

**The Communist International
in America**

**Documents
1925-1933**

**Bolshevik League
of the
United States**

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Introduction

Brief Outline of the History of the Communist Party USA and the Struggle for Bolshevization

Many revolutionary communists and even progressives are agreed upon the fact that the original and old Communist Party USA (CPUSA) is a putrid, revisionist, reformist, stinking corpse. For over three decades the CPUSA has not been the revolutionary vanguard party of the US proletariat. Its newest program, adopted at the CPUSA's 22nd National Convention in 1981, continues to chart a reformist, pacifist, and chauvinist course which seeks to prevent the advanced and awakening sectors of the proletariat and the national movements from taking a revolutionary class stance against the bourgeois dictatorship in the US. The CPUSA continues to advance the class collaborationist traditions of "reforming" capitalism, "curbing" monopolies, tailing the labor aristocratic trade union bureaucrats, fighting for a so-called "anti-monopoly struggle for people's power." No longer is socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the immediate objective in the US. The national movements of the oppressed Black Nation, Chicano Nation, and Native Americans for self-determination are liquidated and reduced to a struggle for civil rights. The CPUSA also continues to act as the vanguard detachment of Russian imperialism, the propagator of revisionism, anti-Stalinism, and distorter of what socialism and communism really is. The CPUSA has abandoned and renounced all of the revolutionary traditions in the US proletarian movement. It has rewritten and distorted the history of the October Bolshevik Revolution, the Communist International of Lenin and Stalin, and their relationship to the struggle to Bolshevize the CPUSA.

Since 1944 (when Browderism liquidated the CPUSA for a year and formed the Communist Political Association) there have been numerous attempts to re-construct a revolutionary Communist Party. Today, aside from the numerous counter-revolutionary trotskyite parties and sects, the CPUSA, and the social-democratic Democratic Socialists of America, there exist

more than seven self-proclaimed parties and numerous other circles and grouplets claiming to be *the* vanguard of the proletariat. Most, if not all, of these parties and grouplets are what is left over from the collapsed Maoist movement whose roots came from the student movement, the petty bourgeois sectors of oppressed nationality movements, and very small sectors of the proletariat during the spontaneous mass upsurges of the 1960's and early 1970's.

The central task of all revolutionary Communists in the US is still the construction of a Communist Party. The Bolshevik League of the US seeks to contribute to the task of constructing a Communist Party. On the basis of the summation and experiences of the international communist and workers movement, most notably the October Revolution, the role of the Comintern in advancing the world revolutionary process, and the great successes of socialist construction in the USSR under Lenin and Stalin, contrasted to the opportunism, chauvinism, anarchism, and factionalism of the international Maoist and Hoxhaite movement, we believe that a new Communist Party must be modeled after the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Stalin. Despite the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and the degeneration of the former socialist camp around the USSR, the theory and practice of Bolshevism, from its inception in 1903 until Stalin's assassination, has proven to be the genuine revolutionary force when led by a Bolshevized Communist Party merged with the proletarian masses.

The CPUSA was for a time the American section of the Communist International. Despite its degeneration into a social-chauvinist and counter-revolutionary party, the CPUSA was a revolutionary force and contributed to the spread of communism in the US. The Comintern Theses on Bolshevization state: "Bolshevization does not by any means reject the heritage of previous generations of revolutionaries. The study of the history of the revolutionary struggle in one's own country and in other countries is absolutely necessary for conscious activity in a Bolshevik Party at the present day. It should not occur that a French Communist be ignorant of the works of Lafargue and the better works of Guesde written when he was still a Marxist. It should not hap-

pen that British communists are not trained to respect Chartism and are ignorant of the most important documents of the Chartist Movement. German communists must not forget the experience of the struggle conducted by the better sections of social-democracy in the period of the anti-socialist laws. The better works of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel must be used by the German communists against the social-democrats. Russian communist must not forget the more brilliant pages of the activity of Plekhanov in the days when he was still a Marxist.

“To Bolshevize the Party means to enable it consciously to continue all that which was genuinely revolutionary and genuinely Marxian in both the First and the Second Internationals — on the basis of Leninism.”

For us it is important to know not only the history of the Bolshevik Party and the Comintern, but also the history of the American Communist Party and its struggle for Bolshevization. We must learn from the revolutionary traditions of the CPUSA and learn the specific causes of its degeneration into the camp of counter-revolution. Our view on the history of American communism must be dialectical and historical materialist and not based on the hearsay of the revisionists, trotskyites, maoists, hoxhaites, and the semi-trotskyites. On the one hand we have forces like the pro-China League of Revolutionary Struggle, the pro-Albanian Marxist-Leninist Party, the pro-Russian *Line of March*, who generally praise the CPUSA up to the 1950's when it was already degenerating under the centrist leadership of William Z. Foster. Then there is the maoist and semi-trotskyite version like that of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA, the Progressive Labor Party and a host of other small intellectual circles, which regards the history of the CPUSA as a history simply of opportunism with no real revolutionary traditions. The RCP has the gall to claim that it is the most proletarian revolutionary party that has ever existed in the US! In reviewing the CPUSA we must keep in mind the following statement by the Comintern. “Speaking generally, Communism, Marxism and Bolshevism are one and the same thing. Communist Party and Bolshevik Party are in themselves synonymous terms. In practice, however, they are not always the same thing. Several im-

portant sections of the Comintern had and partly still have to undergo a process of gradual evolution from left Social-Democracy (in some cases from anarcho-syndicalist ideology) to genuine Communism, to Bolshevism. In a certain sense the whole work of the Comintern may be described as the Bolshevization of the Labor Parties.”

The Period of the Birth and Foundation of a Communist Party, 1919-1928

American communism was influenced and aided by Bolshevism from its very inception. The roots of American communism stem from the left wing of the socialist, workers’, and Black national movements. During the imperialist World War One, the Socialist Party (SP) pursued a centrist, social-pacifist line, degenerating rapidly into a social-chauvinist stance. The internationalist activities of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party through the left Zimmerwald International (the left wing of the opportunist Socialist International) was supported by left wing socialists in the SP in the Communist Propaganda League and the Socialist Propaganda League. They voiced their condemnations of the chauvinist “defense of the fatherland” slogans and were for the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. The Bolshevik Revolution in October, 1917, ushered in a new epoch of social revolutions. Lenin’s Bolshevik strategy and tactics succeeded in creating the world’s first successful workers’, socialist republic, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Bolshevism began to spread to all corners of the world where the proletariat and toilers were battling to end the world war and fighting for social justice. Millions embraced the program of Bolshevism. In the US, the left wing of the workers’ movement, the Industrial Workers of the World and the smaller International Trade Union Educational League (later the Trade Union Educational League), and other leftists in the AFL began to look at the Bolshevik Revolution for inspiration. In the Black movement, *The Messenger* and other Black publications, which agitated for Black workers to fight to join the trade unions, also sympathized with the Bolshevik Revolution.

In the Socialist Party leaders such as Eugene Debs adopted

an internationalist stance against the imperialist war and openly supported the Bolshevik Revolution. By early 1919, the Socialist Party was split into a left and a right wing. The left wing advocated class struggle, proletarian internationalism, proletarian dictatorship, and membership in the Third International. The right wing advocated class collaboration, defense of the fatherland, support of bourgeois democracy, and membership in the bankrupt Second International. On April 19, 1919, appeared the *New York Communist*, edited by John Reed, which was a key publication, helping to organize the left wing of the Socialist Party. At the SP national elections held in the spring of 1919, the left wing had a sweeping victory and captured the majority of the leadership positions in the SP. John Reed, Alfred Wagenknecht, and Charles Ruthenberg were all left-wing leaders of the SP. But Hillquit and Berger, the leaders of the social-chauvinist right wing, refused to make public the results of the elections and proceeded to purge the left-wing sections. In May 1919, the Hillquit-controlled National Executive Committee expelled more than seven of the immigrant language federations and other sections of the SP that constituted the bulk of the left wing, i.e., more than 55,000 members.

In June 1919, a National Conference of the left wing met in New York represented by 94 delegates from 20 cities. They represented the majority of the SP. At the left-wing conference, a split ensued whereby the majority (Reed, Ruthenberg, Wagenknecht) fought to recapture the leadership of the SP in order to form a Revolutionary Socialist Party. The minority, (Dennis Batt, Louis Fraina) called for the immediate establishment of a Communist Party on September 1st. Between June and the August 30th SP Convention, Charles Ruthenberg and his followers joined Louis Fraina's plan to establish a new party. At the August 30th SP Convention in Chicago, John Reed and the left-wing socialists were kicked out when Hillquit called in the police. On August 31, the Reed-Wagenknecht group declared themselves the Communist Labor Party, composed mainly of American-born workers (about 10,000 members). On September 1st, the Fraina-Ruthenberg group declared themselves the Communist Party, composed mainly of the immigrant language fed-

erations of workers (about 58,000 members). The CLP and CP combined represented approximately 68,000 workers who had rallied to the banner of Bolshevism. This did not include the IWW, the TUEL and the left wing of the growing Black national movement.

In reaction to the chauvinism and reactionary class collaboration of Samuel Gompers' AFL and to the pacifism, reformism, parliamentarism, and tailing of the AFL by the SP, the majority of the left wing of the communist and workers' movement was imbued with the infantile disease of "left-wing communism." The new, young American communist movement was riddled with anarcho-syndicalist tendencies, chauvinism, narrow nationalism, and social-democratic traditions. Though rooted in the proletariat, this was mostly in the light industries, where much narrow nationalism and sectarian tendencies dominated.

This sectarianism was one of the principal causes of the inability of the CP and CLP to unite in their early days. Factional infighting and overestimation of differences characterized the relationship between both parties. Charles Ruthenberg made efforts to unite the two, but these were unsuccessful. Less obvious, though widespread was the phenomena that despite the CP's and CLP's "left-wing communist" errors and anti-Social-Democratic platform, organizationally they were still structured along social-democratic lines. Social-Democracy created parties that were legalistic, not based in the factories, but along the lines of parliamentary branches, community branches, and language federations. All the social-democratic traditions of the Socialist Party were brought into the new communist movement.

The Comintern, also born in 1919, pursuing its proletarian internationalist responsibilities, intervened in the struggles of the new American communist movement. The Comintern refused to recognize the two parties because of the sectarianism and anarcho-syndicalist tendencies in both parties, the chauvinist deviations on the part of the CLP and the narrow nationalist deviations on the part of the CP. The CI issued several statements on a unity process for both parties. This phenomenon of "left-wing" communism did not exist only in the US, but also in Britain, Germany and elsewhere. This is why Lenin, prior to the Second Con-

gress of the Comintern wrote “*Left*” *Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*. In explaining the causes for anarchism and “left” wing communism in the early days of the communist movement, Lenin noted that it was the other side of the coin, the reaction to the years of dominance of reformism, chauvinism, and class collaboration of the parties of the Second International. “Anarchism was not infrequently a kind of penalty for the opportunist sins of the working-class movement.”¹

The Comintern also issued the *Thesis on the Fundamental Tasks of the 2nd Congress of the C.I., and the Conditions of Affiliation to the Communist International*, which sought to ensure that the new Communist parties eradicate the social-democratic lines and traditions. These conditions were the beginning battle cry of the Comintern to Bolshevize the new parties in formation.

By April, 1921, both parties had united into the Communist Party of America (CPA) (unified), with Charles Ruthenberg as its general secretary. The CPA became the American section of the CI. In the main, the anarcho-syndicalist tendencies were defeated and a struggle to Bolshevize the CP ensued.

William Z. Foster's TUEL, left-wing members of the IWW, and left-wing members in the AFL rallied to the CPA. For the first time in the history of American socialism, the CPA paid special attention to the Black national movement. All previous socialist movements had chauvinist policies towards the Black movement and reduced Black national oppression to just a class question. The CPA addressed the Black national movement as a racial and class question. It began to work within the Garvey movement and rallied its left wing. It also worked jointly with Black publications geared towards organizing the Black proletariat in trade unions such as *The Messenger*, *The Crusader*, *The Emancipator*, etc. The TUEL had experience in uniting Black and white workers in the meat-packing industry.

However, the CPA was still plagued with a chauvinist policy on the Black national question. It had not yet viewed the Black question as a national question despite the fact that Lenin and the Comintern had recognized the Blacks in the US as a subjected nation. Lenin in his *Preliminary Thesis on National-Colonial Question* presented to the 2nd CI Congress states: “... it is neces-

sary for the Communist Parties to render direct aid to the revolutionary movements in the dependent and subject nations (for example, in Ireland, the Negroes in America, etc.) and in the colonies.” The lack of a correct line on the Black national question again revealed that the CPUSA was far from being a Bolshevik Party. The theses on Bolshevization issued by the ECCI after the 5th Comintern Congress reiterated the necessity of applying the resolutions of the 2nd CI Congress on the national-colonial question. The ECCI resolved that “There can be no Bolshevization without a correct policy on the national question.” (see p. 32 in this book)

The unification of the CPA was accomplished under the most difficult conditions. By 1921, American capitalism, in its quest to destroy the widespread influence of Bolshevism, unleashed the force of its bourgeois dictatorship with the infamous Palmer Raids. The repression was spearheaded at the CP, the IWW, immigrants and Blacks. Wobblies (members of the IWW) and Blacks were lynched. The Ku Klux Klan had a following of close to 4 million. The newly established CP was baptized with the fiery repression of the Palmer Raids. Its membership was reduced to approximately 10,000. The CPA was forced to go underground in 1921. But in order to utilize what legal conditions still were available so as to have an open existence, the Workers Party of America (WPA) was also established in 1921. Hence, by the end of 1921 there existed the illegal and underground CPA and the legal, aboveground WPA. Such was the first phase of the period of the construction of a Communist Party in the US.

The years 1922-23 ushered in the second post-WWI period in which the general crisis of world capitalism was temporarily stabilized. As a result of the Palmer Raids followed by the partial stabilization of capitalism, the proletarian movement entered an ebb period. The revolutionary upheavals of the first post-WWI period had generally subsided.

From 1922 to 1925 the CPA acting through the WPA proceeded to deepen its roots in the proletariat, farmers’, and Black national movements, pursuing a united front policy. The WPA participated in the farmer-labor movement with the objective of

forming a Farmer-Labor Party and later, a Labor Party. It participated as a part of the left wing of the petty-bourgeoisie and populist La Follette Movement, attempting to build a Farmer-Labor Party from this movement. Through the TUEL the WPA began to work in the AFL in this period, and helped to build independent industrial unions. Communists were being purged from Samuel Gompers, craft AFL unions. The Smith and McCarren Acts were enacted which barred communists, Blacks, women and youth from the reactionary trade unions. The TUEL became essentially the united front of workers, the Left, Blacks, women, etc. which led many strike struggles, helped formed workers' oppositions inside the AFL and other unions, and helped formed many new industrial unions.

Through the TUEL the CP was able to lead and influence workers' struggles like:

- the famous textile strike of 1926 in Passaic New Jersey
- strike of 26,000 cotton mill workers
- strike of 2,500 textile workers in Gastonia, North Carolina.

The TUEL was instrumental in forming the United Textile Workers and later the National Textile Workers, in opposing John L. Lewis' concessions and collaboration with the capitalists in the United Mine Workers Association and helped form "Save the Union" committees which later formed the National Miners Union.

In the Black national movement there existed the pan-Africanist Garveyite movement led by Marcus Garvey, which was instrumental in igniting Black national consciousness and a Black national movement. In the beginning, despite its "Back to Africa" line, the Garvey movement was anti-imperialist, supported the USSR, and rallied Blacks to fight for democratic rights. However, by the early 1920's Garvey capitulated to imperialism, reduced his movement strictly to a "Back to Africa" movement, abandoning the fight of American Blacks in the US. A "Black Zionism" developed, supported even by the KKK. The KKK also liked the utopian and reactionary idea of Blacks going "back to Africa." Marcus Garvey's activities degenerated to the promotion of Black capitalism in order to finance the shipping of Blacks in steamships back to Africa.

Nevertheless, the WPA adopted a tactical policy of participating in this movement insofar as it developed a Black national movement in the US. As a result, many in the left wing of the Garvey movement rallied to the side of communism.

Communists worked among the Black proletariat in organizations like the African Blood Brotherhood and later the Negro Labor Congress. Strikes in meatpacking, textiles, among sharecroppers, etc. began to produce many Black communists. Yet, the WPA failed to properly aid the process of the struggle for proletarian hegemony in the Black national movement centered in the oppressed Black Nation in the southern Black Belt. This failure was due to its chauvinistic policy on reducing the Black national question to a racial and class question. The struggle against national chauvinism inside the WPA still needed to be sharpened and this chauvinist position routed out of the communist movement.

The CPA-WPA also initiated and participated in famous labor defense committees (such as the battle to stop the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti), spread propaganda and support of the USSR and the Chinese Revolution, and participated in the All-American Anti-Imperialist League (which mobilized masses of toilers against Yankee imperialism in Latin America).

Despite these advancements, the CPA-WPA was still predominantly based among immigrant workers in light industry, had a chauvinist line and policy on the Black National question, was still organized along language federation lines, with social-democratic organizational traditions, neglected work among the broader American working class, and was still very weak in theory, strategy and tactics.

The combination of all these defects led to a sharpening of the internal struggles in the CPA. A factional and sectarian struggle emerged, related to various policies of the CP (such as the tactical line towards the farmer-labor movement and the La Follette movement, and on work in the trade unions). All these problems were further complicated by the existence of two sections of one movement — the CPA (underground) and the WPA (aboveground).

Again, in 1925, an Enlarged Plenum of the ECCI intervened

and issued a Resolution on the American Question (reprinted in this book, see p. 46) to resolve the factional and sectarian infighting and set tasks to aid the process of Bolshevizing the CP. At the 4th National Convention, in 1925 the WPA and CPA were consolidated as the Workers (Communist) Party of America. This marked a second phase in the period of founding a Communist Party.

In 1928, the 6th CI Congress met and issued the *Program, Constitution and Statutes, and Strategy and Tactics of the Communist International* (reprinted by International Correspondence). In its report on the international situation, the CI noted that the second post-WWI period of partial stabilization was coming to an end and that the general crisis of world capitalism was deepening. The beginning of a third post-WWI period was characterized as a period of deepening crisis, militarization of capitalist economies and preparation for another inevitable imperialist world war. This period was also characterized as a period when the USSR was proceeding to successfully build socialism, and when the revolutionary process was maturing in the movements of the workers and oppressed peoples of the world. Hence, the 6th CI Congress issued a tactical policy that ensured the development of a revolutionary movement in the imperialist, colonial and semi-colonial countries. It issued a call to fight the main danger of right opportunism which sought to maintain the tactics of the C.I. during the former period of partial stabilization. It also issued stern calls to Bolshevize all the sections of the Comintern, purging its ranks of right opportunism and of trotskyism.

Between 1925 and 1929, the WCP continued to develop its ties with the growing mass movement. It conducted work among the unemployed through the formations of Unemployment Councils. In 1929, the TUEL became the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL) with an influence over 7,000 people in textile, needle trades, mining, industrial unions and worker oppositions in craft and AFL unions, among Blacks, women and youth. The TUUL rallied many workers to communism and was instrumental in the formation of industrial unions, most especially the Committee of Industrial Organization (CIO). The TUUL was also the American section of the Red International of Labor Un-

ions. The WCP pursued work in the form of the TUUL due to the following conditions: (a) The reactionary and craft unions of the AFL and the Railroad union leadership were pursuing a class collaborationist policy of speed-ups and wage cuts, destroying the fighting qualities of the mass trade unions. The TUUL sought to restore the fighting capacity of the TU movement; (b) the AFL, as a tool of the capitalists, was riddled with corruption and backwardness, and due to its policy of concessions and collaboration with the capitalist offensive, was losing members and in serious decline. More and more, it was restricted only to skilled workers and did not represent the mass of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, nor did it protect their interests; (c) the AFL and craft unions pursued the social-fascist policies of purging their trade unions of communists and rank-and-file workers' opposition groups. More and more the workers' opposition movements were forced to form new independent industrial unions separate from the AFL.

Hence, the TUUL helped organized the unorganized, forming many new industrial unions that later paved the way for the formation of the CIO.

Between 1925 and 1929, the WCP failed to eradicate the unprincipled factional struggles which pigeonholed the process of Bolshevizing the party and failed to arm the party workers ideologically and politically in order to prevent any opportunist deviation. Likewise, the WCP also failed to adopt a correct policy on the Black National Question. The CI established a special commission which included Black communists of the WCP like Harry Haywood. The 1928 and 1930 Comintern Resolutions on the Black National Question (reprinted in this volume) were the first serious attempt to present a Marxist-Leninist analysis and program on the American Black National Question.

By March 1929, the ECCI issued an open letter to the WCP again criticizing the unprincipled factional infighting and elaborating the tasks necessary to Bolshevize the party. The ECCI states: "From a propagandist organization, uniting chiefly immigrant workers and having an insignificant influence among the native workers, the Workers (Communist) Party is now beginning to turn into a mass Party of political action guiding the po-

litical and economic actions of the most advanced and the most militant ranks of the American proletariat....

“However, the Party is now just making its first steps on the new path. It is now just on the threshold between the old and the new, it has not yet passed the turning point. It has as yet done little to shift its base from the immigrants to the native Americans employed in the basic industries, it has done still less in relation to the millions of the Negro proletariat....

“The Workers (Communist) Party of America has been for many years an organization of foreign workers not much connected with the political life of the country. Owing to this immigrant exclusiveness two leading groups arose, took shape and became consolidated within the Party. For six years an almost uninterrupted struggle for supremacy in the Party has been going on between them. The struggle was, in the main, not based on principle, and at times, it assumed an unprincipled character. At times it assumed the appearance of a struggle based on principle, but in reality it was not entirely a struggle of principle; principles served chiefly to camouflage the struggle for supremacy in the Party. Whenever, the struggle between the groups was centered more on principles (the attitude towards the Labor Party, the question of trade union tactics, the differences could have been settled without a factional struggle).

“Thus, in 1925, all resolutions at the IV Convention of the Party were adopted by both factions unanimously, notwithstanding the actual factional struggle prior to the convention. But when the convention was over the factional struggle became even sharper than before.” (p. 85 in this volume).

The unprincipled factional infighting prevented the WCP from ideologically arming itself and grasping the resolutions of the 6th CI Congress in its deeds. As a result, within the WCP right opportunism blossomed, taking the form of the theory of “American Exceptionalism.” Both factions (the majority led by Lovestone and Pepper and the minority led by Foster and Bittleman) were guilty of the rightist deviation of “American Exceptionalism.”

The theory of “exceptionalism” essentially raised the following: “a crisis of capitalism, but not of American capitalism; a

swing of the masses to the left, but not in America; the necessity of accentuating the struggle against reformism, but not in the United States; a necessity for struggling against the right danger, but not in the American Communist Party. And yet, the present period, when the process of shaking the foundation of capitalist stabilization is going on, signifies for the United States that it is being ever more closely involved in the general crisis of capitalism.... The crisis will shake also the foundation of the power of American imperialism.

“Under these conditions the theory of ‘exceptionalism’ is a reflection of the pressure of American capitalism and reformism which are endeavoring to create among the mass of workers an impression of absolute firmness and ‘exceptional’ imperialist might of American capital in spite of its growing crisis and to strengthen the tactic of class collaboration in spite of the accentuation of class contradictions.” (p. 129 of this book)

The CI established a special commission of the ECCI in order to resolve the internal state of affairs of the WCP. J.V. Stalin, Lenin’s greatest disciple, also took an interest and participated in this special commission. Stalin and the CI paid much attention to the WCP because of the important role that the American proletariat has in the world revolutionary process. Stalin comments in his speech to the special commission of the ECCI on the American Party:

I think, comrades, that the American Communist Party is one of those few Communist Parties in the world upon which history has laid tasks of a decisive character from the point of view of the world revolutionary movement. You all know very well the strength and power of American capitalism. Many now think that the general crisis of world capitalism will not affect America. That, of course, is not true. It is entirely untrue comrades. The crisis of world capitalism is developing with increasing rapidity and cannot but affect American capitalism. The three million now unemployed in America are the first swallows indicating the ripening of the economic crisis in America. The sharpening antagonism between America and England, the struggle for markets and raw materials and, finally, the colossal growth of armaments — that is the second portent of the approaching crisis. I

think the moment is not far off when a revolutionary crisis will develop in America. And when a revolutionary crisis develops in America, that will be the beginning of the end of world capitalism as a whole. It is essential that the American Communist Party should be capable of meeting that historical moment fully prepared and of assuming the leadership of the impending class struggle in America. Every effort and every means must be employed in preparing for that, comrades. For that end the American Communist Party must be improved and bolshevized. For that end we must work for the complete liquidation of factionalism and deviations in the Party. For that end we must work for the reestablishment of unity in the Communist Party of America. For that end we must work in order to forge real revolutionary cadres and a real revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, capable of leading the many millions of the American working class toward the revolutionary class struggles. For that end all personal factors and factional considerations must be laid aside and the revolutionary education of the working class of America must be placed above all.

“That is why I think, comrades, that the most serious attention must be paid to the proposals of the Commission of the Presidium of the ECCI for your consideration there, for the aim of these proposals is to render the Communist Party of America a healthy party, to eradicate factionalism, to create unity, to strengthen the Party and to bolshevize it” (reprinted in this book, p. 106).

Stalin’s intervention took the character of not only noting the importance of Bolshevizing the Party, but also of criticizing and exposing the opportunism of both the Lovestone majority faction and the Foster minority faction, as well as putting forth a six-point solution to rectify the Menshevism of the WCP. Lovestone’s line on the Black National question was that an oppressed Black nation no longer existed due to the increase in industrialization of the Black Belt. To Lovestone, the proletarianization of the mass of Blacks, the migration to the north of many Blacks, led him to liquidate the Black National Question. However, again, the CI Resolutions on the Black National Question prevented the CPUSA from adopting this chauvinist position.

The Lovestoneites, the main proponents of the right deviation, refused to abide by the discipline of the CI, despite their hollow “praises” and “loyalty” to the CI and Stalin.

Hence, the struggles culminated with the purge of the main ringleaders of the right deviation. Foster and his following agreed to abide by the discipline of the CI and proceeded to implement the resolutions as put forth by the ECCI. As part of its rectification process the Central Committee of the CPUSA published a pamphlet, *On the Road to Bolshevization*, which reprinted the various presentations of the special commission of the ECCI on the American Communist Party. In it, the CP states: “Our American Party is not yet a Bolshevik Party... It was necessary that factionalism should be eradicated in order to establish the indispensable organizational unity... In our American Communist Party, however, the opportunist influences had grown strong enough to put up resistance against the process of preparation. To break this resistance, the leadership of our International Party, the Communist International had to help” (p. 82 in the book).

The WCP underwent a process of rectification with a change in leadership. In this period, a secretariat to the Central Executive Committee was set up consisting of Robert Minor, Max Bedacht, W.W. Weinstone and William Z. Foster. By the Seventh CP National Convention in June 1930, the secretariat was reorganized to consist of W.W. Weinstone (organization secretary), Foster (trade union secretary), and Earl Browder (administrative secretary). The WCP changed its name to the Communist Party USA. This period generally marked the end of the period of the foundation of a Communist Party in the US. From then on, the CPUSA proceeded in a new period of rallying the masses to the side of the CP.

The CPUSA’s Struggle for the Masses and the Process of its Degeneration, 1929-1944

The early 1930’s was a period of the intensification of the general crisis of world capitalism. As predicted by the 6th C.I. Congress, a spontaneous upsurge and a leftward swing of the proletariat and toilers was occurring in all countries, while the

imperialist powers were preparing for war.

In the US the CPUSA led broad mass struggles, pursuing the “class against class” tactics as outlined by the 6th CI Congress. The CP led many hunger strikes and demonstrations of the unemployed. On March 6th, 1930, the CP led the historic National Unemployment demonstrations under the slogans “Work or Wages” and “Don’t Starve, Fight.” Demonstrations took place in New York (110,000), Detroit (100,000), Chicago (50,000), Pittsburgh (50,000), Milwaukee (40,000), Philadelphia (30,000), Cleveland (25,000) and Youngstown (20,000). Unemployment insurance and social welfare reforms were by-products of this movement. In 1930 a National Unemployment Council was formed which led the mass hunger marches in 1931 and 1932.

The TUUL led mass strikes in steel, coal, textile, auto, needle trades, cotton pickers, etc. Such famous strikes as the San Francisco General Strike in 1934 were led and participated in by the CP. By 1935 the CIO was formed, representing a step forward in the industrial labor movement. The CP also led struggles of farmers and war veterans.

In the Black national movement, the CP began to concentrate activity in the Black Belt South. It published the *Southern Worker* as a special publication to guide the activity of the CPUSA in the oppressed Black Nation. The CP led an international campaign to free the nine Scottsboro Black youth who were framed on rape charges. By 1936 the CP initiated and helped form the National Negro Congress. The National Negro Congress had 83 unions along with other educational, religious, and civic organizations of the Black masses. It also allowed whites to participate.

The Young Communist League also led struggles and had broad influence in the American Youth Congress. The CP also had influence in the Women’s Chartist Movement. By 1938, the CPUSA, through its united front policies had influence (directly and indirectly) over 800,000 workers in the U.S.

With the rise to power of Nazism in Germany in 1933 and the danger of fascism worldwide, the CP took on its task of rallying broad masses of American workers in support of the Chinese revolution, and in support of the USSR. The CP helped orga-

nized international brigades which sent many volunteer workers and Blacks to fight the fascists in Spain. Up until the outbreak of WW2, the CPUSA was becoming a tremendous force leading a broad mass movement. But these successes of the CPUSA came about as a result of internal struggle for Bolshevization. Successes and consolidation of the gains were made only when the CP implemented those instructions that pursued a path towards Bolshevization.

In this period of a growing spontaneous movement, of increased work in the trade unions, of the utilization of legal and electoral means of struggle, it was necessary that the CP ensure a Bolshevization process and increase the internal struggle against the main danger, right opportunism.

The tasks of Bolshevization outlined by the CI in 1929 proceeded very slowly and at times were being pigeonholed. There developed much infatuation with the growing mass movement. The worship of spontaneity was setting in. Thousands of workers were rallying to the correct line of the CPUSA and the CI, but the CPUSA was unable to consolidate these gains ideologically and organizationally along Bolshevik lines.

The increased social-fascist attacks from the AFL and the SP, aided by the counter-revolutionary trotskyites acting as agents of the bourgeoisie, along with economist tendencies in the organizing of the mass movement, led to a lack of propagation of the CP and CI program and line. There developed an under-utilization of the Party press and a lowering of vigilance in the struggle against right opportunism.

Internally, the CP's policies on cadre training began to degenerate. There were many cases in strikes where CP members stood aloof from the struggles. The CP also instituted an incorrect mass recruitment policy. Hence, there were years when 10,000 workers were reported to be recruited. However, there was also a turnover of about 10,000 workers leaving the CP. Fluctuation of membership was a disease in the CPUSA.

This lack of Bolshevization obviously began to affect the social basis of the CP. Many unstable and petty bourgeois elements were allowed to enter the party. The CP failed to change its social-democratic structure of Party branches organized along re-

gional and community areas rather than along the Bolshevik policy of factory nuclei.

In 1932, an article appeared in the CI journal, *The Communist International*, addressing the problem of the CP's fulfillment of decisions and its carrying out of criticism and self-criticism (it is reprinted in this book). The article points out that the CP was not Bolshevizing the Party but in fact, despite some successes in the mass movement, was regressing in its Bolshevization process. For example, on the directives to base the CP on factory nuclei, this article notes: "One of the indications of an improvement of the work in the factories must be a growth in the number of factory cells. For a number of years, the Party not only has not moved forward on this question, but has even definitely regressed" (see p. 199 in this book).

The article notes that the CP leadership, led by Earl Browder, developed a fetish regarding resolutions and self-criticisms, but in practice still failed to Bolshevize the CP.

In 1933, an "Extraordinary Conference of the CPUSA" was held where an "open letter" was issued to the CPUSA. This "open letter" contained the most serious criticisms and self-criticisms and again indicated ways of overcoming the problems. In November 1933, the ECCI did a check-up on the implementation of the tasks of the CPUSA by reviewing the activities of the *Daily Worker*, the organ of the CPUSA. It noted that there was still a lack of follow-up and instructions to the cadres to implement the "open letter." Browder was again criticized for phrasemongering "self-criticism," while in practice not fulfilling the tasks of Bolshevization.

A fundamental turn in the international situation took place in 1933, further aggravating these problems. With the assumption of power by fascism in Germany, the contradictions internationally became much more complex. Hitlerite Germany, along with the other fascist powers, embarked on an active campaign to not only smash the USSR and the world communist movement, to colonize the oppressed nations and peoples as in Africa, but also to conquer Europe and eventually the US. The Hitlerite fascists embarked on a barbaric plan of world conquest, in certain places restoring feudal and slave conditions. By 1935, the

7th CI Congress scientifically analyzed the phenomenon of fascism, especially Hitlerite fascism, and charted the new tactical policy of the CI. (For more on fascism and WW2, see "Origins and Character of WW2..." in *Bolshevik Revolution* no. 8, by the BL). With these new changes in the international situation coupled with the problems inside the CPUSA, once again right opportunism grew.

At the 8th CP National Convention, Browder put forth the opportunist concept that "communism is 20th Century Americanism." This was criticized soon afterward by the CP. However, the rightist lines developed further. The lack of Bolshevization internally led to mishandling and a lack of financial resources in the CP. One measure that the CP implemented to cut costs was the elimination of the publication *Southern Worker* which was to play a key role in the Black Belt. This itself was a sign of the chauvinist liquidation of the Black National question that still existed and was again growing under Browder's leadership.

By 1936, at the 9th CP National Convention, Browder began to distort the tasks of the 7th CI Congress applied to the US. He distorted the difference between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy in the tasks of building a united front against fascism. At the 10th CP National Convention held in 1938, Browder's revisionism led to changes in the Preamble of the CP's Constitution, saying that Marxism-Leninism is considered the culmination of the evolution of "Jeffersonianism." Browder promoted illusions about Roosevelt's New Deal program and advanced the right opportunist and "American Exceptionalist" theories of a "new and progressive organized capitalism" in the US. Even W.Z. Foster, in his *History of the Communist Party of the USA*, had to admit that: "At its conventions of 1934, 1936, and 1938 the Party was not yet keen enough in its Marxist-Leninist clarity to grasp the significance of Browder's developing opportunistic interpretations of American democratic history, and thereby to kill this particularly venomous political snake in the egg. For this political shortcoming the Party was to pay dearly in subsequent years."

In 1935, attempts were again made to organize the CP along Bolshevik lines which would have prevented the development of

Browderite revisionism. The CP *Manual On Organization* was published in 1935 and distributed. It advocated the Bolshevik re-organization of the CP. Yet by 1939, Browder, in collaboration with the trade union bureaucracies, liquidated all factory nuclei and communist fractions in the trade unions. Browder's revisionism began to take the logical course of liquidationism.

With the signing of the USSR-Germany Non-Aggression Pact in 1939, and with the start of WW2 in the fall of 1939, much confusion on the character of the war and tactics to pursue in the war beset the CPUSA, as well as other parties in the CI. (See "Origins and Character of WW2..." for more on this topic.) Browderism fed upon this ideological confusion. By 1944, Browder issued his "Teheran" Statement, which distorted the essence of the anti-fascist agreements that Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill made in 1943. Browder's "Teheran" Statement advocated a policy of class collaboration and faith in the imperialist system. He advocated national unity, i.e. unity with the bourgeoisie. Browder, like Foster, also repudiated the Bolshevik line on the Black National Question to the degree that by 1944, the CPUSA had virtually liquidated its entire work in the south. Browderism also called on the Latin American workers and peasants to lay down their arms against Yankee imperialism because now Yankee imperialism was "exceptionally" "progressive" and "peaceful."

On the basis of his views, Browder proceeded to liquidate the CPUSA at the 12th CP National Convention held in New York City on May 22-24, 1944. The CPUSA became the Communist Political Association with a program following Browder's revisionist "Teheran" policy.

The social basis for the growth of Browderism was rooted in the CP's growing ties with the petty bourgeoisie and the labor aristocracy as a result of their tailing Roosevelt's New Deal program, their distortion of the 7th CI anti-fascist tactics, and their lack of Bolshevization. The CP's neglect of basing the Party in the basic industries, neglect of the task of ensuring that the factory nuclei become the basic unit of the CP, up to the liquidation of the factory nuclei and fractions in the trade unions, was coupled with the CP's tailing of the highly paid trade union bureaucrats

of the CIO. Browderism also allowed for a large influx of petty bourgeois into the CP. Browder himself was a petty bourgeois accountant who consistently manifested many rightist views. The inability of the CP to wage a proper struggle to Bolshevize itself led many of the proletarian cadres to lower their vigilance against this right opportunist current. Browder complicated matters by instituting bureaucratic norms and special privileges within the CP. By the middle of WW2, the opposition forces within the CP were incapable of purging the Browderites. In fact, at the 12th National Convention where the CPA was formed, virtually the entire National Committee of the CP accepted Browder's revisionist line and liquidation of the CPUSA.

The Fosterite Centrist Opposition to Browder and the Struggle Against "Browderism Without Browder" — The Birth of "Anti-Revisionism"

Foster, as national chairman of the CP, opposed some of the basic features of Browder's "Teheran" statement in 1944. Foster had notified the Political Committee of the CP that he wished to make a presentation against Browder's line, but was rejected on the grounds that Foster's opposition line would create "disunity" and "ideological" confusion in the midst of the war. Foster complied on the basis that discussion would be held at least in the Political Committee.

With no such discussion ever occurring, Foster proceeded to write a letter to the National Committee challenging Browder's line. At an enlarged meeting of the Political Committee held in February 1944, Foster's line was rejected by all of this leadership except for one person, Sam Darcy. Foster again complied with the liquidation of the CPUSA, whereas Sam Darcy persisted in polemicizing against Browder's liquidation. Within the CPA Foster was placed in charge of carrying out Browder's dirty work of purging those forces who openly opposed the liquidation of the CP. It was Foster who purged Sam Darcy, his only previous supporter in the leadership, from the CPA.

In the CP, many other old veteran leaders opposed Browder and the conciliationist and centrist forces that capitulated to Browderism. In 1945, a French CP leader, Jacques Duclos, wrote a letter criticizing Browderism and the liquidation of the

CPUSA. This open letter became the rallying point for opposition forces to fight Browder and reconstitute the CP. When Foster and ex-Browderites in the CPA reconstituted the CP in July 1945, Sam Darcy was not allowed to enter the party.

When the CP was reconstituted at its 13th National Convention, Browder remained in the Party and was purged only after he refused to subordinate to the Fosterites. So only Browder and a few of the diehard Browderites were purged from the Party. But the majority of the Browderite National Committee that capitulated to Browder and led in the liquidation remained as the leadership of the Party with Foster at the head. Foster's centrist and conciliationist opposition to Browder only revealed that he too was still influenced by the "American Exceptionalism" that Stalin criticized him for as early as 1929.

Though the CP was reconstituted in 1945, it still maintained Browder's "American Exceptionalist" analysis, but more camouflaged in leftist colors. The CP also maintained Browder's line of peaceful transition to socialism and propagated faith in bourgeois democracy. Foster's CPUSA stated: "The Communist Party holds the view that socialism in the United States, although inevitable in the future is not now on the immediate political agenda."

"American conditions and world socialist experience make it realistic, however, to suppose that, in their march to socialism, the American people, as many others are doing, will take their path through the successive phases of the people's front and the people's democracy."

"What stands out clearly in this analysis, however, is that, in its perspective for ultimate socialism in the United States, the Communist Party, at the Supreme Court, with a rare exhibition of objectivity, clearly stated in the Schneiderman case of 1942, (during Browder's reign — BL) always strives for a peaceful and democratic course to socialism, supported at all times by a huge majority of the American people."

"This Communist course constituted basically a policy of striving to prevent both civil and international war, of holding intact and strengthening the democratic institutions in the respective capitalist countries, of compelling the wolf-like capitalist

states to live together without devouring one another, and of assuring the peaceful co-existence of socialism and capitalism in the world.”

“The attempts of the Truman government to destroy the Communist Party, on the pretext that it advocates the forceful overthrow of the United States Government, is a lie and a political frame-up. There is no basis for such an accusation — in Marxist-Leninist theory, in the program and activities of the CPUSA, or in the world experience of the Communist movement.”ⁱⁱ

Such was the program of the reconstituted CPUSA under Foster’s leadership. But the Fosterites did not proceed unopposed. In 1945 and 1946, various leaders of the CP opposed the Fosterites calling them Browderites without Browder. The only thing which Foster mentions of this left opposition wing in the CPUSA is the following: “An aftermath of Browder’s revisionism was the organized defection of a few dozen disgruntled sectarians in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and elsewhere. This included Sam Darcy, William F. Dunne, Harrison George, Vern Smith, and others. They developed a leftist line of criticism, charging that the new Party leadership was centrist. This was their way of retreating from the increasingly difficult class struggle under cover of revolutionary phraseology.”ⁱⁱⁱ

These forces, however, did not just “defect” from the Party. They were purged by Foster himself. In 1945-46, despite the fact that Browderism, right opportunism, and Centrism were the main dangers in the CP, Foster waged a campaign against and directed his main blow at “leftism” and purged the CP of supposed “dogmatists,” “ultra-leftists,” and “disgruntled sectarians.” Yet, the CPUSA was not even reconstituted partially along Bolshevik lines. They continued to tail the AFL-CIO, capitulated to the McCarthy terror during the “Cold War,” liquidated the struggle for self-determination of the oppressed Black Nation, failed to address the Chicano and Native national questions, while pursuing Foster’s revisionist line. The CP, displaying its Menshevik essence, was virtually destroyed by the “Cold War.” Despite its reconstitution, the CP failed to become the vanguard Party of the proletariat. Today’s revisionist party of Gus Hall is essentially

the same party reconstituted by Foster. It is no accident that since the 1940's, the labor movement in the US has been in decline and under the full dominance of the labor aristocracy and reformism. It is also no accident that social-democracy and trotskyism have grown to huge dimensions with the temporary defeat of Bolshevism in the US.

Amongst the so-called “disgruntled sectarians” there were forces who considered themselves Stalinists in opposition to the Titoites, Fosterites, and semi-trotskyites in the US. Harrison George from California (a founder of the CPUSA) was a supporter of Stalin, Dimitrov, and the Communist Information Bureau (set up in 1948) internationally. Publications like *Turning Point* also considered themselves Stalinists and fought for the reconstitution of a new Communist Party in the US. There were many new small groups and publications that arose in the late 1940's. In Canada, the communist movement followed a pattern similar to that in the US. In 1945, a leader of the Party in Canada, Fergus McKean, also initiated a battle against “Browderism without Browder.” But also amongst this new anti-revisionist movement were elements of semi-trotskyism, such as Bert Sutta, who considered the “roots of revisionism” to lie with Stalin and the Comintern.

In the summer of 1947, an effort was made to unite the scattered and expelled left wing of the CPUSA. But ideological confusion and sectarian tendencies prevented such a formation. So the opposition to the CPUSA proceeded very loosely and inconsistently. The conditions of the “Cold War” and the growing ideological struggle in the international communist movement further complicated matters in re-establishing a genuine communist current.

By 1950, the left opposition forces had generally disappeared. Only the *Turning Point* group, which renamed itself the Communist League (CL) in 1954, remained. The CL struggled to build a new CP, defended the Rosenbergs, criticized Khrushchev's attacks on Stalin, and supported some of the Chinese and Albanian critiques of Khrushchevism. In 1956-58, the CPUSA again purged other forces (allied more with Mao, Hoxha and Molotov, i.e., the new centrist forces opposing the Khrushchevite

revisionists). These forces organized the Provisional Organizing Committee. The CL approached the POC for possible joint activity to combat the Fosterite CPUSA. The POC refused to work with the CL calling them “Stalinists.” Apparently, some of the POC leaders were former leaders of the CP who in the mid and late 1940’s had purged the “dogmatists” and “disgruntled sectarians” of the CL and other formations.

By 1962, the CL disappeared. Coincidentally, this was the period of the origins of the centrist maoist and pro-PLA communist movement. We also know that in 1962, Mao’s CPC viewed Foster in the following way: “We highly esteemed Comrade William Z, Foster, builder of the CPUSA and outstanding leader of the US proletariat.”^{iv} Such was also the position of Enver Hoxha of the Party of Labor of Albania.

The new maoist movement in the US was generally formed out of the petty bourgeois student movement (most notably from the social-democratic Students for a Democratic Society) and from the petty bourgeois and lumpen sectors of the oppressed nationality movements. Some proletarians rallied to the maoist movement. Nevertheless, the “new left’s” closest link to the old Communist movement was through the POC, which rejected work with supposed “Stalinists.”

This is only a brief, sketchy outline of the development of the American Communist movement. We do not endorse the activities of Sam Darcy, Harrison George, *Turning Point*, etc. We are only beginning to conduct a study of their activities. However, we do note that they were pioneer forces that identified with Stalinism and began the struggle against the Fosterites. The task of doing a thorough summation of the CPUSA, its collapse, and the development of the “new left,” is still one that is awaiting completion. It is a very complex task, tied to an analysis of the international Communist movement and the great imperialist conspiracy which destroyed and smashed the USSR, the socialist camp, assassinated Stalin and other Bolshevik leaders, and initiated an international anti-Stalinist, anti-Bolshevik campaign.

However, we can conclude that the period of greatest successes of the CPUSA was linked to the campaigns, led by Stalin

and the Comintern, to Bolshevize the Party. In the interests of further drawing lessons from the history of the Communist International in the US, the Bolshevik League will be reprinting a series of documents that will aid the process of summing up this history. In this volume are reprinted documents covering the period from 1925 to 1933.

Notes

1. *LCW* 31:31.
 2. Foster, *History of CPUSA*, p. 552-559.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 437.
 4. "A Comment on the Statement of the CPUSA," FLP, 1962.
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The Communist International in America

Documents 1925-1933

The Communist Party in the United States emerged as a fusion of a number of diverse elements of the workers' movement in America, from reformist socialists to anarchists. They had one thing in common, sympathy for the great revolutionary process unfolding in the Soviet Union.

The party in America went through a number of phases of development but remained tremendously factionalized and with a limited influence in the working class. The problems of the American section of the Communist International were not unique and in fact reflected a weakness that existed in many of the sections in the Comintern. The survivals of the old methods of social democracy, in which so many Comintern members were schooled, hung on tenaciously. The methods of anarchism and ultra-"leftism" also had a pernicious influence.

In response to this situation the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International formulated the task of Bolshevizing its various sections, to purge the sections of survivals of social-democracy and "left" deviations, like trotskyism, which were in essence also social-democratic deviations. In addition to these general problems there also were particular problems of the American section, that the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) paid attention to.

Reprinted here are almost all of the texts on this subject published in the press of the Comintern as well as some published by the Communist Party of the US. The texts are taken principally from *The Communist International* and *International Press Correspondence*, the organs of the Comintern. In addition to this, texts are taken from certain books and pamphlets published by the Comintern. Several of the texts are taken from a collection published by the American section under the title "On the Road to Bolshevization." This collection specifically concentrates on the question of the Bolshevization of the American section and thus starts with the material relating to this campaign after the Fifth World Congress. The first text is by J.V. Stalin. It is on the German Communist Party, but outlines the basic tasks of Bol-

shevization that applied to all the sections. This is followed by the theses on Bolshevization of a plenum of the ECCI following the Fifth World Congress and is followed by the specific resolution on the American Question.

This is followed by a report made by the American section on its activities between the fifth and sixth congresses of the Comintern. A comparison of this report with the later criticisms will show what difficulty the American section had with Bolshevizing itself.

To understand the questions raised here it is very important to acquire an understanding of the Sixth World Congress in 1928, none of which is reprinted here because the major documents have recently been published by International Correspondence and should be studied along with the documents reproduced here.

The next group of documents reflect the struggle for the line of the Sixth World Congress to be applied in the American section. This struggle led to the expulsion of the Lovestone faction and the trotskyites from the American section. Several of the documents are speeches of Stalin, who paid considerable attention to the problems of the American section.

The texts that follow this are a continuing analysis and critique of the American section for weaknesses in Bolshevization and for failure to carry out the decisions of the ECCI. The collection of Documents ends in 1933 because this represents a turning point for the Comintern. In 1933 fascism came to power in Germany and was expanding quickly in other countries, this necessitated a shift in tactics in all the sections, including the American one. To understand the particularities of the American section it is necessary to have an understanding of the XIIth Plenum of the ECCI in late 1933 as well as those of the Seventh World Congress in 1935. This goes beyond the scope of what is being done here. For an orientation to the question of fascism the reader should consult *Lines of Demarcation*, no. 16 as well as *Bolshevik Revolution*, no. 8. the 1928 and 1930 Theses of the ECCI on the Negro National Question in the U.S. are also reproduced, but out of historical sequence. The task here is to republish those documents that demonstrate the efforts to Bolshevize the American

section against the influences of social- democracy and trotskyism.

Although a historical analysis of these documents would be useful, they are being published without one in the interests of getting this material to workers who are today interested in the subject of once again struggling to build a Bolshevik party in the US and who see the tremendous influence of social-democracy, revisionism, trotskyism and anarchism on workers and revolutionaries today. They need this material to help them learn how to wage the struggle. An historical analysis will be prepared at some point in the future, but we are certain many militants in the US will find these documents useful without one. The introduction to this book gives an analysis of certain aspects of the history of the CPUSA in this period.

It is useful, however, to make a few notes on who some of the authors of these texts were. Of course, J.V. Stalin needs no introduction. S. Gusev was the secretary of the Petrograd military-revolutionary committee in the October Revolution. In 1921 he became an alternate of the Central Committee. In 1925, he along with Stalin, were delegates of the Bolshevik Party to the enlarged plenum of the ECCI that formulated the theses on Bolshevization that are in this collection. Immediately after this plenum he was sent as the representative of the ECCI to the United States for one year to try to resolve some of the intense factional disputes. In the US he functioned under the pseudonym of P. Green and is probably the author of the article in this collection signed under the name "Green." He was a delegate of the Bolshevik Party to the Sixth World Congress and was elected an alternate to the ECCI and in 1930 became a member of the Presidium of the ECCI. He was active in both the eleventh and twelfth plenums of the ECCI. He died in 1933.

It was common for Comintern leaders, particularly those that were deployed to the various countries, to operate and write under pseudonyms and this is likely for the articles signed under the names I. Mingulin, which is identified with the parenthesis (Moscow), probably meaning someone with the ECCI, and J. Tsirul. This may also be true of J. Pringle and S. Willner or they could have been leaders of the American party writing under

pseudonyms.

W. Weinstone was a delegate of the American party to the Sixth World Congress, he was also a delegate to the sessions of the ECCI that dealt with the problems of the American section, including the one Stalin spoke at. When Lovestone was removed from the American section by the ECCI he became a secretary of the CPUSA. He was also a delegate to other meetings of the ECCI that happened later up until the XIIIth. In his later years he followed modern revisionism.

H. Wicks was part of the American delegation to the Sixth World Congress and served for a year in Moscow as the North American representative of the Profintern. He was purged from the CPUSA in 1937.

In republishing this material it should be understood that the Bolshevik League does not necessarily endorse every word contained in them but presents them so revolutionary workers can learn from the history of their class and learn how to build an authentic Bolshevik party in the US.

The Prospects of the Communist Party of Germany and the Question of Bolshevisation

Interview with Herzog, Member of the C.P.G.

J.V. Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 7.

First Question (Herzog). Do you think that political and economic conditions in the democratic-capitalist republic of Germany are such that the working class will have to wage a struggle for power in the more or less immediate future?

Answer (Stalin). It would be difficult to give a strictly definite answer to this question if it were a matter of dates and not of trends. That the present situation, as regards both international and internal conditions, differs substantially from [hat in 1923 needs no proof. That, however, does not preclude the possibility of the situation changing abruptly in favour of a revolution in the immediate future as a result of possible important changes in the external situation. The instability of the international situation is a guarantee that this assumption may become very probable.

Second question. Considering the present economic situation and the present relation of forces, shall we need a longer preparatory period in which to win over the majority of the proletariat (the task which Lenin set the Communist Parties of all countries as an extremely important condition for the conquest of political power)?

Answer. As regards the economic situation, I am able to judge the matter only in the light of the general data that I have at my disposal. I think that the Dawes Plan has already produced some results, which have led to a relative stabilisation of the situation. The influx of American capital into German industry, the stabilisation of the currency, the improvement that has taken place in a number of highly important branches of German industry—which by no means signifies a radical recovery of Germany's economy—and lastly, some improvement in the material conditions of the working class—all this was bound to strengthen the position of the bourgeoisie in Germany to some extent. That is, so to speak, the “positive” side of the Dawes Plan.

But the Dawes Plan also has “negative” sides, which are bound inevitably to make themselves felt at some definite period and to demolish the “positive” results of this plan. Undoubtedly, the Dawes Plan imposes a double yoke upon the German proletariat, the yoke of home and the yoke of foreign capital. The contradiction between the expansion of German industry and the shrinking of the foreign markets for this industry, the discrepancy between the hypertrophied demands of the Entente and the maximum ability of German national economy to meet these demands—all this inevitably worsens the conditions of the proletariat, the small peasants, office employees and the intelligentsia, and is bound to lead to an upheaval, to a direct struggle for the conquest of power by the proletariat.

That circumstance must not, however, be regarded as the only favourable condition for a German revolution. In order that this revolution may be victorious, it is also necessary that the Communist Party should represent the majority of the working class, that it should become the decisive force in the working class. Social-Democracy must be exposed and routed, it must be reduced to an insignificant minority in the working class. Without that, it is useless even to think of the tutorship of the proletariat. If the workers are to achieve victory, they must be inspired by a single will, they must be led by a single party, which enjoys the indubitable confidence of the majority of the working class. If there are two competing parties of equal strength within the working class, a lasting victory is impossible even under favourable external circumstances. Lenin was the first to lay special emphasis on this in the period before the October Revolution as a most essential condition for the victory of the proletariat.

It could be considered that the situation most favourable for a revolution would be one in which an internal crisis in Germany and the decisive growth of the Communist Party’s forces coincided with grave complications in the camp of Germany’s external enemies.

I think that the absence of this latter circumstance in the revolutionary period of 1923 was by no means the least important unfavourable factor.

Third question. You said that the C.P.G. must have the ma-

jority of the workers behind it. Too little attention has been paid to this aim hitherto. What, in your opinion, must be done to convert the C.P.G. into such an energetic party, with a progressively increasing recruiting power?

Answer. Some comrades think that strengthening the Party and Bolshevising it mean expelling all dissenters from it. That is wrong, of course. Social-Democracy can be exposed and reduced to an insignificant minority in the working class only in the course of the day-to-day struggle for the concrete needs of the working class. The Social-Democrats must be pilloried not on the basis of planetary questions, but on the basis of the day-to-day struggle of the working class for improving its material and political conditions; in this, questions concerning wages, hours, housing conditions, insurance, taxation, unemployment, high cost of living, and so forth, must play a most important if not the decisive role. To hit the Social-Democrats day after day on the basis of these questions, exposing their treachery—such is the task.

But that task would not be fully carried out if those everyday practical questions were not linked up with the fundamental questions of Germany's international and internal situation, and if, in all its work, the Party failed to deal with all those everyday questions from the standpoint of revolution and the conquest of power by the proletariat.

But such a policy can be conducted only by a party which is headed by cadres of leaders sufficiently experienced to be able to take advantage of every single blunder of Social-Democracy in order to strengthen the Party, and possessing sufficient theoretical training not to lose sight of the prospects of revolutionary development because of partial successes.

It is this, chiefly, that explains why the question of the leading cadres of the Communist Parties in general, including those of the Communist Party of Germany, is one of the vital questions of Bolshevisation.

To achieve Bolshevisation it is necessary to bring about at least certain fundamental conditions, without which no Bolshevisation of the Communist Parties will be possible.

1) The Party must regard itself not as an appendage of the

parliamentary electoral machinery, as the Social- Democratic Party in fact does, and not as a gratuitous supplement to the trade unions, as certain Anarcho- Syndicalist elements sometimes claim it should be, but as the *highest* form of class association of the proletariat, the function of which is to *lead* all the other forms of proletarian organisations, from the trade unions to the Party's group in parliament.

2) The Party, and especially its leading elements, must thoroughly master the revolutionary theory of Marxism, which is inseparably connected with revolutionary practice.

3) The Party must draw up slogans and directives not on the basis of stock formulas and historical analogies, but as the result of a careful analysis of the concrete internal and international conditions of the revolutionary movement, and it must, without fail, take into account the experience of revolutions in all countries.

4) The Party must test the correctness of these slogans and directives in the crucible of the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

5) The entire work of the Party, particularly if Social-Democratic traditions have not yet been eradicated in it, must be reorganised on new, revolutionary lines, so that every step, every action, taken by the Party should naturally serve to revolutionise the masses, to train and educate the broad masses of the working class in the revolutionary spirit.

6) In its work the Party must be able to combine the strictest adherence to principle (not to be confused with sectarianism!) with the maximum of ties and contacts with the masses (not to be confused with khvostism!); without this, the Party will be unable not only to teach the masses but also to learn from them, it will be unable not only to lead the masses and raise them to its own level but also to heed their voice and anticipate their urgent needs.

7) In its work the Party must be able to combine an uncompromising revolutionary spirit (not to be confused with revolutionary adventurism!) with the maximum of flexibility and manoeuvring ability (not to be confused with opportunism!); without this, the Party will be unable to master all the forms of

struggle and organisation, will be unable to link the daily interests of the proletariat with the fundamental interests of the proletarian revolution, and to combine in its work the legal with the illegal struggle.

8) The Party must not cover up its mistakes, it must not fear criticism; it must improve and educate its cadres by learning from its own mistakes.

9) The Party must be able to recruit for its main leading group the best elements of the advanced fighters who are sufficiently devoted to the cause to be genuine spokesmen of the aspirations of the revolutionary proletariat, and who are sufficiently experienced to become real leaders of the proletarian revolution, capable of applying the tactics and strategy of Leninism.

10) The Party must systematically improve the social composition of its organisations and rid itself of corrupting opportunist elements with a view to achieving the utmost solidarity.

11) The Party must achieve iron proletarian discipline based on ideological solidarity, clarity concerning the aims of the movement, unity of practical action and an understanding of the Party's tasks by the mass of the Party membership.

12) The Party must systematically verify the execution of its decisions and directives; without this, these decisions and directives are in danger of becoming empty promises, which can only rob the Party of the confidence of the broad proletarian masses.

In the absence of these and similar conditions, Bolshevisation is just an empty sound.

Fourth question. You said that, in addition to the negative sides of the Dawes Plan, the second condition for the conquest of power by the C.P.G. is a situation in which the Social-Democratic Party stands fully exposed before the masses, and when it is no longer an important force in the working class. In view of actual circumstances, we are a long way from that. That is obviously the effect of the shortcomings and weaknesses of the Party's present methods of work. How can these be removed? What is your opinion of the results of the December 1924 elections, in which the Social-Democratic Party—an utterly corrupt and rotten party—far from losing votes, actually gained about two million votes?

Answer. That is not due to shortcomings in the work of the Communist Party of Germany. It is primarily due to the fact that the American loans and the influx of American capital, plus the stabilisation of the currency, which have somewhat improved the situation, have created the illusion that the internal and external contradictions connected with Germany's situation can be completely eliminated. It was on this illusion that German Social-Democracy rode into the present Reichstag as if on a white horse. Weis is now preening himself on his election victory; evidently he does not realise that he is claiming another's victory as his own. It was not the victory of German Social-Democracy, but of the Morgan group. Weis has been and remains merely one of Morgan's agents.

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Theses on the Bolshevisation of the Parties of the Comintern

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Part I.

The Presentation of the Question.

1. The Resolution of the Second World Congress of the Comintern on the Role of the Party in the Proletarian Revolution.

The resolution of the Second World Congress of the Comintern on the role of the Party in the proletarian revolution, drawn up with the closet cooperation of Comrade Lenin, is one of the most important documents of the Communist International which has maintained its importance unimpaired up to the present. This resolution was drawn up at a time when the Communist International was just in process of formation and when it still included in its ranks semi-syndicalist and semi-anarchist groups; when the Communist International had only just outlined the 21 conditions and was conducting negotiations with the German Independents and other semi-social democratic organisations for their affiliation. This resolution described the character and role of the Party in proletarian revolutions Generally. At the present time, when the Communist International has taken definite shape, when it has conducted serious work against both the Right and against the ultra-Left tendencies, when in a number of countries mass Communist Parties have been formed and have become consolidated, the necessity arises for formulating the policy of the Communist International, not only on the question of the role of the Communist Party in proletarian revolutions generally, but also as to what should be done to transform our Parties in the shortest time possible into fully developed Bolshevik Parties.

It must not be forgotten that in 1919-1920 we had in Germany and in Italy, Parties affiliated to the Comintern, but these Par-

ties were unable to handle the tasks with which history confronted them, in spite of the tremendous and spontaneous movements of the masses, just because they were not completely Bolshevick Parties.

2. The Slowing; Down of World Revolution and the Slogan of Bolshevisation.

Already at the Third world Congress of the Comintern, it became clear that we were on the eve of a more or less protracted development of the world revolution. This became still more evident at the Fifth Congress.

With the slowing down and protracted rate of development of the revolution, the slogan of Bolshevisation gains rather than diminishes in importance.

A Bolshevick is not one who joins the Party when the revolutionary wave is at its height. A Bolshevick is he who participates in the work of building a Communist Party during long years and if need be, decades, in years of depression, and in years of slow development of the revolution. This does not mean that those comrades who join the Party when the revolutionary tide is rising are inferior to those who already joined the Party previously.

A Bolshevick Party does not spring up 'suddenly when the revolutionary wave has reached its climax. A Bolshevick Party participates in all struggles and is formed during the process of such struggles. Right Wing and wavering elements in the Comintern and amongst those sympathetic, are of the opinion that the slogan of Bolshevising the Party is inopportune, since revolutionary events are not developing rapidly. They fail to understand that if the tempo of revolutionary development flags, if in connection with this, vacillation among certain sections of the proletariat increases, and the tendency in favour of counter-revolutionary Social Democracy increases, then the necessity for the slogan of the Bolshevisation of the Party becomes all the more actual. It is precisely under these conditions that Communists must work with greater perseverance to create a bulwark against this wavering, to retain the best elements of the proletarian vanguard in our ranks, increase their number, hold aloft the banner of the proletarian revolution, and in this way be capable

in very difficult circumstances to weld together a proletarian nucleus fitted to prepare for, and organise the proletarian revolution under all and any conditions. The Communist Party must be sufficiently flexible to go underground, when circumstances demand, in an orderly manner and without panic, not to surrender its legality easily, it must be able to combine illegal work with legal work, to utilise every, even the most insignificant “legal” hook in order to break through the limitations of underground work, it must take the lead in public mass movements, preparing the road for revolution, remaining all the time true to its fundamental revolutionary tasks.

In such circumstances, Communist Parties must bear in mind two fundamental dangers: on the one hand, the danger of becoming a small sect of “pure” Communists with “excellent” principles, incapable of establishing contact with the contemporary mass movements of the workers. On the other hand, there is the danger of falling to the level of an amorphous semi-Social Democratic Party, when the Party fails to combine the fight for winning over the masses of the workers, with the maintenance of loyalty to the principles of Communism. To be able to avoid the Scylla of narrow sectarianism and the Charybdis of amorphousness and vagueness means to facilitate the Bolshevisation of the Party.

3. Right Wing Dangers and Ultra-Left Deviations.

The slogan of Bolshevising the Party arose in the struggle against Right wing dangers, if the Fifth Congress of the Comintern had not so resolutely opposed the opportunist distortions of the tactics of the United Front and the Workers' Government, we would be confronted by the immediate danger of certain Parties of the Comintern degenerating into opportunism. The correct slogan of the Third Congress — “To the Masses” — has been interpreted in a number of countries so incorrectly for two years that the real danger arose of the independent tactics of Communism being substituted by a policy of “coalition” between Communists and counter-revolutionary Social Democracy.

The Bolshevisation of the Parties must first of all and above all be directed in the future against these right-wing distortions

which threaten to foil the historic mission of the Comintern.

But Bolshevisation is impossible without combating also the ultra-Left deviations which frequently are nothing more nor less than opportunism turned inside out. At the moment when all efforts of the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy are directed towards liquidating the “Communist menace” among the masses, the ultra-Left deviations objectively aid the pressure of bourgeois Social Democratic reaction. The mistake of the ultra-Lefts for example on the question of Communists belonging to reformist or reactionary trade unions, could absolutely destroy the Communist Parties for years to come. Russian Bolshevism also took definite shape in the struggle against both opportunism and petty bourgeois “Left” revolutionarism.

4. Communist Parties and Bolshevik Parties.

Speaking generally, Communism, Marxism and Bolshevism are one and the same thing. “Communist Party” and “Bolshevik Party” are in themselves synonymous terms. In practice, however, they are not always the same thing. Several important sections of the Comintern had and partly still have to undergo a process of gradual evolution from left Social Democracy (in some cases from anarcho-sindicalist ideology) to genuine Communism, to Bolshevism. In a certain sense the whole work of the Comintern may be described as the Bolshevisation of the Labour Parties. The Communist International has incorporated into its ranks a considerable number of Parties, groups and individual comrades who formerly belonged to the Second International; this, of course, could not be otherwise. The Russian Bolshevik Party, too, was in the ranks of the Second International, which of course was unavoidable. But, owing to a combination of circumstances, the Russian Bolsheviks were able sooner than other Parties to break with the Second International. The objective revolutionary conditions in Russia helped Russian Bolshevism, under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, sooner than the others to take the form of a Bolshevik Party, i.e. of a genuine Communist Party. Even to-day it is possible to find in a number of sections of the Comintern, considerable groups of comrades who regard themselves as Communists, but not Bolsheviks. Bolshevisation

consists in making all the Sections of the Communist International and all their subsections communists, i. e. Bolsheviks.

5. Bolshevisation and the Concrete Conditions of the Struggle.

It must not be supposed, however, that there is a panacea suitable for the Bolshevisation of all the Parties of the Comintern. Genuine Bolshevism demands above all a precise estimate of all the concrete circumstances of place and time. The Parties affiliated to the Comintern may be divided tentatively into the following three groups:

Parties who are only just passing through a predominantly propagandist period and are taking the first steps along the path of rallying the broad masses around the banner of Communism;

a) Parties which are already in the zone of more or less acute fighting and who have the support of considerable sections (sometimes the majority) of the masses of the workers;

b) Parties which have already conquered political power and are in the period of consolidating that power.

c) The first group includes a number of Parties which are still relatively weak.

The second group contains Parties like the German, French, Czechoslovakian, Bulgarian and Italian Parties, etc.

To the third group, as yet, only the Russian Communist Party belongs.

The Bolshevisation of the Sections of the Comintern is the study and the application of the experiences of the Russian Communist Party in the three Russian revolutions and also, of course, the experiences of every other section which has engaged in serious fighting. All the Sections of the Comintern must study the tasks that confront them in the light of these experiences and generalise their own experiences. It would be a serious error, however, to apply mechanically the experiences of Russia to the other countries, an error against which Comrade Lenin already uttered a warning. In the experiences of the Russian Revolution there is much which Comrade Lenin described as of universal significance for other countries (Soviets, etc.). In his "Left Wing Communism" Comrade Lenin wrote: "We now have a fair

amount of international experience which quite definitely indicates that certain fundamental features of our revolution are not merely local, not peculiarly national, not merely Russian, but of international significance. I speak here of international significance not in the broad sense of the word: not several, but all the fundamental and many secondary features of our revolution have international significance in the sense that it has influenced all countries. No, it is in the narrowest sense of the word, i. e. understanding by international significance the international application, or historically inevitable repetition on an international scale of what happened in Russia, that certain fundamental features of our revolution must be regarded as of international significance... But, in the present historical moment, the situation is such that the Russian example shows to all countries something very essential in their inevitable and not distant future. The progressive workers in all countries have long ago understood, more frequently they have not so much understood as sensed this with their revolutionary class instinct Hence, the international “significance” (in the narrow sense of the word) of the Soviet system and also of the principles of Bolshevist theory and tactics... Of course, there is much in the experience of the Russian Revolution, which will not be repeated in other countries.”

