISTIC (my emphasis—Li.) and which exert decisive influence on the "geographic distribution" of the contending forces in China, viz.:

(1). A HIGH LEVEL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEASANT MOVEMENT, which assists in consolidating the forces of the revolution in the agrarian "outlying districts" and which renders it easy to establish inner Soviet regions long before it becomes directly possible to overthrow the central counter-revolutionary government.

(2). THE WEAKNESS OF THE KUOMINTANG STATE APPARATUS, which has become more or less firmly consolidated with the aid of interested imperialist groupings in the most important industrial and cultural political centres, but which has not sufficient forces and means at its disposal to bring about real control over the "depths" and "outlying districts" where the revolutionary (Soviet) movement is developing."

#### The Rôle of the Proletariat.

It must be noted here that the "high level" in the development of the peasant movement" (as, for example, in Guandong during the Canton stage of the revolutionary movement), and the weakness of the militarist state apparatus did not and could not lead to the establishment of Soviet districts until the revolution took deep root and

passed from the stage where there was a united revolutionary front to the stage of where there was an AGRARIAN REVOLUTION IN WHICH THE PROLETARIAT EXERCISED ITS UNDISPUTED HEGEMONY. The proletariat PREPARED this deepening of the revolution by means of colossal ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRIKES, by supporting the "Northern campaign," and by a whole series of ARMED UPRISINGS in the biggest centres, viz., Shanghai and Canton. In the course of the revolution, the proletariat undermined the influence of the national bourgeoisie (who had passed over to the imperialists) and took the lead of the peasant movement. The proletariat supplied the most determined units of the Red Army (the miners of Pinsiang, the strikers of Hongkong and Canton, etc.), and, as is well known, the percentage of workers in the best units of the Red Army is from 25 per cent. to 30 per cent. The vanguard of the proletariat—the Communist Party—rallied the scattered partisan detachments of the peasantry, organised them into a regular disciplined Red Army and gave the movement its SOVIET FORM.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Soviets arose and became consolidated in peasant districts, they were from the very beginning not peasant Soviets, but WORKERS and peasants' Soviets; a form of the REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND PEASANTRY. While taking into account the undisputed and colossal revolutionary importance of the peasantry in the Chinese Soviet revolution, it was only the proletariat who could ensure the victory of this revolution, the scope taken by it, and the power it has; and it is only the proletariat that can guarantee the prospects of the revolution developing in a non-capitalist, i.e., socialist direction. The armed PEASANT STRUGGLE COULD NOT HAVE RISEN TO A LEVEL HIGHER THAN THAT OF A PARTISAN STRUGGLE, AND HAVE LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET DISTRICTS, HAD THE PROLETARIAT NOT WON THE LEADING ROLE IN THIS MOVEMENT. At the same time Comrade Myro totally ignores this DECISIVE condition for the conquest of Soviet power and the establishment of Soviet districts in the interior regions of the semi-colonies in his enumeration of the "characteristic features which exert decisive influence on the geographical distribution of the fighting forces in China." It is clear, however, that this question must determine the POLITICAL LINE of the Communist Party, and the entire system of its PRACTICAL MEASURES.

But let us continue with our criticism of the arguments advanced by Comrade Myro.

In examining the conditions under which the establishment of Soviet districts in the interior is possible, Comrade Myro writes:

"SECONDLY, what is needed is that a certain co-ordina-

tion should exist between the LEVEL ATTAINED BY THE UPSURGE OF THE working class movement and the level attained by that of the peasant movement. Should the working class movement be very much behind, the establishment of a FIRM PROLETARIAN CORE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY INSURGENT ARMY would be very much hindered or would even be completely ruled out; the movement of revolt in such a case would be characterised by all the weaknesses inherent in a purely peasant movement (its scattered character, weak organisation, etc.). On the other hand, should the peasant movement lag very much behind, and masses of peasants be insufficiently prepared (if only in certain regions in the country) for armed struggle, the construction of a revolutionary insurgent army would generally speaking become impossible (for only peasants would constitute the main forces of the revolutionary army)."

Even in this, which is the DECISIVE point in his argument, and when Comrade Myro should have elaborated on all necessary POLITICAL CONDITIONS for the establishment of Soviet districts, he narrows down the question of the rôle of the proletariat to the MILITARY-POLITICAL question of the establishment of a PROLETARIAN KERNEL in the revolutionary army, capable of guaranteeing that the army is organised and disciplined. "A certain proportion between the level of the upsurge of the worker and peasant movement" is a general formula which says nothing just as is the phrase about the "broad masses of peasants being insufficiently prepared . . . for armed struggle." What should have been said is the following: Firstly, such a development of the peasant movement is needed as leads to a SHARP STRUGGLE FOR THE LAND, TO THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION, TO DIRECT ACTION OF THE PEASANTS IN SEIZING THE LANDOWNERS' ESTATES AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION BY THE PEASANTS. It is precisely this struggle for land which more than anything else leads to the "masses being . . . prepared for armed struggle" and ensures the stability of Soviet districts. Secondly, such "co-relation" between the working class and peasant movements is required wherein the PROLETARIAT assumes the leading rôle in the movement and gives it its PROLETARIAN FEATURES. This refers not only to the army, but to all the measures taken by the revolutionary government and to the very form of this government (Soviets) and exerts its impression on the agrarian revolution itself, ensuring its consistent character and giving the entire movement a sharp anti-imperialist character, etc., etc.

