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TEN CENTS

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## On the Upgrade Results of the Tenth Plenum\*

**A**FTER analysing the modifications which have occurred in economic and political life since the Sixth World Congress, the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. stated that these modifications completely confirmed the accuracy of the main thesis adopted by the Sixth Congress regarding the dynamics of the third, post-war period: This period "will inevitably lead,—through the further development of the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation—to capitalist stabilisation becoming still more precarious and to the severe intensification of the general crisis of capitalisation." (*Communism and the International Situation*, p. 6.) Starting from this basis and after completely confirming the accuracy of the theoretical line laid down by the Sixth Congress, the Tenth Plenum clarified and defined the militant tasks of the C.P.s in accordance with the events which have since taken place.

The Tenth Plenum was confronted with many problems; the intensification of the struggle against the Rights and Conciliators; the increase in the War danger; the fascisation of the bourgeois States; the transformation of the social-democratic parties into social-fascist parties; the attempt to shatter and drive underground the Communist movement; the rising development of the revolutionary workers' movement as instanced by the increasing number of strikes and the transformation of economic strikes into political strikes; and the preparation for International Red Day—August 1st.

The work at the Tenth Plenum was of a more collective character than that of previous plenums and congresses. It was significant of this that although two reporters were appointed, in reality four reporters, i.e., Kuusinen, Manuilsky, Molotov and Thalman spoke to the first item of the agenda. And these four were not reporters, each defending a different point of view or a differ-

\*All quotations of the Tenth Plenum resolutions are re-translations from the Russian.

ent shade of opinion, but reporters who defended one and the same Leninist line in the light of the rich and varied international experience which has been accumulated since the Sixth Congress.

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**T**HE debates on the first item of the agenda, i.e., the international situation, were mainly devoted to an elucidation of the factors disturbing the capitalist stabilisation, and a definite formulation of the militant tasks of the C.P.s as arising from those factors. Parallel with this, a struggle was waged along the whole line against those open and secret cowardly opportunists who gloss over the contradictions of modern capitalism and try to drag the party back, and who are overwhelmed by the difficulties of the struggle.

MacDonald's coming to power; the Kellogg pact; the Paris reparations agreement; all comprise a pacifist smoke-screen behind which a vigorous preparation for war is developing. That smoke-screen affects certain unstable elements in the Communist camp, engendering pacifist illusions in them. The Tenth Plenum dispersed that smoke-screen and threw light on the true position of affairs.

The reporters and speakers unanimously demonstrated that the coming to power of the so-called Labour government of MacDonald would in no sense result in setting aside or mitigating the profound antagonism between the U.S.A. and the British Empire, which the Sixth Congress of the Comintern pointed out as existing. On this question the theses relating to the first item on the agenda read: "No negotiations or even temporary agreements between the MacDonald government and America can avoid the inevitable armed conflict between the U.S.A. and Britain, but on the contrary they will constitute similar stages in its preparation to the attempts at agreement between the imperialist powers on the eve of the world war 1914/1918." The reporters and speakers were unanimous in their opposition to Varga, who had declared that the realisation of the Young Plan would temporarily ease the antagonism between the imperialist Powers, and that they would intensify again only at some future date. The

results of the discussions on this issue were formulated in the theses in the following words: "The fresh regulation of the reparations question by the Young Plan by no means connotes a mitigation of the imperialist antagonisms, as the reformists declare, but will on the contrary lead to a further intensification of the conflicts within the camp of the imperialists (the Anglo-American struggle over the reparations bank, and the Franco-German antagonism) and simultaneously will increase the danger of a financial blockade, and therefore of intervention against the U.S.S.R., in view of the fact that Germany is increasingly being drawn into imperialism's anti-Soviet war policy." The Paris reparations agreement is only one link in the chain of agreements which give aid to the reformists to preach their false, pacifist theory of super-imperialism. In connection with this question, also the Young Plan, the Tenth Plenum again provided a general estimate of this theory: "The international interlockings of monopolistic unifications of finance capital (international cartels, financing companies, the reparations super-bank proposed by Young) not only do not diminish the menace of war, but on the contrary they increase it, by creating the prerequisites to the transformation of the approaching war into a world war, into a war for a fresh partitioning of the world."

Whilst thus confirming the accuracy of the thesis adopted by the Sixth Congress as to the intensification of antagonisms among the capitalist States, the Tenth Plenum, also in full accordance with the Sixth Congress resolutions, emphasised that the chief and most immediate danger was that of war against the U.S.S.R.; a fact which certain opportunist elements in the Comintern are disposed to underestimate, especially now that the renewal of diplomatic relations between Britain and the U.S.S.R. is once more on the agenda. On this question the Tenth Plenum's thesis reads: "The chief world antagonism between the capitalist world and the U.S.S.R., as between two fundamentally opposed economic and political systems, is developing more and more. The imperialists' attack on the U.S.S.R. constitutes the chief danger." Even as this thesis was being formulated it

was strongly confirmed by the descent of the Nanking government upon the Chinese-Eastern railway, provoked by the imperialist powers with the object of drawing the U.S.S.R. into war. The filibustering attack not only confirmed the existence of the direct danger of war with the U.S.S.R. It also provided a good illustration of how war these days is prepared under a false pacifist flag: of course it was no accident that the seizure of the Chinese-Eastern railway coincided with the coming to power of the pacifist MacDonald government in Britain; nor was it mere coincidence that those same imperialist powers which had continually been inspiring the provocations of Nanking, among whom France was foremost, her governmental press openly ranged itself on the side of the brigands, expressed their readiness to intervene in the rôle of "mediators" and "peace-makers" between China and the U.S.S.R.

ONE of the chief reasons why the danger of an attack upon the U.S.S.R. has drawn much nearer is to be found in the shattered hopes of the bourgeoisie that a capitalist degeneration of the Soviet Union, and its gradual subjection to the capitalist world would develop; this hope is shattered as the U.S.S.R. passes from the restoration to the reconstruction period. Every new success in the work of industrialising the U.S.S.R. strikes a blow at the capitalist system. In accordance with this the Tenth Plenum gave particular attention to the successes achieved in the industrialisation of the U.S.S.R. in their relation to the question of the break-down of capitalist stabilisation. In his speech Molotov gave many clear illustrations to show that the "five-year plan of great works," and in fact the maximum variant of that plan, has not merely not proved to be beyond the strength of the Soviet Union as the doubting right-wingers and conciliators thought, but that on the contrary the reality has already in a number of spheres of industry surpassed the expectations of the five-year plan. So that on the basis of the latest achievements the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. is now systematically overhauling the control figures and laying down higher rates of industrialisation than the five-year plan presupposed.

Molotov gave illustrations of the especially vigorous development of the collective and Soviet farms which had recently taken place and of the general work of socialist reorganisation of agriculture, which has assumed dimensions far exceeding the expectations of the party at the Fifteenth Congress and even those of the Sixteenth Party Conference. In view of the fact that the successes of social construction in the U.S.S.R. are far from sufficiently utilised in the propaganda of the Comintern sections in their struggle against the war danger, the Tenth Plenum decided in its theses: "In the struggle against the menace of war danger, against the attack of the employers and against the slanderous campaign of the reformists, all Communist parties must carry on extensive campaigns to throw light upon the colossal achievements of socialist construction in the Soviet Union (the five-year plan)."

THE enormous achievements in the work of socialist reconstruction within the U.S.S.R. are counterposed by the profound internal antagonisms within the capitalist world, arising out of capitalist rationalisation. The Tenth Plenum gave a good deal of attention to defining capitalist rationalisation and the demolition of various opportunist delusions bound up with this problem.

In his report Kuusinen noted that even during the Sixth Congress the German conciliators and the representatives of the majority of the American C.P. (Lovestone) were identifying the conception of capitalist rationalisation with technical progress, and strongly over-estimating the present-day technical progress in capitalist production, which Lovestone called a "second industrial revolution." Kuusinen pointed out that the comrades who are struck by the latest technical achievements in capitalist production lose sight of the circumstance that they are most frequently associated with the enormous development of war industry, and also that definite limits are set to technical progress by monopolist capital, whose shackling rôle was pointed out by Lenin himself. Kuusinen further reminded the Plenum that even at the

Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. certain comrades fell into the error of being inclined, (despite the opinion of the German delegation) to consider the modern technical improvements as the most characteristic feature of capitalist rationalisation, and proposed to struggle not against capitalist rationalisation as such, but only against its "injurious consequences." Kuusinen proposed that this conception should be made absolutely clear at once. He emphasised that the undoubted enormous technical achievements in capitalist production are in no way bound up with capitalist rationalisation, that the essence of the latter consists not in technical improvements but in the "reorganisation of the labour process" with a view to the intensification of labour and to increasing the exploitation of the workers. And finally he emphasised that contra to the rationalisation of production in the U.S.S.R., capitalist rationalisation has no compensation in the shortening of the labour day, the increase of wages, or the protection of labour power from complete exhaustion (rest-homes, etc.); that on the contrary it goes hand in hand with a lengthening of the labour day and with a general worsening of the conditions of labour. The conclusion arrived at by the Tenth Plenum was the necessity of contrasting the methods of socialist reconstruction adopted in the U.S.S.R. with the methods of capitalist rationalisation applying in bourgeois countries, against which we must wage the most determined and unconditional war.

In connection with the problem of capitalist rationalisation the Plenum considered the question of the workers' living standards in capitalist countries, and in this sphere struggled against the penetration of bourgeois influence into our ranks. Varga put forward the proposal to abandon the formula: "the lowering of the living standards" of the working class, leaving only a more general formula as to the "worsening of the situation" of the working class in the theses, on the ground that the economic situation of the working class in capitalist countries is at present worsening not absolutely but only relatively. This opportunist declaration, which arises from an excessive confidence in the figures provided by bourgeois economists, was reso-

lutely and unanimously resisted by the Plenum delegates, who judged of the situation of the working class on the basis of their own direct contact with the masses, and not merely on that of the writings of bourgeois statistical apologists. It was pointed out that Varga came to his conclusions on the basis of a triple error. In determining the level of existence of the whole working class he left the existence of eleven or twelve million unemployed out of account; then he worked with average figures, not taking into consideration the circumstance that the higher wages of a stratum of labour aristocracy obscure the fact of the low wages of the mass of the workers; and thirdly he did not allow for the extraordinary intensification of labour and the exhaustion of labour power, which everywhere reduces the wage level below the level of the value of labour power. To counterbalance such statements the Tenth Plenum not only recognised that capitalist rationalisation "lowers the level of the masses," but in the resolution on the economic struggle it further declared that "modern capitalism has already arrived at the point in which property relationships have become quite incompatible with a rise in the standards of existence of the working class (although in isolated cases temporary and partial rises in wages are possible.)"

Extraordinarily stern resistance was put up at the Tenth Congress by the German and Russian comrades to recent articles by Bukharin, in which he declares that owing to the hegemony of monopolist capital the sphere of competition is being constricted within capitalist countries by the development of organised planned capitalist economy, and that the competitive struggle is being transformed outside the State and into international relationships. It was pointed out that this view of Bukharin's is not of recent origin, but that it had met previously with the condemnation of Lenin. In *Economics of the transition period* Bukharin wrote: "Finance capital has abolished the anarchy of production in large capitalist countries." On the margins of one copy of this book Lenin wrote: "Not abolished." And at the Comintern 1st Congress this idea of Bukharin's found expression in a resolution, despite Lenin's

objections; as a member of the 1st Congress, Kuusinen, told us at the plenum. It is highly symptomatic of Bukharin's present position that whilst speaking of the extrusion of the anarchy of production by elements of organisation in capitalist economy, he at the same time reckons on the preservation of free market relationships, unconstricted by superfluous regulation, in the Soviet Republic for some long time to come. Here is revealed his distrust in the strength of the proletariat and an excessive confidence in the strength of the bourgeoisie. The Tenth Plenum provided the due estimate of this theory in the following passage of its theses: "The conciliators' views as to the modification of the internal antagonisms of capitalist countries, and as to the possibility of organising the internal market and retaining anarchy exclusively in the world market, are confuted by all the development of capitalism during recent years, and in fact signify capitulation to reformist ideology."

The Plenum gave considerable attention to the question of the latest evolution of social-democracy towards social-fascism. The rightwingers and conciliators, as we know, deny the social-fascist degeneration of social-democracy. They declare that the methods of violent suppression of the workers' movement are by no means new to post-war social-democracy, that they were applied widely by Noske and Co. in their time, and yet no-one called them fascist then. The object of this declaration is to prove that there has been no essential modifications in social-democracy recently, that it remains what it always has been since the war, and that correspondingly the new course for an intensification of the struggle against social-democracy is quite unjustified. Such a position is really a direct support to social-democracy, who still to-day represent themselves as a "democratic" party, ostensibly carrying on a struggle on two fronts, against Communism and against Fascism, and that fascism itself struggles not only against the communists but against the social-democrats also. They are supported in this attitude by the rightwinger and conciliators. It cannot be said that the discussions at the Tenth Plenum exhausted this question, but it clarified the issue to a certain extent. The shooting down of the workers by Noske and Co. does

not constitute a final manifestation of social-fascism, but it was one of the essential elements of fascism. It was transformed into social-fascism when social-democracy began systematically to fuse with the bourgeois State machinery, when it began systematically to preach "industrial peace" and "economic democracy," endeavouring to paralyse the class struggle of the proletariat, and when simultaneously it not only resorted from time to time to armed force in order to suppress the revolutionary movements of the proletariat, but declared with cynical frankness that it took on itself the task of achieving an open bourgeois dictatorship. (Wels at the Magdeburg Party Day). The Tenth Plenum noted that the German social-democrats were swiftly accomplishing this revolution before our very eyes, with the other social-democratic parties following hard on their heels; that the British Labour Party had not yet succeeded in transforming itself into a social-fascist party, but that all the elements essential to that transformation were already present within it and that it would swiftly take the social-fascist road as soon as the class struggle intensified in Britain, which in turn would inevitably occur in the immediate future with the coming to power of the Labour Party.

Whilst recognising the transformation of social-democracy into social-fascism, the Tenth Plenum simultaneously emphasised the especially injurious and dangerous role which the "left" wing of social-democracy is playing. In the theses we read: "The E.C.C.I. Plenum proposes that particular attention should be turned to the intensification of the struggle against the "Left" wing of social-democracy, which retards the process of the decline of social-democracy by spreading illusions as to the opposition of this left wing to the policy of the leading social-democrats, whilst in reality supporting the policy of social-fascism in every way."

**T**HE question of a new rise in the workers' movement occupied the central place in the Tenth Plenum's deliberations. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern made mention of the leftward movement of the working class, but during the period which has elapsed

since then the workers' movement has acquired such dimensions that the Tenth Plenum recognised the existence of a "growth" of a new rise in the revolutionary workers' movement, as Molotov emphasised. This development of a new rise is particularly noticeable at the present time in Germany, France, Poland, and, among the colonial countries, in India. But there are elements of the new rise in all other countries, not excluding Britain.

In Britain, the depression which set in among the workers after the defeat of the General Strike and the Miners' Lock-out has now come to an end, and MacDonal's accession to power opens prospects of a swift development of class struggle. On this point the Theses adopted by the Tenth Plenum reads: "Only now is a swift political differentiation of the masses and their abandonment of the bourgeois 'Labour Party' beginning." But whilst noting the objectively favourable prospects for the movement in Britain, a number of comrades emphasised that the realisation of these prospects will to a considerable extent depend on how far the British C.P. is able to rise to the enormous tasks with which it is confronted, after straightening the distortions in the tactical line which it allowed to develop by yielding to the depression in the working class after the 1926 defeat.

In accordance with this view, the Tenth Plenum stated that a swift shedding of the parliamentary pacifist illusions by the British proletariat, was conditional on the C.P.G.B. resolutely eradicating all the vestiges of right-wing and opportunist deviations in its ranks, on its carrying out a genuinely Bolshevik policy, and intensifying the workers' struggle against the so-called "Labour government."

The existence of a new rise in the revolutionary workers' movement is denied by the right-wingers and the conciliators; Serrat particularly has done so in his latest extremely opportunist pronouncement. Their main argument is that in 1926 there was a General Strike in Britain, in 1927 there was the Chinese revolution; but no such clear facts are observable at the present time. At the Plenum, Molotov replied to this line of argument by justifying the view that we were now living through a new stage. He observed that although at the moment no such clear mani-

festations of a revolutionary movement were to be observed as were the British General Strike and the Chinese revolution, on the other hand the rise in the movement was on an international scale, and embraced great masses of the working class. The characteristic features of the growth in the new rise were: "From being bourgeois offensives the class struggles were beginning to pass into proletarian counter-attacks and in part direct offensives." The struggle waged by the proletariat is of an extraordinarily stubborn nature, and in its course the economic struggle is developing into a political struggle, in certain places being accompanied by sharp clashes with the police and military. "The strike movement revealed the active part played by the unorganised masses, who not rarely surpass the organised reformist workers in their militant mood." A number of strikes of solidarity and protest against the reactionary persecutions of workers have arisen. In a number of countries (Western Ukraine, Poland, Greece, Roumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, France, Holland, etc.) the agricultural labourers and peasants have been drawn into the movement. In some places, France for example, the movement is to be observed even in the army. The fact that the economic struggles are everywhere passing into political struggles "confronts the C.P. with the problem of a political mass strike as the decisive problem of the present time."

There is not a direct revolutionary situation as yet. At present there is only a continuation of the new rise in the revolutionary workers' movement; but as Molotov remarked at the Plenum, there is no need to represent the position as though after the third period of post-war crisis in capitalism there has to follow yet a fourth period; there is no need to represent the matter as though the present situation is cut off from a direct revolutionary situation by a Chinese Wall.

The May Day events in Berlin were highly symptomatic of the present period. The barricades which the Berlin workers spontaneously began to build in Neukoln and Wedding were precursors of the approaching decisive class struggles, and confirm the soundness of the view that we are not cut off as by a Chinese Wall from a direct revolution-

ary situation. Therefore it is not a matter for surprise that the Tenth Plenum gave special attention to the May Day events in Berlin. The Plenum confirmed the declaration of the German C.P. that the "May Days in Berlin constitute a turning point in the class struggle in Germany, and will accelerate the tempo of the revolutionary rise of the German workers' movement." The Tenth Plenum wholeheartedly condemned the view that the May Day events in Berlin "connoted a defeat of the working class," as all the defeatists and renegades of the Comintern maintain. The Plenum recognised that these events laid bare the "strength of the influence enjoyed by the German C.P." It completely approved the tactics adopted by the German C.P. during the May days, which consisted in "not yielding a single step before the reaction and at the same time not allowing the bourgeoisie to provoke it into an armed rising in the existing situation." The Plenum noted the political importance of the May demonstrations, which "repulsed the bourgeoisie's and the social-democrats' attempts to deprive the working class of its May Day and forced the German bourgeoisie and its social-democracy to capitulate before the pressure of the working class on the question of the prohibition of the demonstration, which in other countries found expression in the struggle for the street, and which within Germany brought the proletarian masses to their feet." In conclusion the Plenum "associated itself with the heroic proletariat of Berlin, the valiant defenders of the Neukoln and Wedding barricades," and expressed its complete agreement with the tactical line adopted by the German C.P. during the Berlin events. The Tenth Plenum recognised that the self-revelation of the social-fascist character of the social-democrats, especially when they find themselves in power, and the existence of a new rise in the revolutionary workers' movement, together "establish the conditions for a serious crisis of social-democracy within the proletarian masses." Hence the Plenum drew the deduction that in a number of the most important countries we are confronted with the task of winning a majority of the working class. The Plenum resolution on this issue says: "The E.C.C.I. Plenum emphasises that in the con-

dition of a new and developing rise of the revolutionary workers' movement the winning of a majority of the working class is the central task of the C.P.s." Manuisky's report was devoted preponderantly to that task. On the basis of Lenin's writings and an estimate of the special conditions in the leading capitalist countries Manuisky gave concrete formulation to what we have to understand by the phrase "the winning of a majority of the working class" in these countries. He observed that in these countries there could be no talk of the organisational capture of the majority of the working class before the conquest of power, but only of the C.P. winning immediate influence over a majority of the working class through their guiding reins: the T. Unions, the factory committees, strike committees, etc.; that in distinction from the reformists we understand the word "majority" not in a formal sense, not statistically and not on the basis of the number of votes cast, but that our criterion was the leadership and direction of the class struggles. From this aspect he noted how important it was to the success of the revolution to have "an overwhelming preponderance of strength at the decisive moment and at the decisive spot." (*Lenin.*) This means that strike centres have to be set up among the decisive strata of the working class; it means that the C.P.s have to reinforce their positions organisationally among the metal workers, the miners, chemists, electrical industry workers, war industry workers first and foremost; it means the possession of the chief positions in the most important strategic points: the postal telephone and telegraph services, the shipyards, the railway centres, at the right moment. It means that in the factories themselves those groups of workers have first and foremost to be won over without whose participation in the production process a normal functioning of the factory is unthinkable."

In order to carry out this central task in accordance with the decisions of the Plenum a number of other tasks have also to be accomplished. In the first place, the struggle has to be intensified against "the most important resistant-points of capitalism," a "resolute intensification of the struggle against social-democracy and especially against its 'left-

wing' as the most dangerous enemy of Communism in the ranks of the workers' movement and the chief dam to the growth of military activity among the worker masses," is indispensable.

Secondly, the other barriers which the bourgeoisie are now trying to erect across our path to the masses have to be broken down. Quite aware that the C.P.s are already confronted with the task of winning a majority of the working class, the bourgeoisie are trying to drive the C.P.s underground by terrorist methods. This confronts the C.P.s with the problem of co-ordinating the methods of illegal work with a still further development of the mass struggle. In present conditions it would be equally as dangerous, equally as opportunist for the C.P.s to be passive and procrastinating in the adaption of their organisation to the conditions of illegal existence, as to be passive in the task of developing the struggle against the attempts of the bourgeoisie upon the parties and in that of extending the open mass struggle generally. In order to guard the parties against both these opportunist tendencies, the Tenth Plenum decided: "In view of the threat of deprivation of legality, which is hanging over a number of the parties which hitherto have been working legally, the E.C.C.I. Tenth Plenum obliges these parties unconditionally and immediately to take all necessary political and organisational measures in order by all means to develop a mass struggle against this threat, and to ensure the continuance and even the extension of their mass work also in the illegal circumstances, and at any time to be ready to connect up the legal and illegal methods of work."

Finally—and this is a most urgent task—a fundamental purge of their ranks must be undertaken by all parties.