Comrade Lemn emphasised the peculiar conditions of the transition from capitalism to proletarian dictatorship in the various countries which arise from the peculiarity of the present epoch:

“Any Marxist”, wrote Comrade Lenin, “if asked if the transition from capitalism to the dictatorship of the proletariat will be even and equally harmonious in all countries will undoubtedly reply in the negative. Evenness, harmony and proportion never existed, and never could exist in the capitalist world: each country developed prominently some particular feature or group of features peculiar to capitalism and the labour movement” (“The Third International and its Place in History”).

Bolshevisation means the ability to apply the general principles of Leninism to given concrete conditions in a particular country. Bolshevisation means the ability to grasp at the principal “link” by which it will be possible to drag the whole “chain”.

This "link" cannot be the same in every country, in view of the variety of the milieu and political conditions apparent in them.

Bolshevisation is a prolonged and continuous process, which has only just been initiated in the best of the European Parties of the Comintern. The work which confronts us in this sphere is enormous and demands many years for its accomplishment.

Part II.

Marxism and Leninism.

6. Marxism and Leninism.

The sections of the Comintern can become genuine Communist Parties in the present epoch only by rallying to the banner of Leninism.

It is a matter of course that under no circumstances is Leninism to be contrasted with Marxism. Lenin was the most eminent pupil of Marx. Without Marxism there is no Leninism. But Leninism enriched Marxism first of all with the experience of three Russian revolutions and also with the experience of a number of other revolutionary movements in the period between the beginning of the 20th century and the present day. Above all, Leninism enriched the general doctrines of Marxism by the solution of the following questions:

1. The theory of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution.
2. The conditions and the forms of realising the dictatorship of the proletariat.
3. The mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry.
4. The significance of the national question generally.
5. Particularly the significance for the world proletarian revolution of national movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries.
6. The role of the Party.
7. The tactics of the proletariat in the epoch of imperialist wars.
8. The role of the proletarian State in the transition period.
9. The Soviet State as a concrete type of proletarian State in

that period.

10. The problem of social sub-divisions in the proletariat itself as a source of the division of the labour movement into an opportunist and a revolutionary tendency etc.

11. Overcoming both the Right Social Democratic tendencies and Left deviations in the Communist movement ('Left Wing' Communism").

Marx and Engels summarise mainly the experience of the social movements in France, England and Germany. Leninism, which has its source in the doctrines of Marx and Western experiences, fought in the front ranks against the distortions of Marxism by Western European Social democracy (Lenin's fight against opportunism generally and against Kautskyism in particular) employing the method of Marx, it summarised at the same time the experience of the great revolutionary movements in the Near and Far East and on the frontiers of the Orient — In Russia, China, India, etc.

The first epoch of Marxism: from the "Communist Manifesto" to the death of Marx.

The second epoch — the epoch of the Epigones of "Marxism": from the foundation of the Second International to the outbreak of the imperialist war. This epoch, particularly in its first half gave proof of some strong phases: the formation of mass proletarian organisations, considerable educational work, etc. Taken as a whole; however, the '90's represent an epoch of the distortion of Marxism. From 1907 approximately an international revolutionary wing of the labour movement began to be consolidated within the Second International.

The third epoch — the Leninist epoch. — Leninism commences approximately on the eve of the first Russian Revolution (1903—04) and in 1917 wins its first world historical victory.

Without Marxism there is no Leninism, but after what the leaders of the Second International have done with Marxism; after the "revision" of Marxism made by Kautsky and Co., under the banner of Marxism (particularly the fight these renegades of Marxism conducted against the proletarian dictatorship in Russia) it must be said that under present conditions there can be no revolutionary Marxism without Leninism.

Leninism is the Marxism of the epoch of monopolist capitalism. Imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions. The victory of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia, the growth of the proletarian and peasants movements almost throughout the whole world, the growing revolutionary movements for liberation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, and this in toto represents the beginning of the world revolution.

Leninism obtained its first direct victory in a country with a predominantly peasant population (Russia). But just as the Russian Revolution arose out of the general international situation, so Leninism is a product of the entire international proletarian movement. Ridding Marx's appreciation of the great proletarian movements of the 19th century (Chartism, the Paris Commune) of the distortions of the opportunists, completing this appreciation by a Marxist criticism of the experiences of the growing new mass proletarian movements in Europe, America, and other parts of the world, weighing the great significance of the peasant and national revolutionary movements, which appeared with special force at the beginning of the 20th century. — Lenin developed the doctrine of Marx to a new level.

Leninism represents the consistent further development of the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat — in conditions when the dictatorship of the proletariat is beginning to take the place of the dictatorship of imperialism.

The view that Marxism is only theory and that Leninism is only practice is incorrect, Leninism is the theory and practice of Marxism in the period of imperialism, imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions opened by the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia. The Comintern has set itself the task of becoming an international organisation embodying the theory and practice of Leninism.

7. Bolshevisation and Revolutionary Traditions.

Bolshevisation does not by any means reject the heritage of previous generations of revolutionaries. The study of the history of the revolutionary struggle in one's own country and in other countries is absolutely necessary for conscious activity in a Bolshevik Party at the present day. It should not occur that a French

Communist be ignorant of the works of Lafargue and the better works of Guesde written when he was still a Marxist. It should not happen that British Communists are not trained to respect Chartism and are ignorant of the most important documents of the Chartist movement. German Communists must not forget the experience of the struggle conducted by the better sections of Social Democracy in the period of the anti-socialist laws. The better works of Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel must be used by the German Communists against the Social Democrats. Russian Communists must not forget the more brilliant pages of the activity of Plekhanov in the days when he was still a Marxist.

To bolshevisize the Party means to enable it consciously to continue all that which was genuinely revolutionary and genuinely Marxian in both the First and the Second Internationals — on the basis of Leninism.

8. Bolshevisation and Certain Theoretical Errors Committed in the Communist Camp.

(Particularly Luxemburgist Errors).

The genuine assimilation of Leninism and its practical application in the construction of Communist Parties throughout the world is impossible without taking into consideration the errors of very prominent Marxists who strove to apply Marxism to the conditions of a new epoch, without being wholly successful in so doing.

Among these errors must be included those of the “left” Communists in Russia, the group of Dutch Marxians (Gorter and Pannekoek) and also those of Rosa Luxemburg. The nearer these political leaders are to Leninism, the more dangerous are those of their views which, being erroneous, do not coincide with Leninism.

The situation today is such that a number of Parties of the Comintern will find it impossible now to become genuinely Bolshevized unless they overcome for instance Luxemburgist errors, which owing to historical conditions, play an important part in the movement of the respective countries. Among the most important Luxemburgist errors of real importance at the present time, are:

a) The non-Bolshevik method of presenting the question of “spontaneity”, “consciousness”, “organisation” and the “mass”. The incurred estimation of conditions made by the Luxemburgists who in their time, under the influence of the experience of the German Social Democratic Party, which frequently hampered the revolutionary envelopment of the class struggle, were prevented from properly understanding the role of the Party in the revolution.

b) The under-estimation of the technical side of preparing for revolt hampered, and in some places even now hampers the proper presentation of the question of “organising revolution”.

c) The error in the question of attitude towards the peasantry. In the last article written by Rosa Luxemburg, after the suppression of the Spartakus rising in January 1914, she was on the verge of realising her mistake in underestimating the role of the peasantry. In a number of her previous writings, Rosa Luxemburg underestimated the role of the peasantry, i.e. presented the peasant question, not in the Bolshevik spirit, but made a number of ideological concessions to the Social Democrats.

In practice, similar Social Democratic errors in connection with the peasant question were committed by the Hungarian Communists while in power, by the Polish Communist Party, by the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1923, by the Italian Maximalists, by the pseudo-Left Communist Labour Party of Germany and are being committed now by a number of Sections of the Comintern.

d) Equally serious were the errors committed by Rosa Luxemburg and a number of Polish, Dutch and Russian Marxists on the national question. The repudiation of the slogan of self-determination of nations (the right to form independent states) on the ground that under imperialism it is “impossible” to solve the national question, led in fact to a sort of nihilism in the national question which extremely hampered Communist work in a number of countries.

e) The propaganda of the party-political character of trade unions as was insisted upon for a number of years by the Polish Party under the leadership of Rosa Luxemburg, was a great mistake which evidenced the failure to understand the role of the

trade unions as organisations embracing all wage workers. This mistake seriously hampered and still hampers the proper approach of the vanguard to the working class as a whole. The mistake which a section of the German Communists made prior to the Frankfurt Party Congress, in 1924, on the question of the trade unions was of an analogous character.

While paying just tribute to the greatness of the work of Rosa Luxemburg, one of the founders of the Communist International, the Comintern believes that it will be acting in the spirit of Rosa Luxemburg herself, if it will now help the Parties of the Comintern to draw the lessons from the errors made by this great revolutionary. N

Without overcoming the erroneous aspects of Luxemburgism, genuine Bolshevisation is impossible. Only Leninism can serve as the guiding star of the Communist Parties throughout the world. Every deviation from Leninism is at the same time a deviation from Marxism.

It is equally necessary to combat resolutely all deviations from Leninism in the sphere of so-called “pure theory” — philosophy, theory of political economy, etc

The inadequate attention which some Parties devote to theory is the greatest hindrance to the genuine Bolshevisation of the Parties of the Comintern. As long as this “tolerant” attitude towards theoretical deviations etc., is maintained, genuine Bolshevisation of the Party is out of the question. Trotskyism is a particularly dangerous deviation from Leninism which is a species of Menshevism representing a combination of “European” opportunism and “Left Radical” phrases, thereby frequently concealing its political passivity. Trotskyism is no mere individual deviation towards Menshevism, but a system of fighting Leninism of many years standing. Neither is Trotskyism merely a Russian phenomenon but an international one. To realise Leninism in the Comintern, means to expose Trotskyism in all the Parties and to liquidate it as a tendency.

PART III.

Bolshevisation and Winning over the Majority of the Working Class.

9. Bolshevisation and the slogan. — “To the Masses”.

Social Democracy also created a mass movement, but that was a Reformist mass movement. Reduced to a general formula, Bolshevisation may-be defined as the creation of a mass proletarian revolutionary movement under the banner of the ideas of Marx and Lenin.

First of all and above ad a Bolshevik is one who works among the masses. The slogan issued the Third International Congress, — “To the Masses, — in order to win the majority of the most important sections of the proletariat” still remains in full force. The Fifth Congress did hoc only repeat this slogan, but 011 the contrary developed and lent it more profound significance.

10. Bolshevisation and Work in the Trade Unions.

Deviations on the question of work of Communists in trade unions conceal the greatest dangers for the work of really Bolshevising our Parties. Throughout the entire capitalist world, the trade unions represent the most important form of mass organisation of the proletariat. Other forms of mass organisation (factory councils, etc.), are extremely valuable and have certainly a great revolutionary future; but these new forms of mass organisation are just beginning to win general recognition among the masses of the workers. New forms of mass proletarian organisations like Soviets, only become feasible just at the beginning of the revolution. To foster the belief that Communists will be able, under the capitalist system to devise mass labour organisations other than trade unions is to abandon the realms of reality.

One of the most important integral parts of the doctrine of Leninism is the axiom of the necessity for communists to work even in the most' reactionary unions. Communists have paid very dearly (the best example is Germany) for departures from this policy. Vacillation in this respect has resulted in the fact that the young Communist Parties throughout Europe have not yet

properly commenced their work in the trade unions. One of the most important component parts of Bolshevisation consists in devoting to the work in existing Social Democratic and other trade unions (yellow, national-socialist, Christian and fascist) a hundred times more attention than they received hitherto. Only when this is done, can the monopoly in the hands of the reformist leaders (the labour bureaucracy) in the trade unions be really broken. Only if this is done will the trade unions really be freed from the corrupting influence of reformism which is striving to destroy the significance of the trade unions as reliable weapons in the class struggle. The same argument, of course applies to factory councils where they exist or wherever the possibility exists of creating them on a mass scale.

Communists will increase their influence and will gain authority over the workers by defending immediate demands: higher wages, defence of the eight-hour day, struggle against unemployment etc., and by conscientiously and boldly taking the lead in all conflicts against employers.

This attitude is all the more necessary since the Social Democratic trade union "leaders" systematically betray the interests of the workers in all countries and do not scruple to take sides with the capitalists to sabotage or make null and void strike "movements begun in spite of them.

To enable Communists to take up a correct attitude in all movements which bring the workers into conflict with capitalism, Communist Parties must make a careful examination of all the factors of the concrete conditions of all such struggles: the nature of the business of the factory or factory groups, the bulk and genuineness of orders placed, the connection and mutual intertwining of the various factories, syndicates and trusts, the organised strength and capacity for resistance of the employers and also the strength of the trade union organisations and the readiness for the struggle of both organised and unorganised workers, the possibility of the strike spreading and its political consequences. All this is essential to enable Communists to be in a position to give exact directions and to ensure that they take the lead in all proletarian encounters with capitalism.

11. Bolshevisation and the Correct Tactics of the United Front

The Bolshevisation of the Parties of the Comintern does not exclude, but really presupposes the application by these Parties of the tactics of the United Front. The ability to find a correct method of approach to the masses and to have a clear view of the tasks of the vanguard in relation to the whole class — are characteristic features of Bolshevism. The tactics of the United Front have been and remain an actual method of revolutionary agitation and organisation of the masses. i.e. a correct method of approach for Communists to the masses of the workers in the present stage of the movement, when Social Democracy still has the support of the majority of the workers in a number of countries. The tactics of the United Front are by no means the monopoly of Right-Wing elements in the Comintern. These elements may lay claim only to one thing: A monopoly of opportunist errors in the application of the tactics of the United Front. These tactics however themselves wholly and essentially appertain to Leninism.

The fight for the unity of the international trade union movement supported by the Comintern will be the principal fight in the next few years. The idea of the unity of the international trade union movement is beginning to gain ground among broad sections of the masses of the workers. The time is not far distant, when this question will become the most burning question in every trade union in every country.

The Comintern is only at the beginning of the application of the tactics of the United Front (and particularly the slogan of Workers' and Peasants' Government as interpreted by the Fifth International Congress). The discarding of the tactics of the United Front is incompatible with Bolshevisation.

12. Bolshevisation and Partial Demands.

“The Bolshevik Party is a Party of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” and not “a Party of partial demands”; this is how the “ultra-Left” elements sometimes present the question. The Bolshevik Party is a Party of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and precisely for that reason it systematically puts forward partial demands and links them up with its revolutionary tasks in order

to win over the majority of the proletariat — this is the reply of Leninism. The reformists take every opportunity to put forward partial demands as a substitute for genuine revolutionary struggle. Bolsheviks utilise every partial demand in order to enlighten the masses on the necessity for revolution, and in order, by means of concrete facts to make clear to the masses the impossibility of any radical and lasting improvement of their conditions within the capitalist system. Bolsheviks put forward every concrete demand around which the masses rally in the light of the struggle for the revolution. To refuse to put forward partial demands generally, is the abandonment of the tactics of the United Front and what is more than that, — it is a repudiation of the slogan. “To the masses”.

Simultaneously Communists should prove by examples to the masses that it is really the Reformists who sabotage every earnest fight for partial demands, that only the Communist Party — because of its orientation — is capable of leading the workers in their struggle for their daily interests and understands how to protect the toiling masses from all attacks on their standard of living.

The repudiation of partial demands is incompatible with Bolshevisation.

13. Work Among the Workers Affiliated to the Second and Amsterdam Internationals.

In the majority of countries the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals in one way or another still have in their ranks considerable sections of the workers. The tasks of Bolshevising our own Parties undoubtedly include constant work among those proletarians who are still affiliated to the organisations hostile to us. The methods of work among these sections of the proletariat cannot, of course, be uniform and depend entirely upon the concrete circumstances prevailing in the given country or even in the given industry. But the obligation to conduct such work equally concerns all Parties affiliated to the Comintern.

14. Bolshevisation and the Youth Movement

Communist Parties do not yet devote sufficient attention to

work among the youth. Even in large Communist Parties there are scores of local organisations which have not yet been able to organise Communist Youth Groups in their respective localities.

One of the tasks connected with Bolshevisation, is to win over the whole of the working-class youth in all countries, — liuti generation of the working class which grew up amidst conditions of world imperialist wars and the beginning of world' revolution. While Social Democracy relies mainly upon the more bourgeois sections of the labour aristocracy, which arose in the peace epoch, the Communist Parties of all countries, on the contrary, among their other tasks, must strive to organise the whole of the proletarian youth of the new epoch under our banner.

15. Bolshevisation and Work Among Women.

The more profound a given popular movement, the more active are the women toilers in it.

The work of enlisting the hundreds of thousands and millions of women of the working class into the struggle, is also one of the most important premises of Bolshevisation. This Meeting of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern declares that in this sphere our work is extremely unsatisfactory.

The enlistment of proletarian women to active work and in the struggle is one of the premises for winning over the majority of the working class. Our victory in the civil war is impossible, if the proletarian women, the women workers, do not fight shoulder to shoulder with us, just as the building up of Communist society is impossible without the active, conscious cooperation of the women of the working class.

The Enlarged Executive, therefore, impresses upon all sections the duty of carrying out the decisions of the Fifth World Congress and of the Third Conference of Communist Women on this point. Work amongst women must be completely incorporated into general Party work, both organisationally and ideologically. Moreover, auxiliary organs or organisations (committees of action and of control, delegates' bodies, etc.) must be created to organise the masses of women under Communist leadership, to bring them under the influence of the Party and to maintain them in permanent contact with it.

16. Work Among the Unemployed.

The Communist Parties of all countries must devote most serious attention to work among the unemployed. In view of the attitude of the bourgeoisie and Social Democracy towards the millions of unemployed, the Communist Parties, by devoting proper attention to this work, could gain decisive influence among this section of the proletariat.

17. Bolshevisation and our Press.

A state of affairs such as that which exists in Berlin, Paris and Milan for example, where there is a comparatively extensive circle of Communist readers, but a comparatively small number of constant readers of our press, is intolerable. An analogous (and even worse) position is evident in other countries. Bolshevisation demands that our press becomes a popular press in the best sense of the word, i. e. that it penetrates into every working-class home, and that everyone who sympathises with us should read our newspapers. It is necessary to take measures both of an organisational and literary character in order to secure the permeation of our press into the very heart of the masses of the workers, and in this manner convert it into an instrument for the Bolshevisation of the masses. Questions of worker (and peasant) correspondents, the publication of wall newspapers, factory journals, the training of proletarian writers, etc., must receive the most far-reaching attention.

PART IV.

Bolshevisation and the Question of the Allies of the Proletariat in Revolution.

18. The Allies of the Proletariat in Revolution.

The basic attitude of Communists to the petty bourgeoisie as a possible ally of the proletariat in revolution is exhaustively and clearly defined in the classical works of Marx, Engels, and Lenin — from the “Communist Manifesto” down to Lenin’s latest works.

One of the most important tasks of Bolshevisation consists in the proper application of this principle to the conditions under

which a given Communist Party has to carry on its struggle.

One of the strongest points in Leninism, ensuring victory to Bolshevism in the revolution, has always consisted in the ability to discover a concrete ally for a given concrete task: in Russia — alliance with the entire peasantry against czarism, and, subsequently alliance with certain sections of the peasantry against the bourgeoisie, etc.

Leninism always conspired it one of its main tasks to estimate correctly what intermediate strata are suitable as allies of the proletariat in the given stage of revolutionary development, and what are the main demands which form a link between these strata and the proletariat in the given situation.

It is precisely because Leninism considers the problem of proletarian dictatorship a practical task of the immediate future that it gives prominence to the question of possible allies for the working class in time of revolution as one of the most important immediate tactical problem-.

Basically, Leninism subdivides the petty bourgeoisie into three groups: some strata of the petty bourgeoisie can and therefore must be won over in the capacity of direct allies of the proletariat, even if only temporarily; other strata must be neutralised; against the third strata (the upper section of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie) an energetic fight must be waged.

In a number of countries of Western Europe (for instance in Germany) considerable sections of minor urban office workers — clerks, officials, the technical intellectuals, etc., under the existing correlation of forces between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, may to a certain degree become the allies of the struggling proletariat. These sections could under certain circumstances play more or less the same role as the peasantry in certain stages of the proletarian revolution in Russian.

One of the most important component parts of Bolshevism is the adoption of correct and skilful tactics with respect to the intermediate strata of the population which vacillate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, but sections of whom under definite conditions may partially throw in their lot with the working class.

19. Bolshevisation and Proletarian Policy Towards the Peasantry.

The Bolshevik Party is a Workers' Party. The doctrine of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is the fundamental teaching of Bolshevism. Yet the question of the peasantry as the class which is nearest to the proletariat and as the most important of all possible allies of the proletariat in the revolution, is of paramount importance to Bolshevism, prior as well as after the conquest of political power by the proletariat.

“The proletariat becomes a truly revolutionary class, truly Socialist in its actions, only by acting as the vanguard of all those who work and are exploited and as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the exploiters; this cannot be achieved without carrying the class struggle into the rural districts, without making the labouring masses of the countryside gather round the Communist Party of the urban proletariat, without the peasants being educated by the urban proletariat.” (Comrade Lenin's Theses on the Agrarian Question, adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International).

The fundamental partial problem of the Communist Parties may be summarised as follows:

1. Struggles of the proletarian vanguard against the Social-democrats for the capture of the majority of the proletariat
2. Struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie, (imperialism) for the capture of the majority of the peasantry — in the final analysis this constitutes the basic problem of the tactics of the Communist Party. ¹

The Leninist view of the role of the peasantry not only in Russia, but throughout the world is expounded in Comrade Lenin's resolution adopted by the Second World Congress of the Communist International. This document internationalises Leninist views on the role of the peasantry. It is one of the most remarkable and unsurpassed Leninist documents.

According to this resolution, the rural population throughout the capitalist world is divided into three groups which together form the majority of the countryside and which can, and therefore must, be won over by the proletariat.

“The toiling and exploited masses of the countryside whom

the urban proletariat must lead into the struggle, or at least win over, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following groups:

First, the agricultural proletariat, the hired labourers (by the day, by the year and for the season) who have to earn their living by hiring themselves out to capitalist agricultural enterprises, and to industrial enterprises connected therewith.

Secondly, semi-proletarians or semi-peasants, i. e. those who earn their living partly by hiring themselves out to capitalist agricultural enterprises and partly by working on their own or rented plot of land which yields only part of the foodstuffs necessary for the maintenance of the family. This group of the rural working-class population is very numerous in all capitalist countries. However, the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the Socialists adhering to the Second International do their utmost to ignore the existence of the position of this group of workers, partly deliberately deceiving the workers and partly submitting blindly to customary petty bourgeois views and merging this group with the general mass of peasantry.

Thirdly, the small peasants, i. e. those who own or lease small plots of land, which are just sufficient to meet their requirements and eliminate the necessity of employing hired labour. This section of the rural population certainly stands to gain from the victory of the proletariat.

These three groups taken together form in all countries the majority of the rural population. Therefore, the ultimate success of the proletarian revolution is guaranteed not only in towns, but also in the country..."

One of the most important premises for the genuine Bolshevisation of our Parties is the systematic work necessary to carry out this resolution. First of all, it is essential for every worker, every rank-and-file Communist to know and to understand this resolution. Moreover, every section of the Comintern should consider it its foremost duty to familiarise the masses with the views expressed in this resolution and to take practical steps for its realisation. We must admit that the majority of Communist Parties has not yet taken this work seriously in -hand.

20. Bolshevisation and Proletarian Policy on the National Question.

The national question in colonial and semi-colonial countries, and by no means in these alone, is to a great extent a peasant question, in as far as the peasantry forms the majority of the population of these countries. Bolshevik policy in the colonial question cannot be carried out unless the national question is properly presented. The experience of the last few years has shown that in various countries and under varying conditions, Communists make the same mistake, namely to underestimate the national question — a mistake which makes it impossible for them to win over to their side considerable sections of the population, which are at times of decisive importance. Nihilism and indifference in connection with the national questions (or above all concessions to the “imperialist” viewpoint of the dominant national group) have greatly injured the German Communist Party and some Balkan Sections of the Comintern, as well as the Czechoslovakian Communist Party, etc.

The resolution of the Second World Congress on the national question, together with subsequent decisions of the Communist International, give very clear theoretical and tactical directions to the Communists throughout the world on this question. There can be no Bolshevisation without a correct policy on the national question.

Part V.

Concrete Tasks of the Various Parties.

21. The Immediate Concrete Tasks of the Various Parties.

Approximately these tasks are as follows: (The most important points are given):

A. The USSR. At the present juncture the task of Bolshevisation must concentrate on the following.

1) Complete Liquidation of Trotskyism as an internal Party tendency. This liquidation is a primary condition for guaranteeing a correct policy for the RCP on the following points: a) attitude towards the peasantry, b) complete supremacy of the Party in the State apparatus, in economic organs also during the pre-

sent Nep period, etc.

2) In carrying out the absolutely correct and obligatory policy of the Party on the peasant question, to take all measures (inter alia with the help of the Dictatorship) for the systematic development of the elements of socialist economy, and to strengthen thereby the economic base of the proletarian dictatorship and to help forward the transformation of Russia from a Nep into a socialist country.

B. Great Britain: The Communist Party, in making its first serious efforts in the direction of becoming a mass Communist Party, must regard the following as its central task in Bolshevisation:

1) Work in the trade unions. Special attention to be paid to the Minority Movement; the masses to be imbued with the Marxist viewpoint on the connection between economics and politics. In view of the peculiar inter-relations between the British trade unions and the Labour Party, the idea prevails in many trade union circles that the trade unions play the leading role and that the leaders of the Labour Party are so to speak only the executors of the will of the trade unions, — whilst in reality the contrary is the case.

2) Agitation against imperialist tendencies which have also become entrenched among the British labour aristocracy, (the colonial question) and especially adequate attention to the Irish question.

3) Establishment of a firmly-knit centralised Party organisation and liquidation of dilettante working methods.

4) Systematic application of the United Front tactics.

C. France: Bolshevisation at the present juncture implies the following:

1) Campaign for Trade Union Unity.

2) Establishment of trade unions of a more mass character generally; consideration of the fact that France has become very much industrialised during the past few years and that its working class has grown considerably in numerical strength. The existing trade unions, however, are as yet numerically very weak.

3) Establishment of the closest contact at all costs between the Party and the United General Confederation of Labour

(CGTU.) on the basis of the tactics and policy outlined by the Comintern.

4) In spite of all former French traditions, establishment of a well organised Communist Mass Party. Forty to fifty thousand new members should be added to the Party.

5) Organisational consolidation of the mass influence which the Party exercises over the Paris workers.

6) Utmost efforts to be made to bring the influence of the Party in the most important industrial centres (Departments) up to the level or the influence of the Party in Paris.

7) Serious influence among the peasantry to be secured.

8) Anti-militarist propaganda to be carried on primarily through the peasantry and the Young Communist League.

9) Special attention to be paid to immigrant workers.

10) Energetic work to be conducted in the Colonies.

D. Germany: Here the task of Bolshevisation implies the following:

1) Liquidation of "Left" mistakes on the trade union question not only in theory but also in practice.

2) Party agitation and propaganda to be placed on a more concrete basis in order to terminate all vacillations whatsoever as to the admissibility of partial demands.

3) Application of United Front tactics, which in the present situation (exposure of the corruption of some of the most prominent Social Democratic leaders, etc.) promises to give good results.

4) Greater attention to the work of the organised capturing of the masses, (not only agitational campaigns in the press).

5) Greater attention to the work among petty officials, clerks, etc.

6) A practical treatment of the question of work among the peasantry.

7) Propagation of the slogan: '-Workers' and Peasants Government'" as interpreted by the Fifth Congress, i. e. in the revolutionary sense which excludes every opportunist interpretation of the slogan.

8) The adoption of every means to secure sound and normal internal Party development and the removal of all the effects of

previous fractional conflicts, the firm maintenance of Pam unity against any fresh attempts to create fractions.

9) Further struggle against all fresh deviations now when the political policy of the Party has become sufficiently consolidated and organised. This should be attained by means of an extensive ideological and political educational campaign to train fresh Party functionaries, by systematically enlarging the cadres of active Party workers, and by enlisting and assimilating still more than formerly the best forces of the former opposition elements, in as far as these comrades can be won over to loyal cooperation in the spirit of the resolution passed by the Party.

10) Execution of the political policy of the Party, while at the same time observing the methods of internal Party democracy, and conducting systematic educational work, so that through discussions, wide sections of the Party membership may become convinced of the correctness of the policy adopted by the Party.

E. Czechoslovakia. Here the process of Bolshevisation implies the following:

1) The raising of the fighting capacity of the Party, abolition of parliamentary-municipal opportunism, and generally speaking the liquidation of the Right tendency within the Party composed of people of the Bubnik type.

2) Inception of the campaign for the Federation of all trade unions not only in name, but in reality.

3) The Party must learn to conduct concentrated political campaigns, extending and developing its slogans in accordance with the development of the movement.

4) All efforts should be concentrated on obtaining unanimity based on Bolshevik lines at all costs in organisations such as those of Prague, Kladno, Brünn, etc.

5) Incomparably more attention should be paid to the Youth Movement.

6) A bolder and more revolutionary attitude towards the National and Peasant questions and more attention to organisational work on this field.

7) Special attention to the formation of Party cadres trained in a truly Leninist spirit.

F. Italy:

1) Still further increase of Party agitational influence on the masses of the workers, by means of breaking through the limitations of underground activity necessitated by Fascism.

2) Regular political campaigns to be conducted more systematically.

3) Trade unions to be permeated more effectively than hitherto and to develop the fight for Trade Union Unity in spite of the provocative attitude of the reformists, who have begun to expel members of the Communist Party.

4) Systematic work to be undertaken to establish, consolidate and capture factory and workshop committees.

5) The slogan of establishing peasant committees should not be the limit, but at all costs actual penetration right into the villages by means of the workers and the progressive peasants.

6) Greater attention to be paid to questions of Marxian ideology.

7) Struggle against all ideological deviations, against the doctrinaire and theoretical conceptions of Bordiga and against the reformism represented in Graziadei's economic theory.

G. Poland.

1) In spite of extremely difficult conditions created by terrorism and provocation, efforts must be made for the more effective permeation of trade unions and for the organisation of a campaign for Trade Union Unity.

2) Adoption once and for all of bold and decisive lines on the national peasant questions in a true spirit of Leninism.

3) Concentration of untiring attention on the need for giving the increasingly developing peasant movement a revolutionary organised character.

4) Greater attention to be paid to the establishment of a single centralised Party out of the various component sections — on the basis of a correct national policy.

This task also confronts a number of other countries, such as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, etc.

H. America.

1) More intensive work must be conducted in trade unions and better organisation of our influence on them (Communist fractions).

2) Fusion of all national groups of the Party into a real homogeneous Party.

3) Greater attention to be paid to agitation connected with everyday conditions of working-class life (application of United Front tactics).

I. The Balkans.

1) Presentation both of the peasant and national questions in their concrete form in the Balkans, and the role of imperialism in the Balkan countries from the Leninist viewpoint.

2) Utilisation of the experiences of the peasant and national movements in the Balkans to secure a correct attitude in respect of the peasant and national organisations.

3) Struggle for the liquidation of the illegality of the Communist Parties and of working-class organisations, and coordination of legal and illegal activities.

4) Mobilisation of the Parties for the struggle for the immediate demands of the masses.

5) Consolidation of the Communist Parties under conditions of illegality. Introduction of more working-class elements into their ranks and formation of united and energetic executives, increased centralisation and strict discipline in the Parties.

6) Consolidation of Party influence in the trade unions and cooperatives. Struggle for Trade Union Unity.

7) Liquidation of fractional struggle by laying down correct political lines for the action of Communist Parties in agreement with the CI and by the methodical education of the rank-and-file Party members (Yugoslavia).

8) Coordination of the actions of the Communist Parties through the consolidation of the Communist Balkan Federation.

22. Bolshevisation and Anti-Monarchist Agitation.

It is erroneous to refrain from anti-monarchist propaganda on the ground that it is the bourgeoisie which actually rules under the aegis of the monarchy. Communists should lay stress on the slogan "Down with the Monarchy in Great Britain, in Italy, in the Balkan countries, etc. but also in Germany. Communists must be able to combine their anti-monarchist agitation with the everyday economic and political struggle. Bolshevism does not

mean to refrain from republican-democratic agitation against the monarchy, but implies ability to combine this agitation with socialist demands and to explain to the workers generally the transformation of the revolutionary-democratic movement into the socialist movement.

23. Numerical Growth of Certain Communist Parties — Illegal Parties.

In a number of countries — in France, Germany, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Sweden, Norway and America, Communist Parties are working now under circumstances in which they could and ought to have increased their membership considerably. Such a numerical growth (its importance is at times under-estimated by Party leaders) far from hindering the Bolshevisation of these Parties, could on the contrary facilitate it.

Those Parties forced to work under illegal conditions must utilise every means to bring their organised influence to bear on the masses of the workers and peasants generally in an ever-increasing degree. If every constitutional illusion — that is the illusion that legal activity will be tolerated by the bourgeoisie without an illegal organisation — is of extreme danger, still illegal parties must take advantage of every passing opportunity to group sympathetic workers even loosely together, in order to ensure a basis for legal Party work in the agitation and propaganda spheres.

Part. VI.

Bolshevisation and Organisational Questions.

24. Bolshevisation and Organisational Questions.

The most important premise of Bolshevisation is a correct Bolshevik policy, a policy enabling us to capture the masses. No organisational form will be of any avail without a correct Bolshevik policy capable of guaranteeing first and foremost correct relations between the Party and the entire class, between the Party and non-party workers. But even the best policy of a Communist Party will not be able to reach the entire Party membership and through these the masses if the Party lacks a well-knit and suitable organising apparatus. But on the basis of its revolu-

tionary experience, Leninism has elaborated a whole system of views on various questions including the question of organisation, which are of the utmost importance for the Bolshevisation of the Parties.

The principle and fundamental organisational form of every Bolshevik Party is the factory Party nucleus. The old principle of organisation borrowed from the Social Democrats, according to which the Party is constructed on the basis of constituencies, convenient for parliamentary elections, is not acceptable to Communists. It is impossible to establish a real Bolshevik Party unless the organisation is placed on the basis of factory and workshop nuclei.

In addition to factory and workshop Party nuclei in such organisations as trade unions, factory and workshop committees, cooperatives, etc., one can, and in fact, one should proceed to the creation of a whole series of auxiliary and non-Party organisations: tenants, unemployed, ex-soldiers, etc. (with Communist nuclei within them). Bolshevisation demands that our Parties take advantage of every opportunity for making the network of workers' organisations as close and intertwined as possible. Advantage should be taken of every significant topic of the day to create auxiliary loosely formed organisations, provided they have vitality.

The initiative for the creation of such organisations must be taken by the Party Executives through Party members who then must take the superintendence of these organisations into their own hands. Communists should form Communist fractions in these organisations, which then receive directions from the Party executives.

The respective Party executives must pay special attention to work in the nuclei, establish a close connection with them, issue instructions to them, prepare and elaborate material for them and make them participate in the discussion and decision of all political, economic and Party questions.

The campaign commenced for the reorganisation of our Parties on a factory and workshop nuclei basis should be energetic

cally pursued and brought to a conclusion¹⁾) with as little delay as possible. But our Parties must not forget that this reorganisation in itself alone is not by any means complete Bolshevisation. It is only part of it. They must above all bear in mind that organisation of factory and workshop nuclei is only the first step, for the Party must imbue these nuclei with political life, provide them with trained leaders who must be recruited in the factories and workshops for this work. The nucleus should also be taught to adopt methods in its work capable of increasing the influence of our Party among the workers employed in enterprises, factories, and workshops, etc.

25. Bolshevisation and the Resolution of the Third Congress of the Communist International on Organisation Questions.

The resolution of the Third World Congress on the organisation question has by no means been carried out in its entirety. One of its most important paragraphs is that which deals with the necessity to conduct the work in such a way that every rank-and-file members of the Party should feel the obligation of working for the Party, and that the entire Party apparatus should gradually draw as many rank and file communists as possible into its work. The Enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern draws attention once more to this paragraph of the resolution, and is of the opinion that it must be put into practice as a premise to ensure Bolshevisation. The Enlarged Executive draws the attention of the Communist Parties to the resolutions adopted by the fifth World Congress on the question of organisation. It also endorses the resolution adopted by the organisation conference of the sections of the C. I. and recommends its application in every detail.

26. Bolshevisation and the Problem of Party Cadres.

In order to establish a Bolshevik Party, it is necessary to be able to build up in the course of years Party cadres fit for this work. Such cadres are formed not only by means of organised elections, but mainly by selecting suitable workers on the strength of their activity. The process of such selection is neces-

1 There are cases when such reorganisation should not be forced, for example: small Parties in big industrial countries.

sarily slow. From factory and workshop nuclei to the Central Committee of the Party only workers who have stood the test of political activity and struggle should be selected for these cadres. One of the foremost tasks of every Communist Party should consist in selecting very carefully the leading cadres among the more advanced workers distinguished by their energy, capability, knowledge and devotion to the Party. Communist cadres of working-class organisers should be imbued with the idea that they are not preparing the revolution as a side issue, but that they have to give themselves up body and soul to the revolutionary struggle and must place themselves completely at the disposal of the Party. A Communist organiser must not resemble a Social Democratic “official”. A Communist organiser must live and work among the masses — in factories, workshops and mines — always ready to be sent by the Party wherever he or she is most needed. These workers must be systematically helped to become real organisers of the masses, Party and trade union leaders.

The importance of the vanguard is enormous. But it stands to reason that the vanguard and the Party cadres, to do justice to their historic task, must really get into contact with the non-Party masses. A Communist Party which forgets this and holds itself aloof ceases to be a vanguard.

It is essential to impart a more working-class character to the leading institutions of the Party. Working class leaders should be treated with patience and care and encouraged to work for their own improvement, given opportunities to prove their worth by the allocation of more important and increasingly responsible work.

27. Bolshevisation, Internal Party Democracy and Discipline.

The Bolshevik Party does not regard internal Party democracy as an abstract “principle” but presents the question concretely. The Estonian, or the Bulgarian Communist Parties, for instance, cannot apply internal Party democracy as the French or the British Communist Parties can. The German Communist Party cannot act in accordance with the method of Party cleaning and the conditions of acceptance into the Party adopted by the Russian Communist Party. The forms of internal Party organisation must

be subordinated to the fundamental interests of the struggle for proletarian dictatorship. Under all circumstances, however, the Communist Party must preserve a certain amount of freedom of internal Party criticism, must inculcate its spirit of equality among the members, the superior bodies of the Party must be attentive and helpful to lower nuclei, the principle of election must be maintained, etc. This will stimulate the activity of the Party masses and secure the cooperation of the lower bodies and all the nuclei of the Party in the political and organisational life of the Party, thus fostering initiative on the part of the workers in the Party).

Iron proletarian discipline is one of the most important premises of Bolshevisation. Parties displaying on their banners the device: "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" must understand that victorious proletarian dictatorship cannot be achieved without iron Party discipline — discipline which it takes years and years to acquire. For Bolsheviks it is not a case of reiterating the stereotyped Social Democratic phrases about the advantage of discipline in general, but rather of making workers realise that without exercising the strictest Party discipline, based on ideological power, and to maintain and consolidate proletarian dictatorship, that without such discipline civil war is doomed to failure.

28. Bolshevisation and the Party Apparatus.

One cannot have a centralised, well organised and strongly welded Bolshevik Party without a proper Party apparatus.

At present some sections of the Comintern are burdened with an unwieldy Party apparatus out of all proportion with the Party itself and therefore frequently bureaucratic. Other sections again have hardly any Party apparatus at all.

The Enlarged E.C.C.I. instructs the Presidium in conjunction with the OrgBureau and the representatives of the respective Parties to devise measures to enable every one of the Comintern Parties to form for themselves an apparatus in accordance with the interests of the work.

29. Bolshevisation and Self-Criticism.

Struggle against what Comrade Lenin called "Communist

Boastfulness” against smug self-content and conceit in the Communist ranks, is one of the most important premises of Bolshevisation. Without healthy self-criticism in our own rank;, dictated by concern for the interests of the proletarian revolution, struggle against overestimating our forces and successes, (but also against faint-hearted grousing) without realistic and sober estimation of the forces of the opponent — there can be no true Bolshevisation.

30. Scheduled Work and Control of its Execution.

In countries where the work of the Communist Parties can be carried out under normal conditions it is essential to elaborate a general plan of work for six or twelve months ahead, in order to learn to concentrate the forces of the Party on the main and fundamental tasks.

Instances may be observed where central and local organisations make many correct decisions, but are unable to put them into practice. It must become an integral part of all our organisations to keep control over the execution of ail decisions made. It is better to make fewer decisions, and to ensure that they are actually executed “Quality rather than quantity” (Lenin).

PART VII.

Bolshevisation and International Leadership.

The establishment of a homogeneous world Communist Party based on democratic centralism demands serious efforts on the part of all sections affiliated to the Comintern. Bolshevisation is incompatible with separate and federalist tendencies. The World Party of Leninism must not be welded by mechanical discipline, but by unity of Party will and Party action. It is absolutely necessary to eliminate all tendencies towards Isolation, group sectarianism, and narrow circle psychology. Every Party affiliated to the Comintern must give its best forces to international leadership. It is essential to instil into the minds of the masses the conviction that in the present epoch the great economic and political struggles of the working class can only be won if they are controlled on an international scale from one centre.

No Communist Party should recoil from illegal work. Ille-

gality is a condition in which many Communist Parties must now work and which in the epoch of the increased intensification of the social struggles might extend to many Parties of the Comintern which today are still legal.

Every Communist Party must reckon with illegality as a possible and probable condition, and must be prepared to transfer to illegal work. Whenever the political situation becomes seriously acute, it must take the proper measures which will enable it to continue its work illegally after its organisation has been prohibited; it must keep its whole technical apparatus for illegality in readiness. But all unnecessary playing with illegality must be avoided and the Party must defend its legality to the bitter end.

On the other hand the Parties which are compelled to work illegality in readiness. But all unnecessary playing with illegality unity of conducting legal activity and for the extension of such opportunities.

The Party should not allow any form of legal activity to be taken from it (election campaigns, parliamentary activity, the legal press, factory councils, trade unions, educational societies, cooperatives, sick benefit societies, etc.). The masses of workers and peasants must become accustomed to protect the legal opportunities of their Party and to meet every attack of the bourgeoisie and the social traitors against these opportunities with mass demonstrations (strikes, demonstrations, etc.).

The principal basis of the activity of an illegal Party is strict Party discipline, which must be much more strict than that of the legal Parties. But this discipline should not be confounded with bureaucratisation. Even under the most extreme illegality, there is still the possibility of Party democracy, freedom of discussion and of election of all Party representatives. Any unnecessary limitation to this democracy would cause the separation of the Party from the masses, would make it pedantic and transform it into a group of conspirators. But once the Party officials have been elected, they must be able to count in all their activities on the iron discipline of the Party membership, and Party discussion may be carried on only until the Party comes into action.

Party discipline in an illegal Party also includes the strictest methods of conspiracy. The composition of the Party organs, the

internal Party affairs and such like, must be kept strictly secret from the Party members. Any breach of conspiracy must be ruthlessly punished, by the dismissal of the responsible Party officials. Party trial and expulsion from the Party.

In the illegal Parties, more care must be exercised in the acceptance of new members. The moral value of the new party members, their strength of character, etc. must be very carefully investigated. The behaviour of Communists under arrest, cross-examination and in prison is extremely important; such situations serve as the fiery ordeal for the firmness of a Communist and his devotion to the Party, and are of extreme importance for the authority of the whole Party. Especially during cross-examination a revolutionary must be doubly careful in his demeanour; every word carelessly dropped might endanger both the Party and the Communist movement.

One of the most important tasks of illegal Parties is the fight against spying and provocation. The most important weapon in the fight against provocation is to mobilise the opinion of the working class against it and to train the workers to react to all acts of provocation and denunciation with the most determined methods. In factories we must continually be on the watch to discover and drive out police informers.

Resolution on the American Question

Adopted by the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.,
March-April, 1925

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1. General Situation.

American capitalism has temporarily overcome its crisis. Masses of workers, who in the last few years took up the struggle against the arbitrary reduction of their standard of living have been defeated in tremendous labour struggles and have been subjected to the heaviest yoke. Masses of small farmers, who were in a state of ferment because of the agricultural crisis, have been expropriated. At last the wide-open price "scissors" was able to be closed in conformity with all the laws of capital; only in so doing the scissors cut these farmers off from their property. The requirements for the expansion of industrial export could, it is true, not be complied with in an adequate degree, but instead of this, new paths for the export of capital to impoverished Europe were opened. American finance capital has thus not only rescued its profit and its power on the home markets, but has won the position of the biggest shareholder among the world capitalist powers. It is now more powerful than ever before.

These victories of American capitalism have not been won without paying a big price. Even the Dawes Plan, which from the standpoint of Wall Street, appears as a ladder to world monopoly, is likely to draw American capitalism into a policy in which it stands to lose much more than merely its interest in German gold marks. It will involve it more and more deeply in the contradictions and crises of European capitalism and also in the imperialist world arena in conflicts and struggles for markets, for interest, for oil, colonies and power.

Furthermore, class relations in America are developing in a direction menacing to capitalism. The increased pressure of exploitation has forced large masses of workers to the point where class-consciousness inevitably awakens even amongst the most politically backward wage slaves. The quality of exploitation

which has been greatly extended, is changing more and more the former heterogeneity of the American working class. It is true that capitalism is still able to bribe millions of skilled American workers by positions of privilege, but the circle of this privileged class is growing smaller and smaller. Mass unemployment as a permanent social institution and the mass proletarianisation of the small farmers, form a fruitful ground for the revolutionising process germinating in the depths. On the whole the situation of the American working class is at present far from being pregnant with revolution; it is different however, from what it was ten years ago.

The strengthening of the centralised government power, which interferes in the most brutal fashion in the everyday struggles of the working class, is an important factor in the increasing acuteness of the class struggles and in the acceleration of the crystallisation of class-consciousness. The cessation of immigration from Europe, the influx of hundreds of thousands of ruined proletarianised farmers (farmers of American origin who speak English, possess political rights and who will offer an energetic resistance to the exploitation and oppression of the trusts) as unskilled, badly paid workers, into the large towns and industrial centres, represent an important change in the structure of the American proletariat.

It is true that the majority of the American workers do not yet feel any fundamental change in their position. But the developing trend of this position has undergone a fundamental change. This change is only very slowly and with difficulty being understood by the masses.

2. The process of the development of political independence of the American workers,

which commenced after the imperialist war and has continued under varying forms from year to year, is the political expression of the changed tendency of development of the class situation of the working class. This process is, however, still moving forward slowly and hesitatingly. This may be explained by various specific American causes and also partly because the American workers have a privileged position in comparison with that of

workers in other countries. In no other capitalist country have the workers to overcome such internal and external obstacles in the beginning on their way to political independence. It is true that the time is already past when the reactionary leadership of the A. F. of L. could sell the entire vote of the organised workers just as it pleased to the highest bidder of the two capitalist parties. The political position of leadership of the agents of capital at the head of the A. F. of L. is in part undermined; in part paralysed by the anti-capitalist sentiments of the masses, but it is far from being eliminated.

The opposition of masses of organised workers to the continuance of their political bondage to the capitalists originally became apparent in various indefinite forms (for instance, in a section of the organisations affiliated to the C. P. P. A. here and there in the labour unions, etc.). However, it was clearer and more definite in the Farmer-Labour movement, which led in 1923 to the foundation of Farmer-Labour Parties in many States, and rallies considerable masses around its standard. The Communist Workers Party played, as we know, an effective part in this movement, and for a certain period even set the pace in it.

Prior to the last presidential election, however, the petty-bourgeois liberal opposition movement led by La Follette came to the forefront and irresistibly captured the mass sentiment of the semi-conscious, anti-capitalistically inclined workers and farmers.

3. The LaFollette Movement

as a genuine petty-bourgeois phenomenon was of a two-fold nature: on the one hand, it was an objective symptom of the disorganisation in the camp of the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, in the prevailing crisis of American capitalism its objective purpose was the support of capital; to divert as a political safety valve the awakening class-consciousness of the proletariat from the consolidation of its independent class movement. Gompers understood this and allied himself with LaFollette. The semi-conscious labouring masses, however, saw in LaFollette, a standard bearer against Big Business and followed him blindly, for the Farmer-Labour movement still lacked political independence in such a

degree. The majority of the workers in this movement desired the formation of a Labour Party, but they did not yet demand an independent proletarian class policy, they preferred rather to accept the guardianship of an opposition party of the petty-bourgeoisie. The path of the proletariat can even lead through such false roads in its first steps towards its constitution as a class.

4. The Fight of the Workers Party against Lafollette for the Labour Party Movement. '

As was to have been expected at the beginning, Lafollette determinedly rejected any community of interest with a Farmer-Labour Party to be organised with the collaboration of the Workers Party, and he succeeded in isolating the Communists from the masses in the election campaign. For its part, the Workers Party opposed La Follette just as unflinchingly even though without prospects of much success, it must be recognised that in the elections La Follette gained an important victory. That does not mean that the tactics of the Workers Party were not correct. They were correct; our Party only met with a defeat which was not to be avoided under the given circumstances.

After this defeat a certain confusion became apparent in the ranks of the Workers Party. It seemed to the majority of the CEC and many comrades that the La Follette movement had paralysed any mass movement' for a Labour Party for a long time to come. For a time after the elections it really appeared that even the masses who had previously supported the formation of an independent national-Farmer-Labour Party, wanted no other Party besides that of La Follette. In this situation the majority of the C. E. C. of the Workers Party drew the conclusion that the former chief slogan of the Party "For the Formation of a Farmer-Labour Party" had to be abandoned as useless, and the Party for the time had to concentrate its attention firstly on the unity of the fight for immediate concrete demands and upon the immediate strengthening of its own ranks.

Important and very symptomatic phenomena in the La Follette movement have already proved that this conclusion was incorrect. At the first opportunity in which a decision upon the

formation of a La Follette Party was to be arrived at, at the conference of the CPPA (the most important organisation in this movement), the adherents of the new Party split on the question of the form of organisation. Whether the Party should be built up on individual membership — as La Follette demanded — or on a basis of collective affiliation. La Follette feels a very comprehensive fear of the preponderance of powerful labour organisations in his Party, but these latter are not Inclined to make a renunciation of their influence through the Bye Laws. This struggle as to the form of the organisation is of course an expression of the class differences and antagonisms in the La Follette movement. Immediately after this split of the Conference of the CPPA., the Executive of the Socialist Party came out into the open with the slogan “for the formation of a Labour Party”, with collective affiliation. The Socialist Party was also up to now one of the pillars of the La Follette movement, and since it is now against the La Follette Party on this question, this is of much more significance than the former Platonic play of the Socialist Party with the Labour Party slogan. Numerically this reformist Party is now very small, but it has considerable ideological influence amongst the trade union officials.

In view of these facts there can scarcely be any doubt that in the near future the problem of the Labour Party will even more than before be an actual, even the most important political question on the agenda of many trade unions and other labour organisations. The Minority of the Central Executive Committee of the Workers Party was right in having confidence in the vitality and future of the Labour Party movement. The Workers Party must now do its utmost to further this movement.

5. Tactics in the Fight for a Labour Party.

Not the rejection of a struggle for the Labour Party, but an adjustment and further development of our tactics in this struggle are called for, by the present situation in America. Our slogan itself should now be revised in so far that we no longer agitate for a “Farmer-Labour Party” but only for a “Labour Party”, since in the changed conditions the premises for the formation of a joint Party of workers and small farmers are lacking.

The Communists need not demand nor even expect that the Labour Party will immediately be a revolutionary, radical party of workers, in which the Communists will take the lead. In this respect the slogan has been put somewhat too narrowly by the Minority of the CEC. Communists should clearly realise that the formation of a Labour Party signifies for the affiliated workers only the beginning of their political emancipation and of the development of their class consciousness. It is very possible that in America, at first there will be for a time at the head of the Labour Party similar reformist labour traitors to those, in England, or even worse. Nevertheless, the formation of such a Party may for a time represent a definite step forward in the American labour movement, and the Communist Party is obliged to participate in this Party, if only the latter permit in a sufficient degree freedom of criticism and agitation on the part of the affiliated organisations.

Why must the Communists act thus?

Because it is their task to remain in closest contact with the masses in order to influence the latter continually in a revolutionary sense. However, mere agitation and propaganda, even the best, is not sufficient for the revolutionary influencing of the masses. For this purpose the masses require their own revolutionary experience. They can obtain essential elements of this experience in the Labour Party, even though the latter be directed by reformists. In that case the masses, after their disappointments will learn to know the reasonable role of the petty-bourgeois reformists, and that is very important. Furthermore, they will gain valuable experience in the independent political organisation of the working class.

The ideas of class and class consciousness should be inculcated as thoroughly as possible in the masses of the American working class by the preparatory campaign of the Communists for the formation of a Labour Party. This is not to be done abstractly, for it would have no success in this manner, but in immediate connection with the most urgent everyday demands of the workers. The Communists should induce the working masses to present these demands to the reformists and to the leaders of the La Follette organisations and to call upon them for joint ac-

tion with the Workers Party. Should they accept or reject such proposals — sooner or later the traitors will expose themselves. After every such instance, the masses of workers will, however, more and more clearly realise the necessity of an independent class Party of their own. And if they do not yet recognise the Communist Party as this class party they will still feel that the slogan of a Labour Party is the consequence of all their everyday demands, and thus this slogan gains vital mass power.

This fight will require persevering energy and much patience. It would be a mistake for us to begin too prematurely with the organisational measures for the formation of the Labour Party. This could only give the La Follette crowd a trump card in their fight against the Labour Party movement and aid them to reconsolidate their own ranks. We, however, should on the contrary drive an ever-deeper wedge into the La Follette 'movement. Of course, the entire organised mass of workers will not join upon the formation of such a Labour Party, but at best only a section. But the conditions for the successful formation are not ripe as long as there is not a firm mass basis of trade union support. The majority of the Central Committee was quite right in emphasising this point. If the Workers Party were merely to be combined with the organisations sympathising with it, no Labour Party could be formed from this combination.

It may be that the mass support for the idea of the Labour Party will reveal itself so strongly in some cities and even in some states, that organisational measures can be taken without further hesitation. The formation of the National Labour Party should be advised against until at least 500,000 organised workers are definitely won over to it.

After the formation of the Labour Party, what the Executive emphasised a year ago should be kept in mind, that it is not advisable to endeavour to split off a Left Wing from the Labour Party as soon as possible in order to transform this split off section into a mass Communist Party. We must rather endeavour to win increasing masses in the Labour Party for the revolutionary point of view and to let this left wing grow within the Labour Party and at the same time to take (the most advanced and revolutionary elements into the Workers Party. This policy is to be ob-

served both prior to the formation of the Labour Party and subsequently.

6. Strengthening and Consolidation of the Workers Party.

The fight for the formation of the Labour Party in no way excludes propaganda and recruiting activity for the winning and training of new members for the Workers Party. On the contrary, this work should be carried out simultaneously with the utmost intensity. The role of the Workers Party as the Communist Party of the country should neither be hidden nor diminished.

As the Workers Party is at present constituted, it is still altogether too weak to collaborate with sufficient effectiveness in the proletarian mass movement of this great country. This natural weakness was particularly evident in its election campaign. As long as the Workers Party does not at least double its membership (and especially increase manifold the number of its American members), it cannot be said that it fulfils the requirements of an American (legal) Communist Party. Under no circumstances should it underestimate in any way the importance of such "minor" tasks, as the circulation of the "Daily Worker" and the establishment of new organs, the development of the "Workers Monthly", the publication and distribution of good propaganda literature, the organisation of Party schools, recruiting weeks, etc.

The organisational structure of the Party still lacks to a considerable extent the necessary cohesion. This is to be improved primarily by systematic, thorough concentration of the Party members of all the different nationalities in centralised organisations. The formation of international branches and factory nuclei is therefore on this account the most urgent organisational task of the Party.

7. Communist Trade Union Work.'

In America the regular work of Party members in the trade unions must be considered now, as the fundamental work on which depends the success of the Party in most of the other fields, and especially the struggle for a Labour Party. Therefore, any tendency to neglect or minimise the importance of this work

must be energetically combated. In every single trade union organisation Party members must be organised into a Communist Fraction and must act unitedly on every question. These fractions get their instructions from the Party and work under its control. Communist fractions must take an active and energetic part in all mass economic struggles.

The Party must give energetic support to the Trade Union Educational League and do its utmost to develop and extend it. Efforts must be made to convert the fuel into a great opposition movement of the Left bloc. All attempts of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy to isolate the TUEL, to undermine its influence in the trade unions and to limit the membership to Communists and their closest sympathisers must be energetically resisted.

8. Party Work on the Other Fields.

Although the Party is at this time not to propagate the formation of a common party for workers and farmers, it must not only work among the agricultural labourers, but must at the same time do its utmost to get into contact with and exercise control over the poorest tenant farmers and farmers who are in debt; for they are destined to play a very important role in the American revolution as future allies of the proletariat. Neither does this modification of the main political slogan of the Party mean that the Party is not to work in the already existing Farmer-Labour Parties. The task of the Communists in the existing Farmer-Labour Parties is as follows: they must organise the industrial elements as a special wing, which should be drawn at an opportune moment into a Labour Party and form a bloc with the organisations of the poor farmers.

The Party must pay more attention and give more support to the work of the Communist Youth. It is moreover of the utmost importance for the Party to make at last in good earnest a beginning with the work among the working women. The women members of the Party and non-Party working women are to be drawn into revolutionary work which the Party must organise. The existing non-Party proletarian women organisations are not to be done away with, but should be made use of for revolutionary work.

9. Struggle against Lore's Opportunism.

Lore represents a non-Communist tendency in the Workers Party. Already the decision of the ECCI in May 1924, pointed out that Comrade Lore's ideology was the ideology of the Two and a Half International. Lore supported Levi against the C. I. He misinterpreted the policy of the C. I. almost on every question. He declared that the main task of the Communist Party of Germany in the revolutionary situation of 1923 should have been to prevent the revolution by every possible means. Lore spread the most ridiculous illusions concerning the "mission to establish world peace" of Ramsay MacDonald. He warned the French Communists against the overthrow of Herriot. He fought against the necessary centralism of the Party in the name of the autonomy of the German Federation. The ideological struggle against Comrade Lore's tendency is essential for the Party.

The Executive proposes to the Workers Party to come to a definite decision on the Lore question at its next congress, in any case the Executive is of the opinion that the Central Committee of the Party is not the place for such an opportunist as Lore.

10. The Firm Consolidation of Communist Forces.

The above platform, adapted by the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International, has also been approved by the representatives of both groups in the Workers Party.

The Executive Committee of the C. I. discovered errors in the attitudes of both groups which must be rectified.

The Executive Committee is of the definite opinion that fractional conflicts between the two groups must now absolutely cease. Although it is true that this fractional conflict arose from real differences, it has, nevertheless, been of too acute a character on both sides and at times assumed impermissible forms. The Executive Committee does not object to a concrete and calm discussion being carried on until the Party Congress but, in the interest of Party unity it demands the unconditional cessation of Party warfare.

In particular, the Executive Committee must point out that it regards a campaign conducted against Comrade Pepper as abso-

lutely uncalled for, all the more since, firstly, comrade Pepper himself has no intention of returning to work in the Workers Party, and secondly the Executive Committee desires to use his energies for other important tasks. The Executive Committee knows that Comrade Pepper during his brief stay in America performed services for the Workers Party for which he deserves praise. The Executive Committee demands that ail personal polemics on both sides should cease.

The Executive Committee regards it as absolutely essential that the representatives of the Party majority and minority should henceforward conclude a fraternal peace and work in communist cooperation. The leading comrades are primarily responsible for setting a good example to the other Part} members in this respect.

The Party Congress will be held at an early date. All disputed questions which may arise between the two groups in the Party Central Committee in the interval, and which cannot be agreed upon, are to be settled in a parity commission under the chairmanship of a neutral comrade. This commission shall also control the actual conduct of the Party discussion.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the Part Congress, in a calm atmosphere, free from all fractional passions, should elect the Party Central Committee from among the comrades of both groups. The group which will be in the minority at the Party Congress must in any case be assured a large representation in the Central Committee.

Naturally, both the groups, having adopted this platform, must at the Party Congress actively oppose any of the followers of Lore being elected to the Central Committee.

America

United States

The Workers' (Communist) Party of America General Economic and Political Situation

The American Section of the Communist International
Between the Fifth and Sixth World Congress 1924-8

The following is an excerpt of the book The Communist International Between the Fifth and the Sixth Congresses – 1924-8 published by the Organization Bureau of the Comintern. The excerpt published here is the report made by the Worker's (Communist) Party of America and shows the compliance with the theses of the Fifth Congress and the Plenum of the Executive Committee published above. The preface to this collection of reports says "the reports of some sections were inadequate and this factor must be kept in mind when studying same. But in spite of this shortcoming, the reports provide a concise survey of the economic and political conditions of the various countries, the position of the political parties and the activities of the sections of the C.I."

At the time of the Fifth World Congress here was a turn in the economic situation in America. The period of "good times" had lasted until the summer of 1927, when a steady and serious depression set in that is now tending towards a crisis. Since this time the United States has witnessed a continual decline in production in basic industries (iron, steel, coal, oil, etc.), a fall in profits, especially of industrial corporations, and a record in the number of commercial failures.

There was an absolute fall in total production of 15 per cent, in 1927 as compared with 1926, and of 8 per cent, as compared with 1925. Steel production was 9 per cent, less than in 1926 and 4 per cent, less than in 1925.

The size of the unemployed army in the United States at present is estimated between three and a half and four million. The worst sufferers are those employed in the basic industries, the decline in the number employed being, e.g., steel 11.2 per cent.,

railroad shops 12 per cent., electrical apparatus 9 per cent.

This severe shrinkage in the purchasing capacity of the home market (which had been artificially inflated for several years by extensive instalment selling), coupled with a constantly swelling productive apparatus, forces the American imperialists to fight more and more sharply for a bigger share of the world market, especially in Latin America and in the East.

Since the outbreak of the war (1914) over fourteen and a half billion dollars have been exported as capital to almost every country on earth, in 1927 the total export of capital being over a billion and a half dollars, an increase of 8.4 per cent, over the preceding year.

In order to maintain this position against a partially stabilised Europe and the colonies and semi-colonies, Yankee imperialism is intensifying its aggressive policy. Hence the big clash between America and Great Britain. United States investments of capital in South America increased 150 per cent, since before the war, while those of Great Britain have remained stationary. The Pan-American Conference at Havana was the scene of a complete rout of British efforts to challenge the hegemony of the United States in Latin America, as well as the splitting of the resistance of Latin America to the penetration of Yankee imperialism.

At home we see an increasing integration of state and capital. The real head of the president's cabinet is Andrew Mellon, one of the three richest men in the United States; Herbert Hoover, a multi-millionaire, is Secretary of Commerce. A partner of the House of Morgan is sent as ambassador to Mexico. State power is used more and more nakedly against every large-scale strike. In practically every labour struggle court injunctions against picketing, strike relief, or any other pro-strike activity are issued to hamstring the workers' organisations. Vicious new anti-labour legislation is in preparation; a law sponsored by the American Bar Association (lawyers) in co-operation with the leaders of the American Federation of Labour provides for compulsory arbitration and the illegality of strikes. Exception laws are also pending for registering (finger-printing) and deporting foreign-born workers. Direct judicial terrorism against individual workers, the "frame-up" system, is being increasingly resorted to

(Sacco and Vanzetti, Zeigler Miners, etc.).

BOURGEOIS PARTIES.

The “republican” and “democratic” parties represent essentially the same big financial and industrial interests. Their petty the petty bourgeoisie and large sections of the workers in the cities, mainly from the northern and western farmers, that of the Democrats from the southern farmers, while both draw heavily from the petty bourgeoisie and large sections of the workers in the cities. Although maintaining the Gompers’ “non-partisan” policy, the official A.F. of L. leadership tends generally to continue to support the democratic party, while powerful leaders (Lewis of the miners and Hutcheson of the carpenters, the two biggest unions in the A.F. of L.) are just as closely bound up with the Republican party.

Not a single major issue at present distinguishes one party from the other. There are differences, however, within both old parties—the new industrialisation is tending to shake up the hitherto “solid south” of the democrats, and there is still some unrest among the Republican farmers of the north-west. The Norris-Borah Bloc constitutes only a mild safety-valve for the releasing of some of the agrarian discontent which still prevails and to prevent its developing into Farmer Labour Party sentiment.

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES.

The Socialist Party has some locally concentrated membership among better paid workers, chiefly in Milwaukee and New York; in Milwaukee it consists of a local third-party election machine that holds certain municipal positions (including the mayor and minority of the City Council) on an extremely limited reformist local programme. In New York it is composed of the reactionary bureaucrats of the Jewish unions, the conservative workers and middle-class elements centred around the Jewish “Daily Forward,” and a fringe of liberals of the Rev. Norman Thomas type. It is estimated that the present membership is not over 5,000, but the Party’s name on the ballot it still sufficient to draw hundreds of thousands of votes of workers, farmers and

middle-class elements.

The leadership of the Socialist Party is rushing headlong to the Right. Although the Party professes to favour Russian recognition it does nothing whatever to help bring it about, but attacks the Soviet Government on every pretext. Some local leaders enter into general united front actions with Communists despite the prohibition from headquarters.

The Socialist Labour Party, the oldest social democratic organisation in America, claims about 2,000 members and continues a precarious existence as a purely propaganda sect. It has one weekly organ in English, a large part of its space being devoted to vicious attacks on the Communists.

The Proletarian Party is a small local propagandist group, engaged mainly in study classes of an academic character. It professes to support the principles of the C.I., but attacks the American Communists viciously.

THE POSITION IN THE TRADE UNIONS.

During 1924-27, the period of prosperity, not only did the A.F. of L. register no gains, but it lost considerably in membership. Out of three and a half million members the A.F. of L. barely has two and a half million left.

The dominant trade union bureaucracy has become integrally bound up with the bourgeoisie. The A.F. of L. supports the internal and external policy of American imperialism. Green, Woll and Co. are for "industrial peace," "rationalisation" and "efficiency."

In this period whatever resistance was made by the workers to the capitalists was under the leadership of the Workers (Communist) Party and the Left Wing. The Party and the Trade Union Education League were the only agencies in the U.S. that fought the class collaboration policy of the trade unions.

The growing success of the Communists was responsible for the war conducted by the reactionary bureaucracy upon the Communists and the Left Wing in the trade unions. In attempting to exterminate them from the trade unions the bureaucracy has on its side the Socialist Party, the employers and the State. The new offensive of American imperialism which has brought our

trade union movement to the crisis of its life, is being conducted with the connivance and support of the reactionary trade union officials. The objective of the new offensive is to smash all trade unions, particularly those with a mass base (miners, building trades, etc.). The outstanding events which depict the present situation in the trade unions are (1) the war of the reactionary bureaucracy upon the Communists and Left wing in the miners' union and the needle trades. (2) The new wage policy of the A.F. of L. and the union management co-operation schemes. (3) The United States Supreme Court decision in the Bedford Stone case denying workers the right to refuse to handle scab products. (4) The nation-wide use of sweeping injunctions against workers. (5) The lockout of the bituminous miners and the attempt of the mine owners to smash the union as well as the treacherous betrayal of the miners' interests by the Lewis machine (partial settlements, refusal to organise the unorganised, submission to injunctions, failure to organise relief, etc.).

