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Tenth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.

Full Report.

Twentieth Session.

Discussion on the Reports of Comrades Thälmann and Lozovsky.

Comrade ERCOLI (Italy):

Comrades, Comrade Lozovsky in the first part of his report laid great stress on the necessity that the discussion of the trade union question shall not be limited to general statements and the annunciation of abstract principles, but that a concrete and minute study shall be made of the experience of trade union activity in recent years by the revolutionary proletariat in the different countries, and that a particular study shall be made of the trade union experience of the Sections of the Communist International.

This is an absolutely just demand. I believe that if the comrades who wrote the theses submitted to us had carried out this demand, the theses submitted here — which are absolutely correct as regards general statements, and which would constitute the basis of our trade union activity in the present period — would have been drafted better than they have been. The things stated in the reports may be considered the result of great experience in recent time in the domain of trade union activity, but not of the whole of this experience. Obviously, they represent almost exclusively a summary of the experience of the proletariat and the Party in Germany, but not the general experience.

Of course, the experience made by the German Party is unquestionably the most important in recent times. It is in Germany that the different features of the political situation just now stand out most prominently; it is in Germany that the process of the reactionary transformation of the Social Democracy and of the reformist trade union apparatus is proceeding at the most rapid pace. It is in Germany that our comrades, in view of the revolutionary moods manifested by the masses, are becoming acutely confronted with the problem of carrying on independent trade union activity, of fighting to win the masses

of the workers in the course of trade union struggles, and of starting the direct fight against the reformist leaders to wrest from their hands the leadership of the working masses.

That is why in the experience of the German proletariat we may find a guiding line for the whole activity of the Communist International in the present period, and especially in the domain of trade unionism. Yet at the same time I should like to reiterate that while taking the trade union experience of the German Party for the basis of our discussion, we should also endeavour to make successful application of this experience to the different countries, i. e. to find out the manner in which the different countries might apply this experience so as to open to us those doors which are still shut to us in the development of the mass struggle in a great many countries.

There is a whole series of problems dealt with in general fashion in the theses and resolutions that should be considered in far more detailed manner. To prove what I say, I am going to dwell on four points.

First of all, the problem of organising the unorganised. It is a mistake to consider the problem of organising the unorganised as one and the same problem for all countries. The very fact of the existence of a large percentage of unorganised workers is one which we should appraise differently in regard to the different countries.

I shall take two particularly striking examples: France and Germany.

In Germany we have a high percentage of unorganised, and even a tendency towards an increase in the number of the unorganised. The percentage is even higher in France. Yet when speaking on the problem of organising the unorganised, we generally limit ourselves to Germany.

Yet the problem of organising the unorganised is far more important in France than it is in Germany, and should be solved

in France by different methods from those employed in Germany; because in France we have Red trade unions which do not show today any tendency to increase the numbers of their members. At the same time we are very acutely confronted in France with the problem of organising the unorganised, and our Party should exert the utmost efforts to solve this problem.

The second example relates to the new strike tactics. These tactics have been entirely accepted today. Yet in this respect also we should not limit our outlook to the development of the workers' struggles in one part of Europe, but should rather extend it to the whole of Europe. A considerable part of our attention, if not the greatest part, should rather be devoted to Great Britain than to Germany, whereas in the theses the application of the strike tactics is considered almost exclusively in connection with the situation in Germany, in Czechoslovakia, and partly in France, but not in the manner which the application of these tactics should be considered in respect to the situation in Great Britain. Our British comrades have represented the outlook of the development of the class struggle in their country as likely to begin in the form of economic fights for the immediate demands of the workers.

What line would be followed by the C. P. G. B. in such a development of the situation; how is it going to apply our general line of trade union tactics which all the Parties should apply in the present period? I am afraid that if we fail to discuss now this problem and to adopt quite definite decisions, the British Party will take up in this respect a too feeble position, like the position which it took up in its tactics towards the Labour Party during the preparations for the General Election. In Great Britain there are traditions of the struggle and organisation of the working class, even outside of the trade unions, which may be utilised as the premises for the application of our new trade union tactics. One may recall the Committees of Action and the Shop Steward movement which developed during the revolutionary post-war period. The British Party should orientate itself in this direction now, or else we shall perhaps have to make the same observations next year as we are now making about the results of the British elections.

Thirdly, the problem of the factory councils. Generally, the factory council of Germany is confused with that of France and of Italy, yet these are three different types of organisations. In Germany it is an organisation with deep roots among the working class and recognised by the latter; in Italy the factory council was an organisation rooted among the working class and recognised by the employers, but not by the law; in France there are no factory councils. In France there was a development of factory councils in 1919—20, but since then the institution of factory councils has almost entirely vanished. Generally speaking, in the Latin countries, in France, in Belgium, in Spain, the problem of the factory council should be treated quite differently than in Germany. In the Latin countries we have to start the formation of factory councils. The passage in the theses (p. 20 point 5, French text) which speaks of the conquest of the factory councils has no meaning for countries other than Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The problem with which we are confronted in all the other countries, and which the Red trade unions have to solve in France, the Communist Party in Great Britain, in Belgium, etc., is to get the masses of the factory workers to elect their representative organs in every factory and to fight for their recognition, not by the State but by the employers, so that these committees might become the organs which express the wishes of the workers in their economic and political fights. I believe on this point the theses should be more amply worked out so as to give solutions that will hold good for all our Parties.

Fourthly, the problem of the formation of new trade unions. On this question the solution given in the theses is quite proper. But in the reports and in the preliminary discussions there were statements made which cannot be accepted without reservations. For instance, when Comrade Thälmann spoke in a general way to the effect that the problem of forming Red trade unions was not on the order of the day, he was wrong. This problem is on the order of the day in America where it has assumed, and is assuming ever greater importance in the development of the economic and social struggles. Yet at the same time I cannot accept Comrade Lozovsky's formulae, who, in speaking about the formation of new trade unions in America, declares in a general way that the mere formation of small Red trade unions,

even if they are not mass unions, but only little nuclei of militants, will permit us to have the prospects of victory in the development of the economic fights. This theory cannot be accepted. It is pure anarcho-syndicalism. The revolutionary trade unions should be something different from a small organisation of cadres breaking away from the reformist organisation at a given moment, with the assurance that at a given moment they will get at the head of the mass movement. This theory has given birth to the Lozovsky tendency, expounded in his report and even in his report, of invariably urging the formation of new trade unions as the actual problem.

Thälmann has justly said that it is not a question of leap over the intermediate stages.

I am now returning to my starting point, and in order to demonstrate practically how, in my opinion, the experience of the different countries should be studied, I will refer to the experience of our Party and of our labour movement.

I am under the impression that this experience is underestimated in the Communist International and even in the International of Labour Unions. Yet, if we consider that this is the only country where the Communists have succeeded in gaining a leading position in the unions, not only during the revolutionary tide of 1919—20 but also in the present period, we must conclude that our experience is of a certain value and ought to be studied.

There are comrades who say that it is impossible to capture the trade unions today because to capture them is the same thing as to capture the State, and since the State cannot be captured, the unions cannot be captured before the revolution.

What does our experience show? It shows that the capture of the trade union apparatus is impossible. The capture of the reformist trade union apparatus cannot be accomplished other than by an armed fight, but the trade unions as mass organisations can be captured. I go even farther. I maintain that during the period of the reactionary transformation of the trade unions it is possible not only to capture the masses of the members, but even a portion of the apparatus. The size of this portion will depend on the extent to which the trade union apparatus is tied up with the apparatus of the State; but in a general way it may be said that it is not altogether impossible to capture the portion of the trade union apparatus that is most directly in contact with the masses. For instance, in Italy we have captured not only the flag, the label of the General Confederation of Labour, but we have captured also a portion of the trade union apparatus, a portion of the leaders in the rank and file sections of the trade unions who were not Communists, who were maximalists, anarchists, non-Party people, but who stayed in the Confederation even when the leading nucleus was already made up of Communists.

But what were the conditions which allowed us this victory? Above all, they were the general political conditions. On the one hand, a very rapid transformation of the political situation in the reactionary sense; on the other hand, a rapid reactionary transformation and fascisation of the trade union apparatus. When the leading body in the reformist trade unions went over to fascism, this fact caused a profound reaction on the part of the working masses which enabled our comrades, at the head of the masses, to capture the leadership of the General Confederation of Labour.

Never did we give up the struggle within the trade unions. Never did we pursue a policy that might be misrepresented to the masses as the policy of taking the initiative of splitting the unions. At the same time in our struggle against the trade union apparatus, and against the reformist leaders, we have followed the formula of Danton: "De l'audace, de l'audace, toujours de l'audace." That is why some of the tactical measures that are now presented as something new do not at all strike us by their novelty. In 1925—26 we have already fought upon this basis. In this connection I have heard some comrades, especially Comrade Thälmann, speak about the necessity of keeping away from the internal struggle in the trade unions. I recognise that at this moment it would be an enormous mistake in Germany to give up the work within the trade unions, but does this fact mean that we should refrain from developing those tactical forms which constitute a violation of trade union rules, but are essential in order to keep in touch with the masses in the movement? Comrade Thälmann said we should do no such thing, because if we do, it will be interpreted by the comrades as the tactic of abandoning the activity within the trade

ions. This is no argument. I believe that in a Communist Party, in a Bolshevik Party, our comrades should be able to appreciate and combine these two things: the struggle within trade unions and the struggle against trade union legalism. At the same time we must succeed in breaking down this trade union legalism, not allowing ourselves to be driven out of the unions, but fighting against the reformist bureaucratic apparatus, without severing our organic ties with the masses that are in the unions.

The fundamental quality of a Communist Party is the ability to combine these things.

I take as an example the problem of strike committees. What is the solution given in the theses? It may be summed up in two formulae: 1. the strike committees cannot take the place of trade unions; 2. the strike committees are transitional organs. In the past, comrades, we have always worked upon a different line, that is to say, we have always endeavoured to give a permanent character to the strike committees, and when the possibility presented itself, we have given such tasks to the strike committees as the accomplishment of which meant the substitution of these committees for the unions.

What should be said about strike committees signing labour contracts as the result of a strike in which they were at the head and in which they acted in opposition to the reformist union? I should be said that in this case, in this concrete case, they did take the place of the union. As a matter of fact, in this case the interests of the working masses as against employers are protected, and the responsibility is assumed, not by the union, but by the strike committee.

It is therefore quite proper to say that we should not take a strike committee to be the basis of a new trade union organisation; but it cannot be asserted that there would be no movement in the struggle when the committee ought to take the functions which normally belong to the trade union organisation. As regards the temporary character of the strike committees, possibly we have always tried to give a permanent character to the strike committees. Above all, we formed the strike committees before the commencement of the fight. Yet in the theses this fact is accepted when it is proposed to form strike committees before the commencement of the fight, not strike committees, but initiative committees in the factory. It is only a different name, but the fact remains the same. But when the struggle is over why should this organisation be disbanded after having obtained recognition by the workers in the factory, or by a whole category of workers? Why should we not entrust to it those functions which it carried out during the fight, why should it not continue to agitate for certain demands which were the basis of the strike? Why should it not continue the struggle against the limitation of the strikers by the employers, why should it not defend the militants who have taken part in the strike? Are there not sufficient economic and political tasks to justify the continued existence, the permanence of the strike committee?

This question concretely arises in France, above all. To our comrades in the C. G. T. U. it is closely connected with the problem of the formation of factory councils. The C. G. T. U. and the C. P. of France cannot solve the problem of the formation of factory councils unless they connect it with the problem of forming permanent strike committees. In France today the formation of factory councils and the formation of permanent strike committees are nearly identical things.

Yet, in regard to the factory councils, is it legitimate for a factory council, having taken the initiative in a strike against the reformist leaders, to sign a contract after the conclusion of the strike? Yes or no? If it is legitimate, here is a case where the factory council takes the place of the union. I go even farther, I say that in the German Party today it ought to be the fundamental perspective that the factory council should become the centre of the struggle against the trade union bureaucracy, not only in the sense of education, but also of trade union initiative and action. If our German comrades should fail to achieve success in this direction in the course of the coming struggles, the difficulties which they now encounter will be increased.

The problem of expulsions. I agree with Comrade Thälmann that in the case of the expulsion of individuals who are Communists or militants that are very close to the Communists, it is sufficient to establish contact between the expelled and the trade union opposition. But what is to be done if a whole section is expelled? Or if we succeed in organising, not 5 work-

ers, but 400 workers, and these workers are driven out by the reformists because we have organised them, what shall we do in that case? It is not a good solution to tell workers to belong to organisations which are not trade union organisations. These workers need a trade union, not the Red Front or the W. I. R. which are quite different organisations. They want a union, but not yet the Party. And if we do not give them a trade union, the problem is not yet solved.

Scores of times we have been confronted by this problem. We organised the workers in their hundreds, but the reformists did not accept them. We then organised them as unorganised sections of the reformist trade union organisation, urging them all the time to join the unions, to insist upon being admitted. Evidently, this is a problem of political significance. If we have comrades who do not understand that it is necessary to keep the workers at the door of the trade unions and to have them grouped in trade unions without resorting for this purpose to the tactics of scission and the formation of new unions, such comrades ought to be enlightened, their political outlook should be broadened, but we cannot afford to adopt a wrong policy merely because the correct policy leads to error on the part of some of our militants.

Another problem on which I should like to say a word or two is the problem of illegality. We agree that the unions should defend its legality to the limit, that it should not allow itself to be outlawed, that it should fight for the defence of the trade union rights of the workers with all means, by propaganda, agitation and the political strike; but the problem is one of force, and a moment may come when we shall not be sufficiently strong to defend our legality, when we shall no longer be able to escape from the problem of illegality. Under such circumstances we should not recruit, but should go on with our work under the new situation. Nevertheless it is an error to lay down the principle that the trade union cannot be illegal.

In Italy the discussion of the possibility for the existence of an illegal trade union marked at one time the distinction between ourselves and the reformists. We have always fought for the defence of the legality of the trade union movement, but we have always told the reformists that no faith should be put in bourgeois legality, that it was necessary to prepare for illegality, that it was the duty of the trade union leaders, at a moment when the whole of society was to undergo a reactionary transformation, to transform the trade union organisation so as to enable it to subsist under conditions of illegality. Of course, this transformation is by no means a simple thing, it raises a series of big problems which should be studied in time by the Red trade unions both in France and in Czechoslovakia. For instance, a trade union organised like the C. G. T. U. upon an exclusively territorial basis, upon a basis which is but a reproduction of the reformist trade union basis, cannot put up a resistance to the reaction.

The problem of the Red trade union in France is to establish a basis in the factory. By the way, there is not a word in the theses about this basis; yet there should be something said about it. As long as the C. G. T. U. has no factory basis, it will not be able to develop to the extent required by the new situation.

What is meant by illegal trade unions? What are their characteristics? How can they function? The reformists used two arguments to polemicise with us and to deny the possibility for the existence of illegal trade unions. First, they argued that the illegal trade union cannot be a mass organisation and that the trade union movement cannot exist otherwise than as a mass movement. Second, they urged that the illegal trade union cannot sign labour contracts, nor negotiate with the employers, and that therefore it has no reason for existence.

As to the first point, it is certain that a trade union which becomes illegal is going to lose a considerable portion of its membership. What Comrade Lozovsky has said about the transition of trade unions from legality to illegality is perfectly true. Yet these statements ought not to be taken in an absolute manner, and from this it should not be concluded that the trade unions which are put upon an illegal basis must necessarily become a mere duplication of the Party. At the time of greatest progress in our movement (1927) the ratio between the Party members and the members of the illegal trade unions in Italy was 1:5, that is to say that in the factories we had an average of 5 militant trade unionists to 1 member of our Party. During the most difficult period there was a drop in this figure, but at no time was our trade union membership entirely reduced to

the Party membership. This reduction was complete in regard to the leaders, because the leading elements in our unions are the same elements which lead our Party organisations. But as regards the rank and file of the trade unions, the latter have always existed as a basis which is different from that of the Party.

What is the problem which has confronted us in Italy, and which will confront all the comrades when their Party becomes illegal? It is the problem of finding the proper forms of contact between the trade union movement and the Party.

It is a very difficult problem, because the old methods of contact may at a certain moment prove entirely useless; for instance, the method of distributing cards. But we believe that the method of distributing cards is not a good one, because the worker takes the card and burns it. The best method is to take small contributions once a month or once in two months and to organise regular meetings for the workers who pay contributions; the regularity of the contributions and of the meetings give continuity to the trade union organisation. The worker feels himself attached to a permanent organisation.

The second big problem for illegal trade unions is that they are unable to sign labour contracts. Our comrades cannot come before the employers to negotiate in the name of the G. C. L. As a result, there is a tendency observable among our trade unions to become simply a propaganda organisation, a duplication of the Party, not only as regards the numerical strength of the membership, but also as regards activity. To obviate this danger it is necessary to urge the comrades to study the labour contracts signed by the fascist trade unions or the labour contracts enforced by factory owners without discussing them with any organisations. In other words, while the legal trade union actually signs labour contracts, the illegal trade union merely studies the labour contracts of the legal trade unions while fighting for the modification, and sometimes even for the observance of the terms of such contracts. This may appear as a concession to the enemy, but it is sometimes the only way for us to maintain our trade union groups in the factories as such, i. e. as organs which are fighting for the immediate interests of the workers.

Have we done anything in this respect, and in what direction? We have done something in the direction of studying all the methods employed for cutting down the wages of the workers, which are not always the same, so as to organise the resistance of the workers to the cutting of wages. In 1927 and in 1928 we have succeeded in fostering considerable resistance by the workers to the cutting down of wages.

Now that the wages of the workers have been brought down to the minimum, while there are some symptoms for renewed activity by the masses, our slogan is no longer for fighting against wage cutting, but for wage increases. It was justly observed by Comrade Lozovsky that in Italy we are witnessing the first symptoms of a renewed movement in the factories. These are little symptoms, but they indicate at any rate a renewed movement in which not only the Party will play a role, but the trade union, although illegal and reduced in membership like the Party. The trade union organisation will then have to play a considerable role.

I now wish to say a word or two on the work in the fascist trade unions. Also on this point we cannot afford to generalise. One cannot find formulae to be equally good for Italy, for China, for Chile, and for other countries. It is necessary to study minutely the situation in each country, because in each country the fascist method of trade union organisation is different. In Italy the organisation method of the fascist trade unions has changed in conformity with the different periods in the development of fascist trade unionism, and our tactics had to be changed accordingly.

In the Central Committee of our Party, we all agree on the necessity of working in fascist trade unions. But there are hesitations in the basic organisations. These hesitations are partly the reflex of passivity in the basic organisations, but they are also partly due to our comrades' fear that work in fascist trade unions means abandoning work for the reconstitution of class trade unions. There is after all a political reason which could to a certain extent justify this opposition. But there is no doubt whatever that we must overcome it.

But, can the work be done? I do not know conditions in China. For Italy, the answer cannot be general for all periods.

There are periods when the work can be done very thoroughly but there are also periods when the work cannot be done.

In 1927 there was a big wave of wage cutting. During this period the fascist trade unions resorted to a great deal of demagoguery, bringing up all manner of arguments to persuade the workers of the necessity to cut down the wages in order to further the development of industry, and so forth.

These tactics of the fascist trade unions enabled our comrades to develop great activity within those unions. They distributed pamphlets in which the fascist arguments were criticised, and so on. What was the result of this work? The result was that after 6-8 months the fascist trade unions were forced to change their tactics completely. The demagoguery had to be given up, and we had a period during which it was impossible to do any work in the fascist trade unions, because there were no union meetings held and the whole of their existence was reduced to that of a bureaucratic machine.

On the whole, we may say that the work done during a certain period in the fascist trade unions has caused an immediate modification in the fascist trade union organisation, accentuating its reactionary and bureaucratic character.

A factory meeting in Italy presents sometimes a striking spectacle. It is a compulsory meeting, i. e. the fascists present themselves at the factory gates, pointing their revolvers at threatening those workers who intend to go home. But when there is an acute situation, when an agitation goes on in the factory etc., it happens sometimes that the workers attend the meetings of the fascist trade unions in order to hear what they should say about their immediate interests. In such cases our comrades should also attend the meetings and have their say.

To sum up, I think the general line of the thesis is correct, but it will be necessary to bear in mind the observations which we have made in order to modify the solutions in accordance with the situation in the different countries.

Comrade BROWDER (United States of America):

Comrades, The American Delegation is in full agreement with the line of the trade union theses before the Plenum. I believe that Comrade Lozovsky is absolutely correct when he cites America as a proof of the correctness of the trade union line generally of the Comintern. Especially the developments in America have proven with completeness the correctness of the specific decision with regard to America — the formation of new unions.

We must say that without the new trade union policy in America, we would not have been able to take advantage of this new wave of struggle against rationalisation. It would have been impossible, operating under the old conditions, to take this movement and develop it as we have.

Outstanding among our developments in the past few months has been the strike movement in the South. The South is a new industrialised section of America; the proletariat is a new proletariat, recently recruited from the villages and farms, and in this industry there is of the most modern type. In this industry the process of rationalisation has been carried through to its highest degree. The pressure of rationalisation in the South, combined with the low level at which the workers are recruited in this industry, has developed a widespread movement, and we have taken advantage of this, for the first time entering into the South. We have extended our new textile workers' union into this area, leading the Gastonia strike, which is internationally known, from the Gastonian strike extending our influence to large sections of the South till today we have connections in nuclei in more than 60 textile mills in North Carolina. The battle of the Gastonia strikers against police attacks, as a result of which 14 of our organisers are in prison charged with murder, will probably become a historic landmark in the American Labour movement such as the Sacco-Vanzetti case.

The new union in the garment industry has also made distinct progress and has conducted economic struggles. In the miners union we have made some progress, but we must say with regard to the miners that the hesitation in applying the new policy is responsible for our losing the best moment for the organisation of the miners' union and delaying it to such a point that its difficulties were multiplied many times. But in my opinion, the certainty of a new advance in the next few months will place the miners' union in the field, as our old unions, as a fighting organisation, especially in the Illinois coalfield where a big mass revolt is developing in the old union

We have a basis for a new union in our Marine Workers' League, which in the past few months has recruited more than 100,000 members and is carrying out a wide propaganda. For more than a year it has been conducting very successfully seamen's strikes, and the basis is laid for the organisation of a very large marine workers' union, principally of seamen as yet, within the next 8 or 10 months at least.

We have the beginnings of an automobile workers' union, one of the most highly mechanised industries that the world has ever seen, and the most highly rationalised. This is one of the most important problems of the organisation of the workers in America, and the key to many other industries.

We have favourable developments of this kind in many other industries, and strangely enough, we realise for the first time in our history with its full completeness that in most of these industries if we do not have our new policy, we would be absolutely helpless. However small our beginnings are at the present time, we can say that positive organisational work is going on in every important industrial basic industry in the United States even including the railroad workers.

A word about these railroad workers. They are the most highly paid and the most conservative section, perhaps, of all sections of the American workers who have steady work all the year round. They are looked upon as the stronghold of reaction in the American working class. Yet even with these railroad workers we can see a distinct swing to the Left, so strong that there is the beginning of a new union organisation springing up spontaneously in some shops of the American railroads. We have had a very interesting example of this in our preparations for the T. U. E. L. Convention. We sent out the stamps to be sold to the workers, 25 and 50 cents, for the raising of a special fund for the T. U. E. L. Convention. Workers in the railroad shops, reading a call for our Convention and following our instructions to form shop committees and send delegates, set up shop work and not only formed a shop committee, but took up the stamps for the raising of funds for the Convention, and converted them into regular union stamps for regular monthly dues, transformed their organisation into a trade union in every respect except the name, and began to propagandise our Left wing committee in the railroad unions that they must begin to organise a railroad workers' union. Of course it is not our programme at the present time to organise a new union of railroad workers, because this is one of the industries in America which has perhaps 35 or 40% organised in the old unions. But in my opinion, also in the railroads, in tackling the 60% unorganised workers, we will in most cases find it impossible to continue any organisation of the unorganised through the old unions, which are rapidly becoming organically connected with the railroad administration.