The Communist Parties are entering upon a period of battles which demand a bold initiative, enormous energy and endurance and great self-sacrifice. In order that they can accomplish their tasks in such conditions they must first and foremost declare a ruthless struggle against opportunism, vacillations and waverings in their own ranks. This is a most necessary preliminary condition, which the Tenth Plenum formulated in the following

words: "Without a cleansing of the C.P.s from both open and secret opportunist elements they will not be able successfully to move forward along the line of accomplishing the new tasks set by the intensification of the class struggle in the new stage of the workers' movement." The Plenum noted with satisfaction the successes achieved by a number of parties (Germany, France, Poland, Czechoslovakia and America, especially the first three) under the leadership of the E.C.C.I., during the last few months. On this issue the rightwingers and conciliators raised a howl about the "disintegration of the Comintern." The Tenth Plenum contemptuously ignored these howls of the right-wing renegades, which have been taken up by the conciliators. It emphasised that this cleansing of opportunist elements indicated not the disintegration of the Comintern, but the "consolidation of the C.P.s on the basis of the political and tactical line laid down by the Sixth Congress." The Plenum recognised that this struggle with the right-wing conciliators had to be waged still more sternly. On this lead the Plenum resolution says: "The E.C.C.I. Plenum considers that the defence by certain of its members of the views of the rightward deviation condemned by the Comintern as an anti-party course and one highly inimical to the interests of the proletarian revolutionary movement, is incompatible with party membership." Simultaneously the Plenum recognised that "conciliation, which emerges as a cowardly opportunism concealing utterly liquidatorial tendencies, has recently gone over to the rightwingers' positions on all the main questions of the Communist movement, and inside the Comintern had assumed the role of the rightwingers." In accordance with this view the Plenum made the following demands of the conciliators in the form of an ultimatum: "(a) the conciliators must openly and resolutely differentiate their position from the rightward deviators; (b) they must carry on an active struggle not in words but in deeds against the right-wing deviation; (c) they must incontestably submit to all the decisions of the Comintern and its sections, and actively put them into force. Failure to fulfil one of these conditions will place the transgressor outside the ranks of the Communist Inter-

national." The Plenum has now raised the question of the struggle against the right-wingers and conciliators on a still wider basis. Its theses: *On the international situation and the immediate tasks of the Communist International* end with the following words: "The Plenum considers that the greatest danger at the present period is that the C.P.s should lag behind the tempo of development of the mass revolutionary movement. The Plenum calls upon all sections of the Comintern to wage a most resolute struggle with such tendencies, which are a reflection of social-democratic vestiges; and unless they are overcome the C.P.s will be incapable of playing their role as the advance guard of the workers' movement leading the working class on to new revolutionary battles and victories."

**T**HE second item on the Plenum agenda was devoted to the economic struggle and the party tasks bound up with it. The Tenth Plenum gave exceptional attention to this question, on the ground that the development of a new rise in the revolutionary movement is now proceeding on this very basis of economic struggle. In accordance with this view the Plenum resolution on the economic struggle recognised that "in the new conditions the economic struggle of the proletariat is more and more acquiring a clearly expressed political character," and goes on to say: "In this very period the role of the revolutionary T.U. movement consists first and foremost in the organisation of struggle for sectional demands—from the aspect of the prospects of the struggle for political power."

The Italian comrades accused the Plenum resolution on the economic struggle of being "too German." Thälman rightly remarked that this accusation arose out of an unsound general attitude to the given issue, from an underestimation of the international importance of the experience of the economic struggle in Germany, and that it was somewhat reminiscent of the accusations which were formerly made against the Comintern resolutions generally that they were "too Russian."

It is just because Germany, with its highly developed industry and enormous proletarian basis, has witnessed the most ruthless applica-

tion of capitalist rationalisation with a view to extracing further surplus from the working class on behalf of German capitalists and the victor countries, that the new rise in the revolutionary workers' movement has had clearest expression there. In so far as the German C.P., on the basis of the rise in the workers' movement in Germany, has been more thorough than other parties in carrying out the new tactic laid down by the Fourth Congress of the Profintern and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, and called for a resolute struggle with the right-wingers and conciliators, it has achieved comparatively big successes in this realm. Consequently the latest German experience in the economic struggle is the most indicative at the moment and has the greatest international significance, which does not in any way exclude the necessity of other parties introducing such sectional changes or modifications in the tactics of the German C.P. as are rendered necessary by local conditions. It is just because the German experience of the economic struggle of the last few months is of exceptional importance that two reporters were appointed to speak to the second item on the agenda of the Tenth Plenum: Comrade Lozovsky from the Profintern; and Comrade Thälman, from the German C.P.

The resolution adopted by the Tenth Plenum on the economic struggle notes the following characteristic features of the new revolutionary rise of the workers' movement: "1. The transition from small sectional struggles to larger struggles having a more mass character. 2. The increasing change from the defensive to a counter attack. 3. A continually increasing activity among the unorganised masses. 4. The breaking-down of T.U. legalism. 5. A growing tendency to give strike struggles a political and revolutionary character. 6. The international nature of the movement: the movements in the colonial countries and of Britain, which has hitherto lagged behind."

The Tenth Plenum noted that the growth of the workers' movement is accompanied by the fascisation of the reformist Unions. In the intensifying economic struggles the social-fascist T.U. bureaucracy goes over entirely to the side of the great bourgeoisie, insisting on

compulsory arbitration, striving to harness the working class in the yoke of capitalist rationalisation, and transforming the T.U. machinery into strike-breaking organisation.

The Tenth Plenum further noted that "in the process of the swift fascisation of the reformist T.U. machinery and its fusion with the bourgeois state the so-called "left-wing" of the Amsterdam International, (Cook, Fimmen, etc.) play a particularly harmful role; under the pretext of opposition to the reactionary leaders of the Amsterdam International these leaders seek to hide the real purport of this process from the workers, and constitute an active organic link (and one far from being the least important) in the system of social-fascism." The new economic programme adopted by the Plenum of the E.C. of the Amsterdam International in June this year constitutes a new step in the process of fascisation of the reformist Unions. This programme, which is adopted on an international scale, is a purely capitalist programme. It demands "the Unions' co-operation in the work of preparing and carrying through measures of rationalisation." It pronounces in favour of the establishment of "economic councils," (i.e., of compulsory arbitration and the renunciation of any strike and struggle by the proletariat.

The fascisation of the T.U.s taken in conjunction with the rise of the workers' movement is leading to a growth of the crisis in the reformist T.U. movement. On this crisis the Plenum theses say: "This growing crisis in a number of countries has found expression in the stagnation of the reformist Unions (Britain) and in the mass growth of revolutionary unions. (India, Latin America and the U.S.A.) It has also found expression in the strong distrust of the T. Union masses to the reformist bureaucracy and in an offensive of the social-fascist T.U. bureaucracy against the revolutionary T.U. opposition, in an increasing practice of expelling members of the revolutionary opposition from the reformist unions and in threats to expel tens of thousands." This growing crisis is expressed in the liquidation of the last vestiges of T.U. democracy, in the presentation of ultimatums to the revolutionary opposition, and so on. The crisis in T.U. reformism is particularly

clearly expressed, as Thälman illustrated with statistical material at the Plenum, by the tendency to make the unions more aristocratic in composition, in the increase of the comparative numbers of members paying heavy membership dues.

This crisis in the reformist T.U. movement, evoked as it is by the rise in the workers' movement on the one hand and the fascisation of the reformist T.U.s on the other, rendered it possible for the Fourth Congress of the Profintern, and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, to map out new tactics in the T.U. struggle. The essential features of the new tactics were as follows: the winning of the independent leadership of strike movements by the C.P.s; the break-down of T.U. legalism; the formation of Committees of struggle elected by the entire factory masses and directing the strikes despite and in opposition to the T.U. bureaucracy; and the mobilisation of the unorganised.

Since this new tactic was mapped out the Communist Parties have accumulated considerable experience in its application, and this experience has revealed the weakness of our movement and thrown up new tasks in the application of the tactical line. The Tenth Plenum had accordingly an opportunity to work up an extensive definite programme of the methods of independently leading the economic struggle. This programme is formulated in the Plenum theses: *The economic struggle and the tasks of the C.P.s*, and it deserves the most diligent study. Here we confine ourselves to a short exposition of the main instructions of the programme.

In order to make contact over the heads of the reformist T. Unions, with the general proletarian masses of organised and unorganised workers, and to lead their movements independently in the conditions of the present rise in the revolutionary workers' movement, it is necessary to organise "Committees of struggle" and factory committees not subservient to the reformist unions, and indeed, quite independent of them.

"Committees of struggle" have not to be appointed from above (by the T.U.s) but have to be elected at general town and delegate meetings. They are to be non-party mass organisations. But by no means must

they be politically neutral. They must be elected on the basis of a definite economic and political programme. Only under such conditions will they be able to direct the struggle despite and against the social-fascist T.U. bureaucracy. The Italian comrades expressed the opinion that in certain conditions, in those of the European Latin countries for instance, "Committees of Struggle" would become permanent organisations replacing the Unions. The Plenum expressed itself against this view, and recognised that the Committees of Struggle as organs of mass action must be temporary organs, ceasing existence when the strike or the other mass demonstration which they had directed had come to an end. This does not exclude the possibility that in order to consolidate the results of the struggle the "Committees of Struggle" can and ought to take the initiative in concluding wage agreements, in setting up wages commissions and organisations to control the carrying out of the agreement. Nor does it exclude the possibility that the "Committees of Struggle" can be transformed and developed into permanently functioning revolutionary factory committees where such do not already exist, or into permanently functioning revolutionary plenipotentiaries.

In distinction from the "Committees of Struggle," the factory committees are permanent organs. But they also "are not and cannot be replaced by T.U.'s (so long as organisations of unions by industry do not exist)." In certain countries, during the initial period of partial capitalist stabilisation, the factory committees were retained, having degenerated into organs of class collaboration, being so transformed by the employers and the social-imperialist T.U. bureaucracy. Newly created, or newly elected, factory committees must be transformed into revolutionary organs, into organs of class struggle. To this end, during elections to factory committees, it is necessary that there should be "resolute renunciation of any form of election agreement with the reformists, and independent lists should be put forward despite all the regulations of the reformist T.U. rules." To this end, it is necessary that when factory committees are being set up they should be "transformed, breaking down all the legal

barriers, into organs concerned with the task of struggle for the everyday economic interests of the proletariat, and organs conducting the political struggle in the enterprises (the struggle against war, the struggle with fascism in the enterprises, the organisation of workers' defence, etc.)" The utmost resistance has to be put up to those opportunists in our ranks who consider that "the factory committees have no political tasks, but must do only what is prescribed for them by the State," and also to those who are disposed to regard the factory committees as parliamentary types of representation whose function is "to defend the workers' interests against the employers." In order to establish close contact between the factory committees, the revolutionary unions, (where such exist) and the revolutionary opposition within the reformist unions on the one hand, and all the workers in the enterprises on the other, "it is necessary to take the initiative in setting up organs of plenipotentiaries in every enterprise."

As we have said, in accordance with the decisions of the Tenth Plenum, the "Committees of Struggle" and the factory committees are on no account to replace the unions. Then what attitude have we to take to the reformist unions, which are becoming more and more fascist in character before our eyes? In view of this transformation, have we then to renounce all work in the reformist unions? Not at all. Communists are obliged to work wherever the masses are to be found, and the reformist unions still unify large masses, despite the fact that a profound crisis in the reformist T.U. movement is now developing. Our task is "to win the Unions by conquering the T.U. masses." How are we to interpret this formula of "winning the Unions"? There was some disagreement on this question at the Plenum, and so the theses on the economic struggle definitely explained the formula: "The present period confronts the Comintern, not with the policy of withdrawing from the reformist unions or with the artificial establishment of new revolutionary unions, but with that of struggle to win the majority among the working class, both in the reformist unions and in the organisations dependent upon the wider masses (Committees of

Struggle, factory committees.)" And how are the majority of the workers to be won in present conditions, when the reformist T.U. machinery has closely fused with the bourgeois State and with the employers' organisations? Under such conditions can we count upon the conquest of the reformist T.U. machinery? The theses categorically deny this: "It would be an injurious and opportunist illusion to think that in present conditions we can obtain the mastery of the reformist T.U. machinery, even though the T.U. mass membership is on our side. But this by no means indicates that the Communists and the revolutionary opposition are to be passive at elections of the T.U. leadership. On the contrary, the struggle to expel all bureaucrats and agents of the capitalists from the unions, the struggle for every elected post in the union, especially the struggle for the lower T.U. delegates, has in our hands to serve as a mighty weapon for the unmasking of the rôle of the social-fascist T.U. bureaucracy and for struggle against that bureaucracy." The second "important means of struggle for the conquest of the masses of the reformist unions (in countries where an independent revolutionary T.U. movement does not exist) is the intensified attraction of new workers into the unions, on the basis of the programme of the revolutionary opposition, and united around the "Committees of Struggle" in mass demonstrations." The slogan of the right-wingers and conciliators in the conditions of a rise in the strike movement says: "Workers, join the Unions!" (i.e., the reformist unions, where revolutionary unions do not exist.) The Plenum theses resolutely repudiate this opportunist slogan. They propose not simply to call the workers into the unions, which would mean reinforcing the reformist unions, but to call them in only "on the basis of the programme of the revolutionary opposition," with a view to intensifying the struggle inside the reformist unions against the social fascist T.U. bureaucracy.

How are we to react to the splitting policy of the reformist unions, to their policy of expelling the revolutionary opposition en masse from the unions? By no means by adapta-

tion to T.U. legality: "It is necessary to wage a resolute struggle against all capitulation." We have to reply to the method of expulsion with an intensified "struggle for readmission into the union under the slogan of unity, on the basis of the class struggle." (and not of unity in general!) Furthermore, starting from the general assumption that "the present period does not confront the Comintern with the policy of withdrawal from the reformist unions," the theses issue a warning against the expelled T.U. organisations becoming assemblage points for workers expelled from other T.U. organisations. "The struggle against the T.U. bureaucracy's splitting policy, not by the organisation of expelled communists and members of the revolutionary opposition in new unions, but by the intensification of the struggle for proletarian democracy within the unions, against reformism, and for the elimination of the T.U. reformist bureaucracy."

As we have seen, the Tenth Plenum theses reject the course for withdrawal from the reformist unions for the present period. Does this mean that they have declared in principle against the splitting of the reformist unions and against the formation of new unions? By no means. "The communists cannot be against the splitting of the Trade Unions on principle." But the theses point out that a number of conditions are requisite to the establishment of new unions. It goes without saying that the establishment of new unions "is recommended first and foremost in those spheres of production where trade union organisations are altogether non-existent, and then in those cases in which, as the result of the workers' revolutionary demonstration and owing to the treachery of the T.U. bureaucracy, the masses have abandoned the unions and a break-up of the T.U. movement has occurred." But in cases where the reformist unions have survived, the Plenum theses consider it possible to form new unions under the following conditions: "The establishment of new unions is possible only during a rise in the strike wave, only where the political struggle has become extremely acute, where considerable masses of the proletariat have already realised the social-fascist essence of

the T.U. bureaucracy, and when those masses have actively supported the establishment of a new union. But even if all these conditions be present, the establishment of new unions in countries where hitherto an independent revolutionary T.U. movement has not existed (Germany for instance) has to be undertaken only as the circumstances dictate and in accordance with the entire objective situation."

Such are the chief instructions. We shall not stop to consider the questions connected with the illegal T.U. movement, with work in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and a number of sectional definite instructions. We refer the reader to the theses to acquaint himself with all these questions. In conclusion one may say that the Plenum's theses on the economic struggle are pervaded with one idea and pursue one end: Communists must win the independent leadership of the economic struggle in order to shatter the social-fascist T.U. bureaucracy, to win influence over the majority of the working class, and to direct the struggle into becoming an immediate struggle for political power.

**T**HE third item on the agenda of the Tenth Plenum was devoted to the question of the International Red Day against imperialist war. This is the most actual question of the moment, and in consequence was brought forward in its position on the agenda. The international bourgeoisie, the social-fascist and the renegades of Communism, the Trotskyists and the right-wingers have, as we know, developed a frantic campaign against the International Red Day. That struggle was not confined to the general arrest of communists and members of the red unions and the closing down of Communist newspapers, but was also waged on the ideological front. The social-democrats, who are gathering on August 4th, the anniversary of their treachery, are playing out their pacifist comedy, and simultaneously, in order to frighten the working masses out of participation in the August 1st demonstrations, are reiterating in all keys that the Communists propose to gather on this day to the glory of "red imperialism," to organise an "adventure," a "putsch," a revolt, and so on, and the renegades of Com-

munist (Trotskyists and Brandlerites) take up the refrain. It is false. The Communists quite frankly admit that they are working for an armed insurrection, but only in the conditions of a direct revolutionary situation. No such situation exists as yet. Consequently the Comintern wishes to give the demonstration of the international proletariat on August 1st against imperialist war and in defence of the U.S.S.R. merely the character "of a militant review of the revolutionary proletarian forces." This militant review is to take the form of mass street demonstrations, mass meetings, and wherever possible mass political strikes. These demonstrations must be closely connected with all the economic and political struggles of the working class, with its revolutionary struggle against capital, fascism, fascist social-democracy, and especially against its "left wing." The whole movement has to be directed into the struggle against imperialist war and in defence of the U.S.S.R.

It is to be a militant review of the revolutionary proletarian forces. None the less, according to the Tenth Plenum resolution, the August 1st demonstration will be "an event passing beyond the bounds of customary demonstrations of the working class against war." The first of August has to raise the movement to a higher stage, inasmuch as on this day the various streams of workers' movement have to flow together into one international flood, inasmuch as the Red Day demonstration has to be of a clearly political nature, inasmuch as it is directed to the struggle against the chief danger, the danger of war against the Soviet Republic, the Fatherland of the International Proletariat and the centre of the International Proletarian Revolution.

But the International Red Day is of great importance in one other sense; it is to be a test of the work and the fighting-power of our Communist parties. In connection with the preparations for August 1st, the Tenth Plenum carried out a preliminary examination of the achievements and the weaknesses of the various sections of the Comintern on the basis of what they had done in order to prepare for the International Red Day before the Plenum met. The results of the examination revealed

that the most serious work had been done by the German C.P., then by the French and Polish C.P.s, and also by certain illegal C.P.s; in the other parties the work had been less effectively done, in certain cases being quite inadequate. The preparations for August 1st enabled the Plenum to reveal the weaknesses and defects and deviations from the general line in various sections of the Comintern. Comrade Piatnitsky's speech was devoted to our organisational gaps, and Com. Manuilsky's closing speech on his report was to a large extent devoted to our gaps and errors in the realm of political tactics. In particular, a good deal of attention was devoted to the weak features in the work of the C.P.G.B., which is now confronted with enormous tasks, in the work of the Swedish C.P., and in that of the Young Communist International. Regarding the work of the Y.C.I., the resolution to the first item on the agenda reads: "During the past year the Y.C.I. has fulfilled its task of carrying through the Comintern line in the struggle against the right-wingers and the conciliators. The state of the mass work in the Y.C.L.'s and their organisational development have however remained absolutely unsatisfactory, and strongly show the necessity of effecting that change in the direction of work among the masses which the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern demanded." Regarding the Swedish C.P. the reporter on the first item on the agenda pointed out that it had achieved great success in the sense of a swift numerical growth and in regard to the position of the organisational work, but that it had committed considerable political errors of an opportunist character, which found especially clear expression in its pacifist demonstration in parliament and in the passivity which it had displayed on May Day, and its postponement of the demonstration for meteorological reasons. In accordance with this situation, we find in the resolution to the first item on the agenda: "In a number of Comintern sections, the Swedish for instance, rightward vacillations are still widespread, and these constitute a great danger in the practical work also." Regarding the C.P.G.B. it was pointed out that

during the general strike it had passed its political examination. But afterwards it yielded to the depression which had possessed the working masses as the result of their defeat in 1926, and had not made sufficient of the incipient new rise, of the process of differentiation now occurring in the British workers' movement. Correspondingly it had not carried out the slogan of "class against class" thrown up by the Ninth E.C.C.I. plenum consequentially enough, submitting more to discipline than from internal conviction; this was most clearly expressed in the inadequate struggle against the left wing of the Labour Party (Cook, Maxton) and also in a number of other vacillations, especially in an insufficiently active participation in the international struggle against the right-wingers and conciliators. But the hope was expressed at the Plenum that the C.P.G.B. would find sufficient strength in itself to eradicate all the vestiges of the right-wing and opportunist deviations in its ranks, without any severe party crisis.

The Tenth Plenum dispassionately and in true bolshevik fashion occupied itself with self-criticism, revealing all the weaknesses and defects of the various sections of the Comintern, doing so not in order to throw the blame for these errors on "objective conditions" and not in order to reduce the tasks to conform with the weaknesses of the party. When one comrade proposed to allot more modest tasks to the first of August, his proposal met with resolute opposition. The Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was occupied with self-criticism, and revealed the weaknesses and defects in the various sections in order to raise the activity of the sections and their revolutionary initiative, in order to cure them of the least symptom of leadership from the tail of the workers. During the past year certain sections which have traversed this Leninist road have achieved great successes in the bolshevisation of their ranks (for instance the German, French and Polish C.P.s) and the others will follow them under the firm leadership of the Comintern, and will forge themselves into a steely power to meet the coming decisive class battles.

# The Provocation in the Far East

**T**HE seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway by the Government of Chinese generals and reactionaries, the crisis it has caused in the Soviet-Chinese relations, and finally, the rupture of these relations by the Soviet Government which had no other choice in view of the consistent provocations and violence on the part of the Chinese authorities, are events of tremendous importance which are likely for some time to push into the background the questions of current international politics. These events are most closely connected with the entire international political situation and can in no way be considered as phenomena limited in their origin and in their consequences to the realm of Far Eastern politics. On the contrary, the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which has already brought about the rupture of the Soviet-Chinese relations, unquestionably forms part of the new offensive of world imperialism against the Soviet Union. The real significance of the events in the Far East has been most aptly pointed out in the Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of July 18. "While organising the war against the U.S.S.R. on the West and on the East, from the side of Poland, Roumania, and Afghanistan," says the Manifesto, "world imperialism is making use of the Nanking Government to organise direct attacks on the U.S.S.R. The Kuomintang, headed by the traitors to the national revolution and by the executioners of the revolutionary fighters of China, is trying to turn China into a jumping-off ground for the fight against the Soviet Union; acting in this matter under the orders of imperialism."

