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The Communist Parties In The Fight For The Masses



Speech by
O. PIATNITSKY

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The Communist Parties in the Fight for the Masses

By O. PIATNITSKY

1. The Presentation of the Question

THE resolution of the Second Congress on the fundamental tasks of the Communist International (Part I, paragraph 4) reads as follows:

“Only the Communist Party, if it really is the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it contains all the best representatives of that class, if it consists of fully class conscious and devoted Communists, educated and hardened by the experience of stubborn revolutionary struggle, if this Party has managed to link itself inseparably with the whole life of its class and through this class with the whole of the masses of the exploited, and if it can imbue this class and these masses with complete confidence—only such a Party is capable of leading the proletariat in the most ruthless, determined and final struggle against all the forces of capitalism.

“On the other hand, only under the leadership of such a Party can the proletariat develop the whole might of its revolutionary onslaught.”

Have we in the capitalist countries, after fifteen years' existence of the Comintern, such parties as fully satisfy all the above-enumerated requirements? The reply to this question must be in the negative. But although not a single Communist Party in the capitalist countries completely satis-

fies the requirements laid down in the resolution of the Second Congress, nevertheless, in a number of countries (China, Germany, Poland), the Communist Parties have come close to them during this period.

The sections of the Comintern have a number of achievements to record and I will deal here only with a few of them.

II. The Achievements of the Communist Parties

The Communist International, unlike the Second International, and the Communist Parties, unlike the parties affiliated to the Second International, during the fifteen years of their existence have achieved considerable successes in regard to the proper presentation of the question of the struggle against imperialist wars and in the organization of this struggle. As is well known, in 1914, the Second International collapsed shamefully, precisely during the war and in connection with the war.

Today, with the intensification of the antagonisms in the camp of the imperialists, the post-war Second International is again cracking up, and the fascization of its separate parties is being accelerated in the process of transition to the second round of revolutions and wars.

During the fifteen years of its existence, the Comintern has achieved absolute clarity, not only in the principles of the question of the struggle against imperialist war, but also in regard to the strategy and tactics of this struggle.

Various sections of the Communist International have proved that in this difficult and important question of war they are striving to pursue, and in many cases are really pursuing, the line of the Comintern, are fighting against the stream of chauvinism, and are remaining true to the requirements of proletarian internationalism.

Let us take only a few examples.

a) The Communist Party of France during the Morocco War.

In 1925, French imperialism waged war against Morocco. At times the French suffered defeat. This called forth a wave of chauvinism in France. The bourgeois parties, in-

cluding the Socialist Party, furiously called for war against Morocco and did all they could to support this war. The Communist Party alone waged a proper, consistent struggle against this predatory war; and at meetings everywhere it openly exposed the predatory, colonial policy of France, fought for the independence of Morocco, and demanded the withdrawal of the French troops from the colonies. It goes without saying that it is easier to adopt a defeatist position in a colonial war, which openly bears a predatory character, than in a war which the imperialists may claim to be a war for the defense of the country against the attacks of the powerful enemy. Nevertheless, the correct position taken up by the Communist Party of France was an exemplary one, the more so that the Communist Party of France had been formed comparatively recently out of the Socialist Party, which during the imperialist war was thoroughly infected with chauvinism. In 1925 the Communist Party of France passed its examination on the question of war.

b) There are still greater grounds for saying the same thing in regard to the struggle waged by the Communist Party of China at the time the hordes of Chang Hsueh-liang seized the Chinese Eastern Railway, and during the Japanese invasion of Shanghai. What happened during the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway? It is well known that not only the Chinese militarists, the Kuomintang, etc., but also the parties of the Second International in all the capitalist countries, in order to discredit the U.S.S.R., falsely depicted the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway by the Chinese militarists, who were backed by the imperialists, as a war against unequal treaties. The Northern militarists were also supported by the Trotskyists, Chen-Tu-hsuh and others. The Chinese Communists did not allow themselves to be influenced by this demagoguery. In its propaganda, agita-

tion, and in the whole of its practical work, the Communist Party of China pursued the Leninist line and fought against the Kuomintang and the militarists in its own country.

During the invasion of Shanghai by the Japanese imperialists, the Communist Party of China succeeded in taking the lead in a mighty, anti-imperialist mass movement against the Japanese invaders, and it organized resistance to Japanese imperialism while continuing the struggle against the Kuomintang.

And what about the glorious, heroic story of the Red Army in China? After the treachery of Chiang Kai-Shek, who was supported by international imperialism, and the victory of the Kuomintang counter-revolution, a small group of armed men led by Communists fought its way out of the ring of enemies, retreated to the hills, began to rally around itself new forces, fortify itself in the territory it occupied, and gradually enlarged its territory.

Enlisting to its side the broad masses of the peasantry in the fight against the imperialists, the militarists and the landlords, gradually arming itself with the weapons it captured from the enemy, repelling the superior forces of the Kuomintang counter-revolution and of the imperialists with exceptional heroism, it managed to build up a Red Army which today is a big factor in the international revolution.

Having set up a Soviet government, and having proved to the workers and peasants of China, and of the whole colonial East, that it is possible to fight victoriously against the imperialists and landlord reaction, the Communist Party of China not only strengthened its positions among the broad masses in the Soviet regions, but also disintegrated the rear of the enemy. Thanks to this, the Red Army, led by the Chinese Communists, repelled all the five Kuomintang campaigns against it, and emerged from each campaign stronger

than it had been before. It is now heroically repelling the sixth campaign, in the organization of which the biggest imperialist powers are taking part. The Red Army is improving the fighting qualities of its units, and is paralyzing the monstrous military machine which Chiang Kai-shek has built for the purpose of eradicating Communism from China.

The successes the Communist Party of China has achieved in the midst of war and revolution should serve as an example to all other Communist Parties, particularly at the present time when we have come right up to a new round of revolutions and wars, when the application of the Leninist line in war and revolution becomes the central task of every section of the Communist International.

c) Finally, the Communist Party of Japan.

In Japan, where the whole bourgeoisie, the whole press and all the parties are shouting that, without Manchuria and expansion on the continent of Asia, Japan will suffocate, where the Social-Democratic parties speak with exceptional cynicism about the civilizing role of Japan in Asia, where day after day it is dinned into the minds of the masses that Japan is invincible since she has never suffered defeat in war—it has been particularly difficult for the small Communist Party to raise the question of the defeat of the fatherland and the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war. Nevertheless, it did this. It boldly and determinedly went against the stream. It not only put forward correct slogans, but carries them right among the masses, penetrates everywhere where there are workers and peasants, and comes out in opposition to the war and in defense of China.

The examples quoted give us grounds for saying that the question of the fight against war has been properly put in these sections of the Communist International. By this I do not want to suggest that all the Communist Parties have in

the past period properly agitated against war, sufficiently mobilized the masses for the purpose of combating it, and in particular, have done all that is necessary to prevent the shipment of munitions to Japan and to defend the Chinese Revolution. Only after all these weaknesses have been overcome, when mass work, concerning which I shall speak later, has been properly organized, will the sections of the Communist International be able at the decisive moment to fight properly against war and for transforming the imperialist war into civil war.

d) The revolutionary workers and the bourgeoisie of all countries know now that the Communist Party alone champions the interests of the working class and it alone is capable of organizing it for the struggle against the bourgeoisie. That is why the bourgeoisie is driving the Communist Party underground.

e) The Communist Parties are pursuing the uniform line of the Communist International. The Communist International is united by the Executive Committee of the Comintern into a single, world, centralized party, which the Second International never had and never will have.

f) The Communist Parties are monolithic parties and not a "bloc of trends." In these parties there are neither factions nor groups as there are in the Second International. The Communist Parties are waging a tireless and successful struggle on two fronts; against opportunism and against "Left" sectarianism.

g) And what about our cadres? Our cadres display self-sacrifice in the struggle. This applies to the legal Parties in the so-called democratic countries, and there this is of great significance, because the times have passed when it was possible to demonstrate or strike without being arrested or shot; but this applies particularly to the illegal parties.

In Bulgaria, Poland, Japan, China and other countries, where every Communist who falls into the hands of the class enemy is beaten up, subjected to torture, is sentenced to long terms of severe imprisonment, the majority of the Communists do not cease to be Communists, and do not cease their struggle even in prison. On leaving prison, the majority of them immediately take up their work again.

Or take Germany. Even in China and Japan, where Chiang Kai-shek and the Arakis know how to torture and exterminate revolutionary workers, we have not witnessed such torture and cruelty and such a mass extermination of captured revolutionary workers as we have witnessed in Germany. In fascist Germany on various pretexts, after trial and without trial, everyone who is suspected of belonging to the ranks of the Communist Party is tortured and killed. The dead are silent. But there is already a literature based on the statements of those who have managed to escape from the concentration camps after unprecedented torments. These unprecedentedly cruel and refined tortures of the fascist executioners are intended physically to exterminate or break the spirit of the Communists. Has it succeeded? Those Party workers who have escaped from the camps display indomitable readiness to take up their work again immediately.

We have Party workers with whom we can go through fire and water. What then is it that is so often lacking? They are not always able to carry on systematic, practical, mass work properly.

III. The Spheres in Which the Communists Have Not Fulfilled Their Tasks

In passing now to what in my opinion is an important question, I must utter a warning. Naturally, I shall speak principally about defects and mistakes. That does not mean, however, that our sections have not achieved positive successes in this work during the past year.

But in the first place, the comrades who spoke before me dealt mainly with their achievements and, in all probability, those who speak after me will also do the same. (*Laughter.*) Secondly, it is necessary to analyze the mistakes that are being committed in order that they shall not be repeated. Moreover, attention must be concentrated on defects in order to learn the lessons they teach and achieve greater successes than those which the sections of the Communist International have achieved in the period between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Plenums.

What have the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions failed to carry out in regard to what is required in the present situation? Again and again it must be emphasized that the Communist Parties, the Red trade unions and the revolutionary trade union opposition have not yet learned to carry on mass work well, to agitate and to consolidate the influence they acquire in their everyday work.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Socialist parties and the reformist trade unions in all countries are taking part in the growing political and economic offensive against the working class (the fascization of the state apparatus and the application of fascist methods of violence, the continued sharp reduction of nominal and real wages, the furious increase in the intensification of labor, the cutting down of all forms of unemployment relief and the line taken for the complete

abolition of unemployment insurance, compulsory labor, etc.), *the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions have not sufficiently liberated the masses of the workers from the influence of the Social-Democratic parties and of the trade union bureaucrats.*

The number of workers and unemployed who are disillusioned with the policy of the reformists is increasing, and this is due to no small degree to the work of the Communist Parties and of the revolutionary trade unions. But the workers who left the Social-Democratic parties and the reformist trade unions have not, in the mass, come over to the Communist Parties; they either joined the fascists (Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria), or the Conservatives and National Laborites (England during the last election), or else remained outside of all parties. Moreover, the Communist Parties, the revolutionary trade unions and the unemployed organizations have not managed to enlist and retain in their ranks the masses of the workers who follow their lead (Germany, before Hitler came to power; England and America, during the big unemployed movements and strikes).

At the same time another dangerous phenomenon is observed; *under the influence of advancing fascism, the approach of war and the sharp worsening of their conditions, the masses of the workers in the so-called democratic countries, as a result of the faulty work of the Communist Parties, the revolutionary trade unions and the revolutionary mass organizations, are again throwing themselves into the arms of the social-fascists.* Thus, during the municipal elections in England, the Labor Party gained 292 seats at the expense of the Conservatives and the National Laborites. In the parliamentary elections in Norway, the Labor Party obtained 69 seats. In the cantonal elections in Geneva, the Social-Democratic Party obtained 46 per cent of the total

number of votes cast; and yet in French Switzerland the workers, in the beginning of this year, engaged in mass battles during which Communists were killed. The workers are also joining the reactionary trade unions (the American Federation of Labor increased its membership by 500,000).

At a time when the world situation is approaching right up to the second round of revolutions and wars, it is particularly important for the Communist Parties to understand why their influence on the broad masses of the workers is weak, and why considerable numbers of workers still follow the Social-Democratic parties and the reformist trade unions. I shall try, by comparing the situation in several Social-Democratic parties and Communist Parties, and also by comparing the work of the reformist trade unions with that of the Red trade unions in the same industries, to indicate some of the reasons why the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions are lagging behind.

A. THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF FRANCE

I. *A Few Figures on the Communist Party and the Socialist Party*

I shall quote a few figures on the membership of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party of France (according to the official returns of these parties):

Year	Members	
	Socialist Party	Communist Party
1920 (at the time of the split)	179,800
1921 (after the split).....	50,450	110,000
1931	130,900	29,415
1932	137,700	32,000

The fluctuation of membership from 1924 to 1932: The Socialist Party of France made 292,700 new members and

lost 186,415 members. Hence, 106,285 members remained. In the same period the Communist Party lost more members than it made.

Take the central organs of the respective parties: *Le Populaire* and *l'Humanite*. At the time of the split in 1920, the average circulation of *l'Humanite* was 140,000 per day; in 1927 the average circulation reached 172,000 per day. *l'Humanite* has hardly any regular subscribers. In 1927, *Le Populaire* had an average of 18,236 subscribers and 29,700 daily street sales. In 1932, the average number of subscribers rose to 43,000 and daily street sales to 75,000. In the same year the average daily circulation of *l'Humanite* dropped to 113,068. The sales of *l'Humanite* are dropping, the sales of *Le Populaire* are rising. The average daily sales of *l'Humanite* in Paris were: in 1921—37,000, in 1928—45,000, in 1932 (fourth quarter)—27,299.

Now take the parliamentary elections. In 1928 the Socialists obtained 1,698,084 votes; the Communists obtained 1,063,993 votes. In 1932 the Socialists obtained 1,964,084 votes and the Communists—795,630 votes.

2. *The Unitary and Reformist Trade Unions*

We now come to the trade unions, and we get the following figures: In 1923 the unitary trade unions* had a membership of 391,137 members; in 1926 they had 464,836 members and in 1933 (on August 1)—287,088. If we take the four federations separately, the builders, textile workers, metallists and miners, we get the following: in 1924, these had a total membership of 184,800, and in 1932 the

* The unions affiliated to the revolutionary Unitary Confederation of Labor as distinct from the reformist Confederation of Labor.—Ed.

membership was 77,100. We lost 107,700 members during this period. Of the unitary trade unions, only the railwaymen's and civil servants' unions are more or less stable; they lost only 3,000 members in this period. On the other hand, at the time of the split in the trade union movement in France, the reformist unions had about 400,000 members, now, according to what the reformist leaders say, and they are no doubt exaggerating, they have about 800,000, that is to say they have doubled their membership.

