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*Publishing Office :*

Leningrad, Smolny, 63. Tel. 1.19.

*Editor's Office :*

Leningrad, Smolny, Zinoviev's Cabinet

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Published at 16 King Street, Covent Garden, London, **W.C.2.**

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

*Organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist  
International*

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ENGLISH EDITION

NUMBER 10 NEW  
SERIES

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# The Labour Party and the Workers' Struggle

## 1. A Few Facts.

**G**REAT confusion exists in many minds, Communist and non-Communists about the nature and function of the Labour Party. In no small degree this is directly due to the peculiar character of its organisation—collective affiliation of the trade unions as its financial basis, with Socialist societies and (since 1918) individual members' sections in the localities. The contrast between this organisation and the rigidly centralised Social-Democratic Parties, based on individual membership, is very striking.

One of the commonest impressions is that this composition is peculiar to the British Labour Party. Other comrades have recently put forward the thesis that it is a form of organisation peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon countries. Monopolist capitalism, it is claimed, has succeeded there in creating a privileged minority of labour, divided by a vast gulf from the apathetic majority, and for the latter the Labour Party is a kind of bridge on the way to a political Workers' Party.

There is much that is true in this explanation, but the trouble is that it does not fill the bill. Not only do Labour Parties exist outside Great Britain, but they exist and have existed outside the Anglo-Saxon countries. In Belgium the Labour Party is organised on the same principle as the British, and thanks to this the reformist leaders are having exactly the same trouble with the obstinate trade unions, who persist in sending Communists as delegates to local committees, as Macdonald and Egerton Wake have in Great Britain. In Norway, again, the Labour Party until recent years was organised on the federate trade union basis and even affiliated to the Comintern as such. One of the points on which the reformists broke with the International was the latter's demand for re-organisation on an individual basis, and their separate organisation retains the old structure.

But there is more evidence still. In the early days of the Third Republic in France, when the Socialist and Labour movement was first pulling itself together after the bloody defeat of the Commune, the embryo out of which the political party of the proletariat later developed was a "General Congress of French Workers" (1876). At this Congress, 70 trade unions and 28 "political clubs" (what we should call local Socialist societies), representing an aggregate membership of a million, were represented. The objects of the organisation set up were declared to be rather economic than political. In 1881, the movement went a step further, when the "collectivist wing" formed itself into the "French Revolutionary Socialist Workers' Party," and held a congress of 300 delegates, representing both trade unions and Socialist groups. A national committee was set up, composed of five delegates from each of the six national districts, and one delegate from each national trade union. It was only in 1882, when the Marxist wing of the new party broke away under the leadership of Guesde, that a real step forward was taken to a democratically centralised organisation, based on individual membership.

Again, one of the most important constituent elements out of which the Swiss Social-Democracy developed was the "Swiss Workers' League," founded by a "General Congress of Workers" at Olten in 1873. From 1873 until 1880, this League existed as the mass political organisation of the Swiss workers, uniting trade unions with Swiss and German Socialist societies. It was only at the seventh annual conference that the elements were separated.

Even if we limit ourselves merely to these four examples, we see already (i) a Labour Party based on the trade unions is a stage through which many non-Anglo-Saxon countries are passing or have passed; (ii) it is not necessarily connected with the existence of powerful monopolist capitalism; (iii) there seems to be some ground for anticipating that in certain circumstances a Labour Party will go on from collective to individual membership.

But, of course, it is not merely a question of the form of organisation. It is first of all a political question—the question of the degree to which class consciousness has developed amongst the workers. Two circumstances point to this. First, that with the British Labour Party as with the old French "Workers' Party," the organisation was originally for purely economic, sectional ends—to defend the legal position of the trade unions, to obtain Parliamentary repre-

sentation for this or that union. For many years there was no question of the Labour Party acting as a political leader of the whole working class in the struggle against the capitalist class *i.e.*, as a Socialist Party. Secondly, although the old "Parti Ouvrier" claimed the support of a million workers, and the Labour Party to-day the collective membership of four millions, in reality it is only a fraction who are active members, or even conscious of being members of the Labour Party. The mass of members can and will become real, *i.e.*, individual members only in proportion as they arrive at the realisation that they must conduct a political struggle against capitalism.

If we compare France and Germany, where Social-Democratic parties have existed for over a generation, with the countries possessing Labour Parties, we see that the essential difference is that, after the proletariat had come into existence, it found itself involved in the political armed struggles of the bourgeoisie (the Empire, the Commune, and the Third Republic in France, the Austrian and French wars of Prussia). While capitalism grew up late, it began giving the workers a political education early. It was this that drew into the path of definite class conscious (*i.e.*, Socialist) thought and activity large masses of workers in France and Germany, while in Britain and Norway the number of Socialists remained infinitely smaller.

What was the historical function of the Labour Party, then, if we leave on one side for a moment the particular purpose in the mind of that active minority which organised it? We can find some valuable and instructive answers to this question in the writings of Engels, who took such a wholehearted and passionate interest in the development of the British Labour movement.

## 2. Engels on the Origin of the Labour Party.

Engels did not live to see the actual formation of the Labour Party, although long before his death the Trades Union Congress (in 1887) passed a resolution, in the teeth of violent opposition from Henry Broadhurst and the other Liberal leaders and M.P.'s, in favour of its organisation.

But towards the end of his life he saw that a new mood was growing up in the British working class, of which that resolution was only a symptom, and which he explained in a brilliant article in 1885 (quoted by him in his "Preface"

to the 1892 edition of "The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844") :

"The truth is this: during the period of England's industrial monopoly the English working class have, to a certain extent, shared in the benefits of the monopoly. These benefits were very unequally parcelled out amongst them; the privileged minority pocketed most, but even the great mass had, at least, a temporary share now and then. And that is the reason why, since the dying out of Owenism, there has been no Socialism in England. With the breakdown of that monopoly, the English working class will lose that privileged position; it will find itself generally—the privileged and leading minority not excepted—on a level with its fellow workers abroad. And that is the reason why there will be Socialism again in England."

In this passage, Engels did two important things. First he laid his finger on the main reason why British Labour had been entirely under the rule of the Liberals for half-a-century—namely, its share in the profits of world industrial monopoly. It was not Engel's fault that he could not foresee that for another 25 or 30 years British Labour would continue to share in the profits (perhaps to a lesser extent, but still appreciably) of a new monopoly—now no longer of British industry, but of British finance capital—a monopoly in the sweating and exploitation of hundreds of millions of colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Secondly, Engels pointed out that Socialism—the consciousness amongst the working class that it must fight the capitalist class, with the object of overthrowing it, and not "collaborate" with it—was bound to grow as the privileged position of British Labour disappeared. But the new lease of life given to British capitalism by its development into its last phase—imperialism—subsequently slackened the rate at which that growth was proceeding in Engels' last years. Although Engels could not foresee this, his own reasoning was justified up to the hilt.

Nevertheless, the growth had begun. It was expressed partly in the formation of the Social-Democratic Federation (1883), in which a number of workers joined forces with elements from other classes. This circumstance, together with the immaturity of the movement as a whole, condemned it to a barren sectarian position almost from the first. Engels repeatedly exposed that sectarianism, and we see why in any extract from his letters on the subject. Thus, writing to Sorge on September 17th, 1886, Engels said: "The movement here is still in the hands of adventurers on one

hand, and cranks and emotional Socialists on the other. The masses remain on one side, although even amongst them there is the *beginning* of a correct movement."

What direction should that movement take? Engels answered this question clearly in a letter of November 29th, 1886: "One of the first and most important steps of every country newly coming into the movement must be the organisation of an independent political party, by whatever means it be achieved, providing it is a really workers' party. . . . The masses require for their development time and suitable circumstances; the latter will come of themselves, so soon as the masses create their own independent movement—no matter what form it takes, provided only that it is their *own* movement, in which the masses will be pushed forward by their own mistakes, and the losses involved will make them wiser."

"It is much more important," we find Engels writing to an American friend, Madame Wischnewetzky, on Dec. 28th, 1886, "that the movement should grow wider, develop harmoniously, strike deep roots, and, if possible, embrace the whole American proletariat, than that from the very first it should follow a completely correct path in respect of theory. . . . The most important thing is that the working class should enter the movement as an independent class."

Engels found that in America, just as in England, the Socialists were confronted with the likelihood of becoming a sect (if not of falling into the hands of "adventurers, cranks and romantics"), if they insisted on maintaining the strict purity of their robe. He insisted that it was the masses who must be got moving, even if it be hesitatingly, confusedly, and often erroneously at first: "no matter what form it takes," provided that the workers "enter the movement as an independent class." Once they had achieved that, their own experience, and the breakdown of capitalist society, would show them better forms of organisation, and clearer roads to emancipation, *i.e.*, would lead them to Socialism. "One or two million workers' votes given for a bona fide Labour Party at the present time," he went on in his letter to America, "are infinitely more important than a hundred thousand votes cast for a programme that is irreproachable from the theoretical point of view."

That Engels was abreast of actual tendencies in his own day is shown by the Trades Union Congress resolution, already referred to, the next year, in favour of a Labour

**Party.** The adoption of that resolution already meant a big step forward, namely, the defeat of Broadhurst and the other middle class elements who had hitherto dominated the Congress—the “bourgeois Labour Party,” as Engels called them in 1891 (in contrast to the working class elements in the Congress fighting for the 8-hour day). This contrasting of the two class elements within the same Labour movement is the key to most of the problems facing the workers in the Labour Party to-day.

Engels does not take us much further towards the actual forms which the independent political party should take. But the lessons of his teaching (justified by actual events) are clear: (i) that in Britain the workers were prevented from pursuing an independent class policy by their privileged position as partners with their bosses in the exploitation of world Labour; (ii) that the disappearance of that position, whenever it came, would involve the workers in a Socialist *i.e.*, political class struggle; (iii) that the formation of an independent class party, “if possible embracing the whole proletariat,” and even if its programme were extremely confused, was the first step towards “theoretical clearness,” *i.e.*, towards a real Socialist Party.

True, Engels gave a few important indications of how he thought the Socialists should work.

In the same letter to Mme. Wischnewetzky previously quoted, he referred to the “Knights of Labour,” one of the earliest forms of industrial organisation in America, but with a very confused programme, as follows: “The Knights of Labour are a very important factor of the movement,” (towards a bona fide Labour Party) “which should not be treated with contempt, but on the contrary should be revolutionised from within.”

In February, 1890, again insisting, in a letter to Sorge, that not propaganda, but only the facts of life, could call the Labour movement into being, he said: “To create a mass movement, you must begin with the trade unions, every step forward of which will be imposed upon them by some defeat or other. But as soon as they step over the bounds of a middle class outlook on the world, the movement will move forward rapidly.”

And finally, in the same year, he showed what he meant by “beginning with the trade unions.” In the same letter of February, 1890, he refers to the great dock strike. He

says it was caused by the absolute necessity of self defence, but "thanks to 8 years' agitation, the ground was so prepared that *the workers without being Socialists themselves, chose leaders for themselves exclusively from amongst the Socialists.*"

Again, in April, 1890, Engels writes an enthusiastic account of how the Socialists have succeeded in beating the Liberal leaders of the London Trades Council (on the question of a demonstration for the legal 8-hours day), and comments: "Wide masses of the workers here still do not consider themselves supporters of Socialism, but are approaching it, and have already come so close that *they are choosing only Socialists as their leaders.*" (Engels' italics.)

There is, therefore, some justification for thinking that (1) Engels considered work in the trade unions as the most important work of Socialists because if the masses chose Socialists as their leaders, it was a step towards becoming supporters of Socialism, and (2) that he anticipated the constitution of a wide Labour Party on the basis of the trade unions (we find him speaking with approval of a similar plan for London, in a letter of May 29th, 1890) *as a step towards a class party.*

But only a step. We have already seen that such steps were taken in other countries, and were followed up by further steps. In Britain those steps were not taken. Why? The general reason, no doubt, was that which Engels himself indicated: the continuation of the privileged position of British Labour. But the concrete forms which the "arrested development" took, the nature of the obstacles which Socialist development met, we find most clearly stated by Lenin.

### 3. Lenin and the Labour Party.

Five years after Engels died—in 1900, that is—the Labour Party was formed, by a combined committee of trade unionists and Socialists, and on a basis of collective affiliations—about 350,000 members of trade unions and 23,000 members of Socialist societies. This proportion became even more striking as time went on—16 to 1 at the beginning, 53 to 1 by 1905, and 107 to 1 by 1922.

There was more in it than the relation of numbers. The trade unions looked upon the Labour Party as a parliamentary weapon for advancing their own sectional in-

terests. They came in and out of the Labour Party as the latter considerations dictated. Within the unions, the workers were little removed, for the reasons already stated, from the condition of slowly awakening political consciousness in which Engels had left them in 1895. And the leaders were little different, in many cases, from Liberals, while most looked upon the unions as a means of securing sectional bargains with the bosses on behalf of their men, and not as part of the working class machinery of struggle against the capitalist class as a whole.

To the essentially non-Socialist (and, therefore, middle class) bloc created in this way within the Labour Party, or rather at the key positions of its machinery, was super-added the influence of the I.L.P., which had from the first worked actively within the unions (Dr. Aveling, Engels' son-in-law, was one of its most ardent early supporters), and which took a leading part in forming the Labour Party. The special peculiarity of the I.L.P. was that its Socialism was excellently adapted for the new period (1895-1914) in which British finance-capital dominated the world, and threw to British Labour a part (diminishing, but still a part) of the spoils. The Socialism of the I.L.P. repudiated the class struggle and stood for "gradually and painlessly" altering the social system. When that social system represented the dictatorship of the capitalist class, it is obvious that *in practice* I.L.P. Socialism meant collaboration between the capitalists and the workers—small fights for sectional needs, but no attack at the roots. I.L.P. Socialism, in short, was (and is, to the extent that the middle class still dominates the working class section of the I.L.P.), the philosophy of the middle class.

Thus the Labour Party, even before the war, was dominated by a middle class bloc. In the words of Lenin (April, 1913), writing on the I.L.P. Conference: "The British opportunists have succeeded in bringing about what the opportunists of other countries so frequently incline to, namely, the combination of opportunist 'Socialist' M.P.'s with M.P.'s of the alleged non-party trade unions."

Lenin had explained why this was bound to be so, as long ago as 1902, in "What is to be Done?" In this pamphlet he attacked those Socialists who wished to confine the working class struggle purely to the economic field, under the guise of "leaving the workers to fight their battles in their own way." He says: "The history of every country shows that with their own forces the working class can



hammer out only a trade unionist consciousness, *i.e.*, the conviction that it is necessary to organise trade unions to carry on a struggle against the masters, *to secure from the government the passing of various laws necessary to the working class, etc.* But the elemental development of the Labour movement leads precisely to its domination by bourgeois ideology. . . . Elemental development means trade unionism. . . . And trade unionism (pure and simple) means just this ideological subjection of the workers by the capitalists—for the simple reason, that bourgeois ideology is infinitely older, more elaborate, and more powerful and extensive than Socialist ideology.”

Lenin said that, so long as the Labour movement confined itself to purely trade unionist activities, it was thereby abandoning the class struggle for a series of sectional struggles. In those it could be easily met half-way, without in any way upsetting the balance of the system as a whole. And even the parliamentary advancement of the trade union cause (*i.e.*, the work of the Labour Party), would not alter the essential fact that the “trade union cause” means satisfying the wants of individual groups of workers, while the Socialist cause means overthrowing capitalism and thereby emancipating the whole working class.

It should not be thought, however, that Lenin was under-estimating the importance of the Labour Party in its historical perspective. He was looking at the problem from the point of view of the formation of a Socialist mass party, under conditions (in Russia) which obliged every honest Socialist to advocate, not collaboration, but only combat with capitalism. But Lenin was fully conscious of the importance of the Labour Party as a step forwards towards a Socialist workers' party in conditions where capitalism was stable and “peaceful”: and in this we find him at one with Engels.

One of his most striking early references to the question of the Labour Party was in December, 1905. At that time (just after the failure of the 1905 revolution), Lenin was fiercely combating the Mensheviks, who had become intoxicated with the speed at which events were moving, and had begun widely spreading the idea of a Labour Party on the Belgian (or British) model—forgetful of the existence of Tsardom. Lenin laughed them to scorn: he said they had translated the constitution of the Belgian Labour Party into Russian, but had omitted “to translate into Russia the industrial conditions and history of Belgium.” “*After a series*

of bourgeois revolutions, *after* decades of struggle with the middle class semi-Socialism of Proudhon, amidst a gigantic, almost unequalled development of industrial capitalism, the "Labour Congress" and the Labour Party in Belgium represented a transitional step from non-proletarian to proletarian Socialism." In Russia, on the other hand, where actual class war was raging, and where a Socialist Party was already in existence, it would be a step back.

Everything Lenin said of Belgium, of course, would apply to Britain. But he was not unmindful that it was a *transitional* step. And when necessary he emphasised it with all his might.

The best illustration is in his article in the Bolshevik organ *Proletarii*, 1908, dealing with the acceptance of the Labour Party as a member of the Second International (it is printed in full in our Party publication "Lenin and Britain," pp. 24-32). Here the issue was raised very clearly Kautsky moved that the Labour Party be admitted "since, while not expressly recognising the proletarian class struggle, nevertheless in practice it conducts the struggle, and by its very organisation, which is independent of the bourgeois parties, bases itself on the class struggle." Lenin moved to substitute: "since it represents the first steps on the part of the real proletarian organisations of England toward a conscious class policy and towards a *Socialist* Labour Party."

Lenin said that *in practice* the Labour Party was not conducting an altogether class policy. "That the Labour Party in England, by dissociating itself *in Parliament* (not at the elections! not in its policy! not in its propaganda and agitation!) from the bourgeois parties, was thereby making the first step, on behalf of the proletarian mass organisations, towards Socialism and a class policy, is beyond dispute. . . Such a formulation (his own) would induce hundreds of thousands of British workers, who undoubtedly respect the decisions of the International, but who are not yet quite Socialists, to reflect once more why it is considered that they have made only the *first* step, and what the next steps in the same direction should be."

When we compare this passage with what we have already seen was Engels' view (Lenin knew it well), one's first instinct is renewed admiration of Lenin's marvellous power of taking up the great ideas of the founders of Marxism and carrying them a stage further, in the light of fur

ther development and new circumstances. Engels, we recall, said that a workers' party receiving a million votes was a tremendous step forward: Lenin, once this has been achieved, says: "Yes, but by what policy, by what propaganda and agitation?" Practice, says Lenin, has shown that a Party is possible which *outwardly* conforms to Engels' conditions, while, in the concrete circumstances of a later day, it falls very far behind them in reality. Engels' wrote that experience, life itself, would teach the workers how to **develop their organisation** towards a Socialist Party: Lenin wants the International, embodying the collective and sifted experience of the world working class movement, to assist them in this—it would be a mistake not to do so.

Lenin, like Engels, condemns the sectarian attitude of the S.D.F., for refusing to work with the masses; but he utters a warning against going to the other extreme, and endorsing the I.L.P. attitude by recognising the Labour Party as "in practice independent of the bourgeois parties as conducting the class struggle, and as being Socialist."

There is another very important lesson which Lenin teaches us about the Labour Party. We must notice his repeated emphasis on the fact that the Labour Party is not a party in the ordinary sense of the word. In 1908, in the article already quoted, he called it "the political representative of the British trade unions." In 1920, at the Second Congress of the Comintern, he said: "The Labour Party is a *peculiar organisation*, having no parallel in any other country; it comprises from six to seven million organised workers of all kinds of unions—political convictions are not inquired into." In another speech at the same Congress, he said: "We must remember that conditions in the British Labour Party are very peculiar. This is a very unusual party, *it is not a party in the ordinary sense of the word*; it consists of the members of all the trade union organisations. It grants sufficient liberty to all political parties which affiliate to it." And finally, he calls it, "*This strange workers' organisation* of four millions of workers, of partly trade union and partly political nature, under the guidance of the bourgeoisie."

Lenin's view of the Labour Party, then, was (1) that it is a peculiar organisation which acts as the parliamentary representative of the trade unions; (2) that it reflected the "trade unionist" outlook of the mass of British workers, which in practice meant a policy of collaboration with the

bourgeoisie as a whole, while opposing individual sections of the workers to individual sections of the capitalists; (3) that it was dominated by the capitalist class, indirectly, through the latter's conscious and unconscious middle class agents in the ranks of Labour; (4) that it was a step towards a *Socialist* party of the workers.

It was in the light of this view that Lenin, as is well-known, advised that Communists should work within the Labour Party: "Since it cannot be denied that the British Labour Party is composed of workers, it is clear that working in that party means co-operation of the vanguard of the working class with the less advanced workers; and where this co-operation is not systematically carried on, the Communist Party is worthless." (Speech at Second Congress of Comintern, 1920.)

#### 4. The Labour Party: Whence and Whither?

It is now possible to get a more definite picture of the historical role of the Labour Party. Like its counterpart in other countries, it is a step towards an independent class party of the workers. Like them, it came into being when "economist" or "trade unionist" ideas were uppermost in the minds of the workers. Unlike its counterparts in France and Switzerland, which evolved towards ordinary Social-Democratic parties under the pressure of the greater political activity of the workers, it has remained for 25 years essentially the parliamentary weapon of the trade unions. Just as the trade unions have borne the stamp of opportunism and reformism created by the special position of British Labour in the past, so has the Labour Party. In addition to ensuring the indirect domination of the bourgeoisie through its dependence on the trade unions, the Labour Party offered special facilities for middle class influence through the I.L.P. (and, of course, the Fabian Society).

Even before the war, therefore, the Labour Party was a peculiar form of working class organisation, dominated by a middle class bloc.

The war, which precipitated hundreds of thousands of the petty bourgeoisie into or nearly into the ranks of the proletariat, gave an opportunity to the middle class bloc to open the doors of the Labour Party even wider for the middle class—taking advantage at the same time of the political apathy or confusion of the workers. The result, as

Comrade Murphy showed in the last number of the "Communist International," was the setting up of the individual members' sections, as a new base for the reformist I.L.P. leadership.

This strengthened the hold of the bloc on the machinery but did not essentially alter the nature of the Labour Party.

There is another aspect, however.

Nothing in Nature can stand still: everything is in a process of becoming. To the extent that the middle class hold on the Labour Party prevented the workers from developing a *Socialist* Labour Party, it created a danger that the Labour Party may be transformed into a third party of the bourgeoisie.

In what sense can the Labour Party be spoken of as becoming "Liberalised," or "a third capitalist party," since the war? In one sense it was moving in this direction even before the war. Its policy, as Lenin showed, was rarely independent: in most cases it carried out a Liberal policy, and thereby acted as a kind of secondary middle class party. But during the war, and after it, there has been considerable progress in the revolutionising of the workers of Great Britain: they are becoming, as Engels wrote long ago, before the era of Imperialism, "instinctively Socialist." And this process has been countered by a still further strengthening of middle class influence within the Labour Party, through the individual members' sections.

*The struggle of the middle class bloc that dominates the Labour Party against the instinctive Socialism of the workers is what constitutes the tendency towards transforming the Labour Party into a third capitalist Party.* Not only has this taken the form of political programmes, but also of organisational measures. A body that is in the process of changing from a peculiar organisation of trade unions, Socialist societies and local Labour Parties (based again on the same two groups, together with individual members) into a bourgeois party must inevitably tend to throw off the working class elements. That is the simple logic of the middle class leaders who, as long ago as the election of 1923, proclaimed that the Labour Party was not a "class party," but a "People's Party") *i.e.*, not a workers' party, but a new Liberal Party.

That is why the middle class leaders have secured the expulsion of the Communists so far, have already begun to speak of expelling the I.L.P. (where there is a strong working class group), and, if that succeeds, will go on to expel the trade unions—leaving behind a fully-fledged bourgeois political party, based on individual membership, and not collective affiliation.

This tendency must continue—the *middle class bloc cannot otherwise maintain power in the Labour Party*—unless the bloc itself is defeated and overthrown.

What can overthrow it? The answer is obvious: a working class bloc. Where are the elements of such a bloc? First, in the trade unions: in the movement amongst the members of the trade unions to drive out that reformism and class collaboration amongst the trade union leadership which has made it possible for reformism and class collaboration to maintain the upper hand in the Labour Party. In other words, in the Minority Movement and the Left Wing amongst the trade union leaders. Secondly, in the active working class and Socialist members of the individual sections. Thirdly, in the I.L.P., amongst those workers who remain loyal to their class, and genuinely anxious to fight capitalist influence in Labour's ranks: whether in the localities or in Parliament, the central bodies, etc. Fourthly, in the Communist Party.