The fact that this latest action has been undertaken precisely in the Far East and precisely at this moment is no doubt due to some peculiar traits in the political situation in the Far East which has resulted from the change of Cabinets both in England and Japan. In England the government has passed from the Conservatives to the reformists, and in Japan—from the Conservatives (Seiukai) to the more liberal circles (Minseito). Of course, these changes by no means signify that the

new governments of Great Britain and Japan are going to pursue any different political aims from those of their predecessors. On the contrary, the substance of both British and Japanese policies in China, as well as in other political questions, remains unaltered. Nevertheless the new governments in both countries are introducing substantial changes in the methods of these policies, which in their turn are exercising a distinct influence on the international situation.

It can hardly be doubted that the latest events on the Chinese Eastern Railway are not incidentally coinciding with this change of government in the two Powers which are most interested, both politically and economically, in Far Eastern affairs. The crux of the matter is that the adoption of more pliable and cautious, although no less effective methods of penetration in China—by Great Britain as well as, and particularly, by Japan—to a certain extent frees the hands of the ruling cliques in China. There arises a possibility of a sort of collaboration between these cliques and the imperialists, of a temporary understanding between them on the basis of China's repudiation of any attempt to fight against imperialism, and at the expense of the U.S.S.R. Hence the actual situation, paradoxical at first sight, when the advent to power of the British Labourites (who, regardless of all their sabotage, will be bound to resume sooner or later the relations with the U.S.S.R.) and of the Japanese Liberals (who, in their turn, have signed the first treaty with the Soviet Union) signifies at the same time an increase of the anti-Soviet activity in China, as the fruit of the joint efforts of both these Powers. This anti-Soviet activity is technically facilitated by the fact that the energetic anti-Soviet activity of the British and Japanese colonial apparatus in China—diplomacy, secret intelligence service, espionage—is by no means arrested or paralysed by the political changes in the mother country. Thus, the international proletariat has the opportunity to become practically convinced of the correctness of the thesis advanced by Communists throughout the world, namely,

that the transition of power from the extreme to the relatively moderate political groups of the bourgeoisie, far from contributing to a serious relaxation in the international political atmosphere, rather creates new dangers and menaces to universal peace.

**T**URNING now to the substance of the conflict in the Far East, let us deal in a few words with what the Chinese Eastern Railway represents. This railway was built by the Czarist Government of Russia at the close of the '90s of the past century as the final link in the Great Trans-Siberian Railway. The construction of the Siberian Railway, as well as of the Chinese Eastern Railway, undertaken by the Russian Government under the cloak of a private "Chinese Eastern Railway Company," had pursued distinct political, and even more, annexationist aims. The construction of the railway coincided with extraordinary activation of the imperialist policies of Czarist Russia in the Far East, with the attempts of Russian imperialism to annex the whole of Manchuria, with the energetic quest for an ice-free port on the Pacific coast, and with the beginning of the intrigues in Korea which proved fatal to the Russian Empire. This railway, with its extension to Port Arthur under the treaty of 1898, was to serve as the weapon and support of all these imperialist designs. The Czarist Government grudged no money for this undertaking, and the expenditure on this railway, built entirely with money from the Treasury, i.e. with the people's money, rose to the huge sum of 459 million roubles. The importance of this railway, as the political weapon of Czarist imperialism, was retained also after the crushing of the hope for the annexation of Manchuria, after the decisive defeat of Czarist Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904. As a result of that war, Manchuria was only divided into two spheres of exclusive interests: the Russian sphere in the North relying upon the Chinese Eastern Railway, and the Japanese sphere in the South relying upon the Southern section of the same railway (South Manchurian) which went over to Japan. The C.E.R. continued to play its political rôle, although on a more limited scale: its right-of-way territory constituted a

sort of a State within a State in which the Czarist laws of Russia prevailed, which was guarded by Czarist troops, and the administration of which was in the hands of Russian functionaries, Russian courts, and Russian police. Needless to say, the management of the C.E.R. was entirely in the hands of agents of the Russian Government, while China had nothing to do with the railway and derived no profits from it. The Czarist Government continued to spend money lavishly on the railway, and during the first ten years of exploitation it expended another 178 million roubles in addition to the original cost, to cover the working losses of the railway.

Old Russia was swept away by the October Revolution. Its place was taken by the Workers' and Peasants' Government which opened a new page in world history. The victorious Russian Revolution threw overboard together with all other legacies of the past all the unfair and unequal privileges acquired by the Czarist Government in the Eastern countries by means of deception and violence. Already in its declarations of 1919-1920 the Soviet Government, separated from China by the fronts of the civil war, addressed a manifesto to the Chinese people in which it repudiated the old Czarist treaties and offered an understanding upon the principles of equality and reciprocity. In those declarations, and later on in the treaties signed with China, the Soviet Government voluntarily and upon its own initiative gave up the consular jurisdiction in China, the territorial concessions, the right of maintaining troops, the Boxer indemnity, and all the other elements of the regime of unequal treaties. This rejection was not connected with any compensation whatsoever; it arose from the essential principles of socialist foreign policy; it constituted the preliminary basis upon which both countries established their co-operation in the struggle against the common enemy, World Imperialism.

**I**N regard to the Chinese Eastern Railway, the Soviet Union was equally resolute in breaking with all the traditions of the politics of Czarist Russia. It gave up all the judicial prerogatives vested in the administration of the railway, and all its privileges in

respect of armed guards, landownership, or taxes, which in any way violated or restricted the state sovereignty of China. Needless to say, the Soviet Union never had and never could have any annexation aim in regard to Manchuria, neither did it associate any political aims with the C.E.R. Its interest in this railway, which it considers as a commercial enterprise is limited to its financial aspects: the fact of the investment of huge sums of the people's money, its economic importance to the Soviet territory on the Pacific coast and to Vladivostok, through which the major part of North Manchurian exports is now shipped, for the whole system of European-Asiatic railway transportation in which the C.E.R. forms a link.

These principles predetermined the character of the regulations on the question of the C.E.R. which are contained in the Soviet-Chinese treaty of 1924. In these regulations the C.E.R. is declared exclusively a commercial enterprise, all the questions of a juridical character are referred to the competency of the Chinese authorities, and finally, from a Russian concession the C.E.R. is transformed into a joint enterprise of U.S.S.R. and China that is managed by a joint administration composed of Soviet and Chinese citizens on terms of parity. Both sides have an equal number of representatives on the supreme organ of the railway, the Board of Directors which solves all questions by a majority vote, i.e. by agreement between the Soviet and the Chinese section. In the event of disagreement, such questions are referred to the governments concerned. The same principle of parity is applied in filling responsible positions on the management of the railway. Accordingly, to the Soviet manager of the railway, who represents the executive organ of the parity management, is attached a Chinese assistant, while the positions of chiefs and assistant-chiefs of the different services are equally distributed between the representatives of the Soviet and Chinese sides. Finally, regardless of the fact that the railway was built exclusively with money from the Russian treasury, the net profits of the railway since 1927 are equally divided between the parties.

This regime, established by the treaty of 1924, secured the essential interests of both

sides, and particularly guaranteed to China both its sovereignty over the whole territory of Northern Manchuria as well as its half-share in the administration and profits of the enterprise. It seemed as though politically the problem of the C.E.R. had been solved, all the more so since the Mukden Treaty of 1924 provided for the possibility of a complete buying out of the railway, as well as of a further curtailment of the period of the concession which had already been curtailed under the Treaty from 80 to 60 years. There remained only the shaping of the practical side of business and economic co-operation on the railway, to which there seemed to be no obstacles in the path.

Nevertheless the fortunes of the C.E.R. remained closely intertwined with the general political situation in the Far East and in the rest of the world. The imperialists, who had offered furious resistance to the signing of the Soviet-Chinese treaties, continued to exert all their efforts to frustrate their realisation. The growing volume and scope of the national-revolutionary movement in China, which had grown into a mighty revolution of the masses, contributed to the further intensification of the contradictions in the Far East, and to the further activation of the anti-Soviet work of the imperialists. The reaction, which came as the result of treachery by the Chinese bourgeoisie and the Kuomintang, did not stop this activity, but only afforded the opportunity to the imperialists to reap its fruit. Chang Tso-lin's raid on the Soviet Embassy in Peking in April 1927, the storming of the Soviet Consulate at Shanghai by a brutal whiteguard mob in November, the pillage of the Soviet Consulate at Canton by the Chinese military, and the murder of a number of employees of that Consulate in December of the same year,—all these acts merely constituted particularly outstanding moments in the desperate struggle of the imperialists against the Soviet influence in China, and consequently against the Chinese revolution. Such was also the meaning of the steps taken by the imperialists themselves, e.g. the sending of a British expeditionary force to Shanghai and the direct preparation for intervention on the Yangtse. China has been for a number of years the field of the most furious vanguard revolutionary

battles, and upon the same field the imperialists have waged the counter-offensive against the citadel of the world revolution, the Soviet Union. It stands to reason that this counter-attack was bound in one way or another to involve also the Chinese Eastern Railway.

The task of the imperialists in regard to this railway consisted in persistently provoking conflicts between the Soviet and Chinese side of the administration, in inciting the Chinese authorities against the Soviet representatives and the Soviet organisations, in urging and provoking the Chinese generals to seize the railway and to completely oust the U.S.S.R. This complex action of the imperialists in connection with the C.E.R. pursued several different aims simultaneously. These aims may be classified under the following heads:

(1) *CURBING THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE U.S.S.R.* The seizure of the railway means, above all, the loss of huge sums of the people's money invested in the C.E.R. Suffice it to say that in the balance sheet of the C.E.R. the item "Debt of the railway to the Russian Government," together with accumulated interest, reaches the sum of one billion roubles. Furthermore, the seizure of the railway disorganises the whole system of European-Asiatic railway communication and deals a severe blow to the port of Vladivostok, in which the Japanese are particularly interested in view of the sharp competition between Vladivostok and Dairen.

(2) *BELITTLING THE POLITICAL PRESTIGE OF THE U.S.S.R.* Every blow at the Soviet rights and interests in the C.E.R. is utilised by imperialist propaganda in China as a sign of the weakness of the U.S.S.R., and the Chinese bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie is urged to rely upon the invincible capitalist powers. The calm and restraint of the Soviet Government in face of such provocation is misconstrued as a sign of extreme weakness, of a fear of internal complications, and of its readiness to patiently put up with any humiliation, and from this the deduction is made about the safe possibility and necessity of further, even more aggressive steps.

(3) *FRUSTRATING THE NATIONAL DEMANDS OF CHINA.* The voluntary recognition of the principle of equality and

reciprocity contained in the Soviet-Chinese Treaty of 1924 is the very antithesis to the old statutes to which the imperialists continue to cling. Just as the signing of these treaties strengthened China's position in the struggle against imperialism for the abolition of the unequal treaties, the violation of the Soviet-Chinese treaties, and the policy of provocation towards the first and only country which gave up on its own initiative the privileges enjoyed under unequal treaties, serves to weaken China's position. The foreign activists, the extreme advocates of colonial pressure under the famous theory about the "white man's burden," are now able, on referring to the example of China's behaviour towards the U.S.S.R., to raise the argument (using the words of the *Manchester Guardian*) that the present Chinese regime does not honour any treaties that are not backed by force, and that every case of violence over the rights and interests of the U.S.S.R. and its organisations or citizens (particularly, those cases which have taken place as the result of direct incitement by the imperialists) is invariably utilised by the imperialists against China, as demonstrating the impossibility of having any dealings with China upon the usual principles of international law. The events on the C.E.R. constitute no exception to this rule.

(4) *FOREIGN CLAIMS ON THE C.E.R.* It was laid down in the Soviet-Chinese treaties that the question of the C.E.R. concerns only China and the U.S.S.R., and no third parties. By these treaties the C.E.R. was wrested from the sphere of influence of international capital, and the tools of this capital, the Russian whiteguards, were removed. Yet the C.E.R. represents such a valuable enterprise that the foreign capitalists do not give up their attempts to get this railway into their hands again. Under the existing order of things in militarist China, the seizure of the railway by the Chinese generals will mean its wreck and ruin. This fact causes serious misgivings to those circles of international capital among which the business interest prevails over the desire for political and financial adventures. Yet the same fact allows them to anticipate the possibility of forming in future some sort of an international commission, like the one formed during the intervention in 1918, and

of subordinating to international control the most important artery in the Chinese railway system. It is characteristic that upon these grounds there is already a conflict among the opposing interests, as each of them would like to secure a predominant difference, and this really accounts for the apprehension as to the future fate of the C.E.R. that is expressed in various comments in the foreign bourgeois press. This conflict is associated, on the other hand, with the existence of several competitors for the direct control over the C.E.R. France is claiming this control on the basis of the fictitious rights of those institutions that are the fictitious heirs to the Russo-Asiatic Bank by whose agency the Czar's Government had concluded the basic contract for the erection and exploitation of the C.E.R. Japan cherishes the same dream on the basis of her exceptional position and exceptional rights in Manchuria over which she holds military sway. Finally, America is now raising the question of establishing its actual control over the whole railway system in China, and consequently also over the C.E.R.

(5) *THE PROVOCATION OF WAR.*

In persistently provoking the acts of seizure and violence by the Chinese authorities on the C.E.R., the imperialists are aware of the possibility of determined resistance and corresponding measures of repression on the part of the U.S.S.R. Military action between the U.S.S.R. and China would indeed fit in with the artful plan which may be expressed in the classic formula of "Divide (the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial countries from the U.S.S.R.) and govern"! Needless to say, this provocation goes a deal farther, being one of the manifestations of the preparation for a new war against the U.S.S.R. that is going on in all imperialist countries. There is a possibility for the extension of the conflict to involve a number of capitalist powers which the extreme advocates of intervention can already see in their dreams as arrayed in a united front of war against the Soviet Union.

**A**LL these facts afford a fairly minute characterisation of the nature of the imperialist background which unquestionably served as the basis for recent events on the C.E.R. There can be no doubt that these

events would have been unthinkable otherwise than as part of the plan of the continued and furious onslaught of the imperialists against the Soviet Union. If the Chinese generals, who cringe before the powers and refrain from any serious attempt to do away with unequal treaties and privileges, are allowing themselves the crudest violence in regard to the U.S.S.R., it is not because they rely upon the pacific policies of the latter, but chiefly because they rely upon the backing of their imperialist taskmasters. We have dealt with this background in such detail because it does contain the political essence of the Chinese attack upon the C.E.R. The concrete motives and factors of this attack are of relatively secondary importance. As to the latter, suffice it to say that the fulfilment of imperialist tasks in regard to the Soviet Union and its property has nothing in common with the defence of the national demands of China. On the contrary, the aggressive actions against the U.S.S.R. serve to the Chinese generals and reactionaries as a cover for their actual surrender before world imperialism on the question of unequal treaties. Although the campaign against the C.E.R. has been conducted now and then under the guise of Chinese nationalism, one can easily detect its profound reactionary, anti-National and militarist nature. In their attempts upon the C.E.R. the Chinese generals, besides carrying out the dictates of others, objectively and partly also subjectively, are prompted by specific and eminently selfish motives. Under the atmosphere of "primitive militarist accumulation," the spectacle of a flourishing concern which cannot be used for the purpose of personal enrichment is bound to irritate the appetite of the generals. Previous attacks on the C.E.R. amounted in the long run to the seizure of some valuable property belonging to the railway which was sold and the proceeds were shared out by the militarists and the functionaries; the same is the background for the seizure of the entire railway. To this motive, however, is that of another no less important aspect: the peculiar dialectics of the political struggle in China proper, the bitter hatred of the sycophants of the Chinese reaction (to whose number the Manchurian and Kuomintang militarists unquestionably belong) for the

revolutionary movement and for the world power which supports this movement. All in all, a situation arises where the imperialist plans are finding a very favourable soil.

Speaking about this soil, one must finally mention another specific trait in the Manchurian situation. We have in mind the horde of whiteguards concentrated in Manchuria after the civil war, the scum which was ejected to the inhospitable Manchurian plain and which is thirsty for revenge. The whiteguards do not play any independent rôle whatsoever. Experience has shown them to be a cowardly crowd who can easily be shown their place. Yet they possess some significance as the aids of the Chinese militarists and the intermediaries between them and their foreign masters. The whiteguards technically facilitate the execution of anti-Soviet manoeuvres of every kind.

In the light of the foregoing it is easy to see why during the whole period which followed the signing of the Soviet-Chinese treaties and the establishment of the mixed Soviet-Chinese administration on the C.E.R., the Chinese side incessantly instigated all manner of artificial conflicts with the Soviet side of the administration. At times the provocation was of purely political character purporting to strain the relations with the U.S.S.R. (the conflict in 1925 over the removal of whiteguardists from the railway); but in the majority of cases, as already said, it took the shape of plundering some property of the railway. Thus, in 1926 there were valuable land allotments of the railway seized, as well as the whole of its river fleet. This was the work of the late Chang Tso-lin. These conflicts increased to the extent that the triumph of the Chinese reaction increased. The last case of such partial seizure took place at the end of last year when the Chinese authorities unlawfully seized the telephone station belonging to the railway.

Lately, however, the usual anti-Soviet campaign inspired by a section of the Chinese press has assumed particularly embittered and persistent form, clearly foreshadowing something serious. This campaign has been conducted under the slogans of the complete seizure of the C.E.R. and the elimination of the Soviet Union for alleged violation of the

treaty by carrying on "Communist propaganda." In order to substantiate this favourite charge of the bourgeoisie throughout the world, the usual trick of issuing false documents was employed, and in order to make the latter appear plausible, the premises of the General Consulate at Harbin was raided. The Chinese generals were not held back by the fact that the consulate raid proved fruitless, nor by the disbelief expressed in the foreign press, even the newspapers that are hostile to the U.S.S.R., as regards the alleged documents discovered during the raid on the Consulate, which were the crudest forgeries of local origin. It was obvious that militarists were waiting for a favourable moment to deal a serious new blow to the railway. On July 10th the Chinese authorities carried out a violent coup d'état on the railway, removing the whole of the Soviet section of the administration including the manager and his assistant, smashing all the trade unions and the co-operatives of the employees of the C.E.R., and carrying out wholesale arrests and expulsions. All these events are sufficiently fresh in our memories, and there is no need to dwell on them in detail.

Confronted with this new provocation, the Soviet Government answered by a proposal which was strictly in keeping with its pacifist socialist foreign policy. Instead of immediate repressions and humiliating demands on China, which would have been made by any imperialist power upon a far less serious pretext, the Soviet Government proposed to begin negotiations on all disputed questions, naturally stipulating the conditions that the Chinese authorities should immediately discontinue their acts of repression against Soviet citizens and repeal their illegal measures. As was shown by the gigantic demonstrations of the toilers throughout the Soviet Union, these demands are fully supported by the millions of the workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R.! Nevertheless the Chinese Government, inspired by the imperialists, rejected the proposal. The Soviet Union had nothing left but to declare a complete rupture with the hirelings of imperialism who have started hostile action against the Soviet Union at the bidding of the imperialists, and at all events, are rendering normal friendly relations impos-

sible. This decision has met with the powerful support of the working class which, at thousands of meetings and in thousands of resolutions, has expressed its readiness to apply all measures to safeguard its socialist construction, and which has replied to the threats of world imperialism and its agents by the demand for an increased pace in the industrialisation of the country.

Moreover, the response of the proletariat in other countries, e.g. the answer given by the workers of Berlin to the events on the C.E.R., indicates that the policies of the Soviet Government concern not only the proletariat of the Soviet Union, that they equally concern the workers of other countries and merit their support and approval.

The proletarians in the capitalist countries are not going to be lured by the bourgeoisie and its press which is going to tell them that the Soviet Government is looking for adventures, that it is out for annexation, or that it simply protects its interests in the same manner as any imperialist power might do. The lie has been exposed long ago, and will be repudiated in no uncertain voice. The Soviet Government is not looking for any possibility of aggression on Chinese territory; on the contrary, it is doing its utmost to avoid such conflicts. We have already said that the Soviet Union does not pursue any annexationist aims in China, and that under all circumstances it asks only for the observance of the voluntary and equitable treaties signed with China. As regards the defence of its

interests, it has been admitted even by the bourgeois press (e.g., the *Manchester Guardian*) that the pacific policy of the U.S.S.R. has been demonstrated: "No other great power would have put up so calmly with such provocations as the U.S.S.R. has done in regard to China."

**T**O all patience there is a limit, however, and the Soviet Union could not go on for ever ignoring the provocation and the challenges of the imperialist hirelings who, after seizing the C.E.R., are now making direct attacks on Soviet territory. In its Note the Soviet Government goes the utmost limit of conciliation. If conciliation will prove unavailing, if the Chinese militarists continue their policy of provocation, if the Soviet Government is compelled (using the words of the Note) to resort to other means for the defence of its lawful rights and interests, such actions will be supported by the whole of the international proletariat.

Because, whatever the outward form of the international conflict, the struggle in connection with the events on the C.E.R. is just as much a revolutionary struggle, a stage in the struggle for world revolution and socialism, as any clash between the forces of world reaction and the forces of world revolution. The proletariat throughout the world is vitally interested in resisting the annexationist actions and attacks upon the rights and interests of the U.S.S.R., the citadel and the vanguard of the whole revolution.

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# The Reformist "Struggle for Peace" is Preparation for War

By P. Shubin

**I**N one of his articles dealing with the question of the struggle against the war danger ("Notes on the Question of the Tasks of our Delegation at the Hague," *Collected Works*, Vol. XX., pp. 531-532, Russian Edition), Lenin, as is known, pointed out that in order to characterise the extreme seriousness of this struggle it is essential both "to cite practical instances from the past war" and to "elucidate the present conflicts among the powers and their connection with possible armed conflicts."

There is no need to argue that the Communists should systematically and persistently, upon examples taken from the current realities, point out to the large masses of the toilers the inevitability of war and the possibility of its breaking out upon seemingly the most paltry pretext. But Comrade Lenin tells us that it is necessary in connection with this agitation and propaganda based upon concrete materials of the present, to elucidate also the experience of the past and to do so "with extraordinary minuteness."

"It is necessary," Lenin wrote, "to examine all the shades of opinion which existed among Russian Socialists in connection with war. It is necessary to demonstrate that such opinions did not arise by chance, but were rather the fruit of the very nature of modern wars in general. It is necessary to demonstrate that without analysing these opinions, and without explaining how they are bound to arise and how decisively important they are to the question of the struggle against war, without such an analysis there can be no talk of any preparation for the event of war, nor even of any conscious position on the subject." This means that it is necessary to study not only the positive experience of Russian Bolshevism during the war, but also the rather rich, so to speak, negative experience of all the forms of centrist pacifism, as well as of outspoken social-chauvinism.