LEFT DEVELOPMENT OF WORKING CLASS.

There are increasing signs of resistance to the attacks of the employers. The Colorado Strike, the militancy of the 150,000 locked out miners in Pennsylvania and Ohio, the needle trade fights, the strike of 30,000 textile workers against wage cuts in New England, the national conference of the T.U.E.L. in New York, attended by 297 delegates, the Save the Union Conference of miners in Pittsburgh, April 1, 1928, attended by 1,128 delegates, the Sacco-Vanzetti demonstrations and strikes, Passaic strike, traction workers strike, trade union delegations to the Soviet Union, etc., are evidence of this fact.

THE INNER PARTY SITUATION.

The resolution of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the American question, July 1, 1927, declared:

“The objective difficulties, the weakness of the Workers (Communist) Party and its inadequate contact with the masses of native workers are factors complicating the inner situation of the Workers (Communist) Party. An insufficiently strong Party life, as a result of an insufficient mass basis, and

the inadequate contact of many members of the former language groups with the specific problems of the class struggle in the United States favour the development of groups and fractional struggles, the existence and intensity of which we seek in vain to explain by serious differences of principle.”

Since the Fifth Congress the inner-Party situation has been dealt with in special American commissions in the Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Enlarged E.C.C.I. Sessions, and two conventions of the American Party have been held (the Fourth, August, 1925, and the Fifth, September, 1927).

At the Fifth Enlarged Executive the main question at issue was the continuation of the Labour Party campaign which the then majority of the C.E.C. of the American Party had decided to discard. The E.C.C.I. decided that while this proposal was wrong, the minority put the slogan too narrowly:

“The majority... drew the conclusion that the former chief slogan of the Party, ‘For the formation of a Farmer-Labour Party,’ had to be abandoned as useless.... This conclusion was incorrect...”

“The minority... was right in having confidence in the vitality and future of the Labour Party movement...”

“The Communists need not demand nor even expect that the Labour Party will immediately be a revolutionary, radical party of workers, in which the Communists will have to take the lead. In this respect the slogan has been put somewhat too narrowly by the Minority of the C.E.C.”

As to the slogan, the resolution states:

Our slogan itself should now be revised in so far that we no longer agitate for a ‘Farmer Labour Party,’ but only for a ‘Labour Party,’ since in the changed conditions the premises for the formation of a joint party of workers and small farmers are lacking.”

Other points of this decision provided for the calling of a Party Convention to decide the question of leadership.

After the sudden death of Comrade C. E. Ruthenberg, the General Secretary of the Party, in March, 1937, new differences came to a crisis. Three groups arose within the Central Committee which rendered it impossible for any one of these groupings

to muster a majority on any question of policy. The situation was dealt with by a special commission of the C.I. immediately after the Eighth Plenum. The resolution adopted stated:

“...The Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I. very emphatically declared: ‘that the Comintern demands the complete and unreserved cessation of factional struggle.’”

" It must be placed on record that this demand was not carried out seriously enough and that an untenable position of fraction formation within the Communist Party' still exists, that alongside of the general party meetings, each of the existing fractions holds meetings only for its supporters arriving at binding group decisions.”

The resolution further stated:

“The majority of the Party executive did not sufficiently understand how to create such a condition of affairs as to bring about an amalgamation with the forces which are today in opposition...”

“The Opposition groups must cease their fractional methods. They must endeavour by their attitude to facilitate unity with the majority of the Political Committee before and at the Party convention. All proposals, all criticism of the Party work and its leadership must be made in this spirit.

“During the work of the American Commission it became clear that the differences regarding the important political questions have recently been much reduced.”

The Fifth Convention met in September, 1927, and had a majority of supporters for the tendency of the late Comrade Ruthenberg. A wide Central Committee was chosen, many new and proletarian elements being added (majority 22, combined minority groups 15); a Political Commission of seven to four, and a Secretariat of two to one was subsequently elected pursuant to the decision of the Eighth E.C.C.I.

The last (February, 1928) meeting of the C.E. adopted unanimous thesis on the general situation in the Party, stating that while there are “lingering remnants of old fractional groupings,” it must be recorded that:

“Great headway has been made by the Party in consolidating its forces and unifying its ranks on the basis of the

resolutions of the last Party Convention.”

The Political Secretariat of the E.C.C.I., in reviewing the accomplishments of the February 1928 Plenum of the American Party, again discussed the inner-Party situation. The resolution (April, 1928) referring to the “remnants of old fractional groups,” states:

“The session of the C.E.C. (February, 1928) itself was a convincing proof of definite achievements of the Party towards political consolidation of its ranks. The complete organisational unification of the Party will become possible only if the Party succeeds in creating an atmosphere of full confidence which will lead to the joint harmonious work of all members of the Party.

“It is the opinion of the E.C.C.I. that the main problem of the Party in the field of organisation is to kill all remnants of factionalism.”

On the question of the united front the inner Party work was based on the rooting-out from the membership of the last lingering remnants of the idea that mass activity on a united front basis intensifies with the building of the Communist Party, and to demonstrate that on the contrary only a mass work would enable the Party to fulfil its Communist functions. The specifically American expression of the fight against opportunism was the struggle against the Lore viewpoint.

The Campaign Against the Opposition in the C.P.S.U.

In the final voting, after an intensive educational campaign, and membership meetings throughout all sections of the Party, less than one per cent. of the membership registered its support of the Opposition within the C.P.S.U. Most of the support given to Trotsky was to be found outside the Party.

The Party waged an energetic struggle against such renegades as Max Eastman. He was forced to resign from the monthly magazine the “New Masses.”

The most important result of this struggle has been the complete rout of the Opposition forces and the lifting of the ideological level of the American Party membership, as well as of considerable numbers of sympathising workers.

The Death of Comrade Ruthenberg.

The American Party suffered an irreparable loss in the death of the General Secretary, Comrade Charles E. Ruthenberg. He died on March 2, 1927, literally in the harness of Party work, after an illness of only a few days. Ever since its organisation in 1919, Ruthenberg was secretary of the American Communist Party, except during the periods when he was in prison for his Communist activity.

General Activities and Campaigns.

The main campaigns of general political character were as follows:

Campaign against the war danger, for the defence and recognition of the Soviet Union. Hundreds of mass meetings were held and large quantities of literature were distributed. On the Tenth Anniversary 156 meetings were held. Two workers delegations were sent to the Soviet Union despite the most vicious attacks of the reactionary bureaucrats. The first consisted of a group of progressive trade union leaders, accompanied by a number of liberal economists. The second group, which attended the Tenth Anniversary Celebration, consisted of 25 rank and file trade union members. Both delegations wrote favourable reports on their visit, which received widespread circulation.

Anti-imperialist Campaigns, China, Nicaragua. Under the slogan of "Hands off China" the Party launched a united front campaign against the intervention of United States against the Chinese revolution. Committees and conferences were organised in many cities, in one case 60 local unions being affiliated with the "Hands off China" conference. In this work contact was made with the "Kuomintang in America," a Left wing was organised, control of an organ secured and, after the Chiang Kai-shek betrayal, a split was originated. When American troops began to be sent to China, demonstrations were organised in front of the navy yards in New York, Philadelphia and Seattle, leaflets were distributed to the embarking marines, and inside the military camps (Port Slocum).

A vigorous campaign was launched against the American war; on Nicaragua, under defeatist slogans, in which for the first

time in American labour history the marines were appealed to on the necessity to fight against their own government. Attempts were made to reach the forces in the Navy Yards, and a number of Party and W.Y.L. comrades were arrested.

The Party supports the efforts of the All-American Anti-Imperialist League, a united front organisation with its headquarters in Mexico City and a branch in the United States as well as in the chief Latin American countries. This organisation is concentrating its efforts on fighting the spread of the influence of the Pan-American Federation of Labour, and is mobilising anti-imperialistic sentiment throughout Latin America to resist the encroachment of Yankee imperialism.

The Labour Party¹ movement is at a low ebb nationally but in a number of localities (Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and California) there are signs of considerable sentiment for a Labour Party. The reason for the ebb in this movement, as compared with 1921-24, is to be found in the objective situation prevailing since 1924, and also in the fact that American capitalism is strong enough to bribe a considerable labour aristocracy with living conditions superior to those enjoyed by the great unskilled and unorganised mass.

There is a very slight prospect of either a Labour Party ticket or a United Labour ticket nationally in the 1928 elections. The Workers' Party has nominated its own national ticket—Foster and Gitlow. This will not mean the discontinuance of agitation for the Labour Party.

In the scattered local elections in the autumn of 1927 the Workers' Party had its own ticket in a number of cities. In New York 10,000 votes were cast, double that of the previous election. In San Francisco the Party vote outstripped that of the Socialist.

The campaign against injunctions has been waged by having Communist and Left-wing trade union leaders and masses openly violate the injunctions, and then organising broad united front bodies to fight for those who are arrested for "contempt of court." A number of workers now face terms of imprisonment in

¹ See E.C.C.I. resolution on American question, April 13, 1928.

such cases.

The fight against judicial frame-ups. In the Sacco-Vanzetti case the Communists led in establishing a united front and fought to preserve it from the splitting tactics and sabotage of the bourgeois liberals, socialists, anarchists and labour bureaucrats. The three successive political strikes, July 7, August 9, and August 22 brought hundreds of thousands of workers upon the streets. In New York vast crowds staged friendly demonstrations before the Communist newspapers and hostile demonstrations in front of the Socialist and fascist headquarters despite police attacks.

The campaign for the protection of the foreign-born is conducted by a large nation-wide front organisation in which the Party plays an important role. Its aim is to fight all exceptional laws directed against the foreign-born workers. At the Second National Conference of this organisation, held at Washington, D.C. delegates were present representing 400,000 workers—the Party has a special department for work among the foreign-born, in the central apparatus as well as in every district.

The Anti-Fascist campaign has been of great importance in checkmating the attempts of Fascism in Europe and its agents in America, to organise an extensive Fascist movement there. The Workers' Party plays an important role in the "Anti-Fascist Alliance of North America," a united front organisation representing 200,000 workers, which has been instrumental in effectively counteracting attempted pro-Fascist demonstrations, in blocking subscriptions to the Italian Fascist loan, etc. The work of this organisation is of a consistently proletarian character. The Grecco-Garillo frame-up was one of the counter-measures of the Fascists against this organisation.

The unemployment now so widespread in America is the subject of a special Party campaign. "Unemployed Councils" have been formed in a number of towns, notably New York, where open air demonstrations have been held and relief kitchens established; in Cleveland, where the unemployed invaded the meeting of the City Council and demanded work or relief; and the same was true in San Francisco, Denver, etc. The unemployed are being drawn into the trade union organisation cam-

paigns, and since its last convention in December, 1927, also into the organ of the Trade Union Educational League.

ACTIVITY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE MOST IMPORTANT INDUSTRIAL STRUGGLES.

The Anthracite Strike.

The anthracite coal strike was confined to the hard coal regions of the State of Pennsylvania and involved 150,000 workers. The Party entered the struggle and worked out a programme of Left-wing demands. Over 200,000 leaflets were distributed amongst the miners.

Resolutions were presented and fought for in the miners' and railroad workers' locals. Members of the C.E.C., special organisers, and foreign language organisers were sent into the strike fields. Special editions of the "Daily Worker" were printed and distributed among the strikers. Scores of meetings were held throughout the strike area which were attended by thousands of miners. Later, during the course of the strike, the Party was able to organise resistance to the Lewis machine in the General Grievance Boards made up of rank-and-file representatives from the miners' locals.

The Passaic Strike.

This strike, which was the result of wage cuts, involved 16,000 textile workers who were totally unorganised and was led by Communists. The officialdom of the A.F. of L. opposed the strike and fought it. Despite this, through the relief organisation that was built up, not only was over 600,000 dollars raised but the overwhelming majority of the rank and file of the trade unions was won for the support of the strike. The pressure from below forced President Green and the A.F. of L. to come out in favour of the strike after they had denounced it. Affiliation was secured with the A.F. of L. as a step towards the settlement of the strike. The withdrawal of Weisbord, the leader of the strike., when the Passaic Union joined the A.F. of L. was, however, not accompanied by the elimination of the leadership of the Communists. They remained in full control of the organisation. The strike lasted thirteen months. It was settled by the winning of the

main demands. Unlike all other textile strikes an organisation remains with about 700 members fully under Communist anti Left-wing leadership.

The Furriers' Strike.

The Furriers' Strike involved 10,000 workers. The Right-wing Social Democratic leadership, which pursued a policy of scabbing and disruption, was so completely discredited that they were entirely eliminated from the activities of the strike. Green, President of the A.F. of L., intervened in the strike, attempting to sell it and bring back the Right-wing leadership; but in this he was defeated. The demand for the 40-hour week was made a national issue for the American Labour Movement by the Furriers Strike, and the convention of the A.F. of L. was compelled to recognise it as such. The strike lasted seventeen weeks and ended in a victory for the union and a crushing defeat for the Right-wing and the A.F. of L. bureaucracy.

The Cloakmakers' Strike.

The Cloak and Dressmakers' Union of New York, comprising 50,000 workers, was the largest union in the needle trades, it was the second important union of that industry to come under Communist and Left-wing leadership. The General Strike of the Cloakmakers, which took place in the middle of 1926, involved 35,000 workers. The strike was caused by the decision of the Governor's Commission, which had been appointed two years previously at the request of the Right-wing Socialist leaders then in control of the union. The Right-wing leadership in control of the national organisation favoured the acceptance of the decision. The Communists and Left-wing leadership, through the N.Y. Joint Board, exposed the decision and the strike followed. The Socialist press carried on a vicious campaign against the strike. The A.F. of L. sabotaged the strike and opposed it. The strike ended in important gains for the workers.

The Bituminous Strike.

In April, 1927, 250,000 miners were locked out. In the Pennsylvania and Ohio coal fields, 140,000 workers are still out on strike, continuing one of the most important struggles now going

on in the United States. The lockout was clearly a move to destroy the miners' union, which had already been weakened by the reactionary policies and corrupt practices of the Lewis machine. The extent to which the union was weakened is shown by the fact that 70 per cent of the bituminous coal is now being mined by non-union miners.

The failure of the Lewis machine to provide adequate relief was utilised by the Left wing to establish a National Relief Committee of its own. This committee not only provides relief, but also conducts a wide agitation and propaganda for Left-wing issues. The Party and the Left wing succeeded in mobilising the workers for mass picketing, demonstrations and violation of the sweeping injunctions issued against the miners. In all the mining districts the slogans are "Win the Pennsylvania and Ohio Strike" and "Lewis Must Go."

The Party factions played an important part in the calling of the local conferences in all important coal districts—Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and the anthracite district. Over 750 delegates were present at these conferences. A bi-weekly paper was established, "The Coal Digger," which in a few weeks reached a circulation of over 15,000. Organisers were sent into all the districts to organise the "Save the Union Committee" and mobilise the miners for the support of the strike and for the fight against the Lewis machine.

The Save the Union Committee National Conference, held in Pittsburgh on April 1st, 1928, was attended by 1,128 delegates from every district of the country. The Conference decided to take over the leadership of the strike, to organise the unorganised, to oust the Lewis machine and take over the unions.

The Colorado Strike.

The strike of the 10,000 Colorado miners was a strike for organisation, and for the Jacksonville scale. The hitherto unorganised miners were under the leadership of the I.W.W. As soon as the strike broke out the Party sent in organisers, as well as youth relief representatives. Every effort was made to co-operate with the I.W.W. leadership. Close contact was made by the Communists with a section of the I.W.W., but the timid and conserva-

tive policies of the I.W.W. leadership threatened and finally accomplished the defeat of the strike. The I.W.W. spread illusions of the "fairness" of the State officials, and abandoned mass picketing, and put the settlement into the hands of the State Industrial Commission, in the face of the cold-blooded murder of a number of strikers and sweeping anti-picketing injunctions. The strike ended in defeat under I.W.W. advice, the men went back to work with nothing gained except the promise of an investigation by the State Industrial Commission.

Tie Haverhill Shoe Workers' Strike.

This, involving 6,000 to 7,000 workers, was another strike where the Party took the leadership. After twelve days, this strike resulted in a complete victory for the workers.

OTHER WORK.

The Activity of the Agitprop.

The last four years have witnessed a remarkable progress in the work of the Agitprop Department. An Agitprop apparatus has been built up in every district of the Party.

Workers' Schools.

The same period witnessed a rapid rise in the opportunities for education offered by the Workers' Party for both members and sympathisers. Four years ago there were not more than 200 students divided between the New York and Chicago Party schools. To-day, there are schools established in 12 cities with a student personnel of close to 4,000.

All important street nuclei in New York, for example, have from one to four neighbourhood courses as have also various outlying districts. This is also true of other centres.

Nuclei Discussions.

For this purpose outlines and bulletins are prepared by the Agitprop Department.

Circuit Schools.

This is a recent innovation calculated to eliminate the great

difficulties confronting the Party in keeping in touch with small localities and seeing that they function. In the Buffalo district (upper New York) a travelling instructor was furnished for 6 study classes which have an attendance of 108 students. In some of these cities there have never been any form of educational activity before. The excellent results from this experiment will be utilised in covering other similar districts.

National Training School.

The Agitprop Department has just established a National Party School consisting of a full-time three-months course. It has 30 students, three of whom are from the Canadian Party.

The Press.

The Party has 11 dailies in 9 different languages and 12 weekly publications, besides a number of papers and magazines over which the Party has a big influence. The total circulation of the Party press is estimated at over 170,000. There are also the following publications, 8 trade union papers, 3 co-operative, 3 farmers', 4 women's, 3 youth and 4 organs of auxiliaries, that are under our influence. The central organ of the Party is the Daily Worker (New York). It has a circulation of 18,000.

The Freiheit (Jewish, New York) with nearly 40,000 readers has the largest circulation. It has considerable mass influence among the workers in the needle trades. Dailies and weeklies in Hungarian, Ukrainian, Russian, Yugo-Slav, Slovenian, Polish, Lithuanian and Italian, have great influence among the workers in the basic industries (coal, steel, etc.). Three dailies in the Finnish language practically dominate the field. The Italian Communist weekly "Il Lavoratore" is the successor to the daily that was forced to suspend by financial difficulties.

Factory Newspapers.

There were in January 1928 shop papers with a total circulation of 45,000. Most of these papers are closely bound up with factory life. There are, however, slight weaknesses occasionally in connecting factory issues with the general political situation: One of the best papers is "The Ford Worker" issued in the Detroit Ford Plant. This paper has been appearing regularly for the

past two years and has a circulation of 10,000 semi-monthly. Special efforts have been made to develop effective shop paper: especially in heavy industries.

Worker Correspondents.

The organisation of worker correspondence groups is receiving considerable stimulus from the classes for worker writers in the Party's schools. The Party press, especially the Daily Worker, gives considerable space to worker correspondents.

Work in the Trade Unions.

A national trade union fraction secretary directs this work from the centre. The number of Party members belonging to the trade union fractions has increased steadily (see report on organisation).

Fractions are organised in the unions of all important industries, coal mining, metal, building transport, needle trades,

In the machinists' union, the carpenters, painters, railroad workers, seamen, steel, and food workers, our fractions are active and doing important work as is evidenced by the election campaign in the machinists' union, where the Left wing received a large number of votes. The railroad workers' fraction succeeded in having the switchmen's union of the north-west district adopt a Left-wing programme at its conference. In the carpenters' union the leadership of important locals was won against the Hutcheson machine, one of the most reactionary and powerful machines in the A.F. of L. In a number of locals Hutcheson was compelled to reinstate Left-wing workers who had been expelled from their activities. In the Painters' Union the Party's fractions, together with the progressive group, succeeded in defeating the Social Democratic Zauser machine in New York City. In the Food Industry the Left-wing fractions control the leadership of a number of important A.F. of L. locals as well as the independent union, the Amalgamated Food Workers of America.

The fractions in the I.W.W. have done good work. Many of the best elements in the I.W.W. had been won for the Party.

Work in the Co-operatives,

The Co-operative League of North America, with 150,000 members, contains considerable Left-wing elements. In the 1926 convention the Left wing succeeded in defeating the attack of the Right. Five delegates were elected to attend the Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance at Stockholm. At the November 1926 convention of the Co-operative more than one-third delegates were left-wing supporters. Of the Executive Board elected one-third are left wingers. The Central Cooperative Exchange (Superior, Wisconsin) serving 100 retail stores, is a Left-wing organisation.

The Left wingers in the co-operatives have succeeded in securing some relief for the striking coal miners, and recently called a conference to extend this work. In New York City is the United Workers' Co-operative Association, which is controlled by the Left wing. This co-operative has spread recently to other cities, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles. It is building a series of houses, controls a number of camps for workers, conducts cultural work on a Communist basis, etc.

Work Among Farmers.

The Party has aided in the formation of the United Farmers Educational League. Its monthly newspaper, the "United Farmer" was transformed into a weekly in the autumn of 1927. This newspaper, which has a circulation of approximately 6,000 has steadily improved its contact with the working farmers and now publishes regular farmer correspondence from a score of states. The U.F.E.L. works with non-partisan farm organisations, holds conference of progressive farmers, works for the affiliation of farm organisations to the Farmer Labour Parties, for the organisation of the agricultural workers and their alliance with the city workers and for the extension of cooperatives of working farmers. The progressive farmers of Iowa, a political economic organisation strong enough to hold mass meetings of 3,000, has adopted the "United Farmer" as its official organ.

Work in United Front Organisations.

The International Labour Defence is the American section of

the International Red Aid. It publishes a monthly organ, the "Labour Defender" with a circulation of 16,000, It is a broad organisation in which Communists take a leading part.

The Workers International Relief is a united front organisation, without an individual membership basis. It carried on collection activity for the British strike, victims of the Nanking bombardment, Passaic, and coal strike, etc.

The Workers' Sports Federation has a membership of 5,000 of which 5 per cent. are Communists, who are organised in factions. During the two years of its existence it has developed an influence far beyond its present organisational strength. Some locals have youth and children's sections.

Work in Other Non-Party Mass Organisations.

The Party participates in work among a number of mass organisations, fraternal societies, sick and death benefit societies, etc. These organisations consist mainly of foreign-born workers in basic industries and have several hundred thousand members. The Party carries on in these organisations systematic campaigns for all its slogans. In a number of these, especially amongst the Jewish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Yugoslav, and Hungarian, the Party factions exert considerable influence.

National Race Minorities.

The Party has eighteen language faction bureaux which carry on work among the various nationalities. These direct the faction work in the mass fraternal, benefit, and other organisations, workers' clubs, etc. The Party has a total of eleven dailies, twelve weeklies, and two monthlies which it controls directly, and a number of organs which are controlled through sympathetic organisations. In practically every one of these national minorities. there is a continual struggle against the Social Democrats and the bourgeoisie. Our position varies widely. Among the Finns we clearly have the leadership, while among the Poles we have very little influence.

Negro Work in America.

The most numerous minority in America are the Negroes, forming about 13,000,000 of the American population.

The Party has made a number of attempts to develop the work, but has not always met with any significant success. It supported the African Blood Brotherhood, that was liquidated with the organisation of the American Negro Labour Congress. Intensive efforts were put forth, in the North and in the South for the building of the A.N.L.C. on as broad a scale as possible. Many timid elements, however, were frightened by the vicious attack launched against the Congress by the American Federation of Labour officialdom. This and other reasons resulted in a too-narrow gathering. An official organ, the "Negro Champion," was established, speakers and organisers were sent on tour, at special committees for development of the work among Negro were set up. Campaigns were developed in connection with the Sanhedrin (Chicago, 1924), the various congresses of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (Garvey); the fourth Pan-African Congress (New York, 1927), and other Negro organisations. The Party was also a driving force in campaigns incidental to the Sweet Case (Detroit), school fights (Cary, Indiana, and in New Jersey), imprisonment of Garvey, housing (Chicago), and placing of Negro comrades as candidates in election campaigns. The greatest success in the trade union field was achieved in drawing Negro coal miners into the "Save the Union" movement in the united mineworkers of America, Negro miners being conspicuous at the Pittsburgh Conference (April 1st, 1928). They were successfully drawn into the campaigns to "organise the unorganised" in the rubber (Akron), and automobile (Detroit) industries. A successful strike of Negro workers (Date and Fig Packers, Chicago) was carried on.

The Party, nevertheless, showed little initiative in the organisation of the Brotherhood of Pullman Porters. Industrial disasters (Gary Steel Mills), in which many Negro workers lost their lives, have been taken advantage of to point out the necessity of organisations. At the present time the Party and the A.N.L.C. in Chicago are aiding in the building of a Negro Central Labour body which seems to be developing successfully. Propaganda is being carried on continuously for the breaking down of prejudice and the abolition of constitutional bars against the admission of Negro workers to the regular trade unions. Negro workers are

drawn into the various Party schools in as large numbers as possible. In the South, where the larger part of the thirteen million American Negroes live, in the worst conditions of any section of the population, the efforts of the Party and A.N.L.C. to make effective contacts have not met with any considerable success. The Party has established a national Negro department and has also committees for work among Negroes in all districts. Work among the Negroes remains one of the most important tasks of the Party. The experience of the past shows that new ways and new methods must be found to approach the Negro masses and to carry on among them a more successful campaign than hitherto.

Work in the Colonies.

The Philippines are the most important colony of American Imperialism. Good connections have been established with the workers' and peasants' movement in the island. The appearance of annual Philippine commissions in the United States have been utilised for propaganda purposes.

The arrest and imprisonment of the two Communists, Walter Trumbull, and Paul Crouch, soldiers in the American forces in the Hawaiian Islands, had a considerable repercussion in the organised trade union movement of the Islands. The island workers got their first news of the imprisonment of the two soldiers from the "Daily Worker." The Party has not yet been able to establish any collections here. Some contacts have been established with revolutionary elements in the Virgin Islands.

Work Among Women.

After the Fifth National Convention of the Party the C.E.C. organised a Women's Department. However, prior to the convention the seven major districts had already built up functioning women's departments. The Party now influences some tens of thousands of women in sympathetic working-class woman's organisations. These organisations have rendered valuable services in mobilising the support of the masses of women in connection with the textile workers' strike in Passaic, in various strikes in New York and in the coal miners' strike in Pennsylvania and

Colorado.

For work among women in the factories and in the trade unions, the shop nuclei and Party fractions in Detroit were mobilised for systematic work. In New York a local of 1,500 previously unorganised women millinery workers was organised. The first delegate meetings with representatives from factories, trade unions and sympathetic women's organisations, were held in New York in 1927. This was a beginning in the direction of calling periodical women's delegate meetings. Through these delegate meetings the Party was able to make connections with numerous factories which provide a source of worker correspondents to the "Working Woman," a bulletin published by these women's delegate conferences.

In Chicago, Negro women working in a date and fig factory were organised into a trade union for the first time and led in a successful strike. In Detroit, the delegates from the "Federation of Working Class Women" attended an organisation conference recently called by the automobile workers' union. The delegate succeeded in introducing two specifically women's demands into the general programme drawn up by the conference. The "Daily Worker" publishes considerable material about work among women, but in a rather unsystematic manner.

One of the most successful campaigns in mobilising masses of women was the International Women's Day Campaign of 1928.

Party Activities in Work Among the Youth.

The Party conducts youth columns and children's columns in all its press. This brings in a considerable number of letters mainly from American-born children of foreign-born parents and gives the Young Workers' League continual contacts.

For the last two years the Party has helped the League to raise funds to conduct its five district and one national six week's full time summer schools. The Party also supplied instructor for these schools. Several places were reserved for Young Workers League members in the Party's national training school.

The Party, through its various sections, districts, etc., has

helped to build up the children's summer camps and children's groups and given other support to this work.

The Party Organisation.

Three months after the 4th Convention the reorganisation was declared to be 70 per cent, complete; in New York alone there were 207 shop nuclei and 46 street nuclei; in Chicago 27 shop nuclei and 38 street nuclei, in Detroit 15 shop nuclei, etc.

In the two years prior to the reorganisation the language federation membership had remained stationary while that of the English branches had doubled. A large section of the federation membership did not immediately come into the reorganised Party, but they were all organised in the new "Workers Clubs," which under the control of our Party fractions, carry on all the social and cultural work formerly done by the old federation brandies. Freed from these tasks the new language bureaux (which replaced the old federation executives) now give all their attention to spreading' our influence in the big mass fraternal organisations of the foreign-born workers and to the development of the Communist press and especially to the support of the general campaigns of the Party, e.g., organising the unorganised, etc. We lack complete figures of the work of all the language fractions, but taking the small Scandinavian fraction we find that the 211 members before the reorganisation there are now 150, but these are organised into fractions controlling 21 clubs with 1,000 members, and through these clubs last year a united front "Workers Educational League" with 2,000 members was formed. In the Yugo-Slav fractions 815 Party members (1,000 before reorganisation), work in 30 workers clubs with 2,500 members, have an Int. Red Aid organisation with 2,000 members and lead a Left wing of 14,000 in mass fraternal organisations having over 100,000 members. In a single district the Finnish comrades have 34 Women's Clubs (20 of them organised within the past year). Most important is the great increase of forces released by the reorganisation for regular Party work; hundreds of comrades have been surprised to find that they have a sufficient command of English to take on active functions in the regular units, and this has strengthened the ranks of lower unit function-

aries. The record-breaking attendance at classes in the English language conducted in every Party school, the holding of teachers' conferences, etc., is the main factor in the "Americanisation" process now going on in the Party.

There have been certain changes in the occupational composition of our Party membership. Due to the reorganisation, the percentage of metal workers has also declined from 15 per cent. challenged the metal workers for first place with 15 per cent. of the total, has declined to fifth place with 9 per cent. But the percentage of metal workers has also declined from 15 per cent. to 0.7 per cent. (including auto workers), dropping from first place to fourth. First place is now occupied by the needle trades workers with 21 per cent. of those registered in the last registration as compared with 9 per cent. (4th place) in 1924. There are gains also in the percentage of labourers, shoe and leather workers, printers, railroad workers. The very considerable increase in the proportion of workers from the light industries of the eastern state is due to the big strikes led by the Communists during the past two years. Similar results are looked for from the Party work are now being concentrated on the heavy industries.

In February 1928 the Workers' Party had 12,000 dues-paying members, and about 14,000 members on the lists. At the time of the Fifth World Congress its membership was likewise 14,000. In this connection it should be mentioned that in 1925 the Party had no accurate membership statistics and that among the 14,000 members at that time, a considerable number were housewives who were considered as members in view of the then prevailing family membership principle.

The reorganisation of the Party on the factory nuclei basis, which began in 1925, eliminated the family membership principle and laid down the foundation for a more accurate membership calculator. The membership in October, 1925, immediately after the reorganisation of the Party, was altogether 7,215. This figure shows how inaccurate the previous statistics of the Workers Party had been, as it is not to be conceived that the Party actually lost 5,000 members in the process of its reorganisation.

During the first 3 months of 1928 the Party conducted a membership drive under the slogan "build the Party" and ob-

tained 1,300 new members. Many hundreds of new members, however, have not paid their initiation fee in view of their being unemployed. During the first quarter of 1928, 20 new factory nuclei have been formed. The subscribers to the "Daily Worker" increased by 2,000 and an additional 11 factory newspapers have appeared in the key industries with a total circulation of over 20,000.

On The Road To Bolshevization

Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., 1929

INTRODUCTION

The ever-sharpening class struggles and the feverish preparations of the American capitalists for war against the workers' Republic of Russia as well as for war against their imperialist rivals raise most difficult and most important problems before the American Communists. The substance of these problems is the mobilization of the American workers for the class war.

A Bolshevik Party must be organizationally and ideologically a monolithic party, hewn of one piece. Our American Party is not it a Bolshevik Party. It is rent by a factional struggle of years' standing. This factionalism has weakened the power of resistance of the Party against opportunist influences. The problem of mobilizing the American workers for the class war, therefore, presented itself to our Party, before all, in the form of a problem of mobilizing its own forces.

It was necessary that factionalism should be eradicated in order to establish the indispensable organizational unity. It was necessary to combat all influences in the Party of petty-bourgeois ideology, to fight against all opportunist tendencies and all right deviations in order to insure the ideological unity of the Party.

In our American Communist Party, however, the opportunist influences had grown strong enough to put up resistance against the process of preparation. To break this resistance, the leadership of our International Party, the Communist International had to help.

This little booklet contains a collection of decisions of our International Leadership concerning the tasks and the problems of our Party. We Communists must study them carefully. In the application of these decisions lies our preparation for the tasks ahead of us. The accomplishment of these tasks is our revolutionary duty.

Open Letter of the E.C.C.I. to the Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America

International Press Correspondence, March 1, 1929

Dear Comrades,

The VI Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America marks an important stage in the great change through which the Party is now going.

From a propagandist organisation, uniting chiefly immigrant workers and having an insignificant influence among the native workers, the Workers (Communist) Party is now beginning to turn into a mass Party of political action guiding the political and economic actions of the most advanced and the most militant ranks of the American proletariat. The VI Congress of the Comintern emphasised in its resolutions this important new feature in the development of the Party, declaring that “a number of stubborn and fierce class battles (particularly the miners’ strike) found in the Communist Party a stalwart leader.”

Precisely in the period following the convention of 1927 the Party has been acting with increasing frequency as the stalwart leader of mass actions of the American proletariat and has increased its influence among the native workers. The furriers’ and garment workers’ strikes, the miners’ strike, the textile workers’ strike in New Bedford and Fall River and the silk strike in Patterson—such is the series of battles in which the Workers Party of America has for the first time appeared in the role of a Party of political action capable of linking up the economic struggles of the proletariat with its political aims. The struggle for the organisation of new unions which the Party had to carry on under circumstances of fierce terrorism on the part of the state apparatus, the murderous bands of powerful trusts, the yellow American Federation of Labour and the most stubborn resistance of the Socialist Party, is one of the best pages in the history of the work of the Party during the last year.

However, the Party is now just making its first steps on the new path. It is now just on the threshold between the old and the

new, it has not yet passed the turning point. It has as yet done little to shift its base from the immigrants to the native Americans employed in the basic industries. It has done still less in relation to the millions of the Negro proletariat.

Meanwhile, the conditions which will impose enormous tasks on the Workers Party of America, and will compel it to take the lead in gigantic class conflicts, are developing ever more rapidly.

The aggressiveness of the United States in the struggle for markets and the most important sources of raw material throughout the world is growing swiftly. The election of Hoover as president means that American imperialism is resolutely embarking on a course which leads to colonial wars of occupation and to an extremely rapid accentuation of the struggle between the United States and its chief imperialist rival—Great Britain. American imperialism is striving for a monopolist position in world economy and politics and is becoming more and more involved in the universal crisis of capitalism and comes more and more into the orbit of the growing instability of world capitalism.

The striving towards domination in world politics drives American imperialism, on the one hand, towards brutal capitalist rationalisation which throws considerable sections of the proletariat out of production, leads to an extreme overstrain of labour without corresponding compensation, to a colossal growth of unemployment (3-4 million) and to a general worsening of the conditions of the working class. On the other hand it leads towards tremendous growth of armaments which puts ever-heavier burdens onto the shoulders of the toiling masses. All this and the menace of the terrific calamities of war creates a state of uncertainty and insecurity in the entire working class. It is on this basis that the tendency towards radicalisation of the American working class is increasing; that its activities, its will to defend itself, which in some places transforms itself into a will to assume the offensive, is developing. This drift towards the Left does not develop evenly in all parts of the working class. It now embraces the unorganised workers, especially in those industries which have not reached their previous level after the depression of the first half of 1928.

The Workers (Communist) Party is obviously still unprepared for the great class conflicts which will inevitably arise on the basis of the sharpening class relations in the United States.

Its past still weighs upon its present. The relics of the previous period of its existence form the greatest obstacle in the path it has to travel before it successfully passes the turning point and develops in the shortest possible time from a numerically small propaganda organisation into a mass political party of the American working class.

This, however, is the task which the whole objective situation in the United States, the entire post-war development of American imperialism places before the Party. This is the chief, fundamental and decisive task to which all other tasks must be entirely subordinated.

The Workers (Communist) Party of America has been for years an organisation of foreign workers not much connected with the political life of the country. Owing to this immigrant exclusiveness two leading groups arose, took shape and became consolidated within the Party. For six years an almost uninterrupted struggle for supremacy in the Party has been going on between them. The struggle was, in the main, not based on principle, and at times, it assumed an unprincipled character. At times it assumed the appearance of a struggle based on principle, but in reality it was not entirely a struggle of principle; principles served chiefly to camouflage the struggle for supremacy in the Party. Whenever the struggle between the groups is centred more on principles (the attitude towards the Labour Party, the question of trade union tactics), the differences could have been settled without a factional struggle.

The absence of substantial differences on points of principle between the combatant factions has been recorded many times by the E. C. C. I. as well as by the Party itself.

Thus, in 1925, all resolutions at the IV Convention of the Party were adopted by both factions unanimously, notwithstanding the acute factional struggle prior to the convention. But when the convention was over the factional struggle became even sharper than before.

Further the resolution of the presidium of the E. C. C. I. on

the American question adopted on July 1st, 1927, states:

The objective difficulties, the weaknesses of the Workers (Communist) Party, and its inadequate contact with the masses of the native workers, are factors complicating the inner situation of the Workers (Communist) Party. An insufficiently strong Party life, as the result of an insufficient mass basis, the inadequate contact of many members of the former language groups with the specific problems of the class struggle in the United States favour the development of groups and factional struggles, the existence and intensity of which we seek in vain to explain through serious differences of principle.

No less indicative is also the fact that both groups adopted unanimously in February 1928 extensive theses concerning all vital political theses of the United States, as well as the fact that both groups prior to the VI Congress committed in common Right-Wing errors. Finally, the VI Congress of the C. I. declared that the factional struggle of the Workers (Communist) Party of America "is not based on any serious differences of principle".

Nor can the E. C. C. I. find such serious fundamental differences between the convention theses of the majority and the minority of the C. E. C. as to justify a struggle within the Party. The differences between the majority and minority of the C. E. C. do not go beyond those limits which would make it impossible to settle them without a factional struggle.

The majority has shown a tendency to under-estimate the process of radicalisation as well as the process of differentiation in the ranks the working class, which finds its expression in the attempts to point out the conservatism of the American working class in a static form without giving a class analysis of the causes which underly its backwardness and without a sufficient consideration of the further prospects of development of its political consciousness.

The minority, on the other hand, over-estimates the degree of radicalisation of the American working class at the present time, interpreting the vote for Smith of a part of the workers during presidential elections as a sign of the radicalisation of the prole-

tariat. This is wrong, just as is the reference to Lenin's letter of 1921 which refers to the Roosevelt vote, because Roosevelt was a candidate of a third party, something which did not exist in the last election. Both the majority and the minority entirely underestimate the Leftward trend of the working class in the other capitalist countries. In the theses of both groups there is no attempt to evaluate such important facts as the Lodz strike and the Ruhr lockout; they are not even mentioned.

In estimating the character of American Trotzkyism, the majority does not draw in its theses a clear line of division between out and out Right-Wing opportunist deviation and Trotzkyism, which is opportunism disguised with Left phrases. The failure to understand this difference objectively leads to a weakening of the struggle against the main danger—the Right danger, as in reality it limits the struggle to the task of the struggle against Trotzkyism.

The majority however not only under-estimates the Trotzkyist danger, but, on the one hand says nothing in the theses about the fact that such extreme Right wingers as Sulkanen and Askeli do not even hide themselves behind Left phraseology, belong to the Cannon group, or that the latter has concluded a bloc with Lore and Eastman; and, on the other hand it states that Cannon has taken with him a number of workers from the Party, which objectively adds prestige to the Cannon group and weakens the struggle against American Trotzkyism.

All the enumerated differences between the minority and majority could, if the factional struggle would cease, easily be overcome by means of self-criticism within the Party.

At the same time the majority and minority commit the same mistake in their view of the relations between the American and world economic systems, although expressed in different forms and both groups make different conclusions. This mistake lies in their wrong conception of the nature of the relationship between American and world economics and the underestimation of the increasing involvement of American imperialism in the rapidly sharpening general crisis of capitalism. Both sides are inclined to regard American imperialism as isolated from world capitalism, as independent from it and developing according to its own laws.

Both sides do not take sufficiently into account that the approaching crisis of American imperialism is part and parcel of the general crisis of capitalism. Both sides believe that world economy plays in relation to American imperialism only or chiefly a subordinate and passive role of a market for the export of commodities and capital.

The failure to understand the close relations between American economy and the general crisis of capitalism leads the majority to wrong estimation of the role of American capital in the stabilisation of Europe, and to a misconception of the inevitable sharpening of the conflicts between the ever-more aggressive American imperialism and trustified Europe, which strives to free itself from tie economic domination of the United States, It leads the minority to the conception that the coming crisis of American capitalism is called forth exclusively by its internal contradictions.

These mistakes reflect the failure to understand the fact that the roots of the contemporary general crisis of capitalism, side by side with the sharpening contradictions between the development of the productive forces and the contraction of markets, side by side with the existence and development of the U. S. S. R. as a factor which revolutionises the working class of all countries and the tolling masses of the colonies, and stands opposed to the world capitalist system, there is also the unequal growth in the economic development of the various countries which has its expression in the transference of the economic centre of capitalism from Europe to America and the rapid development of American imperialism which surpasses the development of the other capitalist countries.

The rapid development of American capitalism does not exempt the United States, or say other capitalist country, from the crisis; on the contrary it accentuates the general crisis of capitalism as a result of the extreme sharpening of all contradictions which it leads to. On the other hand a sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism is to be expected not because American imperialism ceases to develop, but on the contrary, it is to be expected because American imperialism is developing and surpasses the other capitalist countries in its development, which

leads to an extreme accentuation of all antagonisms.

The failure to understand the nature of the general crisis of American capitalism inevitably leads to a distortion of the entire revolutionary perspective outlined in the decisions of the VI Congress in connection with the third period. To consider American capitalism isolated from the sharply accentuated general crisis of capitalism means to overlook the general revolutionary crisis of capitalism which includes the economic crises in all capitalist countries, the imperialist struggle against the U. S. S. R. and the rebelling colonies, the struggle among the imperialist countries themselves, as well as the class struggle of the proletariat in the various capitalist countries.

With regard to the fundamental question as to the nature of the contemporary general crisis of capitalism, the perspective of its accentuation, the further shattering of stabilisation throughout the world economic system, the question of struggle against the danger, which has of late become the chief and decisive issue in the Comintern, both the majority and the minority commit big errors which inevitably lead to a profound under-rating of the revolutionary perspectives in Europe and especially in America.

The majority entirely ignores in its theses the resolution of the VI Congress (the point referring to the third period of post-war development), and the minority, while quoting that point, was unable to link it up with its own conclusions concerning the American crisis. The VI Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America must decidedly rectify this mistake and pass resolutions on this most vital issue such as would be in full accord with the decisions of the VI Congress of the C. I. This mistake of the majority is related to its great over-estimation of the economic might and the powerful technical development of the United States. It is wrong to speak of a second industrial revolution as is done in the majority theses,

A powerful technical revolution is taking place in the United States, a tremendous rationalisation, an increase in the forces of production, which in its effects can be compared to a second industrial revolution.

This is a serious error. On the one hand, the emphasis on the

fact that the remnants of feudalism are being wiped out in the South of the United States (which is wrongly considered in the theses as its colony) and that a new bourgeoisie with a new proletariat are being formed, may give the term "second industrial revolution" the implication of a second bourgeois revolution. On the other hand, if we were not to interpret the term "second industrial revolution" in this sense, it could not be explained in any other way but as an uncritical over-estimation of the significance and results of the development of technique. Such over-estimation would play into the hands of all advertisers of the successes of bourgeois science and technique who seek to deafen the proletariat by raising a lot of noise about technical progress and showing that there is no general crisis of capitalism, that capitalism is still vigorous in the United States, and that thanks to its extremely rapid development, it is capable of pulling Europe out of its crisis.

However, the development of the productive forces on the basis of the technical transformation and the new forms of organisation of labour, leads to increasing antagonisms between them and the limited home markets and, consequently, to a further deepening and sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism and not a diminution or a liquidation of that crisis, as the apologists of American imperialism pretend.

The slightest concession to the noisy advertisers of the growth of technique, the slightest vacillation, is an intolerable opportunist mistake.

A no less important shortcoming both in the majority and minority is the under-estimation of the effect of the technical development and rationalisation, on the working class. Not only the majority theses, which over-estimate the significance of the tremendous technical development, but also the minority theses leave this aspect of rationalisation in the shade and pay little attention to it.

The fact is that the great intensification of labour arising from technical development and capitalist rationalisation expressed in the speeding up of the conveyor and the movement of machinery, in the extreme crowding of the working day, in a terrific speeding up of the workers by means of the bonus system

which leads to the wearing out of the workers and their being thrown out of the factory sooner than was the case hitherto and, finally, the absolute diminution of the number of workers in some industries, which gives to the tremendous growth of unemployment, are truly becoming the central problems of the entire American working class and thus acquiring the greatest political significance.

This new form of exploitation of the workers is based upon the increase of wages of a very small upper strata and upon the lowering of the standard of living, which was low enough hitherto, for the vast majority of the working class (notwithstanding the statement of the majority theses to the contrary).

The American proletariat does not feel so much the worsening of its position in any other respect as in the growing overstrain of labour, in the reduction of the period of the worker's stay in the factory, and in the growing unemployment.

Huge masses of American workers can be rallied to a struggle against overstrain of labour and the monstrous growth of exploitation. The chief demands capable of uniting them in a common struggle are—1) the 7-hour day and 6 hours for workers engaged in industries injurious to health and in underground work; 2) social insurance (in case of sickness, injury, invalidity, and unemployment) at the cost of the employers and the State.

. Extensive and persevering agitation for these demands throughout the entire period should be the main task of the Party which must simultaneously proceed also with the organisation of the unemployed. By fighting for this programme, the Party can unite broad sections of the proletariat, educate them politically, strike deep roots in the midst of the American workers, and become a mass working class Party. The revolutionary unions, provided their organisations will be seriously prepared and their leaders carefully chosen, can be an extremely important lever in that work.

The struggle against the consequences of capitalist rationalisation should be closely linked up with the struggle against the war danger. In this connection, the Party absolutely fails to see the enormous importance of this task and its decisive political significance. This entails an under-estimation of the revolution-

ary perspectives. There is no doubt that the objective situation as well as the first successes of the Party in leading mass conflicts provide a basis for a healthy discussion on points of principle within the Party. But the existence of two crystallised leading groups is a decisive obstacle to embarking on this course.

So long as these two groups exist in the Party, the possibility of an exchange of opinion on questions of principle within the Party, and hence the further healthy ideological development of the Party is entirely excluded.

To advance artificial differences of principle on questions concerning which no such differences exist would at the present time serve only and exclusively as a means of furthering the non-principled factional struggle.

The deep-rooted unprincipled methods of factional struggle are becoming a great obstacle in the struggle against all deviations from the correct political line and hindering the development of self-criticism or leading to its factional distortion.

However, the decision of the VI Congress of the Comintern on the struggle against deviation from the correct political position is of special importance to the Workers (Communist) Party of America.

The ever-growing economic power and ever-increasing importance of American imperialism on the world arena, the specific method of economic and political oppression of the working class on the part of the bourgeoisie, who use the powerful apparatus of the A. F. of L. as an agency in the working class—all these conditions give rise to the most serious danger of the development of a strong Right-wing tendency in the American Party. The fact that both factions were guilty of Right-wing errors is most significant and amply confirms the existence of the danger of the development of a Right-wing tendency in the American Party. The VI Congress has already pointed out in its resolutions a series of Right-wing errors (the attitude towards the Socialist Party, inadequate work by the Party in organising the unorganised and the struggle of the Negroes, the insufficiently clear struggles against the murderous policy of United States in Latin America), and recorded that “these mistakes cannot, however, be ascribed exclusively to the majority leadership”. The mistakes

committed since the VI Congress of the C. I. were also of a Right character.

The appearance of Trotzkyism in the United States can be explained by the fact that the Trotzkyist opportunist doctrines on the question of the Party and its structure, at the basis of which lies the “principle” of unprincipled alliance with all and sundry Right and “Left” groups and organisations fighting against the Comintern, seems to fit perfectly into the scheme of political struggle in the United States where lack of principle was always the underlying principle in the activities of all bourgeois parties. Nowhere, in no other country in the world, have we witnessed so easy and rapid formation of a bloc of the Trotzkyist and the out and out Right wingers as in the United States, thus revealing at the very outset its Social Democratic and anti-Comintern nature. The Right mistakes of the Party helped the growth of Trotzkyism in the United States.

Notwithstanding the presence of certain temporary premises for Trotzkyism in the United States, the Trotzkyist bloc there also is doomed to collapse. The main condition for this is a correct political line of the Communist Party based on clear principles aiming at the elimination and correction of Right mistakes and a decisive fight against the Right danger in the ranks of the Workers (Communist) Party of America.

A successful struggle against both the out and out Right as well as against the “Left” Trotzkyist deviations, has been hindered until now mainly by the intolerant and unprincipled faction struggle between the two leading groups. Each faction speculates on the mistakes of the other concealing or under-estimating meanwhile its own mistakes. Each faction hurls against the other accusations of alleged Right and “Left” mistakes. Actual and imaginary errors are exaggerated for factional purposes and deviations are manufactured out of them.

For factional considerations, the minority of the C. E. C. attacks the majority on some points more sharply than the Trotzkyists who have been expelled from the Party. In its turn the majority, also for factional reasons, resorts to absolutely intolerable manoeuvres (the invitation of the renegade Cannon to a meeting of the C. E. C., for example). Speculation on deviations (instead

of combating them), and factional manufacturing of deviations, does not give the Party a chance to discover the real mistakes and to establish the actual dimensions and the actual sources of the Right (and also the “Left”) danger.

The struggle against the Right and “Left” dangers has to contend with factionalism in the Workers (Communist) Party of America and cannot be developed in a truly Bolshevist manner until this main hindrance is eliminated.

The C. I. several times requested the Party in the most decisive manner to put an end to the factional struggle. The VI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. demanded from the Party a “complete and unconditional cessation of the factional struggle.” The American Commission during the VIII Plenum confirmed that decision. The Polit. Secretariat of the E. C. C. I. declared in April 1928 that: “it is the opinion of the E. C. C. I. that the main problem of the Party in the field of organisation is to kill all remnants of factionalism.” Finally the VI Congress decided that: “the most important task confronting the Party is to put an end to the factional strife, which is not based on any serious differences, and at the same time, to increase the recruiting of workers into the Party and to give a definite stimulus to the promotion of workers to leading Party posts.”

The existing factions must be resolutely and definitely liquidated. The factional struggle must be unconditionally stopped. Without this no mass Communist Party of the American proletariat can be organised.

This is the most urgent task of the Party. The VI Convention of the Workers Party must categorically prohibit any further factional struggle, under threat of expulsion from the Party, and lay the foundation of a normal Party life, especially internal democracy, self-criticism and iron Party discipline, based on the unconditional subordination of the minority to the majority and an unconditional recognition of the decisions of the Comintern.

All Party members must unite their efforts for the speediest carrying out of this most urgent task.

The Young Workers League must not be led by any of the factional groups in the Party, its members must fight on the basis of the decisions of the Comintern and the Communist Youth In-

ternational for the liquidation of factionalism and factional groupings both in the League and in the Party.

The fact that the Party has increased last year the number of its members employed in big factories by 14%, the fact that it has already come out as a staunch leader in stubborn class wars, the fact that its influence among the native workers has increased and improved, all this shows that the Party has already matured for transformation into a mass organisation. But the fact that the Party could not get more than 50,000 votes in the elections shows that its ties with the American proletariat is still weak.

The Party can become a mass proletarian Party only on condition that it widens its base by creating its main strongholds in the ranks of the American workers, especially in the most important branches of industry, and also among the Negro workers, while at the same time retaining its positions among the revolutionary immigrant workers.

This course on the American workers and the decisive branches of industry must run through all activities of the Party and must be laid down in the foundation of the organisation of the unorganised, the creation of new unions, the organisation of the Left Wing in the old unions, "laying thereby the basis for the actual realisation of the slogan of creation of a wide Workers' Party from below." (Resolution of the VI Congress of the C. I.)

Four principal conditions are now essential in order that the Party may definitely enter the path leading to its transformation into a mass Communist Party, four conditions, the decisive significance of which neither the majority, which is responsible for the leadership, nor the minority have understood. These conditions are:

1. A correct perspective in the analysis of the general crisis of capitalism and American imperialism which is a part of it.

2. To place in the centre of the work of the Party the daily needs of the American working class and especially a) the demand for a 7-hour day and 6 hours for underground workers and those engaged in injurious trades, while exposing and waging a systematic struggle against the capitalist methods of rationalisation directed towards intensifying the exploitation of the workers; b) the demand for all forms of social insurance at the cost of

the employers and the State.

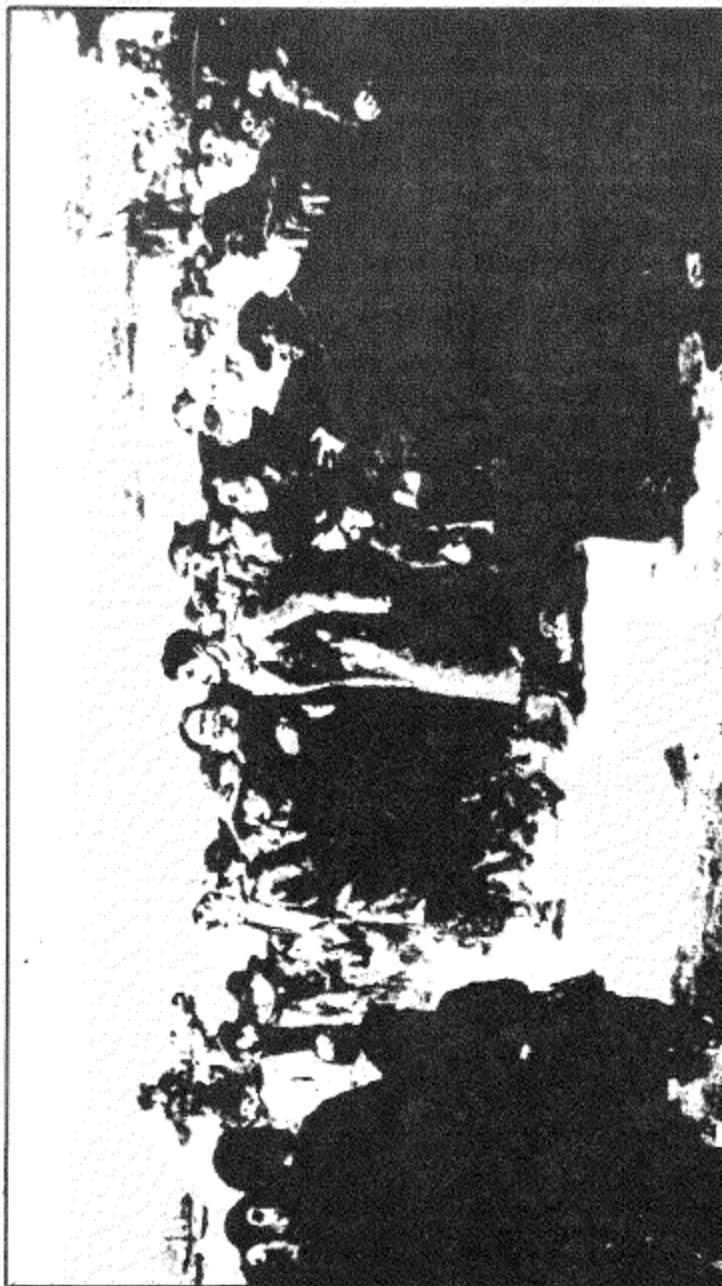
3. Freeing the Party from its immigrant narrowness and seclusion and making the American workers its wide basis, paying due attention to work among the Negroes.

4. Liquidation of factionalism and drawing workers into the leadership.

The E. C. C. I. calls open the VI Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America to carry out these decisive tasks.

With Communist Greetings.

Executive Committee of the Communist International.



J. V. Stalin leading a political demonstration of the Batum workers on March 9, 1902.

Stalin's Speeches on the American Communist Party

Speech Delivered in the American Commission
of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.
(May 6, 1929)

Comrades, since quite a few speeches have been delivered here and the political position of both groups in the Communist Party of the United States of America has been sufficiently clarified, I do not intend to speak at great length. I shall not deal with the political position of the leaders of the majority and the minority. I shall not do so since it has become evident during the course of the discussion that both groups are guilty of the fundamental error of exaggerating the specific features of American capitalism. You know that this exaggeration lies at the root of every opportunist error committed both by the majority and the minority group. It would be wrong to ignore the specific peculiarities of American capitalism. The Communist Party in its work must take them into account. But it would be still more wrong to base the activities of the Communist Party on these specific features, since the foundation of the activities of every Communist Party, including the American Communist Party, on which it must base itself, must be the general features of capitalism, which are the same for all countries, and not its specific features in any given country. It is on this that the internationalism of the Communist Party is founded. Specific features are only supplementary to the general features. The error of both groups is that they exaggerate the significance of the specific features of American capitalism and thereby overlook the basic features of American capitalism which are characteristic of world capitalism as a whole. Therefore, when the leaders of the majority and the minority accuse each other of elements of a Right deviation, it is obviously not without some measure of truth. It cannot be denied that American conditions form a medium in which it is easy for the American Communist Party to be led astray and to exaggerate the strength and stability of American capitalism. These conditions lead our comrades from America, both the majority and the minority, into errors of the type of the Right deviation. Ow-

ing to these conditions, at times one section, at times others, the other section, fails to realize the full extent of reformism in America, underestimates the leftward swing of the working class, and, in general, is inclined to regard American capitalism as something apart from and above world capitalism. That is the basis for the unsteadiness of both sections of the American Communist Party in matters of principle.

Having made these general observations, let us now pass to practical political questions.

What are the main defects in the practice of the leaders of the majority and the minority?

Firstly, that in their day-to-day work they, and particularly the leaders of the majority, are guided by motives of unprincipled factionalism and place the interests of their faction higher than the interests of the Party.

Secondly, that both groups, and particularly the majority, are so infected with the disease of factionalism that they base their relations with the Comintern, not on the principle of confidence, but on a policy of rotten diplomacy, a policy of diplomatic intrigue.

Let us take a few examples. I will mention such a simple fact as the speculations made by the leaders both of the majority and the minority regarding the differences within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. You know that both groups of the American Communist Party, competing with each other and chasing after each other like horses in a race, are feverishly speculating on existing and non-existing differences within the C.P.S.U. Why do they do that? Do the interests of the Communist Party of America demand it? No, of course not. They do it in order to gain some advantage for their own particular faction and to cause injury to the other faction. Foster and Bittelman see nothing reprehensible in declaring themselves "Stalinites" and thereby demonstrating their loyalty to the C.P.S.U. But, my dear comrades, that is disgraceful. Do you not know that there are no "Stalinites," that there must be no "Stalinites"? Why does the minority act in this unseemly fashion? In order to entrap the majority group, the group of Comrade Lovestone, and to prove that the Lovestone group is opposed to the C.P.S.U. and, hence,

to the basic nucleus in the Comintern. That is, of course, incorrect. It is irresponsible. But the minority cares nothing about that; their chief aim is to ensnare and discredit the majority in the interests of the faction of the minority.

And how does the Lovestone group act in this connection? Does it behave more correctly than the minority group? Unfortunately, not. Unfortunately, its behaviour is even more disgraceful than that of the minority group. Judge for yourselves. The Foster group demonstrate their closeness to the C.P.S.U. by declaring themselves “Stalinites.” Lovestone perceives that his own faction thereby may lose something by this. Therefore, in order not to be outdone, the Lovestone group suddenly performs a “hair-raising” feat and, at the American Party Congress,¹ carries through a decision calling for the removal of Comrade Bukharin from the Comintern. And so you get a game of rivalry on the principle of who will outdo whom. Instead of a fight on principles you get the most unprincipled speculation on the differences within the C.P.S.U.

Such are the results of a policy which places the interests of faction higher than the interests of the Party.

Another example. I refer to the case of Comrade Pepper. You are all more or less acquainted with that case. Twice the Comintern demanded Comrade Pepper’s return to Moscow. The Central Committee of the American Communist Party resisted and, in fact, ignored a number of decisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International regarding Pepper. Thereby the majority of the American Communist Party demonstrated its fellowship with Pepper, whose opportunist vacillations everybody knows. Finally, a delegation from the Executive Committee of the Communist International sent to the 6th Congress of the American Communist Party, advances again, in the name of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the immediate recall of Comrade Pepper. The majority under the leadership of Lovestone and Gitlow again resists this demand and does not find it necessary to carry out the decision of the E.C.C.I. Foster’s group utilizes this situation against the Lovestone group, stating that the majority group within the

¹ Comrade Stalin speaks here of the Sixth Convention held in 1929.

American Communist Party is against the Comintern. The Lovestone group finally senses that its interests might suffer should it find itself in a position of opposition to the Comintern. Accordingly, the Lovestone group performs another “hair-raising” feat and expels Comrade Pepper from the Party! the same Pepper whom only the day before they had defended against the C.I. Another game of rivalry – who can spit furthest. How can we explain the resistance to the decisions of the Comintern regarding Pepper on the part of the majority group? Not, of course, in the interests of the Party. It was exclusively in the interests of the majority faction. Why is it that the majority made a sudden right-about-face and unexpectedly expelled Pepper from the Party? Was it in the interests of the Party? Of course not. It was purely in the interests of the Lovestone faction, who were anxious not to surrender a trump card to their enemy, namely, the Foster-Bittelman factional group. Faction interests above all!

The Foster group want to demonstrate their devotion to the C.P.S.U. by declaring themselves “Stalinites.” Very good. We, the Lovestoneites, will go still further than the Foster group and demand the removal of Comrade Bukharin from the Comintern. Let the Fosterites try to beat that! Let them know over there in Moscow that we Americans know how to play the stock market.

The Foster group want to demonstrate their solidarity with the Comintern by demanding the carrying out of the decision of the Comintern regarding Pepper’s recall. Very good. We, the Lovestoneites, will go still further and will expel Comrade Pepper from the Party. Let the Fosterites try to beat that! Let them know over there in Moscow that we Americans know how to play the stock market.

There you have the fruits of the factionalism of the majority and the minority.

But, Comrades, the Comintern is not a stock market. The Comintern is the holy of holies of the working class. The Comintern, therefore, must not be confused with a stock market. *Either* we are Leninists, and our relations one with another, as well as the relations of the sections with the Comintern, and vice versa, must be built on mutual confidence, must be as clean and pure as crystal – in which case there should be no room in our ranks for

rotten diplomatic intrigue; *or* we are not Leninists – in which case rotten diplomacy and unprincipled factional struggle will have full scope in our relations. One or the other. We must choose, comrades.

In order to show how pure Communist morals are depraved and defiled in the course of a factional struggle, I could cite yet another fact as, for instance, my conversation with Comrades Foster and Lovestone. I refer to the conversation that took place at the time of the Sixth Congress. It is characteristic that in correspondence with his friends Comrade Foster makes this conversation out to be something secret, something which must not be talked about aloud. It is characteristic that Comrade Lovestone, in bringing his charges against Comrade Foster, in connection with this conversation, refers to his talk with me and boasts here that he, Comrade Lovestone, unlike Foster, is able to keep a secret and that under no conditions would he consent to divulge the substance of his conversation with me. Why this mysticism, dear comrades; what purpose does it serve? What could there be mysterious in my talk with Comrades Foster and Lovestone? Listening to these comrades, one might think I spoke to them of things which one would be ashamed to relate here. But that is stupid, comrades. What is the purpose of this mystical game? Is it difficult to understand that I have nothing to conceal from comrades? Is it difficult to understand that I am ready at any moment to tell comrades the substance of my conversation with Foster and Lovestone from beginning to end? What will then become of the famous mysticism so zealously spread here by Foster and Lovestone?

What did Comrade Foster talk to me about? He complained of the factionalism and unprincipledness of Comrade Lovestone's group. What did I answer him? I admitted these sins on the part of the Lovestone group, but at the same time added that the same sins were characteristic of the Foster group. On the basis of this Comrade Foster arrives at the singular conclusion that I sympathize with the minority group. Where is the foundation, one asks? On what grounds is Foster pleased to think that I fail to see the defects of the minority group and even sympathize with that group? Is it not obvious that with Comrade Foster *the wish is father to the thought?*

What did Comrade Lovestone talk about? Of the worthlessness of the Foster-Bittelman group. What did I answer? I answered that both groups were suffering from serious defects and advised him to take measures to liquidate factionalism. That was all.

What is there mysterious here that cannot be spoken about aloud?

Is it not strange that out of these simple and clear facts the comrades of the majority and the minority make a secret worthy of arousing the laughter of serious-minded people? Is it not obvious that there would be no mystification if there were no factional atmosphere poisoning the life of the American Communist Party and defiling simple and pure Communist morals?

Or let us take, for instance, another fact. I refer to the talk with Comrade Lovestone that took place *the other day*. It is characteristic that Comrade Lovestone has also been spreading absurd rumours about this conversation of mine and making a secret of it. Why this incomprehensible passion for the "mysterious"?... What did he speak about to me the other day? He asked that the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. should rescind the decision to withdraw him from America. He said that he, Lovestone, would undertake to carry out the proposed decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., provided it would not be directed sharply against the leaders of the majority of the Communist Party of America. He promised to be a loyal soldier of the Comintern and to prove it in practice, if the Comintern would give him the necessary instructions. He said he was not looking for high positions in the American Communist Party, but only begged that he should be tested and given the opportunity to prove his loyalty to the Comintern. What did I reply to this? I told him that experiments in testing the loyalty of Comrade Lovestone to the Comintern have already been going on for three years, but no good has come of them. I said it would be better both for the Communist Party of America and for the Comintern, if Comrades Lovestone and Bittelman were kept in Moscow for a time. I said that this method of action on the part of the Comintern was one of the surest means of curing the American Communist Party of factionalism and saving it from disintegration. I said that although this was

my opinion, I agreed to submit the proposal of Comrade Lovestone to the consideration of the Russian comrades, and undertook to inform him of the opinion of the Russian comrades.

That seems perfectly clear. Yet Comrade Lovestone again tries to make a secret of these obvious facts and is spreading all kinds of rumours regarding this conversation.

It is obvious that there would be no such mystification and simple things would not be turned into mysterious legends, if it were not for a policy which places the interests of a faction higher than the interests of the Party, the interests of diplomatic intrigue higher than the interests of the Comintern.

In order to put an end to these foul methods and place the American Communist Party on the lines of Leninist policy, it is necessary first of all to put an end to factionalism in that Party.

That is the conclusion to which the above-mentioned facts bring us. What is the solution?

Comrade Foster mentioned one. According to his proposal, the leadership should be handed over to the minority. Can that solution be adopted? No, it can not. The delegation of the Executive Committee of the Communist International committed an error when it sharply dissociated itself from the majority, without at the same time dissociating itself *equally sharply* from the minority. It would be very unfortunate if the Commission of the Presidium repeated the error of the delegation of the E.C.C.I. I think the Commission of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. should in its draft dissociate itself both from the errors of the majority and from the errors of the minority. And for the very reason that it must dissociate itself from both, it must not propose to turn over the leadership to the minority. Hence the proposal of Comrade Foster with all its implications, automatically falls to the ground.

The American delegation proposed a different solution, directly contrary to the proposal of Comrade Foster. As you know, the proposal of the American delegation consists of ten points. The substance of this proposal is to the effect that the leadership of the majority should be fully rehabilitated, the factional work of the majority should be considered correct, that the decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. to withdraw Comrade Lovestone should be annulled, and that thus the practice of suffocating the

minority should be endorsed. Can this solution be adopted? No, it can not, for it would mean, not eradicating factionalism, but elevating it to a principle.

What then is the solution?

The solution consists in the following:

1. The actions and the proposals of the delegation of the E.C.C.I. must, in the main, be approved, with the exclusion from the proposals of those points which approximate to the proposals of Comrade Foster.