This growth of the Socialist Party and of the reformist trade unions is taking place amidst the general worsening of the conditions of the working class in France and the direct participation of the Socialists and the trade union bureaucrats in the government's offensive against the standard of living of the workers. It is sufficient to quote a few figures showing the drop in wages and the cuts in unemployed relief to become convinced that even in France, where this year a relatively steady increase in output in certain branches of industry has been observed, wages and the number of workers employed have continued to decline.

a) In the metallurgical works in Rombas wages have dropped 280 to 350 francs per month, compared with 1931, and in the works at Knutange they have dropped 300 to 400 francs per months. Wages in the textile industry have dropped 15 to 20 per cent. Simultaneously with the wage cuts, bonuses have been abolished, family allowances have been reduced, machines have to be cleaned without pay after working hours, and an extensive system of fines has been introduced, etc., etc.

b) In normal times, the total number of workers employed in industry, according to the figures of the Unitary Confederation of Labor, is 7,500,000. On October 1, 1933, the number of totally unemployed was 1,282,000 and the number of

partially unemployed was 2,820,000. The percentage of the various industries is as follows: miners—40 per cent unemployed, metal workers—30.1 per cent, chemical workers—21.5 per cent, etc.

c) Unemployed relief is paid to 232,880 unemployed workers, at an average of 10 francs per day.

How is it to be explained that, in spite of their treacherous policy, the Socialist Party and the reformist trade unions are growing, whereas the Communist Party of France and the unitary trade unions, which fight for the interests of the working class, are losing members, losing votes and losing readers of their press? It can only be explained by the fact that the Communist Party of France and the unitary trade unions are working badly, and above all, badly carry on mass work. Let us examine a few concrete examples.

The treachery of the Socialists and the leaders of the Confederation of Labor. When the Sick Insurance Bill was being passed through the French Chamber, the Socialists and the leaders of the reformist trade unions voted in favor of compelling the workers to pay contributions. The first time these contributions were deducted from wages, 150,000 workers spontaneously stopped work and demanded: "Give us our ten sous." The Socialists and the Confederation of Labor sabotaged this strike.

It was the Socialists and the trade union leaders who drafted the clause in the Bill to cut down state and administrative expenditure, which saved the government 320,000,000 francs at the expense of the salaries of civil servants. They voted in favor of reducing the budget by 400,000,000 francs, by reducing bonuses and subsidies to civil servants and workers. They voted for the budget that included expenditure on armaments, expenditure on the colonies, expenditure on the police, on the secret service, etc.

The Socialists and the trade union bureaucrats systematically betrayed strikes. Thus, in the summer of 1931, they betrayed a big strike of textile workers in the North, in which 125,000 workers were involved, and they concluded an agreement with the employers which provided for a reduction of wages. In 1933, they betrayed a strike of 20,000 workers in Strassburg.

It is well known that the leaders of the reformist trade unions openly take part in the work of the state institutions of the bourgeoisie. Thus, Jouhaux and other secretaries of the Confederation of Labor, are members of the Supreme National Economic Council, an organ of the government; they are members of the organs of the League of Nations, etc. The Socialists and the trade union bureaucrats actually take part in the work of fascizing the state apparatus and in the preparations for imperialist war. These facts provide the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions with numerous opportunities for exposing the leaders of the Socialist Party and of the Confederation of Labor; but full advantage is not taken of these opportunities.

In the North of France, in the very district where, as I have said, the reformists betrayed the textile strike, the number of trade union dues stamps issued between July 1, 1931, and June 30, 1933, has not diminished in comparison with the period 1927-29, and the reformist trade union social insurance society, *Le Travail*, even increased its membership during these two years by 20,000. And it must be borne in mind that the bulk of the workers in the North of France are textile workers.

Could such a position have arisen had the Communist Party and the Unitary Confederation of Labor exposed to the broad masses of the workers the strike-breaking tactics of the reformists during the textile strike and the other

treacherous acts of the Socialist Party and of the reformist trade union bureaucrats?

I shall give you a concrete example of faulty work on the part of the Unitary Metal Workers' Union in Lyons. Before the economic crisis, about 20,000 metal workers were employed in Lyons. In 1928 the Unitary Metal Workers' Union had a membership of 1,500, and had contacts with a considerable number of factories. During the past years, however, it lost these contacts, because it did not carry on any systematic work and did not even fight against wage cuts. The mutual Aid Fund organized by the unitary trade union was captured by the Trotskyists. The trade union also had an unemployed relief fund, but it was allowed to fall to pieces, and has not been restored during the crisis. The same thing happened to its legal advice bureau.

In 1928, while the reformists were concluding a collective agreement with the employers, the unitary trade union developed a campaign exposing and explaining the policy of the reformists. Now, however, the agreement concluded by the reformists with the employers is not known to the workers, and it is not exposed by the unitary trade union. Many cases of wage cuts have occurred, but the trade union waged no campaign against that. As a result of this deterioration in the work, the membership of the trade union has declined from 1,500 to 300. The reformists, however, who had hardly any influence before, now have a stronger trade union than ours, with 400 members.

This is not the only example of the work of the unitary trade unions.

What is the position of the revolutionary trade union opposition in the Confederation of Labor? Although the unitary trade unions achieved certain successes and enlarged their contacts with the reformist and unorganized workers

by means of demonstrations, meetings, etc., they did not carry on any systematic work inside the reformist trade unions, and are not doing so now. In the campaigns connected with the preparations for the congresses of the Confederation of Labor and the Unitary Confederation of Labor, we criticized the activity of the former, but neither the revolutionary trade union opposition groups nor our sympathizers in the Confederation of Labor unions expressed such criticism. The result of this weakness in the work of the revolutionary trade union oppositions was that not a single real delegation from the reformist trade unions attended the congress of the Unitary Confederation of Labor. And yet an opposition does exist in the Confederation of Labor (opposition speeches at the latter's congress, the withdrawal of moral support from the Confederation of Labor by the reformist Gas Workers' Union in Landes, the expulsion of several opposition branches of trade unions from the Confederation, for example, the Builders' Union in Dijon, several miners' delegates, etc.). But neither the Communist Party of France nor the unitary trade unions have any connection with this opposition. This shows that no work is yet being carried on in the reformist trade unions either by the unitary trade unions or by the Communist Party of France.

But even in those cases where the unitary trade unions enjoy considerable influence they are unable to consolidate this influence by organizing their sympathizers. Take for example, the Unitary Miners' Union in Calais. Thanks to an improvement in its mass work, this union achieved considerable successes recently, about which I shall speak in greater detail later. We are interested now in another aspect of this work, viz., the continued weakness in the consolidation of our influence in the pits. In pit No. 3 in Kurner,

the unitary trade union put up a candidate for the position of miners' agent who received 101 votes, and he was elected. In this pit there are only four members of the Unitary Miners' Union. In the Labourse pit, the candidate of the unitary trade union for the position of miners' agent was elected by a vote of 323, but the union has only six members in that pit. In St. Angoil, the unitary trade union has only ten members, and yet its candidate was elected by a vote of 471. The reformist candidate obtained 60 votes, although the reformist trade union has 50 members. The results of the elections leave no doubt that the unitary trade union has considerable influence in these pits, but it is unable to recruit or retain new members. The growth of the influence of the trade union is not accompanied by the growth of its organization and by its organizational consolidation.

And yet the position is such that all that is required is that the unitary trade union should exert a little effort for the work to produce good organizational results. The work of the members of the unitary trade union among the clothing workers of Lyons goes to prove this. The reformist Clothing Workers' Union, which is very strong in Lyons, agreed to a 30 per cent wage reduction on the pretext that prices had dropped. The unitary trade union, in spite of its weakness (only one member of this union put up a real fight), with the aid of the district council of the Unitary Clothing Workers' Union, called meetings and distributed leaflets, and thus roused all the workers, men and women. When the wage cut was declared, the indignation among the workers was so strong that at a number of factories the machines were stopped. The employers, fearing a strike throughout the whole clothing industry, were compelled to withdraw the wage cut. As a result of this victory, the Unitary Clothing Workers' Union became much stronger,

and four trade union branches were formed in the factories. The influence of the reformists considerably declined.

As I have already stated, the Unitary Miners' Union in Calais recently achieved considerable successes. The number of branches has increased as compared with 1932. In twelve branches, 329 new members were made, and in eight branches, 117 members were lost. This success can be ascribed to the improvement in the methods of work; for example, the union began to publish a monthly paper, *The Miner's Voice*. When they started this paper they had not a sou, but the sales of the first issue (6,300 copies were published) brought in sufficient funds for publishing the second issue (7,000 copies), and at the present time the paper is being run without a loss. In addition to the publication of this paper, mention must also be made of the good work carried on by various branches and individual members, which has produced definite results. Take for example the branch in pit No. 3 in Lievin. This branch was formed in 1931, and consisted of 20 members; in the middle of 1933 it had 240 members. This result was achieved by the regular calling of meetings, the discussion of the tasks ahead, the enlisting of all the members in trade union work, the proper distribution of functions, etc. There can be no doubt that the proper organization of mass work by the other unitary trade unions would produce the same positive results. Hence, it is up to the Communists and the revolutionary trade union workers.

3. *The Demagogy and Maneuvers of the Socialists and Trade Union Bureaucrats, and the Mistakes of the Communist Party and the Unitary Confederation of Labor of France*

The united front. The Central Committee of the Com-

munist Party of France committed serious opportunist errors at the end of 1932 and the beginning of 1933 in carrying out the united front. For three months the leading body of the French Communist Party carried on negotiations with the Socialist Party concerning the terms of a debate that was to be organized on the question of unity generally. Accepting one after another the terms demanded by the Socialist Party, including "the mutual obligation to abstain from accusations and insults," and "equal number of invitation tickets," etc., they eventually came to an agreement that the "meetings must bear the character of mutual respect and discipline."

The mistake the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France made was not of course that it carried on negotiations with the Central Committee of the Socialist Party, although it is difficult to understand why they should negotiate with P.U.P.'ists,* with renegades and people who have been expelled from the Communist Party, who represent nobody. Their mistake was that they failed to carry on negotiations for the organization of a united front of struggle between the Communist and Socialist workers on definite questions and on a definite program; instead they discussed the organization of a debate on questions concerning the united front. These negotiations were carried on in the following manner: the Communist Party called a meeting on the united front, to which they invited the Socialist leaders. That was the proper thing to do. That meeting was very successful; but owing to the opening of negotiations, no further meetings of this kind

* *Partie d'Unite Proletarienne*. Party of Proletarian Unity—a small group of opportunists who were expelled from the Communist Party in 1929.—Ed.

were called. Had the Communist Party continued to call such meetings on the united front then, in view of the interest displayed by the workers in a united front of struggle, the success of the Communist Party of France would have been assured, as is proved by the anti-war campaign which the Party carried on in a skillful manner. This campaign met with a very fine response not only among the non-Party workers, but also among the members of the Socialist Party (122 branches of the Socialist Party affiliated to the Amsterdam anti-war movement).

The Socialist Party, which began by intimidating its members who took part in the anti-war movement, had to change its tactics, because threats of expulsion had no effect. It commenced negotiations with the Communists not for the organization of a united front of joint struggle—of course the Socialist Party does not want such a united front—but about the terms of organizing a debate on the united front. Its purpose was to put a stop to the process of disintegration in its ranks. And thanks to the mistakes committed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France, the Socialist Party succeeded in its object.

Then began a series of joint conferences, communiques, etc., about trifling matters. And this created the illusion among the Socialist workers that real unity was being discussed. The interest displayed by the workers in these negotiations was enormous. Outside the hall where these negotiations were going on hundreds of workers gathered. Having started these negotiations, the representatives of the Communist Party should have tried to transform them into negotiations for a real united front of struggle on a definite platform and in this way expose the representatives of the Socialist Party, because the latter's aim, of course, was something entirely different. The members of the Socialist Party

who were disappointed with their party were already on the road to the Communist Party. But owing to the fact that the latter had entered into these negotiations for "unity" with the Socialist Party, they thought to themselves: well, the Socialist Party is not so bad after all, why should we leave it? Perhaps the two parties will unite.

These negotiations for the organization of a debate on the "scientific" significance of the unity of the working class were brought to an end only by the intervention of the E.C.C.I. As is well known, in the beginning of March, the Central Committee of the Socialist Party rejected the proposal of the Communist Party of France to establish a united front of struggle on a definite platform, and left no doubt whatever that these negotiations for a debate were simply a maneuver on its part. As far as I know, the Communist Party called no further meetings for a united front after the cessation of the negotiations.

The campaign for the united front was not carried on any better by the unitary trade unions. Take, for example, the tactics of the Unitary Confederation of Labor on the question of organizing a united front of struggle of the municipal workers and office employees against the sweeping attack upon their wages that the government was preparing. As a result of the pressure of the masses, on November 30, 1932, the reformist unions in Paris called a big meeting of municipal employees to protest against the proposed wage cuts. But, scared by the call made to its members by the unitary trade unions to attend this meeting, the reformists cancelled it. Thus, the unitary union had every opportunity of taking the initiative and calling a meeting themselves to expose the reformists and utilize the meeting for the purpose of organizing a united front of struggle with the municipal employees against the attack on their standard of living.

But instead of doing this the unitary union came to an agreement with the reformists to set up a joint committee to convene the meeting, to have an *equal* number of speakers, and to refrain from all verbal criticism. And this was agreed to in spite of the fact that the unitary unions in Paris have approximately three times as much influence upon the municipal employees as the reformists. And *l'Humanite* wrote that the meeting passed off in fraternal unity and that the "pact of non-aggression was very conscientiously observed by the unitarians." It is not surprising therefore that *Le Populaire* wrote that the meeting was one of the best examples of the application of the tactics of the united front. (*Laughter.*) Apparently, *l'Humanite* accepted this praise at its face value.

The Unitary Municipal Employees' Union in Dijon went even further in its capitulation to the reformists in carrying out the united front. In Dijon, the initiative in calling a meeting of the municipal employees against the government's attack on their wages was taken by the reformist union. Here too, the unitary union called upon its members to attend the meeting. When the reformist leaders, seeing the temper of the meeting, proposed that a joint bureau be set up, and began to make "Left" speeches, our Comrade Haniman declared that he was "glad to note the change of position of the reformist organizations and the speakers who have adopted the point of view of exposing the anti-working class character of bourgeois parliamentarism and of 'Left' governments, which they formerly supported." (*Cahiers du Bolchevisme*, December 1, 1932, p. 1458.)