Of course, history does not repeat itself. The new war, even now during the process of preparation, is manifesting an infinitely more clearly expressed class character than the war of 1914-1918. Needless to say that the attack of a more or less extensive group of imperialists upon the Soviet Union during the period of the development of the Socialist offensive is going to be different in principle from all the wars which have taken place hitherto. Nay, even more than that. The very fact of the existence of the Soviet Union, as the most important factor of international politics, renders the relations and the quarrels of the imperialist robbers among themselves far more transparent than ever.

On the other hand, the process of the further counter-revolutionary degeneration of the social-democracy has introduced profound changes in its war policies and practices. In 1914-18 social-chauvinism limited its service to the bourgeoisie to shielding more or less systematically the war actions of the latter. It is a different situation to-day. In no other sphere is the fascisation process in the social-democracy revealed so clearly as in the war policies and practices of the parties of the Second International. Instead of shielding, they are now directly participating. Acting, and even inciting to war, playing no longer a passive rôle, but assuming an active rôle in the political and organisational preparations for armed conflicts, at times showing even a greater appetite for adventures than the official bourgeois parties, taking sometimes the initiative, particularly on the question of hostile actions against the U.S.S.R. (not only the American Federation of Labour, but also the German Social Democracy; not only Paul Boncour in France, but also MacDonald in England). Passing on from the policy of class collaboration to the policy of representing the interests of monopoly capital, and accepting from the latter quite openly upon

these conditions the rôle of leadership in the imperialist State, the social-democracy thereby becomes transformed into the most active factor of preparation for war.

It would be a mistake to think that the clearly expressed class and counter-revolutionary character of the war, and the organising rôle of social-fascism not only in its conduct, but also in the preparation for it, reduces the significance of social democracy, of pacifist hypocrisy, of reformist cant, of diplomatic lies and provocation. On the contrary, the more complete the predatory character of the war, the greater the force of deception which has the purpose, at least for the time being, of concealing this character from the masses. The more directly the social-democracy takes deliberate part in the preparations for war, the more it is to its interest to cover up the traces of its activity, in order to simulate the "suddenness" and "unexpectedness" of the war catastrophe, in order to confront the deceived masses with the fact of the war.

The exceptional importance of the deception of the masses in the course of preparation for war and during the war itself was always realised by the war politicians of the bourgeoisie with sufficient clearness. Thus, Bismarck wrote: "Even victorious wars are justified by the people only if they appear to have been inevitable." As is known, the "Iron Chancellor" did not shrink from such petty swindling as the crudest forgery of the Ems telegram, in order to demonstrate that the war of 1870 had been imposed on Germany, that German militarism had been compelled to accept it. "Forgeries," said Wilhelm Liebknecht in this connection, "were an organic part of the 'national politics' of the 'great' statesman Bismarck."

But the people, who must be deceived for the purpose of war, are no longer the same as they were under Bismarck; MacDonald and Hermann Muller have to deal with quite different people. The mechanism of mass deception to-day is more intricate, more perfect than the crude forgery employed by Bismarck, just as the destructive force of the modern bomb-carrying aeroplane or gas attack is more intricate and more perfect than the Prussian rifle of those days. The mass production of these falsehoods in various forms, from

pacifism to fascism, the mass dissemination of these lies under the present conditions constitutes almost the monopoly of the Social-Democracy.

Actual examples from the experience of the past war will help the masses to understand the mechanism of deception also in the forthcoming war. Of course, not because the Social-Democracy will necessarily repeat itself, not because it will reproduce during a new war the same set of alleged differences in its ranks, the same methods of campaigning, and the same means of deception. This will not happen. Neither can we expect that in the pacifist game of the Social-Democracy during the war the same position will be occupied by the different groups as in the war of 1914. Along with the fundamental group of the social-democracy, the process of fasciation affects also all the different shadings, which succumb to the same ignominious yet inevitable fate. Nevertheless, however great the fasciation of the social-democracy, without the aid of the pacifist wing it cannot fulfil one of its essential war tasks: to represent the war as "compulsory," "imposed," as a "defensive war," as "holy war," etc., or as such a war as would lead to a curtailment in the power of the bourgeoisie, despite all the "faults" of this war, and would end in "democratic," "honourable," "just" peace, etc.

If by that time the "Left" social-democracy should become sufficiently exposed by the march of events that it would no longer be able to play this pacifist rôle, another reformist group will be found to take its place. This group must not necessarily be one of those affiliated to the Second International. The march of events may bring about a situation when this task of simulating the struggle against war will be solved with the maximum economy for reformism by some intermediate group.

From this standpoint it was particularly important in connection with the First of August campaign to analyse "all the shades of opinion" which arose among Socialists during the last imperialist war. In this article, however, we cannot undertake to deal fully with this problem. We can only recall by documentary evidence the objective rôle that was played by the "peace" policy of the

official social-democracy, not only after the declaration of war, but also during the preceding period, *i.e.*, during the period when the bourgeois government was anxious to impose war upon the masses in deliberate yet imperceptible fashion.

From these examples, we shall clearly see that any struggle for peace, if not accompanied with a struggle against the national bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state, serve only as a screen, and in the majority of cases as a highly valuable screen for the imperialist actions of the bourgeoisie. If such were the objective results of the activity of all the "opponents of war" which did not break with their bourgeoisie, before the collapse of the Second International, what other aim except direct preparation for war may now be pursued by international fascism when it organises demonstrations on the 4th of August under the slogan of fighting against the revolutionary demonstrations of the proletariat on the first of August?

\* \* \* \*

That the "struggle for peace" on the part of the official social-democracy in 1914 was only part of the diplomatic plans of the respective bourgeois governments, becomes quite clear on reading the diplomatic memoirs, diaries, documents, etc., relating to the history of the war which have been published during the last decade. The October Revolution has made public all the secret treaties of the Tzarist Government. In Germany, the social-democracy having achieved power, has done everything to preserve the secrets of the Kaiser's Government (the documents of the General Staff are still "inaccessible"; nevertheless, diplomatic necessity, *i.e.*, the desire of pleasing the Entente imperialists, has forced the social-democracy to publish some diplomatic documents signed by Wilhelm Hohenzollern that are truly immortal by their brutal cynicism\*). Finally, the picture is rendered complete by the boastful verbosity of the ex-ministers and ex-rulers of other countries. By means of these documents it is possible to reproduce not only the general plans of the bourgeois government, but also the concrete tasks connected with the deception of the

masses of the people in the different countries during the days which preceded the war.

If we compare those plans with the arguments and reasons now raised by the social-democracy of the respective countries in the "agitation against war," we are amazed by the profound coincidence in the utterances of the social-democrats and the plans of the diplomats who provoked the war. If we now read the speeches, resolutions, articles, etc., of the official social-democracy of those days, we are impressed by the manner in which all this was adapted to the service of their respective governments in the realm of agitation among the masses. The fact that some of the purveyors of this pacifist agitation may not have suspected that their talk was "prompted" to them by the respective General Staff, served only to intensify the effect of this self-deception and deception.

For the purposes of illustration we shall content ourselves with a few examples from the practices of the social-opportunists in Germany and France.†

\* \* \* \*

One of the cardinal points of German diplomacy, in the course of nearly a whole month prior to the outbreak of war, consisted in the assertion that Germany was not committed to the aggressive behaviour of the Austrian Government, that she had no knowledge of the contents of the arrogant Austrian ultimatum to Serbia (July 23rd), and finally, that even after the presentation of the ultimatum Wilhelm "had used all his influence in Vienna" to induce Francis Joseph to yield. Without this lie it would have been impossible for German imperialism even to start the construction of its version about the defensive and "compulsory" character of the war. How important this alleged "non-committal" of Germany to the Austrian ultimatum was, may be seen from the fact that even after the war it was thought necessary by Wilhelm's ex-minister, Helferich‡ to stick to it. And it would be no surprise if German imperialism, having recovered sufficiently to take up again

\*A more detailed treatment is contained in the brochure by P. Shubin, *How War Pretexts are Manufactured*, Moscow, 1927.

†Karl Helferich, *On the Eve of the World War*, p. 116.

\*Kautsky, *How the War Was Brought About*.

the formal question of its "right to a place under the sun," should revive this mouldy version about the alleged "ignorance" of the government of Kaiser Wilhelm.

It is superfluous to bring evidence here that Berlin did not pacify Vienna, but on the contrary, that it did everything to incite Austria to be first in declaring war. However, it would perhaps be worth while to cite a few facts that are particularly illustrative on account of the artistic manner in which they are presented in Wilhelm's diary.

During the first half of July (*i.e.*, after the assassination of the Austrian heir-apparent Ferdinand at Sarajevo) Wilhelm had undertaken a sea voyage "in order to pacify public opinion." The Emperor was enjoying himself. Is there any further proof needed that Germany did not even think of a war? On July 10th he had received a message from his Ambassador at Vienna to the effect that the Austrian Premier "was worrying his head over finding out some more demands which would be entirely unacceptable to Serbia." To this message Wilhelm puts his "peace-loving" remark: "Demand the evacuation of the Turkish Sandjak occupied by Serbia; a clash will at once become unavoidable." Wilhelm's advice was heeded in Vienna. On July 14th the same Ambassador was able to report: "The note will be so worded that Serbia will almost certainly be unable to accept it." Wilhelm puts his approving remark: "At last, we have to deal with a real man." The ultimatum that made war inevitable was presented on July 23rd. Serbia, wishing in her turn to simulate an affection for peace, pretended on the first day her readiness to submit. Wilhelm expresses his delight in the following manner: "What bluff this so-called Serbian imperialism has turned out to be! Such has always been the case with all the Slav Government. One should only more energetically tread on the corns of these rascals." And in connection with the reported promise of Francis Joseph to ask for no Serbian territory, Wilhelm wrote "in his own hand" as follows: "Silly ass! The Sandjak should be recaptured."

Did the German plunderer succeed in fooling his enemies by means of this version? Not at all. To judge by the diplomatic documents

which have been published, London for one was well informed about all the manoeuvres and counter-maneuvres of German diplomacy. But the German Government did succeed in deceiving the working masses in Germany. Of course it would not have achieved this without the aid of the social-democracy which supported this hypocritical lie and imbued the masses with the most dangerous illusions.

Paul Froelich cites the Manifesto of the Central Committee of the German Social Democratic Party on July 25th as evidence of the fact that "during the days which preceded the ultimate decision, the Social Democratic Party had appealed to the working class to fight to the last." Thereby Paul Froelich shows only that he has still failed to learn, and maybe does not wish to learn, the stern work of the struggle against war.\* What do we read in that manifesto?

"If we condemn the aspirations of the Serbian imperialists, we must protest even more emphatically against the reckless provocation of war by Austro-Hungarian Government. The class-conscious proletariat of Germany categorically demands from the German Government to apply all its influence on the Austrian Government to preserve peace, and if it be impossible to prevent the ignominious war, to refrain from any interference in the war. Not a single drop of blood of a German soldier should be sacrificed to the ambitions of the Austrian rulers or to the interests of imperialist profits. We do not wish war. Down with war! Long live the international brotherhood of nations."

The slogan of "down with war" in itself does not yet mean anything, and is not sufficient to mislead the people. In order to impose the war upon the people, the bourgeoisie must

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\*See Paul Froelich, *On the History of the German Revolution*, Vol. I., p. 69 (1927). Froelich's attempt to shield himself behind the authority of R. Luxemburg proves unavailing. Comrade Luxemburg laid stress upon the under-estimation of the dangerous rôle of centrism not only in the manifesto of the German Social Democrats, but also in the utterances made by Jaurès; yet this very under-estimation of the erroneous practical deductions of centrism led to her own mistakes in her pamphlet *The Crisis of Social Democracy*. For a critical examination of this pamphlet see Lenin, Vol. XIII., p. 435 and the following. (Russian edition.)

successfully create the version of suddenness. The nearer the outbreak of war, the more anxious the diplomats are "for the maintenance of peace (*i.e.*, to determine the objectives of the war), the noisier are their social-democratic mouthpieces in shouting against war. This should be borne in mind particularly now when the social-democrats are invited by the bourgeoisie to take part in the government in order to use their demagoguery as a cloak for the preparations for external wars and for an offensive against the working class at home. The social-democratic demonstrations "for peace" on August 4th are an essential element in these preparations for war. For this reason, we must particularly remind the workers in all countries that the social-democracy in 1914 had lulled the masses by peace demonstrations for a few days before the outbreak of war. It was not the German social-democracy alone that "protested" against war. The Trade Union bureaucrats of all countries, in answer to an enquiry sent out by the Secretary of the Trade Union International, that filthy chauvinist, Legien, replied by "determined" shouts against war. It is worth while to recollect that none other than the arch-imperialist, Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, shouted louder than the rest: "Damn all wars!"\*

The gist of the manifesto of July 25th was not the slogan of "Down with war," but the endeavour to lend strength to the official German version that the armed conflict had been caused by the "ambition of the Austrian rulers" and that Germany had "used its influence to preserve peace and prevent the ignominious war." Had the C.C. of the S.D.P. really wanted to prepare the masses for the struggle against war, it could not even have started this campaign without pointing out that the war was being provoked by the German rulers no less, and even more than by the Austrian rulers. By shielding the Government of "its own" imperialism, the German social-democracy did not arm, but it disarmed the German proletariat at the hour of decision.

The tone given by the manifesto of the Central Committee on July 25th was caught

up by the whole of the social-democratic party press. Everywhere the same fable was used about the "bad" government of Austria-Hungary and the "virtuous" government of Germany. Only once did the *Vorwärts* inadvertently let the cat out of the bag when it reported that "Herr Bethmann-Holweg (the German imperial Chancellor) had certainly promised Herr Berthold his support from the rear" (see *Vorwärts* of July 25, article entitled *Ultimatum*). Yet on the following day the paper made haste to rectify its mistake and it never repeated it again. In an article entitled *The Prologue of War*, printed on July 26th, the *Vorwärts* said:

"For their own comfort the liberty-loving population and the working class of Germany may see that it has been publicly declared by both the Austrian and German Governments that these steps have been taken by Austria at their own risk. The German proletariat will insist that Germany should resolutely reject Austria's request for help in this trouble which she has brought upon herself without consulting the German Government that was acting in this matter with the silent consent of the German people."

Thus we can clearly see the situation. Wilhelm ordered the Austrian militarists to "tread energetically upon the corns of the rascals." The mailed boot of Austrian imperialism steps down upon Serbia. The semi-official newspaper (*Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*) hypocritically talks "in soft tones about Serbia," while the Social Democratic press talks in even softer tones about Kaiser Wilhelm "acting with the silent consent of the German people." Under the smoke screen of social-diplomatic lies the conspiracy against the German people is hatched.

Soon, however, there is discord between the plans of Wilhelm and the anti-war "agitation" of the social-democrats. On July 29th Wilhelm makes the following stern entry in his diary:

"The Sozi (Wilhelm's nickname for the Socialists) are carrying on an anti-militarist propaganda in the streets. This should generally be forbidden, and particularly at the present moment. If this should be repeated, I will proclaim a state of siege and

\*All the quotations from social-democratic documents are culled from Karl Grumberg's collection, *Internationalism and World War*.

will order the arrest of all the leaders without exception. . . We cannot afford at this moment to suffer Socialist propaganda any longer."

How should we account for this eventual, although belated, clash between the "anti-militarist propaganda" of the Socialists and the war policy of the government? Was it due to the fact that at last the policy of opposition to war was found to be incompatible with the policy of incitement to war? Not a bit of it. There was only a temporary hitch, unavoidable under the rapid march of events, in the transmission apparatus between the general staff and the C.C. of the social-democratic party. A simple juxtaposition of the facts and data will show that Wilhelm's anger was not merited by the social-democratic leaders.

Let us see, what was the turn taken by the diplomatic swindling game of the imperialists at that moment (April 28-29)? Egged on by Anglo-French diplomacy, the Russian Tzar (and subsequently also the British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey) not only proposed, but demanded from Wilhelm to leave Austria in the lurch and to let Russia smash her. This demand, the fulfilment of which would have meant the defeat of imperialist Germany before the first shot was fired, gets Wilhelm into a state of quite legitimate fury. To the telegram received from Nicholas Romanov the following remark is made by Wilhelm: "It is an attempt to put the whole responsibility upon myself. The telegram contains a concealed threat which looks like an order to betray an ally." Still more definite and imperious is the demand from London. Grey tells the German Ambassador plainly that "the British Government intends to keep up the existing friendship and to hold aloof as long as the conflict is limited to Austria and Russia." Wilhelm explains the meaning of this offer in the following remark to the telegram from London: "It means that we should leave Austria in the lurch. This is purely English vulgarity, and devilish pharisaism. . . With such scoundrels I am never going to sign any naval treaty."

Under such circumstances, the old gramophone record which the social-democrats continued to play became a hindrance to the policy

of the Government. The repetition of the harmless and hypocritical advice of the social-democracy to Wilhelm to "use his influence in Vienna for the preservation of peace" becomes tactless and dangerous when the allied imperialists are already seriously asking for such mediation.

Wilhelm's stern rebuke was intended to readjust the agitation machine of the social-democrats. What was the effect of that rebuke? Perhaps indirectly, but through the intricate system of parliamentary and other influences, the new instruction was taken up by the social-democratic leaders with amazing rapidity. In the *Vorwärts* of June 30th, *i.e.*, on the morrow after Wilhelm's rebuke, we already find the expression of particular anxiety to assert its loyalty to Wilhelm the peace-maker, obligingly absolving the Kaiser from any responsibility for the possible failure of mediation:

"While opposed to monarchy on principle, and keeping up this position for the future, while frequently waging a bitter fight against the temperamental wearer of the crown, we must nevertheless frankly confess now, not for the first time, that Wilhelm II., by his conduct in recent years has shown himself to be a sincere friend of peace. If the final decision about the fate of many millions of people in the spirit of humanity and wisdom were left universally to the human mind and conscience, the fears for the existing situation would not have been too great. Nevertheless, even the strongest man is not free from influence in his actions."

Thus, anticipating the results of the "mediation," the social-democratic newspaper takes under its high protection the "temperamental bearer of the crown," shifting in advance the responsibility for the eventual failure of mediation to some "military party" standing apart and in opposition to Wilhelm, to some outside influence "from which even the strongest men cannot be free." The reformist leaders (on July 30th) were bound to see that the war catastrophe was going to break out any moment. Did they attempt to prepare the masses for the forthcoming severe struggle which would call for the greatest sacrifices? To mobilise the masses, to build up an illegal apparatus, to secure the possibility for the

existence of the revolutionary press under the conditions of military terror? The S.D. leaders thought least of all about these things. For them it was important to preserve for Wilhelm the reputation of a "sincere friend of peace," and this service was highly appreciated by the Kaiser. On the 29th he had threatened with the arrest of all the leaders, and on the 31st he declared: "I know of no parties, I know only Germans."

The treachery on the 4th of August did not come as a thunderbolt from a blue sky; it was the inevitable and fatal result of the whole of the opportunist position of the German Social-Democracy.

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Were the tactics of the French Socialists any different in principle from those of their German colleagues? Of course not. Just as the German social-democrats based their peace campaign upon the false assertion that the German Government was "restraining" Vienna, so the French Socialists "could not even admit the idea" that the French bourgeoisie was not only the ally, but also the inciter of the military clique of the Tzar. Since Anglo-French diplomacy was acting more astutely than the blunt soldier diplomacy of Wilhelm (which only reflected, of course, the objectively more favourable position of the Entente), it was easier for the French Socialists to cope with their task of fooling the masses.

It is superfluous to recall the fact that the set policy of French imperialism was to drag the Tzarist Empire into the bloody slaughter, to deprive it of every possibility for retreat, and only then to join the war itself. The rôle of the starter of the fight in the group of the Central Powers was played by the despotic Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and the rôle of "initiator" was left to autocratic Russia which had to bear all the heavy burdens and consequences of the war. Russia's policies might have changed any moment on account of mere chances, depending on the whims and foibles of the degenerate despot on the throne. French diplomacy resorted to persistent intrigues, and also to prepotent orders (the publication of the secret diplomatic correspondence enables us now to trace its course day by day), to bring the Tzarist Government

to such a position that it had no choice but declare for mobilisation, *i.e.*, to start the war. At the same time no other imperialism was so much in need of the "peace-loving" camouflage as was the French imperialism. Without the aid of the Socialists it could not even have undertaken this task. In the manifesto of the French Socialist Party calling for a "peace demonstration" on June 28th we read:

"The workers know that the French Government at the present critical moment is manifestly and sincerely anxious to prevent or to lessen the danger of a clash. The workers are only urging the Government to take steps to secure the triumph of the path of conciliation and mediation. They only ask it to influence its ally—Russia—in the sense that the latter should not look for a pretext to start aggressive action for the defence of Slav interests. Thus, their desires fully accord with those of the German Socialists who are urging the German Government to influence its ally, Austria, to be moderate in her demands."

Thus, the French Socialist Party bestows a peace-loving certificate upon the French imperialists. The allusion to the German Social-Democrats foreshadows only the mutual indulgence which existed among the social-reformers of all countries in the course of the imperialist war, which consisted in that each section of the Second International, while screening the criminal treachery of others, secured thereby a free hand for itself.

This indulgence was even more widely developed at the "International Meeting Against War," which was held in Brussels on June 29th. After a speech by Haase, who developed the already known standpoint of the German social-democrats to the effect that "Austria alone was to blame for the war," a fiery and thundering speech, although impregnated with the illusions of French diplomacy, was delivered by Jaurès:

"Our duties, as French Socialists, are simple. We have no need to urge our Government for a policy of peace. It is pursuing such a policy. I, who have never hesitated to challenge the ire of our chauvinists by the persistent advocacy of a Franco-German understanding, have a perfect right to say that at this moment the

French Government desires peace and is working to maintain it. . . We are in agreement with the German comrades who are urging their Government to bring pressure to bear on Austria to be moderate in her actions. Maybe the telegram which I have just spoken of (the telegram saying that Austria has promised not to annex Serbia) is partly the result of these wishes of the German proletariat. Even the majestic ruler cannot go against the wishes of four million enlightened citizens. That is why we may safely claim that there exists already a Socialist diplomacy which is going to reveal itself, and whose aim is not to break anyone's heart or to smite anyone's conscience."