Last month Comrade Murphy indicated the common ground on which such a "left" or *working class* bloc could assemble. It already has its press—our own *Workers' Weekly*, *Lansbury's Weekly*, and the *Sunday Worker*, which has succeeded *already* in uniting in practice almost all the groups and tendencies previously mentioned, around such definite demands as: International Trade Union Unity, National Trade Union Unity, Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples, and the Restoration of Working Class Unity in the Labour Party. Day by day, every worker, every honest Socialist has ample proof given him by events of the necessity of these and similar cardinal points.

The purpose of such a movement must not be misunderstood. If middle class domination of the Labour Party is broken, if the slide towards a third capitalist party is stopped, it does not mean that the Labour Party thereby takes a step which will make it the workers' Socialist Party

The workers can use it to great effect in carrying on part of their political struggle against capitalism (for agitation in Parliament and in the country). They can prevent it from being transformed by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald into a third bourgeois party. But that is not the same as making it their political party, "in the ordinary sense of the word." A peculiar organisation, existing to fight the parliamentary battles of the unions, cannot be the political *party* of the working class. The formation of the Labour Party itself was the first step towards such a party. If the trade unions, as matters stand to-day, regain real control over the Labour Party, *i.e.*, if the workers revolt against reformism in the trade unions, and thereby make it possible to overthrow reformism in the Labour Party, this will be a real victory for the workers. It will be a second step towards the goal. But the workers need a party which is centralised, elastic, capable of fighting on many different fronts (unions, parliament, factories, co-operatives, etc.), Marxist and Leninist. The Labour Party cannot answer these conditions, because of its very federal nature, and its relations with the unions: at best it will be their handmaid, whereas the workers' political party must lead them at every turn, and not only them, but all the workers' organisations. Such a party can and will be only the Communist Party.

Yet unless the second step is taken, and the Labour Party is made *really* independent of bourgeois influence, unless the middle class bloc formed by 25 years' domination is met, and opposed, and smashed by a working class bloc, the Labour Party will roll further and further downhill towards complete transformation into a middle class party, and will serve to rivet the workers' chains instead of striking them off.

C. M. ROEBUCK.

# Anglo-American Imperialist Co-operation

**W**ITHOUT a concrete and correct analysis of the world situation, the Communist International, the world Party of the proletariat, cannot conduct a successful policy. In his article in the February number of the "Communist International," Comrade Radek attempts an analysis of the main forces in the present world situation. He arrives at the conclusion that **to-day and for some time to come the deciding factor is the co-operation between American and British imperialisms.** On this foundation he builds up the structure of his analysis of world policy. In Comrade Radek's analysis this tendency seems to be stronger than cement and stone; even the dynamite of the world-wide competition between England and America will be unable to destroy this foundation for some time to come.

The conclusion drawn by Comrade Radek is false. The truth, in fact, is just the contrary in spite of temporary and local co-operation between British and American Imperialism, **the conflicts between Great Britain and the United States are becoming ever more acute**; material for dispute is steadily accumulating between the two mightiest imperialist plunderers, and the picture of the future conflicts between Wall Street and the City is being defined with increasing clarity. It is, of course, not merely a matter of taste or is it a question of temperament, as to which feature of the relations between Great Britain and the United States are emphasised; **temporary co-operation on certain questions of world policy or fundamental opposition.** It is a matter of essential importance whether one considers this co-operation as so strong and permanent as to regard the conflicts and competition between the two great powers in all continents and every market of the world as likely to be secondary matter for some time to come, and allow it to fall into the background, or whether one asserts that the contradictions will become steadily more acute, and that even the very "competition" will inevitably be productive of fresh conflicts.



Comrade Radek rightly declares that the question of Anglo-American co-operation and our estimation of its importance is **the central question** of contemporary world policy. He is also right when he states that our estimate of the prospects of the proletarian revolution are partly dependent upon our estimate of Anglo-American co-operation. Comrade Radek says :

“ But it would be sheer short-sightedness and a **manifestation of the spirit of liquidationism** not to count on the probability of a new wave of proletarian mass struggles during the next few years. There can be no doubt that this struggle will begin as a **struggle for the immediate economic needs of the proletariat**. But whether it will be confined to that will depend upon a number of factors. Firstly, on the general world situation of capitalism, *i.e.*, upon the **acuteness of its own internal antagonisms**, its conflicts with its colonists and semi-colonists and with the Union of Soviet Republics, and secondly, on the successes we achieve in the fights against the Social-Democrats and on the organisational and political position of the Communist Parties.”

Radek here quite correctly states that apart from other factors, the internal antagonisms and conflicts of capitalism will determine whether the struggles of the proletariat will remain merely struggles for the immediate economic interests of the working class or whether they will develop into great political and, finally, revolutionary struggles.

That is Radek's first thesis. His second runs as follows :

“**The motive force** of the undoubted movement in world politics was the **creation of a temporary alliance between British and American capitalism**.”

Radek is accordingly asserting that the backbone of world politics is the creation of a temporary alliance between British and American finance-capital.

Comrade Radek then attempts to define this temporary alliance still more exactly. He writes as follows :

“**The dominating problem** of the bourgeoisie at the present moment is the **stabilisation of capitalism**, which is impossible without the stabilisation of **currencies**, the consolidation of international **credit** and the **opening up of new**

**markets. Until these problems are solved, British and American capital cannot make the centre of their policy the fight for hegemony in the re-establishment of the capitalist world."**

One further quotation :

**"Before the struggle can break out between Britain and America for hegemony in Central Europe, Central Europe must be snatched from the claws of revolution which has arisen from the depths of economic chaos. That is the aim of Anglo-American co-operation as expressed in the Experts' Report."**

Comrade Radek's attitude is quite clear. What he says is as follows :

1. Upon the internal antagonisms and conflicts of capitalism depends partly whether the working class during the next few years will engage in purely economic struggles or whether these economic struggle will be transformed into political and eventually, revolutionary struggles.

2. The chief factor in world politics is the alliance between British and American capitalism.

3. The main problem of the bourgeoisie at present is to stabilise capitalism, and accordingly British and American capital, in spite of Anglo-American competition throughout the whole world, cannot make the fight for hegemony the central point of their policies.

4. The struggle between America and Britain for hegemony in Central Europe cannot break out until Central Europe is saved from the menace of revolution and economic chaos.

We see that, according to the theory of Comrade Radek, the temporary alliance between Britain and America is likely to last for a very long time and to become a permanent alliance between British and American imperialism for a lengthy period. If Radek's analysis is correct, this alliance cannot be broken, at least, until order in the capitalist world which was destroyed by war and revolution, is restored. And within the capitalist world, Central Europe must first be saved from the claws of revolution and economic chaos before Great Britain and the United States can enter upon the struggle for hegemony.

Comrade Radek's analysis offers a rather pessimistic outlook for the development of the political, and still more of the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat. Radek's theory of the present durable co-operation between Great Britain and America in the immediate future implies a certain political security of capitalism against the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. Nevertheless, this unshakeable Anglo-American alliance will at the same time be rendered very critical and by the attitude of the Anglo-American bloc towards the U.S.S.R. and the colonies.

**"The Anglo-American alliance, which England is trying to supplement by a bloc with France in the Near East, is the chief element in the stabilisation of capitalism in Europe and the decrease, at least of the external, antagonisms within the European capitalist camp. But it is at the same time rendering the relations of the Anglo-American bloc towards the U.S.S.R. and the colonial countries still more acute."**

This antagonism will even lead to an open conflict between Anglo-American capitalism, on the one hand, and the U.S.S.R. and the Eastern colonies on the other :

**"Summarising the review of the foreign political developments of the past year, which was supposed to mark an era of democracy and pacifism, we have to record that this era was born of the successes achieved to some extent by Anglo-American capitalism in stabilising the capitalist economic system of Europe. But these successes, far from being complete, are bound up with the problem of markets, which Anglo-American capitalism is only just confronting, and has by no means solved as yet. The attempt to solve the problem is bound to lead to an acute conflict between the capitalist world and the U.S.S.R. and the countries of the East, a conflict which may completely wreck the policy of capitalist stabilisation. Failure in this conflict, even in its diplomatic and economic phases, will threaten the collapse of the Anglo-American bloc, since failure, more than anything else, will reveal the conflict of interests between the capitalists of England and America, and between the Anglo-American bloc and the capitalist countries subordinate to it."**

Such is substantially Comrade Radek's theory. He has also certain subsidiary theories concerning an Anglo-French alliance, etc., but the main idea is the Anglo-American alliance. It must be admitted that he makes many remarks which rather weaken the unshakeableness and durability of

that alliance. He enumerates the antagonisms between American and British capitalism. He also says that at the last moment, when the Great War between Anglo-American imperialism and the U.S.S.R. and the colonies becomes threatening, the Anglo-American bloc will be menaced by the danger of collapse. But these enfeebling factors remain subsidiary considerations. **The axis around which the ideas of Comrade Radek revolve is from beginning to end the irrefutable fact of the Anglo-American alliance as the determining factor of the world situation and of the future of the proletarian revolution for a definite period to come.**

Let us examine how far Radek's theory corresponds with the true tendencies of imperialist development.

### Errors in Method.

The whole method of Radek's argument is false. He records the Anglo-American alliance statically and not dynamically. He assumes Great Britain and the United States to be fixed and unchanging magnitudes which will remain unaltered for the whole of a definite period. He therein neglects the following essential factors :

1. The internal class situation of Great Britain is by no means stable. The relation of forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is even liable to rapid changes and may strongly influence the foreign policy of Great Britain.

2. Relations within the various sections of the British Empire are by no means stable ; in the colonies and dominions they are liable to change and may fundamentally influence the foreign policy of Great Britain.

3. The same is true of the United States. Finance-capital has in recent times made successful advances towards an aggressive foreign policy, but there are active and powerful class forces and counter tendencies which are liable to deflect the foreign policy of the United States in a definite direction.

4. It is not enough to enumerate the various conflicting interests of British and American imperialism ; they must be analysed with the purpose of determining whether they are tending to become acute and to what extent they may develop into conflicts ; in a word, they must be presented not statically but dynamically and dialectically.

5. It would, of course, be childish to deny the existence of co-operation between Britain and United States, especially in Germany where it has adopted a most obvious form in the shape of the Dawes' Plan. But it would be vague, and, therefore, incorrect to regard this co-operation statically and not dynamically and fail to see that out of this co-operation fresh frictions, fresh contradictions of interests and fresh conflicts may arise.

6. Theoretically, the possibility of Anglo-American co-operation for a certain period is, of course, not to be excluded. It is equally possible for the two imperialist plunderers to unite against the U.S.S.R., and the colonial peoples of the East. But it would be mere prophecy, and not a justified analysis, to represent the Anglo-American alliance and the Anglo-American war against the U.S.S.R. and the colonies **as the only possible development**, and to eliminate completely all counter tendencies.

### Are Britain and America New Siamese Twins?

Comrade Radek consistently speaks of "Anglo-American" capitalism, and he carries his alliance theory to such an extent that British imperialism and Yankee imperialism appear to be inseparable Siamese twins whose circulation and actions are bound for life and death. The facts go to show that this does not correspond with reality.

There is no such thing as "Anglo-American" capitalism. There are actually **two** imperialist robbers who are opposed to each other on almost every question of world politics, and who not merely on the question of the seizure of new markets and the penetration of old markets, but also on the possibility of export of capital and the acquisition of the raw material areas of the world are in a constant and bitter conflict, which is frequently sanguinary, and which is everywhere becoming more acute and increasingly influencing the foreign policy of both sides. The struggle between the British and American imperialist robbers is the **fundamental**, the essential and primary fact. The struggle is world wide, while the co-operation is merely temporary and local. This assertion cannot be overlooked even though Comrade Radek uses as his principal argument the fact that the stabilisation of capitalism is at present the main problem of the bourgeoisie. But that problem *i.e.*, the problem of the maintenance and stabilisation of capitalism is not only new, but always has been the main problem of capitalism. The maintenance and stabilisation of capitalism is the fundamental and historically,

the main interests of capitalism. This fact, however, has never hindered the capitalist robbers from pursuing their own individual interests. Such a general argument cannot, therefore, solve the problem. It must be examined concretely and in all its ramifications.

We shall attempt to enumerate at least the chief conflicts of interests between British and American imperialism. We shall attempt to prove that :

1. The conflicts of interests are increasing ;
2. They are being ever more consciously felt by both empires ; and
3. The conflict of interests will increasingly involve the employment of the State power of the two imperialist empires.

### **The Fight for Priority.**

The United States is the chief opponent of British imperialism. American finance-capital was able to make use of the world war in order to dethrone British finance-capital. America is to-day the creditor of the world, and not Great Britain. In 1923, Great Britain exported capital to the extent of 650 million dollars, whereas United States exported 390 millions. In 1924 Great Britain exported 592 million dollars of capital, whereas the United States exported the tremendous sum of 1,280 million dollars. Great Britain is still fighting for priority of place ; but she is compelled "peacefully" to retire step by step before a more powerful opponent. Before the war, Great Britain proudly maintained the principle that the British fleet must be as strong as the naval forces of the two next strongest powers. But to-day Great Britain was compelled in the Washington Treaty to recognise the American principle that no fleet in the world may be stronger than that of the United States. The laying down of the proportion of 5 : 5 : 3 : for the fleets of the United States, Great Britain and Japan is a great humiliation for British naval domination, which, in deed, is now a thing of the past.

### **America Menaces the Continuance of the British World-Empire.**

No country in the world presents so strong, direct and acute danger to the existence of the British world empire as American imperialism. Uncle Sam is about to tear the finest diamonds from the British crown, namely, Canada and

**Australia.** The danger to the British world empire contained in the force of attraction exerted by America on the dominions is not a danger of the distant future or of the immediate future, but one of to-day. The last few months have seen the acceleration of the process of fusion of Canada and Australia with America. The Lausanne Treaty, the Geneva Protocol, the problem of imperial protective tariffs, the Canadian agricultural crisis, the high increase of Canadian immigration into United States, the increasing penetration of Canada by American capital, the Japanese menace to Australia, against which America seems to be a better protection than Britain—these are but a few of the factors which are acting as crowbars on the structure of the British Empire. Both sides, Great Britain as well as the United States, are fully cognisant of these tendencies.

We shall quote certain facts, not in order to demonstrate the influence of tendencies which are known to all, but to illustrate the rapidity and the acuteness of their development, especially in recent times.

The American "Commerce Reports," of November 3rd, 1924, (published by the official Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce) contains the statement :

"Economically and socially Canada may be considered as a **northern extension of the United States** and our trade with Canada is in many respects more **like domestic trade than our foreign trade** with other countries."

The United States is responsible for over two-thirds of Canadian imports and acquires 40 per cent. of her exports. Canada occupies the first place on the import list of the United States, and the second place in American exports.

The "Commerce Reports" summarise the situation as follows :

"The United States now takes a **larger proportion** of both Canada's exports and imports **than it did prior to the war**, while the United Kingdom has lost ground in both directions."

According to the figures of the Canadian Statistical Bureau, 31 per cent. of Canadian factory industry is in American hands, 58 per cent. in Canadian hands, and only 10 per cent. is owned by British. Before the war American manufactures owned 200 industries in Canada, whereas to-

day the number of American-owned industries in Canada is estimated at from 1,000 to 1,200.

England no less than America is aware of how the latter is attracting Canada. The English "Economist" of January 24th, 1925, states :

" . . . The material influences are undoubtedly tending to make **Canada an American nation.**"

The "Round Table" of June, 1924 confesses :

"In certain quarters there have been secret forebodings that in **Western Canada a psychological condition was maturing** which might be the prelude to a movement for absorption in the United States."

For public opinion of Canada the question as to whom dominions shall belong is a central question. The following three alternatives occupy the centre of political discussion : Should Canada remain a section of the British Empire, should it adhere to the United States, or should it declare itself an independent nation? The "Economist" of January 24th, 1925, gloomily states the matter as follows :

"But the fact that **the question is so much and so freely discussed in Canada, and that it is a real, not an imaginary issue**, means that Great Britain must give the most serious thought to working out internal relations, and in particular, to removing any suspicion that in foreign policy Canada can be committed by Downing Street to undertakings of which she is ignorant or would not approve. Under present circumstances, this may mean that the British Foreign Office must voluntarily restrict its own freedom of action in such a matter, for example, as the Geneva Protocol ; for it would be very unfortunate, if the British Government took a line on this important issue which would not be followed by the British Dominions. If these difficulties are to be solved, **the British Government must recognise that in the Dominion of Canada the British Empire contains an integral part of the North American continent ; this member to a large extent shares in the economic and social development of the great American nation, reflects its thoughts, and inevitably takes similar political views towards the rest of the world.**"

And what is true for Canada applies also to Australia. American capital is playing an increasingly important part in Australia politically, the fear of Japan is driving Australia into the arms of American imperialism. The great naval



manceuvres which America has planned for the summer of 1925 in the Pacific Ocean are intended not only as a demonstration against Japan, as is generally recognised in Europe, but also as an act of courtship of Australia, as it is generally recognised in America. **The forthcoming visit of the American fleet to Australia is a political event of first class importance.** Penetrating English politicians clearly recognise the danger of this situation for the British World Empire.

Sir Auckland Geddes, the former British Ambassador to America, in a speech delivered in London on November 11th, 1924, declared :

“Our dominions regard England as a mother—their motherland with its parliaments. . . In this feeling is a tribute to old age, **if not senility.** But the United States is regarded as of the same generation.

“Our colonies often find an instinctive understanding at Washington while they face a laborious struggle to be understood in London. **When the dominions look to London for understanding and we do not see their viewpoint, they gaze at the United States, and America looks back with inviting eyes.**

“**When the gallery is not watching, Canada and America play together without the slightest thought of difference of nationality. The same is true of Australia and America.**”

A remarkable co-operation indeed, when one of the co-operators threatens the other with annihilation. Nevertheless one can call it co-operation (but a very peculiar form of co-operation) when America stands like the mighty magnetic mountain of the fable and attracts the important dominions of the British World Empire towards itself with irresistible power. And it must not be thought that the question of Canada and Australia is of secondary importance to England. The existence of the Empire is for England the question of life and death, and it would be naive to believe that England would “co-operate” with America in the annihilation of the British Empire.

### The Struggle for New Markets and Sources of Raw Material.

British and American imperialism are to-day the chief protagonists in the world struggle for fresh markets and

sources of raw material. This fact, of course, is known to Comrade Radek. He himself enumerates a number of countries where English and American interests conflict. It is noteworthy, however, that he draws no conclusion from this conflict of interests. It is noteworthy also that he has such an unshakeable faith in the temporary firmness of the co-operation between Great Britain and America that in his opinion even the most acute conflict of interests and the most bitter and merciless struggle for the maintenance of old markets and the conquest of new, and the struggle for the possession of sources of raw material, cannot effect British-American co-operation. This conception is, of course, absurd, and cannot stand the test of reality. **The struggle between British and American capitalism for markets and sources of raw material is not merely a struggle between individual capitalists or capitalist groups or trusts, but openly or covertly is a direct and immediate struggle of the two great powers.**

Wherever we glance, we find this struggle in full swing in all parts of the world. The collision of British imperialism with **Egypt** and **Sudan** was at the same time a collision with the United States. Great Britain is anxious to grow cotton in her own dominions in order to make herself independent of the cotton produced by the United States which is sovereign in the determination of world prices. The British Minister, Neville Chamberlain, in a speech delivered on February 3rd, 1925, said :

“Since we cannot grow cotton, would it not be better for us to obtain our cotton from **British possessions in Africa and elsewhere instead of competing for the diminishing surplus of the American production**, the purchase of which only exalted the dollar at the expense of the pound sterling?”

The offensive of the British army was also indirectly an offensive against the cotton interests of American capital.

The revolutions and counter revolutions in **Mexico** do not merely represent the class struggle of the Mexican people, but also the armed struggle of American and British capital against each other. In this struggle, America has so far been successful. American capital in Mexico has invested twice as much in oil and five times as much in mining as British capital. The Calles Government is not only the government of the Mexican petty bourgeoisie, but also the government of American finance-capital. The recognition

of this government by the United States is merely a diplomatic expression of the fact that it recognises the domination of American finance-capital. If the British Government refuses to recognise the new Mexican government, it is merely a protest expressed in diplomatic language against the financial domination of the United States in Mexico.

During the last decade the industrial and commercial investments of the United States in **Latin America** have increased threefold. There exists no country in Latin America where Great Britain and the United States are not engaged in the most bitter struggle for outlets for their goods and for opportunities for the investment of capital. Wall Street is driving the City step by step out of the Argentine. In Brazil the competition between British and American imperialism has assumed the form of a "chronic revolution." Great Britain sends her financial investigation commission to Brazil while the United States sends her marine commission. The United States supports the national government, while Great Britain supports the insurrectionary local governments and the mutinous troops and sailors. The bloody struggle in San Paulo, where Brazilians murdered Brazilians was indirectly a struggle between America and Great Britain for hegemony in Brazil.

The struggle between British and American imperialism in Latin America is daily assuming more acute forms. The Coolidge government is the government of aggressive imperialism while the American "Foreign Affairs" rightly speaks of the Baldwin government as follows :

"We may look for a rapid expansion of British interests along this line in various parts of Latin America as one phase of the new Baldwin Government's programme."

American economists have also pointed out that the adoption of the Dawes Plan and the stabilisation of Central Europe signifies a further aggravation of the world struggle between America and Great Britain, since they necessitate larger supplies of raw material for European industries and therefore, a more intense struggle for the exploitation of this great reservoir of raw material of the imperialist world.

**The more America becomes a country of large industry, the more concerned will the American government be for the security of her sources of raw material.** In his last report, Hoover, the State Secretary for Commerce, says :

“ There are a number of **necessary raw materials** for the supply of which we are predominantly dependent on imports from foreign countries. Possibly as a result of the war, **but more particularly during the past eighteen months there has been a growing tendency for producers of these commodities to combine in control of prices as against the American market.**

It is particularly worthy of note, as Hoover points out, **that during the last eighteen months there has been a growing tendency** for the non-American, and especially for British capitalism to seek ways and means for controlling the essential raw materials necessary to American industry, as well as their prices.

The most important struggle, however, in which British and American imperialism are opposed on an extensive front, in fact, a world front in the true sense of the word, **is the struggle for oil.** The world struggle for oil obviously centres around two groups of trusts : the American Standard Oil and the British Royal Dutch Shell. In the fight for oil, Great Britain has assumed the offensive and is conducting a regular **oil blockade** against the United States. In the gigantic fight for oil, armistices are frequently concluded between British and American imperialism, but these acts of “co-operation” do not alter the fundamental fact of the existence of a brutal competitive struggle. Who can count how many revolutions and counter revolutions have been provoked in Mexico, Albania, Mosul, Persia, etc. ; and these are only isolated engagements in the great oil campaign. In Mexico the Americans supported Madero against Diaz, Huerta against Madero, Carranza against Huerta, and Villa against Carranza. The Monroe doctrine serves the Americans as a protection against the penetration of British imperialism into the oil regions of Central and South Africa. The concessions of the British “Controlled Oil Fields” are to be found everywhere along the coast and are spread, as Pierre P'Espagnol de la Tramerye in his book “The World Struggle for Oil” (New York, 1924), rightly says :

“The concessions of the **British controlled oil fields** are nearly always on the sea coast—or rather in close proximity to the sea—which is a considerable advantage. It has expressly chosen them, on both the Atlantic and the Pacific, as a precaution **in case war should break out between Britain and the United States**; for, even with the help of the Japanese fleet, the British Navy might not be able to seize the Panama Canal. And its units must be in a position to

replenish their stores of fuel without being obliged to make a long detour round the Magellan Straits.”

The government of British imperialism is conducting a systematic and increasingly tighter oil blockade against the United States. **In fact the British oil blockade is the greatest hindrance to American imperialism.** The report of the American Federal Trade Commission (February 12th, 1923) presents a clear picture of the restrictions made by the British Government on all British territories against the rights to oil possession by American citizens. The American report enumerates the following countries where the British Government prevents American citizens from acquiring or exploiting oil fields :

The United Kingdom, British India, the Federated Malay States, Australia, Northern and Western Australia, government activity in Papua, Queensland, Mandate of New Guinea, New Zealand, British Borneo, British North Borneo, Brunei, Sarawak; restrictions in Africa, Nigeria, Gold Coast Colony, Union of South Africa, British East Africa, Uganda, and Somaliland, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Palestine, British Honduras, British Guinea, and Jamaica, Canada and Newfoundland, Trinidad, Barbadoes.