And yet, the treacherous policy of the leaders of the Confederation of Labor and of the Socialist Party could have been very strikingly exposed to the masses on the question of their attitude to the reduction of the deficit in the budget

at the expense of the municipal employees. In the course of the year during which the Finance Bill was discussed in the Chamber, Jouhaux and his supporters pretended to be opposed to the Bill, carried on mysterious negotiations with Boncour and proposed amendments to the Bill which, in fact, also provided for economies at the expense of the workers and office employees amounting to three quarters of a billion francs. As a result of all this, the government's Bill was passed, and 38,000 municipal employees were dismissed, no new employees were engaged, wage and salary cuts were introduced ranging from 2 to 10 per cent, various bonuses to workers and office employees were reduced by 20 per cent, etc.

The Communist Party of France and the Berlin Protocol. But since the Communist Party of France displayed such faith in the proposals of the leaders of the Socialist Party to negotiate the terms of a debate on the united front, and since the leaders of the unitary trade unions got so enthusiastic about the loud-mouthed "Left" phrases of the reformists, it is not surprising that the Communist Party and the unitary trade unions were so helpless in exposing the furious campaign and the demagoguery which the Socialists and reformists developed in connection with the prolongation of the Berlin agreement between the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

Fulfilling the direct orders of French imperialism, Rosenfeld began to pretend that he was a loyal friend of the German proletarian revolution and of the German Communists. *Le Populaire* of May 11 commenced a campaign against the U.S.S.R. in connection with the signing of the Berlin Protocol and hypocritically exclaimed: "The Bolshevik Party is persecuted in Germany as the German sec-

tion of the Communist International, which has its headquarters in Moscow. It is persecuted for displaying the Soviet emblem. . . . And this is the very moment the Soviets choose to sign a pact of amity with Hitler. The workers' and peasants' government of Russia binds itself with a friendly protocol to the executioners of the German workers." In the same issue of *Le Populaire* Leon Blum engages in the same demagoguery but addresses himself directly to the Communist Party of France. He wrote: "How can they" (the French Communists) "explain to the masses of the workers the fact that, while their brother party in Germany has been driven underground by the fascists and while their leaders are threatened with death at the hands of Hitler and Goering, the Soviet government hastens to sign with fascism . . . a pact of confidence and amity."

Replying to these articles in *Le Populaire, l'Humanite*, in its issue of May 22, writes: ". . . . It would do no harm to revert to the question of the ratification of the protocol prolonging the German-Soviet treaty concluded in 1926. . . . The treaty in question was concluded in Berlin on April 24, 1926. . . . This is a typical treaty of non-aggression, such as the Soviet Union concludes, and such as was concluded, for example, by the Soviets with France. It was prolonged in Moscow on June 24, 1931, but Germany had not yet exchanged ratifications of the prolongation of the treaty with the U.S.S.R. . . . Hitler did this himself without preliminary negotiations with the Soviet government. Thus, to the great confusion of the falsifiers, Blum and Rosenfeld, it was Hitler, and not Stalin, who ratified the treaty of 1926-31. . . ."

And that is all. In reply to this "argument," Rosenfeld wrote another article in *Le Populaire* of May 23, in which he said: ". . . Let us admit for a moment that this is true.

. . . But in that case, how can one explain the comments of *Izvestia and Pravda* which welcomed this ratification as an act of international significance, and congratulated themselves on it. No, *l'Humanite* must think of some other argument to pacify its readers who are becoming increasingly disturbed about it. . . ."

To this article of Rosenfeld, *l'Humanite* made no reply whatever.

One must give credit to the French Socialists for their ability to maneuver and to develop demagogical agitation; whereas the French Communists do not always opportunely and ably expose these maneuvers and this demagoguery.

Le Populaire, Rosenfeld, Blum & Co., as well as the whole of the Second International, were confronted with the task of counteracting—by means of sickly sentimental phrases about the persecution to which the German Communists are being subjected “for displaying the Soviet emblem”—the stunning effect that the treachery of the German Social-Democratic Party and of the German trade unions, before and when Hitler came to power, had upon the French workers, and in fact, upon all workers. To some extent, the Socialists were able to fulfil this task because the oral and written agitation of the Communist Party of France and of the unitary trade unions failed to refute in a sufficiently intelligible and clear manner the despicable attacks against the U.S.S.R. More than that, this agitation did not even expose the French Socialists and the Socialists of other countries, who either themselves have shot down workers and peasants in their own countries and particularly in the colonies, or have supported the bourgeois governments in suppressing the toilers. Did not the French Socialists vote money, and are they not now voting money, to the French government for the sanguinary suppression of the people in Morocco,

Syria and Indo-China, who are rising against the yoke of French imperialism? Did not Blum & Co., who are so “indignant” about the Berlin protocol, support the French government when it signed the Four-Power Pact to which fascist Germany belongs? Did the French Socialists ever protest against the fact that their government is in alliance with the Polish, Rumanian and Yugoslav fascist governments which are shooting down starving workers and peasants, and who are torturing and physically destroying political prisoners in their dungeons? Attention should have been called to these and other facts of the treacherous practice of the French Socialists.

The French proletarians, whom the Blums try to fool with sentimental phrases, should have been reminded of the policy of tears and blood pursued in the interests of their bourgeoisie, and against the toilers now and in the past by the parties of the Second International when in power. Did not the “Labor” government of MacDonald ruthlessly shoot down the workers and peasants of India and of other colonies who rose against the intolerable yoke of the predatory imperialists? Did it not destroy whole villages with fire and sword? Did not the Social-Democratic police presidents of Berlin and Altona shoot down workers’ demonstrations, particularly the May First demonstration in Berlin in 1929, and the demonstration in Altona in July, 1932? Did not the fascists execute Comrade Luetgens and three other Communist workers who were arrested at this Altona demonstration by the Social-Democratic police president because of their anti-fascist work?

The French Communists must tirelessly and persistently remind the workers of the whole truth about the treachery of the social-fascists. This would suppress all desire on the part of the French Socialists to try to hound the toilers

against the U.S.S.R. by means of campaigns of slander; and it would help the broad masses of the workers to understand the real motives of these campaigns.

Now a few words about the Berlin Protocol.

Should the U.S.S.R., which is the only country as yet in which the proletarian revolution has conquered, and which is, in the words of Lenin, "as yet an oasis amidst a seething sea of imperialist piracy" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII, "Speech in Foreign Policy," May 14, 1918), reject the possibility of temporary agreements with capitalist states in the sphere of industry and commerce, and, if it is possible, in the sphere of diplomatic relations? Should the U.S.S.R. take advantage of the discord among the imperialist states in order to hinder their coming to an agreement against the first, and so far, the only land of the proletarian dictatorship, or as far as possible to make such agreement temporarily impossible? No honest worker can have the slightest doubt that it is the bounden duty of the Soviet Union to take advantage of these antagonisms to strengthen the Soviet Union. Such agreements, said Comrade Stalin, in his "Interview with the First American Delegation," "are possible and expedient in conditions of peaceful development . . . The limits to these agreements? The limits are set by the opposite characters of two systems between which there is rivalry and conflict. Within the limits permitted by these two systems, but only within those limits, agreement is quite possible." (Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol I.)

It is true, there were so-called "revolutionaries" in 1918 who urged that the land of the proletarian dictatorship should not enter into any agreement with capitalist states. As is well known, their point of view was rejected; the adoption of this point of view would merely have helped the imperialists and their accomplices, the Social-Democrats of all

countries, who would have shouted that the Soviet Union itself was to blame, because it isolated itself from the whole world; it would have helped them in their further pursuit of the policy of blockade and intervention against the Soviets. Indeed, in the very first days of its existence, the Soviet government appealed to the people and governments of all countries to stop the war and establish normal diplomatic and trade relations with the land of the proletarian dictatorship. Life has fully confirmed the correctness of these tactics from the standpoint of consolidating the Soviet state and developing the international proletarian revolution. Perhaps, in entering into such agreements with capitalist states, the U.S.S.R. should have been guided by the form of the bourgeois dictatorship—"democratic" or fascist—existing in the respective countries, and should establish normal diplomatic and trade relations with "democratic" France, say, and break off the relations with Germany, because she became a fascist state; or should refuse to conclude agreements with China, Japan, etc., because the bourgeoisie and landlords in these countries oppress and exploit the workers and peasants by feudal and fascist methods? The broad masses of the workers will have no doubts in their minds on this question if the Communists prove to them by facts that "democratic" England or France employ the same methods of colonial enslavement of the peoples of India or Indo-China as the Japanese employ in China, Korea or Formosa; that in all the capitalist countries, irrespective of their form of government, the predatory exploitation of the workers is growing, the ruination of the bulk of the peasantry is increasing, and the peasants are being driven from the land because of their failure to pay their debts. This, of course, does not mean that it is a matter of indifference to the Communists, from the point of view of mobilizing the forces of the proletariat and of de-

veloping the revolutionary struggle, whether the "democratic" or the fascist form of dictatorship exists in the given capitalist country. But this is not what we mean when we speak of the establishment of relations between the proletarian state and the capitalist world. From the point of view of these relations, all capitalist countries are alike. All these countries are governed by the bourgeoisie, which, according to the prevailing circumstances, exercises its dictatorship either in the form of "democracy," or in the form of fascism.

But the social-scoundrels shout: "The Soviet government is concluding pacts of non-aggression with capitalist states, including fascist states! It gives a hearty welcome to statesmen from the capitalist countries! . . ." The best reply to such, and similar, demagogic outcries by the social-fascists and renegades is to explain to the workers the principles underlying the foreign policy of the Soviet government:

a) The Soviet government does not intend to attack other countries, for it is, in principle, irreconcilably opposed to the enslavement of one state by another, of one nation by another.

b) The Soviet Union rejects and fights against imperialist war, which is waged in the interests of a handful of capitalists and causes the physical extermination of millions of workers and peasants.

c) For the first time in the history of humanity two worlds, two systems, two irreconcilable types of state, confront one another.

In the old capitalist world there is economic decay and collapse, the growth of parasitism, the growth of exploitation, of unemployment, ruin, poverty, starvation and the despair of the toilers.

In the Soviet Union, in the land of victorious socialism, there is a rate of development of productive forces unpre-

cedented in history, a gigantic growth of industrialization and the victory of the collective farm system, the *liquidation of classes and of the causes which give rise to the exploitation of man by man in any form.*

The abolition of unemployment and the systematic improvement of the material and cultural standards of the toilers have been achieved already; the broad masses of the workers and collective farmers are conscious builders of a new and happy life.

Is it not clear to the masses of the workers and peasants of the whole world that they are immediately interested in the prosperity of the Soviet system and in the further victories of socialist construction in the Soviet Union? Is it not clear to them that it is necessary to defend the socialist fatherland of all the toilers? The socialist state points out to the workers of all countries and to the oppressed of the whole world, the path of struggle and of victory, and it mobilizes the revolutionary forces of the working class of all countries against capitalism.

The bourgeoisie of all countries are seeking a way out of the crisis by still further intensifying the exploitation of the workers and peasants, by still further oppressing the colonies, by still further enslaving the weak countries, by waging civil war against the toilers at home and by imperialist war for a new division of the world.

The bourgeoisie of all countries hate the Soviet Union whose successes are mobilizing the forces of the proletariat and of all the toilers for the revolutionary way out of the crisis. The imperialists are striving to find a way out of their world of contradictions by means of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. By its consistent policy of fighting for peace, and in particular by concluding pacts of non-aggression with the bourgeois states, the Soviet

government is thwarting the plans of the interventionists and is proving to the masses that it is not the U.S.S.R. that is striving and preparing for war.

And if the imperialists commence their counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, it will not be so easy for them to deceive the masses by asserting that the Soviet Union is responsible for war.

At the same time it must be explained to the masses of the toilers that, while signing pacts of non-aggression, the imperialists are not ceasing their preparations for imperialist war. And every one of the imperialists, under cover of these pacts, is simply waiting for the convenient moment to unfurl its counter-revolutionary attack against the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union alone, in the whole of its policy, is really waging a struggle against war.

The French social-scoundrels know all this perfectly well. They strive to conceal this truth from the French workers precisely because they serve their bourgeoisie in all its maneuvers. When French imperialism (in 1929) instigated the North Chinese militarists to violate their treaty with the U.S.S.R. concerning the Chinese-Eastern Railway and when the U.S.S.R. put up resistance to this, the French Socialists set up a howl about so-called Red imperialism. In 1933 French imperialism is alarmed by the growing aggressiveness of the German fascists. The French Socialists, pretending to sympathize with the German Communist Party, demand the rupture of relations between the U.S.S.R. and fascist Germany.

Is it not clear that the French Socialists are not defending the principles of proletarian internationalism, as they allege, but the interests of French imperialism? But *l'Humanite's* reply to Blum & Co. shows that the central organ of the

Communist Party of France does not fully understand the foreign policy of the Soviet government. Similarly *l'Humanite* did not satisfactorily explain, not only to the broad masses of the workers, but even to the members of the Party, the policy the Soviet government pursued in concluding an agreement with France. In connection with the welcome given to Herriot during his visit to the U.S.S.R. the Socialist press in France raised quite a hullabaloo. *Le Populaire*, commenting on the opinions expressed by Soviet statesmen concerning the peace policy pursued by Herriot, wrote: While the Communists call them, the Socialists, traitors for supporting the policy of Herriot, "Moscow greets this policy as the dawn of a new era." (Paul Faure, in *Le Populaire*, August 28, 1933.)

Although *l'Humanite* replied to this "demagogy" in a number of fairly good articles (Cachin, Ducleaux, Ferrat, Pierre and others), nevertheless the policy of the Soviet government was not sufficiently explained, even to the members of the Party. This alone can explain why the Montlucon District Committee of the Communist Party of France passed a resolution on the relations between the Soviet government and the French government in which it stated:

"After a lengthy discussion on the present political situation, the danger of war and the relations between the Soviet and French governments, the *Montlucon District Committee* declares:

- 1) That the visits of French statesmen (particularly that of Herriot) were not sufficiently explained by the Communist Party and its press.
- 2) That the Socialist leaders, on the basis of their declarations (particularly the declaration of Cot on technical co-operation between the air forces of the U.S.S.R. and of France), commenced a furious attack against Russia and accused it of preparing for a military alliance with France.

3) That *l'Humanite* and the leaders of the Party did not sufficiently and opportunely react to this attack, apparently because they did not understand the importance of it and the impression it could make upon the workers.