These words of Jaurès about "Socialist diplomacy" create such a saddening impression when one recollects the subsequent course of events, the definite collapse of the Second International by that time, and the tragic death which was already in waiting for Jaurès. With all his sincerity, how helpless he appears to be on the question of the struggle against war! It was not true to say that France and Poincaré did not wish the imperialist war. On the contrary, France was deliberately working for war, having secured in advance the supply of cannon fodder by Russia. It was not true to say that the French Government was advising Russia "to be prudent and patient." At that very moment the French diplomacy at St. Petersburg was at one with the murderous camarilla of the Tzar. The reference to "Germany's mediation" was equally untrue. The allusion to "Socialist diplomacy" sounds like a bitter irony. As a matter of fact, both the French and German Socialists were helping their respective governments in the preparations for war.

Even Rosa Luxemburg failed to see the hopeless character of the position taken up by Jaurès in the matter of preparing the masses for the struggle against war. While starting from the correct premise of pointing out the profound fall of the official German social-democracy, she embellishes and over-estimates Jaurès' speech:

"In his last speech at the Maison du Peuple in Brussels, on the very eve of the war, Jaurès declared that everybody was

honestly, squarely and openly for peace. This fact is quite true and it fully accounts for the indignation of the French Socialists when the criminal war was imposed upon their country." (*Crisis of Socialism*, p. 80.)

And although Luxemburg goes on to say that this fact is "inadequate to explain the world war as an historical phenomenon and to determine the attitude of proletarian policy towards it," nevertheless, she fails to see the inner connection between the whole argument of Jaurès and the diplomatic version of French imperialism.

In Germany, in spite of the peace and harmony which existed all the time between the Government and the reformists, there were nevertheless some moments of misunderstanding between them. The same thing occurred in France. The meeting convened by the General Confederation of Labour for June 29th was forbidden at the last minute by the Government. The answer to this prohibition on the part of the French Labour leaders, as in Germany, was to protest even more loudly their patriotic sentiments:

"Is the government afraid of our pacifist demonstration?" said the General Confederation of Labour in its Manifesto. "The declaration of the Government in support of the commendable offer of mediation made by Great Britain allowed us to expect that it would allow a manifestation which could only strengthen the cause of peace."

This declaration was bound to touch Poincaré's heart, and on August 2nd the Socialist Party was allowed to hold a meeting in the Salle Wagram. The ostensible purpose of the meeting was to receive the report of the "delegation of the International Socialist Bureau." The sense of all the speeches made at that meeting was that the leaders had already openly given up the alleged "struggle for peace" and commenced the open agitation for war "to a finish."

"The French Socialists," said Longuet, "will complete the efforts of the German Socialists for the preservation and restoration of peace. But if France should be attacked, could they be found anywhere else than in the front ranks of the defence of France, revolution, democracy, etc.?"

“What is the difference between you and the chauvinists?” said Sembat. “You are anxious about French culture and the freedom of nations. As victors—for it is necessary that you shall be victorious—you are not going to violate the rights of others.”

The only excuse for a few French Socialists (if there can be any talk about a subjective excuse) is that they did not in any degree “conceive a method for the struggle against war,” that they were not in any degree capable of “undertaking reasonable and efficacious methods of struggling against the war.” The majority of the Socialist leaders, under the flag of the “struggle for peace,” were consciously and deliberately leading the masses into the imperialist war. As a matter of fact, both the majority and minority were systematically supporting the false declarations, promises, and propaganda of the Government.

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The scope of a magazine article will not allow me to dwell here on the peculiar forms assumed by philanthropic-bourgeois and centrist petty-bourgeois pacifism, as well as by social chauvinism in England, where imperialism, in view of specific circumstances (firstly, the absence of conscription and the possibility of gradually drawing the proletariat into the yoke of war) was interested for a certain time, even after the outbreak of war, in combining the military terror with the pacifist game. On the other hand, it is not possible here to trace how quickly the pacifist dust was blown away in the Continental countries, how rapidly the social-democratic leaders took up the functions of direct agents of the military intelligence service, utilising their Socialist past for the purpose of carrying on this work on an international scale.\*

\*Among prominent leaders of the Social Democracy, historical priority in this respect belongs probably to the present German Premier, Muller, who under the most plausible pretext—delivering to the French Socialists the refusal of the German Social Democrats from taking part in the proposed extraordinary Socialist Congress—came to Paris on August 1st, *i.e.*, after the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and Germany. The real purpose

of his journey was to try and deprive France of the advantage it had gained as the “defensive side.” While preparing a deliberate screen for the occupation of Belgium that was going on, Muller proposed to the French Socialists to reject the plea of the “defensive character of the war” in voting for war credits, because—said Muller—in the tone of sudden “discovery”—the question of finding out who is the aggressor “is necessarily of a theoretical character and there are tremendous difficulties in solving it.” Muller assured the French Socialists that Sudekum had deceived the Italian Socialists when he told them that the German Socialists intended to vote for war credits. In reality, according to Muller, there were two tendencies to be observed among the German Socialists: one in favour of voting for war credits, and another in favour of abstaining from the vote. Muller’s diplomatic mission, however, turned out a complete fiasco. The French Socialists bluntly refused to give up the trump card of “defensive war.”

During the fifteen years which have elapsed since the outbreak of the imperialist war, the connection between the official parties of the bourgeoisie and the social-democracy has assumed more and more a profound, organic and intimate character. As a matter of fact, one cannot even speak of a division of labour between the social-democracy and the bourgeoisie in this respect: both of them are carrying out the very same functions in the interest of the capitalist State, periodically changing places in the governmental machine, depending upon the changes in the internal and external situation. A most glaring example of this no longer simple collaboration, but rather close and insoluble interlocking, is furnished by the rôle of the Second International in the organisation of the anti-Soviet front.

At the time when the First International was founded, Marx wrote about the necessity for the labouring masses in those days “to get hold of the secrets of international politics, to watch the diplomatic exploits of their rulers.” We have entered into a period when it is no longer possible to get hold of the secrets of international politics without waging a systematic and relentless struggle against the diplomatic exploits of the leaders of the Second International. The struggle against pacifism of the various brands, the struggle against the social democracy which is becoming transformed into social-fascism is the most essential prerequisite for a real struggle against war.

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# A New Era of Democratic Pacifism or the Sharpening of Fundamental Contradictions

By P. Lapinsky

A NEW "SPRING"?

**T**HE reformists of all countries are already loudly proclaiming the advent of a new era, while concealed opportunists of all kinds, unpleasantly affected by the sharp air of our epoch, are similarly sniffing a new "spring" in their impressionable nostrils. This time the supposed spring is in damp England and thence the scented breezes of democracy and pacifism are spreading over the whole world—right to Japan. What has happened? What is the real value and the real historic substance of this new edition of simulated democracy and supposed pacifism?

The elections in England brought the greatest of successes to the Labour Party. A so-called Labour Government has taken over the reins of administration in England, which means in the highest place of that mighty world Power called the British Empire. This has taken place after the social-democrats in another big capitalist country—Germany—have for about a year been the main section of the coalition government. And we can by no means be certain that this advent to power (or a semblance of power) will be limited to these two countries. In little Denmark there is again a reformist government. In France, it is true, Poincaré still holds on.\* He has become an immutable symbol of confidence—the confidence of the propertied classes, upon which the entire system of credit and capitalist economy is maintained. He saved the franc and the bond. He is the best writ-server of his country, having assured, better than anyone else, the receipt of reparations from the vanquished enemy. He is the main pillar of the entire system of Versailles legitimism, he is the incarnation of that historic consistency whose chain stretches from the World War through the Peace Treaties to the present sys-

tem of France's Continental predominance. Compared with other countries with their chronic unsteadiness and crises, France, with her powerful army, her relative economic equilibrium, the absence of unemployment, etc., is, as it were, a "bronze rock" of post-war capitalism, and on this "bronze rock" is perched the small but firm figure of the modern Thiers, the Thiers of a victorious France that has not experienced a second Commune.

But is not the position even of this "national hero" shaken? Do not the Finaly's and other bankers, † who, behind the backs of the various governments, are actually ruling France, desire to remove Poincaré from the scene and give temporary license to some more "Left" Government or other? Do they not want this if only with the object of facilitating the co-ordination of French policy with the verbally-pacifist policy of the present British Cabinet, of weakening the concealed anti-French phase of the latter, of catching the MacDonaldis and Hendersons in their net (as, in another fashion they caught Chamberlain) and at the same time opening some kind of ventilator for the discontent that is growing in the country (caused by militarism, the high cost of living, low wages, etc.)? An evolution such as this is at least possible. In any case the French reformists are already beginning to stir, already preparing for these possibilities. That is the meaning of the decisions of the Nancy Congress. The dogma of non-participation in the Government has been finally shelved. The Right Wing, led by Renaudel, has actually won. The internal demarcation inside the Party now takes a different line; it no longer divides the supporters and opponents of participation in the Government. Both the former and the latter are now in favour of power. The whole difference is simply that whereas the

\*This was written before Poincaré's withdrawal.—Ed.

†All quotations used in this article are re-translated from the Russian.—Ed.

Renaudels and Boncours would be prepared to share this power not only with the Radical-Socialists, but even with Loucheur—and (why not?) even with Poincaré—Leon Blum and his immediate supporters have conceived vague longings in the English style: gradually to absorb the Radicals and their petty-bourgeois electors, just as the Labour Party is gradually swallowing up the Liberals and their electors. At any rate, in France also, the position of the National Bloc Government is no longer as firm as it was. The “Left” groups, up to and including the Socialists, are demonstrating their readiness to help Poincaré to carry through the ratification of the war-debt agreements, to replace, in doing so, the wavering “Right” groups and in this way obtain a reconstruction of the governmental combination “to the Left.”

And even in Fascist Poland we observe a far-off, caricatured reflection of all this “development.” The flying-visit of well-known European reformist leaders was a visit to drop a tiny hint about a big circumstance. The meaning of the hint was: we (they say) are again masters of the situation in Europe and have come to take under our high-standing protection the Polish Socialist Party (flesh of our flesh) the Sejm and “democracy”—from the habits of the colonels. The new era is thus to extend its activity, if only with its edges, even to Fascist Poland, and to preserve there some of the last remnants of “democracy,” wherein the Daszinskis and Liebermanns can hide themselves.

Side by side with these symptoms of the new “Spring” (the springing up of purely reformist governments or of coalitions including reformists, the increased hopes and appetites of the reformists for “power,” to preserve the tatters of “democracy”) we also observe a number of other symptoms of something “new” in the sphere of international relations. MacDonald, with the benediction of all three Parties, falls into the embrace of America. The fruit of imperialist temptation, the Anglo-French world compromise, which was still keeping afloat in a life-belt, is sent to the sea-bottom with a weighty stone in the immediate neighbourhood of the German battleships sunk at Scapa Flow. “Disarmament” has again been placed on the agenda.

MacDonald and the American Ambassador, Dawes, in memory of the “historic” meeting, plant fir-trees in Scotland and the smoke of their pipes (according to the inspired evidence of the reporters) winds upwards in pale-blue rings, like the halos of the doves and cherubim that adorn the building in which the tryst took place. At the same time the Paris Conference led to a revision of the Dawes Plan, to a new reparations agreement between the conquerors and the conquered, to the inauguration of a new parallel financial League of Nations in the form of a Bank for International Settlements. Finally, it would seem (although with all precautions and at a reduced pace) that they are even preparing to resume relations with the Soviet Republic. It is only the fear of annoying M. Poincaré, who is still getting his own way, that makes the German reformists place a silencer on their manifestations of loud joy. The Polish Fascist Bloc (these gentlemen have more courage in displaying their feelings) openly laments the defeat of the British Conservatives.

In sooth, is not this “new era” really a kind of repetition of the blessed “era of democratic pacifism” which was universally established in 1924—and burst about two years later? Have not the weary peoples been anointed with a new cup of peace and benevolence, and should not this repetition mean the prevalence of corresponding tendencies in the development of the entire epoch? How are we to reconcile these new “breezes” with the “third period,” in which, we assert, there prevails all the basic, all the decisive, central, and most common contradictions of post-war times?

#### POLITICAL TINSEL AND ECONOMIC REALITY.

Only those who do not perceive the basic laws of development (which are never reckoned in quite short periods of time, excepting periods of a direct and impetuous revolutionary process) can daily sense and announce new “eras,” can get their bearings by the latest fact occurring on the political surface, or according to the latest telegram in the newspapers. Not only must the more obvious zig-zags of politics be distinguished from the real and fundamental lines of economic and social development, but real politics should also be

distinguished from what is merely political tinsel, from "stage property" politics. In general, simple repetitions just don't happen, least of all are they possible on a world scale, and still less in stormy historical epochs. Therefore the MacDonaldis become unlike the MacDonaldis just as, with time, the Severings become unlike the Severings, despite the fact that every time their figures flicker on the screen of history they remain consistent enemies of the Proletarian Revolution. But, each time in a different way, the MacDonaldis of 1929-1930 will "make" history still less in accordance with their phraseology, than did the MacDonaldis of 1924 in translating it on to lines of "peaceful" development. They are themselves pushed into the limelight by the complicated dialectic of history which makes them perform on this stage, tricks unexpected—even of them.

And this dialectic is at work everywhere! No charms whatsoever will weaken by one iota the tremendous fight for the markets and the sales which would enable capitalism to exist and develop, nor will they remove the intense international economic competition, in the centre of which is the struggle between the two world giants—the U.S.A. and Great Britain. At the very time when the scenario of a peace idyll is once more being played on the external political stage, the economic fight is becoming still more fierce. Conquering the world at a pace hitherto unknown in history, American industrial-finance capital is clearly entering a new phase of its development which confronts it with new tasks. From the clouds that encircle the American continent new storms threaten the European rivals and vassals (or semi-vassals).

The mechanism of American "prosperity" is becoming more and more dialectical, internally contradictory and is pushing forward to hitherto unexplored paths. But when America starts moving she sets in motion the entire capitalist universe. This is already shown by the beginning of a credit crisis. Speculation on New York Exchange has disorganised the entire world money-market. The organising factor has turned out to be a disorganising factor. The wave of capitalist anarchy has rolled from American shores and its tide has brought all European waters into a disordered

and menacing motion. At sight, everything in the United States represents that same picture of the greatest, in fact record well-being. Production is moving forward with fresh impetus. In the steel industry the blast furnaces and smelting works are working under full load (whereas a load of even 90 per cent. is considered quite satisfactory), and their production for the first four months of this year has beaten the production for the same months of last years by as much as 11 per cent. The abnormal production and consumption of steel (according to bank reports) is even "unexpected for the sellers and buyers, and the explanation must apparently be found in the considerably increased demand for automobiles this year. This industry, which five years ago absorbed about 10 per cent. of the steel production has already swallowed up 25 per cent. this year." (June *Report of the National City Bank*.) In exactly the same way, the consumption of electrical energy this year has increased by 14 per cent.—and so on. Finally, foreign trade also in 1928 after an established (1925) era of more or less stationary imports and exports has once more shown a tremendous surplus of exports over imports for a sum exceeding a milliard dollars. There would thus seem to be a picture of "unprecedented well-being," one sight of which should turn the head of a poor European. The old German verse: "America, du hast es besser, als unser Kontinent, der alte" (America, it fares better with thee than with ours, the old Continent) never sounded more convincing.

In actuality, however, the position is by no means so simple and America is not sleeping so peacefully. Her slumbers are disturbed by dreams about necessity—the necessity of new changes which would make the world tighter for her competitors (not that it has not become quite close enough for them already!) A whole number of factors of decisive importance are working in this direction. A definite "destiny" (in which one can easily recognise the inalienable laws of capitalist development, as they were depicted by Marx) is mercilessly driving America further and further forward on to the world sales market. Although no outward signs of the coming depression are yet visible (industry is flourishing, the ware-

houses are not stocked with reserves, etc.), an unceasing credit crisis, an exceedingly high rate of speculative credit hangs over the market situation like a threatening cloud. "If in the near future no means are found for remedying the existing credit situation and money rates are not reduced to normal levels, it is difficult to foresee how a slump in business can be held up for much longer"—we read in the *May Survey of the National City Bank*. In the *Guarantee Trust Company's Review* for the same month we read: "The exceptional duration of such high rates of productive operations is hardly reassuring. For certain leading branches of industry observers definitely predict a slump of more than a seasonal nature during the next few months."

But the credit crisis has yet another aspect increasing the menace to "prosperity": the continued depression in the export of capital threatens to deprive foreign markets, and above all Europe, of the possibility of financing autumn and winter purchases of American raw materials and food products. Under the influence of the speculative orgy on the New York Exchange and the high rates of credit arising therefrom and as a result of the still decreasing demand for speculative stocks, the export of capital, in the second half of last year, was reduced to about half, while in the first three months of this year it fell to the lowest level since 1926. This state of affairs, in view of the bumper harvest and the big surpluses of last year's harvest, has already caused a most serious accentuation of what is actually a permanent agrarian crisis. Just as in industry, the main source of this crisis is over-production heightened by the technical rationalisation taking place in this sphere also. This accentuated agrarian crisis has led the Government to the first big steps in the way to State Capitalism\* which, up to now, has

\*The so-called Farmers' Bill, which envisages far-reaching State intervention in agrarian economics with the aid of a tremendous fund (half-a-million dollars) specially created for this purpose.

In the *May Review of the Guaranty Trust Company* we read the following:

"To let this industry (agriculture is here alluded to.—P.L.) suffer from the ravages usually accompanying the process of economic adaptation without any attempts to lessen the severity of the transition would be conserving that position of *laissez faire* of the State in regard to economics, a position which has already proved to be ruinous for the country as a whole."

more than anything else remained foreign to American statesmanship and economics.

Thus, despite all the outward appearance of "prosperity," American capitalism is taking seriously into account the threat of crisis, and the main practical conclusion to which she thereby has arrived is the necessity of assuring and extending her sales markets by every possible means: by means of the political power of State Capitalism, protectionist policy and financial strategy. It is not merely the various difficulties of the day-to-day economic situation, nor a shaken belief in "painless" development, that have impelled American economics on to this organised advance on the world market—but the whole reality of the situation. The enormously increased American production can be assured a market only at the cost of most unprecedented exertion. This is very frequently underestimated in current literature on the subject. The American process of salesmanship has little in common with the ideal: "We have produced—and sold to an 'easy,' ever-ready, unsated public." Fiddlesticks! Indeed, in the last few years the whole process of so-called "merchandising" (*i.e.*, of getting the goods to the consumer) has been subjected in the U.S.A. to an elaborate and manifold reformation on, what one might call, quite a revolutionary scale. After the process of rationalisation of production (or, to an extent, parallel with this process) came a process of rationalisation of sales, no less intense. The entire system of commercial competition and sales organisation has radically changed. Here it is not merely a question of the hitherto unheard-of development of sales on the instalment system (*i.e.*, credit sales) which threaten the already heavily-burdened future purchasing power. The bringing of goods to the consumer, the "easy-purchase" systems, the "getting rid of" goods *en masse* and the organisation of salesmanship and advertising entailed by these methods, have been brought not only to the last degree of perfection, but also to the last degree of intensity. Not merely separate firms, but whole industries are competing with one another for the so-called "loyalty" of the consumer. There is an unflagging struggle to change the entire structure of the consumer's budget (electrical refrigerators com-

pete with ice-refrigerators, one type of amusement competes with another; the whole house-building industry with textiles: "spend less on dress and build your own home," etc.). The consumer is literally lashed and whipped up by the anonymous advertising of whole branches of industry. Millions of people and milliards of dollars are taken away from the process of production and put into the parasitic functions of distribution, sales and advertising—in the fanatical pursuit for the consumer. The apologists of "Americanism" consider this rationalised chase one of the "fundamental sources" of "prosperity." But this hunt just shows with what extraordinary intensity, with what feverish struggle and with what unproductive waste, sales are assured. But the ultimate limit of these sales still remains, nought else but the purchasing power of the consumer (even though the potential purchasing power of the future be eaten into). An American writer, by profession a banker, alludes very colourfully to this struggle for markets:

"While the wheels of American industry remain in motion, production—and therein is a real miracle—is tremendous. But the force necessary to keep these wheels in motion is not the petty hunt for buyers, but the unequalled deluge of the present-day consumer's demand." (*American Well-Being. Its Causes and Consequences*, 1928, p. 262.)

But to the degree in which the "loyalty" of the local American consumer is stretched to breaking point this "flood of demand," so necessary for the existence of industry, will have to be nourished from foreign, world channels. It is likewise necessary to protect the home market by means of high protective tariffs, without which, the organised "flood" of demand will begin to leak out into foreign basins. It is in these two directions that America is exerting her energy with elemental force. At the very moment when MacDonald and Dawes are busy planting fir-trees and when the smoke from their "pipes of peace" entwines the symbolic doves and cherubim with azure rings—the Washington Lower Houses passes a new "abominable tariff" (as the prohibitive tariff of 1828 was termed

nearly 100 years ago) which is to be a very severe blow to all foreign, and particularly British, competition. The Senate sub-commissions intend still, substantially to increase the duties decided on by the Lower House. For example, the so-called "Emergency Tariff" of 1918 (*i.e.*, the customs tariff justified by the exceptional circumstances of that time—inflation in European countries, etc.) was to all purposes resurrected the following year in the Fordney-MacCamber Tariffs. Meanwhile, now, on the threshold of the new "era" of peace and benevolence, this "exceptional" measure, made still more severe, is to be definitely included in the normal tariff. At the same time this measure is also connected with most peculiar forms of merging of purely capitalist interests with the State apparatus. At the head of the Government, stand people who are also owners of huge undertakings and who utilise their position for raising in an unheard-of manner the customs duties—and in a corresponding degree, their own profits. Concerning such phenomena, the ex-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Washington Lower House observes naïvely in his book on American tariff policy:

"Such organisations, arising from the association between the State and private industry, will no doubt lead to distressing situations, creating the tendency towards a plutocratic hierarchy." (Parry Belmont: *Le Tariff Douanier et les Partis aux Etats Unis*. Paris; p. 92.)

The less naïve Mr. Hoover considers that the gentlemen of the Lower House and the Senators are rather exaggerating. He reckons they are not taking sufficiently into account all the contradictions of the situation and that they are not thinking about how to solve simultaneously all three problems: to protect the home market, to conquer the foreign market and assure for Europe the ability to pay off her growing private and State debts to America. Mr. Hoover is in favour of a "moderate" raising of tariffs, but he also is for keeping the "flood of demand" in the American basin. This protectionist offensive is already arousing loud cries on all sides and has led to official protests by many countries.