This British world blockade against America is supplemented by the Franco-British Treaty of San Remo of 1920, regarding the still unexploited oil fields of Mesopotamia and the British and French colonies.

**The struggle for oil is not a matter of secondary importance but a struggle for life and death between British and American imperialism.** And not only are the oil trusts of both countries involved, but also, and to a greater extent, the **governments** and the **state forces** of both imperialist plunderers. The *New York Times* of March 23rd, 1924, in the matter of fact tone customary to that leading journal of American finance-capital, stated :

“ Secretary Hughes is not the only member of the present Cabinet who is concerned about the situation. Secretary Hoover has told the oil men, at a conference in his Washington office, that they should increase their holdings abroad. If this government, which has always been squeamish about backing up its nationals in foreign commitments, takes such a stand, it is to be expected that the British government which has always been ready to put its diplomatic and military support behind the overseas in-

**vestments of its business men, should take the further step of holding fast to its own foreign oil investments."**

It is simply a repetition and resumé of American political platitudes when De La Tramerye writes :

**"Who attacks the Standard attacks the Washington government directly. The struggle for oil is no longer a rivalry between great trusts; it is a struggle between nations."**

The former American State Secretary for the Interior, Franklin K. Lane, asks whether Great Britain should have the right to monopolise such important markets to the detriment of the rest of the world.

The Teapot Dome scandal in America clearly demonstrates how close the United States was to a war for oil. The recent bloody events in Persia and the insurrection in Albania show that British and American imperialism are already conducting their struggle for oil with the aid of armed forces, even though Albanians and Persians serve as their troops for the present. But the more the Washington Government concerns itself with the interests of the American oil trusts, and the more the London Government identifies itself with the interests of the British oil trusts—and the whole tendency of international development is for this identification to become more close—the more must the world struggle for oil lead to a direct conflict between British and American imperialism. It is a remarkable form of co-operation, indeed, which is portrayed by this most brutal and wholesale competition of the capitalist world—the struggle between Great Britain and America for markets and sources of raw material. It is a "co-operative" which gives expression to "common interests" in the seizure of new markets, in mutual blockade, in violent expropriation, in extraordinary legislation, in armed uprisings, and in the annihilation and creation of new States.

### **British and American Co-operation in Germany.**

Comrade Radek sees Anglo-American co-operation all over the whole world, but particularly so in Germany. In fact, co-operation ceases in Germany before she is saved from revolution and economic chaos. The miraculous instrument of co-operation is the Dawes Plan. Now nobody would be so foolish as to deny that America and Great Britain are actually co-operating in Germany and that the bastard

offspring of that co-operation is the Dawes Plan. But it is a very mechanical conception of the Dawes Plan to see stabilisation only, and to overlook the contradictions which exist in the Dawes Plan to **see the co-operation and forget to analyse the conflict which is inevitably brought about by the co-operation itself.**

What interest has **America** in the Dawes Plan? America wants to export capital to Germany and has already invested hundreds of millions of dollars in Germany. Where? In German industry. America is, therefore, very closely concerned in the welfare and prosperity and export capacity of German industry. And what is **England's** interest in the Dawes Plan? England's main interest in the Dawes Plan is to better Germany with annual payments and with increased taxation, so that German industry shall not be able to compete with British industry by means of low cost of production and by cutting prices. Great Britain is vitally interested in fettering German heavy industry with every possible handicap upon its export capacity. One may **note a simple relation** between German and British industry. When Germany is exporting and has few unemployed, British exports decrease and the number of unemployed in Great Britain increases, and on the contrary, increased British exports is accompanied by depression and increased unemployment in Germany.

Great Britain and America are actually, therefore, co-operating in Germany in the Dawes Plan. But, as we see, American and British imperialism have opposed interests in the carrying out of the Dawes Plan. And the more American finance capital penetrates German industry, and the more hopeless the situation of British industry becomes, the more intense will the conflict of interests between America and Great Britain become in Germany and Central Europe.

We do not intend here to go into a detailed analysis of the inter-Allied debts; but such an analysis would clearly demonstrate the peculiarity of Anglo-American "co-operation." America is "co-operating" with England in such a way that the latter must pay 160 million dollars to America annually. Great Britain is "co-operating" in such a remarkable manner that she is exerting every effort to prevent France from paying her debts to America.

America is "co-operating" with England in the singular fashion, that Wall Street, by complicated financial man-

œuvres, is seeking to force the City to resume a gold currency supposedly in the interests of the London money market but actually in order to increase the competitive capacity of American industry as a result of the increase of the price of British products which would follow from gold parity. It is, of course, true that the British as well as the American bourgeoisie share the general *historical* interest of the bourgeoisie in preventing a German revolution. But it is also true that, apart from this *historical* interest, there are complicated **direct** individual interests. It is a purely mechanical abstraction, a distortion of actual facts, to assume that the bourgeoisie are always and consistently governed by their historical interests and completely ignore their conflicting direct individual interests.

### Military Competition.

British and American imperialism are not only competing by economic means for markets, sources of raw materials and spheres of influence whether to export capital, they are not only competing by means of diplomatic intrigue and blockade, but also as government against government and State power against State power. Not only do they hire whole peoples to conduct their struggles; the State powers of British and American imperialism are making **direct preparations** for an armed conflict. Comrade Radek says that America does not already make the fight against England the central point of her policy because it would lead to such an **intensification of armaments**, that war would become inevitable before it was desirable to the United States. We do not intend to assert that a war between England and America is already imminent. We will also not risk the prophecy that war is likely to break out in the next few years. Nevertheless, concrete facts go to show **that America is feverishly arming, and that its preparations for war are becoming more intensive and more extensive.** Facts show that America is not avoiding preparations for war because she is afraid of war, but on the contrary, that she is arming because she fears war. Never have there been such preparations for war—material and ideological—in America as now.

We will not here go into all the details concerning the active army, the organised reserve and the National Guard. Figures, however, show that America has **never** had such large forces under arms in peace time as she has now. In the last few years, the American army has been increased



from 212,000 to 371,000. The number of American citizens under military training increased from 342,000 to 504,000.

Entirely new military institutions have been introduced in America during the last few years. I will only mention the military training camps for civilians, the reserve training corps for officers and the officer reserve corps. The report of the Adjutant-General of the American Army reveals that during 1924 not less than 275,000 men underwent military training, including 22,000 officers. The National Defence Act of June 4th, 1920, provides **for the first time in the history of the United States** for a huge united army, consisting of the standing army, the National Guard, the organised reserve and the Officers Reserve Corps. According to General William Lassiter, Assistant-Chief of the General Staff of the American Army, this ambitious plan is to provide for an armed force of 3,000,000 men and furnish the country for the first time with a complete plan for developing all the forces of national defence.

For the first time in its history the United States has a general plan for mobilising not only the man power, but also the industrial power of the country. September 12th, 1924, "Defence Day," was the first actual general military and industrial trial mobilisation on a national scale.

The United States is making desperate endeavours to create an air fleet. In his recent budget address to Congress, President Coolidge said that the development of the aeroplane industry meant the development of valiant defence.

The standing army of the United States already equals the British Army in strength; the strength of the American air fleet already exceeds that of the British. Great Britain to-day possesses 600 aeroplanes, while the United States has 750; in the near future Great Britain will have 1,000 aeroplanes, and the United States 1,200. The American fleet is already equal to the British. Great Britain possesses twenty large battleships totalling 558,000 tons, while the United States possesses eighteen battleships totalling 525,000 tons. The Officer Corps of the American fleet is already larger than that of the British fleet.

It is, of course, true that the United States is arming against Japan, and in order to "influence" the Middle and South American countries; but it is nevertheless true that she is also arming against Great Britain, her strongest and

most dangerous competitor. We could cite numerous facts to prove that the American and British bourgeoisie are "conscious" of the danger they represent to each other. We shall only recall the recent sharp discussion over the rearmament of the American battleships which called forth a stormy protest in Great Britain and a note from the British government, which was responded to by a still more violent counter protest in America. A remarkable "co-operation" indeed, when the assumption of the recent manœuvres of the British fleet was war with the United States. A remarkable co-operation, indeed, when the recent manœuvres of the American fleet in the Caribbean Sea was assumed to be the defence of the Panama Canal against an attack by Great Britain. A remarkable "co-operation" indeed, when the forthcoming manœuvres of the American fleet in the Pacific Ocean is not only to be directed against Japan, but is also intended to charm Australia.

### Conclusions.

#### I.

The facts speak for themselves. They show that Anglo-American co-operation is not the **only** "backbone" of the world situation. The facts are on the whole remarkable, and indicate that the anatomy of the world situation is not so very simple in its construction, and that there are several "backbones" to the world situation. Anglo-American co-operation exists, but Anglo-American opposition also exists, and is much more powerful and fundamental. It would, of course, be wrong to deny the **possibility** that Anglo-American imperialist alliance may assume an armed struggle against the U.S.S.R. and the Colonial peoples. But it would be not only false methodologically, but also contrary to the obvious facts to ignore **the other possibility**, namely, the possibility of conflict, and even worse, between British and American imperialism.

#### II.

British and American imperialism are, in fact, compelled to fight for **new markets**. But it is simply to ignore the fact, to assume that this struggle for new markets can only lead to a **common** attack on the part of British and American imperialism against the U.S.S.R. and the colonies, and entirely to ignore **the other possibility**, namely, that the competition for new markets may just as easily lead to **collision** (in Mexico or in South America or in Persia) between British

and American imperialism. It is absolutely one-sided to see only the Anglo-American financial blockade against the U.S.S.R. and not to observe the British oil blockade against the United States. Of course, we must remain alive to the **growing possibility** of an imperialist war against the U.S.S.R., but one must not be blind to the **growing possibility** of a break, perhaps a conflict, or even a war, between American imperialism and British imperialism.

### III.

American imperialism, as well as British imperialism, are indeed fighting for the stabilisation of capitalism, but—and that is the crux of the matter!—both these imperialist Empires are **at the same time** fighting for their own hegemony in the capitalist world. Therein lies the main root of Comrade Radek's false conception. Comrade Radek *mechanically* separates these two tendencies and is, therefore, unable to analyse the world situation as a whole. He only observes the tendency on the part of the capitalist powers to fight for the maintenance of the bourgeois world, but fails to observe the imperialist methods which are inseparable from the existence and activities of the imperialist powers. It is a fundamental error to assume that Great Britain, or America, or any other imperialist country, can carry on a **general** struggle for the stabilisation of the capitalist world **without simultaneously and inseparably** from this struggle carrying on a struggle for their own hegemony. One cannot understand the world situation if one treats capitalism **abstractly and generally**, and does not at the same time treat the imperialist powers concretely as **imperialist** powers.

JOHN PEPPER.

# The Italian Communist Party after Fifth Congress

## Difficulties Confronting the I.C.P.

**F**OR the I.C.P. the interval since the Fifth Congress has been a period of unbroken growth and development. The slogans—"Closer to the masses," and "Build up a mass party," are now actually beginning to be put into force. The small but compact proletarian kernel that formed the basis of the I.C.P. is now continually extending and strengthening connections with the wide masses of workers. The period between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses was a time of difficult trials for the I.C.P., not only because Fascism and the most black and violent reaction had reached the height of their fury during that period, but also because the young I.C.P., although hardened in the fight with bourgeois dictatorship, had not yet finally decided on the correct road. The I.C.P. came into being at a time when the bourgeoisie had already begun its attack, and whereas under the blows of Fascism it became more compact, combative and tempered, it was only under the Comintern's guidance that the Party grew organisationally and ideologically. At the same time, the I.C.P. lived through very difficult times; there were times when more Party members were in prison or had emigrated than were at large in Italy, when endless raids of the police and of Fascist bands destroyed whole provincial organisations, and wiped out all contact with the centre. There were also periods of disagreement in the C.C. or of divergence with the line of the E.C.C.I.

As a result of all these causes the young I.C.P. emerged all the stronger, and became tempered and experienced as is only possible in the course of struggle. However, this in no way means that the I.C.P. has already become finally moulded, or that its future path will only be one of uninterrupted growth and strength. Many difficulties still face the I.C.P., difficulties that may turn out to be the biggest and most serious of all. The whole Party has still enormous work to do in order to grow ideologically and organisationally into a real Bolshevist Party. On such a path difficulties, partial defeats or a struggle with one internal Party digression or another are unavoidable, but in summing up

this short period, one cannot fail to remark with great satisfaction the considerable success that the I.C.P. can now record. Six months ago it would have been difficult to predict that the insignificant I.C.P. driven underground, and exposed to constant destruction, could have so quickly become such a serious force in the events that are now developing in Italy. It is true that the objective conditions in which the I.C.P. has to develop its activities are not the same as they were a half a year or so ago. However, with those difficulties that has stood and are still standing in the path of the I.C.P., it is only by dint of correct tactics, in learning the lessons of the past, and with a great effort of strength that it will be possible to move forward with success.

### Numerical Growth and Organisation of the I.C.P.

What strikes one most after the Fifth Comintern Congress, is the rapid growth in the forces of the I.C.P., and the increase of faith in the Party on the part of the wide masses. It must not be forgotten that in spite of the decomposition of Fascism, and even in spite of the furious campaign that the bourgeois opposition press is also waging against the Fascists, the everyday work of the Italian Communists, and of the revolutionary workers, has changed but little. The bloody activities and frenzy of the Fascist bands led by provincial satraps, still goes on. Only a few weeks ago, Fascist justice sentenced to long years of imprisonment about a hundred workers, for events that happened way back in 1921. But in spite of all this, the ranks of the Communist Party are growing quickly, and would grow yet quicker if the Young I.C.P. only possessed the organisational possibilities of assimilating those proletarian elements who now stand decisively under her banner. The I.C.P. has already nearly 30,000 Party members, and the Y.C.L. about 10,000. There was a time when the total number of Communists at large in Italy was not more than six to seven thousand. This is still more significant when the fact that Fascism compelled tens of thousands of revolutionary workers to emigrate is taken into consideration. The daily Party newspaper *Unita* has already reached a circulation of more than 40,000, notwithstanding the fact that there have been instances of the paper being confiscated by the police three or four times during one week alone. Under such conditions a Communist Party has to make great efforts to produce a newspaper, but through its extensive contributions *Unita* has not only come closer to the masses, but the

Communist workers themselves now take an active part in producing the paper. A large number of worker correspondents reflect the life and struggles of the masses and discuss those tactical questions that the Party places before them for their considerations. Besides the *Unita*, the following publications have a fairly large circulation—the weekly *Stato Operaio*, the T.U. organ *Sindicate Rosse*, and the review *Ordine Nuovo*. In addition to the above, weeklies are published in the most important centres. The total circulation of the Party Press is more than 100,000 copies.

Considerable progress has also been made by the Party in respect to organisation. First, great efforts had to be made to organise the illegal Party apparatus, and to teach underground methods of working to those comrades who were still unaccustomed to it. It was also necessary to learn how to combine illegal work with the use of legal possibilities, and for this purpose, to create an apparatus that would be sufficiently flexible and stable. After a more definite sub-division of functions, the actual apparatus of the Party has considerably improved.

The Party is now devoting a good deal of attention to the question of the peasantry, who play so great a role in Italy. This especially applies to the South, where huge numbers of poor and revolutionary peasants are undergoing mediæval exploitation. The Agricultural Section is now developing intensive work, and the circulation of the Party weekly *Il Seme*, devoted to peasant questions, is increasing considerably. The Agricultural Section is now sending out a large number of organisers who are re-forming or organising Peasant Unions (*Lege Consadine*). Besides this, in quite a number of places in the South peasant conferences have been held, at which Communist speakers have informed the delegates about the tactics of the Communist Party, and of the Peasant International. In general, a considerable livening up of peasant work in Italy can be remarked.

### **Re-organisation of the Party on the Basis of Factory and Workshop Nuclei.**

This has been presented as one of the basic problems of the current life of the Party. If before there were comrades who did not understand, or who under-valued the importance of such re-organisation, it is now accepted by all as a necessary and urgent task of the Party. Reorganisation is being carried out everywhere, already giving positive results. This is especially felt in the great industrial

centres. In Turin, for instance, the whole process of re-organisation has already been carried out, and more than 60 factory and workshop nuclei are at work; in Milan, the greatest industrial centre in Italy, the Communist Federation which not long ago only had 500 members, now has organised more than 45 nuclei in large enterprises, and the Federation embraces about 2,000 Party members; it has thus become one of the strongest.

The work of agitation and propaganda has also improved with the creation of a corresponding Department of the Central Committee. The Agitprop Department, besides control over the whole Press, has also undertaken wide mass agitation by means of publishing proclamations, brochures, etc. The Agitprop also has set itself the task of raising the Marxist and Leninist level of the Party as a whole, and the most active members in particular.

Thus, the growth of the I.C.P. can now be undoubtedly felt in all directions, whilst contact with the masses becomes closer and closer. The Party, beginning last November, after having been forced underground for two years, has again in many places been able to conduct public meetings. These meetings, arranged right on the factory premises, arouse keen interest among the workers.

### The Tactics of the I.C.P.

Following the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, after a few disputable questions of internal Party life and of disagreement with the Comintern had been cleared up, the tactics of the I.C.P. have continued to give tangible results in the growth of the Party's strength and influence. The Party, emerging from a long period of defensive positions, and underground existence, is turning now to the tactics of a wide mass movement, and rapidly becoming stronger, and spreading its influence.

During the period between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses, one of the most disputable questions between the E.C.C.I. and the C.C. of the I.C.P. was the tactical question in relation to the Italian Party. The decisions of the Fifth Congress put an end to the misunderstandings that had arisen on this field. The amalgamation of the I.C.P. with the Third Internationalists was carried out everywhere with great enthusiasm. The campaign for recruiting non-Party workers into the ranks of the Party, that was com-

menced at the same time, gave equally brilliant results. This was a decisive turning point on the road towards creating a mass party. The reinforced influx of revolutionary proletarians continues all the time, ever widening the ranks of the Communist Party.

### The Tactics of the I.C.P. in Relation to Fascism and the Opposition.

The period after the Fifth Congress coincides with that of the commencement of a more perceptible decline of Fascism, marked by the murder of Matteotti. Immediately after the murder of Matteotti in June, the C.I. launched the watchword of a general strike for the armed struggle against Fascism. The appeal of the I.C.P. naturally was impossible of realisation in the face of the resistance of the I.S.P., the Reformist Party, and the General Confederation of Labour. But it had significance in so far as it led to an increase in the influence of the I.C.P. among the working masses. At the same time the Party strengthened its attack against Fascism and gave a wide circulation to the slogans—"Down with the murder Government," "Disarmament of the Fascist bands and Black-shirtists," "Arming of the workers and peasants for defence against Fascism." When, after this, there was organised a parliamentary opposition bloc, consisting of all the Liberal-democratic groupings (together with the I.S.P. and reformists) against Fascism, the I.C.P. in order not to remain in the eyes of the masses isolated in the struggle against Fascism, joined this bloc. But as soon as the anti-proletarian and counter-revolutionary character of the opposition became clear, the I.C.P. was very soon compelled to quit this bloc, in order to commence a double fight against Fascism and against the opposition.

In the C.C. report printed in the *Unità*, 26th of August, the I.C.P. defines its political course at the present time. In giving a detailed analysis of the economic situation of the country, with the increasing decomposition of Fascism and the present distribution of social forces, the C.C. brings out in relief the treacherous role played there by the Social-Democrats (I.S.P.) and the Reformists (Unity Socialist Party of Turatti). Defining this period as one of transition to the bourgeois-democratic sphere, the Party throws out as a special slogan for this period—**Formation of special workers' and peasants' committees for defence and struggle**



**against Fascism.** This watchword gives a wide organisational basis for rallying the masses around the I.C.P., and a wide field for all future propaganda.

The I.C.P. has to carry on a special attack against the I.S.P. and Reformists, whose inclusion in the opposition was to **guarantee the passivity of the proletariat during the period of the fall of Fascism.** In the struggle with Fascism the opposition had to be supported by broad public opinion. By a sharp criticism of Fascism and by demagogic promises, the opposition tried to bring the masses over on to its side, at the same time, however, in accordance with its own plan, trying to keep them within the bounds of a legal constitutional fight against Fascism. But it was just here where the Party carried out a systematic and insistent attack against the opposition, criticising and at the same time driving them onwards. The I.C.P. Press untiringly denounced the passivity and the anti-proletarian, counter-revolutionary tactics of the opposition.

This systematic and successful criticism on the part of the I.C.P. which frequently drove the opposition into a cul-de-sac, not only drove to frenzy the purely bourgeois parties included in the opposition, but more especially the I.S.P. and the Reformists. The wild, but impotent malice of the opposition went to such lengths, that having used up all arguments, they spread abroad the absurd calumny that the Communists were acting in agreement with the Fascists. The Socialist Deputy, Arturo Vella, became a prominent propagandist of this absurd and clownish legend.

### **Proposal of the I.C.P. to the Opposition to Organise an Opposition Parliament.**

The proposition made by the I.C.P. to the opposition bloc on the 21st of October, last year, was a great blow to the passive and demagogic tactics of the opposition. The proposal was to form, in contradistinction to the Fascist Parliament, **a parliament of opposition**, which would begin to function regularly. This would have meant dividing into two camps all State institutions, and the commencement of civil war. The opposition, naturally did not accept this proposition. For some days the whole Italian press was devoted to this proposal of the Communists, which the opposition wanted to "ignore," but could not. After this, the opposition's position became one of hesitation, while the sympathy for and faith in the I.C.P. grew considerably. On

November 10th, just before the opening of the Fascist Parliament, the I.C.P. renewed its proposal, at the same time denouncing the whole contradictory and opportunist character of the opposition tactics. As this was just prior to the special conference of the opposition the Communist Parliamentary fraction requested that the proposal of the Communists should not be rejected before the Communist deputies delegated for that purpose had been heard at the general meeting of the opposition. This time the opposition not only turned down the offer of the Communists, but did not even give the Communists the possibility of speaking at the meeting. Then again, the whole Italian press dealt with the Communist Party's proposals for several days.

Finally, on 12th of November, the day of opening of the Chamber of Deputies, the C.C. of the I.C.P. decided not to limit itself to passive absence from Parliament, but to send there one deputy, who, in the name of the Communist Party would make a declaration. The question of participation or non-participation in the Fascist Parliament was the subject of a lively discussion in all the Party Press. Many comrades suggested that the Communist fraction should return to Parliament in order to continue there from within, the struggle with Fascism; others advised boycotting Parliament, and not going back there at all. The decision taken by the C.C. of the I.C.P. proved to be the most correct. Indeed, Comrade Reppossi's speech in which he openly declared from the tribune of the Fascist Parliament that the Communist Party only sees a solution of the question in a decisive and organised armed fight with Fascism, and calls out the masses to that fight, branding the whole Parliament as a gathering of murderers, was listened to by the Fascist deputies with gnashing of teeth; but created an enormous impression throughout the country. A similar demonstration of the Communist Party at the Conference of the Opposition would but have brought out yet more clearly the tactics and position of the I.C.P. and would have strengthened her influence to a much greater degree.

The opposition, whose passive and cowardly tactics received yet a further blow by this Communist demonstration, again resorted to its old ridiculous invention—that the Communists were acting in agreement with the Fascists in order to ruin "liberal-democratic" Italy.

In this way, these tactics of double attack against Fas-

cism and against the treacherous opposition, the denunciation of the Fascist Parliament, and the opposition "quasi-Parliament," together with a wide propaganda and organisational setting up of workers' and peasants' committees, are the basic tactical platform upon which the I.C.P. is mobilising the masses for the coming struggle.

### The Internal Party Situation.

The internal situation of the I.C.P. is now characterised by a full harmony in respect to the present tactics of the I.C.P. corresponding to the resolutions of the Fifth Comintern Congress. The Party has also become more ideologically compact. The "extreme left" tendencies are being outlived. Nearly all the federal conferences unanimously accepted the resolutions, confirming both the resolutions of the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in relation to the I.C.P. and also the present tactics of the I.C.P., and appealing to all comrades, and particularly Comrade Bordiga, for harmonious and disciplined work in accordance with the direction of the Comintern. In this manner, the Bolshevisation of the I.C.P. is going ahead, although there still remains a great amount of work to be done in the Marxist and Leninist education of the ever-extending ranks of the I.C.P.