2. An open letter must be sent in the name of the E.C.C.I. to the members of the American Communist Party setting forth the errors of both sections of the Party and sharply emphasizing the question of eradicating all factionalism.

3. The action of the leaders of the majority at the Convention of the Communist Party of America, particularly on the question of Pepper, must be condemned.

4. An end must be put to the present situation in the Communist Party of America, in which the questions of positive work, the questions of the struggle of the working class against the capitalists, questions of wages, working hours, work in the trade unions, the fight against reformism, the fight against the Right deviation – when all these questions are kept in the shade, and are replaced by petty questions of the factional struggle between the Lovestone group and the Foster group.

5. The Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the American Communist Party must be reorganized with the inclusion of such workers therein as are capable of seeing something more than the factional struggle, the struggle of the working class against the capitalists, who are capable of placing the interests and the unity of the Party above the interests of individual groups and their leaders.

6. Comrades Lovestone and Bittelman must be summoned and placed at the disposal of the Comintern, in order that the members of the American Communist Party should at last understand that the Comintern intends to fight factionalism in all seriousness.

Such is the solution, in my opinion.

A word or two regarding the tasks and the mission of the

American Communist Party. I think, comrades, that the American Communist Party is one of those few Communist Parties in the world upon which history has laid tasks of a decisive character from the point of view of the world revolutionary movement. You all know very well the strength and power of American capitalism. Many now think that the general crisis of world capitalism will not affect America. That, of course, is not true. It is entirely untrue, comrades. The crisis of world capitalism is developing with increasing rapidity and cannot but affect American capitalism. The three million now unemployed in America are the first swallows indicating the ripening of the economic crisis in America. The sharpening antagonism between America and England, the struggle for markets and raw materials and, finally, the colossal growth of armaments — that is the second portent of the approaching crisis. I think the moment is not far off when a revolutionary crisis will develop in America. And when a revolutionary crisis develops in America, that will be the beginning of the end of world capitalism as a whole. It is essential that the American Communist Party should be capable of meeting that historical moment fully prepared and of assuming the leadership of the impending class struggle in America. Every effort and every means must be employed in preparing for that, comrades. For that end the American Communist Party must be improved and bolshevized. For that end we must work for the complete liquidation of factionalism and deviations in the Party. For that end we must work for the reestablishment of unity in the Communist Party of America. For that end we must work in order to forge real revolutionary cadres and a real revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, capable of leading the many millions of the American working class toward the revolutionary class struggles. For that end all personal factors and factional considerations must be laid aside and the revolutionary education of the working class of America must be placed above all.

That is why I think, comrades, that the most serious attention must be paid to the proposals of the Commission of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. for your consideration here, for the aim of these proposals is to render the Communist Party of America a healthy Party, to eradicate factionalism, to create unity, to strengthen the Party and to bolshevize it.

J. V. Stalin

First Speech Delivered in the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the American Question

(May 14th, 1929)

Comrades, we are faced with a unique fact, worthy of the most serious attention. A month has already passed since the American delegation arrived in Moscow. For almost a whole month we are occupied with it, we are discussing the problems of the American Communist Party and are indicating methods of clearing up the situation that has arisen. Every member of the delegation has had the opportunity to exercise his right of expressing his views and criticizing the comrades who were not in agreement with him. You know that this right was exercised by them to the full, without the slightest hindrance on the part of the E.C.C.I. You know that Comrade Lovestone insisted that the Russian comrades should express their views. You know that the Russian comrades have already had their say on the essential aspects of the question. Accordingly, the Commission has fulfilled all the conditions requisite for finding a solution and bringing the matter to a conclusion.

And what do we find? Instead of a serious attitude to the matter in hand, and a readiness to put an end finally to factionalism, we have a fresh outburst of factionalism among the members of the American delegation and a fresh attempt to undermine the cause of unity of the American Communist Party. A few days ago we were still without the draft of the decision of the Comintern on the American question. All we had then was an outline of the general principles for a decision, an outline directed toward the eradication of factionalism. But instead of waiting until the draft decision appeared, the American delegation, without wasting words, broke out with the declaration of May 9th, a declaration of a super-factional character, an anti-Party declaration. You know with what hostility the members of the Commission of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. met this declaration. You know that the Commission criticized it to shreds. One might have expected that the American delegation would

give thought to this and correct its errors. The direct contrary, in fact occurred. The draft of the proposals of the Commission, which has now been distributed to all the members of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. and the American delegation, no sooner appeared than the American delegation broke out with the new declaration of May 14th, a declaration still more factional and anti-Party than that of May 9th. You are, of course, acquainted with this declaration. Comrade Gitlow read it here during the course of his speech. The fundamental feature of this declaration is that it proclaims the thesis of *non-submission* to the decisions of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. That means that the extreme factionalism of the leaders of the majority has driven them into the path of insubordination, and hence of warfare against the Comintern.

It cannot be denied that our American comrades, like all Communists, have the right to disagree with the draft of the decision of the Commission and have the right to oppose it. And as long as they confine themselves to the exercise of this right there is not, and cannot be anything wrong. But the trouble is that the declaration of May 14th does not stop there. It goes further; it considers that the fight must be continued even after the draft becomes the decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. Therefore, we must put the question squarely to the members of the American delegation: When the draft assumes the force of an obligatory decision of the Comintern, do they consider themselves entitled not to submit to that decision? We have argued the question in the Commission for a whole month; we have had a number of discussions; we have spent a tremendous amount of time on the matter, time that might have been more profitably employed; we finally arrived at the point when the time for discussion was over and were on the eve of adopting a decision which must be compulsory for all members of the Comintern. And now the question arises: do the members of the American delegation, as Communists, as Leninists, consider themselves entitled not to submit to the decision of the E.C.C.I. on the American question?

That is the crux of the matter, comrades.

Permit me now to proceed to examine the declaration itself.

This declaration of May 14th was drawn up rather craftily. I do not doubt that this declaration was written by some sly attor-

ney, by some petty-fogging lawyer. Judge for yourselves. On the one hand, the declaration avows complete loyalty to the Comintern, the unshakable fidelity of the authors of the declaration to the Communist International, not only in the past, not only in the present, but also in the future. That, of course, is excellent, provided it is not an empty promise. On the other hand, the declaration states that its authors cannot assume responsibility for carrying out the decision of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. It plainly states:

“There are valid reasons for our being unable to accept this new draft letter, to assume responsibility before the Party membership for the execution of this letter, to endorse the inevitable irreparable damage that the line of this new draft letter is bound to bring to our Party.”

If you please, on the one hand, complete loyalty; on the other, a refusal to carry out the decision of the Comintern. And this is called loyalty to the Comintern! Petti-fogging practice, indeed. Can you picture a Communist, not a paper Communist, but a real Communist, avowing loyalty to the Comintern and at the same time refusing to accept responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the Comintern? What sort of loyalty is that? What is the reason for this duplicity? This hypocrisy? Is it not obvious that this weighty talk of loyalty and fidelity to the Comintern is necessary to comrade Lovestone in order to deceive the “membership”?

One involuntarily recalls the unforgettable Mr. Chamberlain, who, on the one hand, is for peace and reduction of armaments and, on the other, does everything possible to ensure that armaments should increase and preparations for war proceed at full speed. The chatter about peace is necessary to Chamberlain in order to cover up the preparations for a new war. Loud talks about loyalty and fidelity to the Comintern is necessary to comrade Lovestone in order to cover up preparations for the fight against the decisions of the Comintern. Comrade Lovestone, of course, is not Chamberlain. There is not, and cannot be any analogy between them. But the fact that his “manoeuvre” recalls the “manoeuvres” of Chamberlain should be a sufficient warning for him.

But the declaration does not stop there. It goes further. Passing from the defensive to the offensive, it proclaims the necessity of fighting the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, as decisions, which, it is declared, are against the line of the Sixth Congress of the C.I. It plainly states that the draft decision, the draft for the Open Letter of the Comintern, which here in the Presidium meets with general approval, and which in all likelihood will be approved by the Presidium of the Comintern – it plainly states that this draft is contrary to the letter and spirit of the line of the Sixth World Congress of the C.I. The declaration plainly states that: “The new draft letter... makes an estimate of our Party work” (i.e. the work of the Communist Party of America) “and leadership totally at variance with the line and decisions of the Sixth World Congress...”

I shall not attempt to show that these assertions of the declaration are a petty and unworthy libel on the Comintern and its executive organs. It is also not worth attempting to show that it is in fact the present leaders of the majority of the Communist Party of America who have violated, and continue to violate, the basic decisions of the Congresses of the Comintern and its executive organs on the question of liquidating factionalism in the American Communist Party. Comrade Kuusinen has fully shown in his speech that both factions of the American Communist Party and particularly the majority faction, have, beginning with 1925, systematically violated the fundamental decisions of the Congresses of the Comintern regarding the liquidation of factionalism and the establishment of unity. One has only to acquaint oneself with the resolutions of the Congresses of the Comintern to convince oneself that in the leaders of the present majority we have incorrigible violators of the spirit and letter of the decisions of the Comintern.

As to the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, in its decision on the American Communist Party it plainly declares that “the chief task of the Party is to put an end to the factional struggle, which is not based on any serious differences of principle.” What has the group of Comrade Lovestone done to carry out this decision of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern? You can see for yourselves, comrades, that so far it has done nothing in this direction.

On the contrary, it has done, and is doing, everything possible to transform the decision of the Sixth Congress into a scrap of paper.

Such are the facts.

And if, in spite of all these facts, the declaration nevertheless accuses the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. with violating the "letter and spirit of the line of the Sixth World Congress," what does it mean? It means that the authors of the declaration desire to oppose the decisions of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. to the line of the Sixth World Congress, which they themselves violated and continue to violate. And why do they do that? In order, pharisaically concealing themselves under the flag of the Sixth Congress, to conduct a fight against the decisions of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. In this way the authors of the declaration, so to speak, declare: We, the Lovestone group are for the Sixth Congress, but the draft for the Open Letter of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. contradicts the line of the Sixth Congress; therefore, we must, and shall, fight the decision of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.

The authors of the declaration apparently think there is something new in this deceitful "manoeuvre" and that we shall fail to decipher what is the concealed meaning of their "manoeuvres." Not so, comrades. They are mistaken in their reckoning. The history of the Comintern shows that comrades who have moved away from the Comintern always begin with just such "manoeuvres." When Zinoviev moved away from the Comintern he began by counterposing the line of the Comintern to the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. He did that in order to conceal his fight against the Executive Committee by talk regarding the line of the Comintern. The same is true of Trotsky, who began his divergence from the Comintern by drawing a distinction between the line of the Comintern and the decisions of the Executive Committee and the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. That is the old, outworn path of opportunism, as old as the world itself. It is regrettable that the authors of the declaration have been drawn into this same path.

In counterposing the Comintern to the Executive Committee of the Comintern, the authors of the declaration hope, as Zino-

view and Trotsky once hoped, to sever the Executive Committee of the Comintern from the Comintern. A ridiculous and foolish hope! The authors of the declaration apparently forget that the interpreters of the decisions of the Comintern Congresses are the Executive Committee and its Presidium alone, and not they. The authors of the declaration are mistaken if they think that the American workers will believe their interpretation rather than the interpretation of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern.

Such is the true character of the declaration of the American delegation.

Hence, the declaration of the American delegation is a platform of struggle against the line of the Comintern in the name of opportunist vacillation, in the name of unprincipled factionalism, in the name of the violation of the unity of the American Communist Party.

Let us turn to the draft of the Commission.

What is the basis for the draft of the Commission which is now offered for the consideration of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.? It is based on the idea of maintaining the line of the Comintern within the ranks of the Communist Party of America, on the idea of bolshevizing the American Communist Party, on the idea of fighting the deviation from the Marxist line, and, above all, the Right deviation, on the idea of Leninist Party unity, and finally, and above all, on the idea of completely liquidating factionalism. For it must after all be realized, comrades, that factionalism is the *fundamental evil* of the American Communist Party.

In the history of the revolutionary movement of the working class we Bolsheviks have not infrequently had occasion to conduct a factional fight against opportunism. It was at the time when the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks found themselves *in one common Party*, when the Bolsheviks were obliged to organize a faction in order to break down the authority of the social-democrats, to organize a split against Social-Democracy and to create *our own* Communist Party. At that time factionalism was useful and essential. But now? Now it is a different matter. Conditions have changed basically. At present we have our own

monolithic Communist Parties, sections of the Communist International. Now factionalism is dangerous and harmful, because it weakens communism, weakens the communist offensive against reformism, undermines the struggle of communism against social-democracy in the labour movement. Our American comrades evidently do not understand the fundamental difference between the past and the present.

Wherein consists the evil of factionalism within the ranks of a Communist Party?

Firstly, in that factionalism weakens the Party spirit, it dulls the revolutionary sense and blinds the Party workers to such an extent that, in the factional passion, they are obliged to place the interests of faction above the interests of the Party, above the interests of the Comintern, above the interests of the working class. Factionalism not infrequently brings matters to such a pass that the Party workers, blinded by the factional struggle, are inclined to gauge all facts, all events in the life of the Party, not from the point of view of the interests of the Party and the working class, but from the point of view of the narrow interests of their own faction, from the point of view of their own factional kitchen.

Did not Comrade Lovestone and his friends know that they should have held aloof from Pepper, and that they should have repudiated him so as not to compromise themselves as revolutionaries? Why, in spite of several warnings given by the Comintern, did they not repudiate him at the time? Because they acted first and foremost as factionalists. Because every bit of splinter, every piece of string is to be valued in a factional fight, even every poor soldier, even every poor officer. Because even people like Pepper may serve a purpose in a factional fight. Because factional blindness compelled them to place the interests of their faction above the interests of the Party.

Did not Comrade Foster know that he should have held aloof from the concealed Trotskyites that were in his group? Why, in spite of repeated warnings, did he not repudiate them at the time? Because he behaved first and foremost as a factionalist. Because in the factional fight against the Lovestone group even concealed Trotskyites might be useful to him. Because the blindness of fac-

tionalism dulls the Party sense in people and makes them indiscriminating as to the means they employ. It is true, such a policy is bad and irreconcilable with the interests of the Party. But factionalists as a rule are inclined to forget the interests of the Party – all they can think of is their own factional point of view.

Secondly, in that factionalism interferes with the training of the Party in the spirit of a policy of principles; it prevents the training of the cadres in an honest, proletarian, incorruptible revolutionary spirit, free from rotten diplomacy and unprincipled intrigue. Leninism declares that a policy based on principles is the only correct policy. Factionalism, on the contrary, believes that the only correct policy is one of factional diplomacy and unprincipled factional intrigue. That is why an atmosphere of factional struggle cultivates not politicians of principle, but adroit factionalist manipulators, experienced rascals and Mensheviks, smart in fooling the “enemy” and covering up traces. It is true that such “educational” work of the factionalists is contrary to the fundamental interests of the Party and the working class. But the factionalists do not give a rap for that – all they care about is their own factional diplomatic kitchen, their own group interests. It is therefore not surprising that politicians of principle and honest proletarian revolutionaries get no sympathy from the factionalists. On the other hand, factional tricksters and manipulators, unprincipled intriguers and backstage wirepullers and masters in the formation of unprincipled blocks are held by them in high honour.

Thirdly, in that factionalism, by weakening the will for unity in the Party and by undermining its iron discipline, creates within the Party a peculiar factional regime, as a result of which the whole internal life of our Party is robbed of its conspirative protection in the face of the class enemy, and the Party itself runs the danger of being transformed into a plaything of the agents of the bourgeoisie. This, as a rule, comes about in the following way: Let us say that some question is being decided in the Politburo of the Central Committee. Within the Politburo there is a minority and a majority which regard each decision from their factional standpoint. If a factional regime prevails in the Party, the wirepullers of both factions immediately inform the periph-

eral machine of this or that decision of the Politburo, endeavouring to prepare it for their own advantage and swing it in the direction they desire. As a rule, this process of information becomes a regular system. It becomes a regular system because each faction regards it as its duty to inform its peripheral machine in the way it thinks fit and to hold its periphery in a condition of mobilization in readiness for a scrap with the factional enemy. As a result, important secret decisions of the Party become general knowledge. In this way the agents of the bourgeoisie attain access to the secret decisions of the Party and make it easy to use the knowledge of the internal life of the Party against the interests of the Party. True, such a regime threatens the complete demoralization of the ranks of the Party. But the factionalists do not care about that, since for them, the interests of their group are supreme.

Finally, the evil of factionalism consists in the fact that it completely nullifies all positive work done in the Party; it robs the Party workers of all desire to concern themselves with the day-to-day needs of the working class (wages, hours, the improvement of the material welfare of the workers, etc.); it weakens the work of the Party in preparing the working class for the class conflicts with the bourgeoisie and thereby creates a state of affairs in which the authority of the Party must inevitably suffer in the eyes of the workers, and the workers, instead of flocking to the Party, are compelled to quit the Party ranks. And that is what we are now observing in the American Communist Party. What have the factional leaders of the majority and the minority been chiefly occupied with lately? With factional scandal-mongering, with every kind of petty factional trifle, the drawing up of useless platforms and sub-platforms, the introduction of tens and hundreds of amendments and sub-amendments to these platforms. Weeks and months are wasted lying in ambush for the factional enemy, trying to entrap him, trying to dig up something in the personal life of the factional enemy, or, if nothing can be found, inventing some fiction about him. It is obvious that positive work must suffer in such an atmosphere, the life of the Party becomes petty, the authority of the Party declines and the workers, the best, the revolutionary minded workers, who want action

and not scandal-mongering, are forced to leave the Party.

That, fundamentally, is the evil of factionalism in the ranks of a Communist Party.

Hence, the most important task of the American Communist Party is to put an end to factionalism and definitely cure itself of this disease.

It is on this that the draft of the Commission presented for your consideration is based.

A few words regarding the vaunting manner in which the group of Comrade Lovestone speaks and represents itself here in the name of the whole Party, in the name of 99 percent of the Communist Party of America. They never represent themselves otherwise than in the name of 99 percent of the Party. One would think they have that 99 percent in their pockets. That is a bad manner, comrades of the American delegation. Let me remind you that Zinoviev and Trotsky also at one time played trumps with percentages, and assured everybody that they had secured, or at any rate, would secure, a 99 percent majority in the ranks of the C.P.S.U. You know, comrades, in what a farce the vain glory of Trotsky and Zinoviev ended. I would therefore advise you not to play trumps with percentages. You declare you have a certain majority in the American Communist Party and that you will retain that majority under all circumstances. That is untrue, comrades of the American delegation, absolutely untrue. You had a majority because the American Communist Party until now regarded you as the determined supporters of the Communist International. And it was only because the Party regarded you as the friends of the Comintern that you had a majority in the ranks of the American Communist Party. But what will happen if the American workers learn that you intend to break the unity of the ranks of the Comintern and are thinking of conducting a fight against its executive bodies – that is the question, dear comrades? Do you think that the American workers will follow your lead against the Comintern, that they will prefer the interests of your factional group to the interests of the Comintern? There have been numerous cases in the history of the Comintern when its most popular leaders, who had greater authority than you, found themselves isolated as soon as they raised the banner

against the Comintern. Do you think you will fare better than these leaders? A poor hope, comrades! At present you still have a formal majority. But tomorrow you will have no majority and you will find yourselves completely isolated if you attempt to start a fight against the decisions of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. You may be certain of that, dear comrades.

Comrade Lovestone is spoken of as a talented leader, as the founder of the American Communist Party. It is said that the Communist Party of America cannot get along without Comrade Lovestone, that the removal of Comrade Lovestone may ruin the Party. That is not true, comrades. More than that, it is not sincere. It would be a bad Party that could not get along without any given leader. The Communist Party of America is not as weak as certain comrades think. It is, in any case, many times stronger than it is made out to be. The Party is created by the working class and not by individual leaders. To declare the contrary would be absurd. And, what is more, comrade Lovestone after all is not such a great leader. He is, of course, a capable and talented comrade. But how have his capabilities been employed? In factional scandal-mongering, in factional intrigue, Comrade Lovestone is indisputably an adroit and talented factional wire-puller. No one can deny him that. But factional leadership must not be confused with Party leadership. A Party leader is one thing, a factional leader is something quite different. Not every factional leader has the gift of being a Party leader. I doubt very much that at this stage Comrade Lovestone can be a Party leader.

That is how matters stand, comrades.

And what is the solution, you will ask? In my opinion the solution is to accept the draft of the Commission, to reject the declaration of the American delegation and to lay on all members of the Communist Party of America the duty of unreservedly carrying out the decisions of the Presidium. Either the American comrades will unhesitatingly submit to the decisions of the E.C.C.I. and actively carry them into effect – and that will be an important step toward destroying factionalism, toward peace in the Party; or they will stick to their declaration and refuse to submit to the decisions of the E.C.C.I. – and that will mean no peace,

but war against the Comintern, war within the ranks of the American Communist Party. We propose peace and unity. If the comrades of the American delegation adopt our proposals, well and good; if not, all the worse for them. The Comintern will take its due course under all circumstances. Of that you may be sure, dear comrades.

Finally, a word or two regarding the new processes of bolshevizing the sections of the Comintern which are proceeding at the present time.

In conversation with me the other day, Comrade Lovestone declared that some phrase or other regarding a "running sore" in the apparatus of the Comintern, was a slip of the tongue. He assured me that the phrase was a chance one and had no connection with his relations to the Comintern. I answered that if the phrase were indeed an accidental one, it was not worth paying any attention to, although the phrase itself was undoubtedly untrue and mistaken. However, some time later I acquainted myself with the report made by Comrade Lovestone at the Sixth Congress, where he again speaks of a "running sore," but this time not in relation to the apparatus of the Comintern, but to world capitalism. Apparently, the phrase "running sore" is not altogether a chance one with Comrade Lovestone. "Running sore" in relation to world capitalism implies, we must assume, the crisis of world capitalism, the process of its disintegration.

And what does Comrade Lovestone mean by the "running sore" in the apparatus of the Communist International? Apparently the same crisis and demoralization of the Comintern apparatus. What else could that expression mean? What is it that makes Lovestone speak of a "running sore" or of a crisis in the Comintern apparatus? Obviously the same thing that prompts the Right wingers in the ranks of the C.P.S.U. to speak of a crisis and of demoralization in the Communist International. Speaking of demoralization of the Comintern, the Right wingers usually refer to such facts as the expulsion of Right wingers from the German Communist Party, the debacle of the Right wingers in the Czecho-Slovakian Party, the isolation of the Right wingers in the French Communist Party, the fight for the isolation of the incorrigible factionalists in the American Communist Party, and

so forth and so on.

Well, perhaps these facts are really symptoms of grave illness of the Communist International, symptoms of its demoralization, symptoms of a "running sore" in the Communist International? Of course not, comrades. Only philistines and Babbitts in the Party can think that. The fact of the matter is that this is a beneficent process of cleansing the sections of the Communist International of opportunist and wavering elements. The Parties are being bolshevized and strengthened by ridding themselves of decay. That this is the meaning of the recent events in the German, Czecho-Slovakian, American, French, and other Parties is clear. To the philistines in the Party all this appears to be a sign of demoralization of the Comintern because they can not see further than their nose. But revolutionary Marxians know that this is a beneficent process of bolshevization of our brother Parties without which the proletariat cannot be prepared for the imminent class conflicts.

There are many who think that nothing has changed in the international situation of late, that everything has remained as of old. This is not true, comrades. The fact of the matter is that we have an accentuation of the class struggle in all capitalist countries, a growing revolutionary crisis in Europe, growing conditions of a new revolutionary upward swing. Yesterday this was signaled by a general strike in Lodz. Not so long ago we had a signal from Berlin. Tomorrow we shall get signals from France, England, Czecho-Slovakia, America, India, China. Soon the ground will be too hot for world capitalism.

The duty of the Communist Party is at once to begin preparatory work for the coming class struggles, to prepare the working class and the exploited masses for new revolutionary struggles. The fight against reformism, against social democracy must be intensified. The struggle for the winning of the millions of the working masses to the side of Communism must be intensified. The fight must be intensified for the forging of real revolutionary Party cadres and for the selection of real revolutionary leaders of the Party, of individuals capable of entering the fight and bringing the proletariat with them, individuals who will not run before the face of the storm and will not fall into panic, but will sail into

the face of the storm. But in order to carry out this task, it is necessary at once, without the loss of a single moment, for time does not wait, to set about cleaning the Communist Parties of Right and conciliatory elements, who objectively represent the agency of social democracy within the ranks of the Communist Party. And we must set about this matter, not at the usual pace, but at an accelerated pace, for, I repeat, time does not wait, and we must not allow events to catch us unawares. A couple of years ago we might not have been so urgent about this matter, counting on the fact that the molecular process of bolshevization of the Parties would gradually eliminate the Right and the wavering elements, all the Brandlers and Thalheimers, all and every factional wirepuller, etc., etc. We might not have been so urgent because there was no danger of being belated.

But matters stand differently now. To delay now means to be late, and to be late means to be caught unawares by the revolutionary crisis. Therefore, the cleansing process of the Communist Parties now proceeding is a beneficent process, strengthening the Comintern and its sections. The philistines are afraid of this beneficent process, and in their fright talk nonsense regarding the disintegration of the Comintern, just because they are philistines. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, will always welcome this beneficent process, because it is at the same time an integral part of the great cause of preparing the working class for the approaching class struggles, which is now the main task of the Communist Parties of the world.

The merit of the draft of the Commission, consists in the fact, among others, that it assists the Communist Party of America in carrying this main task into effect.

J.V. Stalin

Second Speech Delivered at the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the American Question

(May 14, 1929)

It seems to me, comrades, that certain American comrades fail to understand the position that has been created now that the draft of the Commission has been adopted by the Presidium. Apparently comrades do not fully realize that to defend one's convictions when the decision had not yet been taken is one thing, and to submit to the will of the Comintern after the decision has been taken is another. One might, and one ought to have, criticized and fought against the draft of the Commission if the members of the delegation considered it was a wrong one. But now that the draft of the Commission has become the decision of the Presidium, the American delegates should have the manhood to submit to the will of the collective, the will of the Comintern, and assume responsibility for carrying into effect the decision of the Comintern.

We ought to value the firmness and stubbornness displayed here by eight of the ten American delegates in their fight against the draft of the Commission. But it is impossible to approve the fact that these eight comrades, after their views have suffered complete defeat, refuse to subordinate their will to the will of the higher collective, the will of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. True bolshevik courage does not consist in placing one's individual will above the will of the collective, above the will of the Comintern. True courage consists in being strong enough to master and overcome one's self and subordinate one's will to the will of the collective, the will of the higher Party body. Without that there is no collective. Without that there is not, and cannot be, any collective leadership.

I think you will not deny the Russian Bolshevik's courage, firmness, and ability to defend their convictions. How did any group of Russian Bolsheviks usually act when they found themselves in a minority? Not wishing to break the iron discipline of the Party, the minority as a rule conformed to the will of the majority. There have been tens and hundreds of instances in the his-

tory of our Party when a section of Bolsheviks, convinced that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had taken a wrong decision, nevertheless, after discussion, after hot dispute, after defending their conviction, would declare their complete readiness to conform to the decisions of the higher leading collective and carry them into effect. I might mention such an instance which took place in 1907 when a section of the Bolsheviks were in favour of boycotting the Duma, whereas the larger section of Bolsheviks were for a change in policy in favour of participating in the Duma, and the minority unreservedly submitted to the will of the majority. The Russian Bolsheviks would have ruined the cause of the Russian Revolution had they not known how to conform the will of individual comrades to the will of the majority, had they not known how to act collectively. That is how we Bolsheviks were trained, the Bolsheviks who overthrew the bourgeoisie, established the Soviet Power, and who are now shaking the foundations of world imperialism. Ability to act collectively, readiness to conform the will of individual comrades to the will of the collective, that is what we call true Bolshevik manhood. For without that manhood, without the ability to overcome, if you like, one's self-esteem, and subordinate one's will to the will of the collective, without these qualities, there can be no collective, no collective leadership, no Communism. And that is true not only in respect to individual Parties and their central committees; it is particularly true in respect to the Comintern and its leading organs, which unite all Parties of Communists throughout the world.

Comrades Gitlow and Lovestone announced here with aplomb that their conscience and convictions do not permit them to submit to the decisions of the Presidium and carry them into effect. The same was said by Comrade Bloor. What they said amounted to this, that since they do not agree with the decision of the Presidium, they cannot submit to that decision and carry it into effect. But only Anarchists, individualists can talk like that, not Bolsheviks, not Leninists, who are obliged to place the will of the collective above their individual will. They talk of their conscience. But the members of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. also have their conscience and convictions. What is to be done if the conscience and convictions of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. conflict with the conscience and convictions of individual mem-

bers of the American delegation? What is to be done if the American delegation in the Presidium received only one vote for their declaration, the vote of Comrade Gitlow, while the remaining members of the Presidium unanimously declared themselves against the declaration of the American delegation and in favour of the draft of the Commission? Members of the American delegation, do you think that the conscience and convictions of Comrade Gitlow are above the conscience and convictions of the overwhelming majority of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.? Do you begin to understand that if each of us starts to act according to his own will without reckoning with the will of the collective, we shall never come to any decision; we shall never have any collective will, nor any leadership?

Let us take any factory or plant. Let us assume that the majority of the workers of that factory show an inclination to go on strike, whereas the minority, on the plea of their convictions, declare against a strike. A war of opinions commences, meetings are held, and in the end the vast majority in the factory decide to strike. What would you say of ten or twenty workers, representing a minority in the factory, who declared they would not submit to the decision of the majority of the workers, since they were not in agreement with that decision? What would you call them, dear comrades? You know that such workers are usually called strikebreakers. Is it not clear that strikes, demonstrations and other collective actions of the workers would be absolutely impossible if the minority did not subordinate itself to the majority? Is it not clear that we should never have had any decisions or any collective will, neither in the individual Parties, nor in the Comintern, if individuals, and minorities in general, did not submit to the will of the majority, to the will of the higher collective?

That is how it works out, comrades of the American delegation.

Finally, a few words as to the fate of the American Communist Party in connection with the decision adopted by the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. The comrades of the American delegation regard the matter too tragically. They declare that with the adoption of the draft of the Commission the American Communist Party will either perish, or in any case, will totter on the brink of a precipice. That is not so, comrades. More than that, it is abso-

lutely ludicrous. The American Communist Party lives and will continue to live, in spite of the prophecies of the comrades of the American delegation. What is more, the American Party if it drives unprincipled factionalism out of its midst will grow and flourish. The importance of the decision adopted by the Presidium consists in the very fact that it will make it easier for the American Communist Party to put an end to unprincipled factionalism, create unity in the Party and finally enter on the broad path of mass political work. No, comrades, the American Communist Party will not perish. It will live and flourish to the dismay of the enemies of the working class. Only one small factional group will perish if it continues to be stubborn, if it does not submit to the will of the Comintern, if it continues to adhere to its errors. But the fate of one small faction must in no case be identified with the fate of the American Communist Party. Because one small factional group is liable to perish politically, it does not follow, that the American Communist Party must perish. And, if it is inevitable that this small factional group perish, then let it perish, as long as the Communist Party will grow and develop. You look at the situation too pessimistically, dear comrades of the American delegation. My outlook is optimistic.

To All Members of the Communist Party of United States

An Address by the Executive Committee of the Communist International

DEAR COMRADES:

The Executive Committee of the Communist International together with the delegation of the Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of the United States, has very carefully discussed the situation in the American Communist Party. Having given the delegates the fullest opportunity for expressing their views and for making proposals, having carefully examined all the material presented, and having considered the question from all aspects, the Executive Committee of the Communist International deems it necessary to place in all seriousness the situation within the Party before all members of the Communist Party of the United States.

The Open Letter of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Sixth Convention of the American Communist Party, which placed before it the fundamental tasks arising in connection with the accentuation of the inner and outer contradictions of American imperialism in the present period, pointed out the necessity of the Party converting itself as soon as possible from a numerically small propagandistic organization into a mass political party of the working class, which particularly at the present juncture is indissolubly connected with the intensification of the struggle against the right danger. This Open Letter declared categorically that the fundamental prerequisite for a successful carrying out of these tasks is the cessation of the unprincipled struggle of many years standing.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International is compelled to record that at the Convention itself and after it, not only was there no appreciable result achieved in the matter of doing away with factionalism, but on the contrary, the factional struggle has become still more accentuated.

Due to the unprincipled factional struggle, the Sixth Convention of the American Communist Party had failed to produce the results which it should have produced in regard to bolshevization

and to the establishment of a healthier condition within the American Communist Party. Many of the most important political questions and tasks confronting the Party were not discussed at the Convention. The errors of the Majority and of the Minority of the Party were not explained at the Convention as they should have been as a matter of Bolshevik self-criticism. The Party was not mobilized for the struggle against the right danger. No consolidation of all the forces of the Party for struggle against factionalism was secured at the Convention. On the contrary, this Convention, which was composed of the best proletarian elements of the American Communist Party, who uphold the line of the Comintern, became the arena for unprincipled manoeuvres on the part of the top leaders of the Majority, as well as on the part of the leaders of the Minority. The Convention was forced off the line proposed by the Comintern and was mobilized for purposes of further factional struggle of both groups.

A gross distortion of the line of the Comintern was the theory inoculated into the Convention alleging that the organizational proposals of the Executive Committee of the Communist International are in contradiction to its political letter, instead of being a necessary guarantee for the carrying out of the line of the Open Letter in the American Communist Party. A clearly factional distortion of the meaning of the organizational proposals of the Executive Committee of the Communist International were also the efforts to interpret them as a handing over the leadership of the Party to the Minority, which was not and is not intended by the Comintern, since the fundamental task of the Open Letter and organizational proposals of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Sixth Convention was the consolidation of the Party on the basis of the line of the Comintern, in the direction of the struggle against the factionalism of both groups. The Minority of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States endeavoured to make the Open Letter and organizational proposals of the Executive Committee of the Communist International an instrument in getting the leadership of the Party into its own hands. The Executive Committee of the Communist International condemns these attempts of the Minority, which show that it has factionally dis-

torted the meaning of the Open Letter of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and its organizational proposals and that certain leaders of the Minority have shown themselves unfit to play the role of a uniting factor in the struggle of the Party against factionalism, in conformity with the directions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

It is the factional leaders of the Majority, with Comrade Lovestone at the head, that are mainly responsible for making use of the Convention for factional purposes, for misleading honest proletarian Party members who uphold the line of the Comintern, for playing an unprincipled game with the question of struggle against the Right danger in the Comintern and in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for the inadmissible personal hounding of the delegation of the Comintern at the Convention; for the organization of caucus meetings of delegates of the Majority, in direct contradiction with the Open Letter of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and in spite of the verbal acceptance of that letter; for hounding those comrades who departed from the Majority faction and unconditionally accepted the line of the Executive Committee of the Communist International; for the campaign against certain responsible comrades of the Minority who are carrying out the line of the Executive Committee of the Communist International,—for all these methods and intrigues which cannot be tolerated in any section of the Comintern, and which clearly bear the imprint of petty bourgeois politics.

Both factions of the American Communist Party have been guilty of right errors. Both factions show serious deviations to the right from the general line of the Comintern, which creates the danger of an openly opportunist right deviation crystallizing within the Party.

Since the Sixth Congress of the Communist International the Majority of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party has been committing a series of gross right errors pointed out in the Open Letter of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. These errors found their expression in overestimating American imperialism and in putting the question of inner and outer contradictions in a wrong way, which led to

the obscuring of inner contradictions of American capitalism; in underestimating the swing to the left of the American working class; in underestimating American reformism which led to weakening the struggle against it; in underestimating the right danger in the American Communist Party; in substituting in place of the question of the right opportunist danger only the question of Trotskyism, i. e. of dealing with the question in a manner which led to the obscuring of the right danger.

The Minority of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party was committing in regard to questions dealing with the crisis of American capitalism and the swing of the masses to the left, "left," but in reality right opportunist errors; it dissociated the development of the inner contradictions of American capitalism from its external contradictions and from the general crisis of world capitalism, and, in regard to the question of struggle against the war danger, it was sliding down to petty bourgeois pacifist slogans ("no new cruisers"—Comrade Bittelman). The Minority of the Central Committee was unable to dissociate itself at the right time from Trotskyism and did not properly struggle against it. The ideological lever of right errors in the American Communist Party was the so-called theory of "exceptionalism," which found its clearest exponents in the persons of Comrades Pepper and Lovestone whose conception was as follows: a crisis of capitalism, but not of American capitalism; a swing of the masses the left, but not in America; the necessity of accentuating the struggle against reformism, but not in the United States; a necessity for struggling against the right danger, but not in the American Communist Party. And yet, the present period, when the process of shaking the foundation of capitalist stabilization is going on, signifies for the United States that it is being ever more closely involved in the general crisis of capitalism. In America, the fundamental contradiction of capitalism—the contradiction between the growth of the productive forces and the lagging behind of the markets—is becoming more accentuated. The bourgeoisie is increasing its efforts to find a way out of the growing crisis by means of rationalization, i. e. by increased exploitation of the working class. The internal class contradictions are growing; the struggle for markets and spheres for

the investment of capital against the other imperialist states is becoming more accentuated; there is a feverish growth of armaments; and the war danger is getting nearer and nearer. With a distinctness unprecedented in history, American capitalism is exhibiting now the effects of the inexorable laws of capitalist development, the laws of decline and downfall of capitalist society. The general crisis of capitalism is growing more rapidly than it may seem at first glance. The crisis will shake also the foundation of the power of American imperialism.

Under these conditions the theory of "exceptionalism" is a reflection of the pressure of American capitalism and reformism which are endeavouring to create among the mass of workers an impression of absolute firmness and "exceptional" imperialist might of American capital in spite of its growing crisis and to strengthen the tactic of class collaboration in spite of the accentuation of class contradictions. The Executive Committee of the Communist International points out that not only the mistakes of the Majority but also the most important mistakes of the Minority were based on the conception of American "exceptionalism."

While it records the political mistakes of both groups, as well as the growth of the right danger in the American Communist Party, the Executive Committee of the Communist International regards as a factional exaggeration the claim, alleging that the group of the Majority as a whole is the hearer of the right tendency as well as the claim alleging that the Minority group represents the Trotskyist deviation. There are in the ranks of both groups elements with strong right tendencies which either show themselves openly, or are masked by "left" phraseology. Neither of the two groups has carried on a proper struggle against these right tendencies in the ranks of its own faction, and the factionalism of both groups has been a great impediment to the development within the Party of the necessary self-criticism and to the political educational of the Party members in the spirit of Bolshevik steadfastness based on principle.

A factional lack of principle which is also an expression of opportunism, finds its expression in the fact that both groups were putting the interests of their faction above the interests of the Party. On the strength of this, the American Communist Par-

ty is confronted now in all sharpness with the question of the danger of the political disintegration of the present leading cadres which threatens to undermine the whole work of the Party.

A characteristic manifestation of the rotten factional diplomacy in regard to the Communist International, is the attitude of the Majority of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party on the question of Comrade Pepper's conduct. In spite of the repeated decisions of the Comintern on the removal from work in the American Communist Party of Comrade Pepper, who repeatedly exhibited opportunistic tendencies, the Majority of the Central Committee violated these decisions of the Comintern, shielding the political errors and gross breaches of discipline, which were being committed by Comrade Pepper. The inconsistency and lack of principle in the attitude of the leaders of the Majority of the Central Committee in regard to Comrade Pepper found vivid expression in the fact that the Central Committee of the American Communist Party expelled him from the Party, pointing out that "the political platform of Comrade Pepper is no doubt the real cause of his cowardly disinclination to do his duty and to go and place himself at the disposal of the Comintern" (decision of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party approved by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee), whereas a few days later in spite of the political characteristics given to Comrade Pepper the Central Committee reinstated him in the ranks of the Party. The Majority, as well as the Minority of the Central Committee was engaged in an inadmissible, unprincipled speculation with questions of the situation in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in the Comintern. If the Minority speculated on the version, as if it were the only group in the American Communist Party sharing the attitude of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in its struggle against right deviations, the Majority, making use of methods of a rotten diplomacy, went to the length of unprincipled manoeuvring in regard to this question. This has found expression in the adoption by the Convention, at the initiative of Comrades Lovestone and Gitlow and without the least attempt of informing the delegates of the Convention about the situation in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of a reso-

lution, which proposed organizational measures in the struggle against the right deviation. And subsequently, on arrival in Moscow, the delegation of the majority, in the person of Comrade Gitlow made a declaration which practically disavows this resolution and upholds the slanderous attacks of the right elements on the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Comintern.

The Executive Committee of the Comintern draws special attention to the attacks entirely unworthy of a Communist, which during the Convention, Comrade Lovestone permitted himself to make on the leadership of the Comintern (Comrade Lovestone's reference to "the running sore" in the apparatus of the Executive Committee of the Communist International). The Executive Committee of the Communist International emphasizes, that these attacks of Comrade Lovestone represent a repetition of slanderous attacks upon the Comintern made by the right opportunists.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International draws special attention to the declaration of May 9th, in which Comrades Bedacht, Lovestone and others tried to discredit beforehand the decision of the Comintern by stating that "the Executive Committee of the Communist International wants to destroy the Central Committee and is therefore following a policy of legalizing the former factionalism of the opposition bloc and is recommending to carry it on also in the future."

The Executive Committee of the Communist International holds that this most factional and entirely impermissible anti-Party declaration of Comrades Bedacht, Lovestone and others, represents a direct attempt at preparing conditions necessary for paralyzing the decisions of the Comintern and for the split in the Communist Party of America. The same manifest determination to oppose their faction to the Comintern found expression also in the second statement of May 14th, submitted by the delegation from the Convention only in more diplomatic form. The assertion of the leaders of the Majority faction concerning their "loyalty" to the Comintern, contained in that statement, was clearly exposed at the very session of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, at which the state-

ment was reported, by the refusal of the majority of the signers unconditionally to carry into effect the decisions contained in this letter. The Executive Committee of the Communist International declares, that in case the authors of the declaration refuse to unconditionally submit to the decisions of the Comintern and to actively put them into practice, the Executive Committee of the Communist International will be forced to adopt all measures necessary to put a stop to all attempts at splitting the Party, to secure unity in the ranks of the Communist Party of America and to realize the decisions adopted by the Comintern.

In the course of years the Executive Committee of the Communist International had repeatedly demanded the liquidation of factionalism in the Communist Party of America. Thus, for example, in the resolution of the Fifth enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, in 1925, it is stated: "The Executive Committee holds firmly to the opinion that factional struggle between the two groups must absolutely cease."

In a resolution of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of 1926 on the American question, among other things it is stated: "To enable the American Communist Party to fulfil its historic mission, the first prerequisite is complete and unconditional termination of the factional fight within the Communist Party, not in words, but in deeds."

In its resolution of July 1st, 1927, the Executive Committee of the Communist International again reminded the Party that "this demand was not being carried out seriously enough" and that there is still in the Party "an impermissible situation of faction formation," which may lead to "a crisis in the Party."

The Sixth World Congress of the Comintern in 1928, while mentioning in its political theses that in the Party there is to be "observed a slackening of the long-standing factional struggle," nevertheless found sufficient ground for deciding that "the most important task confronting the Party is to put an end to factional strife—which is not based on any serious controversies on points of principle."

Finally, the Executive Committee of the Communist Interna-

tional, with the object of carrying out the decisions of the World Congress, and in view of the fact that the inner-Party situation in the United States became anew accentuated, had addressed an open letter to the American Party in December, 1928, and demanded from the Convention, then pending, that it begin at last really to carry out the decisions of the Comintern concerning the liquidation of factionalism.

All of this was absolutely of no avail so far. The leaders of the Majority as well as the leaders of the Minority of the Central Committee, who repeatedly gave their verbal pledges to the Executive Committee of the Communist International, that they will carry out the decisions of the Comintern, have systematically violated the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and their own pledges. Therefore, the Executive Committee of the Comintern, approving in the main the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International delegation to the Sixth Convention of the American Communist Party, resolves to adopt the following measures:

1. To place the Majority as well as the Minority of the Central Committee under the obligation of dissolving immediately the factions and of ceasing all factional work. To call upon all the organizations of the American Communist Party to secure the putting into practice of this instruction, not shrinking from the applications in regard to the factionalists of the most severe disciplinary measure, clear up to expulsion from the Party.

2. Comrades Lovestone and Bittelman, as extreme factionalists of the Majority and Minority, to be removed for a time from work in the American Communist Party.

3. To reject the demand of the Minority of the Central Committee in regard to the calling of a special Convention.

4. To recognize as necessary the reorganization and extension of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, on a basis of securing real collective, non-factional activity, and to render to the Central Committee every possible help in the matter of putting an end to all factionalism in the Party.

5. To turn over Comrade Pepper's case to the International Control Commission for consideration.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International

calls upon all the members of the Party to get together for the struggle against unprincipled factionalism in the Party, to be able to carry on the struggle against the right danger; for the healing and bolshevization of the American Communist Party, for a genuine carrying out of inner-Party democracy and proletarian self-criticism. With these objects in view the Party must initiate a large scale a discussion of questions concerning the situation within the Party and of the political tasks confronting the Party. It is necessary to carry on in all the Party and young Communist organizations a thorough enlightenment campaign concerning the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, the Open Letter of the E. C. C. I. to the Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of America, and concerning the present address of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. In the course of this enlightenment campaign, while waging a struggle against all opportunists who want to fight the Comintern, while uniting in that struggle all honest and disciplined comrades who are loyal to the Communist movement, the Communist Party must concentrate its attention on the most important questions of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in America—on the quest of unemployment, struggle for social insurance, wages, working hours, work in the existing trade unions, work for the organization of new unions, struggle against reformism and struggle against the war danger. The Communist Party of the United States must strengthen its work in regard to recruiting and retaining in ranks the new cadres of workers that are joining the Party, especially of the working youth. It must widen its agitational and organizational work in the big plants, in the main branches of industry and among the Negroes, and must secure for the Party an independent leading role in the industrial struggles of the working class that are developing, organizing in the process of the struggle the unorganized workers.

It is only by relentless struggle against the unprincipled factionalism, which is eating into the vitals of the Party, only by consolidating the whole Party for the carrying out its fundamental practical tasks on the basis of the line of the Comintern and by more energetic struggle against the right danger, that the American Communist Party will become a genuine Bolshevik

vanguard of the American proletariat and will be converted into a mass political Party of the American workers in the ranks of which inner-Party democracy is being actually unfolded while at the same time an iron proletarian discipline is strengthened, to which all organizations and each individual member, unconditionally submits; in the ranks of which is practised the submission of the Minority to the Majority, on the basis of the Party's perusal of the line and practical directions of the Comintern. Such a Party will be capable to lead the American proletariat to victorious struggle against capitalism.

With Communist Greetings,
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COM-
MUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Decisions of Central Committee of Communist Party of the U.S.A. on the Address of the Communist International

(Decisions made Saturday, May 18, 1929)

1. The Central Committee accepts and endorses the Address to the American Party membership by the Executive Committee of the Communist International and undertakes to win the Party membership for the support of the Comintern Address.

2. The Central Committee pledges itself unconditionally to carry into effect the decisions contained in this Address.

3. The Central Committee pledges itself and its members to defend the Address of the Comintern before the membership against any ideological or other opposition to the Address.

4. The Central Committee calls upon the members of the delegation in Moscow to withdraw all opposition to the Address and to the decisions contained therein and to do all in their power to assist the Comintern and the Central Committee of the American Party to unify the Party in support of these decisions.

5. The Central Committee instructs the Secretariat to proceed immediately, in agreement with the Executive Committee of the Communist International, to take all measures necessary to put into application the decisions and to realize the objectives of the Comintern as expressed in the Address.

6. The Central Committee approves all decisions of the Secretariat of the same date, accepting and ordering immediate publication in the entire Party press of the Address of the E. C. C. I. to the American Party membership, and instructs the Secretariat to put these decisions into effect immediately.

The Struggle for the Bolshevisation of the Communist Party of the United States

By I. Mingulin (Moscow)

International Press Correspondence, *June 14, 1929*

The Address of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to all members of the Communist Party of the United States published in the *Imprecorr* No. 27 has attracted the attention of the whole Communist International.

For over a month the commission of the Presidium of the E. C. of the C. I. studied and discussed the situation of the American C. P. together with the responsible leaders of the C. I. The commission had sufficient material at its disposal to adopt a closely reasoned decision based upon a thorough study of the situation of the party. A special delegation came from America at the instructions of the Sixth Convention of the American C. P. in order to discuss all the differences in the American communist movement before the C. I. This delegation had every possibility of presenting all its arguments to the commission and of giving all information which it considered necessary and which was of interest for the commission. The delegation took a great part in the discussion of all the questions dealt with by the commission, and it made its own proposals both in writing and by word of mouth. After all the material had been closely examined and discussed the commission adopted the draft of the Address which was then presented to the Presidium of the E. C. of the C. I. and confirmed by the latter.

The C. I. has seldom examined the situation of a party so carefully and in such detail. This circumstance alone shows how serious is the situation in which the American Party finds itself, and how serious are the measures which are alone able to bring the Party onto the path of development leading to a bolshevist mass party of the most numerous and up to the present most backward proletariat which is now developing revolutionary activity.

Two questions in particular were dealt with by the commission: the fatal, wearisome and characterless fractional struggle in

the Party, and the struggle against the right-wing danger and against the conciliators.

The Communist Party of America is only now seriously facing the question of bolshevisation. The development of the Communist Party under the conditions of a very slow growth of the class struggle and the formation of the Party of the various national and social groups, were the sources of the extremely wearisome fractional struggles which were based upon no serious differences of principle.

The fractional struggle considerably increased the difficulty of developing the Party into a bolshevist mass party of the American proletariat. The fractional groupings, the fractional degeneration of a section of the leaders of the disputing groups, the approach to all fundamental questions from the standpoint of their utilisation in the fractional struggle, all this made it extremely difficult for the Party masses under the conditions created by the influence of American corruption, to solve the really fundamental questions. It made it difficult to clarify the real differences of opinion and to determine the political and organisational policy which would have made it possible to develop the Party along bolshevist lines. Only recently the fractional groups of the majority and the minority in the leadership commenced to develop into two political tendencies without losing their fractional character.

Under the cover of the fractional struggles the recent period, particularly after the Sixth World Congress, showed a speedy growth in the Party of the right-wing danger and of the conciliatory attitude towards it. As in the whole Comintern, the right-wing danger in the American Party and the growth of this danger are determined by the same phenomena which caused the so-called third period in the development of the social and economic conditions of the world: the undermining of the capitalist stabilisation, the intensification of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism, the intensification and revolutionisation of the class struggle of the proletariat and the growing counter-attacks of the working class against the united front of the employers and the reformists.

The specific characteristics of the third period are of especial significance for the United States. Not only does the growth of

the internal and external contradictions of capitalism affect the United States, but the development of the United States in the present period represents one of the most decisive conditions of this intensification, the inevitable outbreak of the contradictions. The fundamental socio-economic contradictions of the third period, the contradictions between the growth of the productive forces and the progressive and tremendous lagging behind of the markets, is becoming more and more noticeable in the present stage of the development of United States Imperialism and that is natural, because this contradiction is expressed most openly upon the basis of the exceeding of the pre-war level of production by European capitalism. Therefore, the tremendous growth of militarism and of the aggressive imperialist policy of the United States.

The other side of this process is the increase of the tempo of the growth of the class contradictions in America, the growth and the intensification of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. This was shown very clearly by the strike wave which commenced with the grand strike of the miners and ended with the great strike movements in the textile industry. Against the will of the reformist leaders, this strike movement was under the influence and leadership of the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions.

This process which draws America more and more within the framework of the crisis of international capitalism, means that neither the economic nor the political situation of America, and still less the tactics of the Communist Party, even making allowance for all possible and unavoidable specific differences in the situation in the various countries, are fundamentally an exception from the general perspective of world development.

This situation faced the Party with two extremely concrete fundamental tasks: 1. The liquidation of the fractional struggle which took up the lion's share of the Party forces and which prevented the clarification of the political and practical tasks of the Party, and 2. in accordance with the work and decisions of the Sixth World Congress, the determination of the tactical line guaranteeing the extension of the independent role of the Party in the class struggle of the proletariat, a speedy process making for

the development of the Party into a bolshevist party which would be the leader of the activities of the American proletariat. The Sixth World Congress placed the following tasks before the Party with all energy:

“The most important task of the Party”, declares the resolution of the Congress, “consists in liquidating the fractional struggle which has no serious differences of opinion as its basis.”

Then, the Sixth World Congress did no more than stress the demand which the Communist International had made to the Party repeatedly during the course of a number of years. The E. C. of the C. I. systematically and persistently demanded the liquidation of fractionalism in the party. (Fifth Enlarged Plenum of the E. C. of the C. I., 1925, Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the E. C. of the C. I., 1926, and the resolution of the E. C. of the C. I. on the American question on the 1st July 1927.) On the other hand, the Sixth Congress seriously warned the Party leadership in connection with the political line of the Party, and pointed to a “series of mistakes” which had been made by the Party leadership. And after all this, despite the great increase in the tasks of the Party and despite the intensification of the class struggle, the Party leadership not only failed to carry out the fundamental directions of the C. I., but even increased and intensified its mistakes.

After the Sixth World Congress the fractional struggle in the Party took on an extremely sharp character. The struggle referred to the basic questions of the communist movement, both in America and on an international scale. But in this struggle the fundamental questions of principle were overwhelmed by characterless fractionalism so that the masses of the Party membership found it extremely difficult and almost impossible to solve the question of what differences of principle separated the fighting groups from one another and in their attitude towards the general policy of the C.I.

After the Sixth World Congress the Party leadership intensified its right-wing errors. The leaders of the majority, Comrades Lovestone and Pepper, developed a whole right-wing policy out of isolated right-wing errors. This was expressed in a number of

questions such as the estimation of the world situation, the formulation of the question of the struggle against deviations and in particular of the struggle against the right-wing deviation (the majority declared and defended in its thesis that the right-wing deviation was Trotzkyism, and in this way completely confused the struggle against the real right-wing danger), in the question of the danger of war, in the estimation of the internal and external contradictions of imperialism, in the estimation of the situation of American imperialism, the radicalisation of the American working class, etc.

The conception of the exceptional position of America which proceeded from the principle that on the whole America was above the international crisis and that the development of American capitalism was not subject to the laws of the undermining of the capitalist stabilisation, this conception was the commencing point of individual right-wing errors and the development of these errors into a right-wing policy. Comrade Pepper supported this conception of the exceptional situation of America since the Ninth Plenary Session of the E. C. of the C. I. It is characteristic and typical of the right-wing opportunist essence of this conception that the question of the exceptional situation of America was developed immediately after the Ninth Plenary Session of the E. C. of the C. I, which had put forward the fundamental perspective of the development of the change in the tactics of the C. I. which was afterwards presented in its final form by the Sixth World Congress.

This theory of the exceptional position of America, which is to be seen in its most developed form in the opinions of Comrades Pepper and Lovestone, consists for instance in the following conception: a crisis of capitalism, but not for American capitalism (that is to say, the crisis does not exist for world capitalism); the radicalisation of the working masses, but not in America; the necessity of intensifying the struggle of reformism, but not in the United States; and the necessity for a struggle against the right-wing danger, but not in the American Party. This policy could only lead the Party into the slough of opportunism and transform it into a "left wing" of the Socialist Party.

The minority which showed an ultra-left tendency in the

speculation of all these questions, was nevertheless not completely free either from this conception of the exceptional position of America, nor from the right-wing errors which it shared with the majority up to the Sixth World Congress. Even after the Sixth World Congress the minority was not quite free from these errors.

The struggle around all these important questions of principle was accompanied by characterless speculation, in particular on the part of the majority in the question of the situation in the C. P. of the Soviet Union and in the reservations of the minority with regard to the resolution of the Sixth World Congress concerning the situation in America; the minority exaggerated the right-wing errors of the majority whilst the majority did not fail to pay back the minority in its own coin and exaggerated the errors of the minority and described it as a right-wing Trotskyist group.

For the Communist International it was quite clear that this intensification of the fractional struggle was the reflection of the intensification of the class struggle in the country and that this demanded a change in the development of the Party, and a correction of the political line of the Party, and that neither of the two fractions, one of which had got itself completely tied up in the right-wing deviation under the ideological leadership of Comrades Pepper and Lovestone, was able to carry out this change.

The work of the Sixth Convention of the Party which represented an extremely favourable commencing point for the recovery of the Party, was being utilised solely for fractional purposes. For this reason the E. C. of the C. I. addressed an Open Letter to the Convention raising seriously the question of the Party crisis and above all the crisis in the leadership of the Party. The Open Letter raised the question of the necessity of a decisive mobilisation of the whole Party for the broadest possible self-criticism and for the proletarianisation of the leadership from above and below in order to liquidate the fractional struggle, to give the Party a correct political line and to lead it upon the broad path to revolutionary development. At this opportunity the E. C. of the C. I. made definite organisational proposals for the carrying out of the

policy contained in the Open Letter.

Both fractions, and above all the majority with Comrade Lovestone at its head, flagrantly deceived the proletarian Convention and attempted to represent the policy of the E. C. of the C. I. as a fractional policy, as a policy making for the handing over of power from the majority to the minority. This was not the intention of the E. C. of the C. I., could not be its intention and is not its intention. Comrade Lovestone made attacks upon the Communist International which were absolutely impermissible for a communist. At the Convention the leaders of the majority conducted a bitter campaign against the correct policy of the E. C. of the C. I., against the delegation of the Communist International, and against the responsible leaders of the minority who represented the policy of the E. C. of the C. I. In this way the Convention which, according to the letter of the E. C. of the C. I., was to have been the commencing point of a real bolshevisation of the Party, became the arena of unprincipled, unbolshevist and right-wing opportunist manoeuvres and struggles against the C. I.

At the end of the Convention, when the leaders of the majority with Comrade Lovestone at their head saw that they would not be able to lead the Convention-and the Party openly upon the opportunist and fractional path of a struggle against the C. I. they adopted the methods of diplomacy and petty-bourgeois backstairs politics, and without any discussion, presented a resolution proposing immediate organisational measures in the struggle against the right-wing danger in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This policy was continued after the Convention when Comrade Pepper was expelled although the majority had supported his opportunism even when he violated the discipline of the C.I.

This was the situation in which the situation in which the C, I. found the American Party after its Sixth Convention, a situation which showed that unless something drastic were done, the Party would suffer a break-up and opportunist degeneration.

But this situation is in crass contradiction to the real character of our American Communist Party. The Party consists in its overwhelming majority of proletarians who are devoted to the C.

I. and to the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. In recent years the Party became more and more the party of the class struggle and led obstinate struggles of the workers, whereby its ranks were extended.. The majority in the Party were in favour of the Lovestone group because, as the comrades of the majority themselves admit, they thought that this group represented the policy of the Comintern. The Party which voted for the Lovestone group wished to express thereby its devotion to the C. I. It voted against the minority because it wanted to liquidate the fractional struggle.

It is worthy of attention that the proletarian Convention which sent its delegation to discuss the American question, did not think for one moment that it would be necessary or possible to oppose the C. I. The Convention which sent its delegation, instructed it in order that there should be doubt at all, from the beginning to accept every decision of the Comintern, because the Convention was never in any doubt as to the correctness of the policy of the C. I.

The Presidium adopted a decision in complete accordance with the circumstances and the tasks of the Party. In the given situation the E. C. of the C. I. cannot simply approach the Party again with an appeal to liquidate fractionalism. The liquidation of fractionalism in the present period demands inevitably a real mobilisation of the whole Party, if necessary against the will of a section of the leadership. It demands real guarantees for a correct political line, the real proletarianisation of the leadership from above and below, the real bolshevist unity of the Party and decisive organisational measures for the carrying out of all these tasks which alone can lead the Party out of the blind alley in which it has been dragged by its leaders.

The measures of the E. C. of the C. I. are in general the following: to enlarge the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Party by co-opting new comrades and conducting collective work; to remove temporarily Comrades Lovestone and Bittelman, as leaders of the fractional struggles, from their work in the American Party; to hand over the case of Comrade Pepper, together with that of Comrade Lovestone who represented a right-wing opportunist policy in the Party under the cover of the ma-

majority of the Central Committee and violated the discipline of the C. I., to the International Control Commission; to clarify the situation and the tasks of the Party before the masses of the members; to criticise sharply the whole characterless fractional struggle around the most important fundamental questions; to expose the crass opportunist and fractional misrepresentations of the policy of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in particular by the majority leadership under Comrades Pepper and Lovestone; to make it clear to the Party that a change of leadership from one fraction to the other, or the support of this or that fraction, cannot lead the Party onto the path of bolshevisation, and that only the decisive liquidation of all fractionalism, a radical improvement of the leadership of the Party through and through upon the basis of its proletarianisation, the complete and unreserved carrying out of the policy of the Sixth World Congress upon the basis of bolshevist self-criticism and a merciless struggle against the right-wing deviation and against the remnants of Trotzkyism — this alone can lead the Party out of the blind alley and develop the Party upon the path of bolshevism, upon the path of its development to a capable, efficient, revolutionary communist mass party of the American proletariat. Such were the decision and the proposal of the commission of the Presidium.

The delegation of the majority answered this decision with an arch-fractional declaration, with a threat to split the Party, to conduct a struggle against the Comintern, with the accusation that the C. I. was pursuing a fractional policy and destroying the Party, etc. The delegation of the minority with Comrades Foster and Bittelman at the head accepted the letter of the E. C. of the C. I. without reservation. The declaration of the majority used the path of slandering the Comintern and misrepresenting its policy, it used the path of open threats, characteristic for all those groupings which have taken the path of the struggle against the C. I., supported the slanders of the renegades and, not content with this, gone over into the camp of reformism, irrespective of whether they have taken the right-wing or “left-wing” path.

The second absolutely fractional and absolutely impermissible anti-Party declaration of Comrades Gitlow, Lovestone and others of 14th May is of the same character and represents the

platform of a struggle against the C. I., a direct attempt to create the preliminary conditions for a break with the decisions of; the C. I. and the disruption of the C. P. of America. But in the Presidium, despite the extended fractional right-wing opportunist and demagogic work of Comrades Lovestone and Gitlow a section of the delegation of the minority declared, when they saw that their leaders were taking the political path of right-wing disrupters, under the banner of a struggle against an allegedly undeserved and too strict criticism of the Executive against the leaders of the majority, that they would accept the decisions of the E. C. unreservedly and would carry them out. The same attitude was taken up by the students of the International Lenin School who formerly supported the majority.

The Communist Party of America is now experiencing a difficult moment of transformation in its history. In the years of stabilisation, in the years of a slow development of the class struggle and under the influence of great pressure from American corruption, and under the conditions of a characterless fractional struggle, considerable rottenness and opportunism had accumulated in the Party (as in other parties of the C. I. in the same degree) and this was expressed most strongly the leadership of the Party. The elements of this rottenness and this opportunism had been purged from the minority group when Cannon and his supporters left through the "left-wing" door to the camp of Trotskyist counter-revolution. The bolshevist parties all grow only by systematic cleanings from rottenness and opportunism. In connection with the intensification of the class struggle, the right-wing opportunism in the Party became the chief danger. Opportunism, driven onto the defensive, expressed itself chiefly in the right-wing danger and in a conciliatory attitude towards it, in a serious deviation from the policy of the Comintern towards the right, a deviation chiefly represented by the leadership of the majority.

The special nature of the right-wing deviation in the C. P. of America consists in the fact that the characterlessness of the fractional struggle also exercised a strong influence upon the right-wing danger. Whether the group with Comrade Lovestone at its head travels the path of the right-wing disrupters to the end, to

the disruption of the Party, or whether it halts and refuses to give its hand openly to the right-wingers and to the conciliators, depends upon how far the Party mobilises its proletarian resistance and upon how far the opportunist influence of these elements has penetrated into the Party. But in any case, the C. I. will not budge an inch from its policy of liquidating the fractionalism of right-wing opportunism and the remnants of “left-wing” opportunism. If the right-wing disrupters leave the Party, this will only mean that there was opportunist rottenness in the Party which has now appeared openly and collected around the right-wing disrupters and without whom the Party will be easier able to travel along its revolutionary path.

This is the good influence of every such party crisis. When such crises arise, only a small group of mistaken and above all opportunist sectarians leave the Party. If they halt upon their disruptive path and remain in the Party, then they can only do this in bolshevist fashion by recognising their errors and carrying out the policy of the C. I.

In any case, there is no doubt about the complete isolation of the opportunist disrupters from the overwhelming majority of the party. The acceptance of the decisions of the C. I. by a part of the delegation of the majority, by the students of the Lenin School, by the Political Bureau and by the Secretariat of the Party in New York, shows that the C. I. has given the Party a correct bolshevist policy and that the proletarian majority of the Party understands and accepts it.

The Party is experiencing a crisis of growth. Under the conditions of the growing class struggle, the transformation is taking place from a divided organisation rent with the opportunist fractional struggles organisation to a united bolshevist, party. The transformation is difficult because the sickness of opportunism and fractionalism has taken a deep hold upon organism of the Party. But the transformation itself shows the growth of the Party and the inevitable demand of the extending class struggle of the proletariat: that the fractional struggle must be destroyed and that a really united Communist Party with a firm and determined bolshevist policy and leadership must be created to lead the proletariat in its struggle. The transformation and the crisis itself

prove that the Party has grown and been steeled for the solution of its tasks.

At the same time the crisis proves how urgent is this task, how great it is and what difficulties stand in the way of its solution. The present and the coming struggles will steel the Party still further, will make it into a bolshevist party in the eyes of the decisive majority of the American proletariat: Therefore the Party is taking its new path so confidently, because it knows that this is the way in which a bolshevist party grows, by cleaning itself from all rottenness and opportunism and by fighting decisively against all opportunist misrepresentations of the Leninist policy.

Such a party need fear nothing, for its cause is certain of success. Only such a party will be able to solve in a revolutionary fashion the really tremendous practical tasks which are now facing the communist movement of America in connection with the increasing pressure of the bourgeoisie through the rationalisation. The growth of the contradictions of American capitalism, the growth of unemployment, the growing insecurity of the broad masses of the proletariat and the growing danger of war demand a great mobilisation and a firm united organisation from our Party. This task can only be performed by a bolshevist party cleaned of the petty-bourgeois rottenness of fractionalism and opportunism.

Success in the struggle for a bolshevist Communist Party of the United States is certain. The Party is carrying on the struggle upon the basis of the policy of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International under the slogans: For bolshevist unity, for the liquidation of all fractionalism, for the decisive proletarianisation of the whole leadership of the Party and to the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Party. Upon this basis broad possibilities of revolutionary struggles and victories open themselves up to the Party and to the revolutionary movement of the American proletariat and the possibility of utilising the weakening of the power of American capitalism.

The Anti-Comintern Opposition in the American Party

By H.M. Wicks

International Press Correspondence, August 2, 1929

The resistance to the line of the Communist International on the part of Jay Lovestone and some of his factional supporters in the Communist Party of the United States of America has now developed into an open campaign against the C. I. The Communist International, in its Open Letter to the Sixth Congress of the American Party made definite proposals to correct the political line of the Party that was manifestly deviating to the Right and to overcome the long factional struggle by removing from work in the Party for a period of time those considered the most culpable leading factionalists. Lovestone and Pepper and their principal supporters resisted these proposals and deliberately organised the overwhelming majority of the delegates against the decisions.

Not daring to come before the proletarian delegates at the Party congress with open opposition to the political line of the Open Letter, Lovestone & Co. charged that the organisational proposals (one of which demanded his removal from work in the American Party) were not justified by the political line of the Open Letter. A proposal was made by Lovestone's supporters to appeal to the Executive Committee of the Communist International against the organisational measures. A delegation was selected and dispatched to Moscow with the understanding that when the appeal was finally decided they were all to accept it and carry it out.