These railroad workers present us with another example of the general tendency in America of the lowering of the living standards of the workers. I know there is still an illusion even in some circles of the Comintern that in America the tendency of wages is still upwards. This is not true. It is true that among the railroad workers there has been some increase of wages in the last year or so, and especially in the last few months. But the significance of these raises in wages will not be understood unless you remember that this category of American workers, the highest in standard of living and wage level, have now in the last increases of wages only recovered their losses of the previous years. Now, with the latest increases, their wage level is just the same as in 1922, at the time of the general railroad strike against wage cuts. But throughout this period, when they were recovering what they lost since 1922 in money wages, the rationalisation process in the railroads has increased the intensity of labour by 37%. Any one who can say that even these most highly paid workers in America have improved their standards of living when their intensity of labour has been increased by 37% and their wages are just back to the 1922 level, is ignoring the whole process of rationalisation in America, the effect of which is to drive down the living standards of the workers generally.

Generally we can sum up the present situation of our new trade union work by saying that we have established fighting functioning trade unions, that the members of these unions are increasing, that the membership at the present time is something bigger than the figure mentioned by Comrade Gey this morning. As a conservative estimate I think we can say that we have at least 100,000 functioning members in these unions.

Now I want to deal with the defects and mistakes in our trade union work. These mistakes and wrong tendencies in our trade union work are for the most part to be defined under the heading of the Right danger in our Party generally. It is not an accident that one of the specially cultivated bases for the work of ex-comrade Lovestone in the American Party was precisely among the Right wing elements in the trade union work. However, we must say in spite of this, the new unions are growing healthily and step by step they are throwing off these Right wing elements and discarding this Right wing policy. We must register the fact that from the very moment that Lovestone and Pepper left America, just after our last Convention to come to Moscow, there was to be noted a decided improvement in the whole of the Party and especially in the Political Bureau in this respect.

This Right danger in the trade union work was a reflection of the general Right wing policy in the Party: the underestimation of the possibilities of struggle, the refusal to recognise the movement towards the Left of the masses, the refusal to recognise the characteristics of the third period generally. In the trade union work this takes the specific form of establishing in our new revolutionary unions all of the old ways and bureaucratic practices of the American Federation of Labour. I will give a few concrete and specific examples which will indicate the whole trend we have to fight in this new union work.

In the miners' union we have the unheard of spectacle of our revolutionary union entering into a contract with the employers whereby the employers collect from the workers the dues from all of the workers in a particular mine, and pay them over to our union. This is the old check-off system of the United Mine Workers' Union: and an absolutely impermissible method, and we see it was uncritically and unhealthily taken over into the new union. This has been stopped now, but the tendency is not completely eradicated.

In the Garment Workers' Union we have an example of this Right wing tendency in the signing of agreements which contain compulsory arbitration clauses, and so on.

One of the great shortcomings in the recent strike of the restaurant workers in New York (which demonstrated a very militant and fighting spirit amongst the workers) was the failure and refusal of the union conducting the strike, an independent Left wing union under the influence of our Party, to establish any strike committees at all. The whole strike was planned, conducted, and carried through by an appointed committee from the union. Not only was this so, but the settlements that were made, were made without consultation with the workers involved; purely by negotiation of the appointed committee with the employers.

There is not only this general character of Right Wing errors which cannot be definitely classified as Right wing, although they go on generally with the Right wing tendency, and also reflect to some extent the remnants of anarcho-sindicalist traditions of the I. W. W.

Of this nature is the failure to give adequate consideration to problems of organisation and preparation of struggle, to problems of establishing trade unions and establishing works committees in the trade unions as functioning organisation. There was in fact at one time clearly expressed in our leading committees by some elements that in our new trade union work we should set ourselves the task to form organisational cadres and not mass trade unions.

I think that on this point it was quite incorrect when Comrade Ercoli criticised Comrade Lozovsky, because we know in America that Comrade Lozovsky has taken the lead in the struggle against this tendency of organising cadres as against mass trade unions in America.

Many of these errors, in fact most of them, are intensified by the bad training of our leadership, from the untrained nature of our leadership, the lack of traditions of revolutionary trade unionism, and the fact that the oppositional work in the past has not been a good training for the new union.

One point that is necessary to speak on is the Negro question. Comrade Lozovsky has given you an absolutely correct picture of this question in America, and the policy which he laid down is entirely correct. It is necessary, however, to say that his picture of the Party reaction to these problems is not entirely true, as, in spite of the factional situation, the Party never hesitated at any time to expel every white chauvinist who showed his face. The expulsion of white chauvinists from

the Party, which has been so complete that in the South we had to expel almost every white member we had, has not entirely settled the Negro problem. I must give you a few examples of the policy of representatives of the Party who were sent to deal with white chauvinism in the South.

One of the representatives of the Party in the South met with the strike committee in Gastonia, where the Negro problem is acute, and said:

"When we discussed this question yesterday, you comrades, who opposed our policy of equality for the Negroes had in mind questions of the home, school, and church. Well, I was not referring to these things, I spoke only of the unions. I had a meeting in Bessemer City with coloured and white workers together. It is true the coloured workers stood on one side and the white on the other. But this is what we mean by equality. The union does not say where the workers shall stand. According to our unions the workers can stand or sit in any place they want to. Let the coloured and white workers sit where they wish. This is what we mean concretely when we speak about equality. The only problem is to get the coloured and white workers in one meeting no matter where they sit."

Then he put up a Southern attorney to speak in the name of the Union, a petty-bourgeois attorney which was approved by our representative of the Central Committee. This attorney said:

"The Negro question is not much of a problem here down South. It means no reflection on the coloured workers to call them Niggers. The problem has been solved by almost every organisation down South. When Weisbord talks about equality, he does not mean to select niggers for your friends. I have even preached in a Negro church. Labour unions can get along only if they let in red or blonde, freckled or beautiful, black or white. We need not worry about the Niggers. The Niggers will take care of themselves."

Then Weisbord afterwards thanked this attorney for his speech and said:

"The attorney said many things better than I could; he understands me thoroughly and can express my thoughts better than I can."

(Interjection: What did the Party do about it?). The Party condemned the whole business and Weisbord is now withdrawn from all responsible work. I think we must establish that the Party has made some progress despite these capitulations, deviations and mistakes in the South.

I must in the few moments which remain speak on one point in the Theses presented to us dealing with the new union. This paragraph certainly would not apply to America. Yet it is a general paragraph applying to the problem of new unions as a whole. It lays down four conditions which must all be present before the necessity of new unions can be established.

(Lozovsky: This particular point does not apply to America but to countries like England and Germany.)

Certainly it would not apply to America. It may be correct as regards other countries but the fact that it is general in nature is wrong if it is intended to apply to a specific country. There are certain phrases which in my opinion cannot be accepted for any country. Certainly in America it is not necessary that "considerable sections of the proletariat have already grasped the social imperialistic character of the trade union bureaucracy", before we can organise new unions, because in America there is a very small section which has any fundamental understanding of this question. The point which is stated here is, in my opinion, entirely incorrect, where it says that "before the necessity of the new trade unions can be established, these masses must be actively supporting the formation of a new union". The whole attitude to this question expressed in this paragraph would have the effect, whether it is designed for that purpose or not, of preventing the discussion of the question of organising new unions until the question had been forced by the workers themselves upon the Communist Parties. In my opinion the Parties, whether in Germany, America or England, themselves must recognise this necessity when it arises, and show it to the masses even before they begin to move. Unfortunately, in America the masses, plus the Profintern and Comintern, had to push us into the new trade union organisa-

tions. I hope this will not be true in other countries, and that the Parties will lead the masses and not wait until the masses force them into the organisation of new unions.

Comrade MONMOUSSEAU (France):

Comrades, I declare our agreement with the general line of the theses which has been submitted on the trade union question. This does not of course mean without certain modifications of detail. These slight modifications of detail which we can formulate within the Commission in putting the theses in final form are accompanied by a number of more important observations:

The first observation is that relating to the passage relating to the conquest of the trade unions. It says:

"The first tendency is based on an erroneous conception of the problem of the unorganised workers, a confusion of the trade unions with the committees of action and on an under-estimation of the possibility of capturing the trade unions."

In my opinion, this question of the possibility of capturing the trade unions can only be presented from two aspects:

1. Win over the trade union masses and the reformist trade union apparatus through our activity and on the basis of our platform.

2. Mobilise the trade union masses, drive out the reformist leadership and replace it by a leadership consisting either of sympathisers or party comrades.

Comrades, I do not see the question from a third aspect but only from these two, and in my opinion this stage has already been superseded by events. It is possible that there are special conditions under which it is yet possible to drive out the trade union leadership to the extent to which this trade union leadership is not yet totally linked up with the program of the Social Democracy, with the police of the bourgeoisie, with industrial rationalisation, the war policy, and with the bourgeois State.

Comrades, I believe that the general line is not in the right direction, and that if we want to be clear on this question the formulation must be radically changed. It must be such that we can and that we must work to win over the trade union masses against the apparatus of the reformist leadership. This is one point and it is the general line of our work against the reformist trade unions.

Our Comrade Ercoli brought up the experience of Italy with regard to this question in order to present the problem of the capture of the trade unions in an affirmative manner. In my opinion, this experience is not sufficiently conclusive to make a general thesis of it.

Why? Because the special conditions under which this has arisen in Italy are not general conditions. The circumstances under which our comrades in Italy were able to win over the trade unions — that is to say, at the time when the trade union leadership was abandoning the trade union and retreating before fascism or else becoming an integral part of it — at that time evidently it was possible to capture the trade unions under these conditions. But are these general conditions which face us and have we the same perspectives?

Comrades, I do not feel that this situation arises in the general perspective. In all countries, particularly in France, there is a slow but certain adaption of the whole trade union apparatus to the policy of the bourgeoisie and to the bourgeois State. There is a process of fascistisation of the reformist organisations which makes it necessary to present the problem in a different manner — to present the problem in the sense of the capture of the trade union masses by firmly organised activity against the reformist trade unions against the reformist leadership. The second observation is that in my opinion, the thesis in the German, that is to say that it is based too much on the analysis and experience of the German situation. In what connection do we find this? In the question of factory committees and committees of action. What does it say in the theses? It says:

"In contrast to the committees of action the factory councils are not temporary bodies, but function in a permanent manner."

In the theses, factory councils are opposed to committees of action. We believe that in a general thesis which must

tain the characteristics of development of the movement and take on an international scale, this question must be more fully formulated and adapted to the conditions under which our movement is developing in countries where there are no central factory councils.

What are the committees of action? The committees of action are temporary bodies enabling us to pass over from somewhat elementary forms of united front to more developed forms.

The committees of action are not opposed to factory councils. On the contrary, they are one of the steps through which we must pass in our country in order to come to factory councils, because the factory council is a question of relationship of forces between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

I believe that we must also point out that the committees of action are not merely a basis for the united front and the rallying of the masses on a factory basis, and that they are not only one of the means for passing over to the most highly developed form of factory councils, but that in the countries where the trade union movement is split, they are one of the means for rallying the masses in the revolutionary trade unions. The experience on this point in France is sufficiently conclusive for us to contemplate the role of committees of action also on an international basis.

There is one other remark to be made; in the reports which have been delivered and in the political discussion on the character of the trade union Left, this Left has been described as the most dangerous movement against which all our forces must be concentrated in order to reach the Social Democracy through it. We are entirely in agreement with this formulation, but we ask that this be contained in the trade union theses. I think that we cannot consider the position of Cook and of Fimmen as an accident of the Left wing of the Social Democracy. At this Plenum we must not ignore the fact that the position of Cook and of Fimmen represents a definite current and that they personally have been the standard bearers of the Left on whom we based our support for a certain period; their passage into the ranks of the Social Democracy is an event which reflects the phenomenon of the class struggle in the third period, and we must unhesitatingly carry down these banners if we wish to have a clear line before the masses for the realisation of the united front.

Another question is the question of new trade unions and the question of the unorganised. The analysis of the general situation shows a majority of unorganised workers in all countries with varying percentages. We find that the proportion of unorganised workers is everywhere larger than the proportion of workers organised in a trade union. This is true above all in France where 90% of the workers are unorganised; this is therefore of primary interest for us; but this is true not only of France, but of other countries to a varying degree. And the trade union theses is not sufficiently categorical on this point; it does not sufficiently emphasise one of the principal bases of our orientation for the conquest of the masses.

On the other hand the analysis of the strike movement brings out the role of the unorganised in all struggles. This is true of France in particular, but it is also true of all countries. It would be of interest to have particulars regarding the social composition of these unorganised workers, showing just what they represent in all countries, if we wish to establish a correct tactic in our mass work. In our opinion the centre of our activity must be directed first of all towards the unorganised, and this applies to France more than any other country owing to the enormous percentage of unorganised. In Germany the considerable number of four million trade union members in the reformist organisations obviously implies a policy directed simultaneously towards the mobilisation of the unorganised, and towards work in the mass organisations represented by the German trade unions. But this must be very early formulated in the trade union theses.

With regard to the question of new trade unions it must be admitted that Thälmann was very prudent. We approve of his prudence. There is a French proverb saying that "prudence is the mother of wisdom" and for the moment this holds true. In contrast to Ercoli I believe that the argument given by Thälmann is correct, and is of great importance, and that we must be very prudent in the formulation of our slogans in

connection with the question of unorganised workers, the organisation of expelled trade union members, etc. at this juncture. But this prudence does not exclude clarity in our perspective. The preliminary part of the theses contains an analysis of the situation and of the class struggle, but when the problem of organisation, which is the main problem, is brought up, we must call to mind the perspectives of the class struggle in countries where these perspectives arise in most sharply outlined form. For Germany in particular we must bring up the perspectives of the class struggle and the counter-revolutionary and splitting role of the Social Democracy which will continue to develop to the extent that the class struggle develops, so that we cannot for long present the problem merely with prudence, but must have perspectives. I believe that in our theory we must link up the question of the unorganised and of new trade unions with the question of the perspectives of class battles and of our work in general. Only in this way will we be able to see clearly the tasks which we must face in the development of the struggle.

The second part of my speech will be devoted to the situation in France.

The first question is: are we approaching illegality of the trade unions? Yes we are. Even now we can no longer speak of real legality of the revolutionary trade union movement. The unitary trade unions are legal bodies according to the text of the law; it is possible that they will remain for a long time legal bodies in accordance with the text of the law of 1884. But in practice there has already been a great step towards illegality of the unitary trade unions. The authorities are bitterly combating the C. G. T. U. and breaking its contact with the federations which defend the demands of certain categories of workers. The employers are systematically attempting to break all relationship with the unitary trade unions, while it deals with the reformist organisations over the heads of the masses and over the heads of the unitary trade unions, and signs labour contracts with them.

We can say, comrades, that in France the question of trade union rights is practically only a question of strength between the unitary trade unions, the masses, the employers and the public authorities.

The legality of the trade unions is the monopoly of the reformist trade unions. It is clear that the question of the recruiting for the unitary trade unions cannot be isolated from this situation or from this whole policy. The result is that the reinforcement of the unitary trade unions is for us primarily a question of activity for the preparation and conduct of struggles on a factory basis. What are the chief aspects of the economic struggles in France? Our comrade Thälmann has already in his reports made certain statements on the estimation of these struggles which I should like to complete because a number of very interesting events are taking place and because now the experience of the French movement is very rich in the lessons which it offers us.

In the past year we have had in France approximately 1000 strikes embracing 500,000 workers in round figures. In the Nord, 40,000 workers have been involved in the textile struggle, 35,000 in the miners' struggle, 8000 in the Peugeot factories, 5000 in the agricultural strikes of Arles, 4000 in the strike of the postal workers, 3000 in the dockworkers' strike in Bordeaux, 6000, the majority native, in the dockworkers' strike of Oran, already mentioned by Semard, and 20,000 cement workers just recently in the same district with their 24-hour strike. Our trade union is now making progress and controls the employment of workers at Paris — that is to say the action of the red trade union has eliminated the anarchist reformist trade union and the employers' organisation; and then there is the Concarneau strike with 12,000 women. We are now witnessing a development of class conflict in the railroads among the railroad workers at Arles, Tergnier and Noisy-le Sec.

I must emphasise the role of the foreign workers because this brings up before us very important organisational problems. In France at the present time there are three million foreign and colonial workers. In the course of the strikes of 1928 to 1929, this foreign labour power was in the front ranks of the struggle, in many cases much more so than our own French workers, as a result of their greater exploitation and bad living conditions. It would be well to consider the role to be played by the 3,000,000 workers in the fairly near perspectives of an industrial crisis in France, and what will be our difficulties and our tasks.

What is the present characteristic of the strikes and what changes are there in comparison with the preceding period? I wish to give a few facts. At Audincourt-Sochoux, during the strike at the Puget works, the strikers conquered the streets and drove out the guards. In the Concarneau strike street battles were carried on by the women against the police forces. The women organised their own strike pickets.

Since we came here the mass of workers at Citroen factory came in conflict with the police in order to protect a native worker who was distributing handbills at the factory gates. There was a battle which lasted several hours. At Rouen, during the tramway strike, the workers lay down along the tracks to prevent the trams from moving. The cement workers of the same district got control of the streets in order to release their arrested comrades.

These facts show that the political level of the conflicts in France is growing constantly higher. The conclusion to be drawn from the analysis of the strikes is that in France at the present time we still have a strike movement of a partial character — not coordinated and not concentrated —, but we are proceeding towards the establishment of a much broader and more far-reaching front and we are witnessing a rapid raising of the political level of strikes. Why? Because in carrying out this change, our Party stimulated to a very marked degree the trade union cadres and the Party membership to assist in the development of these struggles in the shops and factories.

I believe that the formulation contained in the political thesis is correct, and that in France we are witnessing the first stages of a new revolutionary wave. The character of these struggles calls for an advance in our activity among the masses. We have made certain progress, but we must candidly recognise that the course of events in France always has a tendency to go ahead faster than we do ourselves; the character of the struggle at the present time calls for an accentuation of the leading role of the Party and also for a stubborn struggle against opportunism and reformism, which are developing in proportion to the accentuation of the class struggle. Self-criticism in all these battles is a primary weapon for us — a permanent weapon — and we have utilised it throughout this whole period.

What are the various tendencies which we have to overcome? First of all, state reformism, that is to say the reformist forces concentrated in the reformist C. G. T. In France the reformists are playing an exceedingly big role in economic conflicts, the more so in that they are not officially in power and spread illusions among the masses in regard to their independent character. It must be noted that it is no longer merely the reformist leaders who must be considered in the sabotage of economic struggles, but also the reformist nature of the trade unions. The mass of workers in all our strike movements come into conflict not only with the trade union apparatus but with an element of workers who are already drawn into the policy of capitalist rationalisation and the war policy of the bourgeoisie.

But comrades, reformism does not exist merely in the C. G. T.; there is also reformism in the C. G. T. U. The syndicalist line, the political role of which in France is known by all, is of course, the guide for all opportunist currents in the C. G. T. U. But we must note that its contacts with the masses are not very great. It is not the most important force with which we have to contend. Its notably counter-revolutionary character discredits it before the masses. We find among our own ranks at the present time other currents developing which deny the radicalisation of the masses and deny the imminence of war and which rebel against self-criticism.

We are witnessing an open rebellion of elements of the Party against the Party — of elements which the Party is of course driving from its ranks to an ever greater extent. Other elements preach capitulation before repression and before the perspective of having the Communist Party placed on an illegal basis.

Between these currents and ourselves there are conciliators. What feeling serves as the driving force of the conciliators in France? The feeling that we must not be too hard on the reformist currents in the C. G. T. U. They express an attitude of capitulation before the struggle against opportunism and a failure to understand the new stage in the leadership of struggles by the Party; they express the tendency to become

crystallised in the old forms of united leadership of the labour movement, that is to say on the basis of formal relations between the C. G. T. U. leadership and the leadership of the Party as they were worked out in 1923. But when it is a question of taking a step ahead, of placing the real leadership of the labour movement in the hands of the Party, we find definite resistance on the part of the trade union cadres. The cadres do not understand the change carried out in the Party and the C. G. T. U. They keep advising the Party to be prudent in its participation in economic conflicts, its self-criticism in overcoming all the difficulties which stand in the way of our mobilisation of the masses, and the preparation of a leadership of struggles. These comrades overwhelm the Party with reproaches, charge it with all the greatest sins and make it responsible for everything.

We maintain that it is the current of the conciliators which is the greatest danger to our movement. It is against the conciliators first of all that we must direct our attacks because they come before the masses with an obscure policy and hinder our real struggle against the social democracy.

Up till now we have allowed ourselves to be hypnotised by the first aspects of our struggle against the opportunist currents. For months we have been carrying on the battle in this field. Is there a radicalisation of the masses or not there not? During this time there has been a steady progress and development of economic struggles. Their political character has become more pronounced, more extended and deeper. If we do not take a new step, we risk getting left at the tail end of the movement. As compared with the Party Congress our congress must enter a new stage. On what basis is the basis of a new revolutionary wave and not on the basis of radicalisation, pure and simple, such as was previously formulated. Of course, this new formulation is going to cause a new storm against us, a new explosion of anger. And of course we shall arouse new reformist currents which have so far been apparently in agreement with us.

The essential questions of the French trade union movement are contained in the report of the activity of the C. G. T. U. for our coming congress. I wish to emphasise the progress which has been made in comparison with the previous period. The value of the report of activity of the C. G. T. U. does not lie in the number of its pages, but in the effort made in the analysis with a view to emphasising the perspective of struggle and the faults and weaknesses of our trade unions and with a view to carrying out a real self-criticism, and also in the fact that it is the product of collective work and that it is the work of the Party.

In spite of the concentration of all the opportunist and reformist forces which still exist in our Party and which are developing within our trade union movement, we are certain of victory at our congress and of carrying through this victory in the course of the struggles which are to follow our congress because we have a serious basis for support in the development of economic struggles and among the masses.

Comrade TANAKA (Japan):

In Japan we are now witnessing unquestionably a new stage in the revolutionary movement. For instance, in June of last year there was a strike of 50,000 seamen who are under the influence of the Right trade union bureaucracy. The strike ended in defeat, but in view of the growing discontent among the masses there is a constant, if partial, increase in the number of strikes that are taking place in defiance of the reformist leaders. In the beginning of 1929 we had a number of (in Japan) big conflicts in the textile industry involving several thousand workers in each factory, which broke out in connection with the introduction of rationalisation. Such conflicts have occurred in Tokyo, Osaka and other cities, and strikes have been waged in defiance of the reformists and the trade union apparatus. This shows the great fighting enthusiasm of the masses. If we examine the tramwaymen's strikes in Tokyo and Yokohama we see their counter-offensive character. Recently there was a conflict in a big hydro-electrical enterprise which supplied electricity to 12 municipalities in the district of Tokyo. On 15,000 workers were involved in the conflict, and a section of them went out on strike. This strike was declared by the Left wing. Although the conflict has ended in a compromise settlement, nevertheless it is of great importance to the Japanese

the union movement as it indicates the new rise in the wave.

All these facts point to favourable conditions for the un-
dermining of revolutionary activity. In order to carry on the
proper activity it is necessary to have the proper organisation.
As you all know, the trade union movement of Japan is split
into a number of small bodies. Moreover, less than 10% of
the whole of the industrial proletariat are organised in trade
unions. Furthermore, these organised workers are divided into
three tendencies: the Left, the Right, and the Centre. It is therefore
the most essential task to strengthen the Left trade union that
led by the Communist Party. In order to strengthen our
organisational position it is necessary to concentrate the whole
of our attention upon the organisation of the unorganised.
In this respect, something has already been done by our Party
led by the Left trade union, e. g. the calling of a conference
of delegates from the factories and workshops, and so on.
But this is not all that should have been done. As regards the
organisation of factory committees, youth sections, and women's
sections, we have still done very little to carry out the hints and
instructions of the Comintern and the Profintern. In order to
carry on our work successfully in regard to organising the
unorganised, we must strengthen the Party nuclei in the
factories. Of course, this work is being hindered, and will
continue to be hindered, by the reaction which rages in Japan, as well
by the trade union bureaucrats. Nevertheless we should
continue to and strengthen our Party nuclei in the factories, parti-
cularly in the big ones. Around these nuclei we should unfold
activity in behalf of the workers' demands in the factories
and workshops, never forgetting to link up this struggle with
political struggle.