4) That the attack caused dismay even in the Communist ranks to such degree that on Sunday, October 1, at the Youth Congress in Allier, one of the members of the Party raised the question of the possibility of a military alliance between France and Soviet Russia.

The District Committee demands . . . a clear explanation from the leaders of the French Communist Party. . . .”

The Montlucon District Committee is right. How can the members of the Party agitate properly against the Socialists if they do not get a proper line from their Party leaders? Was it difficult to explain that the U.S.S.R. is pursuing a policy of peace and of friendly relations with all countries, and that that is why the toilers of the Soviet Union were pleased that the relations between France and the U.S.S.R. have improved? Even before that the U.S.S.R. was in favor of restoring normal relations with France, as with other capitalist countries, and so, it was not the position of the Soviet Union that had changed, after the *coup* in Germany, but the policy of France towards the U.S.S.R. It is well known that when imperialist France was not very much afraid of Germany (when the Weimar Coalition was at the head of Germany) it got Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia to encircle the Soviet Union; it was the initiator of an attack upon the Soviet Union. Then the National-Socialists, with their program of equal status for Germany, revision of frontiers and war, came into power. Imperialist France had to change its tactics for a time. French imperialism abandoned the role of chief organizer of the anti-Soviet front, signed a pact of non-aggression with the U.S.S.R. and demonstrated its friendship with the Soviet

Union. This change of tactics took place precisely because the international situation had changed. Tomorrow it may change again, and French imperialist circles may try, as the Polish imperialist circles are trying, to strike a bargain with German fascism.

Was this difficult to understand, difficult to explain? It should have been explained to the masses that the Socialists are spreading lying rumors about a military alliance between the U.S.S.R. and France and about the manufacture of munitions for the U.S.S.R. in order to hinder the successful work of the Anti-War Committee, the Communist Party of France and the Unitary Confederation of Labor, against war. They spread this legend about the manufacture of munitions for the U.S.S.R. as a pretext for facilitating the unceasing supply of munitions to Japan. The French Communists have every opportunity of using the whole policy of the Soviet Union as an illustration to prove to the workers concretely that the Soviet Union does not belong to any coalition of imperialist states, that in its relations with other states it is pursuing an independent, proletarian, class policy, in the interests of the toilers of the whole world.

In Poland, the changed relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland were utilized extensively by the Polish Socialist Party against the Communist Party of Poland. Notwithstanding the fact that the central Party press properly replied to the campaign of the Polish Socialist Party and bourgeois press, the local Party organizations were rather slow in reacting to this campaign.

Now a campaign has commenced in the United States in connection with the recognition of the U.S.S.R. It must be observed that there is lack of clarity on this question even among the Communists. As I have already said, we must

deprive the Social-Democrats of their demagogic "arguments" by explaining our position in a clear and sensible manner.

The numerical growth of the Socialist Party of France does not mean, however, that its position in the working class has been strengthened during the past year. On the contrary, the increasingly determined attack of the bourgeoisie on the working class—particularly the reduction of wages and salaries of workers and civil servants on the one hand, and the growing radicalization of new strata of workers, on the other—is compelling the Socialist Party of France to maneuver in various directions, and is even leading to a split in its ranks. The neo-Socialists, led by Renaudel under the slogans: Order, Authority and the Nation, are deliberately striving to excel the fascists in the fascization of the French republic. In particular, they are supporting the "Left" governments of France in carrying out the financial plan of the bourgeoisie to wipe out the deficit in the budget at the expense of the toilers. The majority of the party, led by Blum and Faure, are carrying on "Left" maneuvers. They reject the proposal of the neo-Socialists and are compelled to break away from them, which means a split in the Socialist parliamentary group, because they fear that otherwise they will rapidly lose the confidence of the workers and that the Social-Democratic workers will begin to go over to the Communists. Under cover of this maneuver, they are increasing their intimidation of the revolutionary-minded workers in their own ranks, and they have expelled the Action-Socialist* group for taking part in the Amsterdam anti-war movement.

* Left-wing group in the Socialist Party of France.—*Ed.*

4. *Improvements in the Work of the Communist Party of France and of the Unitary Confederation of Labor*

The Communist Party is helping to disintegrate the Socialist Party of France to a very considerable extent, but it has been unable as yet to take full advantage of the situation. Meetings organized by the Communist Party are attended by Socialist workers; the future will show whether the Party will be able to consolidate for itself this discontent of the Socialist workers.

The Communist Party of France has achieved successes, not in many things, but successes nevertheless. The criticism of the Twelfth Plenum was not lost on it. *It is true that the state of the leadership has not improved much, but still it has improved.* In France we have a definite turn for the better in regard to transferring the work of the trade unions to the factories. There are organizations that have their bases in the factories (*Voiron Metallurgie*). At the Citroen Works, where before the strike the unitary trade union had almost no positions, 17 trade union sections have been organized. The Unitary Woodworkers' Union at Lyons has 17 sections organized in factories, in two of which the workers are organized 100 per cent. On September 16, 1933, the unitary trade unions had a total of 1,600 trade union sections and groups in the factories and 400 factory and trade union section newspapers (in order to avoid misunderstanding I must say that we have not verified these figures). The only thing that is required now is that the work should be carried on properly. Some of the trade unions are beginning to acquire a number of mass auxiliary organs to serve the workers. For example the chauffeurs in the Department of the Seine have a legal advice bureau for matters connected with the arbitration courts, an ordinary legal advice bureau, a solidarity fund, an insurance fund, a

sports club, a children's holiday camp and a home for aged people. The Paris Trade Council has a legal advice bureau on matters concerning arbitration, accident and social insurance, an unemployed insurance fund, a library, etc. Similar organizations have been set up by the Municipal Transport Workers' Union in Paris, the railway workers in Amiens Langol, the metal workers in St. Etienne and the miners in pit No. 5 in Escarpel, etc.

All this is as yet a drop in the ocean, but they are on the right road. They must march forward quickly and the results will soon be perceived.

5. *A Few Conclusions*

a) *L'Humanite* is the most powerful agitator the Communist Party of France possesses. That is why the Central Committee should appoint the best Party newspaper workers to work on the staff of *L'Humanite*. There must be better guidance of the paper by the Political Bureau. The important campaigns should be conducted by the paper under the direct guidance of the Political Bureau.

L'Humanite, and the other newspapers of the Communist Party of France, must reply to the insinuations of the Socialists and of the trade union bureaucrats, not with abuse, but with sensible explanations.

b) The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France and the leaders of the unitary trade unions should set up special departments to guide the oppositional work in the reformist trade unions and other mass reformist workers' organizations.

c) The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France, and the Communist fraction in the Unitary Confederation of Labor, must take all measures necessary to make the unitary trade unions carry on their work in a revolu-

tionary manner. They must improve their daily, painstaking work in the factories and trade unions, and do it better than the reformists. They must make careful preparations for strikes, conduct them in a skilful manner, and enlist non-Party active workers in the leadership of strikes.

Strikes and the everyday work of the trade unions must be utilized for the purpose of extending the influence of the revolutionary trade unions and for the purpose of consolidating this influence. The Communist Party of France does not utilize the advantage it has in the possession of the unitary trade unions because the unitary trade unions work badly. This must stop.

d) The Central Committee of the Communist Party of France must carry on an extensive, energetic campaign throughout the country and call mass workers' meetings, to which members of the Socialist Party must unflinchingly be invited, for the purpose of exposing the Socialist Party. The speakers at these meetings must be carefully instructed by the Party organizations, and special pains must be taken to explain the reasons for the split in the Socialist Party, to characterize each faction and prove that both factions are in agreement in regard to supporting the bourgeois dictatorship, defending the bourgeois fatherland during war, fighting against the Communists, etc.

The Socialist workers must be called upon to leave both factions of the Socialist Party of France and to join the anti-fascist and the anti-war organizations, the unitary trade unions and the Communist Party. A real united front must be established with the local organizations affiliated to the *Action Socialiste*, and efforts must be made to get them to join the Communist Party of France.

e) We must agitate better, work better and consolidate the fruits of our work in France better.

B. THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE LABOR PARTY
IN NORWAY

I now pass to Norway where the last elections revealed a colossal increase in the vote of the Labor Party and the stagnation of our Party.

1. *The State of the Norwegian Labor Party and the Communist Party in Figures*

I shall give only a few figures showing the state and the work of the Communist Party and the Labor Party in Norway.

	Membership	
	<i>Labor Party</i>	<i>Communist Party</i>
1924 (after the split)	45,000	15,000
1933	85,000	5,279
	Circulation of Newspapers	
<i>Arbeiderbladet</i> , in Oslo alone	50,000	Total all newspapers 10,000
	Votes at Parliamentary Elections	
		1924
Labor Party	179,567	
Social-Democratic Party *	85,743	60,000
		1927
United Labor Party **	370,000	40,000
		1930
	375,000	20,000
		1933
	500,000	22,000

* The Social-Democrats left the Labor Party when the latter affiliated to the C.I.

** The Social-Democratic Party rejoined the Labor Party.

2. *The Position of the Communist Party in the Trade Union Movement*

After the split, the Communist Party of Norway had a strong position in the trade unions in the big towns and in the important industries.

In 1927, the Communist Party lost the majority on the Trondheim Trades Council and in the Lumber Workers' Union, but retained the leadership of the metal workers', transport workers', and chemical workers' unions, and in a number of small unions.

In 1930 the Labor Party and the trade union bureaucrats split the trade unions in Bergen; nevertheless, the majority of the trade unions in Bergen remained in the hands of the Communists.

In view of the fact that the Communist Party failed to devote sufficient attention to trade union work, and that the Communists working in the trade unions committed many opportunist and sectarian mistakes, the trade unions with Communist majorities lost their members and the reformist unions grew at their expense. Recently, as a consequence of the intensification of the crisis, the worsening of the conditions of the working class, and the more and more open treachery of the reformists, a certain growth of the influence of the revolutionary trade union opposition has been observed. Discontent in the reformist unions with the policy of compromise pursued by the trade union bureaucrats towards the employers is increasing. At all congresses of trade unions, strong oppositions were formed. For example, at the Building Workers Congress, out of 202 delegates, the Communist opposition obtained 81 votes on various questions. In 1933, the Communists in Oslo secured the election

of 10 of their delegates to the Trades Council and now they have 40 out of 300 delegates. In March, 1933, the Communist Party won the leadership in the Paper Makers' Union in Ostfolt, the principal center of the paper industry.

But the Communist Party of Norway has failed, so far, to make use of its positions in the reformist trade unions, in order to:

- a) recruit the workers into the Party;
- b) to increase the circulation of the Party press;
- c) to turn the discontent of the members of the reformist trade unions against the Labor Party of Norway.

This partly explains the results of the recent parliamentary elections in which the Labor Party obtained 125,000 votes more than it obtained in 1930. In the *Ostfolt* district where the Communist Party has the majority on the Executive of the Trades Council in the town of Sarbsborg, the principal industrial center of this region, the Norwegian Labor Party obtained 21,000 votes and the Communist Party, 266 votes. In Oslo, the Labor Party obtained 73,500 votes and the Communist Party, 1,700 votes.

The Communist members of trade unions managed more or less to take advantage of the discontent of the members of the reformist unions to organize an opposition against the trade union bureaucrats, but they failed to learn how to link up their work in the trade unions with agitation against the treacherous Labor Party, which is behind the trade union bureaucrats, notwithstanding the fact that it puts forward the demagogic demands for the allocation of 55,000,000 krone for combating the crisis, and organizes numerous demonstrations in support of these demands. The Communist Party of Norway has been unable to expose Tranmael's

Labor Party in spite of the fact that it, like all the other Social-Democratic parties, says one thing and does another; it "says" that it will transform the imperialist war into civil war, and yet, when the workers in the Raufe Works (in the suburbs of Oslo) tried to prevent the transport of munitions to Japan, the Tranmaelists acted as strikebreakers.

3. *How the Norwegian Communist Party Conducts Agitation*

a) *The United Front.* In an article in the *Arbeiderbladet* of March 11, 1933, Tranmael wrote: "If one really wants to pursue a common line, then one does not start by putting forward conditions. Negotiations must be commenced on a free basis." In reply to this statement the *Arbeideren*, the central organ of the Communist Party, in its issue of March 27, published a second letter addressed to the Central Committee of the Norwegian Labor Party in which it says: "We must emphasize that our proposal must not be regarded as a condition. It is merely a proposal which we desire to discuss with the representatives of your party, and if in the process of the negotiations better proposals be made, we of course will be prepared to discuss them and agree to them."

Thus, the Communist Party of Norway accepted Tranmael's conditions for a united front instead of putting forward the definite conditions for a united front with the Social-Democratic Party that were published in the manifesto of the Communist International of March 5. I think, and probably you will all agree with me, that these conditions were obligatory also for the Norwegian section. But instead of repelling Tranmael, the Norwegian Communist Party, in its answer to him says: We are prepared to discuss and accept your proposals.

In April, 1933, the central organ of the Communist Party published a resolution passed by the Metal Workers' Union in Oslo which reads as follows: "The unity of the workers will be possible only when all parties throw aside their petty, party interests and enter into negotiations without consideration for their factional positions and without any preliminary conditions." The central organ and the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Norway expressed their complete agreement with this resolution and did not think it necessary to make any critical remarks concerning it.

b) *Fascism*. In a number of articles Tranmael declared that in the interests of the working class of Norway the Labor Party must take power into its hands. In reply to this a member of the executive of the revolutionary trade union opposition wrote a letter to the central organ of the Communist Party in which he said that the Communist Party should support the demand for the formation of a Social-Democratic government with the object of avoiding the fate that befell the working class of Germany under Hitler (*Arbeideren*, October 27, 1933), and the editors of the central organ did not say a single sensible word by way of comment on this "argument."

c) *Who is responsible for the split in the working class?* In reply to a statement made by Tranmael that, owing to the attacks of the Comintern on the policy of the Second International, a united working class is impossible, Comrade Kristiansen, secretary of the Communist Party of Norway, in a speech at the students' meeting held in Oslo on March 18, 1933, said that in the present situation it was no use discussing who was responsible for the split in the working class, the Communists or the Social-Democrats.

d) *Social-Democratic Slogans*. In connection with the

liberal bourgeois minimum program, which the Labor Party advanced as the program for a Social-Democratic government, the central organ of the Communist Party, in its issue of October 24, 1933, writes: "Nearly half a million adult workers and small peasants stand for the proud slogans of Social-Democracy." "Forward to a free, socialist Norway!" "The whole nation must set to work! And we declare that our electors will fulfil their duty if it comes to fighting for these slogans." I think that only conscious or unconscious agents of the Labor Party could "agitate" against the Labor Party in this way.