# Bolshevisation of the Parties

THE Fifth World Congress placed the question of Bolshevising the European Parties on the agenda. Here the Russian and German discussions have been of great service to our Communist movement. Firstly, questions of tremendous tactical importance and bound up with the basic principles of Leninism, with the lessons of the great October Revolution, and with the 25 years history of the Russian Bolshevik Party, were raised for the serious consideration of our European comrades. Bolshevism as a complete system of political views became a subject of study and reflection for the best elements of the European working class movement. On an international scale, we are undoubtedly entering a new phase in the theoretical treatment of the application of the basic principles of Leninism to the complicated and confused situation in Europe. But is this limited to Europeans? The serious study of world economics, of tendencies of its development, the economic problems of individual countries constitute one of the conditions of the Bolshevisation of our Communist Parties.

The improvement in theoretical Marxist thinking that we have witnessed since the commencement of the war, and of which the German Social-Democrats gave the most glaring example a few years ago, by even closing down the *Neue Zeit*, would now seem to be almost at an end. Our Communist Parties, now becoming Bolshevised, are everywhere undertaking the work of overcoming this impoverishment. This move forward is quite noticeable, however timid and sometimes quite unsuccessful the steps along this path may be. To ignore this would be like overlooking something that is at present only ripening, and though promising, shows no outward signs of bloom. The fact that the slogan of the Bolshevisation of the Parties brings a new, fresh current into the European working class movement cannot be denied. Leninism, and the discussion which he caused on the problem of the role of the peasantry in the proletarian revolution, and its relation to the so-called idea of permanent revolution, as well as a number of questions and problems

raised at the last Russian discussion, will undoubtedly serve as a means of awakening an interest in "theory," which, during recent years, has taken a back seat.

At the same time there is an increase in the practical work of Bolshevising the Parties. A new revolutionary generation is politically growing up, sincerely striving to realise the concrete tasks set by the working class in the way the Russian Bolsheviks had solved them in more or less similar circumstances. The long and difficult process of tactically levelling up the European Communist Parties on a par with the Russian Bolshevik Party is in operation, and in so far as the experience of the Russian Bolshevik Party has been justified by history, there is nothing accidental or extraordinary in this process. It is only the hypocrites of the Second International who read into this fact a denationalisation of the various sections of the Comintern and the loss of their "self-determination."

The six months since the Fifth Congress passed by under the banner of Bolshevisation of the European Parties. There has not been a single Party Congress, or important Party Conference that has not devoted attention to this question. It will be sufficient to take the Czecho-Slovakian Party Congress held in November of last year, and the French Communist Party Congress in January, as instructive examples. This last Congress of our French comrades gives particularly instructive proof of the way the French Party masses are being attracted to Bolshevisation—hardened as they are by events, and by the revolutionising of the French working class. However, we must frankly confess that in the European Communist Parties, we are only feeling our way on the path to Bolshevisation. Any exaggeration here would be harmful, and would only make the parties rest on the laurels of the results achieved. In Europe to a vast extent huge fields of work are still virgin soil. The real Bolshevisation of the European Communist Parties and working masses is still ahead. It places questions before us and demands answers such as our Russian working class movement never met with upon its historic path. This Bolshevisation widely expands the framework of our limited Russian experience, for it cannot be simply an imitation of the practice of the Russian Bolsheviks. In "Left-Wing Communism," Lenin warned the British comrades of this mistake. In discussing the significance of the Russian revolution, in saying that its basic lines have "not a local, specially national, or only Russian, but an international significance," Lenin at the same time gives us this wise advice:

“ It would certainly be the greatest mistake,” he writes in Chapter 1 of this book, “to exaggerate this truth, and to apply it to more than the fundamental features of our revolution. It would be likewise erroneous not to keep in mind that, after the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, things will in all probability take a sharp turn; Russia will cease to be the model, and will become again the backward (in the Soviet and Socialist sense) country.”

Meanwhile, many European comrades imagine that they have to repeat, as it were, the whole history of Bolshevism from the very start, as if the whole world labour movement, with its cycle of historic development behind it, must return to its original sources, must return to the same jumping-off ground from which we Russian Bolsheviki commenced our struggle with the Mensheviki in 1903. Some comrades are apt to treat the whole question as an “ideological crystallisation” according to the Bolshevik pattern, and in the light of the Russian working class movement, not noticing the fundamental differences in the situations. History has not given our European comrades that 25 years respite in which the Russian Bolsheviki were able to become ideologically crystallised into a Leninist Party. They do not see the fact that in contrast with the Russian Bolsheviki, they are already mass parties, and at the present time are called upon to lead great mass movements.

What we achieved in Russia, after 20 years hard work as an illegal Party, penetrating into the masses, uniting with them organically, striking our roots into their midst so that the wildest of reactions could not eradicate them—this, we say, has already been achieved to some considerable extent by our national sections in the most important countries. If our German Party succeeded in polling about three million votes at the last election, under conditions of most oppressive persecutions, mass dismissals from the factories, and an increase in the epidemic of “democratic pacifist” illusions in connection with the stabilisation of the mark, and the hope for evacuation of the Ruhr—this shows that German Communism has such a firm footing among the masses of workers that no force can suppress it, and that our German comrades will not have to traverse the difficult path that Russian Bolshevism had to tread, during the 20 years of its history. But if tendencies to narrow down all the problems of Bolshevising the Party to an “ideological crystallisation” appeared in such a Party as this,

this would also indicate that the German Party had been thrown back to the period of infancy of the working class movement, and that the elements of ideological criticism are beginning to get the upper hand in the Party, and that at the present day, the Party threatens to be transformed into a sect.

It would be no less erroneous if we began to copy blindly Russian experience in other fields. Let us take for example the question of the tasks of Party organisation at the present stage of development. Twenty years ago, Lenin, in his pamphlet "What to Do?" set the Social-Democratic organisations of those days the task of forming cadres of "professional revolutionaries." Lenin wrote this pamphlet just at that phase when the Russian Marxists were undergoing their first ideological crystallisation. They had separated from the Economists, who reflected the bourgeois influence on the working class, and were facing squarely the question of forming a compact, centralised revolutionary organisation, capable of becoming the leader of great mass movements in Tsarist Russia. Just imagine what would happen under the present-day conditions, of the European Labour movement, after several years imperialist and civil war after workers' parties have existed for almost half a century, if we were to limit the problem of Bolshevising the Party to the building up of the cadres of professional revolutionaries of the early period of Russian bolshevism. Then, instead of the Bolshevisation of the European workers' movement, we would have but a caricature of Bolshevism.

We are afraid that in present-day conditions, this task might be understood as meaning the transformation of the Communist Parties, not into wide mass organisations, closely bound up with the proletariat, in the factories, but into a closed circle of Party functionaries and intellectuals. The reaction of the bosses, who are forcing the Communist workers out of the factories, is now pushing our Communist Party in Europe just in this very direction. The fundamental task of our brother parties, the chief aim of their endeavours, should be to form the largest possible cadres of *factory and workshop revolutionaries*, devoted heart and soul to the cause of the Revolution. Such is the goal that the re-organisation of the European Parties on the basis of factory and workshop nuclei now aims at. This, of course, does not exclude the necessity for all European Communist Parties to have a fighting staff of revolutionaries who have learned their profession during the revolutionary struggle,

and who have nothing in common with the old bureaucratic spirit of functionaries.

But there is yet another danger in this unconditional transplanting of Russian forms on to European soil. This kind of Bolshevisation would turn Bolshevism into a dogma, deprive it of all vitality, render it lifeless for several years, and make it incapable of any further development whatever. However, revolutionary parties intent on reversing the world social relations, can least of all afford to be dogmatic. World Bolshevism, this mighty, yet unwritten page in the history of the international working class movement, is still only a potentiality. Leninism, applied to European conditions and events, will give the richest experience to the workers of all countries, will develop social and political phenomena not to be foreseen at the present moment. Least of all—will it be a systematic repetition of the self-same events, strung on a coral necklace in the order of Russian Bolshevik chronology. In the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, accompanied by the convulsions of a decayed world-war, intervention, combinations of revolutionary and counter revolutionary order, there will be rises and falls, intervals and further combats, during which the same immense strategy that Lenin used during the critical periods of the Russian Revolution will be necessary. Russian Bolshevism did not have to bother about the democratic-pacifist era, a Dawes Plan strangling Europe nor the perspective domination of America over the Old World. Only by remote analogies is it possible to find, to any extent at all, facts and events that resemble the present day state of affairs in Europe. Therefore, under present conditions, the most serious theoretical work in developing Leninism, in supplementing it with newly tested data, culled from the proletarian class fights, is demanded of our European parties, now in process of Bolshevisation. During the present difficult conditions, they can least of all neglect the theoretical side, or solve tactical problems just as they crop up, simply according to revolutionary instinct. Hence we emphasise the necessity for seriously increasing the Party's theoretical studies, as there are some comrades who are wont to neglect theory in general. They think of Bolshevism exclusively as a great laboratory of the class struggle in the course of which the masses that are brought into motion can learn the basis of revolutionary strategy from practical experience.

Why these Leninist schools in Paris, why this augmented teaching of Marxism and Leninism to the younger



generation, when the classes have learnt these truths in the flame of battle and defeat? It is an indisputable fact that the masses learn from experience, and there is not the slightest doubt that it would be absurd to compare Bolshevism with ideological study-circles, and to push back the workers' movement to a purely propaganda stage, but it would be the worst sort of "khvostism" to draw as a conclusion from this situation, the general laws of development of a revolutionary party. In addition to the masses there is the advance-guard, the Party that leads the masses into the struggle. Therefore, those who would lead the movement, should, above all have a clear conception as to where to lead these masses, and should not only be armed with the personal experience they have accumulated while leading the labour movement, but also with the collective experience which is crystallised in Marxist-Leninist theory. If the tendency to compare the question of Bolshevising the Party with ideological crystallisation, and with the period of propagandist circles and sects is a mistaken one, the other extreme is a political error of no smaller magnitude. Here the general significance of theoretical study is denied, while a quaint kind of empiro-monistic Machiavellian philosophy is introduced, turning the Party into an apparatus for registering the processes that are in operation in the lower depths of the mass struggle. Under modern conditions, real Bolshevisation is neither one nor the other. The correctness of these conclusions is confirmed by Lenin, who appreciated the great significance of revolutionary theory, and who, by his teachings, freed the latter from all academical schematism, and brought it down to terra firma from the heights of intellectual abstraction. As far back as 1897, speaking of the "tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats" Lenin wrote that "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." Later on, in a polemic with the S.R.'s in *Iskra*, 1902, in which he mercilessly exposed their revolutionary adventurism he said:

"The absence of theory deprives revolutionary direction of its right of existence, and will sooner or later inevitably condemn it to political failure."

Our European comrades must not forget these words. For this great civil war of ours, that has broken out at different points through the five continents of our planet, we require not only hundreds of thousands of practised leaders, in close contact with the daily toil of the working class, and contributing their rich personal experience to the class

struggle, but we also need leaders armed with revolutionary theory, forseeing the path that the working class must follow, safeguarding them from the repetition of past errors and leading them through the thorny paths to difficult but sure victory.

## II.

What is Bolshevisation of the Party? Any attempts to give Bolshevisation a kind of inclusive formula, embracing all of the tasks facing our brother parties of the West, has been of a schematic nature. The world Communist movement has reached different degrees of development in different countries. Besides the general tasks facing them, each of the national sections has its specific tasks. It would be of little use to condense the question of Bolshevisation into a kind of book of rules of "etiquette" for all periods and peoples. It is a task, or rather, a whole series of tasks of a concrete nature, that we simply underlined and pushed forward at the Fifth Congress a little more forcefully than we had hitherto done. Long before the Fifth Congress we Bolshevised our European Parties. We Bolshevised them, when we formed revolutionary fractions within the old Social-Democracy, at the time of the social-patriotic war fever, when, as a result of these fractions we called forth a split with these traitors of working class interests, these Eberts, Scheidemanns, Renaudels and others. We pursued the same aims of Bolshevisation when, three years after the end of the war, at the Third Congress, after independent Communist Parties had been organised in the chief European countries, after the Russian Revolution had begun to take up a defensive position—when we fought with the renegade Paul Levi in Germany, Frossard in France, with the mistakes of the Italian Maximalists, with the Left-wing infantile maladies of Comrade Bordiga, or the English comrades, and with the opportunistic digressions of Hoeglund or the Norwegian Tranmaelites. All these fights are still fresh in our memories. Their role in the process of Bolshevisation of our Parties and of the whole Comintern is no less than that of the R.C.P. pre-revolutionary fights with the Mensheviks. Therefore, it would be incorrect to assume that the history of Bolshevisation commences only from the Fifth Congress. The Comintern's five years fighting experience, is full of the most startling instances of the Bolshevisation of our Parties. To recall which were the most important problems of revolutionary organisation and tactics that were produced by the "crisis" we experienced will suffice, in order to realise that we can now gather experience in Bolshe-

visation not only from the history of the R.C.P. but also from the five years' history of the Comintern. We can find these lessons not only in the victorious October Revolution, but also in the revolutionary struggles of the European proletariat, where it's hot blood is mixed with the bitterness of defeat. Examples of these are—the Spartakus rising (January-March, 1919), the defeat of the German Revolution (October-November, 1923), the Hungarian revolution, and the Austrian, the occupation of the factories by the Italian workers in September, 1920, etc.

These crises, struggles and defeats opened up before us and made us conscious of the most important problems of the revolution. Among these was the importance and necessity of revolutionary centralisation of the Party leading the masses into the fight, and its ability for extensive manoeuvring in order to elude the enemy and strike at his weakest points. It was absolutely essential for the Parties to preserve live contact with the masses, by not getting estranged from them, and running too far ahead. They had to see to it that the heavy reserves of the working class were taken in hand, and supported by other strata of the population, and that the rising was not transformed into a putsch. They had to know how to choose the right moment for striking the blow so as to avoid both Brandlerist opportunism, and Menshevik "Khvostism." The questions of federalism and centralism in organisation (the Scandinavian conflict, the discussion with the French Party at the time of the Paris Congress in 1920, and with the Italian Maximalists of the Lazzari genre) and also the question of distinguishing between risings and putsches, and that of Social-Democratic survivals in proletarian class politics, as well as the problems of opportunism (the experience in Saxony), of parliamentarism and of abstentionism, etc.—these have all been sufficiently discussed in the past. We can include all these ideological and tactical disputes in the Comintern's record of Bolshevisation which in no way resembles a "blank sheet" filled up by us on the sixth year of its existence. But we certainly must not deny that there will be relapses and that we may have to return, possibly several times, to those conflicts that had seemed to be outlived. Unfortunately the history of the working class movement in general, and the Communist movement in particular, does not roll as easily as a billiard ball; at times it moves by fits and starts, turning back or stepping aside in order to take a lion's spring forward. The delay in the tempo of the European Revolution will undoubtedly give birth to yet new opportunist relapses,

and a few more "leaders" will be swept from the path. However, the drawing into the movement of new strata of workers from the younger generation, who have not yet fully learnt the history of the struggle with the Left digressions, might once again face the Comintern with problems that appeared to have been solved long ago. And if after the Fifth Congress of the Comintern we made the question of Bolshevisation the centre point of all the work of our sections, and if we are really taking a lion's step forward on this path, which we can see even from the recent Congress of the French C.P. this is explained by the fact that we had to put up a decisive resistance to the attempts at de-Bolshevising the Russian Party, and annulling all the work done by the Comintern during the five years of its existence. This is also explained by the fact that our sections have grown so much and matured politically, that they have been able to permit themselves the luxury of this jump forward. We will finish off the work that has been left undone during these last five years, we will crown it under the steady Bolshevik guidance of the Comintern and at the hands of the growing generation of European Bolsheviks. Schematically, we can sum up this gigantic work in three main points. (a) In the political field. We will have to hammer out on the anvil of Marxism and Leninism such Marxist teachings, applied to the conditions of the epoch of imperialism, and such fighting workers' parties, as will be able to lead the toilers upon the road to freedom without committing mistakes. It is only revolutionary party leaders who are qualified and schooled in their ideas, that will be capable of fulfilling this task. The leaders who are storm-tossed, and who are without the compass of Leninist strategy, will inevitably hesitate between the rises and falls in the workers' movement, and will suffer from political impressionism, harmful to the interests of this movement. (b) In the tactical field. Under the complicated conditions of the modern class struggle, which is spread out over the huge expanse of the whole international front, our parties should become accustomed to such flexible manoeuvring movements, that will not allow them to lose sight of the final aim for one moment, or of devoting every step in the daily struggle towards its successful achievement. At the same time they must become real mass parties, leading millions into action, and capable of seizing state power to establish Socialism, and most important of all be able to retain the power during an involved international situation, during conditions of war between labour and capital. A Communist is thus obliged to become and to remain a Bolshevik not only during the days of victory of

the working class, but also in the days of its defeat. He should not only get ready to "face the last fight" and to await better times when objective conditions become more favourable for the revolution and for working class victory. In addition to this he should find a starting point for the decisive fight in every little strike, in every movement unnoticed at the time by ordinary eyes, and in every cause that at first sight seems unassuming, so that this may really become one of the "last fights." Our tactic is not only a preparation for to-morrow, an original kind of revolutionary gymnastics, having as its exclusive aim the preparation of cadres, for future combats during the epoch of revolution—it is a revolutionary fight of this very day, it is the Party's capacity for producing a revolutionary ferment out of every "partial" demand of the workers, at the same time not falling into the ways of self-adaptation and opportunism, or any compromise with the Social-Democrats. It is just these characteristics that have given revolutionary Bolshevism its strength, and distinguished it from revolutionary phraseology on the one hand and Menshevik "khvotism" on the other. It is just for this reason that Bolshevism is organically irreconcilable with Trotskyism in so far as the latter attempted to combine both these failings, at times falling into liquidationism by sheltering under the slogan of "a free coalition," during periods of re-action, and during better times, swinging round to the "permanent revolution."

(c) In the organisational field. We set ourselves the aim of forming an international Communist Party built on the foundations of democratic centralism, having nothing in common with any federalists or autonomist deviations. Such a party should not be welded by mechanical discipline, but by unity of Party will and Party action. In order to build up such a party as this, we must outlive on an international scale the individualistic frame of mind of group-sectarianism and study-circles psychology which brought, brings and will bring in different layers and tendencies at the time of forming a Party, or at the time of subsequent entrance into its ranks (for example, Spartakists and Independents in Germany, Committee for the Renewal of International Relations and the Congress majority at Tours in France, Communists and Third Internationalists in Italy, etc.). On the other hand, such a Party cannot simply be the means of expressing the spontaneous demands of the labour movement, "giving it only consciousness," as Rosa Luxemburg wrote in 1906, in her pamphlet, "What is to follow?" It should be the Party for organising the revolution, and preparing the conditions

for its victory. At the same time, during the present phase of development of the world labour movement, such a Party cannot be other than a Party of the masses, embracing hundreds and thousands and millions of proletarians devoted heart and soul to the interests of their class. Therein lies the basic difference between the germination of world Bolshevism, and that of Russian Bolshevism. Ten to fifteen years ago, under conditions of unprecedented Czarist repression, Lenin, in reply to the Russian liquidators, who asserted that the Russian underground Party only numbered two or three hundred conspirators, wrote with full justification :

“Two or three hundred illegal Party members express the interests and needs of millions and tens of millions, by telling them the truth about their helpless position, by opening their eyes to the necessity of the revolutionary struggle, by inspiring them with belief in the latter, and by giving them the correct slogans, drawing the masses away from the influence of the pompous and thoroughly false reformist watchwords of the bourgeoisie.”

In the Communist International, in face of all the varying conditions in the different national sections, we have a whole number of parties (Poland, the Balkans), practically in the same position as was the Russian Bolshevik Party ten to fifteen years ago. It would be doctrinaire *en masse* if we were to deny the necessity of a heroic period of this kind in the lives of the separate sections during the epoch of the growth of the Comintern as a world Bolshevik Party. But at the same time it would be an incorrect policy if we wanted to work out, on the basis of these exclusive cases, general organisational principles for all the Parties of the Comintern, especially those parties working in highly developed capitalist countries with large masses of workers, and under more or less legal conditions of existence.

We will now turn to the concrete tasks of Bolshevisation awaiting our most important European Communist Parties. If we take the Latin or the Teutonic countries, and examine the origin of modern Communism within them, we are compelled to recognise that in these countries Communism to a very large degree grew up under the influence of the Russian Revolution, and gleaned its ideological premises from Leninism. Up to the time of the war, and the crisis of Socialism, the Parties had no big theorists or great revolutionaries such as had, for instance, the German and Polish Parties in Rosa Luxemburg. In Latin and Teutonic Social-

ism eclectic traits always dominated. In France, in particular, were to be found the influence of the idea of petty bourgeois Proudonism, the Anarchism of Bakunin, the reformist ideas of Jaurés, and the views of revolutionary syndicalism with its theory of "initiative minority," bringing about the social revolution by cutting off the electric current in Paris. All this variety in social schools and teachings did not prevent the Blanquist Vaillant, and the supporter of the anti-militarist views of the Dutch pastor Neuenhuys and the Breton Herve, from living together in harmony in one and the same Party. The variegated social composition of the Party corresponded with the eclecticism of its ideology. In Anglo-Saxon Socialism, the ethical elements of puritanism and of the religious mystic Keir Hardie dominated. In those old days, Marxism was not very widespread in these countries. Therefore, ideologically, the fundamentals of Leninism here fell on a poorly fertilised soil. Therefore, Latin and Anglo-Saxon Bolshevism did not grow up organically similar to Russian Bolshevism, but at the same time it would be erroneous to say that it were without parent or tribe. It will not occur to anyone to emphasise all the previous difficult and painful history of the labour movement, to ignore that past, with which so many hopes of the best elements of the labour movement had been connected, or to see in this past only continued error, mire and decay. If it is a case of digging into the past, then practically every national section of the Comintern will find the elements of modern national Bolshevism in an embryonic form, for this Bolshevism is not a phenomenon engendered by specific national Russian conditions, but is a phenomenon connected with the imperialistic stage in the development of world economy. It partially changes its form, or details in accordance with the concrete setting in each separate country, but at the same time wholly preserving those basic features that are common to the whole world labour movement. If we want to find the root of present day French Communism in particular, we must turn to revolutionary Marxism, whose pioneers in France were Paul Lefargue and Jules Guesdes in his young and better days. We are speaking of the Marxist traditions of Lefargue and Guesdes during the first period of the latter's revolutionary activity, and not of Guesdism in general, because at the beginning of the war, and even before, the old Guesdism gave birth to a dogmatic and quite fruitless sectarianism, which in its practical application differed very little from the opportunism of the majority of the French Socialist Party. To establish a Marxist tradition of French Communism is both possible and necessary; the basic task of the Communist

Party is to peel off all the ideological husks that French Socialism left as a heritage. However, to oppose this task to the task of Bolshevizing the Party, to oppose Marxism to Leninism, as Comrade Rappaport quite unsuccessfully tried to do at the French Party Congress, discloses a complete failure to understand both Marxism and Leninism. Both are organically connected, and the attempt to separate or oppose them only shows that Comrade Rappaport, and Comrade Dunois, who supported him are dragging the Communist Party back to the doubtful "Marxism" of the old Social-Democracy, that falsified its teachings and deprived it of all its revolutionary content.

It seems to us that the French comrades, in valuing and examining the right tendencies in the Comintern, should seek the roots of these digressions on the French soil, in the past of the French Labour movement. They should show how each of these international digressions can be pieced out according to specific French conditions. We think, for instance, that so-called Trotskyism has a great deal in common with individualistic Proudhonism, and that in France it corresponds with the frame of mind of those sentimental revolutionaries, a whole pleiade of whom have led the syndicalist movement, and who flamed up during the great days of the growth of the Labour movement, and fizzled out at the moment it fell. The Trotskyite conception of "leaders," standing out only at moments of upheaval and street fighting is quite in accordance with French individualism, which finds no place for itself within the framework of the organisation, and is unreconciled to minute organisational work. To a certain extent, it acts as an ideological covering for that passivity from which the French Labour movement suffers during the decline of a revolutionary wave. It is not by accident that Monatte and Rosmer, in their new organ directed against the Communist Party, resuscitate theoretically the ideas of the old revolutionary syndicalism, mixed with a defence of Russian Trotskyism.