As regards forming an opposition minority within the
Left and Centrist trade unions, we have not done very much
in this respect, although this question is of tremendous impor-
tance to the development of the Left trade union, because some
of the Right trade unions have their basis in the large factories
which are turning out munitions of war. This is further dan-
gerous because the Rights have in their hands almost all the
power aboard the big vessels. Now, as to unity of the trade
union movement in Japan. Until quite lately there were attempts
made by our comrades to establish trade union unity by con-
voking a conference of representatives from the different trade
unions. But now these tactics will have to be modified, because
the Centrists are now doing their utmost to hinder the Left
and are working hand in hand with the avowed Right
forces. Unity from below, unity for the active class struggle
against capital, this is our unity of the trade union movement.
In order to carry out the important tasks which confront
the trade union movement, it is necessary to carry out imme-
diately and fully the decisions of the IV. Congress of the
Profintern and of the VI. Congress of the Comintern which
have been since endorsed by the real facts. In order that the
masses might clearly understand these decisions, it is
necessary that there should be clarity in our own ranks as to
the specific nature of these decisions, so that there shall be no
hesitation and no vacillation.

Comrade PIATNITSKY:

When I spoke on the first item on the agenda, I also
spoke about the work of the C. P. of China in the yellow trade
unions, in order to give Comrade Lozovsky and the Chinese
comrades an opportunity to speak on this question in the
context of the trade union question. We had today a speech by
the Chinese comrade, Deng. Unfortunately, he did not deal
with this question, neither did Comrade Lozovsky. He put
the question aside, he only said "en passant" that the recent
events in China were under the ideological influence of the
Communist Party. And yet, this is a cardinal question as far
as the Chinese Communist Party is concerned. If no special
attention is made at the Plenum on the work of the C. P. of
China in the Kuomintang trade unions, this question will have
to be studied and decided immediately after the Plenum or in
the next trade union commission. After my speech on the first
item of the agenda, I received a list of strikes drawn up
by a comrade who has just come from China. This list is
based on official Kuomintang material and shows that the
trade union movement is certainly reviving in China. But there is
no sign whatever of our Party's leadership in these strikes.

It is either absent, or is very insignificant. Here are a few
data concerning the recent strike movement.

In 1928 there were in Shanghai alone 120 strikes, in
which 68,728 men, 122,807 women and 22,431 children parti-
cipated, total number of participants -- 213,966. Very charac-
teristic are the demands of the strikers: 24 strikes were declared
against the dismissal of workers, 13 against bad treatment,
11 against fines, 7 as a sign of solidarity with arrested workers,
6 as a sign of solidarity with workers of other enterprises,
3 were the result of a conflict between workers and police
and 2 were caused by dissatisfaction with trade union com-
mittees. I have given data characteristic of demands other than
economic, but during the strikes special demands were brought
forward for higher wages, shorter working hours and so forth.
I reiterate, I have taken only the most characteristic cases; I
have selected strikes which are decidedly of a political char-
acter. This information is official, it is published by the
Kuomintang. I am convinced that the number of strikes is
considerably minimised by the Kuomintang.

Let us see now what was the number of strikers in the
various enterprises. In 31 enterprises, 10 to 100 workers were
on strike, in 63 enterprises from 101 to 1000 workers, in
21 enterprises from 1001 to 10,000 and in 2 enterprises over
10,000 workers.

These 120 strikes in 1928 are distributed as follows:
96 strikes in Chinese firms, 8 in British, 7 in Japanese and 9
in other foreign firms.

According to Kuomintang strike statistics there were in
January 1929: 12 strikes in 512 enterprises, the number of
strikers being 6469. In the same month there were, apart from
the 12 strikes, 65 conflicts which affected 1051 enterprises and
in which 20,049 workers participated. In May 1929, a number
of strikes took place in Shanghai: dockers, railwaymen, tailors,
shop assistants in ready made clothes shops and others. There
was a tramwaymen's strike in Tientsin. The workers of electric
power stations joined the tramwaymen. The workers brought
forward 10 demands including the 8-hour day, reinstatement of
dismissed workers, full pay during sickness, double pay for
holiday work, dismissal of foreign and Russian white guard
overseers. The tramway workers showed a fighting spirit.
They seized strike-breakers' children, took away a million
coppers, beat the Belgian engineers who tried to organise the
work with the help of strike-breakers. All the strikes in 1928
and 1929 were spontaneous, and the great majority of them
were not under the leadership of the Red trade unions and the
C. P. of China.

Who led these strikes? As already mentioned, the strikes
broke out spontaneously, but subsequently the Kuomintang trade
unions took them in hand. Kuomintang influence is still very
strong among the masses. More than that, nearly all the strikes
in 1928 and 1929 ended by means of Kuomintang arbitration.
There are, of course, already signs that the Kuomintang is
beginning to lose its influence on the workers.

In May 1929, on the day of Sun Yat-sen's funeral which
was declared a national holiday, 2000 arsenal workers refused
to wear mourning armlets and stayed at work, not wishing
to recognise this day as their holiday.

The question arises, if the C. P. of China worked in
factories and works and in yellow trade unions which embrace
big sections of workers, could it capture these workers who,
without Communist help, brought forward political demands
and organised strikes in spite of terrorism? I think that it could
capture these masses. Even if it could not get strike leadership
entirely into its hands, it could in any case get a footing in the
Kuomintang trade unions. One can work among the masses,
there are many opportunities for this, as shown by the following
fact: on May 30th, the anniversary of the shooting of demon-
strators in 1925, in spite of all the preparations of the Chinese
and British police, strikes took place under leadership of the
C. P. of China: postal workers, dockers, cotton operatives, shop
assistants and others. Demonstrations also took place for several
hours in the main streets of Shanghai attended by tens of
thousands of workers and students. The demonstrators raided
2 Kuomintang newspapers, broke windows of tram cars and
foreigners motorcars. These demonstrations and strikes were
successful because they were well prepared. The Communist
Party made use of the murder of a Chinese by a British soldier
for anti-imperialist agitation. More than that, a special non-
Party committee was formed to come to the assistance of the
family of the murdered Chinaman. This committee called in

the general post office, in spite of Kuomintang prohibition, a delegate meeting of 60 trade union and students' organisations which decided to organise a strike and a demonstration on May 30th. The postal workers' union, which is affiliated to the Kuomintang, was dissolved after May 30th and reorganised by the Kuomintang. The universities, the students of which had participated in the demonstration, were closed.

This shows that one can work in China among the masses, but hardly any systematic work is carried on.

It is essential to place immediately before the Communist Party the following task; to start at once energetic work among the masses, in yellow and Kuomintang mass trade unions, because it is possible to work there.

The question was raised here about legal and illegal trade unions. We must examine this question more closely. In countries where Communist Parties are illegal and where wide legal labour organisations exist, it is not expedient to form parallel illegal Red labour organisations, because Communist Parties can work with greater ease and to a better purpose in the existing legal mass labour organisations. I think that experience in the trade unions in Bulgaria has proved the correctness of this assertion. I also think that the experience of the Chinese Communist Party in this domain will confirm this assertion. This does not of course mean that illegal Communist Parties should not organise at a suitable moment legal parallel trade unions, if the existing yellow or reformist unions are not mass organisations, or that they should not organise legal trade unions in industries where such organisations do not yet exist. It is a different matter in countries where no workers' class organisations can exist legally (Italy). In such countries, illegal trade unions must be organised. Where they already exist, they should be maintained. They will play an important role as soon as the Fascist regime has been undermined. More than that, one of the tasks of the illegal unions in Italy must be work among members of fascist trade unions in factories and works, because it is easier for them to struggle against the fascist trade union bureaucrats considering that they are familiar with wage rate questions, insurance and conditions of life and labour in general.

But where big legal trade unions exist, workers are not likely to join en masse illegal trade unions, at least we do not know of such cases from the general practice.

If workers do join these illegal trade unions, they are generally elements in sympathy with the C.P. They are the active body on which the C.P. rests. But this active body must be directed by the C.P. into the big legal unions. Comrade Lozovsky dealt with this question yesterday, though rather cautiously. I agree with him on the whole, that the C.P. must endeavour or rather must do its utmost to maintain the existing wide legal trade unions, also semi-legal where legal existence is impossible, and should resort to illegality only in extreme cases, when it is absolutely impossible to carry on even a semi-legal existence. An illegal trade union organisation, such as, for instance, in Italy, will show what it is worth as soon as the situation changes, and will take into its hands leadership of the trade union movement.

I will deal now with the question on which Comrade Thälmann only touched yesterday — reverses (pledges). According to him, this is acceptable at present only in Germany, and he is not certain if even there in all towns and in all cases. He put the question thus: when trade union bureaucrats ask Communists to sign a paper directed against the Party or the revolutionary movement in general, it would be better for Communists to refuse to give their signature, because this might discredit the C.P. The trade union resolution placed here before us had a paragraph on reverses, — we decided to eliminate it, because it is impossible to decide the question of reverses uniformly for all countries. This is quite impossible. Let us say, if the leaders of Kuomintang trade unions — in order to be elected to the trade union administration — declared that every candidate must sign a paper that he is not a Communist, could in such a case members of the C.P. of China say that they are not Communists, if the C.P. of China had decided to capture these trade unions and their administrations? I say yes! Communists can have no obligations whatever to the bourgeoisie, and trade unions (reformist, yellow, Kuomintang, Catholic and others) are an appendage of the bourgeoisie. We can tell them anything we like, provided this gives us an opportunity to work among masses. Let us consider the signing of reverses in Germany: Although the C.P. of Germany is meeting halfway the powerful development

of the Labour movement, can it decide this question uniformly for all towns and trade unions already at this juncture, not to give the signature demanded by the reformists? Can't it? For the purpose of more successful work in regard to bringing over members of some trade union to free of the trade union opposition. Workers will understand Communists. But if the Communists are well-known, for instance if the Berlin Party organisations were to propose to Comrade Piek as delegate to some trade union congress, this demanded repudiation of Communism on his part, Piek would do more good to the trade union movement and the labour movement in general if he says that he is a Communist, than if he refuses to give any signatures against his Party.

This example shows that conditions vary in the various countries and even in the various towns. Therefore, to say that Communists must never sign reverses, is wrong, in fact, is silly. If I, as a worker, went to the office of some factory to seek employment and were told that Communists are not admitted, I would conceal the fact that I am a member of the C.P., in order to be admitted. I would sign any number of papers in a bourgeois factory office, to get an opportunity to work there. I do not think anyone is against workers giving their signatures to the employers. This is the way to deal with the question of signing reformist reverses, because reverses have entirely gone over to the bourgeoisie. The question of Communists signing reverses cannot be treated uniformly in all countries and cases. The C.P.'s must decide this question in accordance with concrete conditions, — what is more life-like, to extend and strengthen the influence of the C.P. in the labour movement, refusal to sign, or signing and being able to carry out the work. This is how the question of reverses must be dealt with. To us, this is not a question of principle.

And now, the question of strike committees and committees of action. Comrade Ercoli dealt with this question here in a different manner than before the Presidium. There, he put the question straight: committees of action must be permanent organs. We did not agree with him in the Presidium. Today he puts the question differently: when committees of action must be transformed into factory committees. True, if the committee of action or strike committee signs an agreement with the employer, and the workers empower this committee to carry out this agreement, it becomes thereby, let us say, a factory committee whose functions are different from those during the strike. Is this so or not? If other functions are bestowed on the strike committee or committee of action has assumed a different character.

It is pointed out in the theses that there must be committees for preparing the workers for the struggle. Their functions are the collection of material, agitation and propaganda. But as soon as the strike starts, workers elect a strike committee. Of course, workers can instruct the committee for the preparation of the struggle to lead the strike, but what will be in that case the functions of this committee? To lead the struggle. Of course, it will have also to agitate, but the character of the agitation will be quite different. It will have to do more than agitate, it will have to send out pickets, make arrangements for the closing of factories, decide what categories of workers should down tools, etc. The functions of the strike committee are different from those of an ordinary committee of action. When the strike comes to an end a committee is formed to deal with the consequences of the struggle, it must help the workers who have been victimised, it must agitate for the reinstatement of the dismissed, etc. The functions of such a committee are quite different from those of committees for the preparation and leadership of the struggle. This is what Comrades Ercoli and Monmousseau have failed to understand. Comrade Monmousseau also says that committees of action must be permanent, but a permanent committee, if it does not take upon itself other functions when the strike has come to an end, is bound to disintegrate, and having any permanent work to do, Comrade Monmousseau evidently still in mind the decisions of the E. C. C. I. of the R. I. L. U. of 1919—1923 which proposed to form committees of action in factories and works. They were formed, but they forgot when and who had elected them, who formed them, etc. Experience has shown that it is impossible to say that committees of action must become permanent with the same functions.

Capture of the apparatus. Formerly, during the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U., we talked about the possibility of capturing the apparatus of reformist trade unions. But after the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. there were quite a lot of cases in which the C. P. captured individual local trade union organisations, the higher administrations of the unions appropriated their property, funds, statutes, etc. After such facts, can we now still say that it is possible to capture the trade union apparatus? We cannot. Experience has shown the contrary. But again against the question being put thus: Nowhere and under no circumstances whatever can we set ourselves the task of capturing the majority of trade union members and the trade union apparatus. I am decidedly against putting this question as it is done by Comrade Lozovsky and others. The question is: the apparatus is not merely the upper stratum, there is an apparatus also in the lower trade union organisations. The institute of trade union functionaries in factories and works which is a basic apparatus of reformist trade unions, can it be captured or not? Of course, it can. The reformist trade unions will begin to appoint their own functionaries instead of those appointed by us and elected by all the members of the union in the factories and works, — excellent, we will agitate against the appointees and for the formerly elected trade union functionaries.

Thereby we will compel the reformist trade union bureaucrats to discredit themselves in the factories and works before the trade union rank and file. Can individual local trade union organisations be captured? Certainly, for are there not local branches of individual trade unions and trades councils in Germany the majority of which are Communists. These local trade union organisations captured by the C. P. of Germany can carry on the struggle against the trade union bureaucrats. We cannot be so positive about the impossibility of capturing the trade union apparatus as the R. I. L. U. is and Comrade Lozovsky, or as Comrade Gey who also spoke here about the possibility of capturing the trade union apparatus. The question cannot be put either according to the recipe of Comrade Lozovsky or according to that of Comrade Gey. It is an illusion to think that the C. P. will be able to capture the central apparatus of any trade union in Germany. As soon as the C. P. of Germany secures a majority in any trade union, the reformists will split it. They will keep the apparatus, the money, the remises, etc., and the majority of the trade union members will go with the C. P. of Germany. But this does not mean that the C. P. of Germany will not be able to capture local trade union administrations and the institute of trade union functionaries in the enterprises.

Finally, a few concluding remarks about the work of the R. I. L. U., and then I sit down. The Comintern — the Politbureau and the Presidium — has been paying special attention lately to the trade union movement. Many good resolutions were carried, and if I had them here now, I would sign them with both hands. But this is not enough. The time is past for resolutions and formal directions, and if after the decision carried at the IV. Congress, the Chinese Communist Party is still discussing if it should work or not in Yellow mass trade unions and what would happen if Communists did so — perhaps the workers would not follow them — the blame must be placed at the door of the R. I. L. U., in the first place, and of the Comintern, only in the second place, because trade union work is and must be carried on by the R. I. L. U.

The leaders of the red trade unions in France come here three years after we discussed their inadequate work at the VII. Plenum of the E. C. C. I. (Comrade Monmousseau and other French comrades were then up in arms; they accused us of making use of material supplied by the C. P. F. opposition, etc.) and repeat now exactly what we said at that time about the inadequate work of the French red trade unions.

I want to say in conclusion that the R. I. L. U. must change its methods of work. It must be the real leader of the national red trade unions in France, Czechoslovakia, China and other countries.

It is not enough for the R. I. L. U. to have representatives of red trade unions in the central apparatus, it must also take an interest in the work of the red trade unions on the spot. It must put in order its system of instruction, it must send competent people to its sections, it must have a live connection, it must issue instructions and directions, etc. (Applause.)

Comrade RAMIREZ (Latin America):

Comrades, I want to say a few words on the situation in Latin America. The outstanding characteristic of the trade union movement in our countries is the wave of strikes of a pronounced political character. I am referring particularly to the strikes in Colombia, Brazil and in Argentine. You know that these strikes were against enterprises owned by the American imperialists. The conflicts became more acute because the governments represented by these imperialist interests immediately interferred with the strikes. They thus became political issues between the workers and the government defeating the imperialist interests.

Another feature of our movement is the concentration of the working masses in the new revolutionary unions. Another interesting feature in this connection is that the majority of these workers who are turning to the new revolutionary unions are agricultural elements. This movement gives our Parties in Latin America a good opportunity to fight against anarcho-sindicalist ideology.

The Montevideo Congress held last May had a great influence upon the big masses of workers in Latin America. This was shown by the fact that before the Congress there were several countries where there were no revolutionary unions organised, and after the Montevideo Congress in two or three countries as Peru, Ecuador and Argentine, there are now unity committees to form a new revolutionary central union. Before the Montevideo Congress there were new revolutionary central unions in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Uruguay.

Another feature of the Montevideo Congress was that it helped to clarify the workers' ideology with regard to the class struggle. It is well-known that there are two currents in the labour movement in Latin America: the Amsterdam current and the Pan-American Federation of Labour. In addition we have also what we can call government labour unions, that is, labour leaders in the service of the Latin American governments who are nothing but reformists within the labour movement. The Montevideo Congress conducted a good fight against these reformist currents in the Latin American labour movement. Amsterdam has a good basis for its struggle to capture the Latin American workers; it has a good basis in Argentine the C. O. A. where the central reformist union has 80,000 railroad men. Then in Mexico the C. R. O. M., affiliated to the Pan-American Federation of Labour with about 300,000 workers organised. It is a mistake to think that this organisation is dead, as a good many comrades may think; it is very much alive and we ought to make a good fight to destroy it.

One of the questions which were dealt with by the Montevideo Congress is a very interesting one for us, because it has a race character. There are many countries in Latin America with a big Negro population, and the owners of plantations bring cheap labour from those countries where there is a Negro population. They bring Negro workers from Jamaica and Haiti to Cuba to work in the sugar plantations; and now they are doing the same thing in Colombia where they are bringing Negro workers to replace the Indian workers. There is a conflict between these two races on account of the imperialist manoeuvres to obtain cheap labour.

Another question which was dealt with by the Montevideo Congress was the immigration question, a question which should interest you very much. There is a campaign now to bring immigrants from Europe to Latin America, especially to the countries of South America, such as, Argentine, Brazil, and Chile. The system adopted to bring these emigrants from European countries — Italy, Poland, Spain, Portugal, the Balkans, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic countries — is just like the slave system. The Montevideo Congress pointed out the necessity for all our Parties in Europe and the revolutionary workers movement to take up this question. These immigrants are being taken to South America to work on the plantations without being allowed to speak a word to the native population. They are taken straight from the port of embarkation, and then from the port of landing, for instance, Rio de Janeiro, they are sent straight to the plantations without the knowledge of the workers of Brazil, Argentine or Chile, who do not know of their coming until they get to the place of work.

Comrade Lozovsky said that the Mexican Party sabotaged the Profintern work. We can allow Comrade Lozovsky to speak in that way because he is unable to read Spanish. If he could read Spanish, he would then be able to see from the Party press what was done in Mexico to carry out the line of the Profintern. All the re-

sponsible workers engaged in the trade union work to organise the New Central Labour Union were Party members. I will answer Comrade Lozovsky's criticisms of the Party in this regard by the Draft Theses of the Comintern on the trade union question which says:

"The present epoch places before the Comintern not the policy of deserting the reformist unions or artificially creating new revolutionary trade unions, but the policy of struggle for the capture of the majority of the working class in the reformist trade unions, as well as in the wider mass organisations (committees of action, factory committees) which pursue the same tasks as the revolutionary trade union movement, but do so in their own special way." That was what the Mexican Party was doing.

Comrade SCHMIDT (United States):

Comrades, both Comrade Minor and Comrade Browder emphasised that the American Party welcomed the decision of the Profintern and the decision of the Comintern, and emphasised the fact that these decisions are already showing some results and furthermore brought new life and new vitality into the Party membership. Therefore, they correctly stated that the American delegation to the Plenum accepts the theses as submitted by Comrade Lozovsky and by Comrade Thalmann.

I will deal only with one question, and that is the auto situation. Although it is only one question, it is a very big one. The auto situation is an international question. Up to the last convention of our American Party, the question of organising these hundreds and thousands of workers in the auto industry was completely neglected. Since then, primarily due to the effort of the Profintern, the Central Committee at the present time is paying more attention to the campaign, realising its importance, and is trying to develop the campaign into organisational form.

It is true that the production in this industry, let us say in the first five months of 1929, was considerably higher than at any other time in its history. But it is also true that as far as the domestic market in the industry is concerned, it is shrinking on a large scale and in a rapid fashion.

If we follow up the situation closely, we can see the conscious organisation planned on the part of the capitalist class in that industry to reorganise that industry, slowly but surely, into a war industry. A statement made lately in the United States Senate shows that this industry could be organised almost overnight into a war industry, that it is being considered as such and certainly will be utilised in this situation.

Therefore the question of organising these workers, for instance in the Michigan districts where there are nearly 300,000 workers employed in this industry, is of major importance to the entire International. We find a general wage cut throughout the entire industry amounting from 20 to 40%. The wage cuts are not all. But we find the speed-up system, which reflects upon the lives of the workers to such an extent that the workers are disgusted and which is developing into many department strikes; workers are looking to the auto workers union that has up to the present time organised and directed them in their struggle.

Lately, we succeeded in organising shop committees and we also succeeded in organising a local in the Ford factory. This industry, which is the most highly rationalised and centralised industry in the world, in many cases being shown to the workers and the capitalists in other countries as an industry where there is no labour problems, is becoming a problem not only among the workers inside, but also among the workers who are on the outside looking for jobs — the unemployed army; thousands of workers being thrown out due to the rationalisation and speed-up system and the continuous revolutionary introduction of machinery into industry. Therefore, in our campaign against the war danger, the question of organising the work from the inside and the outside has to be connected, and certainly will be.

The programme for the industry can be summed up in the following way. In conducting a campaign to organise the unorganised workers in the industry, a programme of action is of the utmost importance, because up to the present time we had no organised programme as far as the Left wing and the progressive elements in the industry are concerned. It is true that

the most important work in this campaign is the stabilising the building up and the further organisation of shop nuclei and the shop nuclei in that industry will be the major instrument to build up this campaign. Factory gate meetings must be organised all over the country and the programme must be connected up with proper slogans and demands in proper connection with the condition inside the factory. A systematic campaign of distribution of leaflets and literature must be carried out amongst the mass of workers in the specific factories especially in the strategical places, for the purpose of organising the shop committees. There must be a general agitation and educational campaign on a national scale calling the attention of the auto workers to the importance of this industry developing into a war industry. The question of connecting the campaign in the auto industry with the campaign of building up revolutionary unions in America under the leadership of R. I. L. U. must also be stressed. A merciless fight against social reformists and bureaucratic leadership of the A. F. of M. A systematic campaign to be conducted against the imperialist war danger, and the defence of the Soviet Union.

I think, comrades, that with this new orientation of the Party, with this new line which is accepted by the Party, I am confident that the Central Committee, under the leadership of the Comintern, will conduct this campaign for the building up of a new trade union movement in America which will be the basis and which will make it possible for the American Party to become a proletarian mass Communist Party in the United States. This Party, which is a proletarian Party composed of workers in the basic and gigantic branches of capitalist production, will not follow leaders who have taken up the fight against the Comintern. Together with the Comintern and the Profintern, I am convinced that the Central Committee will be in a position to organise and mobilise the American Communist Party for mass struggles and for a mass movement of the working class.

Comrade FIMM:

Comrades, I have come forward specially in connection with Comrade Piatnitsky's address. I agree to a great extent with what Comrade Piatnitsky said in his speech in regard to the trade union movement in China. I whole-heartedly agree with what he said about the necessity of maximum development of Party work among the masses and of more energetic work on the part of the Communist Party of China in the mass trade unions. But from my point of view, a number of deductions in Comrade Piatnitsky's speech are not correct. Comrade Piatnitsky has placed before us here only some of the figures of the strike movement in China. Perhaps this is inevitable, but it is certainly inadequate. However, I must say that even the research bureau of the Kuomintang gives bigger figures than Comrade Piatnitsky has given here concerning the number of strikes and strikers in China. Comrade Piatnitsky's calculations are evidently inaccurate. I would like, for instance, to point out that in 1928, there were not 213,000 strikers, as asserted by Comrade Piatnitsky but 230,000, and not throughout the year, but only in the first 9 months of 1928, and not in the whole of China, but in Shanghai alone. These are the figures of the Kuomintang research bureau. I have already given this information, and according to my calculations, if one takes the strike movement throughout the Chinese territory in 1928, the number of strikers is about 400,000. These figures bear witness of the enormous development of the labour movement in China, especially if one considers that the labour movement suffered not so long ago a serious set-back as a result of the defeat of the revolution.