#### **Comrade Myro and the Districts "Favourable" for the Establishment of Soviet Territories.**

Let us now go a little further and examine what districts from the point of view of Comrade Myro are the most "favourable" for the establishment of Soviet territories.

POINT 1. ". . . those districts are the most favourable where broad sections of the population live under conditions of especially severe exploitation. Thus, for instance, in the South and Caribbean American countries these are

primarily the regions mainly populated by Indian peasants."

Severe exploitation is, of course, an important factor. But we have already noted in our first remark that the political conditions which Comrade Myro quotes as an example, namely, those in the Indian districts, are least of all favourable for the establishment of SOVIET districts.

POINT 2. "It is highly advisable that a PEASANT INSURGENT MOVEMENT should already be in existence in the districts where it is proposed to establish Soviet Power."

This is certainly desirable, but one must draw attention to the fact that we are again dealing here EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE PEASANT MOVEMENT. And let us recall that South China, where the Soviet movement began, was not only a district where there was a "partisan movement," but was a district which had great REVOLUTIONARY TRADITIONS, and where revolutionary struggle had taken place in which all classes of the population participated. But here, for example, we have Manchuria, a district characterised by a partisan movement, and yet it was very far behind the level of the general movement precisely because the proletarian movement in Manchuria has always been exceptionally weak.

POINT 3. Speaks of the EXTENSIVE character of the territory proposed for the organisation of Soviet districts. We cannot but agree with this. It is, however, clear that this point, like the one that follows, is of special importance when it is a question of MAINTAINING the power seized. We need only remark that the Soviet Revolution does not develop exactly according to plan.

POINT 4. Demands that Soviet districts should be established at a distance from the railways, and the coastline, so as to make it more difficult for the enemy to concentrate his forces.

POINT 5. Recommends that Soviet territory should be situated at a distance from districts where foreign interests are particularly strong (here again it is a question of PEASANT districts where there is no concentration in industry or plantations of foreign investments).

POINT 6 presupposes the existence in the Soviet districts of an internal base for food supplies (in other words it is again a matter of agricultural districts).

And, finally, POINT 7 says that it is "desirable that in Soviet districts there should be at least the most primitive industry in the Soviet regions, to ensure that the arms in the possession of the revolutionary army could at least be repaired, if not actually manufactured, and that the means of transport could also be repaired, etc."

Thus in this last, seventh point, of Comrade Myro's "optimum plan" we finally meet with the proletariat! However, the proletariat is presented to us almost as medieval blacksmiths and gunsmiths!

#### **The "North-Western Theory."**

We call to mind that in the stormy months of the summer of 1927 the then opportunistic leaders of the Communist Party of China, scared by the difficulties of the struggle against the imperialists and the hardships of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie and landowners, brought into being their famous "NORTH-WESTERN THEORY." According

to this "North-Western theory" the Chinese Communists were to concentrate their main forces in the districts of Shansi, Kangu and Inner Mongolia, which were also "extensive," "terrifically exploited," and at a great distance away from the railway, coastline and large industrial centres where the interests of foreign capital are strong, etc.

The Communist Party of China REJECTED THIS ADVICE, because it would mean weakening the work of the Communist Party in the more advanced districts to a considerable degree both economically and from the point of view of the development of CLASS CONTRADICTIONS AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE in these regions. And while now, SEVEN YEARS LATER (not in 1927, but in 1934), the province of Sechuwan is, let us say, the most "optimal" for the development of Soviet districts, the Chinese Communists would, none the less, have made a sorry mess of it if they had directed their forces in 1927 towards Sechuwan, or, still worse, the deserts of Inner Mongolia, leaving the Kuomintang to have their way in Central and South China. THE SUCCESS OF THE SOVIET MOVEMENT WAS DECIDED BY THE BATTLES IN CANTON AND CHANGSHA, BY THE CONCENTRATION OF THE WORK OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS OF SHANGHAI AND WUHAN, by the work of the Party among the PROLETARIAT. By its mass actions, strikes and uprisings in the towns under the very noses of the imperialists, the proletariat won its leading position in the movement. It exposed the national bourgeoisie as traitors to the national-liberation struggle, isolated the "Left" Kuomintang elements and in all the so-called "Workers' and Peasants' Parties" (Tan Ping-Hsiang and others), freed the peasantry from the influence of the latter. It thus ensured the establishment of a regular Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and stable Soviet districts in Kiangsi, Sechuwan, in the "extensive" and "distant" districts. The agrarian-peasant revolution, in its turn, which developed over the extensive territories of Middle and Southern China, ensured that the widest masses of the people participated in the movement, and hence that the struggle to retain their hold on the power seized and to EXTEND the Soviet regions was a success. Comrade Myro directs the attention of the Communist Parties of the semi-colonies towards partisan struggle, towards peasant districts as the CENTRE of the entire activity of the Party, leaving out of account the AGRARIAN REVOLUTION. Such a line of approach is fraught with the political danger THAT THE INFLUENCE OF THE PARTY AMONG THE PROLETARIAT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR HEGEMONY OF THE PROLETARIAT MAY BE WEAKENED.