The voice of England is, of course, also to be heard in the choir of weepers, although England also tries to find consolation in the fact that Canada as well is crushed by these new measures. The *Times* of June 29th writes :

“No other country is placed in such a profound and direct manner under the threat of the Tariff Bill and its probable bad effects as the British Empire. . . There is hardly a single imported item of export from Great Britain in relation to which the existing high duties would not be raised to a degree paralysing existing trade with the United States.”

Already at the March meeting of the General Confederation of French Production (an organ uniting all kinds of French economic organisations) the Chairman of the Society, the well-known big industrialist Duchemain, declared in his speech :

“The U.S.A., in promoting her proposed Tariff Himalayas, is preparing an economic offensive—or let us call it by its name, dumping—in grand style. The big European countries are arming for defence. It is our business to start doing the same.” *Report of the Confederation*, p. 22).

And M. Duchemain is right. The “Himalayas” of protectionism, here as everywhere else, serve in capitalist practice as a preparation for the economic offensive on the world market. The American stick is beating Europe with both ends.

As a matter of fact, this “economic offensive in grand style” has already begun. This is seen from the export figures for 1928, particularly the enormous growth precisely in the export of finished manufactured products which, compared with the previous year alone, have increased by 14 per cent., and for the last six years by as much as 75 per cent.\*

While not exporting even 10 per cent. of her total production, and, per head of population less than half that exported by Britain, America at that initial stage, in 1926, occupied first place in world trade. Further, whereas U.S. imports into European countries are only increasing comparatively slowly (by 12 per

cent. since 1922) the proportion of American goods in the imports into colonial countries is growing quickly (by 50 per cent. since 1922). Of the imports into South America the U.S.A. already constitutes nearly 30 per cent. (as against 16 per cent. pre-war), of the imports to Central America she supplies 65 per cent. (as against 53 per cent. pre-war), to Asia 16 per cent. (as against 7 per cent.), and to Australia 23 per cent. (as against 13 per cent.).†

At the same time this, one might almost say frantic growth of American imports into colonial lands, hits Great Britain more seriously than any other country. For in this case they are penetrating rapidly into the oldest and most privileged spheres of the British market. United States exports to Japan have increased as compared with pre-war almost six times (468 per cent.), and to China almost threefold (187 per cent.). America’s exports to British dominions and colonies have grown as follow : To India, also nearly six times (480 per cent.), to South Africa fourfold (306 per cent.), and to Australia and New Zealand, also fourfold. (All figures are for 1927 and taken from the *Commerce Year Book*.) It is equally important to note that the biggest part of these American exports comprise machinery. In other words, America is arming the British colonies for the economic struggle with the metropolis. She is even taking away from the colonies a growing proportion of those of the latter’s imports to other colonial countries which at least might have compensated for the loss in imports of British consumable commodities to the colonies. The Balfour Committee definitely places on record that in the exports of machinery from the United States, British dominions stand second, *i.e.*, directly after Europe, and outpacing even South and Central America. (*Survey of Metal Industries*, p. 209).

Thus America is pushing back Old Europe—particularly England—more and more into her own confines. But Europe and England are certainly not yielding—in fact, how can they? The fever of rationalisation is infecting the Old World also, and is even making fat and weighty old Mother England dance a two-

\*The figures are taken from the *Index* published by the New York Trust Company, April, 1929.

†In round figures, from the League of Nations Publication—*Memorandum on International Trade and the Financial Balance*. Vol. I. (1928), p. 56.

step. But as rationalisation ultimately means nothing else but the widening of productive capacity. American over-production, by dint of competition, is driving all Europe, including England, into a delirium of competition, and has thereby still further accentuated rivalry in general. One need hardly add that by the irony of fate America herself is compelled directly to finance with the surpluses of her accumulation this process of rationalisation of her rivals, also. (In enormous dimensions in Germany and more and more in England.) The chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce and well-known industrialist, Pirelli (who also participates in all and sundry conferences of "experts"), in his report on the last ten years of world economic development, writes :

"The daily increasing penetration of the U.S.A. into the most important world markets, accompanied by the extension of certain American methods of production and distribution giving the maximum of effect, constitutes one of the chief features of the current period. The development of American competition has provoked also in other producing countries an effort to adapt their respective productive systems to the new demands." (*Economiche Internazionale*, April 2, 1929, p. 216).

Whether she desires it or not, America is making the whole capitalist world "rationalise." But what is rationalisation? The definition most widely used in England commences with the formula :

"Rationalisation is the mobilisation of the fighting forces of industry." (Quoted from the *Westminster Bank Review*, June, 1929.)

America is thus mobilising (and, to an extent, also financing this mobilisation with her own resources) world capitalist industry, "Americanising" it, communicating to it against its will her own feverish tempo. Beneath America's lash (and, to an extent, also with the aid of her resources!) world production is being put on to a fighting—a war footing. In face of the final partitioning of the world and an unprecedented international indebtedness, a most furious fight for markets by all the "fighting forces" of industry (and

agriculture) is a common and higher law. At this juncture the Labour Government comes into power precisely as a Government of rationalisation, *i.e.*, with a programme for putting into fighting shape the obsolete mechanism of British industry. This programme means intensified competition, and an attempt by England, even if only partially, to win back her old "place in the sun." This programme, in substance, has nothing in common with that international idyll referred to at the beginning of this article.

American capitalism is occupied to a greater degree in winning positions on the new markets of the future in colonial continents than in strengthening her positions in old Europe. But she is penetrating into Europe in the form of a powerful stream of finance-capital which is no longer satisfied by credit operations in loans and bonds, but is beginning to buy up—wholesale and retail—huge industrial enterprises in their entirety.

Germany and Italy are ceding to her their best automobile works. In England the question of preserving from such a transfer the leading enterprises in a number of the most important industries has become an urgent problem of discussion. The *Economist* is devoting a series of articles to this question, although it warns against exaggerating the dimensions of this "invasion." Banking and commercial circles, interested above all in the free movement of capital and, in particular, in the preservation and extension of the dimensions of capital exports, take a cooler view of this "invasion" than do the purely industrial circles. Wealth of capital permits the U.S.A. to jump over European customs barriers and get a firm footing in European countries by taking advantage of the cheap labour in Europe, and of the blessings of British free trade. But the European countries, England included, with their shortage of capital (absolute and relative) are unable to cross the American tariff "Himalayas" with a like facility.

The reparations problem, as is well known, has brought still further complications in the problem of markets, creating for Germany increased necessity of exports. The new Paris decision on the reparations question has not removed this problem. There has hardly been

time to start organising the proposed International Reparations Super-Bank, one of whose direct objects is to canalise German exports (with the aid of large-scale financing schemes) into the "less developed countries." Yet already calculations that Germany's creditors (including U.S.A.) will be ready to make a privileged position for her in these countries, are calling forth ironical comments:

"Where are there to be found"—asks the *New York Journal of Commerce*—"undeveloped countries in which Germany's creditors would not be interested? None of them would like big German contracts for railroad construction or public works in their respective African Protectorates or colonies. They would not like their commercial opportunities in the Far East to be threatened by a growth of German trade which would be supported by an international bank they themselves founded. It is undoubtedly difficult to believe in the existence of areas and not yet subjected to exploitation, to the development of which they would be indifferent. Commercial peoples extend world trade as soon as the corresponding opportunity occurs. To expect them less jealously to regard Germany's attempt to take away from them markets that await future development would be to underestimate the common-sense of business men in the creditor countries. A polite tongue rarely deceives a seeker after profit." (*Journal of Commerce*, June 13th.)

At the same time, any attempt by the European countries to ease their position by mutual concessions, not extended to the great transatlantic Republic, leads to jealous and angry protests on the part of the latter. Under the hypocritical slogan of "Equal treatment for all," which is one of the variants of the "open door" slogan, America loudly demands that all kinds of commercial advantages allowed to other countries be extended to her—at the very moment when she herself opposes the stout wall of her protective duties to all other countries. A classic example of this method of action was the actual ultimatum presented to France in 1927 after the conclusion of the Franco-German trade agreement. This ultimatum was reinforced by the threat to maintain the prohibition of France's credit operations in America.

"The Franco-German agreement," writes the American professor, B. Williams, "was regarded by Americans as a step towards the formation of a European economic alliance containing possibilities so catastrophic for American trade in Europe. Senator Borah, chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Commission, has asserted that it has become evident that European countries are entering into economic contact with the object of freezing out the United States." (*Economic Foreign Policy of the United States*, New York, p. 278.)

The United States wants to keep the "freezing-out" monopoly for herself. The action of this monopoly is only lessened in the interests of the export of capital, which builds itself a nest everywhere and which is therefore also interested in livening up and facilitating European goods exports: this is one of the typical contradictions of post-war capitalism.

The export of goods is becoming more and more closely bound up with the export of capital. And therefore the extraordinary development in the export of capital from the U.S.A. has tremendously strengthened the position of that country in the fight with England for the world market. In this sphere, England is living at the expense of her past, *i.e.*, the old accumulated wealth rather than on the new accumulation. Ultimately the rate of export of capital is determined by the tempo of the accumulation that is taking place. In this sphere America has irretrievably outpaced Great Britain. Whereas the growth of national income in the United States is taking place at a pace yet unknown in history, in England the approximate calculation of the Colwyn Report whereby accumulation in this country has been reduced by 30 per cent. (*i.e.*, nearly one-third) compared with pre-war, remains undisputed. Repeatedly one meets with the assertion that the national "savings" will have to be increased by 150-200 million pounds per annum in order to get back to the pre-war level. According to calculations based on the recent industrial census the national income has decreased by 3 per cent. per inhabitant, compared with 1907.

Compare these figures with the corresponding data for the United States. In the last analysis it is these facts and not the heritage

of the past (not the fact that the absolute total of British capital invested still substantially exceeds American investments) that will decide as to the prospects of the future. Whereas British "savings" are more and more feebly nourishing the British colonies with capital, American capital is showering gold more and more generously just in those semi-colonial and semi-capitalistic countries where the invested capital is deemed to be safer than in typical colonies or semi-colonies with a politically fettered population, which are already in some form or other in the toils of a revolutionary process. From this point of view Canada is already more like a colony of the United States than of England, and it is not by chance that in preparing for a conciliatory journey to Washington as fellow-traveller and intermediary for MacDonald, the Canadian Premier has chosen himself. But one big dispute—as to the preservation or abrogation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance—has already been settled by Canada in favour of the U.S.A.

If, however, British capitalism under the slogan of rationalisation (and, ironically enough, under the tutelage of the Labour Government) intends putting a jerk in itself and defending more energetically than hitherto its "place in the sun," America, in turn, will be compelled to defend her own "prosperity" tooth and nail. The secret of this "wonderful prosperity" is easily revealed. The causal factor is that the World War left America with a tremendous accumulation—and also relatively high wages. In view of the methods of production and greatly inflated productive apparatus then existing and this relatively high rate of wages it was practically impossible to carry on and at the same time start a fight for hegemony on the world market. Therefore, as we are informed by the latest work of the Hoover Commission of Enquiry, "In the early days of the post-war period many newspapers and owners demanded the liquidation of the workers' gains." (*The Annalist*, May 17, 1929). It is evident they had begun to think a little. It had become clear to them that in the post-war period this would mean a period of serious strife—of class struggles. Meanwhile fortune had left them—different from other countries—another method of preserving a peaceful

outcome: in the form of tremendous accumulation. This colossal accumulation of financial resources, of gold reserves, bank reserves and the low rates of credit connected therewith, made it possible to carry out on a scale hitherto unknown, the reorganisation—rationalisation—of all production and circulation, which gradually increased the productivity of labour by more than 60 per cent. This radical change not only enabled real wages to be preserved, (for skilled and semi-skilled workers), but also, in view of the great reduction in expenditure, made it possible to maintain the prolonged favourable market situation with stable (and even falling) prices. Fundamentally, there is the whole secret of that triple wonder: "high" wages and good business together with a falling tendency in prices—a miracle that stupified all European philistines and even many of the "learned." This secret is the fear of class strife and the temporary possibility of widely extending credit resources, which would play here, in the business of delaying the class struggle, approximately the same rôle that (according to Marx) the opening of the Californian gold-mines played in respect to the Revolution of 1848-1849.

The whole difference is that the discovery of new sources of gold in the middle of the last century gave an outward stimulus to the new wave of capitalist development in a whole number of countries and to the conquest of many new markets; America's present unequalled credit resources, however, has been a product of simple re-distribution of world gold and world funds, so that in a situation of general ruin American prosperity has dawned on the basis of a broad national market, richly endowed by nature. Now, when the reverses caused by rampant Stock Exchange speculation have centred general attention on this aspect of the business, the American "Secret" has been brought to light. Most important data can be found in the small but very interesting works of the Chase Bank economist, Anderson, also in the material scattered in all American financial organs. Judging by this material, despite all the tempestuous development of production in America, the tempo of this development has, nevertheless, not caught up that of the last pre-war era of "prosperity": while in 1896-

1903 the volume of production increased by 43 per cent., in the last era of 1921-1928 it has only increased by 35 per cent. Yet a quite enormous expansion of credit is to be observed. Indeed, it is enough to compare the figures of bank deposits, loans and investments for the corresponding years: deposits in commercial banks from June 1919 to April 1928 increased in round figures from 27 to 44 milliards, i.e., by 59½ per cent.; loans, investments, etc., in these banks in the same period from 31 to 47 milliards, i.e., by 50 per cent. In short, the development of credit resources is moving faster than the development of production. This even gives reason for concluding that the latest phase of American prosperity, as compared with the earlier pre-war one (1896-1903) is, by its structure "rather a financial than industrial and trade prosperity."\* And Anderson naïvely exclaims: "The laws of economics have not been annulled! This is no miracle."

This "miracle," as we have seen, is purely national. It has arisen from the poverty and impoverishment of other countries. The attempt at a purely inflationist revision of this "miracle" were bound to end in failure. But it is the fate of the U.S.A. that it must at all costs protect this "miracle," which cannot be extended to the whole capitalist world. The only other way out consists in the sharpest class struggle, a radical decrease in wages, the liquidation of the whole present-day position of the working masses, the "liquidation of labour," to use the expression of the Hoover Commission of Enquiry. We have seen that with all the unexampled "prosperity," the mechanism for securing markets for American production is exerted to the uttermost. A big leap in the narrow sphere of the world market becomes unavoidable. The development of U.S. foreign trade still remains inadequate; with the exception of 1928, it has practically been stationary and its tempo of growth has not yet reached that of the 1896-1903 "era." However, America, in her struggle for the world market, which is still only just commencing, is confronted with the already completed partitioning of the world, with her European competitors, and first and foremost

her British rival, entrenched in the privileged position of her Dominions (with their system of customs preferences for England) and India. America also comes up against the contradictions of her own interests arising from the export of capital to highly industrialised countries and from the war indebtedness of these countries.

The disagreements on the question of naval armaments are merely a reflection of these deeper processes of struggle, only a proof that this struggle has already reached an open political fight where the question of a survey and clash of forces arises. "The naval disagreements," writes the *New York Journal of Commerce* regarding the proposed visit of MacDonald to Washington, "are merely a symptom of those hidden factors which are more profound and which themselves will have to be corrected if they want to arrive at anything at all stable." No one, says this American commercial organ, is able briefly to formulate these "more profound" factors, but above all else these dominate the questions as to war debts and the customs tariff. To these two problems one could also add the question of the struggle for the raw-materials monopoly and the question of the financial dictatorship of the United States—questions which we have not even been able to refer to here.

The anarchist capitalist elements, the ramp of American speculation and the dearness of credit thus caused, the heavy burden of England's war indebtedness to America (the annual sum of British payments at the present time is almost exactly equal to the whole part of the German annuities not protected by the transfer clause according to the Young Plan)—all these things are causing a dangerous flow of gold from England and are ruining the attempts of the Labour Government to maintain an improving market situation.

The fiercest rivalry (customs "Himalayas," Tariff preferences, mutual "freezing out" of markets, the drive for export of capital, the fight for the quota, for the partition of international control, for monopoly, for hegemony) and—the international idyll ("disarmament" by the "yardstick," fir-trees and pipes of peace, doves and cherubim). Political tinsel and economic reality!

(To be continued.)

\*Figures and quotations from B. Anderson (*Chase Economic Bulletin*, Vol. IX.-XI., No. 3).

# Trial of Indian Revolutionaries

By S.

## I.

**I**N its day, the Cologne trial of members of the Communist League,—the first trial of the foremost section of the awakening proletariat organised by the bourgeoisie—was by Marx called a “police tragi-comedy.” “Just as scenic effects held in the background and hidden behind the wings suddenly at the end of the opera blaze up in the light of Bengal fire and amaze all eyes with their dazzling outlines, so the close of this Prussian police tragi-comedy saw the clear emergence of the workshop in which the ‘minute-book’ and the forged document on the basis of which the charge had been built up, had been fabricated. On the bottom step of the amphitheatre appeared the unfortunate spy Hirsch; then came the agent-provocateur, the City merchant Fleury, then the police-lieutenant and diplomat Grey; and at the top was the Prussian embassy. . . . The palace of the Prussian embassy was the hot-house in which this minute-book had blossomed.”

Since this delineation was written the bourgeoisie have resorted hundreds and thousands of times to the miserable hypocrisy of “legality” in order to conceal their methods of dealing with the fighters of the working class. Among the *dramatis personae* of these judicial spectacles, the heroes described by Marx invariably figure in some rôle or other: the spy, the provocateur, the forger and finally the government itself; the “independence,” “inviolability,” “objectivity” and so on of the judges consist in all the laws and codes amounting only to the howl of the mortally terrified owner: “Only theft can now save property, only the crime of perjury can save religion, only incest can save the family, only anarchy can save order.” The trials of the Communists are therefore always in two acts, which although they develop simultaneously are separated from each other not even by the footlights, but by the barricade. There is the tragedy of the young class whose representatives are being exterminated by the bourgeois court, if only on the basis of the “legal fact” that they have been imprisoned and brought before that court. And there is the

comedy of the inveterately lying, corrupt class clinging to power, and seeking to find some pretext for its murderous extermination.

Both these aspects, the tragic and the comic, find clear expression in the trial of the representatives of the struggling masses of India, which British imperialism has so ostentatiously arranged in Meerut. The resolutely rising movement of revolutionary development in that country on the one hand, the complete political, economic and moral bankruptcy of the British governors, despite all the strength of the positions they still hold, on the other, result in the characteristic outlines of the Meerut trial being thrown into particularly clear, well-defined and high relief.

The tragic element in Meerut emerges especially clearly if one takes into account those efforts, exceptional by their self-sacrificial quality, which the workers of India are making to emerge from the state of disintegration and amorphousness, and in order to destroy the imperialist-exaggerated, caste, tribal and religious prejudices, in order to construct themselves as a class capable of heading a great revolution. The Meerut prisoners are simply flung up by the masses; they have been educated by them; they have grown and developed as the result of a mass revolutionary struggle; they have developed at the cost of those heavy sacrifices which the masses have suffered and are continuing to suffer, in order to correct the errors of the leaders, in order jointly with them to learn from the experience of those errors. India’s isolation from international revolutionary experience renders the creation of steadfast, inflexible proletarian ranks especially necessary; but that same isolation renders the accomplishment of that task difficult. This explains the strong and simultaneously touching devotion which the workers of India display to their still comparatively recently thrown-up leading ranks.

It is well known that when the score or so of Bombay revolutionaries were arrested, Calcutta was inundated with military, literally as though it were a captured city. The wave of strikes in protest against the arrests was broken only after the government had every-

where brought military force to bear, occupying factories with troops and driving the workers in with machine-guns. But despite the ruthless terror the workers did not allow the banner which the arrested workers carried to remain in the hands of the police even for a single day. Instances are rare in which, after the mass arrest of leaders, after the break-up of all the left-wing organisations, the movement has continued so unbrokenly as now in India. "We shall show them that today is not 1922, and that our movement is no Gandhist passive resistance movement, in which imperialism, having bribed certain leaders and removed others, could celebrate their victory"—such would appear to be the thought of the Indian workers as expressed not in words but in deeds.

In nothing was the enormous potential revolutionary forces which are accumulated in the toiling masses of India so fully expressed as in the speed (not everywhere identical) with which the proletariat threw up new leaders after the arrests. Imperialism would like to represent the arrested as a "handful of agitators," inspiring destructive ideas and fastening those ideas upon India. Life has already shown that behind the accused stand millions of the masses. The chief charge against the accused is that they carried on strikes, especially the Bombay strike. In connection with the Bombay strike of 1928, which had been particularly obstinate and protracted, no less than 170 meetings of workers had been held, at which Communists spoke. But immediately after the arrest a second strike broke out, which in regard to organisation, consciousness and clarity of leadership was an enormous step forward by comparison with the first.

The arrests had not destroyed the link between the masses and the revolutionary leadership, and had made that leadership more experienced, steadfast and determined. British imperialism, with its world strike-breaking experience, realises what it means when in place of the administration of the Girni Kamgar union a new one arose out of the masses. The employers' and police attempt to slip their own agent into this administration was immediately exposed by the workers and prevented. The strike leaders, workers from the enterprises, share with the rest the burden

of picketing, distribution of leaflets, the struggle with police provocation, and so on.

But this astonishing growth in the organisation of the masses has been replied to by the authorities under the MacDonald government by a still more abominable terror than that which prevailed under Baldwin. The police bands flung themselves on the Trade Union leaders, and beat the president of Girni Kamgar, Kandilkara, until he was half-dead; but were quickly convinced of the revolutionary enthusiasm with which the unarmed masses stand by their leaders, what resolute resistance they make to the civilised executioners. Smashed and broken up by the police, Kandilkara is struggling between life and death. But as the result of the violence done to him, despite the difficulties, unprecedented even in India, and the mobilisation of all the forces of the bourgeoisie, the textile strike was consolidated, as the *Times* had to admit.

And now those leading ranks, created by the proletariat with such difficulty, the flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone, are torn away from the mass organisations, thrown into cholera and tuberculosis-infected stone jugs, where some of the arrested men (Hati, Mutsiphar, Akhmet, Spratt, and others) have already been reduced to the last degree of physical exhaustion. The young working class of India are the central character in the tragedy of Meerut.