In the same issue of October 24, 1933, we read the following profound arguments concerning the character of the workers' government which Tranmael has in mind: "The crisis and the disintegration of bourgeois society has made it absolutely necessary for the bourgeoisie to pursue a reactionary policy that is openly hostile to the working class in order to retain their profits and class privileges, and for these purposes a workers' government (apparently a Tranmaelist government—O.P.) cannot be utilized." That is how our party "exposes" the treacherous policy of Social-Democracy.

4. *Conclusions*

a) After such a "struggle" waged by the central organ of the Communist Party of Norway against the Norwegian Labor Party, is it surprising that the workers at the last elections almost entirely voted for the Labor Party?

b) Can the workers understand the irreconcilable disagreements between the Communists and the Social-Democrats if the central organ of the Communist Party writes about the united front in this way?

c) With such a policy, and with such work carried on by the Communists in the trade unions, is it possible to acquire influence among the masses of the workers and consolidate it?

d) The Presidium of the Plenum ought to appoint a commission to investigate the situation in the leadership of the Communist Party of Norway; but this does not mean that those comrades who brought the Party to this state of isolation from the masses should be restored.

C. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

1. *After the Twelfth Plenum*

At the Twelfth Plenum, the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia was praised for having managed to conduct a number of big strikes and having drawn into these strikes workers of all trends, including the reformists. But at this very Twelfth Plenum it was pointed out that, while organizing and leading these strikes, presumably by applying the tactics of the revolutionary united front, the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia concealed its Party face. At the time, however, this fact was not so completely revealed as it has been during the past year. The Comintern had to point this out on several occasions. The Social-Democratic Parties of Czecho-Slovakia (Germans and Czechs) are represented in the government. They, in conjunction with the bourgeoisie, are gradually introducing a fascist dictatorship in the country, they are introducing measures which worsen the position of the workers, of the peasants and of office employees, under the guise of fighting for "democracy." However, instead of exposing the Social-Democratic Parties as such, the Communist Party, for the sake of the united front, as they opportunistically interpret it, limited themselves to criti-

cizing only the Social-Democratic leaders. Apparently, for the sake of the same opportunistically interpreted "unity of the working class," no Communist work is carried on in the reformist trade unions, notwithstanding the scores of decisions passed by the Comintern and by the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party itself on the necessity of carrying on such work. Similarly, the Communist Party did not take advantage of all the favorable opportunities that presented themselves to organize the discontent of the masses of the workers. The Red trade unions have not increased their membership at the expense of the reformist trade unions which exist side by side with them.

2. *The Work of the Red and Reformist Trade Unions*

By comparing the data on the state of the Red trade unions and reformist trade unions of metal workers and miners, and by analyzing their work, we shall be able to see why we have failed to win the workers away from the reformist unions, and why we have even lost positions. The following figures indicate the membership of the respective unions:

Red Trade Unions	Reformist Trade Unions
Metal Workers	
January 1, 1933 22,075	} Czech union 68,871 German union 29,021
July 1, 1933 25,741	
	Figures not available
Miners	
1932 12,836	Czech union 17,574
July, 1933 11,000	Czech union 16,052 German union 13,350

Thus, the Red Miners' Union lost 1,836 members, while the Czech reformist union gained 602 members.

I now pass to the work of the Red trade unions and reformist trade unions. The Red Metal Workers' Union has 140 local organizations and 21 factory groups. But these local groups do not carry on any genuinely mass work in the factories. The district committees of the Red trade unions do not guide the work of the local groups, they do not command sufficient authority, and they lack initiative.

The reformist Metal Workers' Union has 353 local groups. These groups are much more active than ours. The district committees work independently, and are authoritative bodies.

Benefits: the scale of unemployed benefits and the period of eligibility for benefits are about the same in the Red trade unions and in the reformist trade unions; but the scale of benefits for the lower scales of contributions is from 8 to 10 per cent lower in the Red Metal Workers' Union than in the reformist union.

Crisis benefit (paid after 26 weeks of normal benefit) is 65 per cent lower in the Red Metal Workers' Union than in the reformist union. The scale of strike benefits paid by the Red trade unions and reformist metal workers' unions are about the same. But in big strikes the Red trade unions do not always adhere to their scale, and the amount of strike pay paid out depends upon the amount of money collected. The reformist union, however, usually pays strike pay in full. After the fourth week of a strike the reformist union usually pays an extra family allowance of 10 krone per week.

In addition to the benefits already mentioned, the reformist Metal Workers' Union also has sick and disablement benefits. The union imposes a levy of 50 hellers a week for this fund which is collected together with the trade union dues.

Agitation and propaganda is conducted by the Red trade unions exclusively by means of the press and leaflets. Even during the election of the factory committees no oral agitation and propaganda was carried on. Slogans and demands are drawn up by the Executive Committee of the union and for that reason they are not sufficiently concrete for each of the given trades. The lower organizations rest content with the material issued by the central body of the union and themselves do nothing to popularize these general slogans and demands in the factories, nor do they link them up with the everyday needs of the workers in the given factories. Generally speaking, the agitation carried on by the Red trade unions is of an abstract character. *The language of the trade union press differs in no way from the language of the Party press.*

The reformist union not only carries on agitation and propaganda in the press, but also orally. It issues only one-tenth of the leaflets and manifestoes issued by the Red trade unions. What is important, however, is that these leaflets and manifestoes are issued by the local branch of the union and not by the Executive Committee, and for that reason they deal with the questions that interest the workers in the given town and in the given factory. Moreover, the union concentrates its agitation on questions concerning various measures of relief for the members; the slogans and demands put forward to the workers by the reformist trade unions are linked up with the demagogic proposals which the Social-Democratic Party in parliament and the Social-Democratic ministers in the government put forward. By that, the trade unions systematically popularize among the masses of the workers the activities of the Social-Democratic deputies and ministers. The Social-Democrats and the reformist unions display great activity in the factories in painstaking

work and agitation. They devote special attention to oral agitation, *which the Red trade unions do not do.*

While the Social-Democrats and the reformists skilfully carry on work with individual workers in the factories to induce them to support the Social-Democratic measures of the government, the Red trade unions do not, with the same persistence, carry on agitation against the Social-Democrats and reformist trade union bureaucrats, whose activities daily provide a wealth of new material for their exposure.

What are the results of this kind of "work"?

Loss of membership in the Red miners' union, in spite of the fact that this year mass fights were waged under its leadership in Brux and in Rositz, which, however, were not utilized for the purpose of consolidating our influence. The local organizations function very badly. In Brux, for example, out of 100 pits there are only 13 pit groups, and these work badly. In the Rositz district, where in 1931 the Red miners' union had 17 members on pit committees, in 1933 it did not secure the election of a single delegate.

In spite of the influx of new members in the Red metal workers' union, there is a considerable loss in the decisive enterprises in the metallurgical industry. At the last factory committee elections we lost from 40 to 45 per cent of our vote.

The relation of forces between the reformist, fascist and Red unions in the factory committees in 142 metallurgical enterprises is as follows:

Czech reformist union.....	101 members	
Fascist union.....	25 members	(71.3%)
Red union	9 members	

During the election of factory committees in the metallur-

gical industry in the German region, the total of 483 members were distributed in the following way:

Red trade union	15 seats
German reformist union	376 seats
Czech reformist union	18 seats
German National-Socialist Union	38 seats

Generally speaking, in a number of decisive enterprises the Red trade unions have suffered considerable setbacks and defeats in the factory committee elections during the past few months. For example, in one of the big enterprises belonging to the Bohemia-Moravia Co. in Prague, we, in 1932, obtained 27.3 per cent of the total vote, and in 1933 only 19.5 per cent of the total vote. At the Kolben works in Prague, we, in 1932, obtained 27.9 per cent of the total vote, and in 1933 only 16.8 per cent. A few weeks ago the factory committee elections took place at the Vitkovice Iron Works, one of the largest enterprises in Czecho-Slovakia, and one which is of enormous importance in the preparations for war. *Here we lost 12 per cent of our votes as compared with 1932.*

3. *United Front Tactics*

After the Twelfth Plenum, a number of articles appeared in the Communist Party press in which the tactics of the united front were interpreted as a bloc between the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party. The question of Communist leadership in the united front of struggle was absolutely ignored. These opportunistic articles caused the Communists to place their hopes on negotiations between the Communist and the Social-Democratic Internationals, and to please the Social-Democrats and renegades, the Communists were urged to refrain from criticizing and

exposing these traitors. The mistakes committed in the press of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia on the question of the united front assume all the greater significance in that they became very widespread in the Party.

After the Comintern had issued the appeal to form a united proletarian front (in March this year), the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia made a proposal to the two Social-Democratic Parties, to the Czech National Socialists (the party of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Benesh, and to the Czech Socialists, to form a united front. In doing so the Central Committee committed a very serious blunder in that it did not, from the very outset, in its invitation to these organizations, clearly and openly explain to the masses of the workers the reactionary role that Social-Democracy was playing. As a consequence of this mistake, the face of the Party became still more blurred as the united front campaign developed, and it led finally to a very definite tendency on the part of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia to distort the policy of the united front into a bloc with Social-Democracy.

4. *The Mistakes of the C. P. of Czecho-Slovakia and Their Results*

It must be said that:

a) The Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia and the Red trade unions were unable to utilize the mass miners' strikes, which took place under their leadership, for the purpose of extending their influence, and of consolidating this influence, by drawing the miners into the Red unions, and hence proved incapable of striking a strong blow at the reformist miners' union.

b) They failed to utilize the enormous dissatisfaction with the reformist leaders on the part of the members of the

metal workers' union which, in spite of orders of the trade union bureaucracy to the contrary, got Comrade Zapototsky to address a huge mass meeting.

c) The above defects are to be explained by the fact that the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia and the Red trade unions had not yet learned to carry on painstaking mass work, to carry on agitation in a popular manner, to extend their influence and organizationally consolidate it, and also by the fact that they took up an opportunist position on a number of political questions generally, and an incorrect attitude toward Social-Democracy in particular, and especially by the mistakes they committed in carrying out the united front tactics. Is it surprising after this that the workers do not see the enormous difference that exists between the Communist and the Social-Democratic parties, and that, as a consequence of our clumsy agitation, they believe that the only difference is that the Social-Democratic leaders are traitors and that it is only necessary to remove these leaders in order to transform the Social-Democratic Party into a revolutionary party?

This is the main reason why the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia failed to mobilize the masses against the suppression of the Young Communist League, the mass organizations and the Party press.

5. *Conclusions*

a) In addition to publishing the legal and illegal press and leaflets, it is necessary to carry on oral, group and individual agitation.

b) It is necessary to consolidate the influence of the Red trade unions and of the Party.

c) It is necessary to intensify the work in the reformist trade unions, and to direct a hurricane fire against the Ger-

man and Czech trade union bureaucrats and Social-Democrats.

d) The leadership must give a proper line to the whole Party, and the opportunists in the Party must be exposed.

D. ENGLAND

1. *The C.P.G.B. Does Not Consolidate Its Influence Among the Masses*

In England, before the last parliamentary election, mass demonstrations were organized as a result of the very widespread discontent of the masses with the 10 per cent cut in the salaries of civil servants, the unemployed relief cuts, and the Means Test. The unemployed movement was led by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and the correct line adopted by the *Daily Worker* on this question exercised a great influence upon the members of the Independent Labor Party, as well as upon the workers who follow its lead. This can explain the resolution passed by the I.L.P. conference on the desirability of establishing a united front with the Communists and of supporting the N.U.W.M.

However, the Communist Party of Great Britain failed to take full advantage of the favorable situation, it did not increase its membership, it did not increase its work in the reformist unions, and did not consolidate its influence in them. More than that, the Communist Party of Great Britain did not even utilize the "solidarity movement" for the purpose of consolidating the increased influence it obtained as a result of this movement.

2. *The Maneuvers of the I.L.P. and the Mistakes of the C.P.G.B.*

The Communist Party did not take full advantage of the correspondence between the Comintern and the I.L.P. in

order to win over to its side individual organizations of the I.L.P. or any considerable numbers of the members of the I.L.P. It did not see through the maneuvers of the leaders of the I.L.P. against the united front, and failed to appreciate the very definite discontent of the members of this party in a number of local organizations with their leaders' policy of sabotaging the Derby Conference resolution on the united front. It did not even give a proper reply to the I.L.P. leaders who resorted to the counter-revolutionary services of Trotsky. The latter, in order to prevent the members of the I.L.P. from joining the Communist Party, poured forth a stream of lies against the Communist International.

What was this maneuver? Everyone here knows that at the Derby Conference of the I.L.P. the leaders spoke and voted against the resolution adopted by the conference calling upon the leaders to ask the Comintern in what way the I.L.P. could help the former in its work. A long correspondence followed. Our letter to the I.L.P. was couched in clear and simple terms that every workers could understand. It very clearly and sharply described our differences with the I.L.P. With this document we wanted to help our English Party strengthen its work among the members of the I.L.P. What was the position in the I.L.P. at that time? The majority of the members were in favor of a united front with the C.P.G.B., of *rapprochement* with the Comintern. The leaders of the I. L. P. were opposed to this. Clearly, our task was to drive a wedge between the leaders who sabotaged the Derby resolution and the members of the I.L.P., who were in favor of the resolution. But owing to the fact that our English Party failed to develop the necessary activity among the members of the I.L.P., a dual process took place: a section of the members of the I.L.P.

who belonged to the Right wing, and who were dissatisfied with the Derby resolution, returned to the Labor Party, from which the I.L.P. had only recently disaffiliated. The other section, which belonged to the Left wing, influenced by our exposure of the sabotage of the leaders on the one hand, and not being pulled together by the work of the Communists, which would have drawn them into the Communist Party, on the other hand, left the I.L.P. and abandoned politics altogether. As a result, our influence, which might have caused members of the I.L.P. to join our Party, was weakened.

Actually sabotaging the decision of the Derby conference, the leaders of the I.L.P. started a long, diplomatic correspondence. In order to pretend that they were carrying out the Derby decision they sent an enquiry to the Comintern asking in what way the I.L.P. could assist it; but they did not make a single concrete proposal. At the same time, they evidently proposed the following division of labor to the district leaders: the National Council of the I.L.P., i.e., the central leadership, is to continue formal negotiations in accordance with the Derby resolutions, while the leadership of the local organizations, notwithstanding the desires of their members, is openly to oppose the united front. As a result of this maneuver, the following situation was created: in its letter to us the National Council of the I.L.P. does not openly reject our proposal but restricts itself to polemical remarks, and adopts a resolution on strengthening the united front in England. At the same time it succeeds in getting several local organizations of the I.L.P. to pass resolutions against the united front decision. Our Party did not understand this maneuver. The *Daily Worker* wrote that the resolution of the National Council of the I.L.P. was a step forward. Very belatedly our newspaper reported cases of

openly expressed hostility of local I.L.P. leaders towards the united front. Placing its hopes on the evolution of the National Council of the I.L.P. to our side, our Party allowed the decisive moment for winning the members of the I.L.P. to slip by.