I would like to speak about the specific peculiarities of the Chinese labour movement noticeable in the circumstances which arose immediately after the defeat of the Chinese revolution. In the course of 1927 and in the first half of 1928, spontaneous strikes took place in China, and it is rather characteristic that most of these strikes took place without clearly formulated demands by the strikers. In no other country have we ever witnessed the strange fact — strange at least at first glance — that not a single demand is brought forward during strikes. What does this mean? It means a great deal. If any worker or any Communist had formulated at some meeting a concrete demand, this would have been a sufficient reason for the fierce reaction to arrest him and to have him executed the next

ay. Is it possible, under such conditions, to accuse the Communist Party of having become entirely estranged from the masses, of leaving the strike movement without leadership? I think that this is a rather hasty conclusion which does not take into consideration the white terror which is raging in China and is still reaping its bloody harvest.

Furthermore, I would like you to take into consideration the fact that the Communist Party could not help losing to a certain extent organisational contact with the working class owing to the brutal terrorist regime and the complete destruction of its Party apparatus. It has, for instance, happened in Shanghai that three consecutive nucleus secretaries were executed. In Wuhan, Hankow, Chansha and other big industrial centres, Party committees were arrested and utterly destroyed 12 times in succession. As soon as a new Party committee was formed, its members were arrested and executed or done away with in some other manner. Comrades, you will understand why I am giving these facts. I do not want to give any more illustrations of the situation in China in the middle of 1928, I am merely giving these facts to induce comrades, and Comrade Tatnitsky especially, to give up the wrong notion that the Party has lost its ideological influence on the working class.

One can describe the present situation in China as follows: we have there a continuous growth of the strike movement. This is due to the fact that in China the working class has to submit to twofold exploitation — by the native capitalists and by the imperialists.

Moreover, we can see that the industrial struggles of the Chinese proletariat are developing into political struggles. Another fact is that under the pressure of this spontaneous labour movement, the Kuomintang is compelled to manoeuvre in regard to its policy in the labour movement. For instance, the Kuomintang had to allow the workers to formulate their demands during strikes. Owing to this, the Communist Party has better prospects for its work, and more can be asked of the Chinese Communists now. We have also been witnessing lately a decided growth of the influence of our Party. Numerous strikes have taken place lately, all of them under the organising leadership of the Communist Party, and a good many of them ended in victory for the workers.

The General Council of the Chinese revolutionary trade unions established its authority among the masses when the Chinese revolution was at its height; it carried through a whole series of general strikes and its influence penetrated into the thick of the Chinese proletariat. Even now the General Council is carrying on organisational work on a gigantic scale, not only maintaining but even increasing its authority which was established in the preceding class struggles.

My concrete proposals are: firstly, it is essential to maintain all the revolutionary trade union centres and to aim at the consolidation of the trade unions themselves; secondly, it is essential to strengthen mass work as much as possible especially to make full use of the present opportunities for work in the yellow trade unions; thirdly, wherever yellow unions have attracted big sections of workers, we must endeavour to draw advanced workers into them, in order that they should organise there a left wing and establish an organisational connection with the Party; fourthly, the Party must make use now of all the conflicts between the working class and the capitalists, between the imperialists and the toiling masses of China, in order to develop these conflicts into something bigger and to strengthen its influence on the masses and its leading role.

Comrade PURMAN (Poland):

During the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. a great impetus was given in Poland to the revolutionary movement in which, like the Ruhr struggles, the cotton operatives' and agricultural labourers' strike in Czechoslovakia, the big strike in Bombay, the wide strike movement in France and other countries, is a confirmation of the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. and the VI. Congress of the Comintern, that in the third period of the post-war crisis of capitalism, the period of great accentuation of class differences on the basis of declining stabilisation, the working class is resisting more and more energetically the attacks of the capitalists and is taking up a counter-offensive against the brutal attempts at exploitation and against capitalist rationalisation. A very vivid example of this growing Left orientation of the mass of the workers, was the heroic cotton

operatives struggle in Poland, especially in Lodz, which developed into an imposing general strike which produced splendid examples of revolutionary strategy, but proved at the same time, by a series of grave mistakes, that the Party will have to struggle hard in order to overcome the Right danger which has taken in this movement the form of trade union legalism. I should like to complete Comrade Thälman's deductions by referring to matters to which not sufficient attention was paid here in connection with this struggle. Stress should be laid on the fact that the struggle against the collective agreement, which lasted about three weeks, was preceded by a fierce and determined struggle of the Lodz cotton operatives for which they were roused and subsequently led by our small Lodz organisation in order to fight the introduction of fines in the factories which aimed at delivering factory workers to the tender mercies of the manufacturers and their managers and foremen.

Already in this struggle, which ended in partial victory for the workers, — the system of fines was withdrawn although it was not possible to convert the strike into a struggle against the collective agreement — all the positive and negative sides of the Struggle could be seen. Our comrades linked up very cleverly the struggle against regulations with the struggle against Fascist dictatorship; they showed that they know how to get in contact with the masses and get control of the street; they prepared the strike itself very thoroughly and used it for the exposure of the fascist slogan of arbitration and of the treacherous role of the social-fascists. In this manner, they prepared the ground for the big struggle which began under our leadership in the first days of September. However, already at this stage of the struggle our comrades made a number of mistakes which had a decisive influence on its issue. Comrade Thälmann said here without justification that the strike leaders were waiting for the sanction of the social-fascist trade union central board to declare the strike. This was not so, the strike was declared the first time in spite of the treacherous role of the trade union leaders, and the second time with their treacherous consent. But our comrades were guilty of a serious error not only because they did not frustrate the manoeuvre of the social-fascists, but also because, after the mistake had been made, they did not carry on a ruthless struggle against those who were responsible for it, and encouraged thereby a repetition of this mistake in the second stage of the struggle. However, it would be wrong to assert that the struggle of the Lodz cotton operatives was a defeat of the Lodz proletariat. It is wrong to the same extent as similar defeatist views in regard to the struggle in the Ruhr or the May incidents in Berlin are wrong. In this struggle, in spite of our errors, the Lodz proletariat took up for the first time after a several years lull the weapon of general strike. For the first time in the course of the last years, the Party got in contact in Lodz with big sections of struggling workers; in this struggle it exposed fascism, its lying deceptive slogans such as arbitration, as well as its aiders and abettors — the social-fascists. We think that in spite of serious errors, the struggle of the Lodz cotton operatives was a big achievement of the working class of Poland and of our Party, and the best proof of this is the fact that after this struggle our Lodz organisation increased its membership by over 100%.

That the Polish working class has swung to the left was shown after the Lodz strike in a series of long and stubborn strikes. All these strikes are assuming more and more the character of struggle of class against class, in which the proletariat finds itself face to face with the united forces of the State apparatus of the fascist dictatorship — the employers and the social-fascist and fascist trade union apparatuses. Therefore, the workers' struggle in these strikes is assuming more and more a political character, and one can say, in this connection, that every industrial struggle in Poland is now also directed against the fascist dictatorship. That the masses are taking up the counter-offensive, is shown in a series of political strikes which have taken place lately: the strike at Kindler's in Lodz as a protest against the breaking up of the workers' demonstration, at Obremsky's in Warsaw against the appointment of a well-known member of the shock troops of Yavorovsky, in several Warsaw factories against the introduction of fines, the strike against the dismissal of delegates in the Odoliani brick works, etc. But the most vivid expression of the political character of the present struggles of the working

class was the extensive participation of the proletarian masses in the May Day demonstrations and their fighting spirit. The mass of the workers and peasants, by coming out as they did on May Day, did not only demonstrate their sympathy with the slogans of the Communist Party; their stubborn struggle for the right to the street, their defence of flags and banners, their struggle against police cordons and barriers, bear witness of the growing will of the masses to fight fascist dictatorship, to carry their struggle onto the higher plane of revolutionary preparedness. This makes it incumbent on the Party to link up the industrial struggles of the workers with the political struggle of the working class. This is also the precursor of big strikes and demonstrations of unemployed whose number is steadily growing in connection with the economic crisis and rationalisation.

The cotton operatives are already in the forefront of the struggle, and they will continue to lead as the struggle goes on. Their actions are directed not only against the capitalists, but against the whole system of fascist dictatorship. The recent struggles in Pabyanitzky, when 4,000 workers in the Krushe-Under factory rose in defence of their dismissed delegate against the united attacks of the employers, the police and the social-fascists, in spite of the threat of dismissal and lockout, are eloquent testimony of the revolutionary character of the present and the coming struggles. The immediate intervention of the fascist government which came to the assistance of the Pabyanitzky capitalists by sending the Minister of the Interior, Skladkovsky, to settle the conflict, shows to what extent the present struggles carried on under the leadership of our Party are directed against the Fascist dictatorship.

Under these conditions, help for the struggling cotton operatives who are in the front line trenches, must be the chief concern of all the forces of the proletariat, the revolutionary peasant masses and the oppressed nationalities, in order to prevent, under the leadership of the Party, the fascist governments' venal measures against them, and in order to help the Polish working class in its struggle.

The proletarian struggle has become sharper not only in the textile industry, but also among the Warsaw metal workers, where a struggle for higher wages is expected, and among the miners in the Dombrovo Basin and Upper Silesia. There is also an increasingly sharp struggle among the agricultural labourers, as for instance, the struggle which is going on now, while our Plenum is sitting, on the Bzostovse estate in West Ukraine where the agricultural labourers on strike, supported by the revolutionary poor peasants, carried out a regular siege of the big police detachments sent to the assistance of the blacklegs. The Party must watch carefully the growth of the revolutionary spirit of the masses; it must be able to determine correctly the moment for the beginning of the struggle, disregarding dates fixed by collective agreements, depending only on a proper preparation of the strike and the will to light of the strikers. In all these struggles, which are spontaneous and fierce, the Party must not lag behind the masses. It must be, on the contrary, the leading organising force, especially as we must expect that social fascism will be making increased efforts to divert the fighting mood of the masses into other channels, in order to sabotage the struggle of these masses. The role of the P. P. S. with its pseudo-democratic and oppositional phraseology which is a cloak for its social-fascist character, is at present the main danger for the working class, and the Party must draw the attention of the masses to this danger.

That the trade union bureaucracy is merging more and more with the apparatus of the fascist dictatorship, and that the trade unions are becoming fascisised, could be seen not only during the Lodz strike, where owing to our mistakes the social-fascists succeeded in sabotaging this heroic struggle, but also in the miners' struggle in Upper Silesia, where the strike was throttled almost at its inception with the help of arbitration which was forced on the masses, and in the garment makers' strike in Warsaw where the social-fascist bureaucracy used terrorist means in order to help the police to break off the strike. This role of social-fascism was given political expression at the recent congress of the social-fascist trade unions which consisted of nominated representatives and was a clear indication of the further fascisation of these unions. The slogans of economic democracy, influencing government, government arbitration carried through with the help of the social-fascists, the rationalisation of trade unions to sabotage strikes, — are a

vivid example of the treacherous role of social-fascism. Another vivid example of this are the decisions of this congress which demand of the government the establishment of fascist organs, of the character of a State economic council and industrial councils in which labour organisations participate, the establishment of labour chambers, etc. This role of aiders and abettors of fascism, the social-fascists exhibited also at the congress, preventing by revolver shots the delegates of the trade union opposition getting admission to the building. There were 150 such delegates elected by the masses throughout the country, and they had come to the Congress headed by the Sejm deputies. The campaign conducted by our Party in connection with the Congress of the trade unions of the congress commission was, just like the May Day campaign, a very important fact in our movement.

The delegates of the trade union opposition, who throughout the country are opposing the treacherous trade union bureaucracy, were instructed by the workers, to put forward demands, and when Zhoulavsky's gang prevented them with the help of revolvers and the police from attending the Congress they elected at their own conference — which the police eventually dispersed — a leading organ of the trade union opposition. As the masses are swinging to the Left, the social-fascists are doing their utmost to deceive them by pseudo-revolutionary demagoguery. As the social-fascists use this demagoguery for manoeuvres likely to deceive the masses, they are becoming a danger to our movement. That this is so, was shown by the decision of the congress of the social-fascists re-introduction of the 7-hour day. They, who have in fact sold the eight-hour day to the capitalists and are helping them to introduce the 10—12 and even the 16-hour day, are issuing the slogan of the 7-hour day for the purpose of preventing the masses from coming under the influence of the Communists, who are realising the gains of the working class of the U. S. S. R. who is already introducing the 7-hour day. Just as demagogical is the proposal of the Bund-social-fascists who demanded the legalisation of the Communist Party, taking into consideration its growing popularity, especially among the oppressed nationalities. While the social-fascists made decisions at their congress under cover of demagogical oppositional phraseology of fascist dictatorship called a congress of its open aiders and abettors, namely the Congress of the Yavorovsky trade union. Both the congresses have once more proved that there is a fundamental difference between fascism and social-fascism as far as their services to the fascist dictatorship are concerned. However, while the Congress of the Yavorovsky people proclaimed the slogan of co-operation with the government, the Congress of the P. P. S. disguised this co-operation by oppositional phraseology. Therefore, it is incumbent on the Party if it is to have the independent leadership of the coming struggle of the proletariat — to shatter the illusion that the P. P. S. is struggling against the fascist dictatorship; to extirpate trade union legalism as the main danger at the present juncture, and to struggle against confusion, vacillation and deviation from the correct line of the Party. That this danger exists, is shown by a whole series of opportunist Right mistakes made throughout the country.

Especially in the trade union work, where the strength of the Party against all opportunist errors must be certainly strengthened and the attention of the Party drawn to these errors, has the erroneous attitude to the P. P. S., as revealed in the speeches and articles of some comrades found expressed in these speeches and articles, far from helping the Party to remedy these Right mistakes, are condoning them. Therefore, overcoming trade union legalism is closely connected with overcoming these wrong views of the role and character of social-fascism, and on the overcoming of all these erroneous views depends the further role of the Party in regard to the main task at the present juncture, namely, independent leadership of proletarian struggles. This is all the more important as in the period of war preparations by the fascist dictatorship against the U. S. S. R., the most dangerous weapon of social-fascism. It is incumbent on the trade union opposition to expose to the masses the machinations of social-fascism and to make them realise that social-fascism is the most dangerous weapon in the hands of the fascist dictatorship in regard to war preparations against the U. S. S. R.

Social-fascism is particularly dangerous among the oppressed and subjugated nationalities where it is particularly active.

With the help of oppositional and revolutionary phraseology. In West Ukraine, social-fascists are helping the fascist dictatorship which is rallying around itself the Ukrainian bourgeoisie for the purpose of war against Soviet Ukraine; together with the Ukrainian social-fascists, they form national trade union branches; they organise Polish-Ukrainian agricultural labourers' unions and unions of foresters and poor peasants; they are establishing a national central commission in Lvov as the representative of the Warsaw Central Commission; they use the deceptive slogan of national autonomy, they are splitting the revolutionary trade unions in West Ukraine.

In the forthcoming struggles which our Party will lead with the help of the trade union opposition, the unorganised workers, i. e., 80% of the working class, will play an important role. Therefore, the Party will not be able to carry out the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. and the VI. Congress of the Comintern unless it shows its ability in establishing in the interest of its leadership — united front organs — below at the factories and works, and in coordinating under the leadership of these organs the mass of organised and unorganised workers. Factory committees and delegations must play the chief role in the establishment of the united front from below. Capture and extension, activation of factory committees and delegations, establishment of a body of factory representatives, such is the main task at the present juncture. In this respect, the Party has been rather successful lately. In regard to independent leadership of the struggle, special importance attaches to committees of action formed by the masses themselves for the organisation of demonstrations, etc. Therefore, we must do all we can to encourage the formation of such committees during the preparation of the struggle. Of course, in all this activity our Party organisation plays the most important role. The Lodz experience has shown that without strong Party nuclei in the factories, without properly constructed Communist fractions in the trade unions, the Party cannot lead the struggle and counteract the complicated and dangerous manoeuvres of social-fascism.

Finally, I should like to say something about the establishment of new trade unions, a question which has caused much dissension in our Party and has created a great deal of confusion. The last Plenum of the Central Committee recorded in its decisions that in this sphere we have made a series of serious mistakes: instructions and decisions of the January Plenum of the Central Committee and of the trade union conference which pointed to the establishment of new revolutionary trade unions. Quite correct was the decision to preserve the revolutionary trade unions expelled by the social-fascists from the Central Committee and to establish parallel trade unions. Quite correct was also the instruction to form local unions where social-fascist leaders would not allow trade unions to be formed. Correct also was the decision that, in connection with the mass campaigns, where the treacherous role of the trade union bureaucracy has been exposed, where the social-fascist trade union has lost its prestige among the masses and where the masses have left the ranks of the social-fascist unions, where the trade union Left has not only won influence on the masses, but has secured strong positions among them in the form of factory committees, strike committees, etc., — we must establish revolutionary trade unions.

But quite wrong was the general course to establish revolutionary trade unions; the assertion that the establishment of such unions at the present juncture is a historical necessity; that the establishment of a revolutionary trade union is the only means of defending the working class against capitalism, fascism and wars, the only means of saving the trade union movement for the struggle of the working class and socialism, as laid down in the decisions of the January Plenum and the trade union conference. The carrying out of these instructions would have led to the establishment of a whole series of revolutionary trade unions which would have meant that we are dissociating ourselves from the social-fascist trade unions and from work in them. These decisions show that the role of trade unions and organs of struggle is confounded and that the role of these organs is under-estimated.

Quite wrong was also the assertion of the trade union conference that in connection with the endeavour of the fascist government to drive the revolutionary trade unions under-

ground, we are succeeding in establishing illegal mass trade unions. These decisions, at a time when the trade union opposition is struggling for the mass and legal trade unions, instead of strengthening our struggle for the legal forms of the revolutionary trade union movement meant encouragement to moods in our own ranks which practically meant evasion of these difficult tasks. In our trade union work, we correctly defended the revolutionary chemical workers' union which was expelled by the central commission. We are right in forming the garment workers' union in Warsaw when the chief sections of this union were expelled by the social-fascists. We were also right in forming the tramwaymen's union in Warsaw when we succeeded in capturing the majority of the workers after the split in the P. P. S. trade union. However, we were wrong in deciding to establish a number of new trade unions, especially the metal workers' union in Warsaw and the railwaymen's union when the preparation for the establishment of a mass trade union was certainly inadequate. This course — establishment of new trade unions which, under the cloak of ultra-Left phraseology, is helping opportunist evasion of struggle against the most dangerous opponent — the P. P. S., was strongly and finally condemned by the last Plenum. When the Party will have really overcome all these errors, it will be able to sharpen the struggle against social-fascism and fascism, which is the fundamental premise for a final victory of the working class in the big proletarian struggles which are imminent in Poland.

Comrade WOLF (Hungary):

Comrades, Comrade Lozovsky has criticised in his report the activity of our Party, the C. P. of Hungary, in the question of the trade unions. He said that we formed a united front with the committee of the fascists expelled from the trade unions. If this were true, it would have been a great mistake on our part, but this is not true. And I protest against this misinformation of the International, because such information may lead to bad decisions and a wrong policy.

It is characteristic that Comrade Bela Kun, although I have informed him, has kept silent on the fact that at the time of the Sick Benefit Fund Elections we had an opposition in our Secretariat which remained in the minority and is even now anxious to saddle us with the mistakes of the Rights. He, who plays in our Party the role of the Conciliators towards the Rights, is now desperately seeking with a magnifying glass for "deviations", and thus in his analysis he arrives at the conclusion that we even want to bring pressure to bear on the fascist leaders.

Comrade VITKOVSKI (Communist Fraction of the R. I. L. U.):

I agree with the reports of Comrades Thälmann and Lozovsky, and would like to deal with just a few questions.

The first is — relations between strike committee and factory council. This is a question which has already been dealt with here. In the theses, it is said that the strike committee must be a provisional organisation which shall be dissolved at the end of the strike. The resolution of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. contains a formula which says something different, namely: that although in countries where factory councils exist, as for instance Germany, one cannot confound the role of factory councils with that of strike committees, one must, on the other hand, emphasise that strike committees are not by any means a provisional transition form towards a trade union organisation. But if we seriously consider the struggle for the establishment of factory councils in countries, as for instance, France, we must understand that only a strike atmosphere creates the necessary premise for the organisation of factory councils, and that it is precisely strike committees — as said in the decisions of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. — which can be the primary form of factory councils.

In Lodz (Poland) a struggle has been going on for several months for the establishment of factory councils which must play at the same time the role of strike committees when necessity arises. Therefore, this question should not be raised schematically, as it is done here. One must realise that there is a difference between countries where factory councils exist as a form of organisation gained by the workers as a result of revolutionary struggle (for instance, Germany) and countries

where factory councils do not exist. Comrades, this is the first question.

The second question with which I would like to deal here, is that of so-called pledge ("reverses"). I think that what Comrade Thälmann said here on this subject, represents a correct point of view. He said that in the concrete situation which exists in Germany, to sign pledges in which workers, our comrades must renounce contact with the Communist Parties, is an impossible proposition. Comrade Piatnitsky said that this question should not be decided for all countries. True, this question should not be decided regardless of concrete conditions. As far as we are concerned, there should be no set rule that we are never to sign pledges anywhere. But it seems to me that at present the question of pledges is a question of pledges in Germany or in countries where the movement is in the same stage as in Germany, and where the concrete conditions are the same as in Germany, where we have overcome the opposition of the Right and the conciliators to the new trade union tactic, where the Party has carried through successfully the Ruhr campaign and subsequently, the factory council election campaign, and where the reply of the reformists to our new tactic was the demand to sign pledges. In this connection, our directions, our line must be definite and clear, and it seems to me therefore, that what Comrade Piatnitsky is proposing is not applicable in this case, and I will tell you why. Whom are the reformists asking to sign pledges? They are asking trade union functionaries. All of them are Communists or people near to us, members of the trade union opposition, people whom the workers know as Communists. That which can be correct in regard to China, in regard to illegal conditions, is quite inapplicable in Germany. And if we were to give our comrades in Germany a definite instruction, for example, to sign pledges, we would soon find that they were not carrying them out. Even if the pledge were signed, repressions would continue, while it would bring disorganisation and confusion into the ranks of the workers who would not understand such an instruction.

I would like to say a few words on the question of new trade unions. I think that the general line laid down in the theses on this question is correct. The conditions under which new trade unions can be formed are clearly stated. The tactic of caution is recommended. But I would like to apply this line to the concrete conditions in Poland. Comrades, although I think that we in the Polish C. P. have in some cases gone too far, that on the basis of inaccurate formulations, formulations of the trade union conference which really went too far, mistakes were made, such as inclination to give up working in the reformist unions, this should not be an excuse for going to the other extreme. One should say definitely that in view of the fact that some trade unions are fascisised, we have to take upon ourselves the initiative in establishing new revolutionary trade unions. What are, for instance, the concrete conditions in the miners' union of the Dombrowa Basin? Comrades, we have considerable influence there. There are many signs of this. During elections, our poll is considerable in this district. But parallel with this, a small trade union exists in the Dombrowa Basin which has not thousands, but only hundreds of members, and whose only role is that of a bureaucratic apparatus which has been hampering for several years every industrial struggle. The establishment of revolutionary trade unions is a necessity in the Dombrowa Basin. Another question is the selection of the right moment for the establishment of such unions. It is self-evident that this must be done when there is a general revival of the labour movement, when an industrial struggle is on the horizon. This is one of the tasks confronting our Party, and another task is the establishment of a transport workers' union.

When our exposure of the reformists results in workers leaving a union en masse, as this was the case during the last cotton operatives' strike, the necessity of establishing a new trade union, is bound to confront us. This does not mean desertion on the part of our trade union cadres, nor desertion on the part of our Party members, it means desertion of this union by the mass of the workers. Hence, our bounden duty is to establish a new revolutionary trade union, of course in connection with an industrial struggle, when a fighting spirit prevails.

Comrades, I think that when we speak in regard to Poland about going too far, about deviations of an ultra-Left

character, we must not for a minute forget that the danger in our Polish trade union movement is not this. Right deviations — trade union legalism which made its appearance in our trade union cadre during the Lodz strike. This is one side of the question, and the other side is — wrong attitude during the split in the P. P. S. trade unions — wrong attitude to the so-called Julavsky trade unions, the official P. P. S. trade unions, wrongly formulated slogans which could be interpreted by the masses as support on our part for the P. P. S. people against avowed social-fascists.