When we turn to the German Communist Party, we find that the German Communist movement has a past history with much deeper roots than French Communism. The German Communist Party has great Marxian learning. Marxism was always the official theory of the old social democracy. After having expounded Marxism at random, Bernstein and the revisionist school, tried to effect its revision a considerable time before the whole art of Social-Democracy was transformed into an opportunistic perversion. At the



same time, however, a left-Radical tendency, theoretically fighting against opportunism, existed within the old Social-Democracy. It is true that this tendency never presented concretely the question of seizing power, it was quite contented with the way Kautsky had approached this problem in his pamphlet "The Path to Power." A better representative of this wing, the late Rosa Luxemburg, has left behind deep traces in the German and Polish Communist movement. One can say without any exaggeration that for a considerable number of years, both parties grew up under the influence of her ideas and guidance. Many of the pages out of what Rosa Luxemburg wrote during the struggles against German opportunism and Polish nationalism may even now be classed among the best samples of Marxist revolutionary literature. But it is just this respect on the part of the Comintern for this great revolutionary and leader that obliges us to free her teachings from those partial errors whose source lay in the historic narrowness of the movement of the epoch in which Rosa Luxemburg lived. It is necessary for the German and Polish Communist Parties to carry out a fundamental theoretical revision of the late Rosa Luxemburg's misconceptions. If we leave out her theory of the accumulation of capital, and periodical disagreements on the trade union question, her mistakes may be reduced to three fundamental ones.

In the national question, Rosa Luxemburg denied the revolutionary value of national movements in the epoch of imperialism, in so far as on the one hand these latter become subject to being used by the great imperialist powers in their own interests, and on the other hand because these national movements potentially carry within themselves imperialistic intentions in relation to weaker peoples. Further, in the agrarian question, Rosa Luxemburg under-valued the significance of the peasants' movement (the union of the peasant war with the proletarian revolution, to use Marxian terms). As late as in 1918, while in Breslau prison, she expressed the fear, in a pamphlet which she later decided not to publish, that in issuing the slogan of dividing the land, the Bolshevik Party was paving the way for a peasant counter revolution, more dangerous than the Menshevik one, in so far as the former has firmer social roots. However, she was inclined to estimate the perspectives of our October Revolution in too European a manner, always fearing the eventual victory of the peasant elements. Thirdly, and finally, on the question of the role of the Party and its inter-relations with the spontaneous labour movement, Rosa under-valued the role

of the revolutionary Party, and over-estimated the significance of spontaneity. In her two articles published in 1904, in the *Neue Zeit*—"Organisational Questions of the Russian Social-Democracy," she was not averse to accusing Lenin, similar to the editors of the *Novaya Iskra*, of ultra-centralism, and Blanquist tendencies. In referring to the famous Rostoff-on-Don strike that had broken out spontaneously, she wrote: "At first it was action. Initiative, and conscious guidance of the Social-Democratic organisation played an extremely insignificant role." Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg thought that Lenin's attempt to form a conspirative organisation was nothing more nor less than a hopeless task. She accepted the weakness of the Russian Party on the eve of the 1905 revolution as a kind of sociological law, compulsory for all stages of the labour movement. Later she also developed the same point of view in her pamphlet, "What is to Follow?" devoted to an appreciation of the famous events of January 9th, and the same again in her speech at the workers' conference at Frankfurt-on-Main, on the question of the mass strike as a weapon of the struggle for proletarian dictatorship. Coming out like a true revolutionary against the trade union leaders who turned down the general strike as a weapon for the struggle, under the pretext that the trade unions did not yet embrace the overwhelming majority of the working class, Rosa Luxemburg correctly pointed out that to treat the question in such a way is opportunism, and that it resembles the proverbial dispute on the hen and the egg. The dialectics of the revolutionary movement teach us that it is only the mass struggles that can draw new fresh strata of the working class into the organisations. But then, Rosa Luxemburg went to the other extreme saying that, "the spontaneous element played such an important role in the mass strike in Russia, not because the Russian proletariat is without an organised school, but because revolutions are not made to order."

We know that this theory of spontaneity, under-estimating the significance of a centralised revolutionary organisation of the proletariat played a very important part in the Spartakist risings: and for this mistake, Rosa Luxemburg nobly paid with her blood. We also know that until quite recently there were scattered voices in the German Communist movement who either under-estimated the significance of a mass party of the proletariat, or else compared the role of the Party with the role of a sect. For this reason, the political liquidation of diverse mistakes of the late Rosa will be the best way of Bolshevising the Party, and serving that cause for

which Liebknecht and Luxemburg devotedly sacrificed their lives. There are even further grounds for doing this, for in that many of the late Rosa Luxemburg's errors are closely akin to those made by Comrade Trotsky from time to time.

The fundamental tactical problem, that now represents the spirit of Bolshevisation of the European parties, is the question of winning the masses. Many very valuable comrades consider that after the bad experiment made in Saxony with the "workers' government," and with the application of the "united front" tactic, this tactic and slogan are now out of favour. Somewhere or other a special theory has been created that during the present long drawn-out period, our parties will have to flow "against the stream," just as did the Bolsheviki in the years of reaction. There is not the slightest doubt that our parties will have to surmount tremendous difficulties in the West during the present period, but all the same, it would be mistaken to draw a complete analogy between those times when Lenin and Zinoviev edited abroad at the beginning of the war, the fighting Bolshevik paper *Social-Democrat*, and the situation that our separate sections are living through at the present time. Meanwhile, this theory that our Party is floating "against the stream," taken in an absolute form, without historic limits or boundaries might become a theory of hiding our defeat, and separation from the masses. Therein lies the chief danger for our movement at the present moment. The whole gist of this Bolshevisation is not to become separated from the masses, to preserve permanent contact with them, to become the only mass Party of the working class in Europe, and to liquidate the influence of social democracy, inside the Party, Bolshevism does not only mean the ability to float against the current during the critical moments of the labour movement. It is that great revolutionary science of being able to define the direction of the "current" and navigate it in accordance with the interests of the proletarian revolution and the working class. Bolshevism is the ingenious strategy and teaching of how to lead the masses into action, and revolutionise them. As far back as 1902, Lenin wrote in his brochure, "What to Do?":

"We are the class party, and, therefore, almost the whole class (in war time, and the epoch of civil war the class in its entirety) should act under the leadership of our Party, and should rally to our Party as closely as possible."

Later, in his book "Left-Wing Communism," telling

us upon what rests the discipline of the revolutionary Party of the proletariat, Lenin wrote :

**“First by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard, and by its devotion to the revolution, by its steadiness, spirit of self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to mix with the toiling masses, to become intimate, and to a certain extent if you will, fuse with the non-proletarian toilers. Thirdly, by the soundness of the political strategy and tactics, based on the idea that the workers from their own experience must convince themselves of the soundness of this political leadership, strategy and tactics.”**

How can we attain this contact with the masses at the present time? Only by our Communist Parties being able to put forth and defend such concrete demands that will respond to the most everyday needs of the widest masses of toilers. The German Communist Party, one of the strongest parties of the Communist International, trod just this path at its last Party Conference. To be a revolutionary does not only mean being able to build barricades during the days of a rising, place machine guns and cannon in position, or shoot from a rifle, but to be able to fight with the masses for a daily crust of bread during black reaction, to fight in defence of the conquests that have been snatched from the capitalist class, to preserve the material standard they have won, and to maintain the proletarian advance-guard in fighting preparation, preserving it from demoralisation or panic.

Only such a party as this is able to keep calm and collected and not lose its head, and can maintain the leadership of the mass movement, which, in the event of a change in the objective situation, will be able to reform its ranks, choosing from its tactical arsenal the means of struggle most appropriate for the circumstances, and not for one moment losing sight of the final aim. Our Communist parties will only be able to save themselves from falling into opportunism by carrying out a policy of supporting the concrete demands of the working class. This can only be achieved by a merciless denunciation of Social-Democracy as a bourgeois party, and by fighting with opportunist deviations in our own midst. The entry of the German Right into the arena with their noisy “taxation programme,” alone goes to prove that at the present there is no small number of people who wish to turn the fight for the concrete demands of the working class into a policy of adaptation. Why were the German comrades quite correct in criticising this proposal very decisively? It was

certainly not because the C.C. of the German Party denies the necessity for having a taxation programme, but because the placing of this question in the centre of all Party activities is the most vulgar opportunism, repeating the very same mistake that the Russian Mensheviks made in their time, when they brought forward the slogan "free coalition" in opposition to the Bolshevik watchword for the liquidation of autocracy. Certainly the Russian Bolsheviks were not against a "free coalition," but they bound up this demand with the fundamental task of the Russian working class, with the fight for the overthrow of Tsardom. In so much as the Right-wing of the German Party is trying to oppose the "taxation programme" to the dictatorship of the proletariat, it commits the same opportunistic blunder.

Our attitude to the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government is also connected with the question of conquering the masses. We know very well how this slogan was compromised in the eyes of the German working class by the Saxon experiment, but nevertheless we think that conditions exist in a number of countries, and in Germany in particular, under which the Communist Party cannot strike out this slogan from its programme of work. We will have to discuss this concrete practical question very seriously at the meeting of the Enlarged Executive. We should point out in our propaganda for this slogan, that this in no way means an "entrance hall" to the proletarian dictatorship, but that it is a synonym for this dictatorship. Further, we have to show that as a revolutionary Bolshevik Party, we do not separate the realisation of this aim from the revolutionary mass movement, and the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system. It seems to us that our recent losses in the German trade unions, are to a certain extent connected with the fact that during the recent political crisis, the Party was unable sufficiently clearly to show the masses its ability for forming concrete watchwords.

A kindred question is that of the organised extension of the influence of our Communist Parties over the working class masses. If in some countries the ideological influence of our Parties proportionally exceeds their organisational strength (Germany and France for example), in other countries we observe rather different phenomena. In Italy, for instance, we have a strong well-knit Party of 30,000 members, but the moral influence of this Party is still exceedingly weak. In this way, our tasks change somewhat, according to the different countries. In Germany and France we are faced

with the task of organising and strengthening the working mass. In Italy, our task is to widen the Party's agitational possibilities. In the latter case, the Party should try to issue from its position of isolation, and seize on every possible chance of coming out openly into the political arena. In this direction, it would be very useful for the Italian comrades to remember the methods of the Russian Bolshevik Party, which on the eve of October 17th, 1905, broke through the police cordon that was strangling it. We understand what flexibility this tactic needs, and what extraordinary difficulties it may encounter in Italy. But nevertheless, we think that police-driven inertia of the Party organisation at the present moment would be very harmful, and would only develop into passivity. But in spite of these differences between the influential and the organisational hold of our Parties on the masses, there is a common task in front of all our national sections. **It is necessary for all our sections to come closer to the workers at the bench.** The re-organisation of the Parties on the basis of factory and workshop nuclei is not a mechanical reform re-constructing only outward relations. It means moving the whole centre of Party work on to the field of the lower factory nuclei. It is only a Party that turns its Communist nuclei in the workshops into fighting staffs for leading the revolutionary struggle of the proletarian masses, than can really say it is becoming Bolshevised. Bolshevisation also means increasing our influence in the trade unions and not only the regaining the positions we have lost, but also winning them completely over to our Communist influence.

In some countries this task has to be split up into further minor tasks, as for instance into that of liquidating separatist tendencies in the trade union movement. In Germany, we have to show the working masses that the so-called proverbial independence of the trade unions is nothing but an ideological figleaf for hiding the link with the bourgeoisie through the Social-Democrats. In France and Czechoslovakia we must outlive all the relics of past mistrust, and establish the closest contact between the political and the syndicalist leaderships. This "Bolshevisation" is not a question of accepting some resolution or other for carrying out particular measures. It is a long pedagogical process, in which our French Party should display the maximum of restraint and patience. The question of forming live fractions in the trade unions has a great significance for the Bolshevisation of our Party. Without forming our organisational bases of support in the trade unions, we cannot seriously talk

of Bolshevisation. Such Bolshevisation would only be a purely ideological intellectual current, having no support among the masses. Our winning of the factory and workshop committees and the creation of these in countries where they do not exist, or where they are very weak, plays a no less important role. Under the present conditions, factory and workshop committees should become, side by side with the trade unions, the levers of our influence in the struggle for the unity of the trade union movement. In Italy, in particular, the struggle for the formation of factory and workshop committees may become the starting point for an active intervention of the working class in the solution of the conflict with Mussolini.

In the peasant countries the problem of conquering the masses assumes a rather peculiar form. While not neglecting to conquer the trade unions and factory and workshop committees, we should call into being revolutionary peasants' organisations by means of splitting the existing peasant parties, which are torn asunder by internal class contradictions, or whether we will create these organisations out of new unorganised elements of the poor peasantry, depends upon the concrete situation. This question, which is of the utmost importance for Poland, the Balkans, France, Italy and other countries, will also have to come up for serious consideration at the Plenum of the E.C.

In other countries, where the specific gravity of the peasantry is comparatively small, the problem of a concrete treatment of the question of revolution compels us to consider the question of the methods to be used for reacting on the so-called middle class, and small town bourgeoisie, perishing under the different conditions of capitalist disorder. The fact that this question was not correctly solved by the German Right at the time of the Ruhr occupation, by no means signifies that it should be removed from our horizon. In France, Italy, Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, this question has now great significance. It is one of the component parts of the whole problem of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the working class.

Lenin put the question in this same way, in an article "The Results of the Discussion on Self-Determination," replying to the Polish comrades, who called the Irish rebellion of 1916 a putsch, he said that the social revolution will not only be a rising of the working class, but of all the oppressed and exploited. "These strata," wrote Lenin, "will bring into the movement their prejudices and their petty bourgeois ideas," but it would be quite Utopian to imagine the revolu-

tion to be a movement entirely freed from petty bourgeois evils.

The present phase of the Communist movement also faces us with the task of forming strong Communist parties. We should use the history of "respite" that has been left us, as a means of perfecting those organisational weaknesses which were the sources of our defeats in Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Hungary. The question of recruiting new members for the Party and training them in the Communist spirit, is in turn one of the problems of Bolshevisation. This task is particularly difficult in such countries as France, where there are no strong traditions of organisation, and where the individualistic frame of mind has not yet been overcome. The best proof of the Bolshevik maturity of the French Communist Party would be to bring the number of members in Paris, the old home of the Commune, up to 50,000 and throughout the whole of France up to 200,000. At the last elections our Party polled about 900,000 votes, while it only numbered 50,000 members (now 75,000), and this shows that there is only one organised Communist for every twenty sympathising workers. We also meet with this disproportion in Germany, although to a lesser degree. Here the Party has about 200,000 members, while the number of the votes given in its favour under the most difficult conditions of persecution almost reached three millions. In Italy where we have 30,000 Party members, we received 300,000 votes under conditions of the most cruel terror.

What is the meaning of these figures? They signify that our brother Parties are not using all the organisational possibilities that occur for drawing into the Party all those elements who are ready to fight under its banner. In Czechoslovakia, the picture is somewhat different. Here we have a wide mass Party embracing up to 150,000 members, but in this case we come up against the question of the incapacity of these Party cadres. In Prague, for instance, there are 23,000 members in the Party organisation, whereas demonstrations organised in Prague only rally about ten to fifteen thousand. This proves that in the Czechoslovakian Party there is a whole strata of Party members, who, in other organisations would be classed with sympathisers. We do not mean to imply by this that the Party should have recourse to a mass cleansing. This would be an incorrect policy. We simply want to draw attention to the necessity for the great work in Bolshevik training that lies before some of our Parties. Then there is the question of our press. At one time, during the years of reaction, our *Pravda* was the centre for mustering hundreds of thousands of the Russian prole-



tariat. In even the remotest of corners, the workers eagerly discussed the *Pravda* articles, and there were likewise no corner without a circle of its self-denying friends. *Pravda* played a tremendous role in forming our Party on the eve of the revolution. It was a source of revolutionary energy where all the streams of the working class gathered, and which showered the sparks of the coming revolutionary fire on every side. The question of the workers' press in the West is quite another matter. We have only one paper, *L'Humanité*, whose circulation reaches 300,000. Unfortunately we cannot say the same of other papers. The circulation of the central organ of the German Party, the *Rote Fahne*, does not amount to more than 30,000 copies. It is true that the German comrades may be justified in so far as they have a whole network of papers in the various districts. However, a total circulation of 30,000 for the central organ of the Party, published in a town where 300,000 votes were cast at the last elections, is really a miserable figure. In Italy, our organ, *L'Unita*, has about 40,000 permanent readers. All these figures tell the same story. We must turn our press into what the *Pravda* was in the pre-revolutionary days. We must bring it closer to the working masses and make out of it a whole series of real workers' newspapers. It matters not if they be not organs catering for sensationalism, or high politics to which the bourgeois papers are so addicted, for they will be the organs of our influence and our deep penetration into the working class. A fundamental task in the Bolshevisation of our Parties is the creation of a network of worker-correspondents, and friends of the paper in the factories, workshops and villages. Organisationally, there is also the question of forming Communist Party units. In most cases the leaders of our local organisations are young, and have not that large organisational experience of which the Social-Democrats are able to boast. On the other hand, from the point of view of knowledge, our units have not caught up with the high demands that the working masses place on them. During the coming months it will be of the utmost importance to perfect our cadres of Party leaders, devoted heart and soul to the workers' cause, to turn them into groups of real professional revolutionaries having close contact with the masses, and eliminating from their midst the spirit of the old officialdom, passivity and bureaucracy.

The question of increasing the proportion of the working class element in our Party should also not be neglected. There is no doubt that in the overwhelming majority of cases our Party rank and file in Western Europe is composed of

workers. The percentage of those coming from other classes and the intellectuals, is extremely insignificant. This proletarianisation of the Parties has a specially great significance for such a country as France, where the old Socialist Party represented a kind of petty bourgeois tag to the syndicalist movement, and where there was even created a special theory on the two forms of organisation, embracing their adherents both according to the class principle and the principle of their political convictions. The Communist International can really note with pride the great step forward that the French Communist Party has made upon this path. Out of the 237 delegates to the French Congress, more than 200 comrades were workers straight from the bench. This example of the composition of the Paris congress shows very clearly how poor and hopeless were the attempts of a few offended intellectuals to disparage the French Communist Party. It is also necessary to insist emphatically on the creation of a united, strong and centralised organisation in those countries where the Party has to operate amongst a population composed of many nationalities. For this kind of Party the fundamental task of Bolshevisation consists in outliving federalistic tendencies, and becoming welded together in a brotherly way, on the basis of proletarian internationalism. I cannot conclude without mentioning about the liquidation of a few Social-Democratic habits in the parliamentary and municipal field of work, which have recently shown signs of life in various countries, particularly in Czecho-Slovakia. Finally, there is the fundamental question on which so much has been written and spoken, that of international trade union unity. In our opinion these are the practical concrete tasks of Bolshevisation that face our sections in Europe. We may be told that these tasks have too much of an every-day character, and that they are included in the ordinary cycle of activities that our brother Parties have carried on, and are carrying on at the present time. That may be. Surely we are not expected to think out some kind of planetary task while there are still so many live practical matters that are yet to be done by our comparatively young Communist sections. To magnify matters by large perspectives, to dream, and to invent "new words"—these are activities that have no place in live proletarian Parties. It is out of these little things that the united world Communist Party will grow, and will become strengthened and the best sons of the working class will devote their brains and their warm heart-blood for its formation.

D. MANUILSKY.

# Events in the Balkans and Prospects of a Workers' and Peasants' Revolution

THE Balkan "volcano" is smoking again. Recent events in Albania have recalled the role which the Balkans have played for centuries in the conflicts of European States, and especially the role they played in the recent world war which was caused by events which took place on the territory of the Balkan Peninsula; first of all, the Balkan War in 1912 and 1913, and then the events in Sarajevo in Bosnia in 1914. The Balkans are again destined to be the theatre of historical events, if not immediately, then in the near future.

## Albanian Events.

We will deal with Albanian events first.

Albania is the most Western country of the Balkan Peninsula, and geographically and economically occupies a very important position; geographically because it occupies a large section of the East coast of the Adriatic; economically because in addition to its agricultural wealth, Albania has oil deposits in the South. Racially the Albanian tribe (Shkipetars) is one of the most ancient races of the Balkan Peninsula. By their religion the Albanians are divided into three unequal groups; Catholics, Orthodox and Mahomedans. The latter formed the overwhelming majority of the population. According to its economic relations, Albania is one of the most backward agrarian-feudal countries of the world. Its agrarian feudalism has an admixture of the clan system which still holds sway in Albania and by which the Albanian population is divided into a large number of clans held together by the system of mutual responsibility and the blood-oath—"bessa" which converts Albania into a second Corsica. Hence the strength and the vitality of the Albanian agrarian feudalism which enables it to hold the Albanian peasantry in subjection.

Economic exploitation is not the only weapon of feudalism, it also exploits the clan ideology of the peasants. Under the Sultans who were very well disposed towards the Albanian

beys, Albania was one of the bulwarks of the Turkish autocracy. The Sultan's bodyguard was recruited from the Albanians, although beys occupied important political and especially military posts in the Turkish administration.

But the struggle against the Turkish bureaucratic-military feudalism, the struggle of the peasants and of the bourgeoisie, which was gradually coming into being through the development of trade and industry, a struggle which began in Serbia, Greece and subsequently in Bulgaria, after the "Great French Revolution," and continued throughout the 19th century, awakened also the Albanian people to national consciousness. This found encouragement from the powerful neighbours of Albania—Italy, and chiefly Austro-Hungary which, like Russia, were intent on making use of the struggle of the Balkan peoples for national liberation from Turkish political and economic domination for the extension of their own economic and political control over these countries, as well as for the extension of their territories at their expense. After the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, the Austro-Hungarian Government began the intensive cultivation of Albania. It did not rely on the progressive, but rather on the reactionary elements, seeing in the triumph of the young Turks a danger for its own political and social privileges. A further development of the Turkish Revolution could lead to the abolition of feudalism in Albania, to the liberation of the Albanian peasants from their beys, and, with it to the abolition of the administrative arbitrariness of the Albanian beys, practically independent as far as the government of the Sultan was concerned. As a result of the work of the agents of the Austro-Hungarian Government, the Albanians rose against the Young Turks in 1910. The Austro-Hungarian Government, acting upon the recipe applied by the Tsarist Government to the Balkan countries, placed before international diplomacy the question of Albanian autonomy and independence. The Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Baron Ehrenthal came forward with a "reform" plan. All the Albanian State provided for in this plan was the absorption of parts of the territory of West and South Macedonia; the Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians, who for their part were intent on seizing Macedonia, regarded Ehrenthal's plan as an attempt to interfere with their rights, and circumvented Austro-Hungarian diplomacy by forming among themselves the first Balkan Alliance. They declared war on the Young Turk Government, taking advantage of the fact that it had not yet recovered from the effects of the war with Italy.

During the first Balkan war, each of the Balkan allies

occupied a part of Albania; the Northern part with town of Shkodra was occupied by the Serbs, the central part with the town of Elbasan by the Bulgarians, and the Southern part with the town of Valona by the Greeks. At that time the Balkan governments contemplated the partition of Albania. But, the inevitable collapse of the Balkan Alliance, which was pre-destined because of the partition of Macedonia, as well as the intervention of the Great Powers, especially of Austro-Hungary and Italy, who did not want to jeopardise their chances of penetrating Albania, saved the latter from partition. Albania was declared an independent State, with the German Prince von Wied as ruler, who during the world war was compelled to take refuge with his kinsmen in Germany; and who subsequently shared with them the fate of the German Emperor and all the German kings and princes.

After the world war, Albania was declared a Republic, but the Serbs remained in Shkodra, the Greeks occupied large territories in South Albania, while the Italians fortified themselves opposite Valona occupying the isle of Sesano. The seizure of the isle of Sesano was confirmed by one of the many peace treaties, while the Serbs and Greeks, were compelled to withdraw from the parts of the Albanian State which they had occupied. Already since the time of the Balkan War a partition of Albanian territory, the so-called Kosovo ground, plus districts of Western Macedonia adjoining Albania populated pre-eminently by Albanians was annexed by the Serbian kingdom. Serbia, making use of its political diplomatic and financial resources, whose power had increased by the addition of provinces of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, continued its efforts to strengthen its influence in Albania and to prepare the ground for its absorption. For this purpose the Serbs made use of the services of the Albanian feudal lords who were kept by them, such as the notorious Isad Pasha who acted as a Serbian agent, and subsequently Akhmed Zoglu, who was in power and assumed power later, thanks to the support of Yugo-Slavia.