It must be admitted that we have not yet obtained as much as we could and should have obtained from this correspondence. We have not increased the membership of our Party at the expense of the Independent Labor Party; we have not won over whole organizations, which was quite possible. Meanwhile, Trotsky comes onto the scene in order to develop his counter-revolutionary attack on the Soviet Union in the pages of the *New Leader*, and, while criticising the I.L.P. from the right, creates the necessary smoke screen for the maneuvers of the National Council to deceive the working class members of the I.L.P. The Communist Party, and our central organ, failed also to expose Trotsky's counter-revolutionary outburst.

Our Party must exert enormous effort to make up for what it has lost in this campaign.

3. *The Work of the Scottish Revolutionary and Reformist Miners' Union*

The recent municipal elections have shown that the Communist Party had not increased its influence among the working class in Great Britain to any considerable degree. The Communist Party has not even organized the work of the only union that we have, the United Mineworkers of Scotland.

At the present time the revolutionary United Mineworkers of Scotland has 3,000 members (the majority of whom are in Fife; in 1931 the reformist union had nearly 8,000).

The reformist union has 20,000 members. The revolutionary union has 49 branches, of which only two are organized on a pit basis; the rest organize the miners according to place of residence, in the mining villages. The union is in a bad way financially. Its expenditure considerably exceeds its income, which is due mainly to the large number of paid officials. Thus, in addition to paid organizers, who also collect membership dues, the union has special dues collectors who receive a salary, and a percentage on dues collected in addition. The reformist union has 54 branches in Fifeshire alone and 92 in Lanarkshire.

How is work carried on in these two unions?

In 1928, at the time of the split, the Communists had strong fractions in all the branches of the revolutionary union and in its leading bodies, the executive committee and delegate council (in the leading bodies alone there were 69 Communists). At the present time only 64 Party members are organized in the Red miners' union. In the reformist miners' union, the Communists have no positions whatever. Out of 370 pits (of which 60 are large pits) the revolutionary union carries on work only in 16. Although it secures improvements for the workers in separate struggles, insufficient advantage is taken of these successes to extend and organizationally consolidate influence acquired by organizing pit committees, etc. This year the union carried on considerable work in the election of pit inspectors (hitherto safety conditions in the mines had been ignored). In spite of all the efforts of the reformists to pour ridicule on the campaign developed by our union, the latter managed to secure the election of 10 inspectors in 5 pits, all members of the revolutionary miners' union, although the reformists also put up their candidates. But these inspectors did not use the material they collected, on the violation of the safety

regulations, in order to mobilize the masses in the pits to fight against these irregularities.

Under the guidance of the Red union, 8 pit papers are published. Although these papers publish a fair amount of workers' correspondence, correctly present political questions, played a big part in the aforementioned election of inspectors, they, however, do not deal sufficiently with the work of their own union, do not give the officials guidance as to how to carry on their work and above all, they do not sufficiently fight against the reformist miners' union.

Generally speaking, the guidance of the work of the local organizations and officials of the Red trade union is very weak, notwithstanding the relatively large number of paid officials. The committees of the local unions do not hear reports on the work of these officials, do not concretely criticize the defects in this work, and in the majority of cases limit themselves to passing resolutions on the inactivity of the local branches.

In the summer of 1933, the union developed a wide campaign throughout the coalfield against the wage cuts, for a 10 per cent increase in wages, for a 7-hour day without reduction of wages, for the abolition of overtime, for improvement of safety measures, etc. Commenting on this campaign, Mr. Ebby Edwards, General Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, speaking in Swinton, Yorkshire, said:

"We are ready tomorrow to negotiate with the employers not merely to prevent a reduction of wages, but to put the industry outside the pale of continual conflict . . . It is not my intention to call a union stoppage in July, but to obtain 100 per cent union membership to prevent a stoppage. . . ." (*Daily Worker*, April 22, 1933.)

In spite of the fact that the reformists so clearly ignored

the pressing needs of the miners, the campaign developed by the Red union was not crowned with success, precisely because it did not sufficiently expose the reformist trade union bureaucrats.

The Red union organized Women's Guilds for the wives of its members. These women's guilds organize outings, social evenings, concerts, etc., for the purpose of collecting funds. But neither the leaders of the union nor the Party organizations devote constant attention to these guilds, do not widen their field of activity, and do not draw them into political work.

The reformist unions, however, in their mass work make wide use of the Miners' Institutes, which are built up with money from the Miners' Welfare Fund. These institutes, which exist in every village, have halls for meetings and dances, gymnasiums, billiard rooms, reading rooms and libraries. Frequently, lectures are arranged. In a number of institutes, technical training courses are organized for the miners. Throughout the whole of Scotland (with the exception of Fife, where the revolutionary union is stronger than the reformist union), it is only the reformist union that utilizes the Miners' Institutes for mass work. Moreover the reformists have access to the Workers' Educational Association, which organizes classes on various subjects in many places.

The revolutionary union does nothing to combat the influence of these organizations.

4. *A Few Conclusions*

Thus, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Revolutionary Miners' Union have all the advantages of putting forward the urgent demands of the workers and of fighting for these demands but they are unable to mobilize the masses

for the struggle against the reformist union, they are unable on this basis to organize the work in the reformist union (after the split nearly all the Communists left that union), they are unable to increase their membership and consolidate their influence.

That being the case, how can the Communist Party of Great Britain increase its membership and consolidate its influence if the Communists do not work in the unions, or work badly, that is to say, do not fight to obtain influence? And yet, in England, if work in the trade unions were carried on properly and energetically, influence could be won and consolidated.

At the present time new wage cuts are being imposed in England and the conditions of the unemployed are being greatly worsened. The National Government, at the head of which is one of the ex-leaders of the Second International, is introducing a number of terroristic measures against the working class, the like of which England has never known before. In the British trade unions discontent is growing. In a number of trade unions (engineers, railwaymen, etc.) there is a change of temper in favor of the Communist Party, of a united front, etc. The Communist Party must at all costs increase its membership by enlisting members of the most important trade unions and employed workers.

I come now to Germany.

E. GERMANY

I. *The Achievements of the Communist Party of Germany*

Before Hitler came to power, the Communist Party of Germany had achieved considerable success in mobilizing and organizing the masses for the revolutionary struggle against fascism. I will enumerate a few of these:

a) In November, 1932, the Party obtained 6,000,000 votes in the parliamentary elections, and in the big industrial centers it received the highest percentage of votes.

b) It organized a number of big strikes against the Papen wage cuts decree. It was only because of this that the decree was held in abeyance, and, in spite of the opposition of the reformists, the workers in a very short period of time achieved successes in their struggles.

c) In spite of the unceasing sabotage of the Social-Democratic Party and the reformists, the Communist Party of Germany managed in a number of cases to organize a united front from below with local Social-Democratic workers to resist the fascist gangs that attacked trade union and Party premises. Whenever the workers put up resistance against the fascists the Communists were in the front ranks and received the heaviest blows of the class enemy; they displayed fine examples of self-sacrifice and indomitableness in the struggle.

d) The Communist Party of Germany increased its membership by tens of thousands and waged a determined struggle against the Neumann-Remmele group which hampered mass work.

e) The mass organizations that were under the leadership of the Party, principally the Red trade union opposition, intensified their work and strengthened their contacts with the broad strata of the workers.

f) At the time Hitler came into power the Communist Party of Germany managed to organize demonstrations and political strikes in a number of towns and enlisted Social-Democratic workers in the struggle against fascism. The Social-Democratic Party alone is responsible for the victory of fascism. It split the working class; it opposed the united proletarian front of revolutionary struggle by a united re-

actionary front with the bourgeoisie; it hamstrung the working class by means of the centralized mass organizations at the head of which it stood.

g) In its resolution of April 1, 1933, "On the Present Situation in Germany," the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. stated that the political line and the organizational policy of the Communist Party of Germany, before, and at the time the fascists came to power, were quite correct. I have no doubt that the Plenum will fully approve of the resolution passed by the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the German question.

This resolution on Germany was one of the most important resolutions passed since the Twelfth Plenum. I think that this resolution is very closely connected with another very important document, viz., the document on the united front. It is well known that the parties affiliated to the Second International hurled themselves upon the German Communist Party in order to conceal its own treachery, the treachery of the German Social-Democrats. It tried to make it appear that the responsibility for the coming into power of the fascists rested not only on the German Social-Democrats, but also on the Communist International and on the Communist Party of Germany. The Social-Democrats of all countries lied to the workers, saying: the Communists also failed to fight against fascism; they did not call for insurrection, for a strike, or sabotage. If the leaders of any one of our sections have failed to understand our document, which raised the question as to whether a party can or should, in the absence of a revolutionary situation and when it has not got a majority of the working class behind it, adopt an adventurist policy and call for an armed uprising—if they have not understood this, how can they fight against Social-Democracy?

h) After the Hitler coup, the Communist Party of Ger-

many very quickly reorganized itself for underground work. In spite of the exceptionally cynical and despicable provocation on the part of the Hitler government from the very first days of its unbridled dictatorship, the majority of the workers who followed the Communist Party remained loyal to the Party. In spite of the raging White terror, 4,600,000 electors in the Reichstag elections, on March 5, voted for the Communist Party. And to vote for the Communist Party on that day, when the whole apparatus of the state and all the parties were directed against us, and when such acts of provocation as the burning of the Reichstag were perpetrated against us, was not a simple thing. It was an act of heroism on the part of the masses of the workers of Germany.

2. *Defects in the Work of the Communist Party of Germany*

It goes without saying that with all the great successes achieved by the Communist Party of Germany before the fascists' coming to power and now, when it is working underground, it committed, and is committing certain mistakes. I want to mention some of these because the Communist Party of Germany, as well as the other Communist Parties, must avoid these mistakes in the future.

It must be admitted that before Hitler came to power the Communist Party of Germany, largely through the fault of Neumann, who was then in the leadership, devoted very little attention, in its agitation among the broad masses of the people, to the struggle against the bondage of Versailles; and yet, the discontent of the masses with the Versailles Treaty was very great. It was not the Communist Party of Germany but the Nationalists and the National-Socialists who, for their demagogic purposes, took advantage of the dis-

content over the whole of Germany, and as far back as 1928 put forward the demand for a referendum against the Young Plan. Instead of taking the initiative in raising the question of fighting against the Versailles Treaty before the masses, if only in the form of a referendum against the Young Plan, and explaining that only a Soviet Germany, in alliance with the proletariat of other countries, could throw off the yoke of Versailles, and instead of simultaneously waging a determined struggle against the chauvinistic provocation of the masses by the National-Socialists, the Communist Party of Germany sneered at the demand put forward by the Nationalists and National-Socialists. The number of votes cast in favor of a referendum, and during the referendum itself, showed that the demand of the Nationalists and of the National-Socialists met with a wide response among the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, and perhaps also among a section of the workers.

Thus, the Communist Party of Germany not only failed to take the initiative in this movement, but that section of the population which voted for the proposal of the Nationalists and National-Socialists, interpreted the attitude of the Communist Party towards the referendum as expressing lack of desire on the part of the Communists to fight against the Versailles Treaty.

The Communist Party of Germany did not with sufficient persistence and intensity wage a campaign against the Weimar Coalition, and principally against Social-Democracy, against all the measures introduced for the purpose of worsening the position of the workers and peasants (wage reductions, reductions of unemployed relief, the ruination of the peasantry by taxation, debts, etc.). The National-Socialists took advantage of the widespread discontent with these measures in order to win over to their own side the

broad masses of the people, including a section of unemployed workers.

The agitation the Communist Party waged against the fascists was not popular in style, was not concrete and did not penetrate deeply among the masses. In its agitation, the Communist Party of Germany did not utilize the experience of what had already taken place in those countries where fascism was already in power (Poland, and particularly Italy), viz., that fascism did not carry out a single one of the lavish demagogic promises it had made before it came into power.

Take, for example, some of the promises made by the Italian fascists, which they published as far back as 1919, such as: land for the peasants, the confiscation of a considerable part of the capital of the country, workers' control of industry, the confiscation of war profits, abolition of the Senate, convocation of a Constituent Assembly which was to express the will of the people for a republic or monarchy, independence and complete liberty of urban and rural self-government, universal suffrage, including woman suffrage. In his speeches Mussolini went even further and, in addition to all this, promised to "expropriate all the large landed estates, steamships, mines and all forms of transport. When we (i.e., the fascists—O.P.) will have settled with Asiatic Bolshevism, we will abolish the capitalists and landlords."

Although the German fascists did not go as far as that, they, nevertheless, in their furious demagogy, borrowed not a little from the lying promises of Mussolini and his cut-throats. In order more convincingly to prove to the masses that Hitler and his gangs were striving, not to satisfy the needs of the workers, the peasants, office employees, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, etc., but to establish the terrorist dictatorship of monopolist capital, furiously

to intensify the exploitation of the workers, ruthlessly to ruin the main masses of the peasantry, to rob the urban petty bourgeoisie, etc., the German Communists, in their agitation against the National Socialists, should have compared the promises made by Mussolini before he came into power with the program he actually did carry out and is now pursuing.

According to the official returns taken from Italian fascist sources (hence it can be taken that the figures are minimized), from the summer of 1927 to the end of 1931, the wages of the Italian workers in various industries dropped 38-50 per cent, while real wages dropped 24-45 per cent (the differences are due to a slight reduction in prices).

By all sorts of special laws the landlords were relieved of the duty of insuring their laborers against accidents, while the real wages of agricultural laborers declined 34.2 per cent in the period from 1919 to 1932.

Even before the German fascists, the Italian fascists said: "Not relief, but work for the unemployed." And yet, according to fascist figures, in March 1932, there were in Italy 1,053,076 unemployed, while unemployed relief was paid to 286,624 unemployed, and only for a period of 22 days. In December 1932, the number of unemployed rose, but the number receiving relief dropped and the amount of relief was reduced by 45 per cent. And yet, every worker must contribute to the unemployed fund (the fund is made up of 50 per cent contributed by the workers and 50 per cent by the employers).