Comrade BEWER (Org Department E. C. C. I.):

I believe that the statements made by Comrade Vitkovski on the question of new trade unions are contradictory to the Draft Theses. It is true, Comrade Vitkovski began by declaring that he agreed to the Theses, but he went on to say that in the Dombrow Basin it was necessary to create new trade unions to lead the economic fights. This is directly contradictory to the Theses, because we say that in order to lead the fights it is necessary to create Strike Committees, and not any new trade unions. Such an argument is contradictory to the Theses.

Secondly, I should like to say a word or two on what has been said here by Comrade Fimm on the activities of the Red Trade Unions in China. First of all, I must draw attention to the fact that the four practical proposals moved by Comrade Fimm do not contain any mention of the Red Trade Unions, but only proposed to increase the mass activity of the Party; he spoke about working in the Kuomintang trade unions, but he did not utter a syllable as to what we are to do in the Red trade unions. And yet there are the following facts which testify to the progress of the Labour movement about which Comrade Piatnitsky has spoken. Comrade Fimm said that he had in his possession even more convincing data indicating a big rise in the mass movement of China. This implies even a greater opportunity for the Party to be active among the masses, an opportunity to organise mass actions, etc. At the same time it is stated in the official document of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party that the majority of the Red trade unions exist now only on paper and carry on no activity; that they consist exclusively of Party members and they do not yet embrace all the Party members. To this should be added that since the time of the VI. Congress, the Chinese Communist Party has lost a considerable number of proletarian members. Evidently, this state of affairs does not in any way testify to the strengthening of the Party's ties with the masses, and the C. P. C. speaks itself about a loosening of the Party's ties with the working class. Such a state of affairs is extremely serious, and obviously, both the Communist International and the Profintern should lend their most serious aid to the Party in remedying this grave state of affairs.

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to a very serious problem which has not yet been touched upon by the comrade who spoke here. It is the problem of the organisation of the proletarian self-defence to combat the attempts of the employers and the police to defeat strikes and to wreck the militant organisations of the proletariat. The Polish Party has big experience in this respect and it would be highly important for the Polish Party should share its experience in this matter with the whole of the Communist International. It is a question which very acutely confronts a whole number of Communist Parties. For instance, in the last number of "Humanite" which we received, we find that great clashes are taking place between the workers and the police forces at the gates in order to prevent any gatherings, meetings, mass conferences, etc. These police are chased away by the workers. Fresh forces of police arrive but the workers in their turn obtain reinforcements from the factory. The last battle of this kind took place in front of the Citroen Works. The question of the organisation of the proletarian self-defence must by all means be included in the Theses.

Comrade LERNER (Communist Fraction of the R. I. L. U.):

The first question I want to touch upon is the question of the forms and methods of preparation for the struggle. In the great majority of instances the preparations for strikes are extremely unsatisfactory. It seems to me that this fact has not found sufficient expression in the resolution. It seems to me

that it would be very important to take up in detail the question of organisation of committees for the preparation of struggles or anti-lockout committees, as well as the need for mobilisation of the Communist fractions and the trade union opposition prior to and during these struggles. There is another very important element and that is the timely convocation and good and proper organisation of conferences of working men and women. Comrade Thälmann has justly dealt widely with this question. As a favourable example he referred to the preparation for the struggle in the Ruhr. On the basis of voluminous material at our disposal, however, it must be stated that the preparations for struggle in the Ruhr was more of a bureaucratic character carried out from the top. There was no extensive permeation of the working masses, there was no popularisation of our demands and mobilisation of the broad sections of the workers around these demands, such as there would have been.

Matters were in this respect even less favourable in Hamburg and entirely bad in Thuringia. That is as far as Germany concerned. The same may be said with some variation with regard to France, the United States and other countries. Poland is an exception, as the strike in Lodz was being prepared for at the same time.

The second question I want to take up is that of Comrade Ley's proposal to retain the strike committees as factory councils. In my opinion this motion is unacceptable. The strike committees cannot be regarded as the embryos of factory councils even in countries with dual trade union organisations, where the organisation of factory councils is, in general, difficult. It seems to me that the Plenum must categorically decide against this proposition. Experience shows that strike committees elected in moments of particularly sharp and strenuous struggle in most cases stagnate after the struggle is over and the tides recede, and after the strike committees, provided they are correctly manipulated, report on their work, sum up the struggle, propose the nature of the policy and tactics of the reformists, etc. Can organs brought to life under the pressure of special rents and conditions, be converted into factory councils? Apart from their great revolutionary political tasks it is the business of the factory councils daily to defend the economic interests of the workers. Strike committees, however, are organised in the heat of the struggle and when the class forces are extremely tense, and they can by no means do this work. An important question which, in my opinion, was not given its due, is the question of the relationship between strike committees and the red unions and revolutionary opposition.

The same vivid examples in the Ruhr and especially in Hamburg on the one hand, and a number of strikes in France, Great Britain and America on the other, have shown that there is a persistent tendency to bring the strike committees under tutelage, a tendency to push them aside, a tendency to fear the initiative of the masses.

I believe, comrades, that this should be emphatically stressed in the resolution as an unfavourable and undesirable fact. It must be borne in mind that strike committees are a source of vast new and fresh forces, a point of crystallisation of new ideas, courageous, determined and capable. We have seen that particularly in the Ruhr. Thanks to the organisation of strike committees new forces came to the fore in many localities in the Ruhr which prior to that had not been reached by the revolutionary opposition. There must be more confidence in the mass instinct and ability of the working masses.

The question of organising the unorganised was one of the most contested questions in the trade union commission which particular attention was called and which greatly attracted the attention of the comrades working in the commission. Comrade Lozovsky did a good thing by withdrawing his absurd proposal which he always stubbornly defended, namely, the organisation of mutual aid societies and benefit organisations, etc. He gave up that idea, but on the other hand insufficient emphasis has been laid on the need of intensive organisation of the workers who have not yet found their way into the trade unions and into such organisations sympathising with the Party as the I. R. A., Red Front Fighters, and especially the W. I. R. The latter organisation, by its aims and objects and the nature of its work, is more than any other in a position to stimulate trade union work amongst the

working men and women. I think that this, too, must find expression in the resolution.

A few words concerning the pledges. It seems to me that Comrade Thälmann does not clearly understand when and under what conditions the pledges may or may not be signed. I did not say that pledges must **never** and **under no conditions** be signed. What I said is that the situation must be carefully weighed as there are no entirely harmless undertakings given to the enemy. It must be clear to every member of the Plenum in what cases and under what conditions and circumstances pledges may be signed.

Comrades, I want another few minutes of your attention to deal with the question of creation of a strike fund. If I correctly understood Thälmann, it seems to me that he has gone to the other extreme. It is quite true that those who claim that no strike can be started without the strike fund must be combated and exposed. It is the Right wingers and conciliators who insist on that proposition. But if Comrade Thälmann, on the other hand, wants to do entirely without a strike fund, that is wrong.

One more question concerning the trade union opposition. This question which was also extensively debated in the Commission has found no expression in the draft resolution submitted to the Plenum.

But it seems to me that many distortions, defects, mistakes and deficiencies in the revolutionary trade union movement can largely be explained by the fact that until now trade union opposition has been a sickly and amorphous creation without an organised backbone and without a foundation. That state of affairs must be categorically changed. The trade union opposition must be organised on a wide basis precisely in view of the great struggles which are now pending. Of this we shall still speak in the Commission.

Finally, I am going to take up the last question, the question of the working woman. I can maintain without exaggeration that as far as I know the history of all Congresses and Plenums of the Comintern, the question of the working woman has for the first time been brought up with such practical clarity and raised to such a height as a point of principle. That found particular expression in Comrade Thälmann's speech, in which the complexity as well as the sharpness and urgency of the problem, especially in the present period of time, in view of the gigantic class struggles and the imminence of an imperialist war, has been given profound attention.

Comrades, tens and hundreds of strikes and lock-outs could be enumerated in which the working women not only marched hand in hand with the men, not only displayed astonishing valiancy, militancy and ability, but in many important battles they were the first ones to declare war. Such was the case in Segeda (Hungary), in the Rego factory (England), in many textile strikes in America, Poland, Germany, etc. Very often the working women entered and successfully led their strikes by themselves, in spite of the reformist leaders and the resistance in their own ranks.

Voluminous material has been accumulated in the last 5-6 years showing the unusual dimensions which the struggle of the working woman has assumed in the outstanding positions in Europe, America, and the East — Germany, France, Great Britain, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, United States, Italy, Japan, India — in the concession works and on the rice, tea and banana plantations, etc. etc. The working woman and the worker's wife demonstrate their unquestionable readiness to struggle and fight to the end in spite of the police and spies, in spite of the regular troops and gangs, in the streets of the industrial centres, on the tram and railway lines. Not to see that, not to reckon with it and to make good use of it for the triumph of the revolutionary struggle, means to be blind. It should be mentioned that the bourgeois as well as the reformist organisations are working hard to capture the "soul" of the working woman. In many countries this work is by far not without success. For example in Great Britain, Germany, America and Austria. Hundreds of thousands of working women belong to reformist, religious and chauvinist organisations and are confused with Mondist-pacifist theories of class harmony.

Comrades, there is an old and effete "truth" still held on to in our ranks concerning what may be termed as the innate backwardness and class unconsciousness of the working women, which must be extirpated. Among the vast numbers of unorganised workers who have sufficiently proven their militancy, — in the Ruhr, Hamburg, Lodz, Bombay, Hallouin, etc. the working women, by their numbers and conduct, occupied foremost positions.

As to the problem of drawing in the mass of working women and raising their activity, this must be solved, in my opinion, in the same way as the problem of the unorganised in general. In this respect it is highly important that the Tenth Plenum should authoritatively emphasise in its resolution that it is necessary categorically to overcome the existing and striking discrepancy and disproportion between the mass participation of women in strikes and their trade union membership, and especially their participation in the political and organisational leadership of the strikes. Let us see how many women there were in the strike committee in Lodz or in the Hallouin strike or the München-Gladbach strike, etc. in which the majority of strikers were women. This spirit of patronage and distrust of the initiative and class sentiment of the working masses, and particularly the women, must be decisively abandoned as having absolutely no foundation. Of course, the most active, most stalwart and sensible women must be selected, but they should be selected and given a chance to work and fight. It is about time to pass from words to deeds. Naturally, it is very important to create extensive cadres for work amongst working women, but for this purpose it is necessary boldly to put forward the most energetic and revolutionary working women to all trade union organs, from top to bottom. An example must be taken from the U. S. S. R. where tens of thousands of working women are working actively and in responsible positions in the leading bodies of the trade unions. This is the more important in view of the imminence of war and gigantic class struggles in which the working woman will play a prominent part in all industries without exception.

Comrades, the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. adopted a resolution on work among women of a political and organisational character and worked out a special programme of social and economic demands. Unfortunately, not a single section of the Comintern or of the R. I. L. U. has as yet lived up to that resolution in spite of the fact that the whole resolution demands a radical change in this sphere. I still want to observe that in the resolution of the Plenum, the very same Plenum at which so much has been said of the need of drawing the working women into political life, the question of work among the working women has not been clearly and emphatically formulated. I suggest that several amendments be made in this respect.

It seems to me that only the bold and determined enforcement of the idea of drawing the working women into the political and organised revolutionary trade union movement outlined at this Plenum will help us in bringing the millions of working women into the powerful general class lines of the struggle. This, in turn, will help us more quickly and easily to conquer and to establish the international dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade PIATNITSKY:

Evidently, Comrade Fimm does not understand the tasks confronting this Plenum and why I have spoken already several times about the work of the C. P. of China in the Kuomintang mass trade unions. What did he say here? There were strikes in China in 1927, but the strikers did not bring forward any demands, because they were afraid of the brutal terror which reigned in Chiang Kai-shek's patrimonial state. In 1928, in Shanghai alone one fourth of the proletariat was on strike. — I have already given here detailed statistical data about the strikes, and will not repeat them. The difference between 1927 and 1928 is striking. In 1928, the strikers did not only bring forward economic demands, they associated themselves openly with the arrested and brought forward a whole series of political demands. This proves that the masses are beginning to feel their strength and are no longer afraid of bringing forward even political demands.

But here is a comrade in charge of the Chinese question in the E. C. C. I., who does not know what is going on.

Instead of issuing a direction clearly, definitely and rapidly, in order not to let pass the revolutionary moment which is coming or has already come in China, he argues if I have put the question correctly or not, if I have correctly expressed myself on this question or not. This is the unfortunate part of the whole business. What was my intention in raising this question? Did I really intend to discredit our Chinese Party? Certainly not, such a thought never entered my mind. The best elements of the Chinese Party have been exterminated, other elements have taken their place, they are still inexperienced, and it is incumbent on the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. to help them, to show them in time what must be done. Communist fractions must organise the Communists in the yellow trade unions, they must control the work of these trade unions, get leadership into their hands, compete within these unions with the Kuomintang and must endeavour to drive them out.

Comrade Vitkovski made it appear as if I, Piatnitsky, in favour of the German Communists signing anything that reformists choose to place before them. I certainly did not say this. What was his reason for saying so? What was his reason for saying that my point of view is the same as that of the Right and the conciliators? Comrade Vitkovski, I would not be afraid of associating myself with the Right and the conciliators if, in regard to this or that question, they made decisions in the interests of the Labour movement. You will frighten me with such tactics, Comrade Vitkovski. If Comrade Thälmann had said that no pledges whatever are to be signed now in Germany under any circumstances (he did not say this), I should not agree with him. Comrade Lerner is altogether against Communists signing any obligations. This is a point of view which I have not come across among Communists. Comrade Lerner, I advise you to read a chapter in "Infantile Sickness of Leftism". (Lerner: I have already done so.) One must work in reactionary trade unions. — I am convinced that you have not read this chapter, otherwise you could not speak such nonsense, namely, that under no circumstances whatever can Communists sign pledges, i. e. documents which come from employers' organisations. For I cannot dissociate now reformist trade unions from employers' organisations. They (the reformists) are even worse than the employers, because the workers know every employer as an exploiter, whereas not all the workers have already realised what the leaders of reformist trade unions are. I am in favour of Communists signing pledges under certain circumstances.

Comrade Vitkovski cannot understand how we can carry out the new tactic in factory councils if we are in favour of people being signed in certain cases, — he is mixing up two questions. At elections to factory councils, just as at parliamentary and municipal elections, Communists put up their lists of candidates openly although the Communist Parties are fully aware that these candidates can be dismissed. I voted for the new lists at elections to factory councils in Germany. I knew then that Communists whose names will appear in the parallel Communist list, would be expelled from the reformist unions. These expulsions have already begun. Moreover, they are not only expelled from the unions but dismissed from the factories and works on the charge that revolutionary factory councils are interfering in matters which do not concern them. It is a different matter when Communists sign reformist pledges in order to get an opportunity of working in and capturing a trade union section, or of capturing the majority of the membership of a local branch of some trade union. In such cases must Communists sign pledges or not? I think that they must and that any Communist who does not do so, is committing a crime against the working class. This does not mean that pledges must be signed at all times and in all situations. Nothing of the kind.

(Lerner: Neither did I say this.)

Yes, you said that pledges cannot be signed under any circumstances whatever. Look at your stenogram. In Germany the question of pledges does not play any role at present, it will play a role as far as Dutch and British Communists are concerned. In a word, I am in favour of Communists being known as such to the reformists, concealing their Party membership and signing any paper for the purpose of capturing trade union rank and file. (Applause.)

Comrade MUSSO (Indonesia):

Comrades, experience has shown that the reformist trade unions do not lead strikes revolutionary, that they actually break them. Therefore, Communist tactics do not consist in forcing the trade union bureaucrats to fight, but leading the working masses in their struggle independently against the will and wish of these bureaucrats and kicking them out of the movement. This tactic has been emphasised by the IV. R. I. L. U. Congress in spite of the opposition of the German Right wingers who are preaching the big slogan: "Force the bureaucrats to fight!" (*wingt die Bonzen.*)

Communists with good common sense do not believe any more that the reformists still possess spirit to lead a revolutionary struggle, and in connection with this the C. I. considers best for itself to get rid of those Communists who still believe that the reformists can be forced to fight. Yet in quite a number of strikes we have had many most unhealthy features owing to the fact that our comrades did not thoroughly realise what has been decided by the IV. R. I. L. U. Congress and the Congress of the Communist International.

As Comrade Thälmann has emphasised in his report, the Lodz strike was defeated, because our comrades did not understand thoroughly what is an independent leadership and what kind of united front has to be created during the struggle.

When the Lodz strike had already begun, the workers had elected a strike committee, and when the P. P. S. trade union turned over its repentatives to the strike committee and stated it would support the leadership of the struggle, our comrades were refused, forgot the independent leadership tactic, misunderstood the united front tactic, and the consequence of this confusion was to give the P. P. S. Union the majority of seats on the strike committee. As comrade Thälmann said: "22 conscious and reactionary arch reformists were sitting in the committee, and at the beginning of the end of the strike."

Comrades, the mistake committed by our Polish comrades is not a local character but it has rather an international one. Our comrades in Bordeaux made the same blunder during the dockers' strike there. There were two unions, the reformist one had but 150 members and the revolutionary union 300 members. These members of both unions, followed by some thousands of workers' went on strike. The leaders of the Unitary Revolutionary Federation during the strike lost their heads and agreed on a united front with the socialist mayor of the town and the leaders of the reformist union.

But fortunately our comrades from the C. G. T. U. came in time and tore up the united front with the reformists and took over the leadership of the strike which they fought to the finish.

The Bombay textile workers' strike began to decline when reformists were entering the strike committee.

Comrades, the series of strikes which happened after the IV. Congress of the C. I. have shown, that our comrades have not yet understood adequately how to carry out an independent struggle and what sort of a united front tactic should be organised, especially in the very thick of the fight.

In the colonies the fascist tendencies of social reformism have grown rapidly, even exceeding our expectation. What did Thomas say when he was in Shanghai? Here I have found an excellent proof to show the fascist character of the international social democrats. Thomas said: "The Kuomintang and the International Labour Office have the same purposes." — *Pacific Monthly* No. 27. In Indonesia reformism so far has not yet influenced the native working masses. Just after the IV. R. I. L. U. Congress and the VI. Congress of the C. I. there took place a rapid revival of the trade union movement in Indonesia.

As you know, before the insurrection of 1926 the working masses of Indonesia were organised by Communists. After the dissolution of these organisations, the Dutch government gave opportunities to social democrats and nationalists to reorganise the disorganised working class. So the Sarekat-Islam succeeded in reorganising the harbour workers, the drivers, the pawnshop workers and workers of other government concerns and municipalities.

The National Party of Indonesia reorganised some workers of the Tramway Company of Sourabaya and also some metal workers.

Of more importance are the independent trade unions. These independent unions are at present the most important organisations in Indonesia and are enjoying the sympathy of the native working class. These unions have their organisations among nearly all workers of all capitalist and government enterprises and have already their sections throughout Indonesia.

The trade unions which are organised by the Sarekat-Islam are daily growing more reactionary. **Suryopranoto**, once the heroic leader of the general strike of the sugar mill and plantation workers in Java during 1919 and **Reksodiputro**, one of the leaders of the general strike of the pawnshop workers in 1922, in the congress of the pawnshop workers in February 1929, stated that they did not like to see once more that the workers are going on strike, because there are many other means to improve the condition of the workers. They also urged the workers to collaborate with the employers. When the Congress was dealing with the establishment of the trade union central, the Sarekat-Islam leaders rejected the participation of the independent trade unions.

The national party of Indonesia, in its congress held in May this year, passed the resolution to strengthen its organisations among the workers and the peasants. It was reported that **Sukarno**, the leader of the N. P. I., had conferred with **Marsudi**, the prominent leader of the independent trade unions and proposed to establish a united front between the independent trade unions and the unions organised by the N. P. I.

What is the present policy of the Dutch Government towards the reviving trade unions? The Government is conducting a waiting policy in spite of the fact that at present already in nearly all capitalist and government enterprises the workers are reorganised. The government still does not take any step to check the further development of the unions. According to the speech of the Governor-General during the opening of the Peoples' Council in June, there is little doubt that the Dutch imperialists intend to give the Social Democrats the opportunity to extend their influence within those unions. With the aid of the Social-Democratic Party of Holland the Government succeeded to appoint **August Salim**, one of the prominent leaders of the Sarekat-Islam, as an adviser of the Dutch workers' delegation to the Geneva Conference.

This step can be considered as a success of the Indonesian Social-Democratic Party in their attempt to bring the nationalists under their influence.

In conclusion, I would suggest to the X. Plenum of the C. I. that it is high time something concrete was done for Indonesia in order to be able to give a correct guidance to our comrades in the conduct of their difficult activities.

Comrade YUZEFOVITCH (Communist Fraction of the R. I. L. U.):

It will not be superfluous to point out that it was at the IV. Congress of the Profintern, and particularly afterwards, that the Rights started a fight against the Party, against the Comintern and the Profintern, trying to frustrate the realisation of the new tactics.

This was by no means accidental. The decisions of the IV. Congress of the Profintern provided for an abrupt change in the whole line of policy and in the practical activity of the revolutionary opposition in the reformist trade unions and in the revolutionary trade unions; they meant a breach through the barriers of trade union legalism, the rejection of the practice of constantly casting side-glances at the reformists, of clinging to their coat tails; they signified the manifestation of the utmost initiative and energy, the realisation of our own strength, the necessity of relying exclusively upon our own forces.

These decisions arose from the fundamental strategical task confronting the revolutionary vanguard — the task of winning the decisive strata of the working class, the majority of the proletariat. And this cannot be achieved without the proper tactics in the economic fights, without the proper appraisal of the role of the reformist apparatus of the trade

unions at this moment, without the proper methods of working for the isolation of the trade union bureaucracy from the masses and for its banishment, without the proper appraisal of the role of the unorganised, without making the widest use by the revolutionary trade union movement of the revolutionary levers in the fight against the capitalists and against their agents within the working class, the reformists.

Indeed, all the questions brought out by the decisions of the IV. Congress of the Profintern amounted in the long run essentially to the problems connected with capturing the key positions to the proletarian revolution. It was for this reason that the Right opportunists, and their conciliatory shielders, being organically incapable of squarely taking up independent revolutionary action and of leading in the class fights, attacked so furiously the decisions of the IV. Congress of the Profintern and of the VI. Congress of the Comintern at the very moment when the Party and the revolutionary wing of the trade union movement had begun the practical and real fulfilment of these decisions.

It was for this reason that they started such a systematic positional fight against the decisions of the international conference on strike tactics and strategy at Strassburg which had already developed and concretised these decisions and instructions upon the basis of considerable experience in the application of the new tactics in economic fights (Ruhr, Lodz, Hallouin, etc.).

The Rights, and the conciliators with them, being an appendage of the social democracy and the reformists, constitute an obstacle in the road of the unfoldment of class fights, of emancipating the masses from reformist influence, and of gathering the masses under the revolutionary leadership.

This obstacle — all the varieties of opportunism — must be swept away. This task is part and parcel of the general task of the struggle against international reformism, constituting the postulate for winning the decisive strata of the proletariat.

There is a number of instances to show where the Rights are leading the revolutionary trade union movements. Their activity in the Metal Workers' Union at Stuttgart, their disruptive activity at Solingen, their deliberate aid to the reformists in capturing the leadership of the Metal Workers' Union at Hannau, their co-operation with the police and their strike-breaking role during the textile and agricultural strikes in Czechoslovakia, their appeals to the governmental organs for arbitration in order to liquidate the mass strike of tobacco workers which broke out in Bulgaria, their evasion of a decisive struggle against the military dictatorship and their advocacy of joining the reformist trade unions in Yugoslavia, their refusal to oppose the reformist apparatus at the German congress of saddlers (Halm), etc., — all this goes to show whither, in the last resort, the attitude of the Rights and their conciliatory shielders leads, the role they are playing, the role of agents of the social democracy and of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, the role of helpers of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the working class which is becoming activated and revolutionised.

All these facts, which indicate that the central point of the struggle between the revolutionary trade union movement and opportunism lies in the everyday economic struggle of the working class, which grows at the present stage into a political struggle, make it obligatory for the Communist Parties and the Comintern to concentrate the utmost attention on the work of the revolutionary trade union movement and to give the utmost support to this movement both nationally and internationally. At the present stage it is no longer sufficient to be contented with general resolutions about the necessity of increasing the trade union activity.