From the moment of the arrival of the delegation in Moscow it was plain that Lovestone, Gitlow and Wolfe were deliberately preparing the delegation to resist the Comintern even after the final decision on the appeal. The keynote for the anti-Comintern line to be pursued was sounded by Bertram D. Wolfe, who had been sent to Moscow as the representative of the American Party. Wolfe charged before the American commission that the Comintern was deviating from the line of Lenin in dealing with

the problem of the American Party. It is precisely the language used by people who are on their way out of the Comintern. This open attack on the Comintern was supplemented by malignant "corridor" gossip to the effect that the Comintern was degenerating, that the Five-Year Industrialisation Plan of the Soviet Union was a fraud and doomed to failure, that the Soviet government was abandoning the revolution and following a course of compromise with capitalist elements. Though not yet definitely formulated, certainly the content of such maligning of the Comintern and the Soviet Union was nothing other than the Trotskyist platform of Thermidorianism. This had been expressed in typical Tammany gutter language when Lovestone, during the last congress of the American Party referred to the Open Letter and the organisational proposals as the result of a "running sore" in the Communist international.

As leaders of the delegation in Moscow, Lovestone, Gitlow and Wolfe thought the majority of the membership of the American Party would follow them in a struggle against the Comintern. In this they were disappointed.

The first blow to their conspiracy to wage an open fight against the Comintern was administered when they sent a cable to the United States urging their former factional associates to seize all the Party institutions, sell the buildings and equipment owned by the Party and to utilize the proceeds for organising a struggle against the Comintern. The comrades to whom this infamous proposal was made exposed it and began active mobilisation for the line of the Comintern.

Now that Lovestone has returned to the United States in plain violation of the decision of the Comintern, for which he was promptly expelled from the American Party, the Party is able clearly to perceive his whole Right-wing line, which has now crystallised into a political platform that, in its international aspect attains complete identity with the Rights and conciliators in Germany. They speak of the necessity of mobilizing the Party to resist "destructive Comintern methods against Brandler, Hais, etc." Again they say "the Comintern is killing such valuable elements as Evert, Humbert-Droz, etc." Lovestone & Co. at first formulated their resistance to the line of the Sixth Congress of

the Communist International, by developing their theory of American exceptionalism. They said the line of the Sixth Congress, the estimate of the third post-war period of capitalist development, could be applied to certain other countries of the world, but that it did not yet apply to the United States. They saw only the rising power of American imperialism, its outdistancing of Britain. They spoke of its formidable power, of its having “attained world hegemony”, but they could not perceive that the very growth of American imperialism sharpened all the fundamental antagonisms of capitalism, internally and externally. They could not see that the disproportion between production and the market affected all the imperialist countries of the world. They could only see in the industrialization of the South of the United States an evidence of the tremendous reserve power of American imperialism but they could not see the mighty class conflicts being generated by that very industrialization which was proceeding under the most modern methods of capitalist rationalisation. In short the Lovestone, Gitlow, Wolfe combination, that together with Pepper was in reality the ideological and political leader of the majority faction of the Party, could see only the might of American imperialism before which they stood appalled and paralysed.

When they finally learned that the Sixth Congress did not exempt the United States from its estimate of the period of post war capitalism, and when the Comintern sternly corrected their political line, they then came forth as open opponents of the line of the Sixth Congress. They now repeat the identical words of the Brandlers who traduce the heroic May Day struggle of the Berlin workers as a “putsch”, and interpret the defeat of the workers in Wedding and Neukölln as evidence of the increasing might of capitalism; as a refutation of the analysis of third period was one of growing precariousness of capitalist stabilisation.

The leaders of the American opposition have travelled so far on the road of apostacy that they cannot perceive that the very fact of the occurrence of such a struggle as the May Day events in Berlin is in itself evidence of the extreme precariousness of capitalist stabilisation. By taking such a position as it does, the Lovestone opposition completely aligns itself with Humbert-

Droz and Serra who saw in the defeat of the British general strike, the Vienna rising, and the declining revolutionary wave in China the strengthening of the power of capitalism, instead of recognising that such events themselves are evidence of the shaky foundation on which the capitalist system rests at this moment.

It is with such a programme that Lovestone tries to fight against the line of the Communist International in the American Party. But he has miserably failed to alienate even an appreciable number from the Party Line. In spite of the baneful effect of the long factional struggle, upon the theoretical development of the Party, the membership, composed in the overwhelming majority of proletarian elements, did not hesitate for one second when it came to a question of making a choice between following the line of the Comintern or following the line of Lovestone, Gitlow, Wolle into the camp of the Right wing by the route of conciliation. The rotten diplomacy that Lovestone used in playing Tammany Hall tricks while professing loyalty to the Comintern and thereby fooling the membership proved of no avail when once the membership was fully aware of the fact that Lovestone was openly opposed to the line of the Comintern. The defeat of the Lovestone attempt to split the Party is absolutely assured. The membership of the Party is overwhelmingly opposed to his anti-Comintern line, and approves his expulsion from the Party for his defiance of the decision of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

To this day, however, Lovestone and his supporters is continuing his policy of distorting Comintern decisions. Even while opposing the political line of the Sixth World Congress analysis of the task of the third period of post-war capitalism, Lovestone declares the Sixth Congress referred to him as a "stalwart leader" of mass struggles. Such a total misrepresentation of the theses of the Sixth Congress is obvious. The actual statement made in the theses was: "A number of stubborn and fierce class battles (primarily the miners' strike) found in the Party a stalwart leader."

Small remnants of a concealed opposition in the Party accept the decision to expel Lovestone, but say that the expulsion of Lovestone from the Party, the removal of Gitlow and Wolfe

from the Political Bureau weakens the Party leadership. Such erroneous views must be strenuously combated. If we are to approach the question in a Leninist, a Bolshevik manner, we must not only deal with the particular acts of Lovestone and his supporters, but we must ask the questions! — “Why, at this particular moment, does the right danger assume threatening organisational forms? Why does Lovestone now expose himself as a right-wing leader?”

The answer to these questions is to be found in the conditions of struggle imposed upon the working class in the third period of postwar development; a period characterised by a swing of the working class to the left, by determined resistance to the onslaughts of the capitalist class, a period in which the working class is taking the counter-offensive against capitalism. Such a situation imposes special tasks upon the Communist Parties as the motivating force, the coordinating force that gives revolutionary direction to the mass offensive against capitalism.

In such a period Communism has to contend with a number of petty bourgeois tendencies which reflect the instability of that class and the vacillation and hesitation of that strata of society. It is precisely in periods of sharpening class conflicts, on the eve of great historical events, in periods when all the contradictions of capitalism become sharpened and imperialism approaches another world war, that such political instability manifests itself in the form of open opportunism. The position of Lovestone and the whole international right wing in this period is nothing more nor less than capitulation before the capitalist enemy. This fact must be clearly understood by every member of the American Party.

Certainly any revolutionist will recognise that it is far better for vacillating elements to expose themselves in such a time as the present than to have them remain in the Party until such time as we face the cataclysmic outburst of another imperialist war and to have them then capitulate to the enemy. Such defections strengthen the Party by cleansing its leadership and its ranks of unreliable petty-bourgeois elements and clearing the ground for the development of a Party and a leadership that can lead the revolutionary struggle under the most trying conditions.

The C.P. of the U.S.A. and the Address of the Communist International

By William W. Weinstone (New York)

International Press Correspondence, August 9. 1929

The Address of the Communist International to the Communist Party of the United States of America, directed against the growing Right danger in the Party and against the unprincipled and devastating factional struggle, has met with the enthusiastic response of the entire Party membership. It has already had a shattering effect upon group ideology in the Party.

The Address was received in the United States on May 18 and published in the next issue of the "Daily Worker" on the 20th of May. The Polbureau which consists of a majority of members of the group formerly headed by Lovestone immediately accepted and endorsed the Address and pledged wholehearted support to the Comintern in the struggle against the splitting tactics of Lovestone, Gitlow and others in refusing to accept the line and discipline of the Communist International and in their endeavours to undertake measures to defeat the purpose of the Address. This action was followed by a wave of resolutions and statements from district committees, language fraction bureaus and leading functionaries in support of the Address.

Every District Committee and Party organisation has thus far accepted and pledged full co-operation to the Communist International in its resolute efforts to suppress factionalism and overcome the Right danger in the Party. The meetings of active comrades that have already taken place in the leading districts of the country have uniformly supported the stand of the Central Executive Committee. At a meeting of leading functionaries of the New York District following reports made by Comrades Bedacht, Foster and Weinstone, a unanimous resolution was adopted which 1. accepted and endorsed the Address; 2. recognised the striking accuracy of the estimation of the situation in the Party contained in the Address; 3. condemned the splitting tactics of Lovestone and Gitlow and directed attention against any concealed opposition that may be carried on against the Communist

International; 4. emphasised the need of intensifying the Party activities in the spirit of the Address, the enlargement of inner Party democracy, of Bolshevik self-criticism and the establishment of a firm Party discipline,

Similar resolutions have been adopted by the Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and other districts.

The Address of the Communist International is being discussed in the basic units of the Party. The discussion is conducted in a non-factional spirit and is motivated by an endeavour to expose the errors of the past through a genuine Bolshevik self-criticism. The Politbureau is at the present time conducting a campaign of enlightenment on the meaning of the Address. In a manifesto issued to all Party organisations and to the revolutionary workers published in the "Daily Worker" of June 4, the Politbureau by unanimous decision declared that the line of the Party before the receipt of the Address has been away from the line of the Sixth World Congress. It expressed agreement with the condemnation of the theory of exceptionalism which was the root of the Right errors of the Party and combats the slanders of the International Rights against the Communist International and indicates that the Rights and opportunist elements which cannot adapt themselves to the revolutionary requirements of the third period are sinking into the morass of social democracy and are hemming renegades and splitters. It outlines the tasks of the enlightenment campaign, expressing that the Address can be carried out only if it achieves the following objects:

1. Open and unsparing criticism, exposure of the old Right errors made by the former majority and minority groups.
2. Establishment of inner Party democracy.
3. Intensification of the Party work, in the spirit of the Address.
4. Ruthless fight against open and hidden opposition to the Address of the Communist International.

The Central Executive Committee in the Manifesto issued shows that the events in the United States have confirmed the correctness of the decision of the Sixth World Congress in regard to the growing class struggle and on the basis of these events outlines the tasks that the Party is to carry out in order to realise

the purpose of the Address and to throw the Party more intensely into the work among the masses.

The Party Manifesto declares as follows:

“The events in the United States since the Sixth World Congress have more and more proven the correctness of the decisions of the Sixth World Congress. The establishment and growth of the new revolutionary unions, the growing response to the idea of the creation of a new trade union centre co-ordinating the new unions with the Left wing in the existing unions, the entrance of new masses into struggle with unparalleled militancy and vigour (New Bedford, Elizabethton, Gastonia, shoe, food workers) resistance to wage cuts among the miners, the growth of the number of sporadic strikes, the street demonstrations on May day, the increase of the election vote in a number of local elections, on the one hand: and on the other hand the cunning manoeuvres of the reformists to deceive the masses (Muste movement) the ever closer collaboration of the reformists with the employers and the state (A. F. of L. Executive Council and West Point, Green and the launching of the battleship Pensacola; the A. F. of L. treachery in the textile strikes in the South) confirm the correctness of the line of the Sixth World Congress for the United States as well as for Europe...

The activity of the Party lies in the resumption and intensification of its everyday tasks, in the need to intensify the building of the new unions and to increase the work in the existing unions, in the application of the strike policy and strategy of the R. I. L. U., in opening up a broad campaign against the effect of capitalist rationalisation and for unemployment insurance and social insurance, in struggling for the shorter workday, the creating of new shop nuclei and shop papers, in recruiting new cadres of workers, especially the industrial youth, the widening of the agitation and organisational work in the big plants in the main branches of industry and among the Negroes.

In the direction of giving immediate attention towards the development of broad mass demonstrations on International Red Day, August 1st, the Party must intensify mani-

fold its activity in the struggle against the war danger. The Tenth Anniversary of the Party September 1st, must be utilised for a campaign to be begun immediately for the building of the Party, for the raising of the ideological level of the Party, for sharpening the struggle against reformism and for increasing the influence of the Party among the masses. Intensive efforts must be made to make the coming conference of the T. U. E. L. a great success in the direction of building a new trade union centre...”

The general favourable response of the membership to the Address is due to the conviction on the part of the Party membership that only by the firm action of the Comintern could the Party be freed from the prison of factionalism. The membership recognised that the Party has been in the blind alley of factionalism, has been operating in a vicious circle which could be broken only by the Comintern. At the same time, the events in the United States are sharpening. The class struggles — the frame-up at Gastonia, the entrance of new masses into strike struggles convinces the membership that the opportunity is ripe for accelerating the process of transforming the Party into a mass Bolshevik Party. The Party has recognised that this could be accomplished not only by destroying all vestiges of factionalism and shattering the group situation but by an energetic struggle to overcome the Right errors and opportunistic deviations in the Party.

The results of the discussion in the Party and the response of the membership to the Address demonstrate definitely that Lovestone miscalculated on the stand of the membership. The American Party, despite its shortcomings, has always prided itself upon being a Party of the Comintern.

To be sure, there are elements that cannot reconcile themselves to the decisive stand of the Comintern and are conducting a hidden propaganda against the decision, but so strong is the will of the membership in support of the Comintern that they fear to conduct an open struggle, but by devious ways they are attempting to build up a faction within the Party.

In all units and district meetings this hidden opposition is being combated. In the New York District which had been at one time a firm supporter of the Lovestone group, this hidden oppo-

sition, which was led by the Organisation Secretary of the District, attempted to come out into the open but was defeated decisively and this led to his removal by the action of the District Bureau, which action has already gained complete support in resolutions by the Party units.

The continuation of a policy of hidden opposition can lead only to the crystallisation of the Right elements in the Party which will quickly be exposed and isolated.

The results of the Address indicate that the revolutionary optimism of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was justified, that the American Party will quickly recover from the disease of factionalism and that the new leadership of the Party, supported by the overwhelming mass of members, will resolutely overcome the danger from the Right within the Party.

The practical work, the pressure of events, the intensification of the class struggle, the sharpening of contradictions, internally and internationally is a powerful support for this process of Bolshevisation and purification of the American section of the Communist international.

The Economic Crisis in the United States and the Tasks of the Communist Party

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I

“Just on the eve of a crash,” wrote Marx, “business appears almost too sound.” Business men, bank directors and capitalist experts and politicians were congratulating one another on the prosperity and soundness of business—until the collapse suddenly overtook them. Immediately upon his election, Hoover announced that he would establish a fund of \$3 billion to “abolish poverty.” Everywhere the apologists of capitalism were singing the praises of American technique and were assuring the world of the eternity of American prosperity. This was the condition just preceding the crash on the stock exchange. Even the fall in production which commenced in July failed to serve as a warning of the impending collapse. To-day “prosperity” has given way to a deep-rooted economic crisis.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party at its Plenum held in the first week of October, 1929, correctly estimated the situation when, on the basis of the crisis in a number of industries, the beginning of a decline in production and the raging speculation on the stock exchange, it declared: “The present situation in the United States also shows the clear features of an economic crisis... The present economic situation in the United States is that we are before a break in the curve of ‘hochkunjunktur’¹ in the beginning of a pre-crisis situation.”

The crisis has not yet matured fully. But already the depth of the crisis is visible. The decline in production has been moving downward with accelerating force. During the month of November the fall was the greatest in any month in a period of half a century, with the exception of the severe crisis years 1893 and 1907 which followed sharp stock exchange crashes”.

¹The trade boom.

The business index which stood at 103.5 in October fell to 94.8. Particularly great are the declines in the automobile and building industries, which have been two of the strong points of the recent prosperity boom. Automobile production, which had the index of 150.5 in June, fell to 115.5 in October and to 81.8 in November. The month of December showed further rapid fall in production. Automobile production swung downward, a fall of 37½ per cent, standing at the index figure of 51.5 (case and trunk production fell from 215,822 in November to 125,000 in December), the lowest in many years. Building production in December was the lowest since 1924, while steel ingot production receded from 89.1 to 78.4, which induces the capitalist and business journal "Annalist" to say that: "This sharp fall in ingot production will have a considerable effect in the direction of carrying downward the ("Annalist") index of business activity." This same journal was forced to admit about pig iron production that it showed "a heavier decline than had been expected. Twenty blast furnaces were put out in the last two months, the largest since April and May, 1924."

Export trade fell in November, 1929 about 20 per cent, as against November, 1928, a sum over one hundred million dollars.

The economic crisis has not as yet expressed itself as a crisis of the money credit system. But, at the same time, it must be noted that credit has tightened — short time credit (brokers' loan) has fallen from \$5,500 million on October 30, immediately after the exchange crash to \$3,352 million on January 8. The outflow of gold to European countries, in particular France, is causing much alarm in the bourgeois press.

Wholesale commodity prices have fallen from 149.1 in June, 1929, to 140.2 in January, 1930. The bankruptcy in business continues to mount. During the first week of January the number was 618 as against 407 the week before.

The crisis, according to all signs, will not be of short duration. The "Annalist" speaks of a six months or longer duration. The "Journal of Commerce" predicts even a greater period. The aspects of the crisis are already those which characterised the big collapse of 1920-21 and which lasted for a period of over eight-

een months before upward recovery began. The span, however, of the crisis, its depth and the duration of the depression which follows, cannot be measured solely by the previous crises in the United States. Occurring in the post-war period of capitalist decline, and particularly in the Third Period of the general crisis of capitalism, the American crisis will, from the very outset, acquire very sharp forms. The crisis likewise is affected by the chronic and deepening agrarian crisis in the United States and all over the world. The agrarian crisis causes a further shrinkage of the internal market.

The sharp crisis in the United States gives the lie to the bombastic assertions by bourgeois social-fascist economists and repeated by Lovestone and Gitlow that American capitalism had overcome the contradiction inherent in the system of capitalism. The efforts of President Hoover have not, and could not, prevent the downward movement. The establishment of an Economic Council of the big bankers, industrial lords and labour bureaucrats has brought no fruits in checking the advance of the crisis. The council of the plutocrats of finance capital has other purposes.

The programme is one of full mobilisation for a new wave of rationalisation, of wage slashing and most bitter exploitation of the workers. It is the concentration of the resources of American capitalism to launch out into a ferocious offensive to capture new markets. The shrinking home market, the sharp competition from Europe demands the most concerted and well organised attack to win new markets, to redivide the world.

The aggressive methods employed by Hoover in conducting this task, the mobilisation of all phases of industrial production recalls a mobilisation for war. In fact for some time the Government has divided the country and industry into military zones and has assigned tasks for the coming war and the onslaught of the workers to the labour bureaucrats given as their task of strike breaking and keeping the wheels of industry turning so that the burden of the crisis may be shifted on to the shoulders of the toilers. Markets and the maintenance and increase of profits must and will be fought for with measures of war, both at home and abroad.

“No issue is of more vital importance than the stimulation of our commerce abroad,” writes James A. Farrell, President of the United States Steel Corporation in the “North American Review,” and Charles E. Mitchell, president of the National City Bank, stated in October before the collapse of the Wall Street Exchange “that competition with European capital is bound to increase and the only limit to what American manufacturers are prepared to export is the amount the market can take.” To secure these new markets the capitalist class seeks by all means to reduce the cost of production and will initiate a sharp attack upon the living standards of the workers.

American capitalism must seek an outlet for its overproduced capital in a world market which has more and more lagged behind the advancing world production. The crisis at the same time is further narrowing the world market as a result of the fact that the crisis is spreading to other countries. The antagonism between the imperialist States is growing more acute, and Anglo-American rivalry is becoming more intense. The London Armament Conference is clearly an expression of the condition of a spreading world crisis under which it meets. The crisis brings nearer the danger of an imperialist conflict. American development has shown that crises come suddenly and when everything seems sound and prosperous. Thus also with war—the sharpening of the contradictions leaves no way out but for the bourgeoisie to try to overcome them by means of war. The greater the peace talk—the more plentiful and frequent the so-called peace conferences, the more likely the suddenness of the outbreak of war. The capitalist class of America by the growth of its imperialism and the sharpening of its contradictions has been driven more and more to take up the lead in the united front against the Soviet Union. The chasm between world capitalism with its mighty imperialist sector, the United States, in the grip of a crisis, and the Soviet Union striding forward in socialist reconstruction intensifies the danger of another intervention in the Soviet Union. The danger of a sudden outbreak of world war was already shown by the provocative attacks of the Chinese hirelings on the Soviet Union. The crisis makes the question of imperialist world war more acute than ever. The fight for the defence of the

Soviet Union becomes more actual than before.

American capitalism will press down upon its colonies and spheres of influence and place upon them further heavy imperialist burdens. The crisis, however, is not localised to the United States. The Latin-American countries are in a deep crisis. In making a drive for the Latin-American market against its foremost competitor (Great Britain) United States capital will only give a great impulse to the revolutionary struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples for independence.

II

The first great effect of the crisis upon the working class is the mass discharges, the rapid increases of the army of the unemployed. Five million workers are already thrown upon the streets excluding the permanently unemployed, which, during the period of the high peak of production equalled nearly three million.

The New York State Commissioner of Labour reports that unemployment to-day is the greatest since 1920. Already during the months before the crisis deepened, the bureaucrats of the A.F. of L. spoke of only 40 per cent. of building trades workers being 'employed in Chicago. Mass discharges have been sudden and considerable. In addition to full unemployment, hundreds of thousands of workers have been working only part time.

During the crises of 1920-1921, the estimated unemployment figures of conservative bourgeois politicians was 5,000,000. During the short depression of 1927, the Tammany Hall Senator Wagner, of New York, gave the figure of unemployed as 7,000,000. The maturing crisis will reach the actual figure of 8-10,000,000. Unemployment in the United States, as well as in the other capitalist countries, is a revolutionary force sharpening the class struggle and shaking the foundations of capitalism. In the United States the workers thrown upon the streets face absolute starvation. The meagre hunger dole of European capitalist States is denied the workers of America. The menacing shadow of unemployment faces the majority of working-class families to-day. How unemployment affects the workers is shown by two recent studies. In examining the results of the dis-

charge of 800 skilled workers in three industries the Senate Commission on Unemployment, 1929, reported that 50 per cent, of these workers are still out of employment after a period of one year, and the remaining group had been out of work from three to six months, finding employment only at reduced wages and at unskilled trades. In a study of the average city in the United States which the author calls "Middletown" the results of an inquiry of 122 families told that 83 suffered from unemployment in the preceding months, 68 were compelled to make changes in living standards, 47 cut down on clothes, 43 cut down on food supplies, 27 wives went to work, 14 allowed their insurance policies to lapse, etc. Full employment is becoming a quality of the privileged worker.

A bitter offensive against the wages and hours of the working class has already begun. The Steel Trust has cut the wages of the Youngstown steel workers by 20 per cent. In the automobile plants wages are being cut from 20 to 40 per cent. This will be carried over to other industries. The terror campaign against the militant unions and the Communist Party is being intensified. During the past two years the International Labour Defence had no less than five thousand cases to defend. The terror against the workers has been unexampled in the United States.

The number of arrests, the raids upon foreign born workers, the attempt at lynching the organisers of the revolutionary unions, the shooting of strikers, the raids upon the Communist Party headquarters, the direct attempt to outlaw the Party as a whole will be severely intensified by the present crisis.

The workers are confronted in this offensive against their wages and living conditions by the alliance of the employers' State and the social-fascists. The capitalist State has been steadily becoming ever more fascised. The power of government is being concentrated more and more into the hands of the President, in the Cabinet Ministers and in specially appointed commissions. Only recently Hoover -wrote about the efficiency of "Government by specially appointed commissions." A few days ago the Law Enforcement Commission appointed by the Government, with the arch-reactionary Wickersham at its head, brought in a proposal for the establishment of 10,000 additional

prohibition agents and for putting the colossal prohibition machinery into the hands of the Department of Justice. The Commission likewise proposed the abolition of trial by jury for petty offences and, in violation of Federal Laws, their trial instead by federal appointed commissioners. The Baumes Commissions on a city and State scale have already carried through a huge concentration of power into the hands of appointed judges and the establishment of life imprisonment for fourth time offenders. The American Federation of Labour and the Socialist Party are in the van of this fascisation of the State. During the last election campaign in New York City, the "socialist" candidate for Mayor, Norman Thomas, ran upon a platform demanding the raising of the efficiency of the police "for a police system freed from the control of politics." In the Illinois strike of the coal miners, which is now taking place, the local Sheriff members of the United Mineworkers are carrying through the arrest and intimidation of the militant miners. How will the workers react to the offensive of the bourgeoisie?

During the period of "prosperity" the workers have shown increased spirit of struggle. Faced by a united front of the employers, the State and the social-fascists, the workers have put up a bitter and sustained resistance to the attacks of these enemies. The Gastonia and New Orleans fights, the struggles of the miners and needle trades have shown with what militancy and heroism the workers engage in a struggle. The highly political character of the economic struggles has created the tendency amongst the masses to develop these struggles into general struggles. During the New Orleans strike, the workers called for a general walkout. During the strike of the oil drivers of New York City against the Standard Oil Company, the rank-and-file workers likewise called for a strike of all transport workers. Only the sabotage and strikebreaking policies of the trade union officials and the weak contacts of the Communist Party prevented the success of these efforts. The offensive mood of the workers has been growing. During the present crisis the workers will aggressively carry forward the counter-offensive against unemployment, wage cuts, speed up, the increased cost of living resulting from the new tariff bills, against the terror of the bour-

geoisie which will result in extraordinary acute battles.

The perspective of tremendous struggles has already been foreshadowed by the battles of Gastonia and New Orleans, the fight of the miners, the militancy and fighting spirit of the masses on International Red Day and the movement for organisation among the unorganised in the basic industries as demonstrated by the composition and fighting tone of the conference which organised the Trade Union Unity League on September 1st. The present crisis occurs in the midst of a growing world offensive of the working class (the rising revolutionary tide of struggle of the German, Polish, and French proletariat, etc., the advance of the colonial revolutionary movement) and particularly of the tremendous progress of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. Gigantic battles of the workers in the basic industries added to the struggle by the agricultural workers are on the order of the day. To lead these struggles, to broaden and unite the front of battles, to direct the struggle against the social-fascists and against the growing fascist State power, is the task of the Communist Party. The Communist Party of the United States has its central task, to become the leader of the mass struggles of the workers.

III.

The present crisis must mark a real turning point in the development of the Party from a small organisation of propaganda to a real leader of the masses. This requires, above all, that the Party sees the tremendous significance, the depth and the extent of the crisis, and that the entire Party be mobilised for the struggle called forth by the sharpening economic crisis. This has not yet occurred. The "Daily Worker" in the first period of the crisis did not ring out with the rallying calls for action. During the first days of the Stock Exchange crash the great masses were aroused by the catastrophic character of the crash, but the "Daily Worker" was silent.

The role of the Trade Union Unity League and the new revolutionary unions must likewise be clear to the Party membership. The main task of the new revolutionary trade union centre is to lead the economic struggles of the working class. Here it is nec-

essary to get rid of the idea prevalent among many comrades that the T.U.U.L. is a propaganda organisation, an opposition “within the main stream of the Labour movement”—the A.F. of L. This conception is a barrier to the fundamental need of the Party for the establishment of independent leadership of the struggles of the workers and results only in a disastrous policy of tailism. The A.F. of L. and socialist bureaucracy cannot and will not organise the masses for struggle against the capitalists. It is a strike breaking force. The Muste movement is an attempt of the American Cooks and Maxtons to screen the downright fascist character of the A.F. of L. Already at the time of the Passaic strike, the role of the A.F. of L. as strike breaker was demonstrated. The fear of the Communists to maintain independent leadership led to a surrender of the workers to the A.F. of L. bureaucracy, with the consequent dispersal of the trade union organisation that was formed and the abandonment of the fight against the employers. The masses were in advance of the Party when they understood instinctively that affiliation to the A.F. of L. meant objectively the betrayal of the struggle. It is true that the Communist Party was motivated by a policy of getting closer to the masses—the false “main stream of the labour movement theory”—when it proposed affiliation, but it is clear to-day that already at that time the means of establishing contact with the masses must be through the independent leadership of the Communists in the organisation of the unorganised outside of the American Federation of Labour. While the Party leadership has learned this lesson it is not the case with many of our leading comrades in the trade union work. The building up of the Trade Union Unity League and the new unions into mass organisations is the most essential task of the present situation. While increasing our work within the A.F. of L. to win away the best elements the main centre of our work is the organisation of the unorganised masses particularly in the basic industries into new unions and into the T.U.U.L. The trade union work, the development of the Trade Union Unity League, the building of new unions is the means by which the Party will convert itself into a mass Communist Party.

This task requires that the old methods of work be abandoned. The organisation of the workers in the factories, the for-

mation of new unions, the organisation of the unemployed, requires new methods, new tactics, greater militancy, the skilful combination of economic and political weapons under the leadership of the Communist Party. Above all, it means that the leading role of the Party must be understood and, consequently, the need for the entire Party organisation to be mobilised for these economic struggles. The past division of the work of the Party into economic and political tasks and the consequent separation of the trade union work from Party work and vice versa, which at all times is an eclectic opportunist policy, is in the present situation, in which there are no economic struggles which are not political, a disastrous practice for the Party.

In the present situation the Labour Party slogan must be dropped. This slogan is a weapon in the hands of the most dangerous enemies—the left social-fascists, the Musteites. The crisis affords the Party the opportunity of more direct contact with the masses —through the new unions, T.U.U.L., the formation of factory committees, etc.

To mobilise the masses, to arouse their fighting spirit, a programme of action for the present situation is necessary. In the foreground of this programme which must be popularised to millions of workers, must be the struggle against unemployment, for the seven-hour five-day week, the fight against wage cuts, for increased wages for the most exploited sections, the struggle against the speed-up system. It is not enough to have such a general programme, it is necessary that this be adapted by the local organisations to the conditions in the districts and to the concrete conditions in the factories, particularly in the big factories. These demands must be combined with the fight against the A.F. of L. and “socialist” party and Muste groups and against the capitalist government for the Revolutionary Workers’ Government

IV.

The political character of the present struggle is not yet clear to many of our functionaries and particularly those in the trade unions. There is therefore an insufficient linking up of the economic demands with political demands and where this is done, these political demands are only feebly agitated among the

masses. There is hesitation among many of our trade union leaders to “injecting political issues” into strike struggles. This is the reason for the very weak demonstrations that have occurred in past strikes against police terror, use of gangsters against the injunctions and injunction judges and the strike breaking city officials. We must remember some very bad incidents in which the contrary policies were adopted— for example the sending of a delegation to Washington in the Passaic strike, to demand an investigation (!) by the United States Senate of the conditions in the textile industry. The terror of the government and the social-fascists are an inevitable part of every struggle. The fight against the employers is a fight against the government and the social-fascists. It is one front of battle. The slogan of the mass political strike must be increasingly agitated in the present struggle. The slogan of the strike on International Red Day met with resistance of large sections of the Party. It was applied only in New York City and even here with insufficient vigour. The political strike was put forward in the Gastonia struggle at the time of the shooting of Ella Wiggins, but met with no response from the workers, chiefly because of insufficient preliminary agitation, lack of organisation in the factories and weak Party organisation. The Party has correctly put forward the slogan of political strikes in the recent severe battle against fascist terror, but it is necessary to learn the experiences in the use of this weapon internationally as well as in our own struggle, to make these known to the Party in order to achieve a greater application and success of this powerful weapon.

The necessity for carrying through demonstrations and strikes under conditions of terror by the police, raises the question of the formation of proletarian self- defence organs and of utilising strategy in the organisation of our demonstrations as an urgent and immediate task. The demonstrations against the government authorities have mainly been limited to Communists. Non- Party masses have not been sufficiently drawn into these demonstrations. The organisation of these demonstrations, mass picketing, etc., require systematic preparation, widespread and systematic propaganda and the organisation of defence corps to carry through these mass actions despite the prohibition by the

police.

The strike of 5,000 agricultural workers in Imperial Valley, California, shows that we can no longer afford to allow the agrarian work to remain at the present low level. The chronic agrarian crisis, the rationalisation efforts of the Hoover government to agriculture, the pauperisation of large strata of the poor farmers, the unbearable exploitation of the Southern Negro farmers calls for an aggressive push forward in our agrarian work, the establishment of a programme which concentrates upon the organisation of the agricultural masses and the lowest strata of the farmers which bear the heavy weight of finance capital.

The Negro work, the organisation of the Negro workers through the T.U.U.L., the penetration of the South and the organisation of the Negro toilers combined with the most intense struggle against white chauvinism, particularly in our own ranks, is a question of the most decisive moment for our Party. The slogan of the right of self-determination of the Negroes has not at all been taken up by the Party. There is opportunistic resistance to this slogan as well as a lack of clarity, both of which must be quickly overcome.

The building of the Young Communist League into a mass organisation is a task into which the Party must throw its full support. The orientation of the League to mass work, which was emphasised by the recent Plenum of the Y.C.I., must not be left to the efforts of the League alone to achieve. The social-democratic neglect of the youth which has characterised the Party attitude in the past is particularly harmful in the present time since the crisis will lead to more intense exploitation of the young workers and swing them in the direction of the Communist Party and Young Communist League. Likewise the greater wage cuts of the wages of women workers. Rationalisation calls for the strengthening of the workers' apparatus and the organisation of the women in the T.U.U.L. and in the class struggle generally.

The revolt in Haiti against American imperialism, the growing revolutionary situation in Latin-America, presents an urgent task to the Party to give direct and practical assistance in the or-

ganisation of these oppressed masses, to establish one front of battle of the American workers with the colonial and semi-colonial masses against American imperialism. The militant demonstrations against the terror of American imperialism in alliance with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of Mexico against the Mexican workers and peasants show that the Party is beginning to undertake this task. But far more must yet be done to draw in the mass of the proletariat in the fight against imperialism.

The leadership of the struggles of the workers must have as its main end the building up of the Communist Party into a mass Party. The resolution of the Central Committee on the first results of the Illinois strike correctly points out that this task is not understood by the Party. During the big struggles which the Party led in the past, the miners' struggle, the Passaic textile strike, the needle trades strike, the Party has not been sufficiently in the foreground of the struggles, nor have we by any means built up Party organisation commensurate with our influence. Even in the Gastonia struggle this task was neglected. During the miners' struggle in Pennsylvania, Ohio, there was a conception among some of our leading comrades that the building up of Party units and of the recruiting of Party members might divert from the "main fight." The struggles of the workers cannot be led without firm and strong Party organisation. The building up of auxiliary organisations is no substitute to the building of the Party. The Communist Party must be made known to the masses. The bourgeoisie is helping to popularise the Party in raising the "Red scare" in every strike struggle, but Party members who evade the "Red issue" and who answer attacks of the government that it does not matter what the political colour of the trade union leader is, as was done in reply to the attacks by the fascist agent, Woods, against the leadership of the Shoe Workers' Union is only confusing the masses and injuring the prestige of the Party. Every Party member must join the T.U.U.L. and as far as possible the new unions. But the Communists in the new unions, in the T.U.U.L. must work to build up the Party, to win new members, to secure new readers for our press, to build factory cells, to propagate the aims of the Party among the masses. The idea of

political neutrality which affects the work of our leading fractions in the mass organisations must be completely exposed. That the masses are ready to join the Party and follow Communist leadership is shown by the present recruiting drive in which 1,800 new members have been secured in the first month of the campaign. Building the Party, however, means rooting it in the big factories. The chief weakness of our “Daily Worker” to-day is the fact that it has no organised support in the factories. The building of the Party, as the major task of every Party member, means to overcome the passivity and casual character of the daily work which has characterised the situation in the past. To build the Party it is necessary to prepare for conditions of illegality. For that reason we must penetrate deeply into the factories.

V

The crisis has fully exposed the opportunist theories of the right renegades, Lovestone and Co. and the opportunist Trotskyists. Lovestone aimed to cover up the bankruptcy of his theories, with the beginning of the crisis by declaring “that the panic on Wall Street did not come as a result of the decline of American capitalist economy.” A comparison of this view with the expressions of Hoover and Mellon—of the soundness of capitalism—will show how deep the bourgeois theories have penetrated the ranks of these renegades.

The Trotskyist opportunists have taken an identically similar view of the crisis. The organ of the Trotskyist Cannon repeats the stupid explanations of the capitalist press when it says “Many employers devoted more time to stock exchange gambling than to business before the crash. Now they are being forced to the wall.”

The Lovestone group and Cannon group are preparing the ground for an organisational merger. Mutual amnesty is being declared in regard to the past struggle. Lovestone declares in his counter-revolutionary organ: In the fight against Trotskyism non-Leninist methods were often employed, particularly in the recent phases (against Cannon) while Cannon makes his bid with the remark “that the rank and file of the Lovestone group belong to the ‘Leninist opposition’.” The efforts of the opportunists to

win the Party away from the line of the Communist International has been defeated. The Lovestone and Cannon groups make up a small insignificant handful with no influence upon the working class. The struggle against the ideology which they represent cannot however, be lessened. Opportunist ideology has still strong roots in the ranks of the Party and constant exposure of the programme' and deeds of these opportunists is a necessary means of educating the Party membership and strengthening the effectiveness of the Party struggle to win the masses.

The fight against the right danger—opportunism in practice—is to-day more urgent than ever. This opportunism in practice has shown itself in the present Illinois miners' strike, in the gap between the correct policy adopted by the Central Committee and its execution by some of the local trade union leaders. The old methods of work, unwillingness due to bureaucracy or inability due to a failure to understand the character of the economic struggle are a barrier to the mobilisation of the masses and stand in the way of carrying through the independent leadership of the struggles. Pessimism and scepticism born of craft outlook and from a tendency to surrender to difficulties have no place in the Party?. If the Party is to build the new unions, to increase the work in the old unions, to establish the new revolutionary centre and measure up to the tasks of the sharpening class struggle, then it must carry through a renovation of the framework of the mass organisations, the drawing in of new forces who show militancy and revolutionary energy in the fulfilment of the requirements of leadership of the growing struggles.

The Party is carrying on this struggle against opportunism in practice. The crisis demands an increase in the tempo of this fight. It demands a broader and deeper exposure of the weakness and shortcomings through the policy of self-criticism which must draw in the Party members and the widest rank and file masses.

The Address of the Communist International came at a very serious moment. Had the factional struggle, which raged for six years, continued at the present time, the Party would have been unable to achieve its role of leader of the impending revolutionary struggles.

The Party is moving forward. The fighting group is growing.

A real earnestness and genuineness in joining in the struggles and leading the revolutionary fight is seizing hold of the membership. There is yet much to be done in all directions. But the Party is in the Leninist path. With the maturing of the crisis and the complete ridding of the opportunist ideology of American exceptionalism, its steps will be bolder and firmer and its advance accelerated toward the winning of the majority of the workers for the revolutionary struggle for power.

Some Lessons From the Latest Miners' Strike

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I.

The first wave of strikes against wage-reductions in mining is, in the main, over. More than 40,000 miners in Kentucky, Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia struggled on for months with the greatest spirit of self-sacrifice. The fight was carried on against the reduction of wages, against the outrageous conditions prevalent in mining and for wage-increases. The strikes were ended without visible material successes on the part of the miners. The struggling workers were not yet strong enough to put through their demands. Insufficient organisation and inadequate widening of their battle-front, lack of assistance in their strike, prevented them from breaking down the reign of terror organised by the united forces of employers, government and social-fascists, from rendering ineffective their treacherous manoeuvres intended to confuse the workers, and from winning success in a material sense. It is, however, certain that the intensity of the wage-reduction offensive in mining, at least for the time being, has been lessened by the strikes. They have resulted in deepening the miners' class-consciousness, in enlarging their experience in struggling and in improving their organisation. Provided the lessons of this strike are properly evaluated and generalised, the entire revolutionary trade union movement of the U.S.A. will profit greatly by this strike. Furthermore, the miners' strikes have been a signal for hundreds of thousands of workers in other industries to be watchful and to begin their preparations for their own struggles against wage-reductions. They have had a mobilising and activising influence; they helped along the strikes of the textile workers and the growing movement in the steel industry.

The miners' strikes began about two years after the announcement of the so-called "Hoover plan," "for overcoming the

economic crisis in the U.S.A.” The Hoover plan proposed several economic measures for attaining this goal. But its most important content was an appeal to the employers to avoid any reduction in wages, in order to maintain the purchasing power of the masses within the country and thus to secure the home market for the products of industry and agriculture.

The employers agreed to Hoover’s plan and specifically promised to renounce any steps towards wage-reduction until the economic situation had taken a turn for the better. This promise was described by the leaders of the A.F. of L. as a guarantee for the quick return of prosperity. The great majority of the workers believed in the Hoover plan, in the employers’ promises and in the demagogical utterances made by the A.F. of L. Thus, for years they were the victims of the great manoeuvre of deception executed by the government conjointly with the big industrial magnates, the bankers and the fakers of the A.F. of L., in order to lead the workers astray.

The Hoover plan is nothing but a masterfully devised tool for the frictionless lowering of the living standard of the masses of workers. The first step in this direction was the introduction of the so-called “stagger-system.” It was carried through by use of such “humanitarian” phrases as “no discharges,” “every worker sure of his living despite the economic crisis.” It threw on to the shoulders of the mass of workers the tremendous burdens of unemployment, for it lowered the workers’ income by 30 to 60 per cent. The stagger-system compelled the individual worker to bend his energies ever harder in order to preserve himself and his family from starvation. And it led likewise to the great intensification of competition within the ranks of his own class.

In working out the Hoover plan, Mr. Hoover and the masters of industry and banking already knew what was the only possible capitalist way to lessen the crisis in the U.S. for the time being. They knew that this goal could be attained only by the conquest of fresh markets abroad for the products of American industry and by conquering fresh possibilities for investing the American capital accumulated. They knew that every step towards attaining this goal must lead to the aggravation of the class struggle between capital and labour, and to new imperialist wars.

Besides that, they knew very well that the immediate precondition for the conquest of fresh positions on the world market by American imperialism was the lowering of the standard of living of the American workers. The employers have worsened the position of the masses of workers—as we have indicated—by applying the stagger-system. Through it, the workers' fight for wage-increases, for unemployment relief and social insurance and against wage-reductions was to be hindered and their organisation in trade-unions to be restricted. A starving, cowed and disunited working class is the aim of the Hoover plan. Granted such a mass of workers, the government and the employers hope to be able best to carry through the temporary softening of the economic crisis by means of fresh rationalisation. by universal and direct wage-reduction, by driving more hundreds of thousands out of the factories.

When there was no more advantage in the stagger-system alone the employers threw on the junk-heap the phrases about "high wages preserving the purchasing power of the home market," "no wage-reductions for the sake of the quick victory over the economic crisis," and set about an open, brutal, direct offensive of wage-reduction.

Among the basic industries the miners were the first victims of this new offensive of wage-reduction. On this sector the employers were counting on a quick and certain victory. The miners live under such wretched conditions that, according to capitalist conceptions, no serious resistance was to be expected from them. The employers hoped that in case of strike, hunger would drive the workers back to the pits within a few days.

But the employers' attempt to lower wages further by direct means destroyed faith in the Hoover plan among the workers with the greatest speed. Hence the employers' attack encouraged the liveliest resistance on the part of the workers. The miners showed the employers that their calculations were false. They gave the public an example of how the working masses—those in work and those out of work—will defend themselves against attempts to worsen their already wretched state still more. They showed through action that the masses of the workers will finally take the counter-offensive and begin the fight for their own de-

mands. Since the miners' strike the local fights continually blazing up in the mining districts, the strikes in the textile industry and the provision trade, the developments in the steel industry, the mass demonstrations and the active measures for struggle by the unemployed are still further serious signs pointing this way. The coming months will be a period of great mass struggles by the American workers for their demands—against wage-reductions and for relief- to the unemployed and part-time workers, if the masses of workers find in the Communist Party and in the revolutionary trade-unions an energetic leadership, conscious of its goal, able to organise and lead these struggles by applying a real policy of the united front.

II.

There is no doubt but that the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade-unions will be the organisers and leaders of the approaching struggles of the masses in the U.S.A. The C.P. of the U.S.A. is the only class party of the American proletariat, the revolutionary trade-unions are the only class organisations of the American workers for organising and leading their struggles against the lowering of the standard of living. The C.P. of the U.S.A. and the revolutionary trade-unions will fulfil their duties toward the working class the more effectively if the party utilises with the greatest conscientiousness the lessons and experiences of the miners' strikes, the textile strikes, the unemployed activities, etc.. and makes them the common property of its entire body of members, as well as of the workers as a whole. If, despite the successes won, it exposes to the workers its political, organisational and tactical mistakes and defects with the frankness of self-criticism, it will clear the way for rapidly overcoming them.

The preparation for, and the course of, the miners' strikes fully confirm the correctness of the resolutions of the last plenum of the Communist International, of the Fourth and Fifth Congresses of the Red International of Labour Unions, as to the prospects and tasks of the revolutionary trade-union movement in America.

What is the main point of these resolutions? In them the

chief emphasis, above all, was laid on the absolute necessity for organising mass strikes against wage-reduction, for mass action for relief of the unemployed. It was shown that during the economic crisis of American imperialism favourable objective possibilities would be developed at the same time for organising such struggles. The miners' strikes showed that these favourable objective premises for organising mass strikes and unemployed action were already at hand. They were an example showing the degree to which the illusions of prosperity and of the Hoover plan had been destroyed and were being destroyed more and more among the proletarian masses by the terrible effects of the economic crisis.

In the above-mentioned resolutions of the Communist International and of the Revolutionary Trade-Union International the sharpest stress was laid upon the fact that the pre-condition for organising and starting mass strikes in times of profound economic crisis was the linking up of the unemployed struggle with that of the men at work. The events of the miners' strike show what an active factor the unemployed are in mobilising the workers of the different mines, for taking up and carrying through the strike struggle when linked up with the men at work. It was just this joint action of the unemployed during the strike which achieved its greatest political effects as against the unemployed and the government. It was that which assured the solidarity of the struggle for so many weeks.

The resolutions further state that, granted a correct policy and tactics and granted the application of the organisational principles of the Communist International and of the Revolutionary Trade-Union International, revolutionary trade-unions of the masses will arise during the approaching mass struggles and the Communist Party will develop into a mass party. The miners' strikes were a splendid example of the correctness of this conception. The strikes were led and concluded by the National Miners' Union with considerable moral and organisational achievements, despite very great difficulties. Before the strike the N.M.U. had about two hundred paid-up members in the Pennsylvania district. During the strike the N.M.U. developed with the greatest speed. Its authority grew daily. Its influence spread into other

mining districts (Kentucky, Illinois, West Virginia, Eastern Ohio). During the strike, about 25,000 miners joined the N.M.U. By its active, determined leadership of the strike the N.M.U. laid the foundation for a revolutionary, mass trade-union of the American miners. Although it was unsuccessful in winning direct, material achievements for the miners by the strike, the latter have remained true to the N.M.U. since the strike and have pressed on to strengthen their organisation, politically and organisationally.

The party strengthened its ranks very materially in the course of the strike. About 1,000 miners entered the party. Even during the strike these new members were bound together in local groups, the election of the group leadership was taken in hand and a beginning was made with their systematic training. In this work the party has achieved quite noticeable results; it was able to make use of the new party organisations to organise the anti-war demonstrations on August 1st, and to prepare for the municipal election campaign. The anti-war demonstrations in the strike belt were among the most successful ones in the U.S.A. The party was enabled for the first time to come out with its own candidates in the municipal elections in the strike area. The first communist member of a municipal administration was elected there. It depends on the political and organisational work of the party in the present and in the future how long these new workers, who have come to the revolutionary movement, will be held in the party and in the National Miners' Union and developed into active members.

Finally, it was pointed out in the resolutions that the building up of the party and of the revolutionary trade-unions was possible in America, as well as elsewhere, only by the bitterest political struggle against the social-fascist and reformist betrayers of the workers and the bourgeois ideology which they spread among them. The miners' strikes, under revolutionary leadership, compelled the employers, the government and the social-fascist miners' organisations (United Mine Workers of America) connected with them, to resort to confusing manoeuvres, backed by merciless terrorisation of the struggling workers. In order to increase its freedom of manoeuvring, the government and the

employers tried to rebuild the U.M.W.A., which in Western Pennsylvania had lost its adherents as a result of its treason during the strike it led in 1929. With its help the united battle-front of the miners was to be shattered and the growing influence of the N.M.U. among the miners was to be destroyed. In Kentucky, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia the employers protected the officials of the United Mine Workers with the police-force. They organised murderous attacks against the leaders of the N.M.U. and imprisoned hundreds of revolutionary miners. In Pennsylvania 21 members of the National Miners' Union were sentenced to more than 50 years in the penitentiary because of alleged "disturbance of the meeting of the United Mine Workers in Cannonsburg." That shows how valuable the U.M.W.A. is to the government and the employers.

Developing in connection with the general radicalisation of the mass of miners, great activity was shown in the mining district by the so-called Muste group (South Virginia, Illinois, etc.). By using revolutionary phrases this group succeeded in making the most of the favourable situation and spreading its influence over certain parts of the mining population. The Socialist Party, under pretext of organising strike-relief, also tried to penetrate the strike-area. All this shows the need' for the fiercest struggle against social- fascism and reformism in the mines and in the organisation of the U.M.W.A. and of the Muste group by applying a correct united front tactic.

The work of the party and of the N.M.U. in preparing and conducting the miners' strikes was a serious attempt to apply in practice the resolutions of the Fifth World Congress of the R.I.L.U. and the various instructions given by the Communist International. The general line of the political and organisational work accomplished during the strike is therefore correct. So are the tactical measures applied. The self-critical investigation of the activity of the party and of the N.M.U. in organising and conducting the strike is therefore limited to answering the question: to what degree was the line laid down by the Communist International and the R.I.L.U. applied and what mistakes and defects were revealed in carrying it through? In the following sections we shall try to give an answer to this question by a criti-

cal examination of the work of the Pennsylvania party district in organising and conducting the strike in Western Pennsylvania.

III.

The general line of the party developed in preparing for, conducting and concluding the miners' strike in Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and Western Virginia consisted of the following:

At several points of concentration the unemployed were mobilised by the party on the basis of local demands. It succeeded in putting forward demands which the workers recognised as right and necessary. Into this movement it drew in a part of the short-time workers. After the beginning of the direct offensive for wage- reductions, local strikes broke out in these districts. The party extended these on a district scale. Within about a fortnight more than 5,000 miners of the Western Pennsylvania district were on strike. In its work the party applied a correct policy of the united front. It had the strikers successfully elect united-front strike committees on a local scale, in the sections and in the districts. Through the central strike-committee it presented the employers with the district demands of the strikers and organised an extensive campaign of strike assistance. The party offered the strikers an organised method of retreat after the strike- situation had shown that there was no longer any immediate possibility of winning the district demands.

In addition the party made the most of the strike movement to raise the class-consciousness of the masses. In order to strengthen the strike-front and simultaneously the movement in general, it replied to the confusing manoeuvres and terrorist measures of the employers, government and the U.M.W.A. fakers with mass propaganda for political demands against the police, against the deceptive contracts concluded between employers and the U.M.W.A. fakers, against arbitration negotiations, etc. It organised various effective mass actions to gain these demands. The hunger-marches to Washington and Pittsburgh, the measures adopted to render ineffective the injunctions secured by the Buttler Coal Co. for the Wildwood Mine, the mass demonstrations of the strikers and unemployed at the capitals in Harrisburg and Washington, the National Miners' Conference,

the anti-war demonstrations in the strike-belt on August 1st, were active and successful measures for making the strike political.

Furthermore, the party tried to make the strikers understand the role of the C.P. of the U.S.A. its aims and methods of struggle. It undertook several political steps towards combatting the Socialist Party. From the viewpoint of organisation, the Party tried to set the strike-apparatus functioning, to build up the National Miners' Union, to strengthen its own ranks by enrolling new members and developing new cadres of leaders. It also carried out successful measures for setting up a united front between the youth and adults, between white and coloured workers. The coloured workers were most active in the strike-committees, relief committees, etc. About 160 negro workers took part in the National Miners' Conference. The party was also able to draw the miners' wives and children for active co-operation in the strike movement. The mass participation of the miners' wives in the picket-lines and hunger-marches made a great impression. It led the government to expressly forbid the participation of the miners' wives in standing picket and in demonstrations for closing down other mines.

What mistakes and defects came to light in applying this political line? The main political mistake lay in the process of radicalisation and the spirit of fight in the mass of the miners being underestimated by a great part of the party in the Pittsburgh district. The party lagged far behind the masses in preparing and conducting the miners' strikes. Its tempo of work was unable to keep pace with the process of radicalisation. The masses of the workers, who were pressing for their struggle to be organised and led, were approached by the party with strong vestiges of the "prosperity" outlook. It had too little faith in the will to fight, in the energy and creative power of the masses. It did not attach sufficient importance to the fact that two years of severe economic crisis with its stagger-system and mass unemployment, and the brutal open offensive of wage-reduction, had not gone by without affecting the outlook of the masses of workers. It was late when the party in the Pittsburgh district observed the fundamental difference between the masses of workers who entered

the strike in 1929 as adherents of the United Mine Workers and those who went on strike in 1931 under the leadership of the National Miners' Union.

Another political mistake lay in a certain "worship" of spontaneity. This mistake was reinforced by certain traditions of the American movement. It is a twin-brother of underestimating the process of radicalisation of the masses. It was expressed in:

(a) Underestimating the leading role of the party and its principles of organisation;

(b) underestimating the manoeuvring capacity of the employers, government and U.M.W.A.;

(c) lack of perspective on the strike and too superficial analysis of the given strike situation in determining on concrete measures;

(d) dangerous failure to pay attention to political and organisational work directed towards forming functioning strike-committees, new organisations, the National Miners' Union and the party;

(e) inadequate resistance to tendencies among individual workers, who do not yet sufficiently understand revolutionary strike-tactics, to substitute individual sets of terror for the mass action which was lacking.

The mistakes were correctly recognised in the resolutions of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee on the miners' strike and in the political resolutions of the last plenum of the Central Committee of the Party. It is, however, necessary to repeatedly point out that the work of overcoming them has made but slight progress.

The activity of the party organisation in the textile and silk-workers' strikes, in the work of making the most of the miners' strike, and especially in the beginning of the Lawrence strike, shows that the lessons of the miners' strike have not been spread sufficiently in the Party, and full benefit has not been drawn from them.

The political mistakes committed during the preparation, execution, conclusion and evaluation of the miners' strikes were especially obvious in the following points:

(1) The party organisation of the Pittsburgh district, despite

two years of fierce crisis, had not yet faced the work of organising and conducting mass strikes. That cannot be excused with such arguments, for example, as, "The party was too weak, it had too few members," etc. The mistakes lie in the fact that the weak-party organisation did not realise the situation in time and thus hindered its own growth both politically and organisationally. This fact alone explains why, at the outbreak of the strike, a beginning had not yet been made in building up a collective party leadership in the district, why there had been no district conference for about a year, why only about 50 miners and a few steelworkers belonged to the party and the rest of the members were {engaged only in small-scale industry or were Unemployed.

(2) The work of preparing for the strike was begun by the party in February, after the fraction in the National Board of the N.M.U. had laid down the general line for it. The work of preparation was not made use of by the party either politically or organisationally. The propagation of the miners' demands was not linked up with the propagation of the aims and fighting methods of the party, as well as with the widening out of its campaigns (the Scottsboro' campaign, etc.). The enrolment of members was not organised either for the N.M.U. or for the party.

The party looked on the work of preparing for the strike as a mere trade-union matter. It limited it to a few fraction sittings and united front conferences of the N.M.U., to a few-mass meetings of the miners to present their demands, etc. The preparatory work was carried out without a clear perspective to a mass strike in the near future. The party was too little acquainted with the real state of affairs in the mining area to be able to get such a prospect clearly in mind. It was the miners' conference, which took place at the end of May in Pittsburgh, which first enabled it to get a real insight into the fighting spirit of the masses. This conference gave the party the opportunity to set up demands for the miners on a district scale. It was only a few days after this conference that the workers stopped the first pits and began the strike.

(3) For a long time the party organisation of the Pittsburgh district was thus inadequately prepared for the strike. With its

tremendous force, the strike-movement interrupted the so-called day-to-day work of the party, which had confined itself to arranging meetings for general propaganda and to a certain amount of work among the unemployed. For the time being it stifled this latter work entirely, for the small forces which had been drawn into this work, after the outbreak of strike, were entirely absorbed in the needs of the latter. The strike-movement compelled the party to adapt its activity to the new conditions. This process, which was developed very far in the course of the strike, is not yet over, even to-day.

As a result, the party was not able to lead the strike, with a full consciousness of its goal, from the very first day. The weakness of the party organisation in the Pittsburgh district led the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to despatch a number of special emissaries to strengthen the district leadership of the party in Pittsburgh. Together with the secretariat of the district, these comrades formed a special committee (called Top-Committee), the task of which was to prepare the work for the correct leadership of the strike, to organise its carrying through and to supervise it.

(4) The party in the Pittsburgh district, even after the outbreak of the strike, greatly underestimated the radicalisation and political progress of the masses. It offered the greatest obstacles to the political penetration of the strike. Instead of giving a thorough-going foundation of political propaganda to the real economic demands, on the basis of which the strike had broken out and spread, for a long time it hindered the party, its methods of work and campaigns from being discussed in the strike-meetings. The comrades were afraid that mentioning the party and its campaigns would disrupt the miners' united front. For this same reason also they neglected to have party orators speak in the mass demonstrations, to have party leaflets distributed and to display the party slogans.

Instead of opening the gates of the party as widely as possible for the most active elements among the striking miners and carrying out a systematic mass-enrolment, strong opposition developed in the party to accepting striking miners in any great numbers. The same opposition was made directly and indirectly

to drawing the striking workers into daily work in the leading organs of the strike-apparatus and of the N.M.U. "The workers are not class-conscious enough. They are incapable of carrying such work out. They will abandon the party again after the strike, for the party is not strong enough to politically develop such great masses of fresh members. After the strike they will again turn their backs on the N.M.U. unless it succeeds in winning the material demands made by the miners." These were the arguments which were used against drawing the miners into the party and into action in conducting the strike, both openly and in a concealed form.

(5) Consequently, the party developed its role as leader of the strike quite inadequately and lagged far behind in the question of building up new cadres. The party's district committee met for the first time about six weeks after the outbreak of the strike. There were no district conferences of the party during the strike. The activity of the fraction in the strike-apparatus and in the N.M.U. was insufficiently developed. All this made itself very much felt—as we shall show later—in the strike apparatus and in the growing N.M.U. The so-called Top-Committee confined; its activity to deciding on the current political! and organisational measures for directing the strike. It neglected, however, to carry on a resolute and vigorous fight for carrying through the proposals made by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee to correct mistakes and defects. Consequently, it aided the forward development of the party, its organisations and fractions, and the process of transformation, set going by the strike, in the party's political and organisational work to a slight degree only. Consequently, it promoted the development of the N.M.U. and of the strike-apparatus in the political and organisational sense, as well as in applying correct methods of work for leading the masses, to an equally slight degree.

The result of all these mistakes was that during the strike—despite its ten weeks duration—neither a functioning district committee of the party nor one of the N.M.U. was built up. It did not succeed in developing an actively functioning executive committee of the Central Strike Committee. The Top-Committee tried to conduct the strike directly with about 12 organisers sent

to the strike area and with the leading comrades of the N.M.U. This was bound to lead to unfavourable consequences for the entire movement.

IV.

Let us now examine in what way these unfavourable consequences made themselves felt in the strike-apparatus and in the N.M.U. as it grew up. We have said that after the outbreak of the miners' strike the party applied a correct policy of the united front and had the strikers elect united front strike committees on a local, sectional! and district scale. According to the statistics available at the highest stage of the strikes, there were 130 local strike-committees, with 10 to 25 members each, in Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia. The local strike-committees accomplished a tremendous amount of work. The picket-marches, picket lines, demonstrations, relief and defence measures organised and executed by them must be described as mode! performances. They showed the stubborn fighting spirit of the masses and their tremendous creative force.

To a great extent, however, the work of the local strike-committees lacked organisation and system. Despite frequent resolutions they made no registration of the strikers. They neglected the systematic division of the strikers for executing the work needed (picket duty, collection of food, work in the communal kitchen, etc.). Consequently, they also neglected to control this work. The picket-lines, which in the beginning functioned brilliantly as a result of the great enthusiasm for the strike, later broke down gradually for lack of organisation. In the strike-area not more than 30 local strike-kitchens were functioning; an absolutely unsatisfactory number when 120,000 needy workers, women and children, were embraced by the strike and needed help.

Even among their own members, the local strike-committees showed only a quite inadequate division of labour. No functioning organisation, agitation and propaganda or strike-defence commissions were formed, as recommended by the Strasbourg resolution¹ on strike strategy and tactics. The connection of the

¹ "Strike," 1d. Minority Movement.

local strike-committees downward to the strikers and upward to the sectional strike-committees was poor as a rule. In scarcely five local strike-committees were there to be seen beginnings of a revolutionary propaganda of their own through posters and leaflets. As a rule the relief and kitchen commissions functioned best.

The strike district of Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia was divided into 11 sections. To hack up its work a representative of the N.M.U. was appointed for each section, to work under the direct control of the Top-Committee. In the sectional strike-conference the sectional strike-committee was elected. According to statistics available there were 11 sectional strike-committees with 15 to 40 members each. The task of the representative of the N.M.U. in the sectional strike-committee was to organise the committee, to form the organisation commission, agitation and propaganda commission, strike-defence commission, and relief commission, to unite the strikers on a sectional scale, to organise general picket-marches, demonstrations and food-collections, to develop an effective propaganda of their own against all manoeuvres of the U.M.W.A. and of the government, and to take measures against terrorisation and for the assistance of wounded or arrested workers, etc. To carry out this work they had to develop some of the members of the sectional strike-committees as speakers, instructors, inspectors, etc.

But these tasks were hardly undertaken. As a rule the chairmen of the local strike-committees and the leaders of the local relief-committees were elected members of the area strike-committees. But they were more than overburdened in coping with their local tasks. Therefore, at best they put in their appearance at the meetings of the sectional strike-committees, but did not participate in their day-to-day work. The representatives of the N.M.U. in the sectional strike-committees, in carrying through this work, neglected to draw in other forces which were available in great numbers among the strikers. Consequently, they remained alone, without a staff of officials or an apparatus. Their connection with the local strike-committees was therefore only a very loose one. As a rule, they were without concrete information regarding the strike situation, etc. This led to confu-

sion and duplication in the work and to disorganisation. It is a certain fact that the men of more than 25 pits, as a result of this mismanagement, were not linked up with the sectional strike-committees, were left without relief and support, and after a short time went back to work. Not more than two of the sectional strike-committees developed a propaganda and agitation work of their own.

At the highest stage reached by the strike the central strike-committee consisted of about 500 members. But the central strike-committee was by no means a properly elected and functioning body. The temporary delegates to the weekly sittings of the central strike-committee were picked at random by the local strike-committees. There was no clarity regarding the role and the tasks of the members of the central strike-committee. There was no list of them. They received no instructions; their activity was not controlled. In various strike districts the conception was developed that different workers should be sent to each sitting of the central strike-committee in order to enable each striker to take part in such a sitting. It was impossible to determine whether the decisions of the central strike-committee reached the knowledge of the strikers and were carried out. It was therefore impossible to get a real picture of the strike situation through the delegates to the central strike-committee. The reports received were often extremely contradictory.

The central strike-committee elected an executive committee of 23 members. The executive committee was made up of a number of workers active in the local strike-committees or relief committees and of some secretaries of the N.M.U. and of the I.U.U.C. The executive committee met very seldom. None of these workers were drawn into carrying out its comprehensive, day-to-day work. Therefore, it was not possible to form functioning committees for the work of organisation, of agitation and propaganda, of work among the young people and the women. It also neglected to develop a staff of instructors and inspectors. All the day-to-day work of the central strike-committee was carried through by the representatives of the N.M.U. and of the T.U.U.L. under direct guidance of the Top-Committee.

V.

Hence the strike-committees were extremely loose, badly organised bodies. They lacked the backbone of a strong revolutionary trade-union. The masses of the strikers demanded just such an organisation. One of the chief tasks of the party was to build up the N.M.U. during the preparation, conduct, and after the close of the strike, and to make it the spearhead of the miners' movement. For this purpose the party carried on a broad propaganda, after the strike broke out, for recruits to the N.M.U. The new members of the N.M.U. were organised locally and received their membership books during the strike. About 130 organisations of the N.M.U. were set up with 25,000 members. Many of these organisations began to hold their meetings, elected their leaders, etc. In the eighth week of the strike a district conference of the N.M.U., which re-elected the district committee, took place.

The mistakes in the party's work, described above, hindered, however—

(a) the development of real activity in the newly formed local organisations of the N.M.U. for promoting the strike movement;

(b) propaganda for the role and tasks of the N.M.U. in the strike;

(c) development of the feeling of responsibility and of a certain voluntary discipline among the newly elected officials of the N.M.U. towards the organisation;

(d) the utilisation of the growing National Miners' Union to organise and stabilise the strike-apparatus.

As a result the new organisations of the N.M.U. were not sufficiently assertive in the work of leading the strike. They were not sufficiently in the foreground, either in propaganda or in organisational activity. The new organisations of the N.M.U. and their leaderships remained rather loose and unorganised bodies, like the strike-committees themselves. The party paid far too little attention to the fact that for building up a new trade-union a tremendous day-to-day detail work in propaganda, agitation and organisation has to be done. It neglected this detail work and therefore made only little use of the great possibilities for build-

ing up the N.M.U. Thousands of the new members have been lost again as the consequence of inadequate political and organisational work. Thousands who wanted to join the N.M.U. were not enrolled in its organisations or its activity. Even at present the party in the Pittsburgh district persists in these mistakes. A systematic propaganda, based on the daily struggle of the miners, is lacking. Systematic work of enlightenment as to the organisation forms of the N.M.U. as to the absolute necessity for building up mine-branches and unemployed branches of the N.M.U. is lacking. Serious work for building up an extensive staff of local officials is lacking, which should maintain connection between the masses of members and the leading organs and guarantee the functioning of the N.M.U. despite the very fierce reign of terror begun by the employers.

The district committee of the N.M.U., since the end of the strike, has visited scarcely 30 per cent, of the newly formed local organisations. It has neglected to instruct the new members on the immediate tasks of organising a strong unemployed movement, securing the release of the arrested officials, mobilising the masses of miners in the pits; it has neglected to carry through measures for collecting the subscriptions, etc. The work of the district committee of the N.M.U. shows that the active comrades in it, even to-day, are not convinced of the possibility of building up a mass union of miners. There is a danger that the results won in the strike may be lost to an even greater degree by the party unless it ensures that the comrades in the N.M.U. carry through really conscientious mass work among the miners.

VI.

Now we come to examine the strategy and tactics applied during the strike. We will try to answer the question: What influence did the mistakes described above have on its strategy and tactics?

The miners' strike passed through three phases of development, its outbreak and upward development, its stagnation, its decline and close. After the first local strikes had broken out, the party decided to extend them. It set as its aim the adoption of a district scale of wages and the recognition of the National Min-

ers' Union by the employers. Through the N.M.U. and the Central Strike Committee it passed the miners' demands on to each coal company. It demanded general negotiations. The N.M.U., in accord with the party's line, declined the conclusion of local agreements during the first phase of the strike, on tactical grounds. The aim was to shut down as many mines as possible, and thus to stop Pennsylvania's supply of soft-coal. Through its energetic activity in widening the strike, the party won great results, as we have already established. It set loose a tremendous activity and enthusiasm for struggle among the masses of miners.

Some sections of the party were intoxicated by this enthusiasm. They were counting on a brief, fiery attack and a quick ending of the movement, either through a certain amount of concession on the part of the employers or through the latter's brutal measures of terrorisation. Consequently, the party failed to make the most of the highest enthusiasm of the masses to strengthen the battle-front organisationally and to build up the apparatus for leading the struggle. This work was regarded as useless, in view of the quick ending of the strike. For the same reasons the party also neglected the direct fight against the U.M.W.A. and thus for a rather long period exposed the strikers without defence to the latter's attacks, which shortly began.