Even before the German fascists, the Italian fascists fooled the unemployed by promising the needy winter relief. But in the winter of 1931-32 this winter relief in Italy amounted to the payment of 15 centimes per day to 199,668 needy persons (a newspaper costs 20 centimes). This is apart from the fact that immediately the fascists came to

power in Italy, strikes were prohibited, the trade unions were seized, the workers' press was destroyed, etc.

All these and similar facts were, of course, known to the German Communists, but they did not make proper use of them in their agitation against the fascists. Even if, at the time, a section of the workers would not have believed the Communists had they said that the German fascists would follow in the footsteps of the Italian fascists, this agitation would have been of great significance, because the workers who had been deceived by the fascists would have realized afterwards that the Communists had spoken the truth and this, of course, would have accelerated the penetration of Communist influence among these backward strata of the working class.

Very belatedly, the Communist Party of Germany, in August 1930, issued its program for the social and national liberation of the German people. The publication of this program, and the propaganda developed in connection with it, was very useful to the Communist Party of Germany, although *Rote Fahne*, of which Neumann was at the head at the time, distorted the slogan of a "people's revolution" and adapted it to the interests of the petty bourgeoisie (the proletarian class content of the slogan—the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat—was deleted from it). But very soon the Party organizations almost forgot about this program.

There is no need for me to repeat all that has been said already about the defects in the work of the Communist Party of Germany among the unemployed. The few unemployed committees that existed did not embrace the very strata of the unemployed that were deprived of even charitable relief, and yet it was among this section of the unemployed that the fascists achieved most success.

In spite of numerous decisions, resolutions, declarations, etc., the organizations of the Communist Party of Germany did not really devote proper attention to improving the work in the factories. They did not establish new contacts at the time when, with the growth of fascism, the members of the Party and of the Red trade union opposition began to be discharged in ever increasing numbers. The result of this was soon felt. At the time of the fascist *coup* the influence of the Communist Party in the factories was insignificant, and a section of the workers who feared dismissal began to join the fascist factory organizations, and were not restrained from doing this by the Communists and the members of the Red trade union opposition.

The work of the Communists in the reformist unions and in other mass organizations had not improved very much by the time Hitler came into power.

The Communists and the members of the Red trade union opposition represented an insignificant percentage in the factory committees. But the fact that the majority of the Red factory committees, and the members of the Red factory committees, did not work any better than the reformists had very serious consequences.

The unemployed organizations did not embrace the broad masses and their work was unsatisfactory, so that, when Hitler came into power, our influence in these organizations greatly declined.

For these reasons the social-fascists and trade union bureaucrats succeeded in hindering the workers from responding to the call of the Communist Party for a mass strike at the most acute moment for the working class.

Compared with 1924, the Communist Party of Germany has considerably increased its influence in the working class during the past few years; from May 1924 to November

1932, it doubled its vote. However, we must say in regard to Germany what has already been said in regard to other countries, *vis.*, in Germany, also, the growing influence of the Communist Party was not consolidated. How can the Communist Party consolidate its influence? By recruiting a section of the masses who follow the Communists for the organizations which stand close to the Communist Party, principally for the trade unions, and by recruiting the best of them, the more advanced of them, into the Party itself.

In Germany, as in other countries, a number of mass organizations were formed: International Labor Defence, Workers' International Relief, Freethinkers' Union, Ex-Service Men's League, Friends of the Soviet Union, Red sports organizations, unemployed organizations and trade union opposition. What a tremendous variety! But the unfortunate thing is that the membership of all these organizations was practically the same. The broad masses of electors who voted for us were not drawn into these organizations. The Communists did not work sufficiently in the mass working class organizations of the reformists and Catholics—sports clubs, cultural organizations, etc.

One of the most important functions of the trade union opposition was to work in the reformist and Catholic trade unions. But neither in the one nor in the other was the work adequate. This could not but lead to the fact that in the reformist and Catholic organizations we not only failed to fight against the Social-Democrats and the Catholic Center, but also against the leadership of these organizations (trade union, sports, etc.).

The organizations that supported the Communist Party did not embrace the broad masses of the workers, and in the reformist and Catholic organizations we hardly fought

at all against the reformists, we did not oppose our program, our tactics, our demands to their treacherous policy. We failed to organize the members of these organizations and lead them.

As a result, we failed to consolidate the influence we had acquired in the parliamentary elections before Hitler came to power.

After being driven underground, the Party exerted colossal efforts to publish and distribute literature on all the important questions of the revolutionary struggle. In spite of the incredible terror, it is easier to work among the German proletariat now, because the Social-Democratic workers and the non-party workers who supported the Social-Democrats, and also the members of the reformist unions, are in large numbers becoming disillusioned with the policy of Social-Democracy.

Even the German fascists are compelled to admit that they have failed to smash up and exterminate the Communist Party of Germany. Revolutionary workers, who formerly belonged to other political trends, distribute Communist literature and help the Communists in their work in every way. The authority of the Party has grown enormously in the eyes of the broad masses. The Communist Party of Germany is really not only the only party of the working class in Germany, but also the only party that is leading the struggle for the defense of the interests of the working class against the fascist dictatorship. Thanks to the changed situation in Germany and to the heroic work of the Communist Party, the Communists no longer meet with the resistance in the working class that was formerly put up by the trade union bureaucrats and the Social-Democratic Party. More than that, the young members of the Social-Democratic Party are inclining towards the

Communist Party and are prepared to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Communists against the fascist dictatorship. In this connection it is necessary to emphasize the extreme urgency of a determined struggle against those Communists who desire to close the doors of the Communist Party to such workers. Cases have occurred when Social-Democratic workers desired to join our Party, but the Communists formed them into sympathizers' groups and appointed commissars over them instead of drawing them into the Party organizations and giving them work to do.

It must be admitted, however, that the mass work of the Communist Party has not yet been organized on a wide scale, there is a lack of oral, individual agitation, which is more than ever necessary at the present time. Communist speeches at fascist trade union meetings are still rare, although anti-fascist-minded workers do speak at these meetings. The fascists continue to make their demagogic declarations that they are going to abolish unemployment, that they are going to provide the unemployed with work, that they are going to improve the conditions of the workers, etc., not in the least disturbed by the fact that apart from the usual seasonal revival unemployment has not declined, that unemployed relief has been reduced to the utmost extreme, and in many cases completely abolished, that wages, nominal, and still more, real wages, have declined. In an election speech delivered at the Siemens Works on November 10, Hitler said: "When I came into power there were more than 6,200,000 unemployed in Germany, and now there are only 3,710,000. If some, while not denying this, say that our standard of living has not improved, I reply . . . the first task was to put people back to work."

To prove in a popular manner, with facts and figures, that the fascist dictator is lying, is very easy and at the same

time very important: it is necessary to prove that this is a lie in such a way that every working class family, that every employed and unemployed worker may see that it is a lie. There is no need for me to emphasize again here how exceptionally important it is at the present time to expose the policy of fascism by means of concrete illustrations, in order to liberate the petty bourgeoisie of town and country, and those unemployed who still believe the fascist phrases, from fascist influence. But unfortunately, the German Communists are not doing this, or are doing it badly. The October issue of the illegal *Rote Fahne* reports that from January to July this year, the average wage per worker declined by 21.4 per cent, and the total amount of wages paid in this period declined by 6.3 per cent. And this is reported in just a few lines. But these facts provide us with enormous opportunities for opening the eyes of the broad masses of the toilers. The whole issue should have been devoted to this question; a number of leaflets should have been issued on this subject, explaining in a popular manner the real position of the working class in fascist Germany.

There are indications that the workers who are disappointed with the fascist unions are beginning to join illegal unions. Everything must be done to enlarge the number of illegal unions and to recruit for them the ex-members of reformist and Catholic unions. The Communist Party of Germany must avoid the mistake committed by the Communist Party of Italy, which for five years was unable to organize its work in the mass, fascist, workers' organizations. It must organize its mass work in the fascist trade unions, in the factory sports organizations, youth organizations and compulsory labor camps. In carrying on energetic work in these organizations, the Party must rally all the discontented elements for the fight against fascism. Only

by this, by increasing the work in the factories, and also by improving the work in the revolutionary trade unions and other revolutionary organizations, will the Communist Party be able to extend and consolidate its influence in the working class.

3. *Common Weaknesses of the Majority of the Sections of the Communist International*

What I have just said applies not only to the Communist Party of Germany, but to the majority of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries. It can be stated quite definitely that:

a) In many cases we carry on our agitation unskillfully, not popularly, not correctly (Norway, Czechoslovakia, etc.); our agitation does not penetrate deeply into the masses;

b) The Communist Parties have not yet learned to consolidate the influence they have already acquired.

I shall quote a few examples:

1. On International Unemployed Day, in the United States, 1,225,000 workers in all the industrial centers answered the call of the Communist Party to demonstrate. But the Communist Party failed to consolidate this response by creating broad unemployed organizations. And what happened? The influence of the Communist Party of the United States soon evaporated. But even now—in spite of the fact that after the wage cuts resulting from the recent measures introduced by Roosevelt the American workers are returning to the trade unions—the revolutionary trade unions have increased their membership to a very small extent only, while the reactionary trade unions which are affiliated to the A. F. of L. have increased their membership by half a million.

2. Last year, in England, when the 10 per cent cut in

civil servants' salaries and unemployed relief was introduced, the National Unemployed Workers Movement made excellent use of the discontent of the broad masses of the unemployed to organize huge demonstrations the like of which have not been seen in England for a long time. *But this influence was not consolidated.*

The "solidarity movement," under the leadership of the Communist Party of Great Britain, not only organized demonstrations, but also took part in a number of strikes. This "solidarity movement" is not in itself a strong, well-built organization, and failed to consolidate its influence.

Thus, during the past year, broad masses of the workers in England were drawn into the struggle with the help of the Communist Party and the organizations that follow its lead. Nevertheless, we see no material change in the attitude of the workers towards the Communist Party. The recent municipal elections show that although the masses of the workers are deserting the National Laborites and the Conservatives, they are again voting for the Laborites, and have not yet found the road to the Communist Party. It is particularly true of England that the basis of the Party can be broadened and its positions consolidated best of all by working in all the reformist trade unions, fighting in them for influence, fighting for the removal of the inveterate reformist trade union bureaucrats, and for their substitution by revolutionary workers. But the Party organizations do not yet sufficiently realize this and act accordingly.

4. *The Significance of Mass Work and of Consolidating Acquired Influence*

By improving oral agitation—individual and group agitation, but particularly individual agitation—and by carrying it deeply among the broad masses, we can extend our

influence. By creating our own mass organizations and by working in the mass working class organizations of our opponents (fascist, reformist, Catholic), the Communists can consolidate this influence.

I said at the beginning of my speech that in this moment of the acute intensification of the class struggle the Communist Parties, by pursuing a correct political line and with firm revolutionary leadership, can free the broad masses from the influence of the social-democrats, the reformist and fascist trade unions, and other organizations, and that they can win the majority of the working class only by improving their mass work and consolidating their influence. This, in its turn, will serve as the guarantee that the Communist Parties will be able to take the lead in the decisive battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In order to show to what extent the mass work of the Communist Parties and the consolidation of their influence plays a decisive role in the organization and the victory of the revolution, it is sufficient to compare Germany in 1923 with Russia in 1917. During the revolutionary situation in Germany in 1923, the Social-Democratic Party was in a state of complete disintegration, the trade unions lost two-thirds of their membership. The trade union apparatus fell to pieces because there was no money with which to pay the officials. But at that time the Communist Party had no mass workers' organizations, even trade unions. The Communist Party was not sufficiently connected with the factory committees—which played such an important role in Berlin in 1923 (the strike against the Cuno government)—because there were no Communist nuclei in the factories. All the various trends existing in the leadership of the Communist Party were opposed to organizing soviets. Had not the Communists almost entirely abandoned the

reformist unions, they, in view of the weakness of the trade union apparatus, could have won the majority of the important unions. The trade unions and factory committees would then have become the mass organizations by means of which the Party could have utilized the revolutionary situation in order to take power. It is now generally well known that the leadership of the Communist Party at that time estimated the political situation in an opportunistic manner and allowed the opportune moment for seizing power to slip by. One of the important factors in this was that the Party lacked driving belts connecting it with the proletariat, etc., mass working class organizations.

The policy and practice of the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917 was altogether different. In spite of all the difference there is between Russia of 1917 and Germany of 1923, with which there is no need to deal now, it is still possible to draw a parallel between them and to compare the Bolshevik mass work in 1917 with the helplessness of the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany in 1923 in regard to the winning of the masses.

After the February victory over Czarism, the Bolsheviks, everywhere, including all the industrial centers, were in the minority in the workers' and soldiers' organizations (factory committees, soviets, trade unions, in the company; regimental, brigade, army corps and front committees); they did not have a majority either in the working class or among the soldiers. But thanks to the correct political line they pursued, the timely advancement of slogans which mobilized the revolutionary activity of the masses, and the broad printed and oral agitation they carried on, including individual agitation in the factories, in the trade unions, in the factory committees, in the soviets, in all the soldiers' committees and barracks, they, day after day, extended

their influence in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, and the socialist-revolutionaries. They consolidated this growing influence and won elected positions in all the workers' and soldiers' organizations (members of soviets, members of executives of trade unions, of factory committees and of the various soldiers' committees). As a result of this work, the Bolsheviks, on the eve of the October Revolution, had the majority in the soviets, in the factory committees, in the trade unions and the elected soldiers' bodies. The Mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries still held certain positions in the central bodies, such as the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions, the All-Russian Executive Committee of Railway Transport Workers' Union, and in the front and army corps committees; but they were powerless, as the lower organizations refused to follow their lead.

Allowing for the concrete situation in each country, the Communist Parties must fight to win the working class organizations in the same way as the Russian Bolsheviks did in 1917.

I now come to the last part of my speech.

F. THE COMMUNIST PARTIES' PREPARATION FOR UNDERGROUND WORK, UTILIZATION OF LEGAL POSSIBILITIES AND REDISTRIBUTION OF CADRES

1. *The Utilization of all the Possibilities in the Conditions in Which the Party is Working*

According to the degree and character of the persecution to which they are subjected by the bourgeois state, the sections of the Communist International can be divided into three categories, *viz.*, more or less legal Communist Parties (16, including the Communist Party in the Soviet regions in China which is here legal); semi-legal (7); and com-

pletely illegal (38). Recently the line of development has been in the direction of the further intensification of the class struggle and the growth of fascism, which must affect the position of the Communist Parties. Undoubtedly, in all countries the Communist Parties will be driven underground on the outbreak of war. It is difficult to forecast the form the illegal position of this or that Communist Party will assume.