Just now it is essential that all the Communist Parties should draft fresh and active forces to this sector of the front, that all the Parties should seriously and in real earnest take up this highly important task. It is essential that every strike, every sector of the revolutionary struggle in which the revolutionary trade union movement is fighting to oust the reformists and to win the masses, in which it organises and leads the masses of the workers in their everyday struggles on the basis of the new tactics, that each step of this character should be the work of the whole Party for which it should mobilise all

its forces and which it should back with the whole of authority.

At the present time it is no longer proper to consider union activity as something of a departmental character, to speak, as something which should engage only those identical with trade union work. Such views are nothing but an opportunistic survival based on a failure to understand the changes that are taking place, a failure to grasp the new character of the present economic fights under the actual circumstances, a failure to understand the tremendous importance of gaining leadership in these fights as the postulate for winning the majority of the working class and preparing it for the revolutionary battles. Such views should be discarded once and for all.

I deem it necessary to declare and emphasise that right at this stage it is essential to strengthen and consolidate the Profintern in every way.

The decisions of the XV. Congress of the C. P. S. U. on this question, the decisions of the VI. Congress of the Comintern should find their practical reflection in the everyday work of the whole of the Communist International and its Sections. From this standpoint we ought to welcome the authoritative decisions of the XII. Congress of the German Communist Party, one of the largest Sections of the Comintern, in the sense that the important task of the revolutionary opposition is to point out to the workers the importance of the Profintern as the international organisation which leads both practically and theoretically the economic fights of the proletariat.

Our body of trade union militants is not yet numerous, large, it is not yet sufficiently trained both politically and organisationally. This we ought to admit frankly and candidly. Absorbed in the everyday plodding activity, our Party and the revolutionary trade union movement frequently do not see that our cadres are beginning to lag behind the tremendous tasks which confront us, that the new cadres are very few, reared, and not at the base at which the struggle is developing.

We must bring home to the masses an understanding of the actual situation and of the tasks confronting the working class; we should draw to our side the fundamental masses of the workers, penetrating into the very heart of the masses through thousands of channels and feelers. To do this we must build a large body of functionaries in the lower and intermediate organisations of the trade unions who should be conscious of our aims in every respect, who should pursue a clear-cut revolutionary policy and who should be capable of bringing forward fresh leading elements to lead the whole movement.

We are also confronted in all seriousness with the question of renovating the cadres of the revolutionary trade union movement, of promoting from below the fresh proletarian forces which are free from any opportunistic, social-democratic and anti-syndicalist survivals. The experience in Czechoslovakia, and also in France, furnishes convincing proof of the fact that there is a considerable stratum among our trade union functionaries which is infected with the old traditions and with opportunism which it is hard for them to shake off, and which considerably hinders them in the understanding and in the constant application of the new tactics.

On these grounds the training and renovation of the trade union functionaries, their training and re-training, acquire serious importance and should be considered not only as an organisational, but also as an exceedingly important political task. The organisation of an efficient and ramified network of schools for the training and re-training of trade union functionaries, the publication of popular trade union literature in which the trade union militants might draw the necessary knowledge for practical work, a general rise in the theoretical level of the revolutionary trade union militants, a serious improvement in the whole of our revolutionary trade union press, transforming the trade union organs from tedious official publications into real live mass organs which rapidly and lucidly reflect the struggle of the working class, which refer to actual events, which rely upon a large army of men and women worker correspondents in the factories, — such are some of the ways and means which should be utilised at all costs for the training of the cadres.

The securing of a proper and clear-cut policy, the elimination of all distortions of the fundamental line which are frequently to be observed, the correction of the still numerous errors in the practical activity, — all this is associated with the question of **developing courageous and determined criticism and self-criticism in connection with the whole of the everyday life and activity of our sections and of the Profintern.** In the Unitarian Confederation of Labour in France we are observing a definite resistance to the development of self-criticism on the part of individual comrades.

While declaring themselves in principle for self-criticism, we have resolutely set ourselves against the mass and indiscriminate application of self-criticism, thereby endeavouring to do it in every way and practically to reduce it to nothing. In spite of this resistance, our French comrades have performed a vast amount of work in the development of self-criticism which has yielded highly positive results.

It is particularly important in the course of economic fights, the course of mass actions of the working class, as well as after their termination, to apply the keen weapon of self-criticism in order to detect our mistakes and put them right in the future.

Comrades, this Plenum is working in an atmosphere of an increasing upsurge of the labour movement. We are called on to show the maximum of revolutionary understanding, ability, and the courage to raise and solve new questions which are brought up by the situation of the struggle. In our own ranks we are still frequently encountering slowness and hesitation in solving new and big questions. We have observed this and are observing this in the solution of such questions as the reorganisation of the unorganised, the formation of new revolutionary unions where this is rendered necessary and desirable by the circumstances, where this is possible and quite indispensable. Of course, in this connection we ought to exercise the necessary amount of prudence and avoid hasty action and mistakes which are still to be observed.

Frequently we are still encountering views that are an absolute hindrance to our revolutionary trade union opposition, taking the broad path of the struggle for winning the decisive strata of the working class, in doing away with trade union legalism, and leading independently in the economic fights.

We shall not be able to eliminate the persisting influence of the reformist trade union bureaucracy, and to win the majority of the working class, unless we display sufficient revolutionary courage in the application of the new tactics, in carrying out the decisions of the VI. Congress of the Comintern and of the IV. Congress of the Profintern, unless our revolutionary cadres will carry out this line **without hesitation and vacillation**, with profound conviction in the correctness of the path mapped out by these decisions.

Comrade YU-FEI (China):

Since the time of the VI. Congress of the Comintern the Chinese trade union movement has been driven underground. At the same time the strikes of the Shanghai waterworkers, tramwaymen and postmen, of the Peking-Mukden railway workers, of the Kailen miners and of the Peking carpet makers, and of the Shanghai-Nanking Railway workers in the north, were followed by a wave of strikes. The rickshaw men went out on strike in the towns of Chenkiang, Panfu, Swatow, Anchow, etc. The characteristic feature of the development of these trade unions during this period has been that the working class has come out from the underground to take up an offensive struggle, and instead of the hitherto existing white trade unions there began to be organised the so-called yellow trade unions which very soon revealed themselves as blackleg agencies and subsequently assumed a semi-yellow, semi-white character. During the same period the leading role of the Communists in the labour movement has also somewhat increased.

At the present time the policy of white terror constitutes the central point in the labour policy of the Kuomintang. Yet the distinguishing feature of the present period is that the Kuomintang, on the one hand, makes use of the so-called yellow trade unions, of the labour legislation propaganda, profit-sharing, etc., while on the other hand, the Kuomintang has maintained a close contact with the League of Nations, with

European reformists of the type of Albert Thomas, who came to China and developed propaganda work on a large scale. The Kuomintang has sent a representative to the conference of the Labour Office of the League of Nations, and together with the Amsterdam International and the reformists of Japan and India, it is trying to convene a Pan-Asiatic conference of trade unions in opposition to the Pan-Pacific Secretariat.

It cannot be denied that the yellow trade unions wield some influence among certain strata of the working class. Yet the political, social and economic contradictions in China will not allow the Kuomintang the possibility to carry out any reforms to stultify the struggle of the workers. Thus, reformism in China does not possess the favourable economic soil which it has in Europe. During the postmen's strike in Shanghai, the Kuomintang leaders invited the British, American and even Japanese troops to occupy the post office premises and to break the strike. The workers in the post office were divested of their clothing and thrown out into the street. After the strike a declaration was issued by the Kuomintang in which it was said that the workers were living a good deal better than the peasants, that the workers should sacrifice themselves for the sake of Sun Yat-senism and that therefore the workers should not go on strike. These hard facts are gradually tearing off the mask from the Kuomintang people.

At the moment when the Chinese working class is again raising its head, it is one of the central tasks of the Communist Party in the effort to win the masses, systematically to expose the Kuomintang, which, under the hypocritical reformist propaganda, is concealing its real role of executioner of the working class; to expose before the workers the treacherous role of the so-called yellow trade unions, the reorganisers of the third party, and to combat resolutely the activities of the Amsterdam International, Albert Thomas, the Pan-Asiatic trade union conference and other agencies of imperialism in the Chinese labour movement, in order to emancipate the working masses of China from the influence of reformists of all kinds.

In order successfully to develop the activity of the Red trade unions in China, it is essential to wage a relentless struggle against the Right danger in the ranks of the Chinese trade union movement. Owing to the unparalleled reign of white terror, some comrades, seeing no revolutionary perspective, are asking for a "lowering of the political standard of the Communist Party" with a view to **developing legal activity**, etc. The development of this Right danger leads to opportunism which has taken place in the Chinese Communist Party in 1926-27. Such opportunism would cause the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese revolutionary trade union movement to become an appendage of the Chinese bourgeoisie, hindering the rise of the new wave of the labour movement.

It is the urgent task of the Communist Party to organise the unorganised, and also the workers in the so-called yellow trade unions, in order to extend its influence in the latter. We should penetrate the yellow trade unions to which the masses belong, taking advantage of the whole discontent of the workers to develop our struggle. In all the strikes it is necessary to endeavour to expose the deception of the workers by the yellow trade union leaders and to capture the leading role in the strike committees. In the course of strikes it is essential to form strong independent groups of Red trade unions and Communist nuclei. The centre of the activity should be shifted into the factories. In every factory it is necessary to form strong illegal Party and trade union organisations to rally all the workers of a given factory.

In preparing the masses for the new revolutionary wave it is necessary to direct attention to the following activities: the concentration of the forces in the chief branches of industry, and the organisation of the agricultural labourers, as against the situation which existed during the revolutions of 1924-26-27. For this reason we must particularly bear in mind now these two spheres of activity. In the course of the coming new wave of revolution, of the great clash between the classes, the chief branches of industry (e. g. railways, maritime transport, mines, textile mills, municipal enterprises, etc.) are going to play the decisive role. The victors will be those who will win the majority of the workers in these branches of industry. In the light industries we should pay particular attention to the activity among the working women and the youth.

The agricultural labourers are the supports of the urban proletariat in the village and play the role of intermediaries between the proletariat and the peasantry. They help the industrial proletariat to carry out its hegemony over the peasantry. One of the causes of the defeat of the Chinese revolution in 1925—27 was the uneven development of the labour and peasant movements. At the height of the labour movement the peasant movement declined, and vice versa. In localities where a strong peasant movement developed, there was hardly any labour movement to be observed. Hence there was no connection, no collaboration between the labour and peasant movements. In the East, in a semi-colonial country like China, where over 85% of the population are peasants, the labour movement cannot be victorious if unsupported by a mighty peasant movement. The task of the Chinese Communist Party is to benefit by this experience and to increase the activity for the organisation of the agricultural labourers, and through them to link up the labour and peasant movements.

Moreover, the agricultural labourers are exceedingly important not only in China, but also in other countries on the Pacific Coast, but little attention has been so far directed to this work in countries like Japan, India, etc.

I now come to the **Indian question**.

In India in 1928 there were 200 strikes which involved 500,000 workers. During the current year the strike wave has developed both in scope and in volume, resembling the events of Shanghai in 1925. Yet we find that only 10% of the Indian proletariat are organised in the trade unions. This movement is now fostered by the enthusiasm of the masses, but it has relatively little organisational power behind it. In this respect also the Indian movement resembles the Shanghai events of 1925. In such a situation, if we fail to work energetically for the organisation of the workers, the movement will very soon be broken up under a new rise of reaction. This has already been shown by the experience of the great Chinese revolution of 1925—27. The Indian comrades in their struggles should strengthen this organisational activity to avoid a repetition of the Chinese mistakes.

The difference between the Indian movement and the Chinese revolution of 1925—27 is that in India the world reformists have relatively more forces than in China. The British reformists have repeatedly sent their emissaries to India to carry on propaganda. The advent of the Labour Party into power is likely to sow illusions among certain sections of the Indian proletariat in regard to British reformism. The so-called "Left" nationalists, who have lately penetrated into the labour movement, are trying to subordinate the class interests of the workers to the national interests. These nationalists are the veritable agents and lackeys of the Indian bourgeoisie. The Indian comrades will have to expose before the working masses the real imperialistic nature of the British reformists and to dispel all illusions concerning the MacDonald Government, at the same time pointing out the treacherous role of the so-called "Left" nationalists. Moreover, we should combat such opportunistic theories as the theory of Comrade Roy. All these are indispensable postulates to a victorious revolution in India.

Furthermore, particular importance attaches to anti-imperialist activity in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Past experience in China teaches us that we can attract the large masses of the people into the anti-imperialist movement. In the foreign enterprises the working masses are subjected to particular oppression by foreign capital, and they are therefore vitally interested in the struggle against imperialism. Hence, the necessity of combining the anti-imperialist activity with the every-day economic struggle. This is particularly true in regard to the Indian labour movement.

Declaration by Comrade Bela Kun.

Comrade Wolf in his speech on the trade union question has made such statements about the trade union tactics of the C. P. of Hungary that cannot be left unanswered. To reply to the speech is necessary, firstly because it contains gross opportunistic deviations, and secondly because it misstates the facts. In his speech he said that it was an untruth that the

leading people in the C. P. H. had formed a united front with the social-fascist elements in the social insurance elections.

It is also stated in the Theses of the Foreign Committee of the Secretariat of the C. C. of the C. P. H. as follows: "the result of a tactical mistake of the Party leadership which should be characterised as exceedingly opportunistic, and a front from above was formed with the social-fascists in the social-insurance elections." It is further stated in the Theses: "our list of candidates was under the hegemony of these social-fascists."

I objected to the splitting of the metal-workers' union in connection with the crisis in the Building Workers Federation. I spoke against the tactics of the C. C. on the trade union question, which can be characterised as nothing but a betrayal of any price. The leading organs of our Party until shortly before the elections pursued the tactics of a combination with the heads of these so-called non-political, i. e. social fascist elements, having done nothing to mobilise the masses and to break up the social-fascist elements. The result of these tactics was that we missed the opportunity of a victory in the elections. The Party was compromised in the eyes of the masses, and a fusion created in our own ranks.

If Comrade Wolf and those who are with him are going to defend these tactics of the "lefts", it demonstrates only a lack of principle. Against these arch-Right deviations, and against the notion that the trade union bureaucrats under fascist influence "can be brought under the pressure of the masses", I have spoken out and will continue to do so very sharply against any opportunistic deviation.

Comrade Wolf's characteristic plea for the opportunistic policies makes it unnecessary for me to polemicise in any way about his other statements, especially about those which are reported to qualify my attitude. What are the Right dangers to our Party? In my opinion, among the many other dangers the most dangerously Right is the tendency which was represented here by Comrade Wolf.

Declaration by Comrade Kolari.

In his speech on the trade union question, criticising the weak points of the trade union movement in Bulgaria and the mistakes of the leadership in the recent big economic strike, Comrade Bella Szanto indulged in considerable exaggeration. To the extent that his criticisms are based upon the criticism made by the Bulgarian comrades, it is correct, but it cannot be considered serious criticism when Comrade Szanto describes as a "democratic illusion" the fact that the strikers at Slivena did not liberate by force the arrested comrades already when they were being led by the police to the police headquarters, but compelled the police by mass pressure to liberate them only after they had been taken to the police headquarters. Obviously, Comrade Szanto differs from the strikers on the question **where** and **how** to liberate their comrades, and he expresses his preference for street action, while the workers did the job on the public square in front of the police headquarters. This is rather a matter of taste. "Democratic illusions" are altogether beside the point here.

Comrade Szanto asserts that the strikers humiliated themselves by accepting material aid from the reformists and social-democrats.

I know the following on this subject: the social-democratic Party donated a small sum for the strike, but it handed this sum to its own organisation which distributed it as it fit among its supporters. Comrade Szanto tells us that the strikers received aid also from the reformist co-operatives, and this he considers as treachery to the revolutionary struggle, opportunism, etc. But in that case we should denounce as opportunists the representatives of the Soviet Union of Food workers who proposed to the Amsterdam Federation of Food workers that it should donate 15,000 francs to the Bulgarian strike fund.

In Comrade Szanto's speech there are also other exaggerations of this kind which do not strengthen but weaken the criticism of the real mistakes and weak points manifested during the strikes in Bulgaria.

(Close of Discussion.)

Twenty-first Session.

Comrade Thälmann's Concluding Speech.

THE POSITIVE AND THE NEGATIVE SIDES OF THE DISCUSSION.

Comrades, I would like to draw your attention to some questions which cropped up in the general discussion in regard to the positive, as well as the negative sides. The positive side is — that our Parties have improved in regard to the carrying through of our revolutionary trade union work. We witness also more understanding and independence in the leadership of economic struggles, the methods of the new tactic have been pursued successfully by the various Parties since the I. World Congress. The negative side of the discussion was — that too much was made of the problem of fighting organs and much too little of the development of strike movements and their conversion into political strikes. Moreover, the centralisation of decisions in regard to the most important spheres of revolutionary work in the trade union movement was inadequate.

THE GENERAL FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF OUR NEW REVOLUTIONARY TACTIC.

As to how we are to give a concrete form to the general decisions, Comrade Ercoli said that the draft which has already been improved by the amendments of the various delegations and by the decisions of the trade union commission, is too German. He also pointed out repeatedly that the orientation in the reports, especially in my report, proceeded too much from the German methods. This reminds me of objections made at the time when the Communist Parties of the whole world made Russian methods their point of departure in regard to their work. We cannot speak of German methods, but of methods applied in Germany in connection with the new tactic, in accordance with the decisions of the VI. World Congress and the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. These methods are the general fundamental law in the application of the tactic in all countries. This does not mean that this tactic must be uniformly applied without taking into consideration the situation, strength and influence of the Party in the respective countries. However, the fundamental tendency and line of this new tactic, as it has been applied in Germany, is the point of departure of the new application of tactical measures. But what is the general point which can apply to all countries? Firstly, independent leadership of economic struggles, secondly, formation of independent fighting organs and united front organs in this situation and, thirdly, simultaneous mobilisation of the organised and unorganised masses with this fighting strategy. In his arguments, Comrade Ercoli put the problem of the unorganised from the standpoint of two countries, namely Germany and France. This is not correct. If we really want to help our comrades in their difficult revolutionary work, we must put this question for all countries. Comrades, does the numerical strength of the organised compared with that of the unorganised in Germany and France play a decisive role? Certainly not. Of course, the relative numerical strength of the organised and unorganised in these countries plays a certain role, because the unorganised in France constitute 90% whereas in Germany they constitute only 73%. But when we put the question of organised and unorganised as a political problem, the number does not play a very important role, the decisive problem is — in how far we succeed in drawing the unorganised into the revolutionary class struggle. From this point of view, the conditions of the application of our tactic in Germany and France are the same with a few insignificant differences. Let us take, for instance, Germany where we have reformist trade unions. In these trade unions, the revolutionary opposition is the actual revolutionary connecting link, and at the same time the organisational form which has to undertake, ideologically and organisationally, the independent leadership of economic struggles. In France, this role devolves on the Party and the Red trade unions. Although the Red trade

unions are independent organisations while the revolutionary trade union opposition has only organs which exist within the framework of the reformist trade unions, there is no substantial difference between these two political factors, as far as ideology and independent leadership in industrial struggles are concerned.

Which tactical questions were wrongly put by Comrade Ercoli? Above all, the question if strike committees and committees of action are only provisional organs or if they can replace the trade unions? There must be no confusion of ideas in our ranks in regard to these questions. The idea that strike committees or factory councils can replace the trade unions must not be allowed to develop, for this must not happen even under the worst conditions of white terror and repression by the bourgeoisie and social-fascism. Ercoli said in connection with this question:

“What solution does the resolution propose? It takes two forms: strike committees cannot replace trade unions. Strike committees are provisional organs. Comrades, we have always worked on a different line. We have always given strike committees a permanent character and, if possible, we have set strike committees such tasks in the carrying through of which they have replaced the trade unions.”

Comrades, this is certainly not correct. Strike committees and committees of action are the outcome of struggles, united front organs formed in the midst of struggle from non-Party, organised, unorganised and Communist ranks, elected on a democratic basis in the enterprises. Such a strike committee leads the strike against the will of the reformist trade union bureaucrats. I will not discuss the question now in how far such strike committees can be subsequently appointed for the development of the factory council movement, especially in countries such as France etc. There is no doubt whatever that these united front organs which, just as strikes are of a transitory, temporary character, can be used for the development and establishment of the factory council movement. But when Comrade Ercoli says that they are to take upon themselves the tasks of the trade unions and that they are not of a provisional character, then I must say that he does not understand the line of the trade union resolution and the application of the new tactic.

Secondly, in regard to tactic, Comrade Ercoli makes no difference between the functions of strike committees and those of initiative committees. What are initiative committees?

(Interjection: **Lozovsky**: “Preparatory committees formed before the strike”).

Comrade Ercoli says in his arguments:

“Perhaps we were mistaken in the past in regard to trade union work, but we have certainly tried to give strike committees a permanent character, above all, by forming them before the struggle. But I see that this fact is accepted in the resolution which says that not strike committees, but initiative committees are formed in the enterprise. Thus, the name has been changed, but the state of affairs has remained the same.”

Ercoli is certainly wrong. There are in every industrial struggle — if the Party, the Red trade unions and the trade union opposition are strong enough — preparatory committees which organise and prepare the movement. But the strike committee itself is born in the midst of struggle and elected in the enterprises, it has nothing to do with the preparatory committees. Thus, Comrade Ercoli is simply confounding functions.

Thirdly, Comrade Ercoli says:

“To say that we are setting strike committees limited tasks, different tasks according to circumstances, is merely

playing with words. If this is the case, we will set them tasks which will make this form of organisation permanent. This is happening in France where our comrades of the C. G. T. U. are forming factory councils. I am sure that the problem of formation of factory councils by the C. G. T. U. and the French Party cannot be solved unless they link up this problem with the formation of permanent committees of action, and the permanent factory council is nothing else."

Comrades, the strike committee or committee of action and the factory council are two different things, we must not confound their functions. The factory council — if it exists legally as in Germany, Czechoslovakia or Austria, or if it be elected as the result of our struggle on the basis of illegal revolutionary initiative carried through under the leadership of our nuclei, fighting organs or Red trade unions in France or other countries — has to carry out the functions laid down in the trade union resolution. Confounding the strike committee or committee of action with the factory council is out of the question.

Finally, Comrade Ercoli thinks that, under certain circumstances the factory council replaces the trade unions. For instance, Comrade Ercoli says that factory councils should make labour agreements. I think that we must help our comrades in France and some other countries by not demanding, as for instance in Germany, immediate or almost immediate carrying out of the tasks. Organisation of factory councils is very difficult in these countries. We must therefore be very cautious in regard to temporary organs such as strike committees, committees of action, etc., also in regard to their liquidation. There was divergence of opinion during the discussion in regard to this question. But one thing must be perfectly clear: nowhere can the trade unions be replaced by factory councils or committees of action and strike committees. Never, under no circumstances whatever!

The formation of committees of action and strike committees is not only a problem of organising the unorganised, it is establishment of the revolutionary united front between the organised and unorganised workers in the enterprises, independent leadership of industrial struggles and their conversion into political struggles. We cannot limit the problem of the unorganised to drawing them into the trade unions. The problem of the unorganised is a question of the utmost importance. The main question is — to know how to organise the masses, i. e. the organised and the unorganised and to draw them, under the independent leadership of the revolutionary trade union opposition and the Red trade unions, into the political struggle under our slogans. In this connection, strike committees or committees of action are of the utmost importance. They are organs of class unity, organs of the organised and unorganised in one class front. But under no circumstances whatever, can they be a substitute for the trade unions, be they Red or reformist. What Comrade Smoliansky said about the relation between organised and unorganised is correct, but the figures he gave here are not true to facts. For instance, the number of organised in the mining industry is certainly not 75%, but 40% at the utmost. Let us take the armament industry, the chemical and electrical industry, and also to a great extent the metal industry. It is a well-known fact that, for instance, in the Ruhr struggle 75% unorganised workers participated. In the most important big enterprises, especially in the war industry, they predominate among the workers.

In this connection, I want to correct two wrong ideas.

Comrade Lerner's idea who thinks that "committees of action or strike committees cannot be considered as embryonic forms of factory councils" (Comrade Lerner: I did not say so!). It is down in the uncorrected stenogram, it is wrong, but it is in this stenogram. Comrades, this is a wrong idea with which I have already dealt in connection with Comrade Ercoli's arguments.