As if himself scared by the consequences of his "optimum" plan, Comrade Myro raised the ques-

tion of PREPARING the struggle for the establishment of Soviet districts.

"The preparations of the struggle to establish inner Soviet regions," he writes, "presupposes first and foremost a general intensification of the work of the Communist Party, ESPECIALLY on the territory which is proposed as the BASIC REGION OF SUPPORT in the oncoming struggle." (Thus Comrade Myro again recommends that Party work be especially intensified in peasant regions, "far-distant" regions, etc., Li.)

"Party work should primarily cover the BIGGEST factories in the MOST IMPORTANT branches of industry, and also the BIGGEST villages, plantations, etc." (It is only a pity that Comrade Myro has forgotten that in his future Soviet regions there are only mediaeval smithies, Li.)

"A mass struggle must be carried on for the partial demands, based on a very wide UNITED FRONT."

(Against whom? Comrade Myro did not say a word on this question throughout his article.—Li.)

"While the treacherous rôle of the opponents of the Communist Party must be exposed in action, in practice, in the very course of the mass battles, and not only through wordy agitation, etc."

(Once again—which opponent does he mean? Even here Comrade Myro does not place the question concretely, namely, first and foremost, THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE NATIONAL-REFORMIST BOURGEOISIE AND THEIR PARTIES.—Li.)

"In brief, what is needed is that there should be an intensification of the development of the struggle to win over the majority of the working class and wide masses of toilers to the side of the Party. All these points constitute the main preconditions for a successful struggle to establish inner Soviet regions."

This is ALL about the POLITICAL preparation of the struggle for Soviet districts, because after this the author deals with MILITARY TECHNIQUE. But what remains unclear is what is the basic prerequisite for the successful struggle for Soviet districts? Is it sufficient to conduct a struggle (which can last a long time and be conducted with changing success) to win the majority of the working class to the side of the Communist Party (but this seems to be little), or must the Communist party actually win over the majority of the working class? Is all that is necessary merely to conduct a struggle for the majority of the toilers, or again to actually win over the majority of the toilers to the side of the Communist Party? But if the last is referred to, then this seems to be too big a demand, and certainly it has not been achieved, for example, by the Communist Party of China, even at the present time. But there is not a word about the hegemony of the proletariat, about the isolation of the national reformists and about the agrarian revolution in the paragraph which deals with the political preparation of the struggle for Soviets .

#### Conclusion.

1. In preparing and in the very process of the struggle for Soviet power and Soviet districts, THE

CENTRE OF GRAVITY IN THE WORK OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY MUST REMAIN WORK AMONG THE PROLETARIAT, IN THE LARGE INDUSTRIAL CENTRES. The winning over of the majority of the working class by the Communist Party (measured not by election results, which don't take place in the semi-colonies, but by the Party's influence during strikes, demonstrations, etc.), is a necessary condition for the victorious struggle for Soviets. This does not mean that prior to the establishment of Soviet power the urban proletariat in the colonial countries will be as well organised in mass organisations (trade unions, etc.) as, for example, is the case in Western Europe. Such a degree of organisation, as may be seen from the experience of the Chinese revolution, will be achieved in the process of the armed struggle for the Soviets, and may extend over many years. However, the stronger the positions of the Communist Party among the proletariat are, the stronger the mass struggle of the proletariat in the major industrial centres and the more successful will the struggle develop for Soviets and the more stable will the position of the Soviet districts be even if we do not succeed at the outset in establishing Soviet power in the big cities occupied by imperialist troops.