The countries where the Communist Parties have been driven underground can be divided into two categories, *viz.*, the countries where the Communist Parties have been driven underground, but where the mass reformist workers' organizations continue to exist legally (Poland, Austria, Bulgaria, Japan, etc.); and countries where all working class organizations and all political parties have been dissolved and only fascist organizations exist.

In the first category of countries the Communist Party must use all the mass workers' organizations for the purposes of their work, such as the trade unions, cooperative organizations, sports organizations, workers' educational organizations, freethinkers' organizations and the workers' organizations of all trends, such as reformist, Christian, etc. In all such organizations Communist fractions should be organized. In these countries, efforts must be made to get the Party committees to guide the work of the Communist fractions, to prevent the latter from becoming isolated from the Party, to get them to carry out the Party line and to get the Party committees to help them in their work. At the same time, the semi-legal and illegal revolutionary workers' and peasants' organizations must be strengthened.

In the second category of countries, the Communist Parties must utilize for their work all the fascist mass or-

ganizations to which workers, office employees, peasants, young workers and women workers belong, such as trade unions, sports and co-operative organizations, youth organizations and women's organizations. Not only is it necessary to organize constant work in these organizations, but it is also necessary to arrange for people to speak at meetings called by these organizations.

The Communist Party of Germany must avoid the mistake committed by the Communist Party of Italy, and immediately commence work in the fascist organizations.

In countries like Germany and Italy, working-class mass organizations such as trade unions, I.L.D., unemployed organizations, etc., should be formed and strengthened. Into these organizations it is necessary to enlist those ex-members of the reformist and Catholic trade unions and social-democratic and Catholic parties who are willing to fight against the fascists.

In both types of fascist countries the center of gravity of the work must be transferred to the factories, where it will produce the best results, of course, if it is carried on skillfully and energetically.

2. Cadres

a) The redistribution of forces before going underground is very important. In Germany it was the middle and lower *active* that suffered most in the process of transition from the legal to the illegal position. Why? Because it was this *active* that came most in contact with the National-Socialists in the factories, in discussions in the districts, and finally, in open conflict with them. At the time of the fascist *coup*, the first thing the National-Socialists tried to do was to arrest this *active*. In this they were assisted by the petty-bourgeoisie who, after the victory of the fascists

at the elections, threw themselves into the arms of the National-Socialists. They pointed out where the Communists lived, who read the *Rote Fahne*, etc. The Party did not succeed in concealing the best of its active members. The biggest arrests of Communists in all towns took place immediately after the fascists burned the Reichstag, on the night of February 28. It is characteristic that in spite of the fact that the provocation against the Communist Party had developed to the utmost at that time, many of the leading Communists stayed at their homes that night.

Although our Party reorganized itself very quickly, it was not in a position to save the middle and lower *active*, the preservation of which was very important for its future work, for it was this *active* that maintained contacts with the factories. Our sections must take measures to prevent this happening again. The Parties who are in danger of being driven underground in the near future must take measures to prevent the middle and lower *active*, not to speak of the leading *active*, staying at home when arrests take place. There is nothing terrible in prematurely leaving one's home; what is terrible is to be caught and sent to a concentration camp and thus to be prevented from doing Party work. Comrade Pieck, in his speech, said that even after the German Party had been outlawed, many Communists were caught by the fascists in their homes to which they had gone to visit their families. And this has happened not only in Germany.

The more acute the class struggle becomes, the more persistently do the fascists shadow and hunt for our cadres, and the greater is the danger that our cadres will be exterminated.

b) It is necessary to decentralize the work, both in order to develop local initiative and to minimize the losses in the

event of arrests. Here I must say that before it went underground, the local organizations of the German Communist Party were shackled by an incredible centralism, a sort of super-centralism. We have spoken about this a score of times. For example, for the sake of economy, manifestoes used to be printed in Berlin and distributed over the whole country without any consideration for the fact that these manifestoes might be suitable for the center, but not for the districts, without any consideration for the necessity to adapt this literature to the conditions and industries in the districts, and to raise the questions that interest the respective category of workers at the given moment. The local organizations did not discuss any political questions until the Central Committee had defined its attitude towards them. This shackled the initiative of the local Party organizations. But, to their honor be it said, the moment they were left without any leadership, owing to the fact that the middle and lower Party bodies had been paralyzed by arrests for a certain time, individual Communists and local organizations displayed remarkable initiative. As Comrade Pieck pointed out last night, the slogans issued independently by the local organizations were later on found to coincide with the slogans issued by the Central Committee.

This local initiative is very important. The Communist must not wait until the Party is driven underground to remember that he is a Communist and that he must pursue the Party line on his own responsibility. Decentralization must be introduced at once in preparation for the transition to an illegal position. This work is possible and necessary in view of the growing discontent of the masses and in view of the fact that the masses follow the lead of the Communists if they are given concrete guidance as to how to wage the struggle.

c) On the other hand, decentralization is necessary for the purpose of secrecy. In Germany a case recently occurred in which a scoundrel, who at one time had some connection with the Party leadership, roamed the streets of various towns in the company of fascists who were searching for Communists, arresting them and exterminating them. The more decentralization is carried out, the less possible will it be for traitors who have managed to penetrate into the Party to damage it.

I do not know whether Comrade Ercoli mentioned in his speech what he told us privately, that in one place only six persons were arrested, but each of these mentioned several other names. In this way, the secret police managed to arrest 150 persons. Afterwards, a large number of these were released, and no one knew which of these was the *provocateur* and which the denounced. As a result, the whole organization was demoralized.

The maximum of caution must be exercised in order to avoid arrests. I will quote another example for Germany: a certain ex-functionary of the Party, who had gone over to the fascists, turned up at a secret meeting place. At this place, without any investigations being made (although not long before that arrests had taken place in the district this fellow came from), he was given the secret address of the secretary of the Central Committee, a secretary who was underground, and whom the fascists were looking for. By a stroke of good fortune, the secretary was absent at the time, and this fellow met another comrade, who was immediately arrested. Direct contact with the secretary of the Party must under no circumstances be given to untrustworthy persons. Contact should be given only through intermediary links, and in this way the most effective safeguards against arrest will be created. In the case I have just men-

tioned the violation of the elementary principles of secrecy was totally unjustified, because it was known at this secret meeting place that big arrests had taken place in the district from which this particular functionary had arrived. I think it was even known that this person had actually been arrested and later released. In fact, he had been arrested, and when the fascists began to beat him up he went over to their side.

In the middle of June there were further big arrests in Germany and a number of active Party workers were seized. Better concealment, better work is necessary!

d) How should the Communists behave under examination? It is necessary to bear in mind that once an arrested man has communicated anything at all, he will not be left in peace until he becomes a traitor. I must say that when our Party was underground, we issued a special pamphlet on how to behave under examination. If anyone in Germany is arrested and beaten up and he begins to talk, then the fascist sadists do not let him alone, but keep on beating him until he betrays his comrades and goes over to the fascists. The less he talks, the less the fascist executioners will expect him to say, and the more quickly will they stop examining him.

The popularization of the experience of the illegal work of the Communist Parties of Poland, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, China and Japan is of enormous importance. We must see to it that the experience in every country shall be made known to all the Communist Parties. Individual Communists must know how to behave under examination, and how to avoid arrest under any given situation.

e) In those countries where the Communist Party is illegal, individual and group oral agitation is of enormous importance (the exposure of the fascists and the Social-

Democratic Party in connection with the urgent demands of the masses, which should be linked up with the struggle for power). This agitation should be carried on among the broad masses and be backed by facts. In this way it will be possible to enlarge the sphere of influence of the Communists. In this connection, the factory newspapers play an important role. There was a moment when the fascists in Germany declared that the Communist Party had been utterly crushed, that it no longer existed. And our comrades set themselves the task of getting Communist literature into the streets at no matter what sacrifice. The Communist Party took to distributing literature and in this way showed that it was alive. This had enormous significance at that time. The foreign correspondents wrote about it to their newspapers, and even the fascist press could not ignore it. But this method of distributing literature must cease now. Literature must be energetically distributed, but this distribution must be organized in such a way as to involve as few arrests as possible, and above all, it must be organized so that the literature gets into the hands of those for whom it is intended, *i.e.*, the workers. It is precisely among the workers that we must distribute our literature in the first place. It goes without saying that the factory newspapers play a great role in this. Special attention must be devoted to it. It is extremely important to utilize the popularity of the factory newspapers among the workers, to distribute them widely, to deal in them with all the general political questions, and questions affecting the given factory.

f) Finally, the organization of protest demonstrations. Here, too, we must take into account whether these are organized in legal or in illegal conditions. Take Austria. When the Party there was legal and organized demonstra-

tions, it was almost exclusively Party members who came out on the streets. This showed that the Party's contact with the masses was very weak, and that it could not draw the masses into the struggle. Well, one can become reconciled to demonstrations in which only Party members take part when the Party is legal, although, of course, our task is to organize mass demonstrations; the loss in Party cadres involved in such exclusive demonstrations is relatively small. It is true that the police beat up a few of the comrades, arrested a few, but there the matter ended. But the damage caused by such exclusive demonstrations in countries where the Party is illegal is very much more serious.

What is now happening in Germany? Here too we organize demonstrations, which is very important, enormously important. But whom do we bring out onto the streets? Only our *active*. Our *active* is unable to bring large masses onto the streets, and so the fascists hurl themselves upon our members and exterminate them. Is it a good thing that demonstrations are organized, that protests are made? Of course it is. But it is bad that our cadres are exterminated. We must organize protests, but they must be imposing protests, otherwise it is not worth while putting our cadres in danger of being shot down. It would be far better if they went to the factories and carried on agitation among the workers. This would produce bigger results than the small demonstrations that are now organized.

g) The skilled distribution of forces and functions is very important, not only for legal, but also for illegal parties. I have already had occasion to state that there are no members of the Party who could not be useful to the Party. The question of utilizing their services is exclusively a matter of leadership, both central and local. If a Communist is not suitable as a propagandist he can perform certain

technical functions; if he is not suitable as an agitator he can distribute literature, stick up posters, etc. The line we take is as follows: if an old Party member is in the leadership, even if he is good for nothing, he has got to be retained. Although he cannot carry on any mass work, is incapable of doing trade union work, nevertheless he is left in the leadership. Even if he wrecks campaign after campaign, he is still left on that work. Why? He is an old Party member. But here and there new cadres are coming forward who have contacts with the workers and know how to approach the workers. Very often these are not utilized for permanent leading work in the Party organizations or in mass workers' and peasants' organizations only because the salaried positions are occupied by old Party members who are not able to cope with their work properly. Of course we must treasure our old Party members: for years they have proved their loyalty to the Party, their readiness to make sacrifices for the Party. Nevertheless, our main criterion in approaching them should be: does this or that old Party member properly carry out the work he is entrusted with? If he does not do that work properly then, although he may be an old Party member, he must be replaced by new cadres who are able to work, who have contacts with the masses of the workers and are able to lead them.

If we have certain active workers who are able to work fairly well, so many duties are imposed upon them that they are unable to fulfill any of them. I will read you a document received from the Communist Party of France:

A certain active member in Marles, near Calais, holds the following offices:

- 1) Secretary of a trade union branch.

- 2) Secretary of the Communist Party nucleus.
- 3) Secretary of the Freethinkers Society branch.
- 4) Treasurer of the Freethinkers Society branch.
(*Laughter.*)
- 5) A member of the Bureau of the Mutual Aid Society.
- 6) Member of the Executive of the Miners' Union.
- 7) Member of the District Committee of the Communist Party. (*Loud laughter.*)
- 8) Member of the bureau of the Executive Committee of the Miners' Union.
- 9) Member of the Editorial Committee of the Miners' Union journal.
- 10) Member of the Auditing Committee of the Miners' Federation.
- 11) Manager of the Mutual Aid Fund.
- 12) Member of the Bethune Trades Council.
- 13) Distributor of the newspapers *L'Enchaine*, *La Voix du Mineur*, *Defence*, etc.
- 14) Dues collector (house to house) in a district other than the one in which he lives.
- 15) Also does work in the "ARAC" (Ex-Servicemen's League).

In addition to all these functions the comrade also fulfills the following functions in the district where he lives:

- 1) Does all the leaflet distribution.
- 2) Sticks up posters.
- 3) Collects money for special funds for the Party and the trade union as well as other organizations.

"For an active member to have ten functions is quite normal in our Miners' Union." (Report by Comrade Henri at the Federal Bureau of the Unitary Confederation of Labor, October 1933.)

The trouble here is not merely that this comrade cannot fulfill all these functions, and not merely that the work must suffer, but that the imposition of so many functions on a single comrade prevents the promotion of new cadres. If a single comrade badly fulfills sixteen functions, they could be well fulfilled by sixteen comrades if they were utilized for this work. We ourselves shout about the inadvisability of imposing many functions on a single comrade, but we do not improve the distribution of work, we make no progress in this matter. This is harmful. This retards the creation of cadres. We must declare war on such a method of distributing the work. Every single Party member must be utilized and be given the opportunity to show what work he can do.

IV. Conclusion

The reformists and the social-democrats could not retain their positions in the working class if they had not behind them the bourgeoisie and its state. But from this it only follows that the agitation and organizational work of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions among the masses must be incomparably better than that carried on by the reformists.

Unfortunately, this is far from being the case.

The reformists give answers to the workers on all the urgent questions; of course, they give answers which correspond to their *main* aim, viz., to serve the bourgeoisie and to betray the proletariat.

The Communists can successfully expose the Social-Democratic Party and the reformists only if, to counteract the reformists, they, in a timely and revolutionary manner, respond to all the urgent needs of the broad masses of the workers on questions of wages, the working day, unemployment insurance in all its forms, labor legislation, capitalist rationalization, etc., and at the same time, link all these questions up with the home and foreign politics of the country and with the preparation of the masses for the decisive struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

At the time of the first round of wars and revolutions no definitely formed monolithic Communist Parties as yet existed. Owing to this, the social-democrats and reformist trade unions managed to keep the revolution under their influence, to betray and smash up the vanguard of the working class. Today, Communist Parties exist, and their main and urgent task is to win the majority of the working class and guarantee the victory of the revolution. For this

purpose the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement must first of all expose the defects in their own work and remove them as quickly as possible in order to prevent the social-democrats and the reformist trade union bureaucrats from betraying the working class again by leading them to be massacred in the interests of the bourgeoisie in time of war, and by saving capitalism from the victorious proletarian revolution in time of revolution. (*Prolonged applause.*)

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