## II.

On the same stage, but with quite a different acting personnel, is being played out the Meerut comedy: boorish, untalented, clumsily produced. But not at the end of the performance, as Marx observed of the Cologne trial, but at the very beginning its Bengal fires have dazzlingly lit up all the machinations, intrigues, provocations in the Meerut affair, and its chief actors are as visible to sight as though they were in broad daylight. There is the agent-provocateur, the diplomat, and at the very apex stands the government. The judicial examination, which began on June 12th, has so far consisted of the "opening speech" of the Public Prosecutor Langford James; his speech was offered in two two-day portions; the interval between them was needed by Mr. James in order to prepare his astonishingly boorish and ignorant, slanderous mess. No

cross-examination of the accused, no summoning of witnesses, no presentation of documents: so far only the prosecuting counsel has spoken. When will he end? How many more two-day fountains of eloquence before the case begins to be heard? No one knows! The "court" does not think it necessary even to inform the accused. Simultaneously the Viceroy of India makes speeches at a banqueting table calling for the punishment of the accused. Thus the judicial examination in the real sense of the word has not yet begun, but its miserable failure is already completely revealed.

The MacDonald government, which is carrying out work of the bourgeoisie, is mischievously throwing a light veil over its participation in the Meerut affair. "An astonishing argument," the *Daily Herald* remarks of James' speech. "A stupid argument," say the "left-wingers," *i.e.*, the most far-seeing and clever politicians in the Labour Party. In a month or two, when James has let himself go even more, they will possibly be saying: "A deplorable argument." But no, my dear sirs, you will not succeed in sweeping away the traces of your share in the Meerut trial. You are prepared to "admit" the crudity, the stupidity, and even the lunacy of Mr. James. But that is not the point. Crudity? But James has been the president of the European Association, an organisation highly cultured, and all but constituting a second government in India. Stupidity? But James was specially selected by the government out of all its multitude of barristers for the prosecution at Meerut, and was not merely selected, but was hired at a considerable price (the British Minister of Labour, Thomas, must not be offended, but James receives even more than he does.) An insane malice? But that is the highest merit and virtue when a prosecution of Communists is concerned. No, James is not the trouble! He is merely a loud-speaker. At the microphone is not James, but the "intelligent," "cultured," "humane" "Labour" government of Britain. Not Mr. James, but the Rt. Honourable J. Ramsay MacDonald is the chief comic lead in Meerut.

It is not mere coincidence that the British government contrived the Meerut affair under Baldwin and is continuing it under Mac-

Donald. It is not by accident that that government is taking all measures and sparing no sums in order to advertise it to all the bourgeois world. British officials were always distinguished for their royal munificence at India's expense. But whilst, despite the deficit in India's State budget, and in face of the growing mass deaths from starvation, throwing ten million rupees into the financing of the Meerut enterprise, even viewed from the morality of colonial robbers they have to give some explanation why this "sumptuous" production is necessary. Several hundred witnesses have been summoned, including some from Europe, tons of "material proofs" are being prepared, the newspapers promise that the trial will drag out for not less than a twelvemonth. And what publicity! The government is not only paying special attention to the telegraphic agencies, not only instructing special officials to look after them, but without a blush of shame it is openly assuming the responsibility of "paying the expenses for the transmission of long telegrams concerning the trial to the Indian and foreign press, through the Associated Press News agency." (See *Hindustani Times*.) Hitherto such methods of world publicity have been resorted to only by the largest entrepreneurs, when organising a boxing bout for the world's championship. Apparently under MacDonald such methods have for the first time in history been openly applied to demonstrate the impartiality of the judges.

What is all this? Merely stupidity, boorishness, frantic malice? No: there is purpose in it all. Stupid, boorish, frantic, yet none the less purposeful. Through the Meerut affair and its publicity, British imperialism is trying to show that it not only is strangling and plundering India, is not only suppressing by armed force any struggle for the liberation of the country, not only drowning the workers' and peasants' movement in blood, but that it also dares to pass judgment. In all the respectable bourgeois homes the Communists are being "tried"; then why should not the colonial enslavers, especially at the moment of a new outbreak of terrorism, represent the affairs as though they were handing over their burden of India to an "impartial court," and

doing so furthermore on questions of "principle"?

But the situation of British imperialism in India at the present time is characterised by the very fact that it cannot find even the slightest and most formally respectable court, even from the bourgeois view-point, to handle the trial of the accused. The defending counsel have wasted no small quantity of ink in proving to the Meerut court the complete absence of even the hypocritical shadow of legality in the actual fact of the transference of the case to its jurisdiction. The accused demand that their trial should take place in accordance with the law, and with the participation of a jury. One may hardly imagine that the accused have any illusions that a jury composed of representatives of the ruling classes could come to a dispassionate estimate of their activities. Experience has shown that such jurors prove to be on the side of bourgeois force and against the toilers. Marx wrote in his day :

"But, the jury said to themselves, if the Prussian government has risked proceeding against the accused with such contemptible and such merciless methods, if it has staked its reputation in Europe, so to speak, then the accused, no matter how small their party, are evidently extremely dangerous and their teaching must in any case be of some power. The government has violated all the laws of the criminal code in order to defend us from this criminal monster. Then let us also in our turn lower our good name a little in order to save the honour of the government. We will be grateful to it, and condemn them."

But that is the trouble : British imperialism has no "jurors" in India. What was possible to Prussian reaction in Germany in 1852, after the defeat of the revolution, is impossible to British reaction in India in 1929, at a moment of the rise of the revolutionary wave. Moreover, British imperialism cannot allow itself even what it conceded two years ago during Spratt's first trial, when the case was heard in the presence of jurors. For not only are the dimensions of the movement absolutely different, but the whole situation of British imperialism has changed considerably for the worse. With all the servility of the Indian bourgeoisie, with all its treachery, the govern-

ment cannot decide on drawing it into participation in the trial in any form whatever. The indignation against British imperialism is so general, so national, so severe in its character that the government cannot risk trusting its case at the trial even to those who at the official receptions of the viceroy or in some other secluded retreat reveal their utter complaisance and willingness to oblige. The strength of the pressure exerted by the masses in India at the present time is such that Indian jurors, no matter how "trustworthy" they might be, might not remain firm in an open court and would surrender the government positions.

The Meerut trial, contrived by British imperialism with a view to showing that "there are still judges even in India," has demonstrated the converse : there are no such judges. There are left only police officials, warders, pogromists and hangmen.

### III.

According to the intention of the organisers of the business the prosecutor in the Meerut trial should constitute the ideologist of imperialism, the interpreter of its philosophy, morals, religion, jurisprudence and so on. Imperialism has no intention of revealing itself in its true nature—through the mouth of its public prosecutor it desires to appeal to the "understanding of every reasonable, moral, decent, man." Besides the slave-driver there is also MacDonald, who could not fulfil his functions as a bourgeois lackey if he did not simply abjure all revolution "generally." And there is Purcell, who only quite recently was preaching the "victory of the Socialist system in the Great Indian Peninsula." The heart of Mr. James has to be of a large size : it has to accommodate Baldwin and MacDonald and Purcell ; who knows?—possibly yet a fourth who still tricks himself out in brilliant scarlet, anti-militarist feathers.

That is why Mr. James may not simply brandish the knout : that is no fit theme for long, "freely" transmitted telegrams. In order to play his part he needs make-up and noble airs. And in fact the Meerut prosecuting counsel is pretending that he demands penal servitude for the accused not because they are in favour of revolution, not because they are in favour of a national revolution, not even

because they are in favour of Socialism. Apparently he could forgive all that. Then for what reason are those who pay him shooting and torturing in prisons? The prosecution does not make an immediate reply to this question.

Yes, no matter how strange it may appear, the former President of the European Association is not against all revolution. He devoted the beginning of his speech to elucidating this extraordinarily important question.

"Now the slogan which most satisfactorily to my mind sums up their intentions, is 'Long Live Revolution.' A revolution is ordinarily an incident in time; it happens, it is done away with, and it gives place to that brighter and better state of things which, any way in the minds of its authors, it is destined to usher in. But the revolution which these accused have conspired to forward, which they have visualised, is indeed a revolution that lives long. It goes on. It is a continuing and almost perpetual revolution."\*

Thus the Public Prosecutor is not against all revolution. He has probably heard something about there not being one, even the most benevolent government in the world, which has not in the past, near or distant, suffered several bloody revolutions and violent overthrows. In particular undoubtedly he has nothing against the revolution which, truly in the most dull-witted and self-interested fashion, was carried through by the British victors in India when they broke up the village commune, destroying the native crafts and thus opening markets for the British textile industry. He is probably not against that truly decidedly original "revolution" in agriculture which has been projected by British imperialism, but which it has not yet decided to carry out, and which in the name of the development of capitalist agriculture will at once sentence tens of millions of peasants to death by starvation. But in accepting revolution Mr. James stipulates that it should "yield place" to a more enlightened and a better system. On the basis of philological, albeit illiterate investigations, he comes to the conclusion that in shouting "Long live" the ac-

cusèd are not striving for that. But it is permissible to ask who is the enemy of himself? Who would not strive for that system which in his opinion is better and more enlightened, *i.e.*, is an aim of revolution?

Of course the prosecution may object that his "tastes" do not coincide in the least with those of the accused, that the system which seems better to them is not to be endured by him, and that therefore he regards revolution as criminal. But if it had simply declared so much it would have been quite superfluous to "convict" the prisoners; without further wasting words they would have "confessed" that the revolution for which they have struggled and will continue to struggle has nothing in common with either the tastes or the interests of the European Association. The task of the prosecution would have been lightened to an extraordinary extent; they had been caught, they would be hanged or tortured. But then there would never have been any trial! And Baldwin, and even more MacDonald, wanted not only to shatter the organisations of the young Indian proletariat, but also to compel them to admit themselves politically and morally bound up with the existing system of colonial spoliation and barbarian exploitation.

"Especially comic," wrote Engels in 1885, when the law against the socialists was rampant in Germany, "sounds the demand to renounce the revolutionary nature which inevitably arises from historical conditions, when that demand is addressed to a party which has first been placed outside general right, *i.e.*, outside the law, and then is desired to recognise the legal basis which has for that party been annihilated." British imperialism is out to achieve a great deal in Meerut: it would like to present a demand to renounce revolutionary nature inevitably arising out of historical conditions not merely to a single party, but to the hundreds of millions of Indian workers and peasants.

Hence we get the second liberal gesture of the Meerut public prosecutor, the one in which, at the beginning of his speech truly, he extends the olive branch of peace to the national bourgeoisie, addressing himself directly to the National Congress of the Swaraj party. Mr. James appears to be not against even a national revolution. On the contrary,

\*The quotations are made from the text published in the Calcutta newspaper *Liberty*, the issues for 14th and 26th June, and in the *Bombay Chronicle*, for 26th June.

he accuses the defendants of wanting to carry out an anti-national revolution.

It is necessary, he indicates, to avert a possible misunderstanding. The revolution which the accused were working for is not a national but an anti-national one. They had feelings of hatred for a very wide circle of people. But those who are customarily regarded as the representatives of the Swaraj for India movement met with the especial hatred of the accused. And in enumerating the representatives of the Swaraj movement which he is willing to take under his protection against the evil hatred of the accused, the prosecuting counsel mentions by name not only Motilal Nehru, but also the "left-wing" Jawaharlal Nehru and Subash Bose and deceased individuals. In an outburst of noble indignation against the accused because they have not shown sufficient respect for these worthy personages, the public prosecutor exclaims: "You do not love your country, you are anti-country, you are anti-God and anti-family. You have ruthlessly to hate those who differ from your views and when the proper time arrives you have as ruthlessly to kill them. . ."

But on what conditions does the prosecuting counsel consent to defend the nationalists against the Satanic plans of the accused? In what capacity does British imperialism "recognise" the national bourgeoisie and is ready to receive no only the old, but also (oh, terrible!) the young Nehru also? Only on the conditions and in so far as they will wage a ruthless war jointly with imperialism against the working class and the peasantry. But as soon as these generally recognised personages dare to say one word about the liberation of India from the British yoke they will be immediately transformed into the worst of criminals. The charge made by the prosecuting counsel against the accused is formulated in such a fashion that, after dealing with the given category of accused it can, and even from the aspect of juridical logic it ought to be brought against those nationalists who refuse to kiss the imperialist whip. And if the petty bourgeois intelligentsia has not been completely muddled in his miserable diplomatic game he has to understand that the juridical sword which is being sharpened in the Meerut court

may at any moment be allowed to fall even on his more than satisfactorily humble neck.

#### IV.

Finally, Mr. James sufficiently understands the spirit of the times—(Baldwin's son, a shareholder in his father's firm, speaks in the House of Commons in the name of the Labour Party!)—not to wash his hands even of Socialism without some reservation. When charging the accused with the organisation of May Day demonstrations, he unexpectedly displays a necessity to make a lyrical aside, above which the newspapers set the caption: "Mr. James looks back to his youth." It appears that in Mr. James' time in England May Day "was a day of rejoicing." What has changed since then? Has Mr. James repented the sins of his youth? Or has the May Day celebration lost its former character? The second appears to be the case.

"In these go-ahead days," says the prosecuting counsel with murderous irony, May Day is "regarded as the awakening day of labourers. . . At all these demonstrations the accused had made speeches wherein they lauded Lenin, that great martyr to this cause," and they "initiated the proletariat into the mysteries of class war and dictatorship of the proletariat." Enlightened imperialism thus recognised the First of May, but also on conditions: it had to be without Lenin, without a class struggle, without the dictatorship of the proletariat. The *Daily Herald* has no right, and not even justification for abjuring Mr. James; in somewhat distorted, but quite popular form he expounds the programme, and of still more importance, the practice of the Second International and all its Zörgiebels during the May Day demonstrations of the proletariat.

The prosecuting counsel's intellectual affinity with the Second International is also revealed in his determination of the question whether it is permissible for the Communist Party to exist. "In England," he said, "a Communist Party could not exist legally; it had to remain there secretly. In India a Communist Party could exist legally while its members did not wage war against the King." We will pass over the somewhat unexpected declaration of the official representative of

governmental authority that the C.P.G.B. cannot exist legally. These burblings in reality more truly represent the actual situation of the Communist Party in Britain than do all the constitutional guarantees of the "Labour Government." Even more characteristically does James hint at the conditions on which he would permit the existence of a Communist Party in India. As we know, such a pseudo-party did at one time exist, of course, only on paper. To this end, it appears, not much is demanded: only that it should not begin to "wage war against the King." What does the prosecuting counsel understand by these terrible words? He sees a summons to this "war" in a speech of the president of the All-Indian conference of Workers' and Peasants' Parties, Joshi (not to be confused with the reformist Joshi) and expounds Joshi's thought in the following words: "He did not like that the king, the governor-general and governors should be retained in the constitution of the Indian Government. Their slogan was complete independence and complete freedom." (What constitution; by whom and for what eternity established?)

So it appears that the king does not "walk by himself"; he has a long tail: a governor-general, governors, and if excessive modesty had not restrained the prosecuting counsel from continuing the list, undoubtedly he would have included the European Association also, whose right to the plundering of India is of some little value. "Not to wage war against the king" means uncomplainingly to carry on your back all this hierarchical tower of parasites. That is all the law and the prophets for the imperialist parties of all varieties, from Baldwin to MacDonald inclusive.

A "revolution," a "national revolution," even a "Communist Party" if you like! But "on conditions": none of this may stretch out a hand against the "natural" rights of the exploiting band. None of your strivings for "complete independence" (and unfortunately that it just the expression used in the resolution of the national congress!) for "complete freedom." Any attempt upon the colonial monopoly of British imperialism will be punished by Mr. James with penal servitude, and by God's help, with the scaffold.

The prosecuting counsel wants this punitive deduction to be taken into account by all interested parties. The political section of his speech was directed to frightening the bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalists with all the horrors of a Bolshevik revolution; the juridical section was devoted to frightening the same nationalists, but with the threat of imperialist punishment. Consequently in his punitive conclusions the prosecuting counsel demonstratively emphasised that salvation was not to be found merely in the renunciation of the Third International.

"It is not necessary in order to constitute an offence under section 121A, nor is it necessary to convict these accused of such an offence, to prove that they belong to this Third International. If I show that they were carrying out work on these lines and at the behest of this Third International that is quite sufficient. It is not necessary to show that they were in fact members of a Communist Party definitely formed and affiliated to the Third International. I think that you will come to the conclusion that they were such a party, and if not actually affiliated, they were about to affiliate to the Third International. But I repeat that is quite an unnecessary part of the indictment. . . I do not want to be understood to say that I cannot link up these people with the Third International. I think, and in fact I am quite sure that I can, but the point is it is not really necessary, strictly necessary, to do so."

The slogan of "complete independence" and "complete freedom" thus appears to be quite sufficient to enable Mr. James to set in motion the guillotine of "law 121A." For him the rest is "unnecessary," a superfluous part of the indictment. At whom is this Meerut Thunderer aiming? Of course the nationalist camp is composed of such righteous ones as have succeeded in shaking the dust of the congress resolution from their feet and have forgotten the idea of an independent India. But there do happen to be "transgressors," or such as might become transgressors under certain conditions, especially if it be remembered that the appetites of Public Prosecutors may increase.

The terrorisation of the nationalists: such is the secondary, but very important task of

the prosecuting counsel. Mr. James has made a soft bed for bourgeois nationalism, but it will find sleep difficult enough. But can one doubt that the storm of events will shatter all the Meerut plans to dust?

### V.

The actual "evidence" adduced by the prosecuting counsel against the accused simply cannot be taken seriously so far, whatever may be one's desire. Suffice it to say that the documents which the counsel quotes, publishes, enlarges upon and explains, "deciphers," and so on, *i.e.*, not only interprets distortedly and erroneously but quite shamelessly supplements with his own guesses and imaginations—that these documents which form the basis of all his accusation have so far not been allowed to leave his hands and have not even been presented to the accused.

How far this inventive faculty (the fruit of boorishness, combined with impudence) can go is to be seen from the following: Having discovered that in every Communist Party in addition to the Political Bureau there is an Organisational Bureau, Mr. James unhesitatingly makes the converse conclusion: any organisation possessing an Organisational Bureau *ipso facto* reveals itself to be Communist. Armed with this truth the prosecuting counsel begins to seek for traces of this fatal Orgbureau in the activities of the accused. Fortune smiled on him. He found this or something like it in the correspondence between the accused, and the "murderous" evidence is ready.

"For instance there is the Orgbureau, which means 'Organisation Bureau,' and which is quite in the cry. We shall find it re-echoed by some of the accused in this case. We have no 'org' here or the 'org' is extraordinarily bad. Well, this is the 'org' bureau."

Thus the references which certain of the accused may have made in conversation or in a letter to a comrade to the weakness or the non-existence of organisational work are interpreted by Mr. James as a proof of the existence of the Orgbureau, and consequently of the Communist Party, and consequently. . . etc. One can be sure that the further the prosecuting counsel's imagination develops the

more effective will be the scandalisation of the whole court.

But there is one other point of interest in Mr. James' speech. Desiring to represent the accused as a handful of conspirators, in his sacred boorishness, the prosecuting counsel adduces a number of facts witnessing to the direct converse: namely, to what extensive mass organisations are behind them. Of course in the crooked mirror of the prosecuting counsel's exposition all the facts are distorted, mangled, and possibly exaggerated. But after taking into account the necessity for correcting this prosecuting counsel's inaccuracy, one none the less gets a certain impression if not of the character then at least of the scale of the intellectual and organisational influence wielded by the left-wing organisations in India. We may a number of quotations in illustration of this.

"Referring to the strike activities of the accused, Mr. James said that their minute-books showed that they boasted of having captured and controlled most of the big trade unions. The Public Prosecutor wanted the court to concentrate not on the number of strikes engineered by the accused, but on the object behind these strikes. The object of these conspirators, he said, was to get hold of in Bombay all important—what I should call strategic—points. They wanted to collar railways, dockyards, tramways, commerce and textile industry, and so on, and they very largely succeeded in doing so. They proceeded on exactly the same lines at Calcutta and other centres. They captured all public utility and transport companies. They even boasted of having captured the munition factory at Itchaky and the arsenal at Kirkee. Their intention was, he had no doubt, to get a strangle-hold upon all means of communication in the country, and they attempted to do so at any rate up here in the north, and it was only either because Mr. Usmani bungled in his job or something happened, that they failed to capture the North-western Railway. But they did succeed in capturing the E.I. Railway Union, the G.I.P. Railway Union, the B.B., and C.I. Railway Union, and the Northern Bengal Railway Union. The intention of these accused persons was, Mr. James declared, to bring about a general strike

on an extensive scale on the 1st of May, 1929. That was their immediate objective and it was upon this job that they were engaged when they were arrested. He went on to say that these gentlemen had complete control over the textile industry in Bombay and most of their members were connected with the Girni Kamgar Union, now known as the Red Flag Union, the G.I.P. Workers' Union, the Dockworkers' Union, the Municipal Workers' Union and lately had been added to the list of unions over which this Party dominated, the B.B. and C.I. Railway Union, the British India Steam Navigation Company Union, the Arsenal Labourers' Union at Kirkee and others. In pursuance of perfectly definite plans in Bombay you may say from April, 1928, to October, 1928, there was a practically continuous general strike in all cotton mills. Workers in eighty-two of eighty-four mills struck." (*Bombay Chronicle*, 26th June).

"In Bengal they captured the Bengal Jute Mill Workers' Union at Titagarh, Alambasar and other places. They also captured the textile workers' union of Kessoram Cotton Mills. There are Calcutta Scavengers' Union, Dakeswari Cotton Mill Workers' Union, E.I.R. Labour Union at Lillooah, Howrah Scavengers' Union, Calcutta Tramway Workers' Union, Jute Workers' Unions at Chenjail and Bavaria, Seamens' Union and such other Labour organisations."

The Public Prosecutor sees the influence of the accused in a number of mass demonstrations which have occurred in India. It is characteristic that in specifying these demonstrations he makes particular mention of the comparatively small workers' demonstration in Bombay against the Simon Commission some two years ago. It is not difficult to explain this special attention.

"These gentlemen," he said, "also joined in the demonstrations against the Simon Commission with placards bearing inscriptions: 'Workers of the World, Unite,' and they also took the opportunity for burning the effigies of Messrs. Baldwin and MacDonald. Writing on the question of demonstration against the Commission, Dange said: 'The question is whether we should bring out workers on a non-revolutionary political issue,' but Joglekar scented an opportunity for making a little

capital out of it. He thought that a general strike of some little importance would go a long way towards educating the proletariat."