2. The struggle for Soviet power (including the struggle in the INNER, i.e., peasant districts as a rule) demands that the proletariat wins the LEAD-

ING ROLE IN THE MOVEMENT. It demands that the peasantry be liberated from the influence of the national reformist parties, and that the toiling masses abandon the road recommended by the national-reformists (i.e., the road of compromise with the imperialists and the feudal elements) and take the path of revolutionary struggle. This leading rôle can only be won in the process of an armed particularly partisan struggle (as, for example, is shown by the experience of Manchuria), but in a situation where THE COMMUNIST PARTY has the MONOPOLY OF THE LEADERSHIP of the workers' and peasants' movement is the NECESSARY AND MOST IMPORTANT CONDITION for the establishment of Soviets and the workers' and peasants' Red Army.

3. It is possible to proceed to establish Soviet districts in the interior when the peasants are engaged in a developed struggle for the land, under conditions of AGRARIAN REVOLUTION. The establishment of Soviet power must in its turn strengthen and extend the agrarian revolution. The closest contact of the anti-imperialist movement with the agrarian revolution guarantees the deep POPULAR CHARACTER of the movement and renders the Soviet movement invincible.

Such, in our opinion, are the basic political conditions for the victorious struggle to establish Soviet power and Soviet districts in semi-colonial countries.

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## **“PROBLEMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.”**

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# A POSTSCRIPT TO "MARXISM IN THE SERVICE OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM"

By T. DEXTER.

**M**ISS ELLEN WILKINSON is apparently disturbed by our review\* of the booklet, *Why War?* written by herself and Mr. Conze and distributed by the N.C.L.C.

She attempts to reply to us in the January issue of *Plebs*. But although she repeats that we devoted much space to examining her booklet, she calmly ignores the major portion of our criticism, and concentrates mainly on the one question of the U.S.S.R.

Very well! But we would remind our readers (and the readers of *Plebs*) that our review was aimed at proving that there was not an atom of Marxism in the analysis made of the causes of war in *Why War?* and that, on the contrary, this booklet definitely distorts Marxism in its explanation of the causes of National Wars, Imperialist Wars and Civil Wars. We came to the conclusion that the booklet could only be of service to British Imperialism. Does Miss Wilkinson attempt to answer our criticism? Not at all! To merely tell *Plebs* readers that our arguments are nonsense is no answer.

### "Britain Honestly in Favour of Disarmament."

Let us ask Miss Wilkinson again, Does she want the British workers to believe her statement (p. 36) that "Britain is more honestly in favour of disarmament than other countries"?—a statement constantly and hypocritically repeated by the very imperialist cliques in Great Britain which are spending more on enlarging the Air Force, bringing the British Army up to date, etc., etc.

But let us examine Miss Wilkinson's "reply" to us, and let us see whether it is of service to British imperialism or to the British workers engaged in struggle against British imperialism.

Firstly, she repeats without any basis the old lie that "the Moscow Government is, in fact, a huge colonial Empire"—in short, she asserts the existence of "Red Imperialism," a counter-revolutionary lie beloved of the Second International and white-guards generally. Let Miss Wilkinson dare to go to any workers' meeting outside Bloomsbury and repeat this!

And linked up with this is her talk about "the Russians training their youth for war"! But when

she does so and when elsewhere she talks of "a war favourable to Russian foreign policy," when she reduces the Soviet Union's desire for peace to the alleged fact that "Russia is unprepared technically" (p. 37), and when she speaks of "Germany, Italy and Japan preparing for war" (p. 35), then we say this language about the U.S.S.R. distorts the facts! The Red Army, which, for Miss Wilkinson's information, is very much prepared technically, is, as its whole history shows, an army to DEFEND the boundaries of the Soviet Union, the first Socialist country in the world, and in this respect differs fundamentally from the armies of the bourgeois countries, whether fascist or non-fascist.

The peace policy of the Soviet Union differs IN PRINCIPLE from the "peace" policy of any capitalist country, whether fascist or non-fascist — for the Soviet Union is a Socialist country, a country really fighting for the interests of the toilers throughout the world, and therefore anxious to avoid war as far as possible—for it is the masses of workers and toilers who are the main sufferers when war breaks out. The "peace policies" of the various capitalist countries, on the other hand, are peace policies determined by the relation of forces among the imperialist powers. France, as a glaring example, is very anxious for peace to-day, primarily because of the increasing armament of Germany at the present time.

### "Satisfied" (?) Imperialist Powers.

And when Miss Wilkinson quotes from *Isvestia* she does a little sleight-of-hand trick. The *Isvestia* quotation states that there are powers to-day who are not striving for war, since such a war might lead to a loss of their conquests. Miss Wilkinson translates this to mean that these countries, France and, of course, Great Britain, are SATISFIED countries and therefore do not desire war, as against the powers who are not satisfied with the present position of affairs (Germany, Italy and Japan). No! Marxism-Leninism teaches us that under imperialism there are no "satisfied" capitalist powers, because the law of uneven development operates to make inevitable the struggle for monopoly domination between the imperialist powers. This by no means excludes that at certain parti-

(Continued on page 170)

\* See No. 22, Vol. XI.