In 1923, important historical events took place in Albania which were bound to bring a great change in the internal as well as external life of the country. The Albanian peasantry, regardless of religious differences, rallied round the rebellious leaders, made an end of the feudal government of Akhmed Zoglu and placed another government in power. In this rising, valuable help was given by the rebellious Kosovo partisan bands under the leadership of Bairan-Zur.

As already stated, Kosovo is a province which forms part of the Yugo-Slavish kingdom, but is mainly populated by Albanians who saw in the existence of an independent Albania a guarantee of their own national and economic liberation from the foreign yoke. Agrarian reform occupied first place in the programme of the new Albanian Noll government. But during the short period of its existence for reasons among which its own vacillations played a considerable role, this reform was not introduced. The Noll government had the support of Italy and its orientation was also towards the Soviet Union and the national revolutionary organisations of Macedonia, as well as towards the national liberation movements in Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the new government was a bourgeois-nationalist government with relics of feudal tendencies, its existence brought a revolutionary-progressive element into the Balkans. Its orientation was towards Italy not only because Italy was not as direct a menace as Yugo-Slavia, Albania's immediate neighbour, but also because Italy with its highly developed industries and trade could contribute to the development of Albanian industries and to the consolidation of the Albanian commercial bourgeoisie. The orientation towards the Soviet Union and the national movements in Macedonia and Yugo-Slavia had its explanation in considerations of a national as well as of a class character, for the internal revolution in Albania itself could only be brought to a conclusion if these factors were victorious in the Balkan Peninsula. Any possible revolutionary events in the Balkans might have given back to Albania the Albanian provinces which had been temporarily given to Serbia and Greece. On the other hand, the consolidation and development of an independent Albanian State became in its turn a bulwark of the national-revolutionary struggle in Macedonia and Kosovo. That is why an independent Albania for the Serbian bourgeoisie was the greatest obstacle to the consolidation of its own power, as well as to territorial expansion at the expense of Albania. Therefore, the feudal lords expelled from Albania headed by Akhmed Zoglu did not only find refuge in Yugo-Slavia, but also active support on the part of the Serbian Government for the establishment of their power over the Albanian peasantry. Akhmed Zoglu's bands were armed quite openly on Serbian territory. Everyone knew that the Serbian Government was preparing a restoration in Albania. But for this purpose the support of the small Albanian forces who were grouped around Akhmed Zoglu did not suffice, hence the Yugo-Slavian Government, to ensure success, gave its own soldiers and the remnants of the Wrangel forces which had been al-

ready re-organised as Serbian frontier forces serving on the Albanian frontier.

All information confirms the fact that the recent "rising" against the Nolli Government was not a rising, but actual war by Yugo-Slavia against Albania. The breach of the front on the Albanian frontier was effected by regular Serbian troops. Penetration into Albanian territory was entrusted to the Wrangel detachments which included a small number of Albanians. According to information received by the foreign press, not less than 50,000 Wrangel soldiers and officers participated in this attack.

This is the only explanation for the fact that the forces of the Albanian Government were totally beaten by Akhmed Zoglu's detachments in eight days. Akhmed Zoglu's government cannot remain in power long, as it is not essentially an Albanian Government, but a nominee of Yugo-Slavia. It is to be expected that Albania will again shortly be the theatre of revolutionary events. Of course, much will depend on the attitude of Italy towards the new government. By this we do not, of course, mean the formal declarations which on such occasions make use of the formula of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states, but the real intentions of the Italian government of which we cannot judge at present because of lack of data. But one thing is certain: the existence of antagonism between Italy and Yugo-Slavia on the Albanian question. This antagonism has threatened already more than once to develop into open conflict, and efforts have also been frequently made by the Serbian and Italian governments to come to some sort of an agreement on the question of Albania. But has such material materialised? During the visit to Rome of the Yugo-Slavian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ninchich, which took place a few weeks before the recent Albanian events, the Italian and Yugo-Slavian governments declared to the whole world that they have come to an agreement on the question of Albania on the basis of the formula of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Albania. But such an empty formula could not deceive anyone. The bourgeois press expressed the assumption that this formula was a screen for another and more substantial agreement concerning the partition of Albanian territory between Italy and Yugo-Slavia.

When events were developing in Albania, it was generally expected that together with the advance of the military forces of the Yugo-Slavian government, disguised as Albanian partisans, Italy would lend a force in South Albania. Has

Serbian diplomacy succeeded in cheating Italian diplomacy in the question of Albania, as was stated in the Italian press, or has the right moment for the application of the agreement, provided such an agreement exists, not yet come, and must be synchronised with future inevitable events in Albania—at the present juncture it is extremely difficult to find an answer to these questions. In any case, the situation in Albania is becoming again revolutionary. If the Yugo-Slavian government has succeeded in deceiving the Italian government, another rising in Albania may be expected in the very near future with the support of Italy, or the Italian and Serbian governments will in the very near future partition Albania and then the Albanian people will be forced to fight on two fronts.

### **Agrarian and Political Relations in the Balkans.**

The workers' and peasants' rising in Bulgaria, the peasant risings in South Bessarabia, and the Albanian events, show that a political and social conflict is brewing in the Balkans which can become the point of departure for a powerful workers' and peasants' movement, capable of drawing into its orbit not only the Balkan countries proper, but also the provinces situated to the North of the Danube from the Carpathians to the Ægean Sea, considered geographically to be outside the Balkans. This struggle for liberation is similar to the struggle of the Russian workers and peasants, but it is not only directed against capitalism, but even to a still greater extent against the existing agrarian conditions which are complicated by all sorts of administrative measures, as for instance, artificial colonisation and settlement of the peasants of the ruling nationalities among the peasants of the subject peoples to the detriment of the latter. Many people expected, among them Lenin, as shown by his article in the Berne "Social-Democrat" that the Balkan war of 1912 would liquidate the relics of the feudal-bureaucratic regime which existed in the old Turkish Empire, and would provide opportunities for bourgeois-capitalist development in the Balkans. But in reality the Balkan bourgeoisie proved incapable of accomplishing this process not only after the Balkan Wars, but even after the world war. Thus, the solution of this question in the Balkans has been left to the workers' and peasants' revolution.

Even the efforts which were made on the part of the Balkan bourgeois governments in the direction of creating favourable conditions for the development of the Balkan bourgeoisie, have only made the class relations between the peas-



antry and the bourgeois power more complicated and more acute. This applies only to some of the Balkan States, while no attempts were made in the remaining States to bring about these reforms. No agrarian reform worth mentioning has been introduced in Yugo-Slavia, Macedonia and Bosnia, which under Austro-Hungarian rule retained the old feudal agrarian conditions. More was done in this direction in Rumania. Already after the peasant rising in 1907, the Rumanian bourgeoisie was confronted with the question of agrarian reform. But until the Russian revolution, the Rumanian government was content with palliative measures which amounted to giving to the peasantry a small part of the land of the big landowners who in Rumania own more than half of the arable land. It was only after the February, and still more after the October Revolution in Russia, that under the threat of another peasant rising in Rumania, all the more dangerous as the conduct of the war was absorbing the attention and the resources of the Rumanian government, that the latter turned its attention to agrarian reform. But as the revolutionary peril diminished in Rumania agrarian reform became more restricted. Under the pretext of preserving "intensive culture," estates where rational methods of agriculture are applied, the landowners of Rumania and Bessarabia retained enormous areas of land. On the other hand, the land which the reform act assigned to the peasantry got mostly into the hands not of bona fide peasant population, but of the new village bourgeoisie consisting of petty officials, merchants, teachers, priests, former officers and non-commissioned officers. Agrarian reform was applied in such a distorted form that even the Rumanian Peasant Party, the so-called Tsaranists, which is the most moderate of all moderate **peasants parties**, was induced to introduce into its programme a paragraph concerning another agrarian reform.

The Bulgarian government of Stambolinsky went much further on the way of agrarian reform. Even before the reform introduced by Stambolinsky, big landownership was practically non-existent, with the exception of some districts in North and East Bulgaria, and in the vicinity of the Black Sea in South Bulgaria. The Stambolinsky government liquidated also the remaining big estates and fixed a maximum of 40 dessiatins for the landowners. But after the overthrow of the Stambolinsky government, the new Zankoff government began the liquidation of agrarian reform.

Agrarian conditions became very acute in the Balkan countries, due to the policy adopted towards the peasantry by the Balkan States in the territories of the more important

national minorities. This policy, which was a policy of colonisation, assumed truly monstrous proportions. Not only tens and hundreds of thousands, but millions of peasants were removed from localities where they could have obtained land from their own landowners, where they had lived for centuries, where the methods of labour were familiar to them, and with which they were connected by the memories of the past. They were transferred to other districts populated by national minorities. This policy was systematically pursued by the Rumanian government more than by any other Balkan government. It transferred Rumanian peasants from Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia to the other bank of the Pruth or the Danube, to Bessarabia or the Dobrudja. Thus, the land which had been confiscated from the landowners of these provinces did not tend to increase the inadequate plots of land of the local peasants or to give land to landless peasants, but was utilised to accommodate Rumanian emigrants. In the so-called Bulgarian quadrangle, or the New Dobrudja which the Rumanians took away from Bulgaria in 1913, the Rumanian government, which excels in reactionary ingenuity found means and methods to confiscate the land of all landowners including the peasants to increase the available land destined for Rumanian emigrants. This confiscation was carried out on the assumption that the Bulgarian civil code did not recognise the absolute right of land ownership, but only the absolute right to hold land. The Rumanian parliament promulgated a special law on the strength of which all landowners in the New Dobrudja had to cede to the government one-third of their land in order to become the absolute owners of their remaining two-thirds of land.

This unheard of act of robbery, the chief victims of which are the peasants, is being, of course, resented, and the consequence is that the peasants of the Dobrudja have been fighting desperately against it for the past seven years. Although the so-called quadrangle represents only a territory of from six to eight thousand square versts, and although the Bulgarian administration and military authorities support the Rumanian authorities in every possible way, the Rumanian administration has not yet been able to cope there with the so-called "banditry." Rumanian newspapers are full of descriptions of acts of "banditry" in the quadrangle. Sometimes these acts take the form, as for instance, in the neighbourhood of the town of Silistria, of the guerilla bands seizing a motor-car occupied by the land commission. They burnt the archive of the commission, stripped the members of the commission naked, and sent them like this

back to Silistria. There were also cases when the guerilla bands killed particularly obnoxious officials, gendarmes and officers. There was also a third case when the local population and not the guerilla bands compelled the Rumanian immigrants in the Dobrudja to renounce their newly-acquired land and to return to Rumania. There was, for instance, one case when Rumanian shepherds sent from Transylvania with their flocks of sheep to the Dobrudja were systematically boycotted by the population who compelled them to return with their flocks to Transylvania. When they reached the town of Cernomodi, where a bridge connects the Dobrudja with old Rumania, the Rumanian authorities refused them entrance, and they remained there for over a fortnight, when they were at last permitted to return to their own homes. The Rumanian law courts chronicle is replete with law suits caused by the existing agrarian conditions. The Yugo-Slavian government pursues in Macedonia, ceded to Serbia already after the Balkan wars, a policy similar to that of the Rumanian government in the Dobrudja. This policy meets here with the same resistance from Macedonian peasants as the Rumanian policy on the part of the peasants of the Dobrudja. Last year, in the vicinity of the town of Shpita, in East Macedonia, the guerilla bands cut 25 people to pieces. In South Macedonia, which was ceded to the Greeks, immigration and emigration assumed enormous proportions. As a result of the Turco-Greek war about a million Greek peasants had to emigrate from Asia Minor. The Greek government settled them in South Macedonia and Thrace, evicting for this purpose the Bulgarian and Turkish peasantry. Such an arbitrary disposal of human lives and interests as is now taking place throughout the Balkan Peninsula was hardly known even in the historic epoch of the migration of peoples, when nomadic tribes in their search for pasture land carried on a sanguinary struggle for existence.

### **Bureaucratic and Financial Oppression.**

Another factor connected with the discontent of the peasantry in the Balkan countries is bureaucratic and financial oppression. Proportionately the bureaucratic class has very considerable weight. In capitalist countries of West Europe, civil bureaucracy developed together with the development of capitalist production, while in the Balkan countries it took precedence of the latter. State revenue was one of the means of capitalist accumulation. Local capitalism came into being chiefly with the assistance of state subsidies or extreme protectionism which raised excessively

prices for foreign manufactured articles greatly needed by the peasantry. Taxation in the Balkan States was always out of proportion with the resources of the population, but the state of affairs grew even worse during and after the war. The bourgeoisie did its utmost to place the burden of the recent war on the shoulders of the peasantry. In addition to the numerous direct and indirect legal taxes which the peasantry has to pay for the upkeep of a military-bureaucratic apparatus far beyond the resources of the country, the system of collecting illegal taxes flourishes in the Balkans more than anywhere else. Every official has, in addition to the taxes provided for in the estimates, additional taxes which he pockets by robbing the peasantry. The numerous military divisions stationed in the subjected provinces—the Dobrudja, Bessarabia and Macedonia live chiefly at the expense of the population from which they requisition and confiscate anything they want. The central authority does not only wink at this procedure, but even gives them encouragement which obviates the necessity to increase state expenditure.

### National-political Relations.

The truth that the national question is a peasant question receives confirmation also in the Balkans. The struggle for national liberation is a peasants' struggle against landowners and the military and civil bureaucracy, as well as a struggle against the exploitation of labour and excessive taxation. The solution of the national question always encountered great difficulties in the Balkans because of the **mosaic** ethnographic condition of the Balkan States. Dozens of nationalities belonging to various creeds live on this comparatively small territory. After the war conditions became more mosaic than before. The Balkan States which had taken part in the war on the side of the Entente, annexed new territories twice or three times as large as their own. Rumania, which previous to the war had a population of barely eight million, has now a population of eighteen million, more than a third of which is non-Rumanian. The Rumanians themselves belong to two creeds—the Orthodox and the Unist. Serbia which annexed Bulgarian Macedonia after the Balkan war of 1912-1913, after the imperial war became the head of a new state with a population two and a half times larger than the population of the old Serbia. Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Dalmatia and Montenegro form part of this State. A typical example of the hypocrisy of international diplomacy is the fact that Montenegro, accord-

ing to international treaties, exists even now as an independent state, for not a single treaty establishes the incorporation of Montenegro with Serbia. Moreover, Montenegro was one of the allies who participated in the fight against the Central Powers. Serbia also after the war seized another portion of Bulgarian territory with the town of Tsarebrod, as well as part of Macedonia incorporated with Bulgaria, in the Strumnitza Valley.

To continue, Greece in addition to South Macedonia, annexed Thrace where the Greek element of the population was in a minority, the majority being Turks and Bulgarians. Bulgaria itself is interspersed with territories inhabited by considerable Turkish minorities, not to mention the fact that in Bulgaria the so-called Pomaks are Moslems. In Yugo Slavia, Rumania and Greece the national struggle developed immediately after the war and is bound to grow as it goes on. This struggle assumes various forms, illegal as well as legal from the struggle for national schools and a national church down to the struggle for complete separation. The various compromises which may be arrived at between various national parties, can only be of a temporary nature. The landowners' and bourgeois parties of the ruling nations as well as of the national minorities may, of course, enter into all sorts of compromise agreements. But the only possible result of this will be to transfer the national struggle more and more to the national peasant parties and ultimately to the Communist Party—the only Party which does not betray the national interests of the masses.

During the entire post-war period we have had a series of risings in the group of States with which we deal in this article from North to South: a rising in North Bessarabia in 1919, guerilla warfare in the Dobrudja in Macedonia and in the Kosovo Plain. Then there was the recent rising in South Bessarabia and guerilla warfare in South Macedonia. At the same time the most important parties of the national minorities are active in Transylvania, Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia and Dalmatia. The only State where the question of national minorities is not yet acute, is Bulgaria, and only because Bulgaria itself was partitioned. But in Bulgaria, too, there is a considerable national minority—the Turks, and it is only because of their general cultural and political backwardness that they have not yet brought forward their national demands. The national question is the second mine threatening to explode the bourgeois States in the Balkans.

### The Danube-Balkan Federation.

Already in the '60's and '70's of the last century, the radical elements of the bourgeois-nationalist parties in all Balkan countries, especially in Serbia, Rumania and Greece, as well as in Bulgaria, at that time Turkish provinces, made the establishment of a Balkan Federation their fighting slogan. It seemed as though such a federation of the Balkan States could not only become the best means of counteracting the annexationist policy of Russia and Austro-Hungary, but would also make it possible to solve the national question in the Balkans, provided strict equality were observed among the various nationalities. Moreover, at that time such an amalgamation of all the diplomatic forces in the Balkans seemed to be the only means to resist Turkish domination, as not one of the Balkan States was strong enough to fight by itself against Turkey. This national-revolutionary movement of the '60's and '70's of the last century was on the one hand connected with the Italian national movement, and on the other, with the Russian revolutionary movement. The Balkan Federation satisfied also the needs of capitalist development in the Balkan States, in as far as they can be regarded as one territorial whole, for the productive forces of the Balkans could only develop within the limits of such a comparatively large State unit, which could place at their disposal all the resources of the various Balkan countries. Turkish domination was overthrown with the help of Russia, and as to the preservation of their independence, the Balkan governments used for this purpose the antagonism between Austro-Hungary and Russia, entering into the sphere of influence of one or other of these States and coming to agreements or even formal treaties with them. Thus the incipient national capitalism of the Balkan States was kept within narrow national limits which proved irksome to it and which it endeavoured to extend at the expense of its neighbours. The whole history of Balkan capitalism in the period succeeding the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 is a fierce struggle for the seizure of the remnants of Turkish territories in European Macedonia and Thrace. In this struggle there were two military episodes: the war between Bulgaria and Serbia in 1885, and the war between Bulgaria on the one side and Serbia, Greece and Rumania on the other side in 1913. The latter broke out after a short-lived, and as subsequent events showed, a very unstable federation of all the Balkan States against Turkey.

The history of the diplomacy of the Balkan States during that period is a history of continuous Balkan civil war.

Even if any political grouping took place between the Balkan States, this grouping was of a purely negative character, namely it aimed at diverting some direct outside peril, and not by any means at removing the irreconcilable contradictions within their national-capitalist development. After the temporary grouping in 1912-13, which soon broke up, the Balkan States formed a new diplomatic group as a result of the world war. The alliance of mutual support between Greece, Rumania and Serbia against Bulgaria which existed before the war, was revived in a new form as the group of the so-called Little Entent, consisting of Serbia—the present Yugo-Slavia, Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia. On the one hand this alliance was directed against Hungary, as far as the whole group of three is concerned, and on the other hand against Bulgaria on the part of Rumania and Serbia. The treaty signed by Greece and Serbia in 1913, which was also directed against Bulgaria, continued in existence. But parallel with these groupings each of the Balkan States carried on its own policy which brought them frequently into serious conflicts. There is an insurmountable antagonism between the so-called allies—Rumania and Yugo-Slavia and between Yugo-Slavia and Greece. Yugo-Slavia seeks an outlet to the Ægean Sea. The Southern frontier of Yugo-Slavia is only 60 versts from Saloniki—the most important port in the Balkan Peninsula, in the possession of Greece. The question of Saloniki occupies first place in the diplomatic relations between Greece and Yugo-Slavia.

Already in 1913, Greece refused to grant certain privileges to Serbia in Saloniki. On its part the Serbian government endeavoured to receive and extend its privileges in Saloniki until such a time when it would be able to seize Saloniki and its hinterland, namely, South Macedonia. A very important episode in this struggle between Greece and Yugo-Slavia is the recent revocation of the treaty of alliance between these two States which was made in 1913. The actual reason for the revocation of this treaty was the so-called Geneva Protocol signed between Greece and Bulgaria. Last summer, during the League of Nations Session in Geneva, the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece signed an undertaking on the strength of which they gave each other some mutual guarantees concerning the Greek minority resident in Bulgarian territories, and also concerning the Bulgarian minority resident in the South of Greek Macedonia. The fact alone that Macedonian Slavs, living on Greek territory, were recognised as of Bulgarian nationality, was looked upon by Serbia, which has always asserted that Macedonian

Slavs are Serbs, as an infringement of its rights even within the limits of Serbian Macedonia.

There is a great deal of interest between Rumania and Serbia with relation to Bulgaria. Rumanians are afraid of a possible inclusion of Bulgaria into the federated Yugo-Slavian State. Certainly if the federalist principle will be vindicated in the national struggle conducted now against the Serbian oligarchy by the Croatian people, a situation will be created favouring the inclusion of Bulgaria in this Federation. It is a well-known fact that Stambolisky pursued a policy of rapprochement with Serbia, to the extent of the inclusion of Bulgaria in the Yugo-Slavian State. If this policy were victorious and if on the other hand Yugo-Slavia became a federative State, there would arise in the Balkan Peninsula a powerful Federation of States whose territory would stretch along the whole Balkan Peninsula from the Danube to the Ægean Sea and the Adriatic. The existence of such a Federation would be on the one hand a great obstacle to the extension of Italian domination in the Balkans, and on the other hand to the retention by Rumania of the old and new Dobrudja, annexed at the expense of Bulgaria.

The military plot as a result of which Stambolisky was killed and the fascist Zankoff government became established in Bulgaria, had no doubt the direct support of the Rumanian and Italian governments. Nowhere was the fall of Stambolisky greeted with such joy as in Rumania, and not only because his death put an end to the peasant government in the immediate vicinity of Rumania which was setting the example to analogous aspirations among the Rumanian peasants, but also because the possibility of creating a powerful and durable Slav State in the Balkans would be postponed for a long time. It is this which has made the polemics between the Rumanian and Belgrade press so acute. The Belgrade press virulently attacked its former and present allies—the Rumanians, having recourse in its articles to all the abusive epithets the Balkan dictionary can provide, calling the Rumanian rulers parasites of the Balkans, Tzigans (Gypsies) and marauders. These differences between the Rumanian, Greek and Yugo-Slavian bourgeoisie are so intense and time-honoured that soon or later they are bound to lead to an armed conflict between them. The fight will be waged for the Bulgarian heritage, and also because of South Macedonia. After Albania, Bulgaria, which has been left without an army and economically exhausted and diplomatically



isolated, is the tempting bait as far as the development of Serbian imperialism is concerned. The eyes of the Serbian bourgeoisie are directed to the Permin coal mines only 60 versts distant from the Serbian frontier and the richest coal mines in the whole Balkan Peninsula.

At the last Session of the League of Nations in Rome, the Serbian government succeeded in achieving a considerable diplomatic victory owing to French and partly Italian support. In order to set itself free with respect to its Western neighbour—France, Italy came to a much desired agreement with the Serbs with respect to Fiume. Serbia was entrusted with the control over the disarmament of Bulgaria, and thereby was given the first mortgage on Bulgaria.

It is on these lines that the following policy of the Balkan States developed. They have long ago relegated to the past the slogan of the Balkan Federation. However, this slogan is not extinct. Previous to the war it was the slogan of Balkan Social-Democracy, which, however, brought it forward in a somewhat different form, namely, as the Republican Democratic Federation. The pre-requisites of such a federation would be a workers' and peasants' victory.

After the October Revolution which placed before the working class of all countries, as its nearest prospect, the task of establishing a Soviet social order, the section of Bulgarian Social-Democracy which has joined the Third International altered its formula and gave it its present complete form: establishment of a Balkan-Danube Soviet Socialist Federation.

Already before entering the war in 1914, a congress took place in Bukharest in which only the Left Social-Democratic Balkan Parties took part and from which the Bulgarian opportunists known as the **broad** Social-Democrats were excluded. At this Congress the Rumanian and Serbian Social-Democratic parties gave up their former intention of collaborating with the Bulgarian opportunists.