After a short time the employers, backed by the government and the U.M.W.A., began their measures for defence. They went to work with manoeuvres intended to confuse the workers, and with terrorisation. It was already plain that the struggle would develop into a long and bitter fight. Governor Pinchot, of Pennsylvania introduced arbitration negotiations. After some manoeuvring, to confuse the masses, the Terminal Coal Co. concluded an agreement with the U.M.W.A. The leaders of this organisation of fakery declared the strike ended for the 3,000 workers of this company. In order to drive the workers back to the mines, they developed a demagogic propaganda: "Carrying on the strike is useless, for the N.M.U. rejects the conclusion of local agreements. It is not strong enough to compel the employers to conclude a district agreement."

The measures taken by the employers, government and U.M.W.A. achieved a certain amount of success. In the mines of

the Terminal Coal Co. the united front of the strikers was broken. The extension of the strike came to a standstill. The strike entered the phase of stagnation.

The change in the strike situation demanded immediate reaction by the party. Measures for strengthening the battle-front, for overcoming the stagnation and for further widening out of the movement were necessary. But the careful sizing up of the given situation was the necessary condition for taking decisions as to the political, organisational and tactical measures. A real picture of the strike situation could be formed only by a functioning strike apparatus. The party was unable in the miners' strike to develop such an apparatus to a satisfactory degree. The quick securing of a correct picture of the strike situation at any given moment was therefore out of the question for it. Hence, its decisions often came too late, were repeatedly misrepresented to the strikers or not passed on to them at all. Thus, they did not have the full effect they should have had, although in the main they were correct.

The passage of the strike from the period of advance to that of stagnation was only recognised by the party very late. In its activity it still confined itself to arranging mass-meetings, more or less spontaneous picket-marches, etc., at a time when the organised picket service had long since become a question of life or death for the strike. It still neglected to develop a real, penetrating, political propaganda, based on the actual facts, against the government and the U.M.W.A., connected with popularising the role and methods of struggle of the N.M.U., at a time when this work had become the decisive means for stabilising the strike-front and rendering ineffective the demagogy of the workers' enemies. In this state of affairs it avoided stating distinctly that the N.M.U. was ready to conclude local agreements with each coal company on the basis of the miners' demands. It was afraid to take active measures to force the conclusion of such agreements, although there were several possibilities for this. Instead, in individual cases when the employers were ready to sign the miners' demands, it refused to conclude a wage-agreement.

After the strike had entered the stage of stagnation, it was

very important to carry out comprehensive relief measures, to carry out active measures of struggle to compel the local authorities to grant strike-relief, to concentrate the struggle on the mines of the leading coal companies, in order to increase its effectiveness.

The party was not capable of taking the necessary steps in time. It was extremely badly informed as to the extent of strike-breaking and the growing movement among the workers to end the strike. Consequently, it noticed much too late that the majority of the workers had gone back to work as a result of bad organisation and insufficient strike-relief, as a result of terrorisation and hunger. This was especially true of the mines of the decisive coal companies. The party neglected to introduce the measures of retreat which had become necessary at the right time; it neglected to change its tactics towards the strikers who had gone back to work. The latter were consequently still being treated as strike-breakers, though it had long since been necessary to restore the united front between the men still on strike and those who had gone back to work, although it had long since been necessary to do everything to ensure the continuance of the N.M.U., to organise active measures for the strikers who had been put on the black-list, to develop a strong movement among the unemployed, etc. As a result, it was impossible to take the fullest advantage of the strike.

Despite its faults and defects, the miners' strike was one of the most significant events in the revolutionary movement in the U.S.A. in recent years. It helped the party find the path to a decided change in its work, towards the enterprises of the basic industries. It signified a new phase in the progress of the C.P.U.S.A. and of the revolutionary trade-union movement in America. In it the party accomplished a tremendous amount of work. Each separate branch of activity, such as the campaign for strike-relief, the mobilising of the miners' wives, the work among the coloured people and the young workers brought valuable experience to the party. The decisive lessons of the strike, however, are: —

Unwavering trust in the fighting and creative power of the masses of workers; absolute faith in the party's capacity and

strength to mobilise these masses and lead their struggles; the greatest activity in making the most of this movement to strengthen the party organisation and to build up revolutionary mass organisations.

Fullest conviction of the need and possibility of building up revolutionary mass trade-unions as the pre-condition of purposeful and successful leadership of mass struggles in the basic industries by the party, applying a correct policy of the united front.

Fullest conviction of the absolute necessity of applying the organisational principles of the Communist International and the R.I.L.U. in organising and leading the struggles of the masses and in building up the revolutionary trade-unions and the party organisations.

Extreme conscientiousness and feeling of responsibility among all members of the party in carrying out political and organisational work to mobilise and organise the masses.

How the American Communist Party Carries Out Self-Criticism and Controls Fulfilment of Decisions

By J. Tsirul

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The Communist Party of America has scored several political successes during last year. It led a number of great strikes, including the miners' strike in Pittsburgh in the summer, which continued for fully three months, the Kentucky strike last winter, etc. The Communist Party is putting up strenuous resistance to the capitalist attack upon the living standards of the working masses, organising the workers for the fight. It is the only organiser and leader of the great masses of the unemployed in the struggle for an improvement of their situation, for State insurance, for unemployed benefits. It organised and led the unemployed "hunger march" in December, 1931. It was in charge of the unemployed demonstration in Detroit last spring. The Communist Party alone has rendered effective assistance to the war veterans in their action. It alone is conducting a real campaign against the preparation for a new world war. and intervention against the U.S.S.R. The Communist Party alone points the revolutionary way out of the crisis to the toiling masses. As a result, the influence of the Party over the toiling masses of America grows. Unfortunately, the Communist Party of America, like the Communist Parties of a number of other capitalist countries, has not yet learned to consolidate its political influence over the masses organisational-. This inability frequently negates the political achievements which the Party has secured by its work. It cannot be said, however, that the Party is unaware of this fact. The Party, as represented by its leading staff, knows its weaknesses, and frequently criticises the defects of its work in the most pitiless manner, yet the situation has not improved in the least. At every Plenum of its C.C. there is the broadest and most merciless self-criticism. But this self-criticism is very frequently unaccompanied by the preparation and realisation of those con-

crete measures necessary to eliminate the defects criticised. The comrades frequently appear like penitent sinners in their self-criticism. After indulging in criticism of their work, they feel satisfied, and everything continues as before. The results of such self-criticism are just the contrary of what was expected of it and against which the Party organisations were warned by the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. which pointed out in its statement on self-criticism (June, 1928) that without concrete measures designed to improve the work "*the slogan of criticism and self-criticism develops into a scrap of paper, which merely compromises the slogan, the Party leadership, and the Party itself in the eyes of the masses.*"

Self-criticism is not an aim in itself, as some comrades think, but only a means towards an end. It must be very closely linked up with the other method of Bolshevik work, control of the execution of decisions. No serious improvement of the work is possible without a well-organised control of fulfilment of decisions. At the same time it is necessary to say that while the method of self-criticism has been fully adopted by the Communist Party of America, it has not yet given any thought to the serious organisation of control of execution of decisions- Therein lies the weakness of the Party.

The discrepancy between extensive self-criticism, and the complete absence of any control of fulfilment of decisions appears most strikingly in the organisational field, leading to the organisational backwardness of the Party. We shall therefore touch upon several questions of the organisational work of the Party which constitute the weakest spots in its work. These questions are: (1) The condition and work of the Party cells and the work of the Party in the factories generally; (2) the growth of the Party and the fluctuations of its membership; (3) the work of the Party apparatus and the struggle against bureaucracy. On the basis of an analysis of the condition of these sections of the work we shall attempt to make a few critical observations regarding the work of the C.P. of America, from the point of view of the connection between words and deeds, between decisions adopted and their execution.

* * *

One can frequently read in the Party press of the C.P. of America, in the speeches of the leading comrades, in the resolutions of the Party that "every factory is a stronghold of Communism." Hence, the Party not only appreciates the importance of this work, but takes measures to improve it. Is this so? One of the indications of an improvement of the work in the factories must be a growth in the number of factory cells. For a number of years, the Party not only has not moved forward on this question, but has even definitely regressed. Thus, in 1927, the C.P. of America had 166 factory cells; in 1928, 111; in 1930, 133; in 1931, 125 (according to other data, 75), while the number of street cells has remained relatively stable or has even increased (468 street cells in 1928 and 528 at the end of 1931).

Perhaps there has been a serious improvement lately, after the XIII Plenum, when the work of the Party, especially in the factories, was subjected to the most scathing criticism? "The Party Organiser," the organisational journal of the Party, wrote after the Plenum (No. 8-9) that: "The-slogan 'every factory a stronghold of Communism' characterised the political line and decisions adopted at the end of August by the Plenum of our Central Committee. The significance of this Plenum to the w-hole Party, and primarily to the American working class, consists of a clear recognition on the part of our C.C. of the necessity of concentrating the entire work of the Party upon the task of penetration of the key industries and biggest factories of the country."

Comrade Browder, in the report of the C.C. at the Plenum, criticising the weaknesses of the Party work, stated that:

"If at this Plenum we do not succeed in bringing about a sharp and profound change in the direction of penetration of the shops the *whole future of our Party is in danger.*" (Italics mine. —J.T.).

And further:

"We mean that the task of this Plenum is to begin such a serious and fundamental transformation of our whole Party life, a change of our whole approach to our work, a change in our hour-to-hour and day-to-day methods of work, a change in our organisational practice, a change so complete

and so deep-going that the entire Party from top to bottom and the working class around our Party will shake with the realisation that this change is going on.” (“The Communist,” No. 9, 1931.)

It is hardly possible to speak more self-critically. It might have been expected that after this, a change in the work of the Party would really develop ; that an extensive discussion would be held in the Party on the contents, forms and methods of work in the factories; that the Party would outline the main points upon which to concentrate its attention; that the responsible workers of the Party would go to the factories and mills to see what was doing there, to help organise the work of the factory cells. Also that the Party magazine would begin to publish information on the work in the factory; that the “Daily Worker” would give serious attention to the situation of the working masses in the different factories, the number of worker correspondents to the paper would increase; the network of factory newspapers would grow; recruiting into the Party would be shifted to the factories; a change would take place in the work of the trade unions in the sense of shifting the attention to the factories.

However, no serious practical discussion or suggestion of concrete steps has taken place in the Party. “The Party Organiser” has not published a single article after the Plenum (or before it for that matter) dealing with some definite case of the work of this or that factory cell. Moreover, the magazine has suspended publication, apparently owing to a lack of material. Neither do we see any turn, in the direction of the factories, on the part of “The Daily Worker” either! The responsible workers of the Party continue, as before, to give the factories a wide berth, do not know what is doing there, how the cells work, or whether they exist at all.

What has been said above may be confirmed by the following characteristic fact. The report of the Party C.C. to the XIII Plenum declared that the Party had 125 factory cells with 1,025 Party members. During the period up to the XIV Plenum another 100 factory cells were created according to the report of the C.C. to the Plenum. The total, however, amounted to only 175. What happened to the other fifty cells? Apparently they disappeared

during this period. The comrades attempted to explain to the Plenum that the said fifty cells existed only on paper. Is there any guarantee that the new cells do not exist on paper as well? Have the comrades any knowledge of their real existence, have they seen these cells? Judging by the discussion at the Plenum, the leading workers of the Party do not visit the cells, have never seen them, and do not know what they are doing. Yet this is not at all such a very complicated affair. There are up to 250 members of regional committees of the Party alone, not to speak of the district committees, which together with the members of the C.C., constitutes about 300 people. Had each one of these familiarised himself with only one factory cell there would not be enough cells to go round. Had each one of the members of the Central Committee and regional committees worked in only one cell, had they been responsible for the condition of the work in one factory, had they kept the Central Committee or regional committee informed on the work of the cell and on the state of affairs in that factory, the Central Committee and the regional committees would not only know how many real (rather than paper) cells, the Party has, but also what they are doing, what impedes their work. Yet the comrades have not thought of such a simple thing.

It was necessary to wait for the XIV Plenum, to decide this question. Whether this decision will be carried into effect, whether it will not fare as many of the previous decisions, the future will show.

If the Party leadership does not know the exact number of its cells, the situation in regard to the content of the work of the cells is no better. What the cells do in their everyday work, what questions they discuss at their meetings, the leading organs of the Party do not know, and do not discuss from a practical point of view. The minutes of the meetings of the cells, which are sent to the higher Party bodies, give some, even if incomplete, idea of the work of the cells, particularly of the cell meetings. But obviously they are not sufficiently studied by the Party centres. Otherwise we should have seen some attempt to analyse the contents of the cell meetings, some suggestions on this point. We shall, therefore, endeavour to do this. True, we have a very limited

number of cell minutes at our disposal, but they are sufficient to offer an idea of what the Party cells of the C.P. of America occupy themselves with.

In the minutes of one of the cell meetings of January 21, 1932, we read: —

“B. and R. are elected to find a hall for a Lenin memorial meeting. A committee to help decorate the hall is elected.

An agitprop letter read:

Comrade R. is directed to read a recruiting article at the next meeting.

R. and B. are appointed to sell the Lenin number of the “Daily Worker.”

E. resumed “Daily Worker” subscription for four months.

B. elected industrial organiser.

R. elected Negro organiser.

N. and E.L. elected delegates to an unemployed united front conference.

E.L., L.R., B. to help organise I.L.D. meeting, January 24.

Here are the minutes of the same cell of January 28, 1932:

“A C.C. communication regarding the bulletin read and discussed. Decided to issue next bulletin February 5.

Question of recruitment campaign discussed, J.I. declaring he has two connections.

Trade Union Unity League question discussed-

Report by B, on the united front policy in the work among the unemployed. He also reported on February 4 demonstration.

Report and debate on I.L.D. Case of S. and G. decided for February 2.

Work in the factories. All members connected with trade unions must work among the unemployed, help disseminate unemployment insurance petition and support demonstration February 4.

Organisation of cell discussed.

Question of factory bulletin discussed.

T. to draw up letter to C-C. in reply to letter received from D.

Question of Y.C.L. discussed.

Letter received from Secretary read and discussed.”

The minutes of other cells closely resemble the above.

Three things rivet the eye when reading the minutes of the cells. Firstly, the large number of questions on the agenda. Apparently our comrades (like true Americans) strictly respect the traditional proverb, "Time is Money." We, too, believe in American efficiency, but we do not find it—in the work of the cells. There is much routine, officiousness, bureaucracy. The minutes quoted are marked, not so much by practicality as by the spirit of pure business. When ten to fifteen questions are discussed at one Party meeting no serious discussion is possible—The result is not a Party meeting, but something like the office hours of some business man. Reports of different officials are heard, orders are issued and the meeting is closed. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is no real Party life in the cells, no political discussion of the burning questions of the day. Some comrades maintain that political discussions take place only in cases of fractional struggles in the cells of the American C.P. This statement is not entirely unfounded. The minutes do not give any indication of decisions adopted on the questions discussed, of measures to carry out this or that work. The meetings have an exceedingly dry, bureaucratic character.

The second thing that strikes the eye in reading the minutes of the cell is the stereotyped manner of discussing questions: the same questions are discussed at different cells, at different times and places. This is further proof of the bureaucratic methods of the work of the cells. The cells live and work according to orders from above. They have no special local questions, they do not bother with them. The leadership of the cells is strictly centralised and cut off from actual life. For this reason the cell meetings are tedious and uninteresting.

Finally, the third peculiarity of the cell meetings consists in the extremely narrow, organisational character of the questions discussed, of the large number of petty organisation questions; there are no political questions, no questions of mass work, of the work in the factory. No concrete problems are discussed at the cell meetings, which consist almost completely of statements by different persons responsible for this or that branch of the work. Is it surprising, after all this, that recent new members in

the Party quit, after a few of these meetings? They joined the Party, in the hope of taking part in the political life; instead of this, they hear dry, formal reports, are given subscription lists to collect contributions, and newspapers to be distributed—and this is all. This cannot satisfy these people, who are anxious for political activity.

How are we to explain this situation? Firstly, by the fact that the leading organs and workers of the Party give little attention to what the Party cells are doing. The cells themselves frequently do not know what to do, have no definite objective. They are accustomed to waiting for orders from above, from the centre, which is not connected with the locality and does not know the actual situation there. Besides, the view is generally held in the Party that the discussion of political affairs, the decision of different problems is the province of the higher Party bodies, while the business of the cells is to sell newspapers and organise various collections. Finally, the organisational structure of the cells and their entire work impedes their activity also. The members of the cells do not know the object of their work, they do not carry on their Party work where they are constantly employed, but in the district where they live, and devote themselves to artificially-created objects.

The Party members working in the factories do not carry on their Party work in their factory. The position of those belonging to street cells is no better. The street cells in the C-P. of America are not built according to where the members of the cell live (as would appear to be most normal and natural), but along much more complex lines. The members of a district are divided up in groups of twenty to twenty-five persons. These groups are called street cells. Each group has a definite section to tend regardless of whether the members of the group live in the particular section or not. Thus, neither the members of the factory cells nor those of the street cells are directly, connected with those working masses among whom they are obliged to conduct Party work, do not know the conditions of life and work of these masses. Is there anything surprising in that they are detached from the masses under this system of work? Some comrades maintain that this system of street cells existed up to 1930, but has since been

altered. Possibly, in some places, this situation has really been changed, but the position remains unaltered in most.

As far back as the beginning of 1931 the Party made a decision to concentrate the entire work in several of the most important regions, districts and factories, to establish bases there from which to move on. This was a perfectly correct decision. The measures taken on this question, however, have a fortuitous character. Obviously, the Party leadership does not check up the fulfilment of decisions adopted. One of the leading Party workers stated that the C.C. adopts dozens of resolutions, sometimes good resolutions, but that no one knows what happens to them after their adoption. If 10 to 12 per cent, of the decisions adopted are carried into effect, it is good. Is this what is called a "sharp turn" in the entire Party work, a change in the methods of Party work? The Bolsheviks have somewhat different names for such things.

* * *

We shall take another shortcoming in the organisational work of the C.P. of America, the growth of the Party, and the struggle with fluctuation in the Party membership. The fluctuation of the Party membership constitutes one-of the weakest points in the work for many years. No fewer than 10,000 to 12,000 new members join the C.P. of America every year, yet the total membership of the Party does not rise above 10,000 to 12,000. This means that every year practically the whole Party membership changes. The Party leadership knows this. Much has been said at the different Plenums on this question, many good resolutions have been adopted on the necessity of a struggle against this phenomenon. Yet, there has been no improvement to this day.

During last winter the Party ran a special recruiting campaign, designed to consolidate the political influence of the Party over the masses, along organisational lines. The campaign went off quite successfully. Between November and May about 11,000 members joined the Party. Here are some figures on the course of this campaign:

The Party membership in October- November, 1931

(the average number of dues paying members) was	10,542
Number of new membership cards issued	
in December.....	1,682
Number of new membership cards issued	
in January	1,723
Number of new membership cards issued	
in February.....	2,610
Number of new membership cards issued	
in March.....	2,661
Number of new membership cards issued	
in April	1,515
Number of new membership cards issued	
for first 14 days of May	<u>683</u>
In May, 1932, Party membership ought to	
have been	21,426

As a matter of fact, however, in May, 1932, the Party had only 13,949 members in good standing, while 7,477 people or about two-thirds of the new members disappeared, or, in other words, dropped out. This does not mean that those who dropped out were necessarily new members. In many cases old Party members quit the Party. The Party registration held in November, 1931, shows that about 60 per cent, of the entire membership joined the Party in 1930, and later, thus having less than two years' standing. This means that many old members of the Party are also quitting the Party. At the present time, as a result of the last recruiting campaign, the percentage of young Party members is unquestionably still higher.

But while the Party members are mostly young in Party standing, they are not at all young in age. Thus, according to the registration, it appears that members of the age of 30-40 predominate (40 per cent.), while those over the age of 40 constitute 35 per cent, of the membership. A similar proportion of age prevails among those admitted during the last enrolment campaign, the average age of the comrades in the different districts being 35-38 years. We see that the Party is connected with adult workers, with full-fledged workers. That workers with much experience join the Party is a welcome sign, of course, but it is bad that there are few young people in the Party, that the Party is poorly con-

nected with the young workers, does not pay attention to attracting the young workers into the Party, that there are very few comrades in the Party of army age, which interferes with the work in the army, especially in connection with the war preparations, which, especially considering the weakness of the Y.C.L., is of great importance.

How are the new members of the Party divided by social composition, by industries? About 8,000 of the new members enrolled during the official enrolment campaign (from January 11 to March 18, 1932) belong to the following industries: —

Metal workers	691
Miners	800
Railroad men	106
Steel workers	122
Textile workers.....	65
Seamen and transport workers ..	178
Needle trades workers	361
Building workers	614

and a number of smaller groups belonging to other trades.

But the above figures do not at all mean that these comrades work at present in the said industries, for the majority of them used to be employed in these industries, and are now unemployed. About three-quarters of the new members are unemployed, only one-quarter are employed workers, while among the old membership (according to the registration held in November, 1931), slightly less than half (about 43 per cent.) are fully employed. We thus see, that, as a result of the last enrolment campaign, the percentage of unemployed Party members has considerably increased. The same applies to those employed in factories and belonging to factory cells. While the absolute number of these members has increased in consequence of the enrolment campaign, relatively it has decreased. Thus, while 77 of the factory cells had 539 members at the time of the registration —90 of the newly-organised cells had only 553 members, many of these being old Party members who had not previously belonged to the factory cells. The existing factory cells were the least effective in the enrolment campaign. They succeeded in enrolling only 141 new members out of the total of 8,000. Such are the

real results of the enrolment campaign for which the Party had so carefully prepared.

What were the objects of the Party during this enrolment campaign? They were to strengthen the connections with the working masses, to penetrate the factories, especially the big ones.

Here is what the enrolment instructions stated on this question:

“The Central Committee has passed a decision to hold an enrolment campaign to bring into the Party thousands of new members from the big mills, mines and factories, active workers from among the unemployed and unions. The recent events have finally confirmed the growing radicalisation of the masses. Our task now consists of raising this radicalisation to the level of political consciousness and attracting into our Party the best elements.

“This campaign must not be detached from the current campaigns of the Party; we must organisationally consolidate the results of the actions carried out by the Party in order to strengthen the current campaigns and convert the enrolment into a systematic everyday work of our Party.”

And what were the results of the enrolment? They far from corresponded to the objects undertaken. The Party undertook to strengthen its connections with the factories, yet as a result of the recruitment we have an increase of the percentage of unemployed in the Party. The Party made it its task to raise the activity of the Party members in the factories, but we have only 141 members recruited by the factory cells as a result. The Party aimed at putting an end to the fluctuation in membership, but as a result we have 7,000 members dropping out in half a year—What is the cause of these unsatisfactory results of this work? The cause lies in the poor conduct of the campaign, despite the good intentions.

It is hardly possible to invent more bureaucratic methods of conducting a political campaign than those used in this enrolment campaign. The mere instructions to the Party organisations had to be printed in *four issues* of the “Daily Worker.” They contained eighty-nine different paragraphs and points, with a

large number of sub-points, introductions and conclusions. The instructions even fixed with precision just which districts are to compete with each other, and other details.

But the trouble was not so much in the organisational campaign as in the way it was carried out. There was no leadership provided during the campaign. The most fundamental defect was that the campaign had too narrow an organisational, inner-party character. Despite the fact that the newspaper devoted full columns to the enrolment campaign for fully three months, from day to day, there was not a single article in it addressed to the non-party working masses, explaining the tasks and policies of the Party, or why the workers ought to join the Party. There was not a single political slogan in the newspaper devoted to the enrolment work during the campaign. Only once, more or less by accident, in the middle of the campaign, a short appeal to the non-party people was published, occupying a few lines. It cannot be said that this is the way to strengthen the connection of the Party with the masses. Is this the way in which a mass political campaign of serious political importance to the Party ought to be conducted?

Although the instructions stated that the campaign should be linked up with the class struggle of the proletariat, the Party leadership, and the central organ of the Party, themselves forgot this. Nevertheless, despite all these defects, despite the lack of all political work, masses join the Party, are attracted by the correct slogans of the Party and Comintern. They are seeking a way out of their hardships and this way is pointed out by the Communist Party alone. This shows what favourable conditions exist for the work. It is only necessary to utilise them. Unfortunately, the Party is far from capable of utilising them. Another serious defect of the Party enrolment was the absence of any work among the newly-admitted members, the failure to take measures to attach them to the Party. The enrolment took place as a rule at meetings and the new members of the Party were not dealt with individually. It is not to be surprised at, that many of the new members soon left the Party; as a matter of fact, they never actually belonged to the Party, for the formal issuance of a Party card cannot be regarded as a sufficient sign of attachment of the new

member to the Party.

There is very much of the show element, aimed at producing an external effect, in the enrolment work, as well as in the other fields of the Party work, a hunt for quantity at the expense of quality. It is of importance to show as large a number of new recruits as possible, and what happens to them afterwards is of little interest. And when the campaign came to an end the Party took up other campaigns, having no time even to sum up the results of this campaign, to estimate it, to draw lessons for the future. To this day no analysis, no appraisal of the results of the campaign has been made by the Party leadership, nor has this been done at the XIV. Plenum. What does this show? It shows an underestimation of the control of execution, as a method of improving the work. Was the campaign carried out in accordance with the instructions, in accordance with the decision adopted by the XIII Plenum? No. Has the Party consolidated its connections with the masses, especially in the most important, decisive industries as a result of the campaign? To some extent, but far from sufficiently.

Not only this campaign, but the entire recruiting work of the C.P. of America (as well as of many other parties) suffers from a number of permanent defects. The entire work is carried on either automatically or by way of campaigns. There is no constant attention to this work on the part of the Party organisations, on the part of each individual Party member. There is no systematic attention to it on the part of the Party. Hence the accidental character of the new members and the fluctuation. The very method of recording the Party membership by the number of cards issued, or stamp sold, is incorrect. It is necessary to pass from recording the Party cards, or the stamps sold, to recording and studying the Party members themselves, the living people. Neither is it right to consider a man who has submitted an application for membership a Party member. He must still be made a Party member, educated as a Party member. In the C.P.S.U. every more or less old member of the Party is able to name more than one Party member whom he brought into the Party, educated for Party membership. The comrades of the Communist Parties abroad do not even understand the question, when they are

asked, how many members they have educated for the Party?

These incorrect methods of enrolment, the failure to control execution, to provide leadership, and rectify mistakes, as well as the unsatisfactory work of the cells, with their lack of connections with the masses, essentially explain the great fluctuation in the Party, which the Party has so far proved helpless to combat.

* * *

While speaking of the work in the factories and growth of the Party, we have already pointed out a number of bureaucratic methods of the Party work. In doing this we have already partly covered the third topic of our analysis, so that there is little left to say. The leadership of the American C.P. very resolutely condemned the existence of bureaucracy in the Party by way of self-criticism. Here is what Comrade Browder said in the report of the C.C. to the XIII Plenum on this question:

“It means that the inner life of our Party does not correspond to the needs and desires of the workers who are closest to us, who follow us, who believe firmly in the line of our Party, who are convinced loyal supporters of the Communist International, who are ready to make any sacrifices for the revolution. They don’t find what they want when they join our Party. Why is that? Comrades, I think that we have to say that this is because of this tendency towards bureaucracy, towards formalism, which, as Comrade Kusinen developed at length in the American Commission last year, is a characteristic American social disease. It penetrates into our Party. Its specific nature is bureaucratic tendencies. Everywhere these bureaucratic tendencies arise. We must make it very clear that these are alien tendencies that find their origin in the ideology of the bourgeoisie and especially of the petty bourgeoisie.”

“We find a great readiness in our Party apparatus to charge workers in the shop with opportunism, but we find a great reluctance, comrades, to spending a few evenings with workers in the shop concretely discussing what are the problems of this shop and *how* we can work in this shop. Too often, when we do have the direct contact between our leading

apparatus and these workers it takes on a formal character—the transmission of instructions that have already been worked out in the ‘secret chambers’ of the committee and no discussion about the concrete problems of that shop.” (“The Communist,” No. 9, 1931.)

We have already pointed out that one of the causes of bureaucracy in the Party is the excessive centralisation of the work, the excessive centralisation of leadership. Lenin repeatedly- emphasised that centralisation of leadership must be combined with extensive decentralisation of responsibility for the different branches of the work. Lenin also repeatedly pointed out the necessity not only of teaching the locals, the lower workers, but also of learning from them, learning from the masses, listening to their voice, to their sentiments This is not done in the C.P. of America.

We know that one of the forms and sources of bureaucracy, is the leadership by circulars instead of leadership in person. Such leadership by circular has been developed to the highest degree in the C.P. of America- Every Party committee, every department of the committee, considers it its duty to write circulars and instructions to the lower organisations, by which the entire life of the latter is regulated to the minutest detail. No place or time is left for the special, local questions, for the display of initiative. One is well satisfied if one has time to read all the circulars received -from above; no time is left for their fulfilment. This incidentally bureaucratises the meetings of the cell. Much of the time of the meeting is devoted to reading different circulars. Here is a sample taken from the minutes of a certain cell and showing what its meeting is devoted to:

“Following communications read:

“1. To all cells from the C.C. Decision to alter the system of membership dues in regard to unemployed comrades.

“2. In support of the Kentucky strike.

“3. From the C.C. in connection with the expulsion of Party members and exposals of non-Party elements in the Party press.

“4. The “Daily Worker” and the enrolment campaign.

“5. Competition with Salt Lake City in the recruitment

campaign.”

This system of bureaucratic leadership develops a sense of irresponsibility and helplessness among the local workers. The comrades become accustomed to' waiting for instructions from above on all questions, avoid undertaking anything themselves, fear making mistakes.

The method of leadership by circulars, is in itself a result of another abnormality, creating bureaucracy in the work. We refer to the extreme inflation of the Party machinery, to the excessive number of full-time Party officials. Instead of attracting comrades to the work of the Party apparatus from the factories, who are directly connected with the masses, particularly members of the given committee, so that the committee might know what is taking place locally, every more or less active and efficient comrade from the factory is immediately removed from it, is made a permanent Party official, is broken away from the masses.

Does the Party leadership know and understand the causes of its bureaucracy? It certainly does. But the Party still adheres to the following “system”: So long as a resolution is not finally adopted it is discussed, edited, improved, etc., but as soon as it is adopted, it is ignored as if it possesses the magic power of itself being carried into life. What results is a sort of fetishism of resolutions. At best it is sent to a certain number of persons or organisations for information—and this is all. Yet, what is a resolution or decision? It is a plan, a system of various measures, which must be carried into effect, on which it is necessary to work. The work actually only begins with the approval of this plan, but in the C.P. of America, it ends there. This is abnormal and must be altered. The systematic control of the fulfilment of resolutions adopted should assist this. Without a combination of broad self-criticism, with the control of execution of decisions, we will not get rid of the bureaucracy which prevents the Party from getting into closer touch with the masses, which breaks the Party away from the masses.

In conclusion, we wish to quote the following statement of Comrade Browder to the XIII Plenum:

“We have been writing and talking about shop work for a long time, but it remains in our Plenums and resolutions

and our documents, and the word is not transformed into the deed.

“I think that we ought to begin to develop another real campaign in our Party, beginning with the Central Committee, a real struggle against phrase-mongering. Every time somebody tries to formulate a task for us, let us give him the job of beginning. And we must begin to insist more, comrades, that our resolutions shall not remain on paper, especially the resolutions about shop work. A resolution that remains on paper becomes an obstacle to the development of the work.” (“The Communist,” No. 9, 1931.)

This is said very well. It is only a pity that the XIV. Plenum did not analyse which of the decisions of the XIII. Plenum had been carried into effect, which had not been, and why, with sufficient concreteness. Let us hope that this will be done at the XV Plenum. We can issue only one warning: Unless the Party takes up control of the execution of its own decisions with as much determination as it has engaged in self-criticism, it will not move one step forward in the direction of an improvement of its work, for as Comrade Browder correctly noted, “a resolution remaining on paper is an obstacle to the development of the work.” And there are still far too many such paper resolutions in the Party.

The End of Capitalist Stabilisation and the Basic Tasks of the British and American Sections of the C.I.

S. Gusev

Speech at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., December 1932

I.—THE GROWTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE, FASCISM AND SOCIAL-FASCISM.

The clearest indication of the end of the stabilisation of capitalism is the development of the world revolutionary upsurge, which arose on the basis of the world economic crisis and includes the revolutions in China and Spain, the approaching revolutionary crisis in Germany, Poland and Japan, the tremendous strikes in Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Great Britain, U.S.A., the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in India and a series of revolts in South America (Chile, Peru, Brazil).

Ever increasing masses are coming forward to the front of revolution. The forces of the world revolution are growing. But at the same time, the forces of counter-revolution are rallying together. "The party of revolution rallies the party of counter-revolution" (Marx). The development of the revolutionary upsurge, and the growth of revolutionary crises cannot take place in any other way. There is not and could not be a revolution which did not have the counter-revolution against it. It is therefore not correct to think that the development of Fascism signifies a weakening in the development of the forces of revolution. This can only be the case after the defeat of the revolution, after the ebb of revolution, in the period of reaction (e.g., the growth of Fascism in Italy in 1922-23). But such a view is absolutely incorrect under conditions of the development of a revolutionary upsurge. The development of the revolutionary upsurge signifies not the weakening, but the growth of the forces of revolution. The forces of revolution are increasing and beginning their offensive, and as a result, the forces of counterrevolution are rallying and passing to the counter-offensive against the forces of revolution. The struggle is blazing up and rising to its highest

level—to revolution.

Thus, in the epoch of the Socialist transformation of society, bourgeois-imperialist counterrevolution is not some chance objective hindrance for revolution, but an historical inevitability. There cannot be revolution, without counterrevolution.

The historical inevitability of counter-revolution has to be stressed, particularly owing to the fact, that a view has appeared in some of the sections of the C.I. as though the development of Fascism is an unforeseen, and at the same time, very dangerous, “super difficulty” for the revolution, that the development of Fascism practically means the end of revolution. Fascism itself, according to this view, arose as the result of the incorrect course of the C.I. and its sections. Such a view of Fascism cannot be called anything but capitulatory. As, in the opinion of those who hold this view of Fascism, revolution can only be victorious when there is no counter-revolution, the appearance of Fascism is declared to decide the inevitable doom of revolution in advance. Thereto! e they propose to retreat, to capitulate to Fascism. Such capitulatory views were contained in the recent speech of Comrade Humbert Droz in the Swiss Communist Party, which objectively gave the International Rights a political platform.

Comrade Humbert Droz has renounced these views, but this cannot destroy the fact that such views appear from time to time, not only in Switzerland. The source of these views is the failure to understand that it is precisely the growth of the forces of revolution that inevitably evokes the solidification of the forces of Fascism.

The same failure to understand the relation between the growth of revolutionary forces, and the development of Fascism, in the period of the development and the growth of the revolutionary upsurge, lies at the basis of the fatalistic theories which arose a year ago in the German Communist Party, which were very properly criticised at the time by Comrade Thalmann. What is the essence of these fatalistic theories, which seem, externally, to be similar to the thesis of Marx of the inevitability of the rallying of the forces of counter-revolution, in the course of the development of revolution; but in reality are a gross distortion of

this thesis? The essence of these fatalistic theories is that the working class must first pass through the-Fascist reaction to understand the necessity for revolution, that only a Fascist dictatorship can bring the masses right up to the necessity of commencing a revolutionary struggle; in short, that without counter-revolution, revolution is impossible, that the counterrevolution rallies the party of revolution. This is the direct opposite of what Marx says. It is not revolution which evokes counter-revolution as Marx and Lenin taught, but they hold the contrary, counter-revolution produces revolution. Thus the starting point of the revolutionary upsurge is not the growth of the forces of revolution, as Marx and Lenin taught, but the growth of the forces of counter-revolution.

A correct Marxist-Leninist postulation of the question of the relationship between the growth of the forces of revolution, and those of Fascism, is of decisive importance to the whole, strategy of the C.I. and its sections. The views of Humbert Droz lead to a retreating capitulatory strategy, and the views of the German "fatalists"; to a passive waiting strategy, i.e., in practice to the same capitulation to Fascism as with Humbert Droz. However, the revolutionary upsurge cannot mean anything else but the beginning of the strategic advance of the revolutionary forces, in which there may be defensive and offensive tactical fights.

The question of the relations between Fascism and Social-Fascism is of equal importance for Bolshevik strategy to the question of the relations between the growth of revolutionary forces and the development of Fascism. This question is worked out in detail in the theses. But in some sections, nevertheless, a misunderstanding of the basic role of Social-Democracy as the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie continues to exist, and there is a misunderstanding of Bolshevik strategy in connection with this.

The Bolshevik strategy of the C.I. has always been to deal the main blows against the conciliatory parties (against the Social-Democrats and the national reformists). It is sufficient to glance at the history of the Russian revolution to see this.

Here is what Stalin said when reviewing the three phases of the Russian revolution:

First phase, from 1903 to the February revolution in 1917.

Aim: The overthrow of Czarism, and the abolition of the last feudal survivals.

The essential force of the revolution: the proletariat.

The immediate reserve: the peasants.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie who were obliged to win over the peasants and ward off the revolution by an agreement with Czarism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of workers with peasants...

Second phase, March, 1917—October, 1917.

Aim: To overthrow imperialism in Russia and withdraw from the imperialist war.

Essential force of the revolution: the proletariat.

Immediate reserve: the poorer ranks of the peasants.

Probable reserve: the proletariat of neighbouring countries.

Favouring circumstances: the prolonged war and the imperialist crisis.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-revolutionaries) who were trying to win over the mass of rural workers and to avert revolution by an agreement with imperialism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of workers with the poorest peasants...

Third phase (begun after the October revolution.)

Aim: To consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country and to use it as a fulcrum for the overthrowing of imperialism in all countries. The revolution is not to be limited to one sole country and has entered its worldwide stage.

Essential force: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, and the revolutionary movements of the proletariat in other countries.

Principal reserves: the semi-proletarian masses and the peasants of advanced lands, the nationalist (liberationist) movements in colonies and dependent slates.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the petty bourgeoisie partisans of Second International, promoters of the policy of conciliation with imperialism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of proletarian revolution with nationalist movements in colonies and dependent states. (Stalin, "Leninism," page 96.)

As we see, at all three stages, the main blow was directed against the conciliatory parties.

In 1905, the Bolsheviks were accused of getting too absorbed in the struggle against the liberal-monarchist conciliatory bourgeoisie, and paying less attention to the struggle against the enemy, against Czarism. In 1917, the Bolsheviks were accused of getting too absorbed in the struggle against the conciliatory petty-bourgeois parties, the Mensheviks and S.R.'s, paying less attention to the struggle against the enemy, against the bourgeoisie.

Such accusations only show a complete failure to understand the role of the conciliatory parties, and the essence of Bolshevik strategy.

Why must the main blows be directed against the conciliatory parties in the period of the preparations for revolution, and its approaching development?

Because the conciliatory parties (the Social-Fascists and the national reformists) in the period of approaching revolutionary development, are the most dangerous social bulwark of the enemies of revolution. Therefore, it is "impossible to overthrow the enemy without isolating these parties, without tearing the wide masses of the toilers away from them.

Both Social-Fascism and Fascism represent bourgeois-imperialist counter-revolution, but Social-Fascism is a special detachment of bourgeois-imperialist counter-revolution, having its own special tasks. What are these special tasks? They are to strive by all means to reach a compromise, to conciliate the proletariat with its class enemy, with the bourgeoisie (particularly with Fascism). They are to preach compromise, and also to carry on a bogus "struggle" against Fascism, to restrain the workers from attacks on Fascism, from resistance to the political and economic offensive of capital, or, in short, to restrain the workers from revolutionary activity, from revolution. Thus Social-Fascism plays the role of a shield, behind which counterrevolution can organise its forces. Therefore, to beat the enemy, the

bourgeoisie, we must direct the main blow against its chief social bulwark, against the chief enemy of Communism in the working class, against Social-Democracy, against Social-Fascism.

It may seem that in Germany, at the present time, for example, the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie is Fascism, and that, therefore, we should deal the chief blows against Fascism.

This is not correct. It is not correct, firstly, because Fascism is not our chief enemy in the workers' movement, but Social-Fascism is our chief enemy there. What does this mean? It means that to win over the majority of the proletariat, i.e., to prepare the basic condition for the proletarian revolution, it is necessary to direct the chief blows against Social-Fascism.

It is not correct, secondly, because the blows directed by us against Social-Fascism differ from the blows delivered against Fascism. Fascism is open counter-revolution utilising' social demagogy. Social-Fascism is concealed counterrevolution. For example, take the attitude of German Fascism and German Social-Fascism to intervention in the U.S.S.R. The Fascists are for intervention, and openly say so, while the Social-Fascists are also for intervention, but talk openly, of defence of the U.S.S.R. (resolution of the II International). This means that we have to strike at Fascism, in a different manner from Social-Fascism.

It is in Germany at the present time that we can see most clearly the difference in the character of the blows which we deal against Social-Fascism and against Fascism. We expose the Social-Fascists, but we never call for an armed struggle against them. We fight the Fascists in the streets, carrying on explanatory work among the masses to the extent that the Fascists still use social demagogy. In the period of preparations for revolution (and it is just such a period which we are now passing through in Germany, Poland and Japan), our chief weapon is exposure, or to use the expression of Marx, the "weapon of criticism." The armed struggle, or as Marx expressed it, the "criticism of weapons," is our secondary weapon in this period. We direct the chief weapon against the main social bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

The united front with the Social-Democratic workers in the struggle against the Fascist gangs, unites both forms of weapon—the chief and the secondary weapons. On the one hand, the

united front is an armed struggle against Fascist gangs, and on the other hand, the united front is the best means of exposing the Social-Fascist leaders in practice.

From all this, it is clear, that in the period of preparations for revolution, we direct our chief weapon at this period against our chief enemy in the working class, i.e., against Social-Fascism.

The main blows against Social-Fascism, the isolation of Social-Fascism, — this means the winning over of the majority of the working class, and also the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie in town and village, converting the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie from a reserve of the bourgeoisie into a reserve of the proletariat. Without this, the victory of the revolution is impossible.

II.—THE WINNING OVER OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PROLETARIAT AS THE FUNDAMENTAL STRATEGIC TASK OF THE SECTIONS OF THE C.I.

The end of capitalist stabilisation and the growth of the revolutionary upsurge sets the basic strategic task of winning over the majority of the working class before all sections of the C.I.

This task is made vastly easier because, as the result of three years of crisis, we find everywhere an upsurge of the mass movement, proceeding differently in different countries. The situation which has arisen at the present time may be characterised as follows: The wide masses of the workers (and, in some countries, the peasants as well) are prepared for the struggle. Some big sections of workers are entering the struggle, sometimes under the leadership of the Communist Party (Brux), sometimes (especially in economic lights) under the leadership of the reformists (Lancashire), and recently they have begun to act independently, against the wishes of the trade unions (Belgium). In the latter two cases, the leadership of the struggle began to come under the Communists' influence in those places where they attempted to intervene, which is a very significant thing.

The influence of the sections of the C.I. is growing everywhere, despite the fact that, in a number of sections, we cannot point to any considerable successes in the matter of improving'

their work in the period since the XI Plenum, either politically or organisationally, which might have explained the increase in their influence.

The masses want to fight. They are seeking leadership, and however weak the work of our sections may be, they come to us.

The course of the Lancashire strike may serve as a clear example of the strong tendency towards the Communist Party, of the masses entering the struggle. Take the beginning of this strike, the strike in Burnley. In this town there are 87 textile factories, and the number of workers reaches 25,000. In Burnley the Communist Party had 9 members and 9 non-Party members of the Minority Movement. In addition, our Party was not popular among the organised workers because it had obtained a firm reputation for being against the trade unions. On July 24th, owing to the growth of strike sentiment among the workers, our Party held a meeting in Burnley. Unexpectedly, 5,000 workers came to the meeting, which was an unprecedented event in Burnley. This meeting was decisive. On the next day, July 25th, the strike commenced, and the leadership was practically in the hands of the Party, although the Party had not prepared for this. The workers demanded that the members of the Party should give them instructions about the further extension of the strike. In two days the strike pickets under Party leadership closed all the 87 factories. In the night of July 27-28 the Party organised a march to the neighbouring textile centre of Nelson, with the aim of extending the strike. 15,000 workers took part in the march.

I will not describe the further course of the strike. The Party made a number of mistakes and let the leadership of the big mass movement slip out of its hands

Does not this example of the Lancashire strike and the example of the American Communist Party, which, last year, led the big miners' strikes in Illinois and Ohio, show that the masses are ready for the fight, and are seeking the leadership of the Communist Parties and the Red Trade Unions; that Communists need only to exert even slight efforts and the leadership will fall into their hands?

The things which hindered the English and American sections most of all in obtaining the leadership of mass activity was

their sectarian approach to the masses, their over-estimation of the influence of the Social-Fascists and trade' union bureaucrats among the workers, and hence their efforts to remain only in the opposition. Then there is the completely insufficient initiative of the lower Party organisations and the Red Trade Unions, and also the R.T.U.O., and, finally, the weakness of our cadres.

The sectarian approach to the masses. The sources of the sectarian approach to the masses in Great Britain and the U.S.A. are different. In Great Britain, it is to be explained by the fact that the British Communist Party has supported the Labour Party at the elections for a number of years, and the necessary transition to the tactic of "class against class" was accompanied by a stubborn inner-Party struggle against the right deviation. Therefore, the tactic of the united front with the workers who belonged to the Labour Party was looked on, by a large portion of the Party members, as a step back from the tactic of "class against, class." On this basis, there arose a sectarian resistance in the C.P.G.B. to the adoption of the tactic of the united front with the workers who belonged to the Labour Party and the I.L.P. The British comrades were afraid of the united front, and therefore, in spite of many favourable conditions, the British Communist Party has hardly any practical achievements in this matter. However, in countries like Great Britain and Germany, where there are big Social-Fascist parties and big reformist trade unions, there can be no question of winning over the majority of the workers unless the tactic of the united front is adopted, and unless work is carried on in the trade unions. Therefore, the sectarian tendencies in the British Communist Party lead in reality to a right opportunist lagging behind the mass movement, and this is the chief danger.

The situation in England at the present time is such that the British Communist Party could win thousands of workers from the Labour Party and the I.L.P. into its ranks, and those of the Minority Movement. The majority of the members of such organisations as the Poplar Branch of the I.L.P. in London, and a number of others, might join our Party. But the Party does not see this task, and does not set itself this task, because it does not know how to distinguish the manoeuvres of the leaders, from the

genuine strivings of the workers. Therefore, it happens that the Party repulses the workers of the Labour Party and the I.L.P. who are turning in its direction.

Here is a very characteristic example of how this is done.

As we know, the I. L. P. recently split away from the Labour Party and published its “new programme.” Among these “rules” there are some very “left” things— “the winning of power by the united working class,” “abandonment of the method of gradual reform,” “a swift passage from capitalism to Socialism,” “the socialisation of the vital resources of the country, including the banks and finances, the land and agriculture, the chief branches of industry and transport,” etc.

This is all inside the country. On an international scale, there is the following programme:

“Steadfast opposition by individual and collective resistance to all war preparations and tendencies. If war is declared... the I.L.P. will demand... an immediate general strike. It reaffirms its demand for disarmament by example, irrespective of what other Governments may do.”

How did our Communist Party react to the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. from the Labour Party, and its rules anti programme, which I have just quoted

Firstly, the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. from the Labour Party was declared to be a “swindle.” There is no doubt that there was a very considerable proportion of swindling in the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. But to describe it entirely as swindling means to fail to see the mass of members of the I.L.P. behind the swindling faces of the leaders, or that these members really want to renew, or, as the members of the I.L.P. themselves say, to “rejuvenate” the I.L.P. and turn it into a revolutionary party. This genuine leftward turn of the workers in the I.L.P. (and in the Labour Party) is missed by our Party. The Party does not understand that when workers leave the Labour Party, this is a difficult turning point in their political development.

Secondly, with regard to the programme of the I.L.P., an article was published in the “Daily Worker” under the title: “Lay down your arms; surrender to imperialism.”

In this article, quotations were given from the programme of

the I.L.P., which I have already cited, that the I.L.P. repeats its demand for England to set the example of disarmament “irrespective of what other governments may do.”

Further, the article goes on to “prove” in a “smart” and tar-fetched manner, something which is not in the programme—namely, that the I.L.P. proposes that the Red Army should set the example of disarmament.

It is not surprising that such methods arouse indignation among the workers who sympathise with the I.L.P. and repulse them from the Communist Party.

One Lancashire worker, whom the “Daily Worker” itself describes “a good fighter for the workers,” wrote a letter to the Editor on the subject of this article. In reply to this letter, the “Daily Worker” published an article under the title: “The I.L.P. wants to disarm the proletariat.”

Extracts are given in this article from the letter of the worker.

Here are these extracts:

“The article is an insult to the intelligence of every class-conscious worker. It is a direct misrepresentation of the actual facts.

“The Communist Party knows perfectly well that when the I.L.P. says ‘disarm by example’ they do not mean the revolutionary workers, but the National Government.”

The article further contains the following brilliant syllogism:

The I.L.P. demands that England should set the example of disarmament. But the I.L.P. is a party which calls itself Socialist. Therefore, it would demand that a Socialist government in England should set this example. Therefore, it demands that the Socialist government of the U.S.S.R. should set the example of disarmament.

What sort of idiots does the “Daily Worker” think the British workers are, when it dares to publish such articles! These articles, comrades, are not mere curiosities, not rarities from the museum of muddle-headedness, which fall outside the sphere of class analysis. No, this is a line, this is the tactic by which the British comrades hope to win over the workers.

Is it possible to organise a united front with the workers of

the I.L.P. and the Labour Party with such a tactical line?

I will pass on to the U.S.A. The sources of the sectarian approach to the masses in the Communist Party of the U.S.A. are not the same as in England. Sectarianism is explained here by the fact that, up to the present, the majority of the members, and especially the leading cadres of the Party have not been native-born American workers, and a considerable proportion of the cadres come from small industry, while a considerable number of them are of petty-bourgeois origin. The real nature of this sectarianism consists in a right opportunist lagging behind the mass movement.

In distinction to the British Communist Party, the Communist Party of the U.S.A. has several big strikes to its credit, which it led independently.

This experience shows that our Parties and Red Trade Unions have wide possibilities of leading independent economic fights. But this possibility is utilised without any definite and consistently applied plan, in a partisan manner, from time to time, and case to case. Therefore, it is not surprising that the strikes which are successfully led by us do not leave any trace on our Parties and our trade unions. Remember the famous strike of the textile workers in Gastonia, which obtained the sympathy of the workers of the south for us, and which gave us the possibility of building up our Party organisation there. And what have we now in Gastonia? Not a single Party member. Take last year's strike in Illinois and Ohio. After the strike, our union did not grow stronger there, but weakened.

The C.P.U.S.A. has recently led several big strikes and big revolutionary unemployed actions, but it is quite obvious that strong sectarian tendencies, especially on the question of the attitude to partial demands, lie at the basis of this lack of plan and partisan attitude in the sphere of the leadership of economic fights by the C.P.U.S.A.

Comrade Bedacht states that in a number of cases he found, that when our comrades spoke in the election campaign, they apologised for the fact that the Party put forward partial demands. They stated, that, of course, they knew that the solution of all problems is revolution, but that the workers do not know

this, and therefore we put forward partial demands, although they have absolutely no meaning (laughter). At one meeting where Comrade Bedacht spoke on the question of social insurance, the workers in the hall told him that other Party speakers had informed them that our campaign for social insurance was not serious, that we did not expect to get anything out of it, and we were not worrying much about it, because any concessions would objectively patch up the capitalist system, the workers would be satisfied, and would not want a revolution.

Sectarian tendencies in the C.P.U.S.A. are the chief hindrance to carrying out the tactic of the united front.

Here is one example, of many, showing how this tactic is operated.

There was a strike of 25,000 textile workers in Lawrence. At the meetings of the strikers, which were held by the United Textile Workers' Union (affiliated to the A.F. of L.), there were usually 3,000 to 8,000 persons. We held meetings on the outskirts, and 300 to 500 people came to us. Thus we were isolated from the basic masses of strikers. When the reformists called a meeting for the last time, and thousands of workers came to it, there was no one to speak at this meeting, because the reformists had already decided to end the strike, and they left the meeting unattended to. But our comrades did not know about this meeting, as they took very little interest in any of the meetings called by the reformists. The strike was broken.

One American comrade describes the attitude of the Party to the strike as follows: They look on the struggle led by the revolutionary trade unions as the struggle of "our workers," and on the strikes led by the A.F. of L. as the struggle of "workers who are not ours."

Here is another American witness, Comrade Bedacht, who stated at the July session of the Polit Bureau: "Our comrades divide the working class into two categories—our friends and our enemies."

"Our workers," and "not our workers"—that is the united front, American style! However, this sectarian position not only fails to hinder, but is the basis for deeply opportunist "gentlemen's agreements" with the reformists, for the "division of

spheres of influence,” as was the case in Illinois.

Work among the unemployed, on the admission of the American comrades themselves (statement of Comrade Newton), “is still carried out on a narrow basis and has a sectarian character.” Therefore, it is not surprising that it is weakening and narrowing. In the first quarter of 1932, there were 30,000 registered in the unemployed organisations, and in the second quarter, there were 13,000.

One of the biggest mass political actions, in which the Party played a prominent role, was the movement of the veterans.* I must stop to analyse the line of the Party in this movement, in view of the fact that such mass movements, which extend to the petty-bourgeoisie, as well as the workers, are becoming more widespread in the U.S.A., and the question of the winning over of these masses by our Party becomes exceptionally important.

In the leadership of the Party, with regard to the veterans’ movement, there were a number of vacillations, the chief source of which was the doctrinaire sectarian approach to the masses. At first the Polburo made a decision: “Convert the march of the veterans into the sending of a mass delegation elected by ex-soldiers in Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and New York.”

As further events showed, this decision was absolutely incorrect, and, in essence, was likely to demobilise the masses and stifle their initiative.

The movement developed widely, and could have become still wider, if the Party had not taken a completely incorrect line from the very start.

But even when the movement had become very wide, and 25,000 veterans had gathered in Washington, the Polburo was still unable to give up its doctrinaire sectarian approach to it, and made the following decision: “Our comrades must take the line of carrying out the sharpest class differentiation in the camp of the veterans.” Instead of trying to extend the influence of the Workers’ Ex-Servicemen’s League, which had been organised by us, and taking the leadership of the movement as a whole, the

* See “Communist International,” No. 16 (1932).

League was to isolate itself from the overwhelming majority of the veterans, from the petty-bourgeois sections, and hand them over to the fascist, Captain Waters, to Norman Thomas of the A.F. of L., and to the Reverend Cox, the founder of the Blue Shirt fascist organisation.

What is the use of such a policy? It is not a line for winning over the masses. It is the line of running away from the masses.

The tendency to hide from the masses led to strong vacillations on the question of the organisation and leadership of the struggle of those hundreds of thousands of working families, who are at the same time the owners of small houses, against the government and the banks which are taking these houses away from these workers, for non-payment of taxes, or interest on mortgages. Such a movement, you see, is not a pure class movement, because in this struggle the working class is not counter-posed to the capitalists!

The same doctrinaire tendency causes doubts among the leadership on the question of the (organisation of the struggle of the workers and the petty-bourgeois strata against the automobile tax, which bears with equal weight on the poor little Ford, which is essential for the farmer or the worker, and the luxurious automobile of the millionaire.

In the U.S.A. there are enormous possibilities of mobilising and organising the masses. Take only the movement of the railwaymen for a pension. This movement fell into the hands of the democratic politicians who introduced a Pension Bill into Congress. At the same time they formed a Pension Bill Club which has over 250,000 members (according to the figures of these politicians), and publishes a newspaper with a circulation of over 400,000.

The T.U.U.L.* paid no attention to this movement for over a year, in spite of the fact that mass meetings, for the popularisation of this Bill, were taking place everywhere. It was only a year later that it intervened, and then only very (undecidedly).

At the present time, in the North-Western states, there is developing a peculiar wide "strike" movement of farmers, directed

* Trade Union Unity League.

towards raising prices. The farmers have organised many pickets, with the aim of raising prices, and they refuse to allow food to be taken into the towns.

According to telegrams, the A.F.L. is already making attempts to wreck this movement by all kinds of manoeuvres. The pickets have already had big conflicts with the police; and what is our Party doing? The telegrams do not say anything. Evidently it is not doing anything and is occupied with wavering and doubting.

These doubts and waverings, caused by the doctrinaire sectarian approach to the mass movement, must be very great in the present case, because this movement of the farmers is directed towards increasing the prices on food, which is plainly not advantageous to the workers as consumers.

I must examine this case in more detail. Higher prices on necessities are not advantageous to the workers. Therefore, it might be said that, in this case, the workers should act against the farmers.

Such a line of reasoning is absolutely incorrect. Such a tactical line would be a fatal political mistake, because objectively it would lead to our Party coming out against the farmers and in alliance with the bankers, the exploiting farmers and the police, who are beating up the farmers' pickets.

It would also be the grossest political mistake for the Party to declare itself neutral with regard to this movement on the grounds that, on the one hand, this movement is objectively revolutionary as it is directed against the capitalist system, but on the other hand, it is antagonistic to the interests of the workers. Our Party can never win over the masses if it keeps neutral and neglects such objectively revolutionary movements.

The Party must call on the workers to support the movement of the ruined farmers for higher prices and for the annulment of mortgages, and for reduced rents, at the same time organising the workers for the struggle against wage-cuts, and for higher wages. The Party must explain to the workers and poor farmers the decisive importance of their joint struggle against the capitalist system, the necessity of the development and strengthening of their alliance in this struggle, the necessity of mutual aid in this struggle.

The deepening of the economic crisis, the end of capitalist stabilisation, and the revolutionary upsurge are bringing with them tremendous mass movements, fighting actions of *all* the oppressed and exploited, with the most varied and frequently contradictory demands. If we get confused in these contradictions, if we hide from them, if we are content with friendly neutrality toward the petty bourgeois masses who are entering the fight against capitalism under reactionary slogans, we shall display the completest failure to understand how a popular revolution takes place, and what must be our attitude to mass movements.

Here is what Lenin wrote in connection with the question of the Irish Rebellion in 1916: —

“To imagine that a social revolution could possibly take place without the revolt of the little nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts on the part of the petty-bourgeoisie with all their prejudices, without the movement of the non-class-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, the national bourgeoisie, etc.—to think this means *to abandon social revolution*. It would mean to draw up troops in one place and say: ‘We are for socialism’; and, in another place, and say: ‘We are for imperialism,’ and this will be the social revolution... The socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything else but an outburst of the mass struggle of all the oppressed and discontented. Some of the petty-bourgeoisie and the backward workers will inevitably take part in it—without this participation it is impossible to have a *mass* struggle and impossible to have *any* revolution, and it is equally inevitable that they will bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and mistakes. *Objectively*, they will attack *capital*, and the conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of the varied, many-voiced, diverse mass struggle, can unite and direct it, win the power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which are hated by all (although for different causes), and carry out other methods of dictatorship which, on the

whole, will bring about the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which is not immediately ‘cleansed’ from petty-bourgeois dross” (Lenin: “Results of the Discussion on Self-Determination”).

The decisive elimination of the doctrinaire sectarian approach to mass movements which dooms the Party to right opportunist backwardness, such is the central and all-deciding task of the British and American sections of the C.I. Without such an elimination, without a radical change in the approach to the masses, these Parties will be fated to a position in which the masses will pass by them, and, at the best, they will sometimes, and in individual cases, be able to take charge of separate mass actions in a partisan manner, as was the case in Burnley and in Illinois; they will not be able to consolidate their influence on the masses firmly.

What are the basic conditions which are necessary to bring about this decisive change in the approach to the masses? There are two conditions—the reorganisation of the Party on the basis of inner-Party democracy, and the formation of new cadres.

III.—INNER-PARTY DEMOCRACY—THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION FOR THE WINNING OF THE MASSES.

I do not intend to speak of formal democracy, of the democracy which is preached by the social-democrats, and on the basis of which, they have built up their Party. I wish to talk about real Bolshevik democracy. What is Bolshevik democracy? It consists in drawing all of the members of the Party into the political life of the Party, into the everyday work and struggle of the Party, into the collective work of preparing and leading mass struggles, into energetic comradely work on the basis of iron inner-Party discipline, because Bolshevik democracy does not exclude, but presupposes iron Party discipline.

“We understand democracy as the raising of the activity and class-consciousness of the Party masses, as the systematic attraction of the Party masses in practice, not only into the discussion of questions, but into the leadership of the work” (Stalin).

There is still far too little of such genuine Bolshevik democ-

racy in many sections of the C.I., and this is the first and basic cause why these sections cannot turn towards the broad masses.

I shall use chiefly American material for illustrating the question of inner-Party democracy, but such, if not all, that I shall say about the shortcomings in the development of Bolshevik democracy in the American Party, applies also to other sections.

In practice, the Party members, the Party cells are not drawn into political life. Politics is for the leading organs, or, at best, for the activists. It never gets lower than the activists.

"The American comrades are afraid of political discussion; they have not organised any discussion for the study of the decisions of the 13th Plenum, and are not organising any discussion for the study of the decisions of the 14th Plenum now. In the cells only organisational and technical questions are discussed, and the collection of money is the chief work" (From the report of the instructor of the C.I.).

Sometimes general Party meetings are called, but they are only for show. The speaker gives his speech, replies to questions, and at the end there is no discussion, no consideration whatever.

Can there be any question of initiative among the Party members and the lower Party organisations under such conditions?

With regard to the attitude towards the new Party members, here is a typical example from the C.P.U.S.A.

"During the last fights of the unemployed in New Cuntington, about 150 workers joined the Party. They received Party cards, and maybe were invited two or three times to the meetings of the Party organisation, but only 30 out of 150 appeared at these meetings. Therefore, the others were put down as 'hopeless,' and no attempts were made to visit them at home, to consult them, to make them into active Party members, etc. Within a few weeks 120 of them were again lost for the Party" (From the letter of the instructor).

The workers have to overcome tremendous difficulties to get into our Party.

Here is the attitude to new members in Great Britain:

"In Eccles we have a group of new comrades, and amongst

them, one old comrade who has been in the Party since 1923. Some of the new comrades were previously in the I.L.P. At first they all worked well, together with the old comrade, but when they began to develop, and after they had studied the resolutions of the E.C.C.I., disagreed with the old comrade on a few questions, he began to tell them that they were not in the I.L.P. now, etc.” (Minutes of the P.B., July 9th, 1932.)

I could give many facts showing that efforts to keep and to make the best use of Party workers are hindered by a formal bureaucratic understanding of Party discipline.

Here is still another example of exceptionally abnormal relations between the leaders and members of the organisation. I am speaking of the Pittsburgh City organisation. Over 70 per cent, of the population of Pittsburgh consists of steel smelters and metal workers. Our organisation had 66 members, of whom only two were workers in the steel industry.

The relations between the secretary of the District Committee and the members of the city organisation were completely abnormal. The Secretariat of the District Committee looked on the whole city organisation as a hive of opportunists who did not want to work, but wanted to be quiet, etc. The workers of the Party, and the trade unions, did not take any part in the everyday work of the city organisation. To carry out this work, people were sent to Pittsburgh from New York and other Party organisations. All this still further deepened the impression of the members of the city organisation that they were not considered as full members of the Party, and they were not recognised by the District Committee. The result of this unhealthy situation very soon made itself felt at the end of the strike. Oppositional feelings arose. The Secretariat of the District Committee reacted to this, describing the comrades as opportunists, slackers, demoralised elements, etc.

At the present time the Pittsburgh organisation has become healthier; it has grown and strengthened. Almost all the old Party members are actively working.

Something similar to the events in Pittsburgh took place at Cleveland also.

The shortcomings of inner-Party democracy in the U.S.A.

stand out with increasing prominence in the attitude taken up towards mass organisations. They are looked on, and treated as a source of money.

In a mass organisation under our control, the International Workers' Order, we take \$2 a month membership dues from the workers. As a result, in the course of the first quarter of this year alone, 1,800 members of this organisation were expelled for non-payment of membership dues.

This is the destruction, and not the strengthening of mass organisations, the mass basis of the Party.

The financial policy of the American Party contains anti-democratic, purely business features. The mass organisations have repeatedly protested against the free way in which the Party organisations deal with their money. The tremendous difference between the salaries of the lower and higher functionaries cannot in any way fit in with inner-Party democracy. Tremendous amounts of money are spent, without any necessity, on travelling expenses, which are very high in the U.S.A., and there is no money for the newspaper in the south, "The Southern Worker" (a mere \$120 a week), and this paper, which had already become popular among the negroes, has been discontinued.

As you see, comrades, the financial policy of the Party plays an extremely big political role, both in the matter of winning over the masses, and in the development of inner-Party democracy, and in the organisation of the press.

Is it possible for a Party which suffers from big defects in the sphere of inner-Party democracy, such as the absence of political life in the cells, a formal and bureaucratic-attitude to the question of securing new members for the Party, absolutely insufficient collective work in the leading organs, an impermissible attitude to mass organisations, an anti-democratic financial policy—is it possible for a Party with such defects to cope with the tasks which face it at the present time—the task of firmly attaching to itself those broad masses who are being roused to the struggle by the crisis, and securing them for the Communist Party? No, it is impossible. It is precisely these shortcomings which explain the tremendous fluctuations in the Party membership.

A sharp change is necessary, a decisive change in the inner

Party regime. Unless this takes place, the Party cannot become a mass Party. Unless this takes place, its numerical growth and the extension of its political influence will lag more and more behind the mass upsurge, and the Party will not eliminate its sectarianism, its separation from the basic strata of the native-born American workers.

This decisive change in the inner-Party regime, this democratisation of the Party, cannot be carried out unless new cadres are formed in the Party and the old ones strengthened.

IV. —THE RENEWAL AND STRENGTHENING OF CADRES AS THE SECOND BASIC LINK FOR THE WINNING OVER OF THE MASSES.

The tremendous importance of drawing in new cadres, the renewal of cadres, and the strengthening of these, evidently remains foreign to the American and English Parties up to the present time. They do not understand that new cadres form the future of the Party, and they stubbornly cling to the old cadres.

“We get the impression,” writes the instructor, “that the Party does not want to have new cadres at all. Some of the cadres, who have completely failed dozens of times in the districts, are again sent to other districts.”

Listen to what Comrade D. said at a meeting of the Pol-Buro: “I think it a very characteristic fact that in the 13th year of our Party’s existence there is not a single district with a leadership composed of workers from that district, of participators in the struggle of this district.”

This shows, best of all, that a policy of securing new cadres is not carried on. The work is conducted with one and the same cadre, shifting them from one district to another, and, furthermore, they are chiefly New York cadres.

Here is what the instructor writes in connection with this question in the Pittsburgh organisation:

“Simple workers were considered to be insufficiently trained to be accepted into the Party. Throughout the whole strike of the miners the city organisation did not recruit a single member. There were undoubted symptoms of white chauvinism as well.”

Take further the composition of the students at the Interna-

tional Party Schools. Experience has shown during the last year that the leaders of the American Communist Party approached the question of selecting the students with a casualness bordering on the criminal. The composition of the students was unsatisfactory, and the directors of the School had to devote a tremendous amount of energy to the struggle against deviations, against white chauvinism, anti-semitism, and factious groupings which arose in the American group.

The British Communist Party was instructed by the C.I. to select 250 comrades and put them through a school, in the course of six months. Recently we received a report on the carrying out of the resolution of the C.I., and we noted definite achievements on every task, except the task of forming new cadres. Instead of 250, only a few dozen persons were put through the schools.

It must be remembered that the basic cadres of the English and American Communist Parties have not been changed for several years. These cadres grew up in the sectarian period of the existence of the Parties. Many of these comrades cannot get rid of their sectarian tendencies. It is precisely this part of the cadres which forms the chief hindrance to eliminating sectarianism.