The other idea is that of Comrade Gossip who is against the election of unorganised workers to strike committees. This idea is fundamentally out of keeping with our line. The British Party and the Minority Movement have waited much too long before they repudiated these ideas and began to struggle against them. This is another sign of lack of understanding for the new tactics as laid down at the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U.

THE QUESTION OF THE FORMATION OF NEW TRADE UNIONS.

In regard to the formation of new trade unions, Comrade Ercoli is labouring under a misunderstanding when he thinks that I hold the view that formation of new trade unions can be considered now. I expressed this view only in regard to the present situation in Germany where the establishment of new trade unions is out of the question at present (Hear, hear).

Comrade Gey who has accused us of dealing with the formation of new trade unions only from a general political point of view, not an organisational viewpoint, is also mistaken, and emphatically repudiate his assertion. Was not and is not the establishment of new trade unions considered from the organisational viewpoint, for instance, for America? Absolutely. Was not this question considered from the organisational viewpoint also for Poland? Certainly! But Comrade Gey denies that the establishment of new trade unions should be considered from a general organisational viewpoint, that the scope of tasks in regard to this question be widened. The practicality of the establishment of new trade unions depends on the general political situation, as well as on various other factors. I repeat that Comrade Stalin's idea that we are not opposed in principle to the organisation of new trade unions, is as valid now as before. But this does not mean that we can already treat in all countries the establishment of new trade unions as a concrete organisational question. Today, we have, for instance, in Germany a very difficult situation: the social-fascists have expelled the whole pay-office groups from the miners' federation. In Berlin the plumbers have already been expelled, turners and locksmiths will follow; in Halle the metal workers' organisation is being to be split by the reformists. We are face to face with the serious task of keeping together and continuing to finance the branches and pay-offices through the revolutionary committees which have been elected by the trade union rank and file. The number of individual expulsions in Germany is about 1,500—1,700, nevertheless we cannot and must not proceed to establish new trade unions. In such a serious question, we must not skip over stages in the revolutionary trade union work. In regard to the application of our revolutionary tactics in the trade union movement, our manoeuvring capacity, revolutionary cleverness and elasticity must be such as to make the proletariat realise that we are struggling for revolutionary unity in the trade union movement wherever the revolutionary class struggle can assert itself.

CAN WE SIGN PLEDGES OR NOT?

I am coming now to the question of pledges. There was considerable confusion of ideas in the Plenum even in regard to this simple question. Comrade Lerner maintains the standpoint that we must not sign pledges (Comrade Lerner: This is silly, I never said so). But it is down in the stenogram, at least in the uncorrected:

"It seems to me that Comrade Thälmann was not quite clear in regard to this point. I think that pledges must not be signed under any circumstances."

(Comrade Lerner: But this is silly!)

Quite so, it is silly, but it is down in the stenogram. If you say it is silly, I agree with you, Comrade Piatnitzky puts the question from another viewpoint. He says, there can be certain situations and circumstances when pledges can be signed and this is correct. But he is not correct when he says that we cannot expect Comrade Pieck to sign a pledge, but a functionary in an enterprise must sign a pledge if asked to do so. Does Comrade Piatnitzky think that a revolutionary worker or a Communist is expelled if he is not well known? In regard to all revolutionary workers and Communists who are on the black list of the reformist trade union bureaucrats, in order to be expelled at an opportune moment, most of them have hundreds, nay, thousands of followers among the workers. There is hardly any difference now between a comrade who is at the head of the Party and a comrade who, for instance, holds a post in the trade union or enterprise.

This question must be made to depend on the character of the pledge. If by the signature, they place us under the obligation to desist from carrying through our political line, if the formula

such that the signatory is expelled at his first revolutionary act, pledges cannot be signed. But if in the course of the actualisation of the struggle between the revolutionary opposition and the reformist trade union bureaucracy, in the process of the capture of the trade unions, pledges are placed before us which we can sign without desisting from our revolutionary work, we shall sign them. But if the pledges are such that they make our revolutionary activity in the trade unions impossible, we shall not sign. This is the only way of putting this question.

THE PROBLEM OF THE CAPTURE OF THE TRADE UNIONS.

I am coming now to the most important question, capture of trade unions. How is this question to be put? Can our work in the trade union movement be the same everywhere? Certainly not. Fascisation of the trade unions develops in diverse ways. Capture of the trade union rank and file plays of course an important role in connection with the fascisation process in the trade unions. Some comrades in the Comintern harboured so long ago the illusion that the trade union apparatus can be captured even on a central scale. Not only capture of the central trade union apparatus is impossible in Germany, even capture of the lower trade union apparatus is unthinkable. In our case, for instance, the development in Britain where the situation is somewhat different. There are possibilities of capturing through our work in the Minority Movement certain trade union organisations owing to the pressure of the masses, but only in a very few cases. Let us take the situation in France. The problem takes a different form there. By a correct and effective tactic which has been already successful in various strikes, we try there to strengthen the Red trade unions by either solving local organisations of the reformist trade unions or by taking them over bodily to the Red unions during strikes. These three examples: France, Great Britain and Germany, are illustrations of the various ways adopted for the capture of trade unions. To us the general rule was and is that we must not have any illusions in our own ranks that in the present stage of development we can have the least chance of capturing the central trade union apparatus. Of course, we must not lose sight of the fact that it is possible from time to time to capture local trade union positions. The most important question is the capture of the trade unions' functionary apparatus and of the local factory councils. Thus capture of the functionary apparatus of the enterprise is also a definite premise of stronger mass mobilisation and pressure especially on local pay-offices and strict organisations of various trade unions against the isolation and splitting policy of the social-fascists.

From this viewpoint, the trade union commission has put the question correctly and has endeavoured to meet the various tendencies to be found in the Communist International by proposing the following formulation:

"At the same time, it would be a harmful opportunist illusion to assume that under present circumstances — even if we have the trade union rank and file behind us — we can capture the reformist trade union apparatus. This, however, does by no means imply inertia on the part of Communists and the revolutionary opposition at the election of leading trade union organs. On the contrary, struggle for the removal of all bureaucrats and agents of the capitalists from the trade unions, struggle for every elective post in the trade unions and especially struggle for the minor trade union representatives must become in our hands a powerful instrument for the exposure (Comrade Smoliansky: I added 'and struggle against') of the role of the social-fascist trade union bureaucrats."

Only under this clear and offensive line, with bold and revolutionary-elastic tactic, shall we be able to strengthen our revolutionary trade union work and to instil greater confidence in the masses in the trade unions for the realisation and the support of our general political struggle.

This formulation was adopted unanimously as a guide in the discussion for our Communist International. These were, in short, the most important questions, which have been unclear in the discussion. I wish to make some remarks on some other questions concerning our general strike strategy.

REVOLUTIONARY CONCENTRATION, MOBILISATION, AND ACTIVISATION OF OUR FIGHTING FORCES.

The characteristic feature of the present stage of development is: small struggles and partial struggles everywhere. But this state of affairs can undergo a change very rapidly owing to the gigantic exploiting methods of the capitalist rationalisation, the enormous mutual rivalry and competition of the bourgeoisie throughout the world, and finally, owing to the accentuation of the class struggle of the proletariat. This accentuates also the whole character of this revolutionary situation; these strikes will develop into political struggles. To our Parties, at least to those who have a firm footing among the masses, the main task in this situation is: to encourage partial struggles to the utmost and to aim at their conversion into big mass struggles. In this connection, we must not lose sight of the tactic of our class enemy. The class enemy will endeavour to split the forces and to exhaust them by small struggles. In such a development, regressive tendencies are also possible. Not all strikes have positive results, but our general aim must be — accentuation of the struggles and dealing with the problem in the various countries according to districts. We must send our best forces where favourable premises exist in the most important branches of industry. It is incumbent on us to start new struggles. Every big struggle undermines capitalist stabilisation and thwarts the measures taken by the bourgeoisie in regard to capitalist rationalisation.

Are we justified in speaking of definite strategical tasks in regard to independent leadership of industrial struggles? Absolutely. We have seen, for instance, in France that the Red trade unions were simply taking unawares in 50% of the industrial struggles. If we intervene too late in a strike situation, we lose a great deal from the purely strategical standpoint. Our Parties must relearn and must reorganise themselves completely. Comrades, the enemy concentrates everything against us — he increases his attacks, the more we attack him. We must set against the reactionary concentration of the enemy our own revolutionary concentration in all spheres of economic and political struggle. Let us take only a few examples from international history: in Germany where the factory council movement is assuming a revolutionary character, the bourgeoisie is immediately adopting a different tactic towards the factory councils. On the strength of most extraordinary decisions, 8 to 10 factory councils were dismissed without notice by the labour courts without any special reason, only because they represented the interests of the workers. The next step of the reaction will be — to prohibit and arrest strike committees and committees of action. If, in such cases, we are compelled to elect them illegally, they will be locked up as this is already done in fascist countries and also in Czechoslovakia. Another method which the bourgeoisie will adopt — preparations for it are already made in France, as Comrade Monmousseau has correctly pointed out — is suppression of the Red trade unions. We can already record such general concentration of the reaction and its attacks in all spheres. But we must also strengthen and mobilise all our forces. Therefore, our main task in countries where we still have a so-called united trade union movement, i. e. where the reformist trade unions exist without Red trade unions, consists in strengthening and organising the revolutionary trade union opposition by drawing the mass of the unorganised workers into this front.

In countries where Red trade unions exist our main task consists in strengthening the Red trade unions organisationally and in developing more initiative in all spheres of the economic and political struggle, and on an international scale: strengthening the Red International of Labour Unions, not only organisationally, but also energetic political support in all spheres through the Comintern and all its Sections. In this difficult situation, the R. I. L. U. will have to be given more substantial support than this has been unfortunately the case lately.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE C. I. AND THE ECONOMIC PROGRAMME OF THE I. F. T. U.

I will deal with one more problem which is connected with the fascisation of the trade unions and the change in the regime of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois state. I think that we must expose still more energetically the counter-revolutionary cha-

racter of the reformist trade unions and the Amsterdam International. Has everything been done by us in this respect? Are we quite clear about the progress fascisation is making in the trade unions? Have we sufficiently mobilised the masses against the counter-revolutionary course of the reformist trade union bureaucrats? Are we to fight only against the reformist bureaucrats, against the reformist trade union leadership in countries where no Red trade unions exist? Certainly not, we must expose throughout the world the connection between the Amsterdam and the II. International.

In regard to the mobilisation and enlightenment of the masses and their politisation, our Parties have not been up to the mark. Let us only take the recently published economic programme of the International Federation of Trade Unions which was adopted in Prague. In this programme, there is not a word about the class struggle and not a word about socialism. Instead of class struggle, the Amsterdamers advocate natural process of development and struggle for the reduction of the cost of production, in the interests of competition. Instead of socialism, they advocate the construction of a "more just economic order". This programme is a frank declaration in favour of the capitalist rationalisation of the world bourgeoisie and of the bourgeoisies of the individual countries. Paragraph two of the economic programme re demands in the national sphere, contains the following statements:

"a) Guarantee against abuse of rationalisation. The trade unions are to encourage the systematic development of industries, their rational co-ordination into bigger units, financial reorganisation and substitution of old machinery and methods by new equipment and technical methods. It is also important to take simultaneously the necessary precautionary measures against the exploitation of the workers and to see that the rise in the standard of living keeps pace with the rise in production..."

What does this declaration mean? It means that the International Federation of Trade Unions fully supports capitalist rationalisation and the economic policy of the world bourgeoisie, not only in the international sphere, but also from the standpoint of national interests. What social demands does it submit to the bourgeoisie? In consideration of the general interests, it certainly brings forward the question of labour protection, higher real wages, shortening of the working day, etc. and finding work for the unemployed in other industries. But in reality, it is opposed to mass struggle for the enforcement of the social demands.

What is the most important feature of the programme? Never before has there been such a cynical and frank admission of close association of the trade unions with finance capital and the state apparatus, as in this programme. The climax of the whole facisation programme of the I. F. T. U. is the demand for the organisation of a national economic council in all countries as an immediate measure. The programme contains the following statement:

"Nationally, it is therefore important that wherever no national economic council exists, such a council be formed with the inclusion of trade union representatives. This council is to pursue a systematic economic policy in regard to all international economic agreements and contracts, it is to see to the necessary publicity and is to bring pressure to bear on the governments, in order that such agreements and contracts be really carried through. The various central trade union organs are invited to make the establishment of such a body, where it does not yet exist, the main point in their economic programme."

Thus, we see that this programme brings forward the demand of a national economic council, i. e. the complete association of the trade unions with the economic policy of the bourgeoisie in all spheres, accelerated association of the trade unions also with finance capital, and that this demand is given as peremptory a form as possible. Thus, the political slogan of economic democracy as political slogan of the II. International and the I. F. T. U. is exceeded. Another thing which is not absent from the programme, is the demand of control over production, nationally and internationally, the demand for the Pan-Europe slogan, as brought forward by Briand, co-operation with the League of Nations and other

international associations of international finance capital & do I deal in such detail with these questions? This economic programme will play an important role in the individual trade unions, departments of trade union organisations and also factory council courses, for the purpose of guiding and influencing, on an international scale, the ideology of the trade union masses.

What must we set against this facisation programme of the I. F. T. U.? The programme of relentless class struggle of the R. I. L. U. A programme of struggle not only for the improvement of the position of the working class under capitalism, but for the overthrow of the capitalist social system in general.

Can we draw up a special programme of action in this situation? I think, that the development is so impetuous, that we cannot bring forward a programme of action on the part of the R. I. L. U. This does not mean, that we must not bring forward partial demands and certain political slogans in the various countries for the improvement of the workers' living and living conditions, for the struggle for the development of the economic struggle into the political mass struggle. But we want to fight the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie incumbent on us — in connection with the struggle for the improvement of the conditions and everyday questions — to make propaganda for our ultimate aims: overthrow of capitalism and establishment of proletarian dictatorship. This is the programme which we are setting against the economic programme of the I. F. T. U. It goes without saying, that the Red trade unions and revolutionary trade union opposition can lead this struggle only in close connection with and under the leadership of the Communist Parties in the various countries.

PARTY AND TRADE UNIONS.

As to relations between the Party and trade unions in the present state of affairs is far from being satisfactory in the various countries. I do not mean to assert that the state of affairs in this respect in the various countries is bad enough to justify other political inferences. But even in the Central Committee of the Russian trade unions, "trade unionist" tendencies have existed. Lenin wrote already in his book: "Left Wing Communism" that under the proletarian dictatorship the trade unions would sometimes reveal a certain narrowness and a reactionary spirit". The events of the last years in the Soviet Russia trade unions illustrate the correctness of this view. Comrade Lenin also pointed this out in his report. In the struggle which took place in the leading organ of the A. U. C. T. U. against the line of the Party, Tomsky and his group were in fact setting the trade unions against the Party. The Party and the mass of active trade unionists soon put a stop to the "trade unionist" course. The present leadership of the trade unions is a guarantee that the great tasks of the Party and the trade unions in this period of gigantic socialist development will be carried out jointly.

It is by no means accidental that there are, for instance, at the head of the Red trade unions in France, many left elements who are not convinced of the correctness of the Party tactic and are not prepared to apply it. We must nip this at the root, but all theories of trade union neutrality or of two camps of the revolutionary movement. Wherever the objective conditions are favourable, wherever no traditional reformist trade union movement exists, as for instance in the colonies, we must develop the trade unions on a revolutionary basis and must develop them in the closest contact with the Party.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the revolutionary trade unions must be much better supported than this has been unfortunately the case hitherto. But our task does not only consist in giving better support to the work in the colonies and criticising the activity of the Red trade unions, we must try to help and encourage above all the Parties in China, India and other colonial countries, and must develop greater interest in the revolutionary trade union work in these countries.

When new problems make their appearance, we generally forget all about the old. The question of unemployment has hardly been touched upon in the discussion. Considering the record in our resolution the fact of 13 million unemployed

throughout the world, the inclusion of the unemployed in the mass front together with employed workers in the factories of enormous importance in this period of mass and permanent unemployment. The fascists, too, are trying their luck among the unemployed, in order to win them for their ideology.

I would like to draw the attention of the Plenum to the fact that factory fascism is making its appearance in many big enterprises. Side by side with the social-fascist organisations of ideology, fascists, and especially the national socialists in many, are experimenting in the enterprises with new political methods of organisation in order to capture the workers. They work very energetically in the sphere of factory fascism, factory sport, factory class collaboration.

In connection with the unemployment problem, we cannot see that organisational and political relations between employed and unemployed workers must become much closer, especially in countries with millions of unemployed.

I would like to say in conclusion that the Plenum has done a big piece of work in regard to the concretisation of revolutionary trade union work. We have made a big stride at the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U., also in respect to application of the decisions made there. Much has been achieved up, many problems seem less difficult than before.

Positive results can be recorded in regard to independent leadership of economic struggles. However, our defects, gaps and errors in regard to our great revolutionary work throughout the world are also enormous. In nearly all the countries, our trade union work has become trade union-political work of the whole Party. In spite of many weak points, the work of the Red trade unions and of the revolutionary trade union opposition has improved. It has been a school for us, an elementary Leninist school for the application of our new tactic. It has been an extension of our revolutionary work, an intensification of the application of our Leninist tactic in regard to new methods of work and forms of organisation in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and social-fascism. It is in this sense that we must attack social-fascism more ruthlessly than ever, and must accentuate our struggle against the bourgeoisie in all the spheres of political life. If we know how to make use of the strike wave, how to impart to it a higher political character, adding new columns and new reserves to the revolutionary class front which is marching onwards under our leadership, our present victories will be the premise for the acceleration of the revolutionary development which is bound to lead to the victory of the proletarian dictatorship in a number of countries. Let us go on in this spirit towards our great aim. (Loud Applause).

Comrade Lozovsky's Concluding Speech.

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EXPERIENCE OF STRIKE TACTICS.

Comrades, the debates in the Plenum, and then in the U. Commission, have revealed full unanimity on fundamental questions, and the existence of some divergent views on concrete practical questions of our tactics. Upon the fundamental question concerning the methods and means of leading the masses during economic fights there was absolutely no differences of opinion, while in the debate there were revealed certain peculiarities in the methods and means of leadership in the different countries, as well as a whole series of faulty aspects in our tactics which should be noted in order that they might not be repeated and that they might not weaken our influence over the masses.

As you are aware, in the domain of strike tactics there is both positive and negative experience.

In those fights which are now waged throughout the world, in fights where our Parties should take upon themselves the leadership, they may and should carry out this leadership, as we have already established, through the strike committees. But, if you take the question about the role of the revolutionary trade unions in the course of the economic struggle — whether in France, Czechoslovakia, the United States, or other countries with a revolutionary T. U. movement, where the trade unions are under our leadership — I believe it is the most difficult and the most important matter to establish between the revolutionary trade unions and the strike committees such mutual relations under which the strike committees should actually embrace the whole mass of the workers and lead the strike movement while the revolutionary trade union, and the Communist fraction, should be the driving force of the whole strike movement.

Hence, it is the task of our Parties during a strike, and immediately afterwards, to strengthen the revolutionary trade unions, and in the event of victory in one strike or another, to endeavour to have the agreement with the employers signed by the strike committee and the revolutionary trade union.

(Martinov: The revolutionary?)

Yes, by the revolutionary trade union. There should be different tactics — and this is quite natural — when the strike

committee elected by the mass of the workers has to face the employers on the one hand, and the reformist trade unions on the other. Here the task consists in contrasting the strike committees to the reformist trade unions, in seeing to it that the strike committee should sign the agreement, while the strike committee should endeavour, on its part, that after the termination of the strike there shall be formed the necessary organ in the enterprise to enforce the fulfilment of the terms of the agreement, whether in the shape of wage commissions, special vigilance committees (as these commissions are called in some cases), or internal commissions, and so forth. The name of such organ does not matter in the least. It is important that the strike committee should see to it that after the termination of the strike the workers might form, — and this ought to be the chief duty of the strike committee — an organ to look after the agreement that has been concluded, if there is no revolutionary trade union in the enterprise to take upon itself this function. In this respect, it seems to me, we still have little experience in the sense of carrying the fight to a successful end in those countries where we are working within the reformist trade unions. Our experience is small, nevertheless the strikes have shown how, with correct leadership of the strike, it is possible to mobilise both the organised and unorganised workers, and with the help of the unorganised to beat back the attack of the reformist T. U. bureaucrats upon the strike committees. I take it that this constitutes a highly intricate, difficult, and important field of activity, because we lead the strikes in order to strengthen our Party organisations, our T. U. organisations and the revolutionary opposition in the course of the struggle, in order to carry on the struggle to the end. And when the struggle is carried to the end in a country with no independent revolutionary trade unions, it is necessary to think of who will, after all, see to it that the victory shall not be turned into a defeat within a month or two. Hence, of course, in countries with revolutionary factory councils this problem may be solved through the vigilance of these councils in regard to the fulfilment of the agreement. In countries with revolutionary trade unions, this function will be assumed by the latter. And in countries with neither revolutionary factory councils nor revolutionary trade unions, it is necessary to create special organs in the enterprises to look after the agreements that are signed.

ONCE AGAIN ABOUT ILLEGAL TRADE UNIONS IN THE COUNTRIES OF FASCIST TERROR.

The second group of questions which is of exceptionally great importance relates to our illegal trade unions in countries under Fascist terror. Here we have a situation when in Italy, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, the revolutionary trade unions have been dissolved; yet, while in Italy, by the side of the illegal trade unions there are only fascist unions, the situation is different in Yugoslavia and Rumania. Here we have reformist unions by the side of the dissolved revolutionary trade unions, while, as Comrade Boshkovitch has told us here, in Yugoslavia these reformist unions have come to an understanding with the fascist dictatorship and are so liked by the latter that the fascists refrain from forming their own union. Our comrades in Yugoslavia and Rumania, immediately after the suppression, were confronted with the question of what to do, whether to create illegal trade unions and to fight for their open existence, whether to advise the workers to go into the reformist trade unions or try to legalise the unions upon a basis of neutrality, publicly declaring that the trade unions have nothing in common with the Communist Party, with the Comintern, and with the Profintern. There were such tendencies in Yugoslavia after the suppression of the revolutionary trade unions. There were some comrades who proposed to go into the reformist unions, others proposed to follow the line of open neutrality, i. e. the line of open apostasy. But the Party declared, and quite rightly, for the preservation of the suppressed trade unions, for their development and strengthening, and in this manner it repudiated the liquidatory tendencies, all those who tried to surrender to the pressure of the fascist dictatorship and to create a supposedly new trade union movement under the flag of neutrality.

The question of preserving, strengthening and developing the suppressed trade unions, is a question of tremendous importance not only to these countries; it is an exceedingly important question also to those countries which are threatened with the suppression and dissolution of the revolutionary trade unions, and among such countries are Czechoslovakia and France. **The preservation of the illegal apparatus of the revolutionary trade union movement should not limit our activity exclusively to those elements of the militant organisation under our control and to the best revolutionary elements of the working class.** Our task here is, first, to draw the largest number of non-Party workers into these unions, and secondly, to fight with might and main for every position, for every inch of the ground, so as to get out of the illegality. Here it is necessary to resort to any possibility to come out of the underground, in order to gather the largest possible numbers of workers around the revolutionary trade unions and around our Party. Had we followed in these countries the road recommended, say by the liquidatory Right elements in Yugoslavia, i. e. the road of refraining from underground work, this would have meant not only political surrender, and not only virtual support to the Social Democracy, but this would have entirely closed to the Party the possibility of increasing its pressure in the sense of the struggle for an open existence, in the sense of the struggle for emerging from illegality. It should be remembered that in these countries of the fascist dictatorship it is possible to emerge from illegality only upon the crest of a strike wave.

In these countries the question of forming strike committees is of exceptionally great importance, because in these countries the strike committees should be organised on the broadest possible lines in order to attract the largest possible number of workers to the election of these committees. This will secure the widest possible support to the Party and to the illegal trade unions, render it possible upon the least opportunity to transform the strike committees (or other militant organs), formed in one or another country of the fascist dictatorship, into supporting points for the whole activity of the Party and of the illegal revolutionary trade unions. Any concessions to the liquidators would be here exceedingly harmful and dangerous, because they would paralyse our Party's activity, depriving it of one of the weapons which it should use in the struggle for the open existence of the revolutionary trade unions. It is not only a question of being recognised by law, but of emerging from illegality under any conditions, and of carrying out the work openly, without asking for official permission. And this can be achieved only upon the crest of the strike wave which is now rising.