### The Anti-Soviet Bloc.

Everyone knows what a cry was raised during the last few weeks in the bourgeois press on the occasion of the establishment of an anti-Soviet Balkan Bloc between Bulgaria, Yugo-Slavia and Rumania with the close co-operation of Great Britain and France. Greece was to be subsequently

added to this Bloc. All this hue and cry is but a storm in a teacup. Of course, no one doubts the anti-Soviet and anti-proletarian aspirations of the Balkan governments. In no other countries is there such an exceptional regime against Communist tendencies as in the Balkan countries. Nowhere are political conditions for direct Communist activities as propitious as in the above-mentioned three Balkan countries. But there is also nowhere such mutual organic and cynical hatred as exists in these three Balkan countries. This hatred was instilled by the Balkan governments into the masses during many decades by systematically inciting one nationality against another. Hence all diplomatic combinations between governments can only be of a temporary character. A Federation of the Balkan peoples for the purpose of any durable and harmonious collaboration can only be achieved by the victory of the masses under the leadership of the Communist Party.

What happened in Belgrade and Bukharest at the time of Zankoff's recent visit to these cities, is more or less known. Zankoff sought support from his neighbours against the deep discontent which exists not only among the workers and peasants, but also among the Bulgarian petty-bourgeoisie with the fascist government in Bulgaria. The interviews which took place during this visit showed that State opportunism and the principle—that's no business of mine, have triumphed in Rumania and Yugo-Slavia. All were agreed, there is no doubt about that, in their unlimited hatred of Communism. But when the question arose what methods should be adopted in the fight against Communism, the clash of interest which exists among them came to the surface. Long ago, and especially during the recent Session of the League of Nations at Geneva, the Bulgarian government endeavoured, under the pretext of keeping down Communism, to get permission to have a permanent regular army and to be freed from the restrictions imposed on it by the Neuilly Treaty which disarmed the defeated Bulgaria leaving it with an armed force of 30,000 men, including the gendarmerie. This new Bulgarian army, which is an army of mercenaries and, therefore, expensive, was to be a professional army with a twelve years' service as a minimum. The purpose was to prevent the Bulgarian government from giving a military training to large contingents of the Bulgarian population.

As it is evident from newspaper and other information in these interviews in Belgrade, and Bukharest the Bulgarian Premier sought the support of his neighbours for the purpose

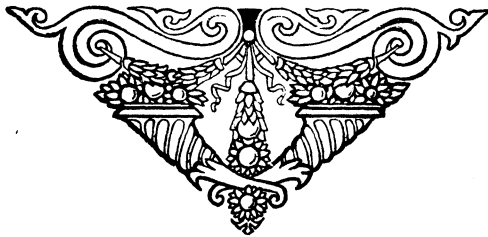
of changing that part of the Neuilly Treaty which deals with the armed forces of Bulgaria. And the Rumanian and Serbian governments preferred Bulgaria to use in its fight with Communists any other means but the creation of a regular army whose bayonets might be turned to-morrow against Yugo-Slavia and Rumania which possess large portions of Bulgarian territory. For its part the Rumanian government proposed as a means of effective opposition to Bolshevism to conclude a military alliance with Yugo-Slavia against Soviet Russia. For Rumania the real Communist peril is in the first instance the peasant movement in Bessarabia which has the moral support of the Soviet Union which has not relinquished its right to take an interest in the fate of the Bessarabian workers and peasants. The Yugo-Slavian government has to reckon with the hostile attitude of the Serbian peasantry towards Rumania, as well as with its profound sympathy with the Russian masses. Finally, the real peril to the Yugo-Slavian government is for the present the guerilla movement in Macedonia and the Macedonian committee which supports it. This committee has its seat in Sofia, and is the ally of the Bulgarian fascist government in the internal policy of Bulgaria. Although the Zankoff government has done its utmost to destroy this ally without whose help it could not have assumed power, it is nevertheless afraid to renounce openly all solidarity with the Macedonian Bulgarians, for this would be tantamount to antagonising the half-million Macedonian immigrants in Bulgaria.

These reasons frustrated the attempt to establish an anti-Soviet Bloc to the great chagrin of international imperialist diplomacy, and especially of British and French diplomacy.

### Conclusion.

The agrarian-feudal, as well as the class and national conditions prevailing in the Balkan Peninsula already before the war, were extremely favorable to the development of the revolutionary movement. This explains the great importance and influence which the Communist Parties obtained in the internal life of the Balkan countries in spite of the fact that capitalist development there was weak and the industrial proletariat very small. The Balkan war, and subsequently the world war with the territorial changes which followed it and the increased oppression on the part of the civil and military bureaucracy together with the

crisis in all the branches of the economic life, made the class and national struggle in the Balkans very acute. The workers and peasants rising in Bulgaria in the autumn of 1923, the revolutionary episodes of the struggle of the Communist Party in Yugo-Slavia and Rumania together with the revision of their tactics have shown that the only leading revolutionary force is Communism. But at the same time all these events opened the eyes of the Balkan Communist Parties to their own errors and shortcomings. Their chief error was that they did not take into consideration that if even the most developed capitalist countries have to reckon with all revolutionary social elements and their proper utilisation if they want to be victorious, this is all the more necessary in the Balkan countries where the industrial proletariat is but small and where Communist Parties are obliged to depend in their decisive struggles mainly on the reserve forces of the peasantry and the oppressed nations.



# The Economic Position & Problems of the Russian Soviet Union

## 1. The General Economic State of the Country.

**B**EFORE proceeding to analyse the state and development of the economic conditions of the Soviet Union in the economic year 1924-25 (commencing October, 1924) we will briefly review the conditions prevailing on the eve of the new economic year. The economics of Soviet Russia are undergoing a very pronounced process of restoration. Its progress is proceeding by leaps and bounds, and each year rapidly brings it to the level of pre-war production. After all it is not so long ago since industry showed only 15 to 20 per cent. of the output of 1913. During the year 1923-4 the gross output of industry amounted to 2,320,000,000 pre-war roubles as against 5,620,700,000 for 1913; in other words it represented 41.3 per cent. of pre-war output. For 1922-23, however, the figure of the gross output was 2,020,000,000 pre-war roubles, consequently the year 1923-24 showed an increase of 15 per cent. If we take only the heavy industry under the control of the Supreme Economic Council, we will find that the output increased from 1,191,000,000 pre-war roubles in 1922-23 to 1,577,000,000 in 1923-24. Consequently in the development of the largest section of industry we have a leap of 30 per cent. in one year.

The number of factory workers employed in industry increased from 1,525,700 in 1923 to 1,711,900 in 1924 (1st of July) as compared with 2,700,000 in 1913. The process of "gathering" the masses of the factory workers who scattered over the country during the period of intervention and famine, is rapidly going on. The working class is becoming consolidated. Its economic conditions are continuously improving; monthly wages have increased from 19.64 conventional Moscow roubles (arrived at on the basis of the Moscow index of prices—Tr.) in October, 1923, to an average for the whole industry of 25.66 conventional roubles for October, 1924.

The same rapid process of restoration is observed in agriculture. The area under cultivation in 1922 was 58,700,000 dessiatins; in 1923 the area increased to 69,900,000 dessiatins as compared with 86,500,000 dessiatins in 1916. Similar illustrative increases are observed in all the various branches of agriculture. The total output of agriculture in all its branches—field crops, meadow crops, kitchen gardening, cattle breeding, vine growing, bee-keeping and silk rearing—in 1923-24 amounted approximately to 6,085,000 roubles in pre-war prices as against 8,907,000 roubles for 1912-13, *i.e.*, 68.3 per cent.

We repeat, the pre-war level has ceased to be a remote ideal. In certain districts, and in certain branches of industry, we have already reached, and even surpassed the pre-war level. The achievement of this level in all branches of industry and in all parts of the country, is only a matter of two or at most—if conditions are unfavourable—three years. All the time should be borne in mind that a process of qualitative reconstruction of our economic system is taking place; a process of slow but steady laying down of a new economic and technical basis.

The increasing output of agriculture and industry served as the basis for the reform of the currency in the spring of 1924. This fact is a decisive one for the further development of our economics, for a stable currency is a firm foundation for the further development of the whole of our economy. The stable currency first of all, laid the basis for the "smitchka" (link) between the town and country and consequently put an end to the division of our economics into two almost independent spheres of circulation—urban and rural—which began to develop in the autumn and winter of 1923-24 as a result of the blades of the notorious "scissors" being opened to their widest extent.\*

The stabilisation removed from the backs of the peasantry the enormous tax burden of inflated currency and by that increased their purchasing power. The introduction of the currency reform, therefore, served as a tremendous impetus to the circulation of commodities and to the development of the home market of the Soviet Union. The stable currency brought Soviet economic right up against the tasks

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\* The extreme divergence between the prices of the products of industry and those of agriculture indicated on the chart by two crossed, diverging lines, which Comrade Trotsky at the Twelfth Congress of the Party in 1923 described as the "scissors,"—Tr.

of more rapidly expanding industry in order to satisfy the famine (in the literal sense of the word) in the principal articles of mass consumption (textile goods, etc.), which began to be felt already in the second half of 1923-24, almost immediately after the introduction of the currency reform.

To illustrate what has been said we will quote just a few figures. The circulation of currency in the country increased from 264,400,000 roubles on the 1st of October, 1923, to 622,700,000 roubles on the 1st October, 1924, *i.e.*, by almost 140 per cent. By the 1st of January, 1925, we had a further increase of the amount of money in circulation by more than 100,000,000 roubles, the total being 742,600,000 roubles. The turnover of the Central Exchange of the country—the Moscow Goods Exchange—increased from 971,000,000 roubles for 1922-23 to 1,555,000,000 roubles for 1923-24, *i.e.*, an increase of 60 per cent. The turnover of the workers and rural co-operatives nearly doubled during that year. The goods famine made itself felt still more acutely, and this was reflected in the growing divergence between wholesale and retail prices with retail prices continuously soaring higher and higher.

Finally, we will quote yet another extremely striking and pronounced illustration of the manner in which our economy is being restored, namely, **that the metal industry is overtaking the other branches of industry in rate of development.** The figures are as follows: in 1921-22 the output of pig-iron was 10,500,000 poods. In 1922-23 it was 18,300,000 poods, and in 1923-24, 40,400,000 poods. Consequently, the increase last year was a little over 120 per cent. The output of steel in 1921-22 was 19,400,000 poods. In 1922-23 the output was 36,000,000 poods and 1923-24 60,300,000 poods. Consequently the increase last year represented 77.4 per cent. The output of finished cotton goods was 302,500,000 metres in 1921-22 which increased to 581,400,000 metres in 1922-23, and to 836,000,000 metres in 1923-24, showing an increase for the last year of 45 per cent.

Of course, if the textile and metal industries are compared with those of pre-war times, the backwardness of the metal industry will immediately be observed. While the output of finished cotton goods in 1923-24 represented 37 per cent. of the pre-war output, the output of pig-iron represents only 16 per cent. of the output of 1913. This emphasises with all its force the significance of the decision of the Communist Party to devote special attention to and concentrate its efforts upon reviving the metal industry.

These then are the principal figures illustrating the economic state of the Soviet Union on the eve of the present year of 1924-25.

The new economic year brought before the Soviet Government in all its scope, the most important question of economic life, viz., the further development of State industry. This question is the most important because all the internal complaints of industry: the high cost of production as compared with pre-war, the "scissors," etc., in the last analysis may be healed only by increased output, by running the factories to full capacity, and by making full use of its productive base. The facts quoted above appear to leave no room for hesitation and demand an absolutely clear and unambiguous slogan: State industry must expand much more rapidly this year than it did last year. The stabilisation of the currency and the closing of the "scissors" (the divergence of the "scissor blades" on the 1st October, 1923 represented 310 per cent.; on the 1st October, 1924, it was 146 per cent.), revealed an enormous, insatiable market; an enormous purchasing power of the peasantry whose industry is becoming restored at a much more rapid rate than the manufacturing industry.

A new factor, however, made itself felt, viz., a partial failure of the harvest which inevitably brought about a palpable change in the disposition of the economic forces.

What was the extent of the failure of the harvest? It affected seven provinces completely and six provinces were partly affected. The whole area affected contains a population of 7,600,000 and comprises 6,300,000 dessiatins of cultivated land, which represent 7 per cent. of the population and 10 per cent. of the cultivated area of the country.

Of course, the failure of the harvest this year can hardly be compared with the great failure of 1921, which one can say, radically disturbed the development of all economic indexes. The failure of the harvest then affected 30 provinces, with a cultivated area of 25,000,000 dessiatins.

As a result of the partial failure of the harvest, the amount of grain gathered fell from 2,802,000,000 poods in 1923 to 2,564,300,000 poods in 1924, i.e., 8.5 per cent. Thus we have a reduction in the amount of grain gathered of from 250 to 300,000,000 poods; a respectable figure.



Will this not compel us to some degree to revise the policy of expanding industry? A detailed analysis of the situation created by the partial failure of the harvest last autumn made it perfectly clear that no revision will be required, on the contrary, it showed that the work of expansion must be continued with the greatest energy.

Why? Because the process of restoration in agriculture as a whole is continuing with intensity; the saleability of the products of agriculture is increasing and the purchasing power of the peasantry has increased as compared with last year.

As a matter of fact, the increase in the area of cultivation has not halted: from 69,900,000 dessiatins in 1923, it increased to 75,000,000 in 1924. Furthermore, precisely this year a rapid increase is observed in the cultivation of technical crops and the increase in the amount of land under marketable crops generally. The area of land under sugar-beets increased by 42 per cent.: 320,000 dessiatins in 1924 as against 226,000 dessiatins in 1923. The area under flax increased by 25 per cent.: 1,060,000 dessiatins in 1924 as against 845,000 dessiatins in 1923. The area under hemp increased by 21 per cent.; the area under cotton increased by 134 per cent., etc. Finally, if we take the figures for cattle breeding, a similar rapid increase would be observed. For example, the number of large horned cattle in 1924 was 46,300,000 head as against 39,200,000 heads in 1923, and 48,400,000 heads in 1916.

All this gives us complete justification for stating that in spite of the partial failure of the harvest the process of restoration in agriculture is continuing and a rapid intensification of agriculture is observed. Consequently, the total out put of agriculture did not decline, on the contrary it increased. In pre-war prices it represented 6,249,000,000 roubles as against 6,085,000,000 roubles for 1923-24. Translated into present-day prices the figures, of course, will be considerably higher. The closing of the "scissors blades," to which we referred above, implies that the purchasing capacity of the peasantry has increased. Even revenues from grain products have increased because this year prices will be on the average one-and-a-half times to twice as high as last year. Thus on the whole, we have a fairly rapid increase in the purchasing capacity of the peasantry. Instead of 1,072,000,000 roubles (calculated in Chervontzi) for 1922-23 and 1,618,000,000 roubles for 1923-24, we will have 1,971,000,000 roubles in

1924-25. In other words, this year will witness an increase in the purchasing capacity of the peasantry by 84 per cent. as compared with 1922-23 and by 22 per cent. as compared with 1923-24.\*

Of course the figures are merely approximate. Nevertheless, they serve as a fairly firm basis upon which to build the industrial policy. We can say with absolute certainty that the course taken for the further expansion of industry will be maintained. The partial failure of the harvest has resulted merely in bringing forward additional complex problems to be solved by Soviet economics. The uneven distribution of the harvest over the territory of the country, the shifting of the purchasing capacity of the peasantry, from one district to another, etc., makes it necessary for Soviet economy to be prepared to perform a number of complicated meæuvres. Particularly does the problem arise of taking full account of the shifting of the purchasing power of the peasantry to other districts as a consequence of the bad harvest, etc.

During the past four or five months, the solution of two fundamental problems has run like a red thread through the practical economic policy of the Soviet Government, viz., the regulation of grain prices and the expansion of industry with a definitely expressed increase in the productivity of labour. The reason why, precisely these two problems are brought to the front, clearly follows from all that we have said.

The movement of the price of grain in our country to a considerable degree determines the other economic indexes. If, as a result of a bad harvest and the absence of any kind of State regulation, grain prices would leap exceedingly high, this would result in the breakdown of the wages policy, which at the present moment aims at bringing the wages of the metal workers and transport workers, which are lagging behind, up to the general level, and an extremely cautious increase of nominal wages, while real wages are raised by lowering prices. Furthermore, this would also lead to the collapse of the industrial policy which aims at steadily lowering the prices of manufactures. Finally, excessive grain prices, which the economy of the country could not bear, might affect the stability of the currency and of the Budget. That is how the question presented itself. For that reason,

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\* The figures quoted are those of Comrade Popov, Director of the Central Board of Statistics.

the first task the government set itself was to secure a dominant position in the grain market, to keep grain prices at a definite level—of course, higher than that of last year—but at the same time, at such a level as would not disturb the wages and industrial policies. In order to achieve this it is necessary to manipulate all the levers—supply, taxation and others—at the command of the Soviet Government. For this it was necessary at all costs to accumulate a State grain fund sufficiently large to render it possible to maintain grain prices at a definite level at all the important points of the Union, particularly in the latter half of the agricultural year, when the peasant comes to the market to buy corn and when the demand for grain is particularly great.

Did the government succeed to any extent in controlling the pressure of 20 million ruined farms, which dictated the movement of grain prices? Or did the anarchy again celebrate its victory on the most importance sectors of the economic front, as it did in 1923?

The situation indeed was very acute. Influenced by the rumours of the failure of the harvest, grain prices in August last year leaped very high—as against 40 to 50 Chervontzi kopeks per pood of rye paid all over the union in the autumn of 1923, we had in August 1r. 5k. per pood. A pood of wheat, which in October and December, 1923 could be purchased at 60 to 70 kopeks all over the Union, in August, 1924 fetched 1r. 35k. per pood.

By the end of August, however, all the levers began to be manipulated more systematically. If the movement of grain prices in the ensuing months were recorded on a chart, we would observe a steadily declining curve, for example, a pood of rye on the average in September fetched 87 kopeks, in October 80 kopeks, in November 85 kopeks. The price of a pood of wheat falls to 1r. 37k. in September, 1r. 18k. in October, and 1r. 17k. in November. In the months following a fresh rise in prices took place due to seasonal causes.

Thus, the government was in a position to manœuvre and to a certain extent to dictate its conditions to the surging small farmers' market. It is too early, however, to celebrate the victory of organised economy over anarchy. The real fight for the maintenance of market relations and prices is only just commencing. The situation undoubtedly must be described as rather tense. Although of the 290,000,000 poods of grain planned to be stocked on the 1st of February,

236,700,000 poods had already been brought in and consequently the government already has a grain fund in its hands. Nevertheless, it must be taken as a fact that the plan of the State and co-operative organisations represent a minimum and also that the prospects of next year's harvest may have been over-estimated in view of the snowless winter. The position will be cleared up definitely only in the spring. Undoubtedly the policy of the government in deciding on the importation of a small quantity of grain from abroad for the purpose of regulating the grain market is absolutely correct.

The past months of the new economic year have witnessed an extremely intensive continuation of the expansion of industry. The preliminary statistics of the Supreme Economic Council give the following picture of industrial productivity.

		1923-24	1924-25
		(In millions of pre-war roubles.)	
October ...	...	120.8	184.0
November ...	...	116.1	170.5
December ...	...	114.9	182.0
January ...	...	120.4	188.0
Total ...	...	<u>472.2</u>	<u>724.5</u>
		100 p.c.	153.4 p.c.

Thus we see an increase of productivity of 53 per cent. as compared with the corresponding periods of the previous year.

In the various branches of industry we observe a rapid growth in the metal and textile industries. For example :

		1923-24	1924-25
Pig-iron (in tons).			
October ...	...	43,538	73,310
November ...	...	49,074	75,652
December ...	...	49,222	87,840
Total ...	...	<u>141,834</u>	<u>237,802</u>
		100 p.c.	167.7 p.c.

## Marten steel (in tons).

October ... ..	82,915	131,445
November ... ..	85,995	123,652
December ... ..	73,608	133,582

Total ... ..	<u>247,518</u>	<u>393,679</u>
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	100 p.c.	159.1 p.c.
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## Cotton cloth (in 000 metres).

October ... ..	63,714.8	113,369.1
November ... ..	59,167.3	101,436.3
December ... ..	65,671.2	119,593.0

Total ... ..	<u>178,553.3</u>	<u>334,398.4</u>
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	100 p.c.	187.3 p.c.
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The output for the metal industry for the year was at first fixed at 273 million roubles at pre-war prices as against 198 million roubles for 1923-24. Consequently an increase of 40 per cent. was proposed. (The figures in tons would show even a greater increase). However, the orders received in the first quarter of the new economic year covered the whole plan for the year. The demand for metal goods in the peasant market increased. For the reason, at the end of January, a very proper decision was taken to expand the metal industry 15 per cent. above plan. The rapid growth of the metal industry affords a striking example of the force of the process of restoration going on in our country.

The programme for the textile industry for the year was fixed at 1,330,000,000 metres of finished cotton cloth which represents 58 per cent. of the pre-war output. As compared with 1923-24, this is an increase of nearly 60 per cent. Now this programme also will have to be enlarged somewhat.

Thus the figures quoted show that the general level of economic life this year is considerably higher than that of last year. This applies, of course, not only to production. The figures for the turnover also indicate the same thing. We will quote only the figures of the trade of Goods Exchanges.

The turnover of 71 Goods Exchanges was as follows :

First quarter 1923-24	...	...	557.7 mill. rbs.
Second " "	...	...	764.8 " "
Third " "	...	...	713.0 " "
Fourth " "	...	...	982.4 " "
First quarter, 1924-25	...	...	1,348.0 " "

Consequently the turnover of the Goods Exchange this year exceeds the turnover of the Goods Exchanges for the corresponding period of last year by 140 per cent.

However, if we carefully examine the figures of the movement of the turnover in the first quarter of the present year (October, 498.9 mill. rbls. ; November, 424.1 mill. rbls. , we will observe that a slight reduction set in after November.

Is this reduction in the whole trade the result of a falling off of the retail demand owing to seasonal conditions (bad roads owing to thaw) or to the bad harvest, or is it due to other causes? One cannot deny the influence of the falling off in the retail demand, especially in December and January. But we must bear in mind that in a number of very large districts principally Siberia, and the Urals, the local demand still cannot be satisfied, there is still an insufficient supply of articles in general use. The principal reason for the reduction in the wholesale trade, consequently, will not be found here. It must be sought for in another place, namely, in the obviously insufficient trading capital. The trading capital in hand is insufficient to set the ever-increasing output into circulation. The situation has become more acute owing to the fact that the expansion of industry made necessary the employment of resources for trade in order to make the financial side of this expansion secure. For that reason industry was placed in worse conditions for making settlements with its customers. The amount of credit granted to industry steadily decreased. According to the returns of the Supreme Economic Council, the transactions made on credit represented : in October, 68.5 per cent. in November 61.2 per cent. and December 59 per cent. Of private trade industry demanded 100 per cent. cash payments, and even deposits in advance with deliveries within a month. All this led to the trading organisations—the co-operative and private traders, reducing their purchases.

The problem of increasing and consolidating trading capital arose in all its scope. It is difficult to say at the moment precisely what amount of trading capital is actually required. The necessary calculations are only just being

made. At all events the Soviet Union has proceeded energetically to solve the problem. Several methods of solution appear possible. One method is to render financial support to the co-operative and State trading organs out of the State budget. The fresh expansion of the State Budget in the present financial year has already permitted of an allocation of 8,000,000 roubles for capital for the co-operative societies. The task of increasing trading capital out of the Budget will undoubtedly have to be borne in mind when future Budgets are drawn up. Another method is for the co-operative societies to set out to enlist the resources of the population itself to a much greater extent than has been done hitherto. To increase the funds by means of share subscriptions is one of the most pressing tasks confronting the co-operative movement at the present time. A third method becomes possible by the conditions which are developing which permit of employing to the full private capital for the purpose of manœuvring in view of the absence of trading capital. This will require some modification of the conditions of sale to private traders, granting them some credit, etc. The fourth method is for State industry to refrain from decreasing its capital invested in trade. The conditions of payments which it imposes upon its customers must correspond to the actual turnover of commodities. Finally, all measures must be taken to facilitate the most expedient utilisation of the financial resources invested in trade.

This, then—after the problem of regulating grain prices in the market—is the greatest problem which Soviet economy has to solve. The next few months will indicate the degree to which success in the solution of these problems have been achieved.