With regard to the U.S.A., I should especially add that a certain part of the cadres grew up in conditions of unprincipled factional struggle, in other words, that this part of the cadres did not come forward because they were completely suitable for responsible political and organisational work.. However, there are many facts showing that new cadres of leaders have arisen among the working masses, who have made themselves prominent in strikes in Britain, U.S.A., Belgium, etc., and that these new cadres are genuine mass workers, and incomparably more strongly connected with the masses than a large part of the old cadres, who are incapable of abandoning their sectarian tendencies. They have already been tested in experience, in Party work in Britain, where a visible improvement of our work in the factories, and the turn towards the masses is connected precisely with the entrance of these new cadres into the Party. They were tested by experience in the Party organisation of Chicago. In those sections of Chicago in which new cadres were secured, the work improved, according to the testimony of Comrade Gebert, but in

the sections where there are no new cadres, it is in as deep a decline as it was before.

By enlarging our cadres, by bringing in new forces which have been thrown up by the masses in the ever-widening struggle, by drawing new cadres into the Party and ideologically training them, we shall link ourselves firmly, with the masses, renew and strengthen the Party cadres and put aside those who resist the drawing in of cadres, removing the fossilised sectarian elements from the leadership—this is our task. Unless this task is decisively carried out, there cannot be any turn away from sectarian isolation and towards the masses.

The British and American Parties are faced at present with four fundamental tasks:

(1) To direct the basic strategic blows against Social-Democracy, to win the masses away from it, to isolate it from the masses;

(2) To win over the majority of the proletariat and the poor farmers, to train them in a series of fights and to convert them into our political army;

(3) To organise our Party into a mass Party on the basis of Bolshevik inner-Party Democracy based on iron discipline, into a revolutionary Staff of this political army;

(4) To enlarge, strengthen and renew our Party General Staff.

In 1925 Comrade Stalin described the revolutionary outlook as follows:

“The world revolutionary movement at the present moment has entered the zone of the ebb of revolution, but this ebb must give place to a flow which may end in the victory of the proletariat, but also may not end in this victory, but be replaced by a fresh ebb which, in turn, will give place to a new flow of the revolution.” (Stalin: Questions of Leninism).

The prophecy of Comrade Stalin was justified. We have now a new flow of revolution, and this flow may end in victory. But for England and the U.S.A. this victory is only possible if these four fundamental tasks are carried out: the destruction of Social-Democracy, the destruction of Social-Fascism, the formation of a mass political army, the conversion of the Party into the fighting

staff of this army, and the formation of a strong general staff.

If they are able to carry out these tasks, then victory will be obtained in the second round of revolutions and wars.

But, however things may end in Britain and the U.S.A., it is quite clear that the basis of the world revolution, the U.S.S.R., will emerge from the second round of revolutions and wars larger and stronger.

The Situation in U.S.A.

(Reprinted from No. 17-18 Communist International)

Jack Pringle

Speech at the XII Plenum of the ECCL, December 1932

Comrade Kuusinen in his report and thesis very correctly points out that the relative stabilisation of capitalism has come to an end. Comrade Stalin in his political report to the XV Congress of the C.P.S.U. predicted this, he declared:

“Out of the partial stabilisation of capitalism there grows a still acuter crisis, the growing crisis destroys the stabilisation—these are the dialectics of the development of capitalism in the present historical moment.”

In the United States the correctness of Comrade Stalin's statement is brought out by the following: During the last three years all activities in the country have dropped 51 per cent. According to bourgeois figures, comparing the average for June, 1929, with June, 1932, industrial production has decreased to 48.7 per cent., automobile production to 42.7 per cent., carloading to 48.2 per cent., department store sales to 60.7 per cent., and steel production as low as to 19.8 per cent., while industrial employment dropped to 57.7 per cent. These figures indicate the general trend in the economic life of the country. Actually the situation is even worse. Added to this, the financial crisis, which has begun, and is shown in the government deficit of 3 billion dollars, the Finance Reconstruction Corporation, that pours 4 billion dollars into the big banks, R.R. and big corporations and finally the Glass Bill, which opens inflation. *The gold standard of the American dollar is in danger.*

In previous crises, the ordinary cyclical crises, when there was no relatively high monopolistic character, American capitalism's return to a new cycle was accomplished through the increase and renewal of basic capital, machinery, technique. In the present crisis such attempts were made only in chemical and war industries. In all industries, including war, the capitalists are increasing speed-up tremendously, lowering the wages of the working class, as the only means of cheapening expenditure of

production. The total payroll of the workers in three years declined 61.9 per cent.

Because of the highly monopolistic character of American capitalism, through which they are able to buy and sell at their own monopoly-controlled prices, the colonies are robbed of their raw materials, the farmers in the home country of their products, and the workers and farmers through the relatively high selling prices of the commodities.

The huge number of bank failures (over two thousand in 1931, around 500 in the first two months of 1932) wipes out the savings of large sections of the workers and farmers, and the petty-bourgeoisie, high taxes destroying the farmers and the petty-bourgeoisie.

The deepening and the broadening of the crisis has placed tremendous burdens on the toiling masses of America, has served to smash the prosperity illusions, the faith in American capitalism which existed during the period of relative stabilisation, that the Social-Fascists and the A.F. of L. use; delivered a smashing blow to the theory of American exceptionalism, developed by the renegades, Lovestone and Pepper.

The American bourgeoisie is putting the burden of the crisis on the backs of the toiling masses; has cut the wages of the workers to approximately 50 per cent. in all industries during the last three years, 15,000,000 are unemployed and about 10,000,000 working two or three days per week. The “stagger” system* becomes a national policy of the Hoover Hunger and War Government. The hardest hit are the Negro masses and particularly the Negro workers. They are the first to lose their jobs, and have their wages cut. The much-vaunted “independent American Farmer” is now becoming a pauperised peasant.

The working class and the toiling masses are arising against the offensive of the bourgeoisie. The economic struggles against the offensive of the bourgeoisie, are becoming an offensive struggle, and are carrying in it, political elements against the bourgeois system in its entirety. The number of strikes, and the

* The system of organising shifts or turns of employment. i.e., a system of organised short time.

militancy of the strikers in them, has increased. This can be shown by the heroic struggle of the 40,000 miners of Western Pennsylvania, in which our Party and the National Miners' Union played the leading role; by strikes in the textile industry, needle trades, shoe, food, agricultural workers (best workers in Colorado) and isolated strikes in the steel industry in Warren, Ohio, led by our industrial union, etc.

Also by the National Hunger March to Washington, which involves hundreds of thousands of workers all over the country, State Hunger Marches to legislative bodies, bread strikes and street struggles, between the unemployed and the police, in such large industrial cities as Chicago, St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland, New York, etc. Anti-war demonstrations in Washington, Chicago, Seattle, huge mass demonstrations on May 1st. And recently in San Francisco, a demonstration of 1,000 workers against shipping of ammunition to Japan. One of the most important characteristics of these struggles is that we see unity of the Negro and white workers, unemployed and employed in action and struggle. A march of war veterans to Washington involving 25,000 ex-soldiers, showed a revolutionary character, which was inspired by the National Hunger March in December. The war veterans were composed of unemployed workers, pauperised farmers and bankrupt petty-bourgeois elements. Although this march had all the characteristics of a spontaneous mass movement, the Party played a definite role in organising and leading the ex-servicemen. Republican Congressman, Hamilton Fish, chief red-baiter, declared: "The veterans' march to Washington, from the big industrial centres such as Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia was inspired largely by the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League."

In the North-Western States farmers are using in masses, and conducting militant struggles by methods of strikes, demanding higher prices for their commodities. They are stopping trains and trucks containing food. This is, objectively, a revolutionary movement of the farmers, against the rubber policy of low monopoly buying prices, that should, and has to be, supported by the Party and the working class. In addition to this movement of the masses, we see the movement among the teachers, as in the

case of Chicago, they are organising marches and demonstrations demanding back pay, which has not been paid for 10 to 12 months; strikes of the tax-payers refusing to pay high taxes; movements of depositors of the closed bankrupt banks, etc.

All these movements among the masses show the revolutionary upsurge, and the tremendously favourable objective conditions, for broadening the organisation of the masses, on a basis of the united front from below, in the struggle for their daily needs and demands; for mass unemployed councils, red trade unions in the shops, and opposition movements inside the reformist unions.

These favourable conditions show the great mass movement, and the possibility of developing it to a higher stage. Up till now, our Party has not been fully successful in achieving these aims. *Why? Primarily because of its narrow sectarian approach to the masses, its isolation from the masses.* This is clearly demonstrated in our participation and leadership of some of the outstanding movements and struggles of the masses. For instance, the National Convention of the Red National Miners' Union, which was held on the eve of a new wave of mass strikes of the miners, not only did not make preparations for coming struggles, but did not even sense the coming struggles. In the veterans' march on Washington, the majority of the Pol-Bureau voted against the mass march on Washington, and under-estimated the readiness of the masses to struggle by this, and proposed a sectarian measure instead—a delegation from a few industrial cities, as a substitute for the mass revolutionary movement.

During the veterans' march, the Party did not understand the character and composition of the marchers, and made appeals only to the workers, in the march. This prevented the mass mobilisation of support for the marchers by the broad masses, farmers, etc., and gaining the leading role in the march.

Our central organ, the "Daily Worker," interpreted the veterans' march in a different manner every day—one day it declared we are friends of the marchers, and the next day it declared, we support the movement of the workers' Ex-Servicemen's League.

The effect of the crushing burden of the crisis was felt most acutely by the Negro masses. The bourgeoisie have increased all

forms of national oppression, increase of terror, lynching, as well as intensifying attempts to isolate the Negro masses from the white workers, and by the strengthening of Jim Crow segregation, etc. This situation places the necessity of strengthening our fight against increased oppression of the Negro masses more sharply before our Party, and especially of developing a systematic struggle against all remnants of white chauvinism, both in the ranks of the Party, and among the masses. Although our Party can show some success in the field of work among the Negro masses—Scottsboro, Camp Hill, struggles of the unemployed in Chicago, Yokinin trial, etc., we are still isolated from the broad masses of Negroes. For example, in the present election campaign, our Party has nominated a Negro candidate for vice-president. This fact caused a big stir among the Negro masses. How did our Party utilise the good response of the Negro masses to the Communist candidate? We have mostly confined our campaign to agitational speeches, and have not as yet connected the everyday struggles of the Negro masses in the South and North with our election campaign struggle. Although one of our central slogans in the election is “equal rights for Negroes, and the right to self-determination in the black belt,” we have not developed concrete struggles around this central slogan. However, wherever attempts were made, as, for instance, in the 1st Congressional District in Chicago, where Comrade Newton, a Negro comrade, is a candidate against De Priest, a Negro Republican, we were able to get support from the Negro masses. 5,000 Negro workers participated in a demonstration against De Priest under our leadership. We have a first beginning of the struggle against Negro reformism in Chicago.

The majority of the Negro proletariat is entirely unorganised. The American Federation of Labour has refused to admit Negro workers into the trade unions for years, and in places where they were forced to organise the Negroes, they built Jim Crow Locals. The immediate task confronting the Party is to develop the struggle in the South among the Negro masses, to mobilise the white and Negro proletariat in the North, to support and to lead the struggle around the central demand and to make a special effort to draw the Negro proletariat into the Trade Unions, Un-

employed Councils, etc. And finally to develop Negro cadres and leadership in the mass organisations. What is true of our sectarian approach to the central demand for "Negro rights and the right to self-determination," is also true of our slogan "Against Hoover Wage-Cuts" and for "Unemployed Insurance." Our Party does not concretely apply these slogans to the daily concrete situation, in the shops, and among the unemployed, and does not mobilise on the basis of united front action. For these reasons our election campaign is not embracing the wide masses.

Under the pressure of the growing radicalisation of the masses, the reactionary leadership of the A.F. of L., the Musteites, the Socialist Party, etc., are driven to more and more "left" manoeuvres, and they have also increased their activities among the masses because of our weaknesses. Whereas the officials declared a year and half ago at the Vancouver Convention of the A.F. of L.:

"It is the opinion of the Executive Council, that compulsory unemployment insurance legislation, such as is now in effect in Great Britain, and Germany, would not be suitable to our economic and political requirements here, and unsatisfactory to American working men and women."

Recently at an Executive Council of the A.F. of L. in Atlantic City, these same bureaucrats declared:

"If relief is not provided, men and women will be forced to return to the primitive ways of getting food for themselves, and their children. People do not starve by tens of millions, when they see plenty around them."

The Socialist Party is likewise engaged in zigzag "left" manoeuvres. Paul Blanchard, one of the leaders of the "left wing" of the Socialist Party writes:

"Thomas moved definitely to the left in the Milwaukee Convention and the majority of the Party moved with him. The Party elected a more vigorous National Executive Committee, it adopted a more friendly policy toward the U.S.S.R., and it laid the ground work for more militant activity in the labour field by appointing field organisers for important industrial areas."

The Muste group, which in the year of 1931 led one-third of

the strikes, is especially dangerous in this situation. The Muste Group originated as a progressive opposition group inside the A.F. of L., and later undertook independent leadership in strike struggles, and is now entering the political arena, trying to become a nucleus for a sort of American Independent Labour Party. The Muste Group have entered the field of the unemployed work and organised Unemployed Citizens' Leagues in a number of cities. They organised large numbers of unemployed in the city of Seattle in the State of Washington. This movement is spreading to other cities on the basis of "self-help of the unemployed," thereby removing the burden of relief from the government — a typical class-collaboration scheme. On the political field it supports the Independent Labour Party in West Virginia, and the Farmer-Labour Party in Chicago; while in Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, it is putting up independent local candidates. There is also a flood of capitalist demagogy.

Our Party was unable to successfully and concretely expose and defeat these enemies in the ranks of the working class, in the everyday struggles. While attacking the hypocrisy, demagogy and betrayals of the Social-Fascist leaders mercilessly, we must patiently persuade and convince workers who are still following the Social-Fascist, Muste, in a comradesly way, especially in the unions of the A.F. of L. of the correctness of our position, on the basis of common united front struggles, especially in the shops against the capitalist offensive.

Comrade Knorin spoke here of the necessity of co-ordinating the struggles of the workers, on the streets, with their struggles in the shops and leading them to a higher political level. We have yet to learn this in the United States. In connection with this I want to deal now with the strikes of 35,000 miners in Illinois and 10,000 in Indiana.

On April 1st, 1932, the coal barons in Illinois and Indiana closed the mines to force a wage reduction, and introduce rationalisation schemes. The bureaucrats of the United Mine Workers' Union of America signed an agreement, with the coal barons, to accept a wage-cut from £6 10s. to £5 a day. The miners rejected this agreement twice by ballot in referendum, although they had already starved for five months. When the bureaucrats declared

that the agreement would be enforced and the mines would open on this basis, the miners responded with *mass strikes*, involving 35,000 of the 50,000 miners employed in Illinois. Our Party and the rank-and-file opposition movement developed a wide campaign against the wage-cut agreement and against the bureaucrats. How the miners greeted our programme of struggle is best shown in the following facts: John Walker, Illinois District President of the U.M.W.A., who came to speak for a wage-cut in Johnson City, was met by miners and their wives with stones, and driven out of town. A sub-district president, Edmondson, addressing a meeting in Royalton, was beaten by the miners and taken to hospital, while the speakers of the rank-and-file committee were enthusiastically greeted wherever they appeared to speak.

Although the present strike is not under the leadership of our Party and the rank-and-file opposition, we are a serious factor there. At a conference in Donald, called by the Musteites and local bureaucrats, our proposals were rejected, but on the same day, in the same town, *ten-thousand miners voted unanimously for our programme*. In Bellville, at a conference of representatives from 28 branches of the reformist unions, a committee of action of 15 was elected and a Communist elected chairman of this committee. In the present situation, in the strike, the main task confronting us is to set up *broad rank and file strike committees in every mine*.

We must take over the leadership of the strikers, and consolidate the strike, uniting the struggle of the employed and unemployed miners and their families, against wage-cuts, for immediate relief of the unemployed, and lead it to a higher stage, giving a definite political character to the situation. To consolidate the strike organisationally, and lead it successfully to victory, it is necessary to extend the strike to the mines still working. This is now taking place in Illinois, where 20,000 miners marched on Franklin County where the miners are still working. They clashed with the police. Over 100 miners were wounded in the battle with the police. Six aeroplanes brought national guards to the strike area. There is a small civil war going on at this moment in the Illinois coal fields. Two miners have been killed on

the picket lines. These struggles of the miners are of tremendous importance. It shows the growing militancy and revolutionary upsurge of the masses. It proves again that the emphasis placed on work in the reformist unions by the Plenum can be successfully applied if the correct united front tactic is utilised.

In Indiana, we have a similar situation, where an equally militant struggle is carried on by the miners. In these struggles, our Party is bringing forward the election campaign, and exposing the rôle of the state and local government. One of the leaders of the miners' strike in Illinois, is a Communist candidate for lieutenant-governor of Illinois. However, in the wage-cuts in the steel, railroad, stockyards and other industries in Chicago district, the Party was unable to mobilise the masses for the struggle. This is explained by our isolation from the big shops, our sectarian approach to the masses, a lack of understanding of the concrete conditions of the workers in the shops, and of personal daily contact with the workers. It is in the big shops, where we are weakest, where we have not made contact with any large group of workers. To acknowledge this shortcoming is not sufficient. We must change this, and the whole Party, must turn its major activities to the big shops. It is essential for us to strengthen our work in the reformist unions, *yet the main task of the district is to organise Red unions among the unorganised workers in steel, stockyards, etc., who form the greatest majority of the workers.*

In the course of the struggle, the Party in the Chicago District grew and developed. In August, 1930, we had only 73 cells with 776 dues paying members, in June, 1932, we had 221 cells with 2,488 dues paying members. The actual membership in the district is over 3,000 with Party organisation in 71 cities. In February, 1931, we had 8 shop cells with 47 members. In March, 1932, we had 35 cells with 206 members. These figures show *the weakness of the Party in Chicago because it is not rooted in the shops.* The outstanding problem confronting the Party in the factory and trade union work, is the proper application of methods of work enabling our comrades to connect themselves with the masses and develop activities and struggles. It must utilise the revolutionary spirit of the unemployed organisations and develop

daily systematic planned work around the shops, primarily *inside* the shops.

To really change the present situation in the Chicago District, get rid of sectarianism:, establish the Party in the workshops, trade unions and develop daily work among the factory masses, the Party must transform its present methods of work outside the factories, and concentrate on the basic factories. Without this change there can be no Bolshevik Party.

Some Questions of the Work of the C.P.U.S.A.

By Green

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In the United States the Party is preparing to call a convention after a break of almost three years. This convention takes on exceptional importance in the history of the Party, and therefore it is necessary to devote extremely serious attention to the questions which face the Party.

In spring this year, the Party stated that the chief decisions on the reconstruction of Party work, which were adopted over a year ago, at the XIV Plenum of the C.C., had not been fulfilled. This extremely disturbing fact was noted by the leading organs of the Party as an ordinary matter which could be solved by passing the regular resolution on the "immediate tasks" of the Party. The question arises as to whether it was necessary to call a Plenum to inform it that the resolutions had not been carried out. Can such a situation be permitted that resolutions are not carried out and then new resolutions are adopted so that, maybe, they will also not be carried out.

There was a period when such a situation existed in almost all the Parties of the Communist International. The Parties were young, the Parties had no cadres, had no experience, etc. We have to bear with such a situation, because the Parties were simply incapable of carrying out the resolutions which they themselves passed. But this period has already passed. The Parties have accumulated experience, have thrown out the Right wingers, they have certain new cadres, and finally the entire situation has radically changed. For we must remember that a new revolutionary upsurge has begun to grow. The Parties have a series of successes. More, the C.P. of U.S.A. has achieved a number of successes during the past few years. Further, the main conclusion which can be drawn with regard to the recent years in the existence of the American Communist Party is that, in those places where the Party has seriously fought for any matter, It has

obtained enormous successes. Therefore, it is possible to carry out the resolutions. All the objective circumstances go to show this. The entire experience of the international movement and the American movement show that it is possible to carry out the resolutions. And if the Party sees that practically nothing has been done for a whole year to carry out the resolutions, which were prepared with such care and seriousness by the XIV Plenum of the C.I., it must be said that this cannot be blamed on to any objective causes.

Such a situation cannot be tolerated further in the Party. The resolutions are passed to be carried out. They can be carried out, and the development of the revolutionary movement demands that they should be carried out.

On the other hand, the chief resolution of the XVI Plenum of the C.C., which took place in spring this year is distinguished by extreme optimism and suffers from lack of clarity. Firstly, on the question of the masses. The idea is brought forward in it that in all branches, after a short period of vacillation and backwardness, the Party is becoming the decisive subjective factor in the development of the mass struggle, that:

“We, (i.e., the Party) properly and rapidly react to these movements. We are able rapidly to direct these spontaneous movements along a channel determined by us.”

Secondly, on the question of deviations. The idea is that at first we should conquer left sectarianism, begin to lead the masses, and only then are we faced with the task of the struggle against right opportunism. Further, it literally says the following: “It is impossible to capitulate to the reformist leaders when we are so far from the masses that we have not even any contacts with them.”

Through the whole resolution runs the view that the Party is everywhere hindered by “left” sectarianism, that “left” sectarianism is the chief danger. At the end of the resolution, it is true, is a brief statement that the right danger is the chief danger, but this is a purely formal declaration which contradicts the entire resolution, because the resolution speaks everywhere of “left” sectarianism.

The statement that the Party stands at the head of the masses,

that it carries the masses with it, that it can direct them along whatever channel it wishes, gives the Party an incorrect orientation.

Is this self-praise a matter of chance? It is no chance. Such a type of statement is connected with the confused theories on the relationship between spontaneity and consciousness which are current in the U.S.A. The Party's head is turned with its first successes, and all the questions of the relations between the Party and the spontaneous movement are turned upside-down. At the XVI Plenum, Comrade X. spoke. He has an incorrect view of this question. He considers that all the successes of the Party are based on the spontaneous movement. Such a view means to bow to spontaneity. It is not a Bolshevick view.

Some comrades correctly criticised this mistake, but unfortunately they went much too far. They reversed X's formula, and it worked out that, according to them, the spontaneous movement is nothing and the Party is everything. For example, on the question of the Detroit strike it was stated that: "Without the work of the Party there would never be any strikes." As if there are never spontaneous strikes, as if there are no strikes which are not led by our Party, as if a large number of recent strikes have not proved to be under the leadership of the Mus-
teites and the A.F. of L.

Regarding the farmers' movement, some comrades said: "Without our leadership of the farmers there would not have been such a mass development of the movement among the farmers." This is pure brag.

With regard to the unemployed, there is the statement that the Party formed the unemployed movement, and, that without the Party, there would also not have been the social-fascist unemployed councils.

Of course, it is true that the Party was the initiator of the unemployed movement, but then the Party abandoned this work, and it was precisely this which made it possible for the socialists to get hold of a considerable part of the unemployed.

There is no doubt that without a revolutionary Party leading the masses, the victory of the revolution is impossible. There has not been and could not be a revolution which could conquer

without a revolutionary Party. But what is a revolution? A revolution is a stupendous spontaneous upsurge of mass revolutionary initiative under the leadership of the Party. The Party cannot take the place of mass initiative nor can mass initiative take the place of the revolutionary leadership of the Party. This question must not be confused. Otherwise things are distorted in the opposite direction, and we come to the conclusion that the Party is standing at the head of the masses, when in reality this is not yet the case.

The sectarianism of the C.P.U.S.A. has been spoken of repeatedly, and not so long ago, at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was confirmed once more that which was said last year in the resolution of the C.C. C.P.U.S.A. regarding the fact that there are still many vestiges of sectarianism in the American Party.

What is sectarianism? Sectarianism is the extreme degree of a deviation, carried to the point of complete or almost complete separation from the masses. As there are two deviations, right and "left," so there can be two kinds of sectarianisms, right and "left." In this article there is no need to explain what is the right deviation. The shortest explanation of what is the right deviation is contained in the word "tailism." The right deviation is when the Party drags at the tail of the masses. And what is right sectarianism? To a great extent it is tailism. It is breaking away from the tail. It means that the Party does not even drag at the tail of the masses, but far behind the tail, being split away from the masses.

A historic example of right sectarianism was the situation in the C.P. U.S.A. in 1930. After this the Party, from time to time, has caught up with the tail.

What is the "left" deviation? The "left" deviation is when the vanguard rushes ahead, leaping over inevitable stages of development. The clearest historic example is from the 1917 revolution. On April 20th and 21st we had spontaneous actions by the Leningrad workers, sailors and soldiers with the demand to remove the Provisional Government. The Party considered that the time had not come to take power, that the masses were not yet prepared for this. The Party held back the masses from further action in April and on July 3rd and 4th. However, there were

some groups in the Party who rushed ahead, particularly Bogdatiev, who organised a squadron of a few armoured cars and attacked along the Nevski Prospect, the main street of Leningrad. Fortunately it was possible to prevent this example spreading, otherwise this action would have played a tremendous provocative role. Such is an example of the “left” deviation at a moment of revolutionary upsurge.

And what is “left” sectarianism? “Left” sectarianism is a jump ahead, when the Party or group which is leaping ahead is completely separated from the masses. “Left” sectarianism is the preaching of revolutionary mass actions at a period when the masses are historically asleep. This means the isolated action of the vanguard alone, of the staff of the revolution alone, without any masses. A historic example can be taken again from Russian history. It is known that the years 1909-1910 saw the greatest decline of the revolutionary movement in Russia. The masses completely disappeared from the historic scene. There was only a small number of strikes. And precisely in these years of the greatest decline of mass activity, precisely in these years a group of Bolsheviks bearing the name of “Otzovists” continued to play about with the slogan of the armed rebellion, organised armed detachments, studied military science, in short, prepared in every way for armed action.

These items of historic information are necessary to disentangle the unclarity which exists in the C.P.U.S.A.

Of what does this unclarity consist? In the fact that they can see only one type of sectarianism, “left” sectarianism; in the fact that they regard all sectarianism as “left” sectarianism, forgetting that right sectarianism exists. Therefore it comes out as if “left” sectarianism, the “left” deviation were the chief danger.

Secondly, in what way does this unclarity on the question of deviations find expression? This is the theory that, in order to make right mistakes, we need to be connected with the masses. This is a very big mistake. In reality, what does such a theory represent? It represents tailism inside out. From this statement it follows that in order to link up with the masses we should choose the right opportunist path, and lower ourselves to the level of the more backward masses, instead of raising them to the level of the

foremost workers.

And so, where is the Party anyway? At the head or at the tail of the masses? Have the contacts between the Party and the masses deepened or grown less? The proper reply to this question is that the Party for a number of years has been dragging along somewhere far behind the tail of the movement. During the last couple of years it has more than once caught up with the tail of the movement, and more than once has even stood at the head of various mass actions. At the present time it has been proved, on the basis of the historic experience of the last two or three years that the Party is capable of putting an end completely to right sectarianism, i.e., to put an end to the split from the tail of the movement, so as to liquidate sectarianism completely. Further, as experience shows, once more, the Party can stand at the head of mass actions, but this takes place from time to time, by chance, without plan and in the manner of irregular troops. This is the chief shortcoming of the Party at the present time.

The right danger is still the chief danger in the Party, and in some respects it is even growing, but not at all because the contacts of the Party with the masses have strengthened, but because the contacts of the Party with the masses of the proletariat in recent years have weakened, while the contacts with the non-proletarian masses have strengthened and increased.

Take the basic facts for the last year. We see a weakening in the leadership of economic struggles. We see a weakening of trade union work. We see the insignificant result of concentration, i.e., penetration into the factories. We see the strengthening of the social-fascists in industrial districts. We see a fall in the circulation of the "Daily Worker," the only proletarian paper.

What do these facts show? They show the weakening of the proletarian basis of the Party, the weakening of the contacts of the Party with the workers. On the other hand, we see the not altogether successful leadership of the veterans' movement, but nevertheless some leadership of it. We see the successful organisation of a wide farmers' conference. We see the successful organisation of the anti-War Congress of the American students, who were always extremely far from any revolution, even from the point of view of European students.

Thus, we see the irregularity of the development of the contacts of the Party with the masses. Contacts are undoubtedly increasing, sectarianism is being abolished, though it is far from having been abolished so far, but contacts with the proletarian masses are either weakening in a number of districts or are growing very slowly, while contacts with the non-proletarian masses are increasing rapidly.

The basic facts show us that the situation of the Party in the last two years has changed, and is changing very rapidly. The old danger of sectarianism has not yet been completely eliminated, but it is being eliminated. It has become less. However, we must see the changes which have taken place in the Party, the change which is taking place now. We must see that the Party is passing to a new stage, that in the Party there are arising new dangers which signify a certain increase in the right opportunist danger, but now in a new form. This is the fundamental question.

If we see this process clearly, we can clearly see the chief historic tasks which face the Party. Then we can raise the question of the plan for the further development of the Party, from the point of view of its class buttress, and correctly solve it.

Take the fundamental question in this respect—the question of concentration, the question of the penetration of the Party into the factories. The resolution speaks of it as follows: “This overwhelming weakness of the Party continues to exist in all Party life.” This is put very strongly. Further, dealing specially with concentration work in the decisive sectors, it says the following: “The concentration programme is mostly operated only formally and mechanically.” Again it is put very strongly.

But the experience of work in Chicago, Cleveland and Detroit, recently in particular, has shown that it is fully possible to penetrate into the big factories, if we really fight seriously for this matter.

It is undoubtedly plain from this fundamental question, the question of forming a basis for the Party in the factories, that the Party has worked very weakly. There was not sufficient clearness in the matter of the construction of the Party.

The general plan of the construction of our Party in every movement and in every complex situation is as follows: Our Par-

ty is a proletarian Party. Why? Because the proletariat constitutes the only class which is consistently revolutionary to the end. All other classes—the poor and middle farmers—vacillate, and will vacillate. Among the proletariat itself, the main section does not consist of farm workers (although of course it is necessary to work among them), but of city workers. Among the city workers, our chief basis does not consist of the unemployed, but of those who work in the factories. Our Party cannot be strong if it is a Party of the unemployed, because our Party must base itself on the workers who are working in the factories. This is the main basis of the Party. Our basis must be the big factories in the fundamental branches of industry in the industrial districts.

In putting the question this way, we gradually arrive at the main basis of the Party, i.e., the big factories in the industrial districts. This is where the main basis of our work lies. It consists of the concentration districts, the concentration factories. Concentration is not one of the branches of Party work, along with other branches. It is the fundamental Party work for the formation of the main basis of the Party in the big factories, in the basic branches of industry.

Everything that has been said of concentration applies also to the trade unions. Any denial of this main organisational and political task is an attempt to turn the Party from its proletarian basis. The history of the Party for the last year and-a-half shows that a plan for the concentration of our forces on the main industrial basis did not exist. The Party spontaneously strives now here, now there. The veterans' movement arises and the Party strains in that direction. The unemployed movement rises, and the Party pushes in that direction. The farmers begin to move, and the Party rushes to the farmers. The students began to talk loudly and the Party rushed to the students, held meetings among them, etc. It is, so to speak, without a rudder and without sails. The Party drifts about the revolutionary ocean, now here, now there, now forwards, now backwards, now to the workers, now to the unemployed, the intellectuals, the students, the farmers, etc. Why? Because the Party has no firm plan.

What was the task of the Party towards the mass movement? Without question the Party should stand at the head of all mass

actions. It must never strive to narrow down mass actions. But when taking on itself the leadership of all mass actions, including those of the farmers, the Party must firmly carry on, among this complex network of actions, the plan for building up a proletarian basis in the factories, and must always see this as its chief aim. We must go to the farmers, veterans, unemployed and students. We must everywhere take the leadership on ourselves, but we must remember that the wider the movement of the farmers and other non-proletarian circles, the more necessary it is for the Party to take the leadership of this movement on itself so as to carry out the hegemony of the proletariat, the more consistently and energetically must we carry on concentration work, the enlargement and strengthening of the proletarian basis of the Party. It is precisely the absence of the enlargement of the proletarian basis which will be the chief obstacle for the Party in leading the entire non-proletarian movement.

We must take a critical attitude to a formal and purely external contradiction. It would seem to follow that if the Party devotes its greatest forces to concentration it will not have forces for the farmers' movement. In reality there is no such contradiction, and such a contradiction could only play a secondary role and could only have a temporary character. We must base ourselves on the fact that to correspond with the importance of the tasks we must distribute our forces in a planned manner so as to supply forces everywhere, but in a planned manner and proportionally to the tasks which face the Party. First of all, of course, we must supply forces for concentration. It may be objected to this, that the Party has sent its forces and nothing came of it. But if nothing came of this, it means that the people sent were not those who should be sent, it means that they did not act as they should have acted, it means that the comrades were improperly instructed as to what to do, that we gave unclear instructions on concentration to them when they set out. Thus, a planned distribution of forces *corresponding to the importance of the tasks* is the first and basic factor which must be kept in mind in the work.

Secondly, it is necessary to *select the main link* and not scatter our efforts, not fritter away our forces, not seize on tasks which the Party in any case cannot carry out. This can be ex-

plained by a few examples. We cannot organise *everything*, because if we could organise *everything*—both the farmers and all the unemployed and all the workers and the homeless and the students, etc.—we could make a revolution to-day, while we cannot even organise all the workers capable of being organised, we are not able to do this, and therefore our enemies organise some of the workers. This is inevitable, just as it is inevitable that the first lessons of political science, the first lessons of political organisation, are received by the workers from the bourgeoisie, just as the first lessons in the handling of arms are obtained by the workers from counter-revolutionary officers.

Therefore, we must clearly see that what we can do and what we cannot do. We must not take hold of tasks which we cannot carry out, we must not scatter our efforts; leave something to the bourgeoisie, let them prepare something for us.

From the question of the planned distribution of forces of the Party and the work in the concentration districts, the following most important task arises: The promotion of new forces, the renewing of the Party cadres. In this sphere matters are in a very bad state. At the Plenum it was stated:

“The leadership in the districts which took part to a greater or less extent in local struggles has not grown up and has not arisen from these struggles, and to a great extent consists of newcomers.”

Besides this the leading cadres are functionaries who have long since been separated from industry.

The question of cadres is not a technical question. It is part of the big political plan of the construction of our Party which the Party laid down as early as the XIV Plenum of the C.C.

In every Party which is struggling and growing in the struggle, Party cadres are manufactured who become the basic support of the Party. Therefore, in a revolutionary Party which is growing and developing, which is moving ahead, we can only welcome the fact that in the leading organs the same steeled Party cadres who are still becoming more steeled keep in their places for years, sometimes for tens of years. In Parties which have been marking time in one spot for a number of years, which suffer from insufficiency of principle and the heritage of factional

struggles, which suffer from the weak development of inner-Party democracy, i.e., the failure to attract all the members of the Party into the discussion of the political questions of the everyday struggle, in Parties which are not moving ahead, the failure to change cadres, or even changes on a small scale may become a hindrance to further development. Without a policy of bringing fresh blood into the leadership and filling the cadres from among the new activists who are separated out in the current struggles, such a Party cannot turn into a genuine mass Party. Until the American workers themselves take in their hands the matter of the further development and strengthening of the Communist Party, until the Party has its fundamental basis of native American workers and is filled with native American cadres, the Party will not be able to become a real mass Party, leading the revolutionary struggles of the American proletariat and the American toiling masses. Therefore, the question of new cadres in the American Party, along with the question of concentration, is a radical question for the further development of the Party. In the preparation of cadres the Party must have its own political "Five-Year Plan" if it may be so expressed.

The best solution would be to concentrate the work for the selection of cadres on the big factories in the concentration districts. This does not mean that capable workers will not be secured from the other branches of industry, and also students, craftsmen or farmers. The basic Party cadres must nevertheless be cadres which come from the big factories. For in spite of the fact that fifteen years have elapsed since the U.S.S.R. carried out its revolution, the basic cadres of the C.P.S.U. still consist of metal workers. These are the people who created and built up the Party and led it. Therefore, it is necessary to concentrate the forces of the C.P.U.S.A. on the concentration districts with the aim of the maximum recruiting of cadres there. There the Party must carry on a most determined policy of drawing the workers into the leadership, not being abashed by the fact that sometimes, or even in the majority of cases, they are politically untrained. Preparing them in the process of Party work, we shall be able to train them politically also.

On the question of the recruiting of new members, it should

also be said that here we have also a burden of old views which hinder the Party in making a correct approach to this question. In the Party there are views explaining fluctuations by the fact that the new Party members are overloaded by all kinds of Party duties. Therefore they leave the Party. In this general form, this statement has become antiquated. It was true in respect to the period when there were no mass struggles, when in reality the kind of workers who did not want to be overloaded came into the Party. Now workers are coming into the Party who want to find a reply to a series of burning questions. In this respect what we should fear is not giving them too much work, but too little. It is ridiculous to talk about overloading Party members at a time when the Party members are thirsting to get the reply to a number of the most important questions. They do not find the reply to these questions, and therefore they leave the Party.

In this respect the Party must work out a whole series of practical questions which cannot be included in a single article.

We must attach the greatest positive importance to the successes of the Party, but these successes have no significance in themselves. In themselves they are too insignificant compared with the stupendous scale of the tasks which face the Party. All these successes are of enormous importance as a proof of the possibility of bringing about a great growth of the Party, if the Party really undertakes the work. The whole Party, all the Party members, must know exactly what is the real condition of the organisation, what are its real forces, what are the tasks set before it by history, where its main forces are directed, according to what clear and exact plan the whole Party must work from top to bottom so as to become a real mass Party, the real Bolsheviki Party of the American proletariat. If this is done, if the Party becomes acquainted with the documents which the convention works out and begins to carry them out attentively and carefully, if the whole Party and all its members begin to participate actively and consciously in the planned construction of the Party, there is reason to state that it will be prepared for the mass revolutionary fights of the American proletariat, which face it in the very near future.



V.I. Lenin and J.V. Stalin Draft the Resolution of the Tammerfors Bolshevik Conference (1905)

The Extraordinary Conference of the C.P. of the U.S.A.

The Communist International,
Vol. X, No. 19, October 1, 1933

At the beginning of July an extraordinary Party Conference of the C.P. of the U.S.A. was held in New York. It was attended by more than three hundred leading Party comrades from all over the country. The fact that this Conference was termed “extraordinary” shows that important questions were before the Party requiring to be dealt with in a manner not ordinarily resorted to by it. The Conference unanimously adopted an open letter to the whole Party membership. This open letter contains the most serious self-criticism of the weaknesses and shortcomings of the Party and indicates the ways and means of overcoming them. Why was such an extraordinary step as this appeal to the whole Party necessary?

To explain this, certain main facts regarding the development of the C.P. of the U.S.A. (which has now been in existence fourteen years) require mention. The building up and consolidation of the Communist Party in the United States took place amidst great difficulties. Born out of heterogeneous, theoretically weakly developed groups and having its main organisational strength in the small enterprises of light industry, with their narrow craft ideology, and a big percentage of the immigrant elements isolated from the masses, the Party became, from its very beginning, the centre for protracted factional fights which hampered the development of the revolutionary mass work and the rooting of the Party among the decisive strata of the American working class. Only in 1929 was the Party able, with the direct help of the Communist International, to purge itself of the Lovestone renegades and thus put an end to the factional struggle.

The Party could for the first time in its history, at its Seventh Convention, in 1930, record the complete liquidation of factions within the Party and secure unanimous acceptance of the political resolutions. It very soon became evident, however, that the Party, despite the liquidation of factions, was not yet able to develop itself into a proletarian mass Party. The curse of the herit-

age from the past, the narrow attitude in approaching the mass work, still rested heavily upon the shoulders of the Party.

In April, 1932, the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C. of the Party was held. This Plenum also unanimously adopted a very critical resolution as to the situation in the Party, stating two years after the Seventh Convention, among other things, the following:

“The radical turn towards revolutionary mass work among the basic sections of the American proletariat, which has been demanded by the E.C.C.I. in its resolutions and directives, has up till now essentially not been carried through in practice. Although the Party has recognised the necessity of this turn, and although the Party can show a number of successes in the attempt to carry out the turn in practice (strikes, Scottsboro’, hunger march), *the work of the Party fundamentally remains in the same groove.*”

This resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum, besides giving an estimation of the situation within the Party, also set forth the main tasks before it; this resolution became the basis for directing the work of the Party for the year 1932. Unfortunately, at the following Plenums of the C.C. in August, 1932, and at the beginning of this year, the Party leadership was compelled to admit that the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum had not been carried out in practice by the Party. This, of course, signalled a serious danger, especially taking the further deepening of the crisis into consideration, as a result of which wide movements developed (in addition to the strike struggles and radicalisation of the working class) also among the non-proletarian strata (farmer-strikes, veterans’ march to Washington, teachers’ demonstrations, unrest among the students and other intellectuals; etc.). Thus the objective situation for the accomplishment of the turn towards revolutionary mass work demanded by the Fourteenth Plenum resolution grew more and more favourable during the year 1932. Notwithstanding this, the Open Letter which was adopted more than a year after the Fourteenth Plenum states that: “The Party has not developed into a revolutionary mass Party of the proletariat.”

The main reason for the failure to carry out the unanimously adopted resolutions is, according to the Open Letter, to be found in the fact that—

“In the Party, and particularly among the leading cadres, there is a *deep-going lack of political understanding* of the necessity for strengthening our basis among the decisive sections of the American workers. From this follows the fact that the leadership of the Party has not adhered to a fixed course for overcoming the main weaknesses of the Party, allows itself to be driven by events, and does not work out carefully with the comrades of the lower organisations ways and means for the carrying through of resolutions and checking up on their execution. The result is that we talk about factory and trade union work in countless resolutions without carrying this work out.”

The tasks indicated, and the methods of work put forward in the Open Letter, do not differ essentially from those of the Fourteenth Plenum resolution. In the Open Letter there is, however, one very important additional point; this is the warning given the Party of the possibility of “going off its proletarian base” if it does not strengthen it among the decisive strata of the American workers (especially in the big factories of the most important industries) much more rapidly than hitherto.

The proceedings of the Extraordinary Party Conference clearly demonstrated the correctness of the criticisms in the Open Letter. The discussion at the Conference revolved mainly around the question of shop work, how to correctly carry out the concentration policy decided upon by the Party over two years ago, and the building up of revolutionary trade unions and the work in the reformist unions. In the discussions, these questions were raised in connection with the gigantic strike wave which has raged throughout the United States during the last six months, sweeping the country from one end to the other, touching almost every industry and embracing the most varied strata of workers; as well as in connection with the N.I.R.A., one of the chief aims of which was and still is to stem the strike struggles of the workers.

Let us examine the main questions dealt with by the Conference in the light of its discussions. Take, firstly, the question of the building up and strengthening of revolutionary unions which was raised as “the *key task* of the Party” in the resolution of the

Fourteenth Plenum. Regarding the accomplishment of this task, the report of the Pol Bureau to the Conference says, among other things, the following:

“In steel, we still have forty to fifty shop groups, not mass organisations — about the same as one year ago... The union still does not play any significant role in the life of the steel workers... Most of the steel workers have not yet heard about the union... In heavy metal manufacturing, activities are equally weak, only some beginnings in small shops.

“In mining... the National Miners’ Union organisation of mine locals still cannot count more than 30 to 40 units. Most of the membership is very loosely organised and lacks leadership; the membership has been practically stationary since the end of 1931. There is very little extension (even contraction) of the field of operation of the union. There is no development of cadres.

“Let us examine the railroad industry. Surely this is one of the most important centre fields of work.. Yet, after years of resolutions and talk about the railroad industry, this remains largely—well, we might call it ‘unexplored territory.’

“In the textile industry, the National Textile Workers’ Union is only now, after a long period of passivity, beginning to participate again, to some extent, in strikes. Its membership remains about a thousand — about the same as in 1929.

“In the marine industry, the Marine Workers’ Industrial Union has conducted a number of small struggles on the ships, has begun concentration work on the Munson Line; has done some serious work among the unemployed; yet the Marine Workers’ Industrial Union also remain a small organisation, isolated from the larger masses.

“In the automobile industry we have the outstanding example of the great possibilities of big results with even a small measure of correct work... At the same time the Union shows an entirely unsatisfactory consolidation of the strike wave.”

In addition to this, many speakers mentioned numerous examples indicating that, on frequent occasions, our forces had not

been able to influence the strike movement sufficiently, which had frequently been quite spontaneous this year. Why? Because the Party had been isolated from the workers concerned. For instance, the following example was reported:

“In the shoe and leather industry, some 50,000 workers are on strike in the last six months especially. In these strikes we see the rise in the role of the independent unions where we began to work, because we did not have enough perspective to see the rise of the struggles of the masses. We applied the torch which began the strike movement in Boston and New England in the shoe industry, but the National Protective Association recruited 40,000 workers and we did not build our union, fortunately at least we were able to see what they could do, and we did not remain on the outside, but got in on the inside, and began to build up our unions.”

While many similar examples, indicating our isolation, were cited, there were also examples of an opposite character. In the State of Utah, for instance, the comrades, actually attempting to carry out their own resolutions on the penetrating into the mines, were able to establish fifteen bonafide locals of the National Miners' Union, with some 1,500 members, in a very short time, and led these miners into strike struggle, despite the joint resistance of the coal capitalists, state and A.F. of L. agents. Among the nut-pickers in St. Louis, most of whom are the most oppressed Negro women, our comrades were not only able to initiate a strike and successfully carry it out, but also to build up the union during the strike and, in addition to that, considerably strengthen the Party. There was a similar situation in the needle trades strike in Chicago, where the revolutionary union was also built as a result of a successful strike struggle. It is worth while mentioning that in the strike in Chicago also most of the strikers were Negro women who had never participated in strike struggles before.

While the Conference recorded a whole series of actual facts on the failures, as well as the beginnings of gains in the trade union work of the Party, it must be stated that this question was not quite fully elucidated in the discussion as regards the quite new situation arising with N.I.R.A. which was already put into

effect at the time of the Conference. The main attention in our fight against N.I.R.A. was paid to elaborating and bringing forward workers' "codes" on the part of the revolutionary unions. To do this was certainly correct. But N.I.R.A. has had, at least temporarily, very far-reaching significance also in the question concerning the practical organisation of the workers into trade unions. Utilising N.I.R.A. and every kind of demagogy, the A.F. of L. has been able to draw new hundreds of thousands of workers under its influence and even into its ranks. This, of course, creates a quite new situation for our work inside the A.F. of L. If the work in the A.F. of L. was important before, now that importance, in connection with our fight against N.I.R.A., has multiplied. Many questions like that of the open and closed shops were not sufficiently clarified. The Conference did not stress the necessity of being on guard against certain capitulation tendencies, in face of the attacks and demagogy of the A.F. of L., sufficiently, despite the fact that examples of the confusion and helplessness produced by the new manoeuvres of N.I.R.A. were stated at the Conference. These capitulatory tendencies are the expression of right-wing opportunism, and it is necessary to mobilise the entire party membership for the fight against them as the main danger in the current period.

Another question was that of the independent union. The tremendous desire of the workers to organise has found its expression, besides the increase in the membership of the A.F. of L. and the revolutionary trade unions, in the springing up of numerous independent unions which do not wish to affiliate either to the A.F. of L. or the T.U.U.L. It is evident that the task of the Communists is to make every effort to bring these independent unions into united front activities with the revolutionary trade unions, and even create various organisational forms for closer co-operation with these scattered independent unions to save them from falling under the influence of the A.F. of L. bureaucrats. This puts new problems and new methods of work before the Communists. The only guarantee of achieving this aim is, of course, patient and energetic work among the members of these independent unions. Shop conferences with the leaders of the independent unions for finding appropriate forms for the unifica-

tion, or joint actions, are, in most cases, doomed to fail if the Red Unions have not the necessary support among the masses of the members in these independent unions.

The complexity of all these questions directly connected with the work of the Party in the trade union field was rather insufficiently clarified in the discussions of the Conference. But a complete clarification certainly constitutes one of the necessary prerequisites for the successful building up and strengthening of the revolutionary trade unions, and organising a mass trade union opposition movement in the reformist trade unions, as demanded by the Open Letter. In connection with the struggle against N.I.R.A. and especially against the new manoeuvres and demagoguery utilised by all the social-fascist camp and the bureaucrats of the A.F. of L. on its basis, as well as the "militant" leaders of the Socialist Party of America, the struggle against social-fascism is more important than ever. This struggle of the party, as stated in the Open Letter, is underestimated and neglected. The most important medium for the struggle is the correct operation of the united front from below. The discussion at the Conference disclosed that frequent cases of right opportunist errors had occurred in the attempts to establish a united front (agreements instead of struggle).

After the publication of the Comintern manifesto on the united front this March, the Party made energetic efforts to create a militant united front. But the Conference also established that in connection with these attempts the struggle against the social-fascist leaders frequently weakened. The party led the campaign for social insurance poorly. This was noted at the Conference, and a number of definite steps were indicated to strengthen this, as well as the struggles of the unemployed. In the attempts to create the united front a special part has been played (and still is) by the so-called "Progressives," headed by the notorious Muste. At the same time as he and his colleagues participated in conferences organised on the initiative of the Communist Party or Red Trade Unions, supporting the proposals of the Communist Party in words, in practice they habitually sabotaged them. Such circumstances, of course, demand a strengthening of the work of exposing these "left" representatives of social-

fascism on the part of the Party. To the extent to which one may judge by different Conference speeches, however, this struggle has frequently been neglected by Party comrades.

Let us take the second question, that of concentration. It is, of course, closely related to the first one, that of the building up and radical improvement of the situation in the revolutionary trade unions.

The many speeches delivered at the Conference concretely substantiated the statements of the Open Letter, according to which, the plan of concentration has not been carried out, the methods used have been mechanical and formal, that the political meaning of the concentration, and the strengthening of the positions of the Party in the most important citadels of American capitalism, i.e., in the districts of Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and Pittsburgh, have not been fully understood by the Party. And, indeed, it was clearly recorded at the Conference that, at the same time as successful work is going on to build up the National Miners' Union in the State of Utah, there was almost a standstill in the main mining districts around Pittsburgh — where we have led gigantic battles of the miners. At the same time when almost no progress was to be seen in the main steel centres of Chicago, Cleveland and Pittsburgh districts, there were several struggles and beginnings in the building up of the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union in and around Buffalo. At the same time that the membership of the Automobile Workers' Industrial Union was declining in the heart of the American automobile industry, and in one of the main concentration centres in the city of Detroit, there were small struggles and attempts to build up locals of A.W.I.U. in some other less important cities. At the same time that the work among the Negroes in the main Negro centre, Harlem, N.Y., is not going forward, there has been a steady progress in building up the Share Croppers' Union in the South. At the same time that a Food Workers' Union was built up among the nut-pickers of the Chicago district, in St. Louis the work of the Party among the Railroad Workers and in the stockyards remains in the same old groove. At the same time that the struggles of the unemployed are rising very high in a city like Seattle, they are rather going backward in

Chicago and Cleveland. These and similar facts as to the carrying out of the plan of national concentration were evident in the speeches at the Conference. The case was the same in carrying out the concentration on a district scale. For instance, in Detroit the work in the Ford shops remains weak, but at the same time there is to be seen a certain movement around the relief question in the Ford city of Dearborn. It must be stated that, apart from mentioning the facts in this regard, not very many conclusions were made in the speeches as to how to actually remedy the situation. But that there are beginnings of a good understanding of the correct application of the concentration becomes evident, for instance, from the following excerpt of one speech delivered at the Conference:

“We have adopted a policy of concentration and then when something came up of immediate importance, we took up that problem of immediate importance and solved that. I think that we must say very specifically that in carrying out the policy of concentration it is going to mean neglecting of certain things, and we should not kid ourselves; we must neglect certain things to carry out these concentrations that must be carried out, and if we try to understand this we will not come back later and find fault that this or that was not done. We cannot do everything with our present forces; we can only do certain things; we must do those which are most important, and if we do that it will make a better base for extending the work into all other fields. Also a policy of concentration means jarring a lot of comrades out of their present routine practices. We cannot carry in our routine practices as we have been doing month after month and year after year. It will mean cutting down lots of forces at the top, throwing these forces down below, neglecting certain routine tasks. But if we actually carry through the policy of concentration these things will be remunerated many times over.”

While there is a certain confusion in this quotation, in contrasting the concentration (i.e., the most important task from the point of view of Communist work) with “neglecting certain things,” and while there still is a certain adherence to respecting the “routine tasks” (i.e., the old methods of work which the Party

has condemned in several resolutions) it shows a considerable clarity as to the understanding of the concentration.

Let us take the third question, which was one of the main points in the Fourteenth Plenum Resolution as well as in the Open Letter, the question of the *Daily Worker*. The Conference recorded (and correctly so) the further decrease, even since the Fourteenth Plenum, in the circulation of the *Daily Worker*, notwithstanding certain improvements in the contents during the recent period, in a very alarming manner. Several proposals as to how to remedy this bad situation were made at the Conference. In this connection, as well as in the dissemination of the other Press organs and the literature of the Party, the financial looseness and irresponsibility which still exists in the daily Party activity were strikingly exposed.

Let us take, finally, the fourth important question of the many touched upon in the Conference discussions, that of the composition of the Party and recruiting. In this regard also many facts were cited as to the insufficient work of building the Party during struggles, and carrying on systematic recruiting. As to how weakly the Party is still rooted among the American proletariat, the national composition of the Party membership offers striking evidence. According to the report on the organisational situation in the Party, 70 per cent. of the Party members are still foreign-born. The proportion, of course, should be the opposite. Figures presented to the Conference show that the Party increased its membership during the year 1932. Several thousand new members were also recruited during the first six months of 1933. But the actual membership of the Party was, at the time of the Conference, not bigger, but rather slightly less, than at the end of 1932. It shows that the fluctuation of the membership is still tremendous. The Party easily gets new members, but cannot keep them. The great majority of the Party members are unemployed, which again shows that the Party has not determinedly adhered to the fixed course of getting new members from the big factories—and building factory cells. Notwithstanding that the present Party membership is proletarian and devoted, it is obvious that this membership must be strengthened with fresh forces from the shops, mines and mills, and, above all, from among the

American elements. This means, and this was also clearly emphasised at the Conference, that special attention must be paid to the every-day practical organisational work, by building up lasting personal contacts with the workers, which was especially emphasised in the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum. Only by greatly enlarging the Party membership and developing it, and increasing the rôle of the Party as an organisation, can such questions as the question of the cadres, fraction work, real Communist leadership in the mass organisations and the correct leading of the various struggles of the workers be solved.

The Extraordinary Party Conference of the C.P. of the U.S.A. was held at a time when a concerted attack of the American bourgeoisie and its main supporters, the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party, was in full swing, under the auspices of N.I.R.A., which has now become the evangel for finding the capitalist way out of the crisis, even for the whole international social-fascist camp. The Party Conference, notwithstanding that its discussions suffered to a certain extent from an insufficiently developed political outlook in this new situation, has through its proceedings and its decisions created clarification as to the question of where the Party stands, and what it must do to rid itself of its isolation and develop into a genuine organiser and leader of the American proletariat.

Notwithstanding the increasing radicalisation of the workers, of which the recent and still extending strike-wave and the desire of the workers to organise are striking evidences, the work of the Party is proceeding at the present time in a situation which is much more complicated than it was during the Hoover administration. The bourgeoisie has now undoubtedly succeeded through the Roosevelt administration, at least temporarily, in broadening the basis for the policy of finance-capital among wide strata of the American toiling masses. The more important is it, therefore, for the Communist Party to adhere to the course fixed in its resolution, above all in the Open Letter, and not to allow itself "to be driven by events" in the face of the new manoeuvres on the part of the bourgeoisie and the A.F. of L. bureaucrats.

It is still too early to judge the extent to which the Party has

succeeded in mastering the decisions of the Conference, and putting them into effect. The first task after the Conference, of course, was to so popularise and discuss the Open Letter as to make it the property of the Party as a whole. In the carrying out and leading of this campaign, the *Daily Worker* has a position of paramount importance. It must be said that the *Daily Worker*, during the two months following the Conference, has not been able to successfully fulfil its tasks in this respect. It has so far been quite isolated from the discussions, which must have been taking place in the Party after such a stirring event as the Open Letter. It is quite evident that the paper, therefore, must take a different attitude to the Open Letter, by popularising it, as well as really leading the discussion in the Party. In one word, the paper should, firstly, bring very thorough information as to what is happening in the Party organisations in connection with the Open Letter, and, secondly, itself take part in the discussion, correcting mistakes, criticising the lack of activity of various organisations in developing the discussion, giving concrete instructions on how to carry on the discussion, giving political estimation of the discussion and its results, etc. If the *Daily Worker* does this, and if simultaneously the whole Party leadership in the broad sense of the word, from the Central Committee to every district committee, do their part by going to the Party masses, to the lowest units, and directing the discussion there personally, the first steps in carrying out the Open Letter will be made; and the Extraordinary Party Conference will really be turned into an historical event in the developing of the Communist Party of the United States into a genuine revolutionary mass Party having its roots in the factories among the most decisive strata of the American workers, whence it cannot be dislodged by any manoeuvres of the capitalists or their allies.

Review of the Daily Worker (U.S.A.)

(June-July)

(In the order of checking up the carrying out of the tasks put before the Communist Party of the U.S.A. by the E.C.C.I.)

The Communist International,

Vol. X, No. 21, November 1, 1933

In its Open Letter to the members of the Communist Party of U.S.A., the extraordinary Party conference, which took place in the beginning of July, noted that the circulation of the D.W. had decreased and the Party had not carried out its tasks of transforming the paper into "a really revolutionary mass paper, into an agitator and organiser of our work." In the control tasks adopted by the conference, the task of transforming the D.W. into a mass popular Party paper was put before the Party. Concretely worked out, exceedingly important tasks of struggling for the carrying out of the instructions in the Open Letter, the struggle for the organisation of a mass Party basis in the main industrial centres, and the organisation of mass revolutionary unions, were put before the paper. The question of the D.W. has a special significance for the C.P.U.S.A. The condition of this paper not only shows the mass influence of the Party, but also which masses the influence of the Party is penetrating. With the presence of more than ten workers' foreign language papers with a combined circulation of more than 150,000, the D.W. on the one hand serves mainly the native American workers, and on the other hand involves the immigrant workers in the common class struggle. Therefore, the position of the D.W. is an indication of the influence of the Party among the native American workers, and also the inclusion of the immigrant workers, who form a considerable mass of workers in the most important industries and, as a rule, are unorganised, in the common class struggle.

I.—THE POPULARISATION OF THE OPEN LETTER AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CARRYING OUT ITS INSTRUCTIONS

In the control tasks, a special sixth paragraph gives directives on the popularisation of the decisions in the C.P.U.S.A.

with the aim of assisting the widest development of practical, useful self-criticism from below. This is to foster the growth of political consciousness, activity and initiative of the membership masses, and the lower organisations, and the working out of the immediate concrete tasks and a plan of work for every Party organisation in its sphere of activity. To emphasise the importance of popularising the decisions, and taking into account the fact that previously (for example, the decisions of the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C.) decisions were not popularised or explained, and there was no struggle in the paper for their accomplishment; the decision on the control tasks indicates that the wide popularisation of the decisions on American questions is the main prerequisite for their actual fulfilment. Every Party member should know these decisions and their significance for his practical work. It was pointed out, especially in connection with the D.W., that the paper should conduct an explanatory campaign connected with current questions of class struggle, involving not merely Party members, but all workers.

Nevertheless, up to the 12th of July, that is, after more than a month, there was nothing in the D.W. directly concerning the Open Letter, as also regarding the coming Party conference.

Right up to the conference the D.W. did not popularise the ideas and tasks put forward in the Open Letter. There was nothing concerning the questions of concentration of the forces of the Party in centres of most importance, of the proletarian basis of the Party, the farmers' question, the building of the D.W., etc. Only the campaign for social insurance was renewed in the paper on the 10th of June, when from day to day the paper started to print material on this question.

On July 12 the paper carried information concerning the conference which was held on 7th-10th of July, with a brief report on it. On the 13th of July the text of the Open Letter was printed in a special supplement. But after that, until July 18, there was nothing concerning the Extraordinary Conference in the paper. On July 18 the D.W. printed a letter from a worker greeting the Open Letter as an editorial, with a "note" and the following comment:

"This, comrades, is the spirit. It was because the Party

conference wanted to arouse such a spirit that the Open Letter was written. We hope every unit of the Party, every Party committee as well as every individual comrade, will thoroughly examine our work with the view of decisively improving our approach to the workers, and in the first place, to those in the big factories.”

“The *Daily Worker* invites comrades and units to write to us on the tasks which you have set yourselves in the light of the Open Letter and particularly on your actual accomplishments in carrying out these tasks.”

It would be apropos for the D.W. itself to state what tasks it has set itself in regard to the Open Letter, and particularly how it is carrying these tasks out. In such a manner the D.W. allowed itself to drift, and divorced itself from the popularisation of the Open Letter and the decisions of the Party conference, and the struggle for the carrying out of the directives of the Open Letter, from the rôle of organiser, the ideological leader of this struggle.

In the issue of July 19 two short letters on the Open Letter were published. True, in the issue of July 15 there was an article under the mysterious caption, “He Who Laughs Last,” which pointed out that the capitalists do not understand this old proverb. The bourgeois press, in connection with the Open Letter, says that the Communists admit their defeat; whereas the D.W. is out to prove that there is no such defeat. The membership of the Party has increased from 9,000 to 20,000 during the last year, its influence is growing everywhere; but this growth of the Party, the D.W. writes, does not satisfy us, for it does not correspond to the full possibilities of the situation. This is not quite what the Open Letter tells us. The formula of forgetting the actual circumstances may also be applied, both to the evaluation of the position of the Party drawn up by the Sixteenth Plenum of the C.C., which the Open Letter admits to be incorrect, and that given by the Letter itself, namely, that the Party has not carried out the tasks which were set it over a year ago. The paper is right in saying that the Open Letter is not an admission of defeat, as there is no such defeat, for the C.P. has achieved certain definite successes. The revolutionary movement is making rapid strides forward. But it should have gone further, and said that the Open

Letter emphasised that if the C.P.U.S.A. does not strengthen its foundations in large enterprises there is a danger that it will “succumb to the influence of petty-bourgeois views” and that it showed the way out of this situation. Without this, as the paper points out, it would not have been “a weapon in the struggle.”

On July 22 an article by Comrade Browder was published on the struggle for social insurance, and the paper carried an excerpt from the Open Letter on the struggle for social insurance, but gave no explanation of the Open Letter, or evaluation of the execution of this directive from the time of the publication of the Letter.

On July 24, in one of the smaller articles, the paper gives an excerpt from the Open Letter, pointing out that Roosevelt’s programme makes the fight for social insurance, and particularly for unemployment insurance, especially important.

The *Daily Worker* of July 25 printed a letter from a non-Party farmer from Pennsylvania, a German, who remarked that the Open Letter appeared at a very opportune time. But the paper limited itself to printing this letter without comment. But comment was necessary, because this letter advances a series of facts, from which it follows that the Party was not mobilised around the Open Letter. “A few days ago,” reports the correspondent, “I met two Party members... I talked with them about the ‘Daily’—and as true as my name is... not one of them was a subscriber to the *Daily Worker*!... I told them straight to the face that such Communists do not count much to-day in a period of revolutionary fermentation among workers and poor farmers.” ... Or this fact, that at a meeting in a workers’ centre where the well-known “Socialist” Maurer delivered a speech in connection with the Roosevelt Act, not a single Communist showed up to expose this “socialist.” “Where were the Communists to expose the Slavery Act? Yes, the Letter (Open Letter) was necessary.” Excellent material for the paper. But the *Daily Worker* remains strangely, mysteriously silent.

On July 26 an editorial appeared which was devoted to the growth of the strike movement and headed, “Who Will Lead These Strikes?” a question which is very timely—and directly related to the Open Letter.

However, after quoting the Open Letter on the increased activity of the reformists, and the necessity for concentrating on work in the leading industries, only at the end of the editorial does the paper, basing its statement on the Open Letter, declare:

“We must raise the loudest alarm in the ranks of the Party and the revolutionary trade unions, stressing the burning point in the Open Letter—centring our greatest energy, our strongest organisational forces, our constant activity in the basic industries.”

However, neither small, nor “loudest” alarm is raised by the newspaper. In this number which the newspaper evidently considers devoted to the Open Letter, the regular excerpt from the speech of Comrade Browder at the Party Conference was given, and one from the Open Letter itself. As editorial, the paper printed merely an address to the readers and the Party organisations, urging them to write about the Open Letter. It is possible that the newspaper resolved to maintain a strictly democratic line in the popularisation of the Letter, “popularisation from below,” giving excerpts from the speech of Browder until a response would arise from below to the paper’s calls.

Only on July 26 did the paper raise the question of who was to lead the growing fight of the workers, and already the next day we find the question answered: the D.W.’s leading article is headed, “The Party Leads.” In the course of one night the Party becomes the leader. “The Communist Party alone,” the D.W. asserts, “stands at the head of the army of starving jobless workers, leading the fight for Federal Unemployment Insurance and for immediate relief.” It is true that only the C.P. fights for federal insurance and immediate relief for seventeen million unemployed. But why make the “slip” of saying that the Party is at the head of seventeen million unemployed? After reading the editorials of July 26 and 27, the reader is left wondering about the true state of affairs. By such work the D.W. does not clarify this question. Possibly the editorial of July 27 was meant to answer the worker’s letter, published on July 26, on the editorial exposing Roosevelt (July 10), which, however, did not mention the rôle of the Party. But such an answer hardly helps.

On July 27 the newspaper printed not only a letter of a read-

er, a member of the Party, but also an answer to it. But, unfortunately, we cannot consider this answer either satisfactory or correct. Comrade — wrote a letter on the internal Party situation. It is possible that he reflects certain unhealthy frames of mind or tendencies in the Party. The question boils down to this, that the Party Conference and the Open Letter approached the problem incorrectly because to develop our work among the unemployed and in general, is very good, but how is it possible to do all of this without improving the inner Party life, particularly the education of the new members of the Party? And, as it happens, just this question is dealt with in the Open Letter; the Party must clean itself internally first and then it will be successful in its mass work. First of all this comrade should have received an answer to the question, “Is it correct that the Open Letter does not speak of the internal Party life, of the internal Party situation?” The newspaper hardly touches on this question, on the grounds that the Fourteenth Plenum has already dealt with the problem of internal Party life. Evidently the Editorial Board, for some reason, did not understand the vital point of this Open Letter, namely, that the questions of the internal situation of the Party, and the education of new Party members are very clearly defined in it, and that therefore a series of questions—the line of the Party, its leadership, the danger of factional fights, cadres, bureaucracy, initiative from below, apparatus, finance, etc.—are so sharply raised. The correspondent did not understand this point of the Letter, but neither did the Editorial Board. The letter deals a considerable length with internal Party questions, and for that reason it openly and authoritatively turns to all members of the Party, *although this is not the central point in the Letter*. The Letter calls upon the Party to overcome internal obstacles and emerge on to the broad road of revolutionary mass work. The Letter indicates the path to this, and mobilises the Party. True, the Editorial Board shows in its reply that the Open Letter speaks of the inner Party life, but it limits itself to a quotation from one of the points of the Open Letter, obviously insufficient for a characterisation of the attitude of the Open Letter—as the paper itself write—to the “fundamental problem in connection with the work of our Party.”