Himself all-unsuspicious, the Public Prosecutor thus cites a fact witnessing to the class sense displayed by the advance-guard of the Bombay workers at the very beginning of the rise in the revolutionary wave. When they burnt the effigy of MacDonald (who at that time was only in opposition to His Majesty's Government) the Bombay demonstrators were not out in their estimate: under the MacDonald government it is that this prosecution of the advance-guard and the first leaders which it has thrown up is proceeding.

Mr. James remembered the words of one of the accused as to the educative importance of a strike so well because any hint of educating the proletariat, especially the youth, causes him to go into a fit of frenzy. "Moscow had insisted on it," he said. "It had said: 'You should get hold of every child from his cradle and teach him class war.' But even in this heap of inaccuracies, fragments and shreds of fact are revealed which show that the issue was not in the least that of teaching suckling babes the art of armed insurrection.

"They (the accused) tried to train up a young Bolshevik group in the country. In Bombay, a resolution was passed in the local youth organisation which advocated Communist ideas. Similar resolutions were passed in the Calcutta Socialist Youth Conference. . . . Anyhow there could be no doubt that steps were taken by the accused for teaching the ideals and principles of Bolshevism to young students. In Bombay, too, similar activities were carried on by the Bombay Party of Communists. Study circles were started by accused Hutchinson, who had a number of books and literature on Bolshevism with him. Books giving vivid descriptions of the Bolshevik activities in Russia were also used by the accused towards that direction."

Mr. James regards Lenin's *State and Revolution* as one of the most dangerous of all those which in his words were studied in the circles. It appears that Lenin misunderstood Marx, or at least understood him not as James would have liked. You see, for the Bolsheviks, Marx exists not in consequence of his philosophy of materialism and his theory

as to the accumulation of surplus value, but in consequence of three other theories: 1, that of class war; 2, that on the State; 3, that on the dictatorship of the proletariat. So it would appear from Mr. James' words. But it is these very three theories which the Public Prosecutor refuses to accept, for the following reasons: 1, class war does not exist; 2, the dictatorship of the proletariat ought not to exist; 3, as for the State, all that has been said (and done!) by Marx and Lenin in this realm pales into insignificance before the theory of the State which the Public Prosecutor himself offers.

"Well now, to come to his (Marx's) theory of the State. I suppose any ordinary person who thinks about the State regards it as an institution which for better or for worse, well or less well, is there to guard the liberties and rights of all the citizens in the State and see to the best of its ability that they all get fair play and equal treatment."

The British government is seeking all over the world for the machinators to whose agitation it ascribes the generally-recognised, albeit unhappy fact that its prestige and authority in India is declining catastrophically. But will it be pleasant for that government to listen to the Public Prosecutor's words, which by all possible methods, by the "payment of expenses of transmission," by open instruction, by scolding and driving are being carried all over India? But what else will this self-enamoured Narcissus of colonial despotism, where State authority is being more and more revealed as savage force, where it maintains its position by a clamant economic, political and social inequality, permit himself to say? He "enchants" his audience with talk

about the State having "to guard the liberties and rights of all the citizens!" In a country where the State authority could not be maintained a single day if it were unsuccessful in provoking religious, caste, tribal and every other kind of fanaticism, so that under the pretext of struggling against that fanaticism it can strangle everybody; in a country where terror stalks licentious and only the violator prospers. To talk in such a country of "all the citizens" getting "fair play and equal treatment" is merely adding fuel to the blaze. If what Mr. James says of the objects of the State is correct then no State authority, no system of rights exists in India; there is only anarchy based on the violence of the conqueror. But once that is so how can anyone twist his tongue into demanding of a great people numbering many millions that they should suffer this despotic anarchy, that they should not rise to effect its overthrow?

Of course, in describing the charms of State authority in a country groaning under an intolerable colonial oppression, the Public Prosecutor is not obliged to be governed by the cautionary advice "not to talk of a rope in the home of the hanged." But then let him not be angered if the toiling masses, before whose eyes Mr. James struts so bravely, jeering at the prisoners, grimacing before his audience, flourishing the instrument of his contemptible trade—let him not be angered if the toiling masses of India call him and the government which hires him by a fitting name. And let MacDonald not be angered if in answer to the Meerut trial the workers and peasants of India increase their efforts tenfold to drive the exploiters, executioners and violators out of their country.

# Collective Farming in the U.S.S.R.

By A. Gaister

**T**HE main object of the Proletarian Dictatorship is to break down the rule of the bourgeoisie and uproot the foundations of capitalist economy. This demands a number of measures in respect to small peasant undertakings such as will eventually assure the development of large-scale Socialist production in agriculture also. Both Marx and Engels alluded to this, and it was on this theory that Lenin based his plan for the co-operative development of rural economy.

"The proletariat," wrote Marx, "as the government, should undertake measures, the result of which will be that the position of the peasant will directly improve and that he will himself go over to the side of the Revolution. These measures will contain the embryo of the transition from private landed proprietorship to collective ownership; they will facilitate this transition in such a way that the peasant will himself arrive at this by economic means." (*Annals of Marxism* II., p. 98.)

Engels makes a similar observation: "Our task in relation to the small peasants," wrote Engels, "is above all to turn their private production and private property into collectivity, but this should be done, not by force, but by means of example, and the application of public aid for this purpose."

"We shall do everything possible," wrote Engels, further on, "to make it more tolerable for the small peasant to live, to facilitate his transition to collectivity. . . ." "The material losses which in this respect will have to be borne in the interests of the peasants, might seem, from the viewpoint of capitalist economics, to be wasted money. But actually this will constitute an excellent investment of capital because such losses will save perhaps ten times larger sums in the expenditure on social reconstruction as a whole. Consequently, in this respect we can afford to be very generous to the peasants." (*The Peasant Question in Germany and France*.)

This teaching by the founders of revolutionary Marxism as to the lines of development of small peasant economy after the seizure of power by the proletariat was brilliantly ex-

tended by Lenin in the co-operative plan for the development of rural economy. Lenin continually emphasised that "when the proletarian revolution takes place in a country where the proletariat is in a minority, where there is petty-bourgeois production, the rôle of the proletariat in such a country consists in directing the transition of these small undertakings to socialised collective labour." (*Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII., part I., p. 118. Russian Edition.)

The October Revolution in the U.S.S.R. in vanquishing the landowners and bourgeoisie gave a tremendous spurt to the initiative of the masses in developing forms of Socialist construction. The poor and middle peasant sections of the Soviet countryside have widely extended the construction of collective farms—the Socialist form of collective production in agriculture.

The first collective farms to a large extent started as "communes," *i.e.*, large-scale enterprises with common means of production, common labour and equal distribution. The revolutionary enthusiasm of the first years of the Revolution led the constructors of socialised agriculture to create Socialist enterprises of a more consistent type. But this form (collective farms) demands from the small peasant radical changes in the forms and conditions of the production and the conditions of living to which he is accustomed. For this reason, side by side with the Communes, and considerably exceeding them in number, the poor and middle peasant masses threw up a number of other forms of a simpler type, such as artels, societies for joint cultivation of the land, sowing associations, etc. The great variety of forms promoted directly by the builders of large-scale production in the countryside bears witness to the great activity of these sections in their fight for new productive and social relations in the Soviet rural areas.

The Fifteenth Party Congress took place at the time of the change from the restoratory to the reconstruction period in the national economy of the U.S.S.R. Soviet industry had entered this stage slightly earlier than agricul-

ture. The latter, however, could not considerably lag behind the reconstruction processes in other branches of national economy. Whereas in capitalist countries the development of capitalist industry intensifies the contradictions between town and country, under conditions of proletarian dictatorship one of the main tasks of the régime is to do away with the opposed position of industry and agriculture. This task cannot leave the proletariat indifferent to the lines of development of agriculture. To the capitalist form of development of agriculture, to capitalism, which has produced millions of small peasant farms, the proletariat counterposes a different way—that of Socialist development. The Fifteenth Party Congress, having in view the considerable successes of Soviet industry, which has passed the pre-war level, and the progress of agricultural machine-production in particular, alluded in its findings to the necessity of a more active construction of the Socialist section of agriculture, *i.e.*, the Soviet Estates and Collective Farms.

These slogans of the Fifteenth Congress met with a friendly response in the countryside itself. The attention paid by party organisations to the construction of collective farms encountered a corresponding wave of activity on the part of the poor and middle peasants in this constructional work. It goes without saying that the proletarian state plays a leading rôle in this collectivisation of agriculture.

The leading rôle of the proletarian state in the socialistic transformation of agriculture is seen plainly in the varied and complicated methods of planned economy. In the main, this rôle is defined by the following factors:

1. *The planned system of economy*, regulation of the market, manœuvring with the commodity mass—these things make it possible to influence rural economy and co-ordinate the development of agriculture with the interests of national economy as a whole.

2. *Socialist Industry*, producing the means of agricultural production, is a decisive propellant of agriculture. This factor determines the tempo of development of the various branches of farming and the introduction of advanced methods of production, improved cultivation, application of artificial manures, building of refrigerators, granaries and so on.

3. *The building up of a State Budget*, of a banking and credit system, the redistribution of parts of the national income, and the manœuvring of credit resources determine the structure of the rural money-market, the character of agricultural finance and the trend of expenditure in rural economy.

4. *Limitation of the development of rural capitalism*, liberation of the dependent sections of the countryside from the usury of the wealthy peasants, the legal, fiscal and other State measures, have a very strong influence on the nature of social relations in the countryside.

Such are the “commanding heights” which enable the Proletarian State to influence the process of development of agriculture.

It should be added that the nationalisation of the land relieved agriculture of the burden of outlay for the purchase or rental of land, releasing funds for increasing the means of production. For the State, this means devoting a part of the population’s resources to the work of economic development.

The production of agricultural machinery inside the Soviet Union exceeds pre-war by two-and-a-half times; the construction of tractors and the production of mineral manures, etc., has now started. The plans of work for the next five years envisage, however, a further very considerable extension of industrial production for agricultural purposes. Thus, two new tractor factories will produce by the end of the five years 100,000 tractors per year; the production of agricultural machines will be five times more than in 1928, while the number of mineral manures manufactured in the country will be still further increased. There is also planned a most extensive system of creameries, poultry farms, bacon curing factories, refrigerators, granaries, etc.

Thus the Socialist industry of the U.S.S.R. is energetically at work and has already achieved big successes in the way of supplying agriculture with implements and means of production such as will be able to bring it up to the standard of all demands of modern agricultural technique and create the basis for its socialisation.

During the two years that have elapsed since the Fifteenth Congress, the number of collective farms has increased almost fourfold. The

population and area sown in these farms has grown still more. On May 1st, 1929, there were altogether 50,000 collective farms in the U.S.S.R. They were peopled by 900,000 families with a total population of 4,000,000 and an area of more than 4,400,000 hectares under cultivation. In 1927 there were 13,500 collective farms with 164,000 families and 774,000 hectares area sown.

The most rapid construction of collective farms has taken place in the districts producing marketable grain where, at the same time, there is class differentiation to a greater degree than in other districts. Thus, in the Ural region the cultivated area of the collective farms was 30,300 hectares in 1927, 80,600 hectares in 1928, and 335,500 hectares in 1929. In the Lower Volga region the cultivated area of collective farms was 67,000 hectares in 1927, 98,900 hectares in 1928, and 405,900 hectares in 1929. In Siberia for the same years the figures are 55,900, 150,000 and 593,200 hectares respectively.

The tremendous scale on which collective farm construction has developed bears witness to the large and rapidly-growing numbers of revolutionary peasants who are breaking forth from the framework of their social "surroundings, from the framework of a small plot of land." (Marx, 18th *Brumaire*.)

The vital force of collective farm construction—this "trial of practical activity in the sphere of Socialist construction in the countryside" (Lenin)—is shown by the way the peasants trust the collective farms with their land. Everyone knows how firmly the peasant holds on to his little piece of land. Yet only 2.6 per cent. of the societies which came into being in 1928 were formed on land not leased out by the peasants. There is a still more convincing fact as to the soundness of collective farm construction. The new farm usually adopts statutes most closely resembling the basis of the original collective farms (commune, artel, society for joint land cultivation).

The life of the collective farm, however, considerably changes the form of these relations. Therefore, it often happens that the actual relations in the collective farms are different from what they ought to be according to the statutes. But if the development of the collective farm were to proceed backwards, *i.e.*, from

the offshoots of socialised production towards desocialisation, it would have to be admitted that the construction of collective farms does not help the collectivist transformation of small peasant farms.

There undoubtedly exists a tendency attempting to utilise the collective farms for individual accumulation. This is shown by the fact that funds assigned to a collective farm frequently leak into that part of the members' individual farms which remains unsocialised. Here the contradictions of collective farm construction by petty proprietors make themselves shown. But a more characteristic leading factor in the collective farm movement is the actual changing of various collective farms towards large-scale socialisation.

In going over to collective production the small peasant farm changes its nature in two ways: (a) the transition from small-scale to large-scale production, and (b) from petty proprietary to collective ownership and cultivation. This break with the customary basis and methods of production of the small producer does not take place under pressure of the inexorable laws whereby capitalism eats up the small farm, but under the pressure of the "economic way" (Marx),—*i.e.*, the more advanced and progressive methods of farming as demonstrated by the proletariat.

What have we to show is that these collective farms are an advanced and progressive form of agriculture as compared with present farming?

In the first place it should be noticed that the large majority of the collective farms have an elaborate agricultural inventory in the shape of the necessary equipment for farming on a larger scale. A large number of collective farms own tractors, although their number is still considerably below the demand.

The majority of collective farms are using assorted seeds, the use of the latter in the R.S.F.S.R. being as follows: In communes 89.7 per cent., artels 77.6 per cent., and in societies 66.8 per cent. In the Ukraine, assorted seeds are utilised by all the communes, 88.9 per cent. of the artels, and 24.9 per cent. of the societies.

The collective farms have also abandoned the three-field system—the bane of agriculture in Russia. The multi-field system of crop

rotation is now prevalent in the majority of collective farms (86.3 per cent. of the communes, 48.1 per cent. of the artels, and 41.7 per cent. of the societies).

The delay in the survey and distribution of the land has held up the application of the multi-field system on many of the collective farms. The steps taken, however, by the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, for the rapid allocation of the collective farm lands will also increase the percentage of farms having multi-field crop rotation.

Taking advantage of the pre-eminence of large-scale farming, the collective farms are increasing the more marketable cultures among their various crops. For example, in the Western district seed grasses occupy only 4 per cent. in the lower groups of the peasant farms, and 17 per cent. in the higher groups of peasant farms. Even in the most simple form of collective farming, *i.e.*, the societies, grasses occupy a bigger place than in the higher group of peasant farms. In the latter, grasses occupy 20 per cent., while in the communes they constitute as much as 28 per cent. of the area sown. In the Central black-soil district, sunflower seed comprises 5.5 per cent. of the area sown in peasant farms and 10 per cent. in collective farms; sugar beet 0.6 per cent. on individual farms, and 1.5 per cent. on collective farms. We find the same correlation in other districts of the Soviet Union. The better supply of equipment and superior organisation of farming bring better harvests in the collective farms; in the Central black-soil region the yield of winter wheat was 9 centners per hectare from the peasant farms and 12 from the collective farms. In the Ukraine, the corresponding ratios were 10 and 13, and in the Northern Caucasus, 5 and 6 respectively.

From this cursory survey of the productive successes of collective farms, we have ample grounds for concluding that the poor and middle-peasant enterprises which go to make up the collective farms, in uniting into this latter form, create a type of farming which, by its technical level and its productivity excels not only the individual poor- and middle-peasant farms, but even the most advanced peasant undertakings. During the present year, in addition to a further increase in the

number of collective farms, there has been a considerable movement towards their general strengthening. The great growth of collective farming during the past year, was to a considerable extent due to the formation of small collective farms which even caused a diminution of the average acreage of collective farms. In the current year, however, there has been an intensive spreading of the system of uniting groups of collective farms out of which "giant" farms have sprung up. Entire districts (Elansk, in the Urals, Volovsk, in the Tula region, the Digorsky Kombinat in the Caucasus, etc.), are experimenting in the construction of these "giant" collective farms, erected on the basis of out-and-out collectivism. These movements towards large-scale collective farm construction are decisive, for only under this condition will the collective farms be able to progress further forward, both in respect to the productivity of their labour and the cultural and social service of their members.

The reconstruction of agriculture in the U.S.S.R. is still only in the first stages of a gigantic process which is to bridge the gulf between industry and agriculture and lead to the liquidation of classes in the U.S.S.R. It is quite natural that in attaching such tremendous importance to collective farms and Soviet estates in this reconstruction of the Soviet countryside, the party and Soviet Government are making great efforts for the extension and strengthening of these farms to the maximum degree. It should be observed, however, that up to now the collective sector still occupies but a small place in the total production of Soviet agriculture. In 1929, the collective farms contributed 4 per cent. of the area sown, 4.5 per cent. of the total production and 6 per cent. of the marketable production. The five-year plan of economic construction in the U.S.S.R. includes the great object of raising to a large degree the importance of the collective farms in relation to the total agricultural output. By the end of the five years the portion of basic capital owned by the collective farms will increase to 15.9 per cent., marketable production will reach 16.7 per cent., while the total of peasant farms combined will increase from 400,000 to 5,000,000.

This growth of the collective farms along with the growing Soviet estates, gives added importance to the rôle of socialised agriculture in leading and guiding the transformation of the remaining peasant masses. In overcoming the difficulties confronting collective farm construction, the poor- and middle-peasants, under the guidance of the proletariat, will widely extend the new form of Socialist transformation of the backward countryside.

The October Revolution radically changed the nature of social relations in the countryside. It completely abolished the landowners' estates, and led to the redistribution of part of the lands of the wealthy peasants which were taken over by the village poor. At the same time there took place a redistribution of the means of production belonging to the capitalist elements, these being utilised by the middle and poor peasants. The results of the agrarian revolution was that the rôle of the wealthy peasantry was greatly weakened, while sections of the poor peasants went over to the middle peasant group. The middle peasant became stronger as the "central" figure in agriculture.

The new economic policy, however, bringing as it did commodity and money-circulation, market relations and the possibilities of accumulation arising therefrom, opened out for the wealthy peasantry (Kulaks) certain opportunities of capitalist development. The wealthy peasantry by accumulating the means of production and hiring it out to the poor peasants and by leasing land to poor peasants not having equipment, or by hiring their labour-power, endeavours to make the lower sections of the countryside dependent on them.

The development of collective farms is a decisive blow at the exploiting aims of the rich peasantry. The collective farms are overcoming the lack of equipment, which forms the main basis for the development of the rich peasant. The peasantry, by getting its own land, by jointly utilising both its own equipment and that received from State credit, by uniting into collective farms—is becoming completely liberated from dependency upon the Kulaks. Roots that have fed exploitation for centuries are being stamped out by collective farming. The Kulak is not allowed to lease out land; to hire labour for a mere song;

to hire out equipment; or to practise usury. Co-operative credit, hiring-stations, tractor columns, together with the correct organisation of large-scale farming on scientific lines—these things are steadily undermining the wealthy peasantry.

At the same time by organising into collective farms, the poor and middle peasantry are helped to struggle against exploitation. The influence and power of the Kulak, which had been strengthened for many decades is now shaking and crumbling. The possibility of getting on without the "services" of the Kulak, and of advancing agriculture with their own forces and government support, is spurring on the lower strata of the countryside, and strengthening their consciousness.

The high productivity of the collective farms, which yield harvests exceeding individual farming by 20-30 per cent., is undermining the authority of the rich peasant as a farmer, and demonstrates by facts what tremendous possibilities there are in large-scale collective production for advancing agriculture in general.

All this, of course, has aroused great hatred against the collective farms on the part of the Kulaks. The more profound the work of placing agriculture on a collective basis and the more decisive the advance of Socialism in the countryside, so much the more stubborn and intense is the resistance of the rich peasantry. Realising that collectivism destroys the opportunity of capitalist accumulation, the Kulaks are using all their influence on the peasant farms depending on them, in order to hinder the organisation of collective farms; they are applying the most varied forms of intimidation, employing slander and the spreading of false rumours and even going as far as setting fire to collective farm buildings and murdering the farm directors. Cases are known where the Kulaks have hired beggars with a view to the latter presenting themselves as disappointed members of collective farms and creating the impression of a poverty-stricken standard of living in the collective farms. Rumours are spread concerning the nationalisation of women in the collective farms, systematic robbery, etc. The strongest argument used in respect of the middle peasants is that when they join the collective farms

they lose all their inventory and everything else goes to the State, while destitution awaits the peasants. Finally, those peasants who are active social workers are absolutely terrorised. They are threatened with murder or incendiarism—frequently carried out—and often corrupted by drink or money.

In view of this intensified class struggle in the Soviet countryside, it is of the utmost importance to develop the initiative and activity of the poor-peasant sections and strengthen their connections with the middle peasants. The most important object of Soviet rural policy is to isolate the rich peasantry, paralyse their influence over the middle peasantry and to draw the latter into the work of Socialist construction. By taking the poor peasantry as a firm basis, by increasing their class-consciousness, their social and economic activity, and maintaining the closest contact with the middle-peasant masses, the Communist Party has brought into being a tremendous social movement in the country—a cultural and economic advancement among the peasantry that has found its expression in the construction of collective farms. The day-to-day work of the collective farms is disclosing such persistence in the overcoming of difficulties and such social initiative on the part of the collective farm population as to show already that they are beginning to outlive the centuries-old narrowness and torpor of the peasant. The building of schools, clubs and hospitals, the sending of the children to Workers' Faculties and Universities, the collection of funds for

these purposes, organised leadership in the respective fields of work—all these things are bringing about tremendous changes in the psychology of the peasantry. The collective farms are a cultural and social centre. The club, the village reading-room, the agronomical consulting station, the schools, the lying-in hospitals—all take the place of the "traktir" (inn) and the church, where the Kulak and the priest once reigned. The economic services rendered to the non-collectivised population by the bigger collective farms makes the latter into starting points for the economic elevation of the poor and middle peasants and for the advance against capitalist elements in the countryside. (Such services include stations for the hire of machinery, seed-sorting and breeding stations, while the superior cultivation of the land and bigger harvests also represent propaganda in fact.)

It is quite clear that given such class relations, any wavering in the attack on the rural capitalist elements, any deviation from a clear-cut class line represents a weakening in the position of the working class in the countryside. The decisive repression of the Right deviation is an essential prerequisite for the collectivisation of rural economy. A conciliatory attitude towards Right-wing vacillations would act as a brake on the Socialist transformation of the countryside. A decisive struggle against these errors is therefore necessary for the development of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R.