Thus, the past months of the new economic year have completely confirmed the prognosis made last autumn to the effect that the partial failure of the harvest, which affected the Soviet Union will not interrupt the restorative character of the economic processes, but at the first will merely retard them. We have seen that in the present year all the economic indexes revealed a considerably higher level. To maintain this level is the task of Soviet economy and the Soviet Government. Soviet economy will achieve this if it increases its vigilance, and reveals a proper capacity to manœuvre, if it will continue with equal energy to carry out measures for organising the agricultural market, to increase the purchasing powers of the peasantry, particularly by in-

creasing the sale of technical crops and produce of cattle breeding in the world market, etc.

Soviet economy will then be in a position to localise the unfavourable conditions of the winter which undoubtedly have led to a reduction in the earnings of the peasantry from timber-cutting, carting, etc.

Of course, only when the prospects of the harvest have become more or less clear, will the features of the economic year 1924-25 be definitely revealed.

G. KRUMIN.





# Marxism and Leninism

*“The role of the fighter in the forefront of the struggle can be fulfilled only by a Party which is guided by an advanced theory.”—Lenin.*

## Why are Theoretical Questions Important at the Present Time?

THE phase of historical development through which the Comintern is now passing is marked by the exceptional importance of revolutionary Marxian theory. This importance is emphasised by the character of the present historical epoch in which the Third International arose. The Fifth Congress opened a new page in the history of the Communist International. In order to understand the character and the tasks of the incoming period, it is necessary to glance at the second stage of the development of the Comintern, the fundamental task of which was to carry out the tactics of the united front. The slogan “To the Masses” proclaimed by the Third Congress, served and still serves as a compass to guide the development of mass Communist Parties amidst conditions of retarded development of the world social revolution.

Owing to the lack of organised Communist parties, welded by unanimity in ideas and politics, the working class failed to overthrow capitalism in the post-war period. The spontaneous mass movements failed to obtain conscious active leadership in the form of a Communist Party. The fundamental lesson that was learned from this period of historical development was the realisation of the role of the Party as the organiser and conscious leader of spontaneous mass movements in the process of preparing for and organising revolution. The fundamental fact of the period immediately following the war, and the first period of the existence of the Comintern, is the spontaneity of the movement, the fundamental feature of the second stage of development of the Comintern, however, is the growth and increasing strength of the Communist Parties, which are winning over the masses by deliberate strategical manœuvres, based on the tactics of the united front. Developing consciousness is seek-

ing a junction with spontaneity. But in this process the practical work of the Communist Parties reveals anti-Bolshevist features. The conclusion of the second period was marked by events of supreme historical importance which created a revolutionary situation in a number of countries. Several Communist parties, like the Bulgarian, the German and the Polish Parties, found it necessary to come forward as the direct leaders of spontaneous mass movements which had broken out with renewed force. These Parties showed that they still had traces of social democracy left in them. From the events of the end of 1923 the German Communist Party learned that it betrayed an incorrect distorted understanding of the tactics of the united front on the part of the Party leaders. After the appointment of the new leadership, some vacillation occurred in the ranks of the Party over the question of the trade unions and on the question of the slogan of "Workers' and Peasants' Government."

The Bulgarian events revealed a failure on the part of the Bulgarian Communist Party to understand the role of the peasantry in the process of preparation for the proletarian revolution. During the Cracow rebellion the Polish Party, instead of being the conscious leader of the fighting masses, followed at the rear of developing historical events.

This great objectively historical test—the highest form of criticism—to which the Communist Parties were subjected, revealed the fact that while the Communist Parties very frequently, as it seems, speak good Bolshevist language they are still a long way from acting like Bolshevists. It was on this ground that the Fifth Congress proclaimed the slogan of "Bolshevisation of the Parties." The fundamental task that confronts the Communist Parties in the present, third, stage of the development of the Comintern, is not only to talk Bolshevism, but to act like Bolshevists.

The Second Congress accepted excellent theses on the peasant question, on the colonial and national question, on the question of the role of the Party, etc. But these excellent theses and the reading of them do not guarantee consistent Bolshevist action. Each country is proceeding towards the revolution in its own way, although essentially it is performing the same process as that performed by the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless, each country is going through the experience independently. Therefore, only the careful study by each Communist Party of its internal experience and its connection with the experience of the international proletariat, will enable it to understand the real meaning of the

excellent theses referred to above and will lay the basis for Bolshevik action.

The study of the experience of the second phase of development of the Comintern and learning the principal lessons of this experience is one of the most important premises for the Bolshevisation of the Comintern. Only on the basis of the lessons of the preceding period and on the basis of a correct analysis of the economic and social class structure of the country of its international connections, etc., can the respective Communist Parties outline a consistently Bolshevik strategical plan and carry out correct tactical movements on the basis of this strategical plan.

The solution of these problems demands the greatest possible attention on the part of the Communist Parties to questions of revolutionary Marxist theory and necessitates the acquisition of theoretical experience. Lenin, having in mind the exceptional importance of theory for Russian social democracy in the period of its development wrote :

“A movement commencing in a young country may be successful only if it applies the experience of other countries. In order to do this it is not sufficient merely to be acquainted with this experience, or merely to enumerate recent revolutions. For this purpose it is necessary to be able to adopt a critical attitude towards this experience and test it independently. Those who realise the gigantic growth and development of the modern labour movement will understand what a reserve of theoretical strength and political (and also revolutionary) experience is necessary in order to fulfil these tasks.”\*

These words can be fully applied with even greater emphasis of their meaning to the present day Communist movement. International Communism has a tremendous reserve of practical experience which the various Parties should study theoretically and politically. The internal welding and strength of the Party depends fundamentally upon the successful fulfilment of these tasks. For that reason the Communist Party, in strengthening itself as an organisation, in re-organising itself on the factory nucleus basis, must not forget the theoretical and political tasks of Bolshevisation. The Bolshevisation advocated by the Fifth Congress is a complex of a whole series of theoretical, ideological, political

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\* Lenin : “What is to be Done?” Collected Works, Russian Edition, p. 135.

and organisational tasks. In order consistently and successfully to carry out the Bolshevisation of the Party, it is necessary to understand correctly the dialectical interdependence between groups of tasks. Very frequently in speaking of Bolshevisation, comrades have in mind merely the political and organisational tasks. In order to solve political and organisational problems, the help of revolutionary theory is necessary. Lenin, in raising the question as to why the Bolsheviks were able to hammer out a discipline necessary for the revolutionary proletariat, immediately raised the question: "Upon what rests the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat? How is it controlled? How is it strengthened? First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its steadiness, spirit of self sacrifice, and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to mix with the toiling masses, to become intimate and, to a certain extent, if you will, fuse itself with the non-proletarian toilers. Thirdly, by the soundness of the political leadership, carried out by this vanguard, and by its correct political strategy and tactics, based on the idea that the workers from their own experience must convince themselves of the soundness of this political leadership, strategy and tactics. Without all these conditions discipline in a revolutionary party, really capable of being a party of the foremost class whose object is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform society, is impossible of realisation. Without these conditions all attempts to create discipline result in empty phrases, in mere contortions. On the other hand, these conditions will not arise suddenly. They are created through long effort and bitter experience. Their creation is facilitated by correct revolutionary theory, which in its turn is not dogmatic, but which forms itself in its finality only through close connection with the practice of the real mass and truly revolutionary movement." ("Infantile Sickness of Leftism.")

Here Comrade Lenin reveals the dialectical connection between practice and theory. Theory, throwing light on practical experience, tracing all the windings and zig-zags of its path of development, facilitates the creation of the fundamental conditions for the revolutionary discipline of the proletariat, the fundamental conditions for Bolshevik action. Theory, in its turn, finds nutriment in the development of revolutionary practice, and on the basis of the latter, flourishes and develops further.

Leaving for the time being the minor theoretical questions raised by the political and organisational tasks of the

Bolshevisation of the Comintern, we bring forward the fundamental question of the inter-relations between Marxism and Leninism. The presentation of this question in connection with the ideological Bolshevisation of the Comintern, is of fundamental and decisive importance.

### **What is Marxism and in what Sense can One Speak of its Further Development?**

When speaking of Leninism, one must always start out from Marxism. In order to understand the meaning of Leninism, it is necessary to take the theory of Marxism as a basis. Two diametrically opposite deviations have been observed already on the question of the inter-relation between Marxism and Leninism. Some assert that there is no such thing as Leninism, and that he who speaks of Leninism is really revising orthodox Marxism and thus ceases to be a Marxist. Undertones of this nature were detected in Comrade Ryazanov's speech at a meeting at which the alteration of the name of the Socialist Academy into the Communist Academy was discussed. Comrade Ryazanov declared that he was neither a Bolshevik nor a Menshevik nor a Leninist, but merely a Communist, and, therefore, a Marxist.

On the other hand, there are comrades who amend, revise, in the real sense of the word, orthodox Marxism, and at the same time declare themselves to be Leninists. We have, for example, Lukatch and Korsch, commencing an attack against the fundamentals of dialectical materialism, and falling into the old Hegelian idealism, calling themselves Leninists.

What then is the real dialectical connection between Marxism and Leninism?

Before replying to this question, we must answer the question. What is Marxism? Marxism is scientific Communism, developed under the influence of the economic contradictions within capitalist society. Like all new theories, however, it attaches itself to the intellectual material which it finds on its appearance in the world. The principal intellectual source from which Marxism obtained its principles, was German classical philosophy, classical political economy and French Socialism. Marxism rose on the backs of these three principal intellectual tendencies of the 19th century. Marx interwove these separate intellectual sources and fashioned them into one complete philosophy. Marxism did

not from the very beginning immediately become an absolutely finished system. Certain parts of the Marxian doctrine were finally completed and formulated in varying periods of Marx's historical activity. Up to 1848 we had principally the process of working out the philosophy, the general method of Marxism. In this period the basic postulates of dialectical materialism were laid down. And in the same period Marx laid the foundations of his historical materialism. In his Communist Manifesto, Marx outlined world history and indicated the further prospects of its development from the standpoint of the method of historical materialism.

In the stormy years of revolution of 1848, politics formed the most prominent questions. When the process of change is taking place in the relations between classes, problems of tactics and politics inevitably arise. In the writings of Marx of that period we find numerous remarks and views on questions of the tactics of the class struggle of the proletariat.

After the revolutionary storm had calmed down, the peaceful years that followed rendered it possible to take up the analysis of the inherent laws of capitalist development. In the fifties and sixties the principal parts of Marx's economic doctrines were built up. Thus, the process of working out the doctrines of Marx went on quite apart from the personal wishes of Marx himself. Social-historical development itself, which presented definite problems to the working class with whom Marx and Engels had linked up, determined the content and direction of their theoretical and practical activities. In order to show the character of the development and the process of the origin of Marxism, we will quote an example of the gradual development of Marx's doctrine of the State.

In summarising history in the Communist Manifesto, Marx sees in the State an organ of class domination. Already in the Communist Manifesto Marx draws the conclusion that the proletariat cannot overthrow the bourgeoisie without first capturing political power, without converting the State into the "organised proletariat as the dominant class." In the same Manifesto Marx speaks of the State dying out after the victory of the proletariat. But, as Lenin points out, the Communist Manifesto does not "raise the question as to the manner, from the point of view of historical development, the substitution of the bourgeois State by the proletarian State should be brought about.

“ This question is raised and answered by Marx only in 1852. For the philosophy of dialectical materialism Marx takes as a basis the historical experience of the great years of revolution 1848-1851. In this connection, as in all others, the Marxian doctrine is a summary of experience made brilliant by a profound philosophical outlook and a wealth of historical knowledge.” (Lenin, “State and Revolution.”) In his “Eighteenth Bumaire,” Marx, from the point of view of historical experience, raises the question not only of the necessity for capturing political power, but speaks of the necessity of breaking up the old State machine. Marx arrived at this conclusion not on the basis of abstract logical reasoning, not by means of various kinds of theoretical tricks, but on a basis of an analysis of historical events of the actual experience of the revolutions of 1848-1851. But because Marx started out from historical experience, he could not at that period raise the question of what should be put in the place of the old State machine which is to be broken up. “In 1852,” writes Lenin, “with the precision of scientific observation, one could assert only that the proletarian revolution had only come up to the task of “concentrating all the forces of destruction” against the State, to the task of ‘breaking-up’ the State machine.” (Lenin, “State and Revolution.”) Marx raised the question of what should be substituted for the old State machine when summarising the Paris Commune of 1871. These brief remarks on the question of the development of Marx’s views on the State, reveal to us the manner in which Marxism developed. We see that the development and formulation of Marx’s views on the State consisted in his study of historical experiences and drawing great lessons for the proletariat from historical development by applying the method of historical materialism.

Marxism as the theory and practice of revolutionary action, is a complete philosophy. It consists of definite parts inseparable from each other. In the period of the Second International, the majority of the theoreticians lost the understanding of this vital organic unity of Marxism. Plekhanov brilliantly described the dialectical unity of the Marxian doctrine in the following words :

“Marxism is not only a certain economic doctrine (a doctrine of a character and development of productive relations peculiar to the capitalist system); it is not only a certain historical theory (historical materialism); nor is it a certain economic doctrine plus a certain historical theory. According to Marx, economic doctrine is not placed parallel to historical theory—it is completely permeated with it.

What Marx says concerning the character and development of productive relations, peculiar to the capitalist system, is the fruit of his study of the economics of a given epoch from the point of view of historical materialism. That is why those who say that "Capital" is not only an **economic** but also an **historical** work, are absolutely right.

Nor is this all. **Historical** materialism, from the point from which Marx studied the economic relations of capitalist society, does not represent a **philosophy**. It is only a **part** of the materialist conception of the world: materialism applied to history. That is why historical materialism, in other words, the materialist interpretation of **history**, presupposes a materialist interpretation of **nature**. Therefore, Engels, who understood the meaning of historical materialism so well, was able to say: 'Marx and I were the only persons who borrowed the conscious dialectics from German philosophy and applied it to the materialist interpretation of nature and history.' Thus, Marxism represents a complete and harmonious materialistic philosophy, and he who loses sight of its completeness as a materialistic doctrine dealing not only with the history, but also with Nature, runs the risk of failing to understand properly, not only those aspects of this doctrine which for some reason or other attract him and meet with his approval." (Plekhanov: "From Defence to Attack," pp. 480, 481.)

We make this long quotation because it excellently describes the vital connection between the various aspects of the **Marxian** theory. But, as we have already said, this vital connection was lost sight of by the principal theoreticians of the Second International. The period of the Second International was the period in which the working class utilised the institutions of bourgeois democracy, the period of building up mass proletarian organisation. Within the limits of gradual and organic development in which there were neither sharp turns nor profound changes, no new and unsolved problems arose. The leaders, having command of a certain number of empirical rules and tactical standards, in conditions of peaceful development, were able more or less successfully to handle the everyday tasks. The characteristic feature of all the principle theoreticians of the Second International is that they ignored dialectical materialism, the method of materialistic dialectics. This is due to the peaceful organic character of the development of capitalism, which did not call for independent and able application of revolutionary dialectics. For that reason the commonest thing observed



among the principal theoreticians of the Second International, is the abandonment of dialectical materialism. Not only did Max Adler consider it possible to combine Marxism with Neo-Kantism, and not only did Friedrich Adler foster a sincere love for Machism, but even Kautsky in a letter he wrote to Plekhanov in 1898 expressed the following idea :

“At all events I must frankly admit that Neo-Kantism worries me least of all. Philosophy was never my strong point ; although I stand wholly on the standpoint of dialectical materialism, nevertheless I think that the economic-historical point of view of Marx and Engels, in the last analysis may be compatible with Neo-Kantism in the same way as Darwinism is compatible with the materialism of Buchner, the monism of Haeckel and the Kantism of Lange.” (“Der Kampf,” 1918, vol. 1, Kautsky’s letter to Plekhanov.)

What is then to be said of a Marxist theoretician who takes up such “an extreme position” as to consider historical materialism and Neo-Kantism compatible and who asserts that Darwinism is equally compatible with the monism of Haeckel and Kantism of Lange. Historical development has submitted to the test not only avowed revisionists like Bernstein, but having thrown Kautsky and Bernstein into a friendly embrace, has shown that although Kautsky has flaunted the mantle of Marxism, at bottom he was never a Marxist. The theoreticians of the Second International having cast aside the “living spirit” of Marxism, the method of dialectical materialism, proved totally incapable of understanding the profound change in world history when it did take place. It was necessary to interpret the new phenomena of the imperialist epoch by applying the method of dialectical materialism. Social life continued to develop, and it was necessary for Marxist theoretical conceptions to develop further also and adapt themselves to the new conditions of social life. In this sense and only in this sense, is it possible to speak of the further development of Marxism from the orthodox point of view. Engels himself in his “Ludwig Feurbach” indicated the path of the future development of Marxism. Engels said that with every fresh discovery, marking an epoch in natural science, materialism must change its form. And he said, since human history also began to be regarded from the materialist point of view, new paths of development open up for materialism also. In our example of the State, we showed that Marx, employing the method of dialectical materialism, studied fresh historical experiences. A similar task has been imposed upon Marxian theoretical thought by the new historical epoch, the epoch of imperial-

ism, of the collapse of capitalism and the development of the Socialist revolution.

### What is Leninism?

Lenin came upon the scene to solve the important theoretical and practical problems which confronted the international proletariat as a consequence of the further development of world history. Lenin was trained for this task by the historical development of Russian Marxism. Employing the method of dialectical materialism, Lenin, independently had to analyse the development of Russian capitalism. His book "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," both from the methodological and economic standpoint is of enormous interest. Lenin had to gather the experience of the international proletariat and apply it critically to Russian conditions. The experiences of Western European countries could not be simply and mechanically transferred to Russian soil. As to the character of the general political method of the Russian Bolsheviks on the one hand, and the Russian Mensheviks on the other, the principle difference between them is that the Mensheviks mechanically transferred to the Russian Labour movement the experience of the European Social-Democratic Parties, experience which the latter acquired amidst the conditions of peaceful development and parliamentary struggle. Lenin, on the other hand, devised correct strategy and tactics for the proletariat, applying the dialectical method, and bearing in mind the peculiar features of the historical development of Russia, understanding that Russia was confronted by tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution, and bearing in mind the peculiar features of this Russian, bourgeois democratic revolution as an agrarian peasant revolution. When the war of 1914 definitely marked the change in world history, and when the Second International collapsed under the burden of historical tasks, Lenin performed a profound theoretical task in studying, on the basis of the method of dialectical materialism, the fundamental antagonisms and the laws governing the epoch of imperialism. In taking up the work of solving these problems, Lenin took his stand entirely on the basis of orthodox Marxism. The historical task of Marx was to create a new method, i.e., the method of materialist dialectics, to work out an all-embracing dialectical materialistic philosophy, embracing both human history and nature. Lenin was not faced with such a task. Lenin wholly accepted the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels. Lenin, as no other of the theoreticians of the Second International has done, approached the examination of the principal successes of modern science

from the standpoint of dialectical materialism. He showed that all those who declared that dialectical materialism had become obsolete, because modern physics teaches a new form of the construction of matter which makes our understanding of nature more exact and profound, understand absolutely nothing about the principles of dialectical materialism. Lenin conducted an unceasing war against all those who attempted to revise dialectical materialism, and understood that the philosophy of Marxism was most closely connected with the Marxian social, political movement.

Applying the method of dialectical materialism, Lenin solved all the principal theoretical and practical questions confronting the Labour movement in the new epoch. If Marxism generally is opposed to the passive contemplation of the world, if Marx in his day said that philosophy merely explains the world, but our task is to change it, how much more does this apply to the epoch of imperialism and development of the socialist revolution? For that reason, Lenin, analysing the economic character of imperialism, at the same time constructed the theory, the strategy, the tactics and the principles of organisation of the proletarian revolution. The principal theoreticians of the Second International came to grief precisely because of their failure to understand imperialism as a special stage in the development of capitalism. For example, Kautsky, in his brochure, "National and Imperialist Government," wrote: "Imperialism is merely a question of power, and not of economic necessity. Not only is it not essential for the capitalist system of production, but even its significance for capitalism is frequently greatly exaggerated." Kautsky, failing to understand the economic character of imperialism, thought that the proletariat could compel the bourgeoisie to return to the previous period of free competition. Kautsky failed to understand that the immediate prospect of world history was not that it would retreat from the phase of monopolistic capitalism to classical industrial capitalism, but that it would advance from imperialism to socialism. Lenin in presenting a correct theory of the economic character of imperialism, also defined the place of imperialism in history. He showed that imperialism is capitalism in decay, that it marks the "eve of the Socialist revolution." Lenin revealed the fact that the imperialist phase of capitalism has completely established the social industrial postulates for the introduction of Socialism. Analysing all the contradictions of the imperialist epoch of development on the basis of his economic theory of imperialism, Lenin revealed the principal driving forces of the transition from capitalism to Socialism. According to Lenin, a chemically

pure social revolution was impossible. The proletariat must establish its hegemony over the peasantry and over the national and colonial liberation movements.

The same sharp presentation of the question of proletarian revolution gave rise to the question of the proletarian State. Here, too, Lenin performed a great theoretical work. (See Lenin's "State and Revolution," and the theses passed by the First Congress of the Comintern on bourgeois and proletarian democracy.) Here in this article we are merely treating generally of special sections of Leninism and concentrating on the methodological mutual relations of Marxism and Leninism.

The question of the peasantry as a tactical problem can be presented and solved on the basis of the profound theoretical work of Lenin on the agrarian question. On the agrarian question, Lenin achieved great methodological results. (See his "New Facts Concerning the Law of Development of Capitalism in Agriculture.") Similarly the national and colonial question, as a question of policy and tactics, could be decided only on the basis of his new theoretical discoveries. (See "A Summary of the Discussion on the Self-Determination of Nations.")

While on the numerous questions referred to above, Lenin relied on Marxism, the situation became altogether different when it was necessary to solve questions of socialist construction, after the seizure of political power by the proletariat. Marx did not have such an historical experience, and, therefore, could not have drawn any conclusion in this connection. For that reason, the presentation of the problem of the growth of socialist society, after the seizure of political power by the proletariat, is one of the most important theoretical parts of Leninism. But from the point of view of principle, Lenin approached the investigation of this new historical experience in the same way as Marx would have done. We have already stated that Marx built up his theory stage by stage on the basis of investigation of new facts and processes in history according to the method of dialectical materialism. That Lenin approached the investigation and theoretical analysis of new world historical experience, in exactly the same way is evident from the following statement :

“The relation between reform and revolution has been definitely and correctly defined only by Marxism. Marx could see this relation only from one aspect, namely, in circumstances preceding the first, to any extent durable and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in one single country. In those circumstances, the basis of the correct relation was: reform is a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. For the whole capitalist world, this relation is the foundation of the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat—an elementary truth which is distorted and eclipsed by the venal leaders of the Second International and the semi-pedantic, mincing knights of the Two and a Half International. After the victory of the proletariat, even if only in one country, something new arises in the relations between reform and revolution. In principle, the thing remains the same, but in form a change takes place which Marx could not foresee, but which can only be investigated on the basis of the philosophy and policy of Marxism.”

We see, therefore, that Lenin examines new historical experience from the point of view of dialectical materialism in the same way as Marx did. Therefore, Leninism being the revolutionary theory and practice of the epoch of imperialism, and the development of the socialist revolution, is Marxism. From the standpoint of method, Leninism can under no circumstances be contrasted with Marxism. Although he made concrete and gave special application to a number of categories of the dialectical method, the method of Marx and of Lenin is the same. In speaking of Leninism, we lay emphasis on the contribution which Lenin made to the Marxist theory, on the basis of his analysis of new world historical practice. Sometimes Leninism is defined as Marxism in practice, or as Marxism in action, but such a definition narrows down and even eliminates the theoretical content of Leninism. Such a tendency is observed very strongly in Trotsky, who strives to eliminate the theoretical aspects of Leninism, and to substitute them by his own theory of revolution. Those who reduce Leninism to a doctrine of the driving forces and practice of proletarian revolution, are also wrong. In the theoretical sense it is a much wider thing.

Leninism is not a “subjective supplement” to Marxism, but expresses merely the fact of the further development of human history. For that reason the Leninist development of Marxism is totally dissimilar from the revisionist development of Marxism which proceeds not from objective historical

development, and does not explain it according to the method of Marxism, but strives to undermine both the method and the doctrine of Marx is wrong. Lenin, however, relying on the method and the doctrine of Marx studied new experiences of world history and solved new practical problems of the Labour movement and by this theoretically enriched both the doctrine and the method of Marx.

JAN STEN.



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