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN THE COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES.

Alongside of the T. U. movement of the capitalist countries, which has reached a fairly respectable age, we have a young T. U. movement in the colonial countries, while the colonial and semi-colonial countries may be divided into several groups. In some of them the T. U. movement arose immediately after the war, in others it arose only two or three years ago.

Finally, the colonial countries may be divided into several groups according to their political and economic conditions.

For instance, we have countries where legal reformist trade unions exist and side by side with them there are also Left revolutionary trade unions, although the latter are persecuted by the police, imperialism, etc. for instance, India, Tunis, Algiers, etc. In other colonial countries there are illegal revolutionary trade unions, e. g. in China, and side by side with them there are governmental, police, yellow trade unions. Here the struggle for the masses is fought between a profoundly illegal party and profoundly illegal trade unions on the one hand, and the governmental, police, yellow trade unions on the other, while this fight in such countries is of an extremely accentuated character, e. g. in China, where the revolutionary T. U. movement and the Communist Party have brought tremendous sacrifices in this struggle. We have a great number of countries where the labour movement has recently entered upon the historic arena, a whole number of countries in Central Africa where there are no trade unions but where in the course of economic fights there are emerging semi-political and semi-economic organisations which carry on the economic struggle, and under imperialist pressure, are being drawn into illegality. There is, finally, a whole number of colonial countries where there are only reformist trade unions but these are of an anti-imperialist character. For instance, in colonies like Sierra Leone on the West coast of Africa there are also colonial countries with reformist trade unions composed of coloured workers, e. g. South Africa. We also have countries where the revolutionary T. U. movement has been smashed by the imperialists and where there are only nationalist and independent unions existing openly on the one hand, and the illegal trade union groups on the other. Such a country is Indonesia. The Philippines may be classed among the first group in which revolutionary and reformist trade unions exist side by side.

In view of such a chequered picture of the T. U. movement in the colonial countries, of such great differences in the political status of the labour movement, it is, of course, of exceptional importance to study the problem of leadership in strike fights, to form our Parties and our trade unions in the course of these fights, for in a whole number of these countries these very economic fights are the right moment for welding together the scattered workers into a class. This we have done in very quick and concentrated form in India, where half a year ago the strikes broke out spontaneously and were afterwards led by the reformist trade unions. In the course of the textile workers' struggle against the reformist trade unions there arose the left trade union, which has enlisted ten times more workers than the reformist trade unions. Just now it is going on a bitter fight for leadership of the strike movement as between reformism, national bourgeoisie, and Communism, which has not yet been definitely shaped, which is organisationally weak, and which has entrenched itself within the ranks of the trade unions.

Exceptionally interesting and worthy of attention in this respect is the experience of the last year in India, where we have seen the growth of our Party and of the Left trade union in a colonial country upon the basis of the strike movement, the growth and consolidation of our supporting points in the struggle against imperialism and the national bourgeoisie.

What then constitutes the immediate task in the colonial countries? Obviously, since the Parties and the trade unions originate in the course of economic fights, it is our task to neglect no opportunity for the creation of real class trade unions under our leadership.

Comrade Deng has recited here some facts showing that among some comrades in the Chinese Party there is a tendency in the sense of reluctance to work inside the yellow trade unions. This is a dangerous, harmful, non-bolshevist tendency.

Along with this there is also another tendency which has sprung upon the basis of the fearful terror, a tendency which that we should only work in the yellow trade unions, in order to become legalised. This is the purest liquidatorship and by weariness, which leads not only to the liquidation of the illegal trade unions, but also to the liquidation of the Communist Party.

On the one hand, there are comrades in the Chinese Communist Party who say (as it was quite properly observed by Comrade Mif in the March number of the "Communist International"): "We should not fight for partial demand"; we see on the other hand comrades who say: "We should work only in the yellow trade unions, in the legal trade unions; we should generally avoid excessive politics in the movement, we should abandon too drastic slogans." In a word, what these comrades are saying is reminiscent of the renunciation of the chief revolutionary slogans by our Russian liquidators in the period of 1908—14. I consider this tendency to be exceedingly dangerous.

ONCE MORE ABOUT THE NEW UNIONS.

The next question concerns the new trade unions, and the methods for their development. It was pointed out here by Comrade Browder and others that the new trade unions in America and in England have small memberships. And Comrade Ercoli has made here the sensational statement that the mass character of the revolutionary trade unions is not a principle upon which Lozovsky generally wants to build new trade unions. Although among the stormy Italian temperaments Comrade Ercoli is not the most tempestuous, nevertheless he has also invented something "in a sudden manner" and has presented us here with two inventions, i. e.: 1. that would like the trade unions to consist only of cadres, and that I want to "create new trade unions everywhere". Of course, this is hard to prove, but at any rate, Comrade Ercoli hurled this "everywhere" at me from the platform of the Comintern. Comrade Ercoli forgot that such statements need proofs. We have had debates in the T. U. commission before the Comintern on the question whether it was necessary to unite the organised workers of Germany and in what form this should be done; but there is a tremendous distance between this and the allegation of a desire to create new trade unions "everywhere", in all countries, and composed exclusively of cadres. We have frequently debated in the Comintern, yet not on this question. Comrade Ercoli, but rather on the question that a small number of Parties are late in forming trade unions where they are necessary. I shall remind you of the controversy which we had in the Comintern on the question of the Polish miners' union. We differed in our views from the Polish comrades, about one year before they have eventually resolved it. I raised this question both in the Comintern and in the Profintern at a time when the union still had considerable losses. The British comrades organised the new union but only after the union had lost three-fourths of its membership. Can it be asserted on the grounds of this fact that I had wanted to build new unions "everywhere"? In this particular case it was resolved by the Comintern that our comrades had shown a spirit of capitulation instead of activity.

We also had a quarrel with our Mexican comrades on the question whether it was necessary to unite the revolutionary unions against the reformist Confederation. Eventually they did so after the assassination of Obregon, when the C. R. O. M. began to crumble entirely. We had quarreled with them about the time. They did not wish to do so sooner. We spurred them on. Does this mean "everywhere"? Concretely, this was necessary in Mexico.

We have quarreled over this question also in regard to Hungary. We have debated this question with the comrades in Poland, under definite concrete circumstances, for a definite period, after definite events, when the P. P. S. unions had split into openly fascist and covertly fascist unions. We have debated upon all these questions. Granted that I was wrong in one case or another, but does this mean that I want to create new unions "everywhere"? We have debated this question in regard to every trade union concretely, under a given situation, for a given branch of industry, and under given circumstances. It seems to me, therefore, that Comrade Ercoli has at least indulged in an exaggeration, which I attribute to

his insufficient knowledge of what has taken place during the last year.

It was stated here by Comrade Campbell that the defects of the British Communist Party in leading the strike movement were caused by the fact that the Profintern at its IV. Congress had adopted a resolution on the creation of strike committees, etc., but had forgotten to mention this in the British resolution. It means that we have made a big omission: in the general resolution we had stated the matter firmly and clearly, but in the special British resolution we had not mentioned it. We have so far thought that the general, basic resolutions are obligatory to all. Thus we thought, perhaps it was due to our international limitations? But Comrade Campbell believes that we should state in each general resolution that this particular resolution extends also to Great Britain besides other countries. What are the shortcomings that Comrade Campbell sees in Great Britain? Do you think he sees a shortcoming there in the lack of activity, in that there were Communists there who were too closely tied up with Cook, or that there were moods of surrender in the Party? Well, he forgot to speak about surrendering, but he did say that they had adventurism, a desire to create new unions at all costs. Thus, Comrade Campbell has noticed in Great Britain chiefly these "Left" mistakes. Yet, where is that adventurism in the creation of new trade unions? If two or three comrades have broached this question, is it of decisive significance for Great Britain? No, of decisive significance for Great Britain is the fact that the Party as such has done little, that it has lost a great deal of time in Scotland. This is the crux of the matter, not that there are two or three comrades who had expressed some incorrect thought in an article or in a letter to the editor. As for myself, I energetically insist that in Great Britain the mistakes were chiefly of a Right and not of an ultra-Left character.

ABOUT THE TRADE UNION APPARATUS.

In connection with the creation of new trade unions we are confronted, of course, with the question of energetically continuing the activity in the reformist trade unions, and so on. I must point out, comrades, that in nearly all the Parties there is still a subconscious notion that the reformist unions are nevertheless better than the Hirsch-Dunker and Liberal unions. A distinction is still made between the reformist unions and those of other tendencies. This is politically untrue, as well as practically harmful. We should be active in the reformist as well as in the Hirsch-Dunker and Liberal unions, wherever there are workers, irrespective of the political label. This, I repeat, is an elementary bolshevist truth.

Yet, in connection with the political activity in these unions there arises a question which we have discussed also in the Presidium, and on which there was a divergence of opinion, the question as to the possibility of capturing the apparatus of the reformist trade unions. Personally I have voiced and continue to voice the opinion that the capture of the trade union apparatus is an utopia, and an opportunist utopia at that. How is this to be understood? Does it mean that we should refrain from fighting for elected positions in the trade unions? Not at all. If we take part in parliamentary and municipal elections, we would be perfect idiots to refrain from taking a most vigorous part in the elections to any trade union organs in which there are workers. It is quite natural for us to participate in the trade union elections, to nominate our own candidates, to oust this or that candidate. Yet, it must be perfectly realised that to capture the reformist T. U. apparatus as a whole is an utopia. For, the apparatus has become merged with the bourgeois State and the reformist trade unions have become State organs, this affecting not only a few people at the top, but considerable cadres of the reformist trade unions. There is as little chance of capturing the entire apparatus of the reformist trade unions by capturing one local branch or another as there is a chance of capturing the bourgeois State by capturing some ten or twenty municipalities.

The struggle within the reformist trade unions should be carried on most energetically under the slogan of ousting the traitors and the agents of capitalism from the ranks of the working class, never yielding to the offensive of our class enemies (because the reformists are our class enemies), and taking advantage of the least pretext whether legal or semi-

legal, by the trade union rules, to pursue our policy, never retreating a single step from our positions. The question is not how to work within the reformist trade unions, but how to organise and utilise the unorganised to repel the attacks of the reformist trade union apparatus.

If you and I were right when we unanimously established the fact that the unorganised are displaying great activity, that the unorganised are more numerous than the organised, that the number of the unorganised is constantly growing on account of capitalist rationalisation, that in industry there is a constant increase in the number of the less skilled elements, such as women, youth, etc., — then it is quite obvious that we should think of how to utilise these huge masses of proletarian women and youth, the great masses of the unorganised, in the struggle against the trade union apparatus, against the reformists. We must at all costs unite in the struggle the section of the working class which is in the reformist trade unions with the section that is outside of them. We should never forget that the workers who are organised in the reformist trade unions can be wrested from the reformist influence only by stirring up a mass movement, and the unorganised may play a big role in this movement. The victory over reformism can only come as a result of huge mass economic and political fights, and for this very reason the careful preparation and skilful conduct of these fights is the most efficacious method for destroying the reformist influence over the masses.

COMRADE SMOLIANSKY'S GRIEVANCES.

In conclusion, I must deal with some polemical questions that have been raised here by some speakers.

The most militant polemist turned out to be our Comrade Smoliansky, who is generally quite peaceably inclined. Comrade Smoliansky, in order to give more brilliant expression to his polemics, wanted to "prove" that I had some very dark intentions, that I had wanted to involve him in Right and conciliatory deviations; in a word that I had the desire of producing an amalgam which was very current at the time of the French revolution, i. e. that I had wanted to amalgamate the pure Comrade Smoliansky with the impure people of the Right-conciliatory camp. I must say that I had never harboured any such dark and ominous intentions. I merely wish to say that there are some very good comrades with the correct point of view who sometimes get muddled, and I have mentioned this case as an example.

Comrade Smoliansky, in an article entitled "On T. U. Problems of the Third Period", wrote:

"Committees of action may neither be subordinated to the trade unions, nor contrasted to them, nor transformed into artificial transitional forms of organisation to trade unions."

What is wrong here, and what is contradictory to the decision which we now take? Wrong is the assertion that the committees of action may not and should not be contrasted to the trade unions. To the reformist trade unions they must be contrasted, but not to the revolutionary unions. I believe my formula to be correct, and Comrade Smoliansky's formula to be wrong. No need to boil about it like a samovar.

At any rate, it seems to me that upon this debatable question Comrade Smoliansky has raised a noise quite for nothing, because both the resolution and the theses here submitted are urging the need of contrasting the committees of action to the reformist trade unions.

OUR "SELF-CRITICS".

As you now, some comrades understand self-criticism in the sense that they criticise you, but not themselves. Such, for instance was the way Comrade Piatnitsky understood self-criticism.

(Piatnitsky: Not quite so!).

Instead of speaking about the shortcomings of the Comintern, he spoke vigorously about the shortcomings of the Profintern.

(Piatnitsky: I referred to both!)

I do not in the least deny the tremendous shortcomings of the Profintern, but I believe that all of us are to blame for it, and of course, we shall work together to put right the mistakes of the Profintern.

Another speaker on the subject of self-criticism was Comrade Gey.

As regards the criticisms by Comrade Piatnitsky, I learn that we — that is the Profintern — are guilty inasmuch as we have not taken adequate steps to straighten out the line in Czechoslovakia, in France, in Italy, and so on.

It would certainly be an exaggeration if I said that we did take all the steps; perhaps if all the steps had been taken there would be better results. Nevertheless, Comrade Piatnitsky is aware of the fact that considerable steps were taken in Czechoslovakia, in France, in China, as well as in a number of other countries.

(Piatnitsky: This was not last year, but the year before last, when we criticised, and you covered up the mistakes.)

To take Comrade Piatnitsky's word, there was a division of labour between us: Comrade Piatnitsky criticised, and we covered. (Laughter.) But this assertion of Comrade Piatnitsky has absolutely no foundation. As everybody knows, all the most important decisions upon all questions without exception were passed with the district participation of the Comintern and its leading organs, and I am prepared to bear 60% of the responsibility, on condition that the other comrades bear 40%. But comrade Piatnitsky's story to the effect that we criticised and we covered, is quite untenable. This is no honest self-criticism, but a sort of an attempt to explain away our own shortcomings by the insufficient activity of others. It seems to me that insufficient activity, in France as well as in Czechoslovakia and other countries, has been shown not only by the trade unions, but also by the Communist Parties. Everyone knows that only after successfully accomplishing a turn in the Party, only then we can accomplish a turn also in the trade unions. Did we not pursue the line of rectifying the mistakes of the Communist Parties in Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, and elsewhere? We rectified the shortcomings and defects in the work of the Communist Parties, and only after we had done that and after having eliminated the opportunist elements were we enabled to take up the offensive upon a wider front in the trade unions and in the mass organisations.

From Comrade Piatnitsky's speech one may get the impression that everything remained the same in France, and that everything was bad. I consider wrong such an attitude. During the last twelve or eighteen months we have been making great strides forward in France. You all know that we have eliminated a number of defects and shortcomings in the work of the Communist Party and of the Unitary trade unions in France. In the Unitary Confederation of Labour a Right wing has been formed, but it does not have the majority in the leading organs (this is not Czechoslovakia), and I believe that a certain and no small amount of credit for this is due also to the Profintern. This of course, does not mean that I wish to deny a whole number of our shortcomings and mistakes in France.

By way of self-criticism, Comrades Beyer and Shubin have also cited the resolutions that are being prepared for the Pacific T. U. Congress. Yet, they did not cite those parts which should have been cited. They wanted to show that the draft resolutions forget to mention about the activity in the yellow reformist trade unions. However, as a matter of fact, in the draft itself — which, by the way, has not yet even been passed through the Commission — there is a special Point 8 which I am going to read to you:

"The creation of new unions, when this is urged by the circumstances, should in no case lead to an abandonment by the revolutionary elements of the activity within the reformist unions. On the contrary, the revolutionary elements should increase their activity within the reformist unions, mobilising the rank and file against the bureaucrats and their opportunist politics. In the event of expulsion from the reformist unions, the revolutionary elements should wage an energetic fight for reinstatement. The work in the existing reformist unions should be continued at

intensified particularly where these organisations are of a mass character (e. g. the seven big unions of Shanghai, the reformist unions of India and Japan.)"

I should advise Comrades Bewer and Shubin to begin first all by reading the whole of what one wants to cite, and then to start polemising. In this manner they would avoid the awkwardness which is bound to result from an excessive effort to prove that which is hard to prove.

THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION.

Comrades, we have tremendous shortcomings in our T. U. movement — in the work of the Communist Parties and revolutionary trade unions as well as of revolutionary minorities; when this now, and we have also dealt with this at the IV. Congress of the Profintern. The basic shortcoming of our work in the T. U. movement consists in that in many countries the use of the political influence of the revolutionary trade unions several times in excess over the organisational hold of these unions upon the workers. Of course, on the one hand it is a good thing that the influence of the trade unions extends beyond organisational limits; but I wish to say here that we do not sufficiently utilise each conflict, each strike, each action, at a time when our influence allows us to utilise them in order to get an organisational hold upon fresh elements of the workers, and for this reason the trade unions are frequently of a narrow scope, of insufficient mass character.

For instance, let us take France. In France we may count on trade unions of a mass character if they embrace 15—30% of the workers in a given industry. Yet, bearing in mind that the Unitary Confederation of Labour embraces 5—6% of all workers throughout France, then in view of the imminent and in view of the huge social conflicts and upheavals ahead, the Unitary Confederation of Labour can by no means be considered as really representing a mass organisation. There are many unions which embrace the majority of the workers in one or another enterprise, but on the whole the progress should be ten times quicker than we are making. This tremendous

shortcoming of ours — the discrepancy between organisational and ideological influence — may be seen at least in the fact that the French Communist Party, having a million of voters, has only 45 thousand members. Great mass movements are carried on under the slogans of the Communist Party in France as well as in the colonies; nearly every movement is carried on under the ideological influence of the Communist Party, nevertheless the Party itself is small. This harbours a particular danger for the immediate future when there is going to be tremendous pressure by imperialism in a number of countries, when we are confronted with the fact of the prohibition of our press and our organisations in a number of countries. (It has been reported that 8 out of the 10 Party newspapers in Czechoslovakia have been suppressed). Should our Party have an insufficient connection with the masses in the factories, the bourgeoisie may succeed in driving our organisations underground for some time. These are the shortcomings of the Comintern and Profintern organisations, against which we must wage a vigorous struggle, extending the utmost aid to our comrades in remedying the defects.

CONCLUSION.

A word in conclusion. It was said by some speakers, notably by Comrades Ercoli and Monmousseau, that the theses are too "Germanised", that the whole of the multiform experience of the international movement is not felt in these theses. In the T. U. Commission we have removed this shortcoming, and I believe this is going to benefit the entire international revolutionary trade union movement. In their present shape the theses take stock, on the one hand, of the tremendous positive experience of the German Communist movement, and on the other hand, also of the experience of the labour movement in other big capitalist and colonial countries, and general suggestions are given to all Parties, about the policy to be pursued in order to get the lead of economic fights, to carry on successfully economic fights, to lend a political character to the economic fights, and subsequently to consolidate these successes by extending our Party and T. U. organisations. (Applause.)

After the concluding Speech of Comrade Lozovsky the reports of the Commissions are delivered. A vote is taken on the draft resolutions which are all unanimously adopted. (The resolutions will be published in other numbers of the *Inprecorr*).

Comrade Ercoli's Concluding Speech.

Comrades, the work of the Tenth Plenum is nearing its end. During this Plenary Session of the Executive we have dealt with a series of problems which are extremely important for the development of our movement, which are linked up with an investigation of the economic and political situation in general and with the tasks which confront our Parties in this situation. We examined all these problems in the light of the decisions of the VI. World Congress, and the X. Plenum of the Executive has completely and categorically confirmed all the decisions and resolutions of that Congress.

But while the decisions of the VI. World Congress served as a guide in the intervening period, at this plenary session, after a year of experience, work and struggle, the meaning and profound value of these decisions is even more apparent to us now than a year ago. The decisions appear to us as the point of departure of a new period in the development of the international Communist movement, a period in which gigantic tasks will confront the proletariat of the whole world and its vanguard.

Our Parties have learned much since the VI. World Congress. The Party which has learned most, is certainly the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the leading Party of the Communist International. The success achieved by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the work of Socialist construction by drawing into this work an evergrowing number of workers, this success means, on the one hand an enormous reinforcement of the forces of the proletarian revolution of the world, while on the other hand, it gives the lie to all slanderous assertions and wrong and criminal prophecies of catastrophe threatening Socialist construction in Russia, prophecies spread by our enemies, and even in our own ranks by opportunist elements — the Right and the panic mongers. We can say that the results of this Plenum give the lie to all the slanderous assertions spread by our adversaries, by the renegades of the Communist movement and opportunists of all kinds concerning the internal disintegration of the C. I. and the complete disorganisation of our movement.

It is true that a number of our Parties have gone in the last year through internal struggles and even serious crises, but these crises have been not only "growing" but "purification" crises. If we lost members, they were those who could not go with us. The members we lost were those who had lost confidence in the forces of the proletariat and the forces of the revolution. The elements we lost and drove from our ranks were those who were no longer able to apply our method of revolutionary class struggle; they were those who were no longer able to march in the ranks of the vanguard of the proletariat in the period of revolutionary upsurge, at a moment which demands of the International, of all our Parties and the revolutionary proletariat supreme efforts in order to attain aims loftier than those we could set ourselves yesterday. The elements whom we lost are being picked up by the enemies of the proletariat and the revolution, by the social-democrats. The Parties who have got rid of these elements have been strengthened thereby, and their strengthening means strengthening of the International Communist movement. Always, and especially in the present situation, internal crises and struggles which enable the Communist movement to get rid of overt and covert opportunism, to expose and eliminate any tendency to become reconciled to opportunism and all sorts of hesitations in the struggle against Right deviations, such crises and struggles are always salutary and necessary, but especially at the present juncture, they are necessary, to make us the Party which we

want to be: the Party of revolution, the world Party of Bolshevism.

The discussions at this Plenum bear witness of a powerful growth of the forces of the Communist International, in the Soviet Union, in the capitalist countries and in the colonies. They bear witness of the ideological strength of the C. I., of the maturity of our revolutionary idea, and they have shown that our forces are united and that we are ready for the

As a result of our study of the objective situation, we placed on record that we find ourselves in a situation where we can not only foresee the coming of a revolutionary upsurge, but when we are already at the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge. It is in this revolutionary situation that we must give a convincing proof of the value of our forces in all countries, in the whole world, in India, Germany, Poland, France, Latin America, and Great Britain, big masses of workers are in a state of ferment. They are not only struggling for their immediate interests, they are assuming the combat offensive against the barriers of the capitalist regime. The masses want to be led, they want to have at their head a strong and disciplined vanguard capable of doing justice to the task incumbent on it — leading these masses into the struggle and leading them to victory. The decisions and resolutions of this Plenum must teach us to accomplish this task.

In our discussions much attention was paid to the preparation of the International Day Against Imperialist War, August 1st. Already when we studied this question at the beginning of our work, we agreed that the Red Day must not be a day of usual peaceful demonstrations, a mere review of our forces. We all agreed that it must be a Day of struggle, that it must mark a change in the struggle of our Parties against the capitalist regime, against the regime of oppression and war, a change in the sense that the struggle in which our Parties are at the head of the toiling masses of all countries, must be taken to a higher plane.

While we were discussing, history has not been standing still. The attack of the Chinese brigands on the Soviet Union is excellent agitational material for the Red Day campaign. This attack shows that the task of combating war danger is preparing the proletariat for the struggle against war, not the defence of the Soviet Union, is not a task of tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, but a concrete and immediate task of today. Things have further developed since we started our deliberations. In the capitalist countries reaction has been let loose against our Parties. In France and Czechoslovakia the legality of the Parties is in jeopardy, efforts are made to prevent their revolutionary preparation, to dissociate the masses, to force it into illegality. The forces of reaction are rallying for an attack on us. Therefore, the task which was placed in this domain before our Parties during the discussions, are concrete and immediate tasks. We can say now that that struggle is in store for us, but that struggle has already begun.

Well, comrades, let us go into the fray with a fresh and with stubborn determination, let us go into the fray with full confidence in our strength and in the strength of the revolutionary proletariat, in the forces of our Parties and those of the Communist International, in the forces of the world revolution!

Long live the Communist International!

Long live proletarian world revolution!