The Editorial Board is absolutely correct when it writes that the decisive question for the Party at present, is its rôle as the advance guard in the struggle of the masses. It is also correct when it states that we cannot sever internal Party life from mass work. But does not the Editorial Board itself follow the road of this separation somewhat, when it declares that the internal Party life will be good, to the degree to which the mass work of the Party is so? At this point, the newspaper evades the question—How can the mass work of the Party be successful when its internal condition is bad? Evidently the newspaper simplifies the question. Evidently it should have pointed first of all to the principals involved in the matter; that when there is a bad internal Party condition, there really can be no good mass work. It is the Party that is carrying on this work. If things are not well inside the Party, it cannot carry on good mass work. And, vice versa, if the C.P. does not carry on systematic work among the masses, this will naturally be reflected in its internal condition. The Open Letter points out that the decisions adopted by the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C. are correct. But they remain on paper, not being carried to the masses. This is the result of internal defects in the Party, and in turn sharpens these defects. For this reason the Party must energetically take up the struggle for carrying its decisions into life, into the masses, first of all among the workers in the basic industries, overcoming internal obstacles, strengthening the Party from within, transforming it into a mass Communist Party. The Party has on the whole cleaned its ranks from the Lovestoneites and Trotskyists, and *now* the centre of attention is the execution of its correct decisions in practice. This *practice*, above all, at the present time, decides the question of the line. What is unhealthy in the comrade's letter (or is the reflection of the unhealthy tendencies in the Party) is that he questions the Party's readiness to touch on what he considers a sore place as it is—the internal Party situation. The Editorial Board evades this sharp question, too. It simply limits itself to pointing out that a "mechanical cleaning" does not solve the question. This is correct, but it is no answer to the question, or rather an answer to only a small part of it.

It should have answered the question directly, shown the in-

ternal Party condition, and pointed out to the comrade that, although there are some unhealthy tendencies in the Party, *the Party is, as a whole, healthy*, and hence it should have answered to the second question that the Party does not need a mechanical cleaning; it should have pointed out that the cleaning of revolutionary parties, under the present conditions in capitalist countries and the fascisation of capitalist domination, takes place in a different way, in the process of the class battles, in the process of carrying out the revolutionary line of the Communist Party in practice, of exposing those who accept it only in words, of the Party's struggle on two fronts, and of purging it of the remains of social-democratic elements in this struggle. And it should in connection with this, have shown comradely resistance to such feelings of suspicion, demands for an internal Party cleansing, etc. It should have pointed out that these frames of mind are not correct, not healthy. The last question is whether such a letter should have been printed. The paper is not obliged to print all letters, but there must be a serious reason for not doing so, such as that it is a useless letter, a harmful letter in that it detracts attention from the questions standing before the Party, a slanderous letter, etc. But once a letter which sharply raises certain questions is published, a serious answer must be given it, not rounding the sharp corners. In this case, the letter places acute questions before the Party—so much the clearer and more carefully thought out should have been the answer.

Finally, on July 28, in an article on the policy of the A.F. of L. and our tasks, which is not bad on the whole, there is a reference to the slogan of "concentrate on the basic industries!" July 31, we find one more quotation from the Open Letter in connection with the campaign for the *Daily Worker*. "Every reader remembers," writes the newspaper, "the terse and significant reproach of the Open Letter: 'The circulation of the *Daily Worker* had fallen off'." Later on it adds, "and the activities of our readers in gaining new readers are the only means we have of guaranteeing that the six- and eight-page daily will be an organ of revolutionary vigour, a paper capable of doing its key-work in the carrying out of all the tasks of the Open Letter." As can be seen, the newspaper itself is at present not carrying out the most

necessary task in connection with the Open Letter—the popularisation of the Open Letter and the work of the Party Conference.

There can be only one conclusion—*the newspaper has not yet achieved the organisation of a systematic mass campaign for the popularisation of the Open Letter and the work of the Party Conference, as the most important prerequisite for the execution by the Party and the newspaper itself of the tasks placed before it by the Open Letter.*

The events which took place in the United States after the working out of the Open Letter—the intensification of the attacks of the bourgeoisie on the working class and the toiling masses under the flag of the Industrial Recovery Act and the increased feverish activity of social reformism in the deception and disorganisation of the workers make the questions of the Open Letter much more actual. And the farmer correspondent from Pennsylvania gave the newspaper a splendid example of how actual the questions of the Open Letter are at the present time precisely in connection with recent events of the United States. The question must be placed this way: At the present time the most urgent task of the Party is the organisation of the united front for the fight against Roosevelt's last act; —consequently the fight for the Open Letter is particularly actual at the present time, since the Open Letter points out the only road by which the Party can become the organiser of this united front. The Open Letter places the central questions of the development of the Party and the central problems before it, without the execution of which the Party cannot be at the head of the basic sections of the American working class. The struggle for the carrying into life of the instructions of the Open Letter must be a weapon for the mobilisation of the Party in the organisation of a broad united front of the workers, in the fight against a new, extensive attack of the American bourgeoisie.

The newspaper must immediately correct the mistake it has committed, so much the more, as in other respects the newspaper shows an ability to improve its work. There is a basis for thinking, therefore, that the mistakes which have been pointed out will soon be corrected. We shall not make any proposals on how to popularise the Open Letter, such directives have been given and

they must be carried out. It should be taken into account that the newspaper has already lost two months. The newspaper must take up, in the most decided manner, the task of explaining the problems of the Open Letter in connection with the actual course of events of the class struggle, to fight for the execution of these tasks in life. It is necessary to give accounts of the course of the discussion of the Letter, and at present it is clearly necessary to give, in the first place, material on how the instructions of the Letter are carried into life with informational material, elucidating articles should be published. The newspaper must *organise the verification of the execution* of the Letter through its contacts in the localities—the workers' correspondents. This is related to the work of the big cells, section and district committees, trade union fractions in the revolutionary unions and in the opposition, in the unemployed councils and mass organisations. The newspaper must summarise the work in connection with the most important questions of struggle and carrying into life of the Open Letter. All of this must be done not only from above, but unquestionably relying on the Party, non-Party and worker-correspondent masses, mobilising the social opinion of the masses, utilising its pressure on the weak and backward sections. An all-sided deep understanding of the Open Letter by the whole Party and sympathising non-Party elements, the mobilisation of the activity of the Party in the fight for its penetration into the fundamental branches of industry—this is the deciding question, at the present time, for the Communist Party of the United States and the *Daily Worker*. This task is not an easy one, but one quite possible of execution.

As early as May 29, the *Daily Worker* published the appeal of the T.U.U.L. to all members of the T.U.U.L., A.F. of L., independent unions, organised and unorganised workers, employed and unemployed, calling on them to organise their own committees in the factories, to formulate their demands, to strike for higher wages, and a reduced working day without wage-cuts. In this appeal a special section dealt with the Roosevelt Recovery Bill (at that time, it was still a Bill and was passed on June 16), and, on the whole, gave a correct characterisation of it. However, after this the paper said nothing on the question of the Bill until

June 3. On June 4, there was an article by Stachel on the growth of the strike struggle, where the section dealing with the Bill, in general, repeated what was said in the manifesto of the T.U.U.L. It was only on June 6 that letters were published from Washington on the discussion of the Bill in the Senate Financial Commission. On June 8 the paper issued a leading article on the strike-breaking nature of the Bill, letters from Washington and another paragraph. On June 9 there was an article by T. Todes, on June 10 a second article by the same comrade, on June 12 a small editorial article, and then it was only after June 15 that the paper carried something every day about the Act (on June 16 the Bill became law). However, it was only on June 22, *i.e.*, a week after the passing of the Bill, that the paper gave a full leading article on the Industrial Recovery Act. After June 22 the paper began to carry on a systematic campaign against the Act, and this campaign only assumed a really political mass character after the Conference. So that if we consider the matter of quantity, the picture is quite good from the end of June. However, it should be noted here, too, that the paper was *very late* in developing the campaign against the Industrial Recovery Act. If it was possible before June 16 to claim that it was still not law, nevertheless, after June 16, when the Act came into force, the immobility of the paper was a big political defect, the more so that the leadership of the Party fraction in the T.U.U.L. and therefore the leadership of the Party as a whole, correctly estimated the Bill, as can be seen from the manifesto of the T.U.U.L. on May 29. Thus we see that the newspaper *lagged behind*. But even after June 22 and up till the Party Conference, the paper developed the campaign against the Act very slowly.

But the chief weakness of the campaign of the paper is not the quantity of material published. From this point of view, up to June 22 the campaign was late, from June 22 up to the Party Conference it developed slowly, became satisfactory, and after the Party Conference it can be considered good. The newspaper systematically gave reports from Washington on the procedure with the Act, on the preparation and the discussion of the industrial codes, the speeches of Roosevelt, Johnson, Green, the employers, the representatives of the revolutionary unions, etc. The

paper gave correspondence on the preparation of codes by the revolutionary unions. It gave a number of articles analysing the various aspects of the Act, the attitude of various parties towards it, exposing the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party. The paper followed the strikes which had anything to do with the passing of Act. Since the second half of July the paper, from time to time, gave very good material (e.g., July 25), both in articles and in correspondence from the localities, dealing with the struggles of the workers and the work of the revolutionary unions against the Industrial Recovery Act. The paper particularly systematically exposed the Roosevelt boom, giving material day by day on this question, capably using the materials of the bourgeois press. The same can be said of the correspondence from Washington. But these things are not the most difficult and most responsible branches of the work of the paper, although we do not wish for a moment to belittle the importance of these branches of the work for the paper and the necessity for further strengthening them.

The weak part of the campaign was the *insufficiency of the political leadership*, the insufficiency of material from the *worker-correspondents*, the almost complete absence of *political organisation and utilisation of material to hand*. In general, during the two months the paper gave about 150 reports, articles, paragraphs and letters on the Act, of which about thirty were articles. But if we take the leading articles and political articles, during the two months, the paper did not give more than five or six altogether (leading articles on June 22, July 26, partly July 13, articles on June 28, July 4, 8, 27, 28 and partly July 15 and 17). This alone would be sufficient to show the weakness of the political leadership of the campaign. During two months the *Daily Worker* only gave two full leading articles against the frantic campaign of the bourgeoisie, who mobilised every government and social lever to carry through the "Recovery" Act. This means that the paper gave insufficient political leadership to the campaign. This was also evident in the weakness of the political organisation and the utilisation of the material possessed by the paper. In this respect, as a general rule, the paper limited itself to the role of information agent and photographer of facts, insufficiently working up and utilising the material politically. It must

be admitted to be an undoubted achievement that the paper increased its information and obtained some improvements in the organisation of the material work in this direction should be intensively carried further. A newspaper cannot live without information. Information is the material basis of a newspaper — the richer this basis, the better the paper becomes. But however good the information may be and however much it may speak for itself, it is quite insufficient and cannot take the place of political leadership, and the paper should approach every line of its material precisely from this point of view. Of course, if the leading part of a paper is too large and the information is sparse, it will not organise the masses. But the result will be the same if the material is given without political leadership. The worker must be *helped* to understand the material, to get the political idea of it, to draw conclusions for the organisation of the struggle, for understanding its slogans. This is the task of a newspaper which is a propagandist, agitator and organiser. The propagandist part of the campaign was more or less satisfactory. In this respect considerable work was done by Comrade Gannes, whose articles, unfortunately, were long drawn out and without a sufficiently clear political and theoretical presentation of the question. But the agitational and organisational rôle of the paper in the campaign was considerably weaker. Day after day a stereotyped postscript is tacked on to the articles and to some of the letters: “We must intensify our work, we must penetrate into the big factories, we must...” One of the big articles of Comrade Gannes on how to struggle against the Act consists entirely of these “we must,” “the workers must,” “intensify and consolidate,” etc.

And yet, even the scanty material which the paper has at present might serve as some kind of a basis for the organisation of leadership. As an example of the utilisation of the material and concrete leadership on the basis of material received, we may mention the issue of July 2, in which the paper, on the basis of material on how the workers of a cement works broke down the attempts of the employers to form a company union, gives the lessons of this struggle and advice to the workers on their further struggle, not giving this advice in a condescending tone. Several

such examples could be given, but they are units among hundreds of articles, letters, reports, etc. The paper registers facts and stops at this, or gives the recipe: "we must," "the workers must," "in every factory, in every mine, strengthen, consolidate," etc.

This expresses the basic weakness of the paper and the campaign—its weakness as an organiser and leader, the weakness of its *concrete leadership*. This is also explained by the weakness of the basis of the paper among the worker-correspondents, the weakness of the promotion and education of these correspondents. The paper sometimes gives good worker-correspondents' material or correspondence from the localities (e.g., July 25), but at present these are only occasional examples and even exceptions. *Unless the basis of worker-correspondents and the network of local correspondents in general is strengthened, the paper cannot live.*

But on the basis of the materials of the worker-correspondents, the paper should display its role of agitator and organiser. In this campaign this rôle was shown very badly. And yet this is the decisive link of the campaign.

And here the paper displayed the weakness of leadership, though it is true that it made some progress towards the end of the period under review. In a number of cases the paper itself makes such admissions as in the headline of July 26: "Letters From Workers Show Growing Desire for Union Under Own Control," and on July 18: "In a month or so Lewis and his representatives claim to have organised 300,000 new members." On July 14, in the report on the session of the Executive Committee of the T.U.U.L., during the Party conference, we find: "In connection with the activity of the A.F.L. and the attempt of the bosses to force the workers into company unions it was stressed that *the T.U.U.L. unions are not taking advantage of the tremendous desire of the workers to organise. Where this was done as among the miners of Utah some 1,300 miners joined the National Miners' Union.*" On July 28, in an article against the strike-breaking of the A.F.L.: "We must proceed to the most energetic organisation campaign of the revolutionary unions to smash these attempts (to form company unions, and to carry out the

tactics of the A.F. of L. leaders). We must realise the danger and be able to cope with it by a most detailed and painstaking exposure of the policy of the A.F. of L. We must urge the workers to form their own unions, develop the initiative of the workers in all plants in the basic industries, stimulating the formation of strike committees..." Many such admissions could be found. However, one thing is very obvious. On July 14 the Executive Committee of the T.U.U.L. admitted that we are lagging behind. But two weeks later the paper again stated: "We must," etc. And what had been done, what was the practical experience, why not summarise this experience, draw lessons from it, instead of repeating a stereotyped phrase? The paper does not carry on any "most energetic campaign" for the independent organisation of the workers. It does not "urge" the workers to this, although it exposes the A.F. of L. quite well, although it gives information about independent organisation. It is a great thing to gather information and to give it. This is a great thing for the organisation of a few dozen people, but the paper must organise the masses, and for this purpose the Editorial Board and its correspondents must convert this material into a basis for the political leading, organising and appealing rôle of the paper. All the facts in the paper show that this is just what is missing in its work. For example, there is a letter from Rhode Island: "When we explained to the workers the real difference between the National Textile Union (T.U.U.L.) and the Amalgamated Union (A.F. of L.), they unanimously decided to join the National Union. There are similar letters from Youngstown, etc.

We must deal with some questions on the political line of the paper in this campaign. The Party and the paper in general correctly estimated the Industrial Recovery Act. But in the campaign there were, nevertheless, some weaknesses. The Industrial Recovery Act is a serious step by the American bourgeoisie in the direction of fascisation and war. However, at the beginning the paper closed its eyes to these new fascist features of the Act. The leading article on June 8 stated directly that the Roosevelt Act only means the extension to other branches of industry of the policy which the Republicans have carried on in the coal industry. In the same way, Comrade Gannes, in his first article on

June 24, states that the Roosevelt Act in essence is the old policy of Hoover, the new features being “only” that the Roosevelt Act aims at finding a capitalist way out of the crisis. Comrade Craweth went to such an extreme that he found the predecessor of the Roosevelt Act in the so-called 1910 protocol, drawn up by Brandeis, now Judge of the Supreme Court, for the garment workers, and the regulations of the War Workers’ Bureau in 1918. Of course it is quite indispensable to use historical examples of exposed heroes of the bourgeoisie for the struggle against their present-day actions and leaders, to show the consistency of the development of the policy of the bourgeoisie. However, failure to put forward above all the question of the new features in the policy of the bourgeoisie is a mistake. It may be that this was why the *Daily Worker* developed the campaign against the Act so slowly—in reality *underestimating* its importance as a regular step in the development, the *fascisation* of the policy of the American bourgeoisie in the circumstances of the sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism, the end of capitalist stabilisation and the growth of the revolutionary upsurge. This denial of new features in the Act went so far that even in respect of its military significance Comrade Gannes states in the *Daily Worker* of July 3: “But this is not a new programme. Preparation for war has always been an integral part of the capitalists during a crisis.” (Why only during a crisis?)

Among the other weaknesses we should mention the insufficient exposure of the demagogy on “planned economy” under capitalism, the insufficient exhibition of the contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie, although at the beginning (June 6) the paper even stated that, owing to the contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie, the Act was almost as good as doomed to failure; the Washington correspondent stated that the capitalists do not even wish to recognise the principle of government control. This, he considered, was shown by the disagreements in the Senate Commission. At the same time the paper indirectly recognised the Act as one for economic planning, stating that the disagreements in the Senate show the inability of the capitalists to carry on any programme of economic planning. But these mistakes were not ones which determine the line of the paper.

The same can be said of the unclear formulation of Comrade Gannes on July 4 that the future development of American capitalism, if it is possible at all, can only take place through the enlargement of foreign markets, and the formulation in the *Daily Worker*, of July 1, which confuses the general crisis of capitalism with the present cyclic economic crisis (see paragraph 2 in the article, "Lag of Markets and Inflated Output Will Make More Unemployed").

However, the *Daily Worker* did not commit any more serious errors.

On the whole, the *Daily Worker*, took up a correct line regarding the Industrial Recovery Act and the entire Roosevelt programme. It should be pointed out as a service of the paper that it not only refused to allow itself to be confused by the campaign in the bourgeois press on the return of prosperity, but took up a firm Marxist position on the analysis of the causes and the character of the Roosevelt Industrial boom. It should be recognised as a service of the editorial board and the leadership of the Party that from the very beginning they correctly determined, on the whole, the tactics of the bourgeoisie, the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party. The article in the *Daily Worker* on June 28 gives a clear analysis of the role of the A.F. of L. and the tasks of the Party, with the shortcomings mentioned above, and an exposure of the programme of Roosevelt. The paper correctly emphasised the slogan of higher wages, though it did not put it forward sufficiently agitationaly. The paper did not sufficiently popularise the slogan against the intensification of labour, against capitalist rationalisation, including the struggle against dismissals, not to speak of a still weaker agitation around these slogans.

THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION WORK.

The development of the Labour movement of the U.S.A. at present has raised two questions in their full magnitude: the question of the relations between organised and unorganised workers, and the question of the attitude of the revolutionary unions to other trade union organisations of the workers. The Party must be perfectly clear on these questions, particularly at the

present moment. Without clarity on these questions no successful work can be done in creating a broad united front of the working class against the Roosevelt programme.

From what has been said in the preceding section it is clear that the paper, although it exposed the Roosevelt laws before its readers comparatively well and carried on an extensive campaign against them, did not sufficiently *organise the struggle* of the masses against Roosevelt's policy. This is particularly acutely felt in the trade union question. With what tasks was the paper faced?

Firstly, to expose Roosevelt's trade union policy. Secondly, to show the part played in carrying out Roosevelt's act by the A.F. of L. leaders, the Musteists, and the leaders of the Socialist Party.

Thirdly, to explain to the workers questions of the work of the A.F. of L., to mobilise them for the struggle against the policy of Roosevelt and of the A.F. of L. leaders supporting him.

Fourthly, to show how the revolutionary elements must carry out these tasks in order always to be with the masses and at their head.

The first and second tasks the paper has, on the whole, carried out satisfactorily, although without a sufficiently carefully thought-out plan. It gave materials exposing both the Act on the labour question and the concrete application of the Act in the sphere of trade unions. In a series of articles and other material the paper showed that the clause of the Act declaring that a worker has the right to belong or not belong to any trade union organisation, as he wishes, is a hypocritical and false statement, which in practice aims at preventing the workers from setting up their own independent organisations. During the negotiations about the codes, the employers and the Act administration recognised as the workers' representatives only the leaders of the A.F. of L. After loud mass protest the representatives of the revolutionary unions were admitted, but only in order that they might state their views; two miners elected by the workers of Brownsville, Pa., were discharged, to which the workers replied with a strike. At the same time a furious campaign is being carried on against the revolutionary unions, which are continuously

persecuted by the police. Roosevelt has declared a moratorium on strikes, and the revolutionary leaders of strikes have in a number of cases been arrested.

The paper showed that the government and the employers put forward the American Federation of Labour, in opposition to the independent organisations of the workers, set up company unions, and, where possible, prevent any kind of workers' organisation in order to disorganise and split the workers. It printed a number of articles and much other material on the policy of the A.F. of L., showing how the A.F. of L. breaks strikes by persuading the workers to wait until a code is drawn up, or, where there already is a code, to wait for the question to be settled by the arbitration commission, and so on.

The paper also printed matter on the co-operation of the A.F. of L. leaders with the employers in establishing low wages, sweatshop systems, etc. It exposed the "Left" manoeuvres of the A.F. of L. leaders, which were at times plain swindles (at a secret meeting the leader of the A.F. of L. textile union agreed to the employers' low-wage proposals, while at an open meeting he "protested," "demanding" a decent wage).

But its other tasks, the tasks of *organising the struggle of the masses*, the *Daily Worker* carried out altogether unsatisfactorily. It would be incorrect to say that the paper has done nothing, or nearly nothing, in this respect. It printed information about workers' action in favour of the unions, against company unions, about workers' action against the will of the A.F. of L. leaders, about the creation of independent unions, the activity of the revolutionary unions, etc. But, in the first place, it gave this information in quite insufficient quantities, and, secondly, it did not systematically, with concrete examples, explain to the workers what to do and how to do it, how to build and use the unions, how the opposition should work, who would be elected to be the leaders, how to organise a strike, to negotiate with the employers, to elect a factory committee, etc.

Only on June 22, as we have already pointed out, did the *Daily Worker* begin an intensive campaign against the Act. It printed a good editorial against the Act, which gave directions on the struggle against it. The paper advised the workers not to rely

on the promises of the Act and the A.F. of L. leaders, but to act, to fight; it pointed to the example of the Brownsville miners, and called on the workers to set up committees and militant unions, to strengthen the rank-and-file opposition in the A.F. of L., to carry on an energetic struggle against the policy of the company unions. This is all true, and the paper has repeatedly stressed it. But surely the point is not just to go on repeating it. Every day material should have been given illustrating how all this should be done, what practical work had been done in each instance, what the mistakes, achievements, or good examples in every case were. This the paper did not do enough of. It did give some information; but this was very little if the tasks were to be explained to the workers with these examples. In particular, there was not enough material on how organisations should be built up, and how the opposition in the A.F. of L. should work. And yet these are the most important points in the fight against the Act, and the central task of the Party in general.

Let us take as an example this same issue of June 22. On page three there are three letters: one from Indiana, on the plans of the owners of the Gary metal works to create a company union; one from Detroit on the intentions of the A.F. of L. agent, Martel, of creating a reformist automobile workers' union to fight against the revolutionary automobile workers' union; and one from Cleveland, about the successful action of 300 workers in a metal works against a 33 per cent. wage cut. It is good material, although it is given in a rather dry, telegraph manner. The heading at the top of the page is correct, too. But there is no explanation of what follows from this material. The heading tells the workers to create their own factory committees. Evidently the workers are for some reason not doing so, if they have to be called on, evidently there is lack of understanding, some sort of difficulty, etc. Therefore, the workers must have this explained to them, must be shown examples. The same applies to the company unions. And the paper either gives material only or repeats general formulas. As for explaining how to apply these formulas to the struggle, giving examples, and in this way itself coming to understand these formulas, the paper is weak. And this means that it is weak as an organiser and leader of the masses, as the

mass agitator and organiser of the Party.

Nor is the issue of June 22 the worst in this respect. Compared to others, this issue is one of the best on the trade union question during the period under review. There were several of these relatively satisfactory issues, as, for instance, those of June 24, 27, 29, and of July 1, 11, 13, 15, and 19. But of these issues only that of July 13 has a leading article explaining the policy of the Party in such an important question as independent unions, company unions, etc. Besides these, mention should also be made of the issue of June 2, which gave material on the experience of opposition work.

There were also some points which are not clear in the few cases when the paper raised questions of trade union policy. This applies to the editorial of June 17, the first editorial dealing with the Act, and also to a number of articles and paragraphs in other issues (June 8, 10, 20, 27, etc.). The shortcoming of this editorial consists in that, in connection with the Act, it gives first place to the question of the "closed shops," as if that were the main question. Secondly, the whole question is not put clearly. The paper simply and without reservation put forward the slogan of the closed shops. It is doubtful whether this is right. It is well known that the A.F. of L. applies this policy of the closed shops to prevent the admission of opposition elements into the factories, to rob the union members in order to provide large salaries for the A.F. of L. officials, to carry through measures against the workers, gagging all protest by the threat of expulsion from the union and dismissal from the factory, to crush all internal union democracy, and so on. The revolutionary elements and the rank-and-file workers must fight against such a policy of the closed shops.

Such distortions of the revolutionary trade union policy must be eliminated and their harmfulness explained to the workers. So that, while supporting the workers in their fight for the closed shops and organising them against the attempts of the owners to do away with the closed shops, we must at the same time fight against the A.F. of L. closed shop policy, against the distortion of the Party's trade union policy by the revolutionary unions under the slogan of the closed shop system, by all means stressing

in this struggle our task of organising all the workers in a factory into a trade union, a factory committee; stressing the right of the workers to conclude through their representatives a collective agreement with the employers providing for conditions of hire, transfer, wages, hours, factory rules, etc., the task of uniting organised and unorganised workers, in short, stressing the task of really rallying and organising the workers in the factories, in order to make the factories really “closed” to strike-breakers, obvious spies and agents of the employers and the officials.

But the question of the closed shop, although a most important question, is only one of the questions of the trade union policy of the Party. As a matter of fact, during the period under review only one editorial—of July 13—dealt with the trade union questions which arose in connection with the Act and with the new situation which recently came into being. This short editorial of the greatest importance deals with the question of the relations between the Party and the A.F. of L., the independent unions, which particularly began to come into existence lately, the company unions and the revolutionary unions. The editorial is perfectly right in trying to explain these questions with the examples of the action taken by the workers of two metal works—in Gary and near the Great Lakes in Michigan. It is right in greeting the workers who broke down the attempt of the employers to set up a company union and organised their own independent union.

The paper is also right in warning the workers not to let the independent union fall into the hands of elements hostile to the workers, or of the direct agents of the employers. But after that there is a series of questions vaguely dealt with.

From the whole article it follows that there are only two kinds of unions—those which assert a community of interests between the workers and the employers, and those which adopt the standpoint of class struggle. The paper puts the question this way: The former, whatever they may be called, are company unions, and the latter labour unions. So it makes several mistakes; what are they?

In the first place, if there are only two kinds of unions—one of them class and the other company—then the A.F. of L. unions

are evidently company unions. This conclusion is not drawn from that formulation alone. The editorial gives grounds for it, declaring that the reformist metal-workers' union is in fact a company union. Is it right to put the question that way? Very wrong and very harmful. It is true that the A.F. of L. unions are not class proletarian unions. It is also true that the A.F. of L. leaders in their unions carry on the same policy, though often disguised, as the company unions, i.e., a bourgeois policy. But are the company and A.F. of L. unions the same thing? Of course not. In both kinds there are workers, in both kinds work must be carried on. But the company union the workers regard as the employers' organisations; they now want their own organisations, and have the possibility of having them. They will not openly join the employers' organisations *en masse*. An A.F. of L. union the worker, even when he sees the treachery of its leaders, still regards as a workers' organisation, created by the workers themselves, although it is bossed by mercenary bureaucrats. That is the difference, an enormous difference. In the first case we are directly against company unions, for their destruction. In the second, we are not, as a rule, against the union as such, but against the treacherous policy of the leaders, for the workers' taking the union into their own hands, throwing out the employers' agents, clearing the unions of corrupt leaders; for they and their union can do this.

This difference became particularly important as the economic crisis developed, when the opposition began to grow up inside the A.F. of L. And it became still more important lately, in connection with the further radicalisation of the masses and with the tactics of the bourgeoisie, which puts forward the A.F. of L. in opposition to the independent organisations of the workers. Precisely in connection with the radicalisation of the masses, the growth in the number of mass actions, the bourgeoisie has been faced with the question of methods of fighting the workers in action, who are not yet sufficiently class-conscious, but who do not want to lie down under the crisis and the attacks of the employers, and who are attempting to set up their own organisations. And this is where the role of social-fascism as a whole, and of the A.F. of L. in particular, comes in. Precisely because

the leaders of the A.F. of L., in spite of having been very considerably discredited in the eyes of the workers, are nevertheless the leaders of the workers' own organisation, the employers can advance the A.F. of L. in order to attract into it the workers, who want to defend their interests, for which they want to have their own organisation, and who may regard the A.F. of L. as such an organisation. The A.F. of L. itself is doing everything in this direction. First of all, we have all sorts of "Left" manoeuvres and demagogy, such as the decision of the Cincinnati Congress on unemployment insurance, the slogan of a 30-hour week, the leadership of many strikes (in order to cleverly betray them), and also a series of organisational measures, such as the reduction of entry and membership fees, facilitation of membership for the unemployed in this respect, a recruiting campaign, etc. All this means that the employers are advancing the A.F. of L. in order to disorganise the masses, after extending its mass basis and its policy; although in fact this policy serves a more fascised system of the bourgeoisie than before, when the A.F. of L. adopted a more reactionary manner. For this reason, if from the very beginning of the crisis we stressed the necessity for strengthening our work in the A.F. of L., for setting up an opposition within it, and censured the attempts made in the resolution of the Fourteenth Plenum of the C.C. to define the A.F. of L. as an organisation of the labour aristocracy, we must now fully adopt and establish the point of the impossibility of successfully mobilising the masses against Roosevelt's policy, of building up a mass revolutionary trade union movement and a mass Communist Party, without seriously directing our efforts to work in the A.F. of L. where it has or is getting a mass basis. It is therefore clear that in such a situation, in the face of such tasks, it is a harmful mistake to identify the A.F. of L. unions with the company unions.

Secondly, this is enough to show that one cannot simplify the question so that it boils down to the existence of only two kinds of unions, just because there are two main classes—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. But three types of unions (company, A.F. of L. and revolutionary) do not sum up the situation, particularly now. There is still a fourth type of union—the independent unions. If in two large metal works the workers have

established independent unions, that is already an important fact. And these are not single facts. So where are these unions to be classed, according to the D.W. definition? Although in a number of cases they may not be class unions, neither are they A.F. of L., they are more Left than the A.F. of L. While according to the D.W., if they are not class unions, then they are company unions. But the situation is such that the revolutionary elements must, in the first place, establish these unions wherever the workers want to be organised, but are not yet prepared to enter a mass revolutionary union, or no longer wish to join the mass A.F. of L. union; and, secondly, must work in all these independent unions, develop joint action with them, in order to strengthen in them the ideological and organisational influence of those elements which are really devoted to the cause of the working class.

In conclusion, we must draw attention to the following point. The importance of building up revolutionary unions of automobile workers and seamen is well known. During the period under review conferences took place of both these unions. But the worker would not gather any concrete information about these conferences from the *Daily Worker*. Nor is this surprising, if the *Daily Worker* gives only two short articles about the congress of the automobile workers' union—a concentration union in a most critical period of its existence, when the agents of the A.F. of L. aim at, and are already succeeding in, creating a reformist union in opposition to it.

We shall not in this review touch on a number of other most important questions of the paper's work (strike struggles, united front, the fight against the danger of war and intervention in the U.S.S.R., etc)—its weakness as a mass organiser shows in other questions, too. Therefore, steps for improving the paper must be directed mainly towards overcoming this weakness.

4.—CONCLUSIONS.

The review of the *Daily Worker* for June-July shows a certain improvement in the paper towards the end of this period. This improvement consists in the paper's giving more topical material, and presenting it in a more popular form to the working-class readers. However, together with this, the paper (a) has

not succeeded in carrying on campaigns on questions of the greatest importance to the Party, particularly on the popularisation of the Open Letter, on the economic struggles and on the trade union question; (b) has, although supplying better and more topical informational and partly also propagandist material, still been very weak as *agitator and organiser*; (c) does not show a sufficiently careful and politically worked-out plan for carrying through the campaigns of the Party; (d) has had very weak connections with the local organisations, particularly the Party organisations. In view of this it is necessary to take a number of practical measures to strengthen the cadres of its workers, both centrally and locally; to secure assistance and control by the Political Bureau of the Party, to strengthen the participation of the local Party organisations in the work of the paper, in order further to improve the contents of the paper and increase its rôle as a class agitator and organiser of the work of the Party in the masses, and as builder of the Party. It is necessary to carry out in practice the decision on the work of the D.W. representatives in the districts chosen as points of concentration, on the regular pages to be directed to work in each such district.

The principal task of the paper at the present time is the struggle against Roosevelt's policy, the popularisation of the Open Letter and the fight for carrying it into life.

(a) At the monthly discussion of the work of the paper by the Central Committee it is necessary each time not only to summarise the work of the paper in the most important campaigns and give instructions based on it, but also to discuss how the paper fought for carrying out the principal tasks of the Party, e.g., the building of the Party in districts for concentration, the development of revolutionary trade union work, particularly the opposition inside the A.F. of L. in the branches of industry where it has mass organisations; leadership of strikes, popularisation of the experience and lessons of strikes, the daily popularisation and organisation of the united front from below in mass work and mass action—the fight against social-fascism on both fundamental questions (democracy and dictatorship, fascism, way out of the crisis, state capitalism, danger of war, unity of the working class, etc.) , and on daily questions of mass action—the attack of

capital, etc.; the fight against the danger of war and in defence of the U.S.S.R., a point which as yet is very insufficiently stressed in the paper.

(b) The *Daily Worker* must decidedly strengthen the struggle for developing revolutionary trade union work, in the first place by systematically popularising the tasks of the Party in this work, particularly in the building up of revolutionary trade unions and the creation of independent unions in the steel and automobile industries, in the organisation of a mass opposition in the A.F. of L. by showing the experience of this work, regularly printing pages on work in the most important branches of industry; to carry this out the paper must have permanent connections with the active Party members in the trade unions; secondly, by specially explaining to the *non-Party workers*, in the most popular manner possible, the current tasks of trade union work, with concrete examples (e.g., the Gary strike against a company union, the miners' strike against the will of the A.F. of L. leaders, etc.), with workers' letters, at conferences with worker readers of the paper, etc., so that not the least detail of trade union life, of the trade union policy and work of the Party should remain unexplained to the non-Party masses; and particularly questions of opposition work in the A.F. of L. (mobilisation of the membership masses against the A.F. of L. leaders, who are supporting Roosevelt, for strikes, against the persuasion of the A.F. of L. as in Pennsylvania), work in the independent unions, questions of trade union unity, attitude towards the Musteists, the policy of the reformist trade unions, etc., for which it is necessary to extend the network of non-Party local worker-correspondents, in the local organisations of the trade unions, carrying on systematic work among them. Questions of trade union work should occupy a central place in the paper; for that reason this work must undoubtedly be carried on by a comrade with a profound understanding, who has had serious experience of trade union work, with a good understanding of the policy and task of the Party in this question, and of the work of the A.F. of L.

(c) In spite of the great growth in the strike struggle, particularly after the passing of Roosevelt's laws, the popularisation of the experience and lessons of these strikes (strikes of metal

workers and miners for higher wages, recognition of unions, etc., the recognition of the A.F. of L. and of the revolutionary elements in these strikes) have not occupied a corresponding central position in the paper, in connection with and together with the daily trade union work. The paper must not only increase the quantity of information on strikes, which has up to now been quite insufficient, but must systematically explain, giving concrete examples (strikes in Detroit, Buffalo, etc.) , the aims of the strike struggle and the problems of its tactics, so that the working class reader should receive not only information about strikes, but also explanations of the mistakes or shortcomings in the organisation of a particular strike; this is necessary in order that the strike may be more successfully carried on, etc.; systematically to print editorials summarising the experience of strikes, etc., constantly leading the workers towards an understanding of the necessity for their own leadership of strikes on the basis of the united front.

(d) The *Daily Worker* has printed several articles dealing with questions of the united front. However, these articles explain the policy of the Party only to the active Party members, and not sufficiently either. It is necessary to extend the popularisation of the practice of the united front in the districts, particularly taking into consideration the level of the understanding of the rank-and-file non-Party worker, showing good and bad examples of the united front. Besides this, it is necessary to give a number of popular articles on the united front, making use of concrete examples of strikes, hunger marches (the metal workers' strike in Buffalo and the hunger march to Ford's in Detroit) to explain such questions, for example, as what the united front is, why it is necessary from below, and not from above, the Communists' attitude towards rank-and-file workers in the A.F. of L. and the Socialist Party, and towards their leaders; why the Communists consider these leaders, traitors, splitters, social-fascists, etc., and the attitude of the social-fascist leaders towards the united front as a manoeuvre.

(e) The D.W. has considerably strengthened the struggle against social-fascism along the lines of exposing the policy of the social-fascists on current events. While continuing to carry

on this most important work in the same spirit, it is necessary, in the first place, to expand the information and criticism of the practical work of the Socialist Party in the local strikes (e.g., the textile industry), demonstrations, in the factories, the unions, in the municipalities e.g., (Milwaukee) and so on, and, secondly, to begin to carry on extensive criticism of and polemics against the social-fascists, making use of definite points (i.e., the attitude towards Roosevelt's laws, etc.), in the principal questions of programme which divide the Communists from the social-reformists (democracy and dictatorship, fascism, the capitalist and the revolutionary way out of the crisis, state capitalism, the danger of war, the unity of the working class, etc.).

(f) The D.W. carries on a campaign of some magnitude against Roosevelt's forced labour camps. This work must be intensified, by printing not only information, as has been done up to now, but also a number of political articles on the questions and methods of struggle in these camps. The paper has dropped its work among the unemployed: very little material is printed on this subject, and the campaign for social insurance, which was renewed in June, has again subsided. It is necessary to carry out systematically the decision on the campaign for social insurance, the importance of which has not decreased through the adoption of Roosevelt's laws, but has, on the contrary, increased, particularly in view of the coming fifth hungry winter of the crisis. The same applies to the work of the unemployed councils.

(g) The paper's network of worker-correspondents is still very weak, and no serious work among them is evident. The paper must very soon take steps, first and foremost, to create a strong network of worker-correspondents in the localities, in order to instruct and help them in writing their letters and to raise their political level; not only to print letters, but to point out the political importance and the lessons of any given fact described by the correspondent, instructing him on his work and the paper's requirements, etc., through the paper or by post, systematically discussing the work of particular correspondents or groups of correspondents over a certain period (e.g., a month), in order to reveal a correspondent's main shortcomings and achievements and to help him in his further work.

It is necessary to enliven the work of the workers' editorial councils in the centre and the concentration districts, to develop the initiative of the members, carrying out their proposals, arranging regular (e.g., weekly) discussions of D.W. questions with them, in which leading comrades should take part, thus drawing them into the daily work of the paper.

(h) The work carried on by the paper to popularise the Open Letter and carry out its instructions in life is very weak. And yet, the popularisation of the Open Letter and the fight for realising it have now become still more important in connection with the mobilisation of the Party against Roosevelt's measures. It is necessary systematically to print articles explaining various points of the letter in connection with the situation and current events of the class struggle in the country, to give information on discussion of the Open Letter in the localities, and, first and foremost, to organise a checking up on the carrying out of the Open Letter with regard to the tasks set in concentration. The paper must combine its foremost task—the fight against Roosevelt's measures—with popularisation of the Open Letter and fight for it, in concrete questions (concentration, trade unions, united front, strikes, etc.).

(i) The D.W. does not deal with questions of *building* the Party. And yet these questions are of a decisive importance for the development of the C.P. U.S.A., its transformation into a mass Party, its Bolshevisation. The paper must create a section of *Party life* and *Party construction* which would, however, in its work take into consideration all the conditions necessary for conspiracy, which are secured directly by the C.C. of the Party. In this section the paper must, in the first place, explain the line of the Party in the most important current questions and fight for this line; secondly, it must fight for a check-up on the execution of the Party's decisions, of the tasks set by it, showing how this execution is going on, explaining the tasks of the Party with concrete examples, and showing how to carry them out, etc.; thirdly, it must particularly give information on the tasks and methods of mass work of the Communists, in mass organisations, particularly the trade unions; fourthly, it must popularise the experience of the organisational building of the Party, the work of the cells, the

fight against bureaucracy, for discipline, against membership fluctuation; recruiting work, work among new members, etc.; fifthly, it must give information on questions of propagandist work, on the work of the school, on questions of agitation, on the work of factory papers.

(j) In the work of the paper not enough planning and care is evident. Although the paper's leading articles have become shorter and more popular, they often resemble an editorial or just incidental paragraph, which is not connected with the rest of the paper's contents. It is necessary to make the leading articles politically instructive and supported by the main concrete material printed in the paper. This requires better organisation of all the material, the addition to sections and important letters of editorial notes, a better and clearer grouping, etc., in order that each issue should have a definite task, around which the material should be organised, and that each issue should therefore bring a definite point or task home to the worker, to inform him on them concretely and from all angles.

Therefore the paper must work according to a plan, the leading articles must be carefully thought out, the most important leading articles must be discussed beforehand by the C.C., together with members of the editorial board; and, generally, the leading articles must be agreed upon by the C.C., so that the Party should really regard the paper's editorials as leading political articles.

In all its work the paper must remember that all information must serve for educating and organising the masses and the Party itself; for that reason it cannot limit itself to giving information, but must carry on, on the basis of information, explanatory work, a fight for the line of the Party; must agitate for the Party's slogans, organise the workers, pointing out what the workers should do and how they should do it in their struggle, in work in the trade unions, etc., bringing the workers to an understanding of the main questions of the C.P.'s tactics and the main tasks in the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Resolutions of the Communist International on the Black National Question

I. Resolution of the Communist International, October 1928

1. The industrialization of the South, the concentration of a new Negro working class population in the big cities of the East and North and the entrance of the Negroes into the basic industries on a mass scale, create the possibility for the Negro workers, under the leadership of the Communist Party, to assume the hegemony of all Negro liberation movements, and to increase their importance and role in the revolutionary struggle of the American proletariat.

The Negro working class has reached a stage of development which enables it, if properly organized and well led, to fulfil successfully its double historical mission: (a) To play a considerable role in the class struggle against American imperialism as an important part of the American working class; and (b) To lead the movement of the oppressed masses of the Negro population.

2. The bulk of the Negro population (86%) live in the southern states; of this number 74 per cent live in the rural districts and are dependent almost exclusively upon agriculture for a livelihood. Approximately one-half of these rural dwellers live in the so-called "Black Belt," in which area they constitute more than 50 per cent of the entire population. The great mass of the Negro agrarian population are subject to the most ruthless exploitation and persecution of a semi-slave character. In addition to the ordinary forms of capitalist exploitation, American imperialism utilizes every possible form of slave exploitation (peonage, share-cropping, landlord supervision of crops and marketing, etc.) for the purpose of extracting super-profits. On the basis of these slave remnants, there has grown up a super-structure of social and political inequality that expresses itself in lynching, segregation, Jim Crowism, etc.

Necessary Conditions for National Revolutionary Movement

3. The various forms of oppression of the Negro masses, who are concentrated mainly in the so-called "Black Belt," provide the necessary conditions for a national revolutionary movement among the Negroes. The Negro agricultural labourers and the tenant farmers feel most the pressure of white persecution and exploitation. Thus, the agrarian problem lies at the root of the Negro national movement. The great majority of Negroes in the rural districts of the south are not "reserves of capitalist reaction," but potential allies of the revolutionary proletariat. Their objective position facilitates their transformation into a revolutionary force, which, under the leadership of the proletariat, will be able to participate in the joint struggle with all other workers against capitalist exploitation.

4. It is the duty of the Negro workers to organize through the mobilization of the broad masses of the Negro population the struggle of the agricultural labourers and tenant farmers against all forms of semi-feudal oppression. On the other hand, it is the duty of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. to mobilize and rally the broad masses of the white workers for active participation in this struggle. For that reason the Party must consider the beginning of systematic work in the south as one of its main tasks, having regard for the fact that the bringing together of the workers and toiling masses of all nationalities for a joint struggle against the landowners and the bourgeoisie is one of the most important aims of the Communist International, as laid down in the resolutions on the national and colonial question of the Second and Sixth Congresses of the Comintern.

For Complete Emancipation of Oppressed Negro Race

5. To accomplish this task, the Communist Party must come out as the champion of the right of the oppressed Negro race for full emancipation. While continuing and intensifying the struggle under the slogan of full social and political equality for the Negroes, which must remain the central slogan of our Party for work among the masses, the Party must come out openly and unreservedly for the right of the Negroes to national self-determination in the southern states, where the Negroes form a

majority of the population. The struggle for equal rights and the propaganda for the slogan of self-determination must be linked up with the economic demands of the Negro masses, especially those directed against the slave remnants and all forms of national and racial oppression. Special stress must be laid upon organizing active resistance against lynching, Jim Crowism, segregation and all other forms of oppression of the Negro population.

6. All work among the Negroes, as well as the struggle for the Negro cause among the whites, must be used, based upon the changes which have taken place in the relationship of classes among the Negro population. The existence of a Negro industrial proletariat of almost two million workers makes it imperative that the main emphasis should be placed on these new proletarian forces. The Negro workers must be organized under the leadership of the Communist Party, and thrown into joint struggle together with the white workers. The Party must learn to combine all demands of the Negroes with the economic and political struggle of the workers and the poor farmers.

American Negro Question Part of World Problem

7. The Negro question in the United States must be treated in its relation to the Negro questions and struggles in other parts of the world. The Negro race everywhere is an oppressed race. Whether it is a minority (U.S.A., etc.), majority (South Africa) or inhabits a so-called independent state (Liberia, etc.), the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism. Thus, a common tie of interest is established for the revolutionary struggle of race and national liberation from imperialist domination of the Negroes in various parts of the world. A strong Negro revolutionary movement in the U.S.A. will be able to influence and direct the revolutionary movement in all those parts of the world where the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism.

8. The proletarianization of the Negro masses makes the trade unions the principal form of mass organization. It is the primary task of the Party to play an active part and lead in the work of organizing the Negro workers and agricultural labourers in trade unions. Owing to the refusal of the majority of the white unions in the U.S.A., led by the reactionary leaders, to admit Ne-

groes to membership, steps must be immediately taken to set up special unions for those Negro workers who are not allowed to join the white unions. At the same time, however, the struggles for the inclusion of Negro workers in the existing unions must be intensified and concentrated upon, special attention must be given to those unions in which the statutes and rules set up special limitations against the admission of Negro workers. Primary duty of Communist Party in this connection is to wage a merciless struggle against the A.F. of L. bureaucracy, which prevents the Negro workers from joining the white workers' unions. The organization of special trade unions for the Negro masses must be carried out as part and parcel of the struggle against the restrictions imposed upon the Negro workers and for their admission to the white workers' unions. The creation of separate Negro unions should in no way weaken the struggle in the old unions for the admission of Negroes on equal terms. Every effort must be made to see that all the new unions organized by the Left wing and by the Communist Party should embrace the workers of all nationalities and of all races. The principle of one union for all workers in each industry, white and black, should cease to be a mere slogan of propaganda, and must become a slogan of action.

9. While organizing the Negroes into unions and conducting an aggressive struggle against the anti-Negro trade union policy of the A.F. of L., the Party must pay more attention than it has hitherto done to the work in the Negro workers' organizations, such as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Chicago Asphalt Workers' Union, and so on. The existence of two million Negro workers and the further industrialization of the Negroes demand a radical change in the work of the Party among the Negroes. The creation of working-class organizations and the extension of our influence in the existing working-class Negro organizations, are of much greater importance than the work in bourgeois and petty-bourgeois organizations, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, the Pan-African Congress, etc.

10. The American Negro Labor Congress continues to exist only nominally. Every effort should be made to strengthen this

organization as a medium through which we can extend the work of the Party among the Negro masses and mobilize the Negro workers under our leadership. After careful preparatory work, which must be started at once, another convention of the American Negro Labour Congress should be held. A concrete plan must also be presented to the Congress for an intensified struggle for the economic, social, political and national demands of the Negro masses. The program of the American Negro Labour Congress must deal specially with the agrarian demands of the Negro farmers and tenants in the south.

11. The importance of trade union work imposes special tasks upon the Trade Union Educational League. The T.U.E.L. has completely neglected the work among the Negro workers, notwithstanding the fact that these workers are objectively in a position to play a very great part in carrying through the program of organizing the unorganized. The closest contact must be established between the T.U.E.L. and the Negro masses. The T.U.E.L. must become the champion in the struggle for the rights of the Negroes in the old unions, and in the organizing of new unions for both Negroes and whites, as well as separate Negro unions.

White Chauvinism Evidenced in the American Party

12. The C.E.C. of the American Communist Party itself stated in its resolution of April 30, 1928, that "the Party as a whole has not sufficiently realized the significance of work among the Negroes." Such an attitude toward the Party work among the Negroes is, however, not satisfactory. The time is ripe to begin within the Party a courageous campaign of self-criticism concerning the work among the Negroes. Penetrating self-criticism is the necessary preliminary condition for directing the Negro work along new lines.

13. The Party must bear in mind that white chauvinism, which is the expression of the ideological influence of American imperialism among the workers, not only prevails among different strata of the white workers in the U.S.A., but is even reflected in various forms in the Party itself. White chauvinism has manifested itself even in open antagonism of some comrades to

the Negro comrades. In some instances where Communists were called upon to champion and to lead in the most vigorous manner the fight against white chauvinism, they instead yielded to it. In Gary, white members of the Workers Party protested against Negroes eating in the restaurant controlled by the Party. In Detroit, Party members, yielding to pressure, drove out Negro comrades from a social given in aid of the miners on strike.

Whilst the Party has taken certain measures against these manifestations of white chauvinism, nevertheless those manifestations must be regarded as indications of race prejudice even in the ranks of the Party, which must be fought with the utmost energy.

14. An aggressive fight against all forms of white chauvinism must be accompanied by a widespread and thorough educational campaign in the spirit of internationalism within the Party, utilizing for this purpose to the fullest possible extent the Party schools, the Party press and the public platform, to stamp out all forms of antagonism, or even indifference among our white comrades toward the Negro work. This educational work should be conducted simultaneously with a campaign to draw the white workers and the poor farmers into the struggle for the support of the demands of the Negro workers.

Tasks of Party in Relation to Negro Work

15. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. in its treatment of the Negro question must all the time bear in mind this twofold task:

(a) To fight for the full rights of the oppressed Negroes and for their right to self-determination and against all forms of chauvinism, especially among the workers of the oppressing nationality.

(b) The propaganda and the day-to-day practice of international class solidarity must be considered as one of the basic tasks of the American Communist Party. The fight — by propaganda and by deeds — should be directed first and foremost against the chauvinism of the workers of the oppressing nationality as well as against bourgeois segregation tendencies of the oppressed nationality. The propaganda of international class sol-

idity is the necessary prerequisite for the unity of the working class in the struggle.

“The centre of gravity in educating the workers of the oppressing countries in the principles of internationalism must inevitably consist in the propaganda and defence by these workers of the right of segregation by the oppressed countries. We have the right and duty to treat every socialist of an oppressing nation, who does not conduct such propaganda, as an imperialist and as a scoundrel.” (Lenin, from selected articles on the national question.)

16. The Party must seriously take up the task of training a cadre of Negro comrades as leaders, bring them into the Party schools in the U.S.A. and abroad, and make every effort to draw Negro proletarians into active and leading work in the Party, not confining the activities of the Negro comrades exclusively to the work among Negroes. Simultaneously, white workers must specially be trained for work among the Negroes.

17. Efforts must be made to transform the *Negro Champion* into a weekly mass organ of the Negro proletariat and tenant farmers. Every encouragement and inducement must be given to the Negro comrades to utilize the Party press generally.

Negro Work Part of General Work of Party

18. The Party must link up the struggle on behalf of the Negroes with the general campaigns of the Party. The Negro problem must be part and parcel of all and every campaign conducted by the Party. In the election campaigns, trade union work, the campaigns for the organization of the unorganized, anti-imperialist work, labour party campaign, International Labor Defence, etc., the Central Executive Committee must work out plans designed to draw the Negroes into active participation in all these campaigns, and at the same time to bring the white workers into the struggle on behalf of the Negroes' demands. It must be borne in mind that the Negro masses will not be won for the revolutionary struggles until such time as the most conscious section of the white workers show, by action, that they are fighting with the Negroes against all racial discrimination and persecution. Every member of the Party must bear in mind that

“the age-long oppression of the colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers, has given rise to a feeling of bitterness among the masses of the enslaved countries as well as a feeling of distrust toward the oppressing nations in general and toward the proletariat of those nations.” (See resolution on Colonial and National Question of Second Congress.)

19. The Negro women in industry and on the farms constitute a powerful potential force in the struggle for Negro emancipation. By reason of being unorganized to an even greater extent than male Negro workers, they are the most exploited section. The A.F. of L. bureaucracy naturally exercises toward them a double hostility, by reason of both their colour and sex. It therefore becomes an important task of the Party to bring the Negro women into the economic and political struggle.

20. Only by an active and strenuous fight on the part of the white workers against all forms of oppression directed against the Negroes, will the Party be able to draw into its ranks the most active and conscious Negro workers — men and women — and to increase its influence in those intermediary organizations which are necessary for the mobilization of the Negro masses in the struggle against segregation, lynching, Jim Crowism, etc.

21. In the present struggle in the mining industry, the Negro workers participate actively and in large numbers. The leading role the Party played in this struggle has helped greatly to increase its prestige. Nevertheless, the special efforts being made by the Party in the work among the Negro strikers cannot be considered as adequate. The Party did not send enough Negro organizers into the coalfields, and it did not sufficiently attempt, in the first stages of the fight, to develop the most able Negro strikers and to place them in leading positions. The Party must be especially criticized for its failure to put Negro workers on the Presidium of the Pittsburgh Miners' Conference, doing so only after such representation was demanded by the Negroes themselves.

22. In the work among the Negroes, special attention should be paid to the role played by the churches and preachers who are acting on behalf of American imperialism. The Party must conduct a continuous and carefully worked out campaign among the Negro masses, sharpened primarily against the preachers and the

churchmen, who are the agents of the oppressors of the Negro race.

Party Work Among Negro Proletariat and Peasantry

23. The Party must apply united front tactics for specific demands to the existing Negro petty bourgeois organizations. The purpose of these united front tactics should be the mobilizing of the Negro masses under the leadership of the Party, and to expose the treacherous petty bourgeois leadership of those organizations.

24. The Negro Miners Relief Committee and the Harlem Tenants League are examples of joint organizations of action which may serve as a means of drawing the Negro masses into struggle. In every case the utmost effort must be made to combine the struggle of the Negro workers with the struggle of the white workers, and to draw the white workers' organizations into such joint campaigns.

25. In order to reach the bulk of the Negro masses, special attention should be paid to the work among the Negroes in the South. For that purpose, the Party should establish a district organization in the most suitable locality in the South. Whilst continuing trade union work among the Negro workers and the agricultural labourers, special organizations of tenant farmers must be set up. Special efforts must also be made to secure the support of the share-croppers in the creation of such organizations. The Party must undertake the task of working out a definite program of immediate demands, directed against all slave remnants, which will serve as the rallying slogans for the formation of such peasant organizations.

Henceforth the Workers (Communist) Party must consider the struggle on behalf of the Negro masses, the task of organizing the Negro workers and peasants and the drawing of these oppressed masses into the proletarian revolutionary struggle, as one of its major tasks, remembering, in the words of the Second Congress resolution, that "the victory over capitalism cannot be fully achieved and carried to its ultimate goal unless the proletariat and the toiling masses of all nations of the world rally of their own accord in a concordant and close union."

LENINISM AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Formerly, the principle of self-determination of nations was wrongly interpreted, and not infrequently it was narrowed down to the right of nations to autonomy. Certain leaders of the Second International went so far as to convert the right of self-determination into a right of cultural autonomy, *i.e.*, they would accord to the oppressed nation the right to have its own cultural institutions while the dominant nation would retain all political power in its own hands. The result was that the idea of self-determination was in danger of becoming a means for justifying annexations rather than a means of fighting against annexations. This confusion has now been cleared up. Leninism has broadened the conception of self-determination, and interprets it as the right of the oppressed peoples in dependent countries and colonies to complete separation, as the right of nations to independent existence as states. This has precluded the possibility of annexations being justified on the grounds that the right of self-determination merely means the right to autonomy. The very principle of self-determination was thus changed from a means to deceive the masses, that it undoubtedly was in the hands of social-chauvinists during the imperialist war, into an instrument for exposing all imperialist designs or chauvinist machinations, a means of political education of the masses in the spirit of internationalism.

Formerly, the question of the oppressed nations was to be regarded purely as a question of law. Solemn proclamations of “national equality under the law” and innumerable declarations about the “equality of nations” were common stock-in-trade of the parties of the Second International, which served to gloss over the sheer mockery of talking about the “equality of nations” under imperialism while one group of nations (a majority) lives upon the backs of another group of nations whom they exploit. The bourgeois legalistic point of view on the national question has now been completely exposed. Leninism brought the national question down from the lofty heights of high-sounding declarations to the solid ground of facts and declared that pronouncements about “equality of nations” which are not reinforced by the direct support of the proletarian parties to the liberation

movement of the oppressed nations are meaningless and false. In this way the question of the oppressed nations became a question of rendering support and assistance, real and continuous, to the oppressed nations in their struggle against imperialism, their struggle for real equality of nations, and for their independent existence as states. — J. Stalin, from *Foundations of Leninism*.

II. Resolution of the Communist International, October, 1930

1. The C.P. of the United States has always acted openly and energetically against Negro oppression, and has thereby won increasing sympathy among the Negro population. In its own ranks, too, the Party has relentlessly fought the slightest evidences of white chauvinism, and has purged itself of the gross opportunism of the Lovestoneites. According to the assertions of these people, the "industrial revolution" will sweep away the remnants of slavery in the agricultural South, and will proletarianize the Negro peasantry, so that the Negro question, as a special national question, would thereby be presumably solved, or could be put off until the time of the socialist revolution in America. But the Party has not yet succeeded in overcoming in its own ranks all under-estimation of the struggle for the slogan of the right of self-determination, and still less succeeded in doing away with all *lack of clarity* on the Negro question. In the Party discussion the question was often wrongly put and much erroneous counterpoising of phases of the question occurred, thus, for instance, should the slogan of social equality or the slogan of the right of self-determination of the Negroes be emphasized. Should only propaganda for the Negroes' right to self-determination be carried on, or should this slogan be considered as a slogan of action; should separatist tendencies among the Negroes be supported or opposed; is the Southern region, thickly populated by Negroes, to be looked upon as a colony, or as an "integral part of the national economy of the United States," where presumably a revolutionary situation cannot arise independent of the general revolutionary development in the United States?

In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question the Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely as the question of an *oppressed nation*, which is in a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent *racial distinctions* (marked difference in the colour of skin, etc.), but above all because of considerable social antagonism (remnants of slavery). This introduces into the American

Negro question an important, *peculiar* trait which is absent from the national question of other oppressed peoples. Furthermore, it is necessary to face clearly the inevitable distinction between the position of the Negro in the *South* and in the *North*, owing to the fact that at least three-fourths of the entire *Negro* population of the United States (12,000,000) live in compact masses in the South, most of them being peasants and agricultural labourers in a state of semi-serfdom, settled in the "Black Belt" and constituting the majority of the population, whereas the Negroes in the Northern States are for the most part industrial workers of the lowest categories who have recently come to the various industrial centres from the South (having often even fled from there).

The struggle of the Communists for the equal rights of the Negroes applies to all Negroes, in the North as well as in the South. The struggle for this slogan embraces all or almost all of the important special interests of the Negroes in the North, but not in the South, where the main Communist slogan must be: *The Right of Self-Determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt*. These two slogans, however, are most closely connected. The Negroes in the North are very much interested in winning the right of self-determination for the Negro population of the Black Belt and can thereby hope for strong support for the establishment of true equality of the Negroes in the North. In the South the Negroes are suffering no less but still more than in the North from the glaring lack of all equality; for the most part the struggle for their most urgent partial demands in the Black Belt is nothing more than the struggle for their equal rights, and only the fulfilment of their main slogan, the right of self-determination in the Black Belt, can assure them of true equality.

I. The Struggle for the Equal Rights of the Negroes

2. The basis for the demand of equality of the Negroes is provided by the *special* yoke to which the Negroes in the United States are subjected by the ruling classes. In comparison with the situation of the other various nationalities and faces oppressed by American imperialism, the yoke of the Negroes in the United States is of a peculiar nature and particularly oppressive. This is partly due to the historical past of the American Negroes as im-

ported slaves, but is much more due to the still existing slavery of the American Negro which is immediately apparent, for example, in comparing their situation even with the situation of the Chinese and Japanese workers in the West of the United States, or with the lot of the Filipinos (Malay race) who are under colonial repression.

It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally it has been abolished, but in practice the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word. Formally, they are "free" as "tenant farmers" or "contract labourers" on the big plantations of the white landowners, but actually, they are completely in the power of their exploiters; they are not permitted, or else it is made impossible for them to leave their exploiters; if they do leave the plantations, they are brought back and in many cases whipped; many of them are simply taken prisoner under various pretexts and, bound together with long chains, they have to do compulsory labour on the roads. All through the South, the Negroes are not only deprived of all rights, and subjected to the arbitrary will of the white exploiters, but they are also socially ostracized, that is, they are treated in general not as human beings, but as cattle. But this ostracism regarding Negroes is not limited to the South. Not only in the South but throughout the United States, the lynching of Negroes is permitted to go unpunished. Everywhere the American bourgeoisie surrounds the Negroes with an atmosphere of social ostracism.

The 100 per cent Yankee arrogance divides the American population into a series of castes, among which the Negroes constitute, so to speak, the caste of the "untouchables," who are in a still lower category than the lowest categories of human society, the immigrant labourers, the yellow immigrants and the Indians. In all big cities the Negroes have to live in special segregated ghettos (and, of course, have to pay extremely high rent). In practice, marriage between Negroes and whites is prohibited, and in the South this is even forbidden by law. In various other ways, the Negroes are segregated, and if they overstep the bounds of the segregation they immediately run the risk of being ill-treated

by the 100 per cent bandits. As wage-earners, the Negroes are forced to perform the lowest and most difficult work; they generally receive lower wages than the white workers and don't always get the same wages as white workers doing similar work, and their treatment is the very worst. Many A. F. of L. trade unions do not admit Negro workers in their ranks, and a number have organized special trade unions for Negroes so that they will not have to let them into their "good white society."

This whole system of "segregation" and "Jim Crowism" is a special form of national and social oppression under which the American Negroes have much to suffer. The origin of all this is not difficult to find: this Yankee arrogance towards the Negroes stinks of the disgusting atmosphere of the old slave market. This is downright robbery and slave-whipping barbarism at the peak of capitalist "culture."

3. The demand for equal rights in our sense of the word means not only demanding the same rights for the Negroes as the whites have in the United States at the present time but also demanding that the Negroes should be granted all rights and other advantages which we demand for the corresponding oppressed classes of whites (workers and other toilers). Thus in our sense of the word, the demand for equal rights means a continuous work of abolishment of all forms of economic and political oppression of the Negroes, as well as their social exclusion, the insults perpetrated against them and their segregation. This is to be obtained by constant struggle by the white and black workers for effective legal protection for the Negroes in all fields, as well as actual enforcement of their equality and combating of every expression of Negrophobia. One of the first Communist slogans is: Death for Negro Lynching!

The struggle for the equal rights of the Negroes does not in any way exclude recognition and support for the Negroes' rights to their own special schools, government organs, etc., wherever the Negro masses put forward such national demands of their own accord. This will, however, in all probability occur to any great extent only in the Black Belt. In other parts of the country, the Negroes suffer above all from being shut out from the general social institutions and not from being prohibited to set up

their own national institutions. With the development of the Negro intellectuals (principally in the “free” *professions*) and of a thin layer of small capitalist business-people, there have appeared lately, not only definite efforts for developing a purely national Negro culture but also outspoken bourgeois tendencies towards Negro nationalism. The broad masses of the Negro population in the big industrial centres of the North are, however, making no efforts whatsoever to maintain and cultivate a national aloofness, they are, on the contrary, working for assimilation. This effort of the Negro masses can do much in the future to facilitate the progressive process of amalgamating the whites and Negroes into *one* nation, and it is under no circumstances the task of the Communists to give support to bourgeois nationalism in its fight with the progressive assimilation tendencies of the Negro working masses.

4. The slogan of equal rights of the Negroes *without a relentless struggle in practice against all manifestations of Negrophobia on the part of the American bourgeoisie* can be nothing but a deceptive liberal gesture of a sly slave-owner or his agent. This slogan is in fact repeated by “socialist” and many other bourgeois politicians and philanthropists who want to get publicity for themselves by appealing to the “sense of justice” of the American bourgeoisie in the individual treatment of the Negroes, and thereby side-track attention from the one effective struggle against the shameful system of “white superiority”: from the *class struggle against the American bourgeoisie*. The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes is in fact, one of the most important parts of the proletarian class struggle of the United States.

The struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes must certainly take the form of common struggle by the white and black workers.

The increasing unity of the various working-class elements provokes constant attempts on the part of the American bourgeoisie to play one group against another, particularly the white workers against the black and the black workers against the immigrant workers and vice versa, and thus to promote divisions within the working-class, which contributes to the bolstering up

of American capitalist rule. The Party must carry on a ruthless struggle against all these attempts of the bourgeoisie and do everything to strengthen the bonds of class solidarity of the working-class upon a lasting basis.

In the struggle for equal rights for the Negroes, however, it is the duty of the *white* workers to march at the *head* on this struggle. They must everywhere make a breach in the walls of segregation and "Jim Crowism" which have been set up by bourgeois slave-market morality. They must most ruthlessly unmask and condemn the hypocritical reformists and bourgeois "friends of Negroes" who, in reality, are only interested in strengthening the power of the enemies of the Negroes. They, the white workers, must boldly jump at the throat of the 100 per cent bandits who strike a Negro in the face. This struggle will be the test of the real international solidarity of the American white workers.

It is the special duty of the revolutionary Negro workers to carry on tireless activity among the Negro working masses to free them of their distrust of the white proletariat and draw them into the common front of the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie. They must emphasize with all force that the first rule of proletarian morality is that no worker who wants to be an equal member of *his class* must ever serve as a strike-breaker or a supporter of bourgeois politics. They must ruthlessly unmask all Negro politicians corrupted or directly bribed by American bourgeois ideology, who systematically interfere with the real proletarian struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes.

Furthermore, the Communist Party must resist all tendencies within its own ranks to ignore the Negro question as a national question in the United States, not only in the South, but also in the North. It is advisable for the Communist Party in the North to abstain from the establishment of any special Negro organizations, and in place of this to bring the black and white workers together in common organizations of struggle and joint action. Effective steps must be taken for the organization of Negro workers in the T.U.U.L. and revolutionary trade unions. Underestimation of this work takes various forms: lack of energy in recruiting Negro workers, in keeping them in our ranks and in drawing them into the full life of the trade unions, in selecting,

educating and promoting Negro forces to leading functions in the organization.

The Party must make itself entirely responsible for the carrying through of this very important work. It is most urgently necessary to publish a popular mass paper dealing with the Negro question, edited by white and black comrades, and to have all active followers of this paper grouped organizationally.

II. The Struggle for the Right of Self-Determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt

5. It is not correct to consider the Negro zone of the South as a colony of the United States. Such a characterization of the Black Belt could be based in some respects only upon artificially construed analogies, and would create superfluous difficulties for the clarification of ideas. In rejecting this estimation, however, it should not be overlooked that it would be none the less false to try to make a fundamental distinction between the character of national oppression to which the colonial peoples are subjected and the yoke of other oppressed nations. Fundamentally, national oppression in both cases is of the same character, and is in the Black Belt in many respects worse than in a number of actual colonies. On the one hand the Black Belt is not in itself, either economically or politically, such a united whole as to warrant its being called a special colony of the United States, but on the other hand this zone is not, either economically or politically, such an, integral part of the whole United States as any other part of the country. Industrialization in the Black Belt is not, as is generally the case in colonies properly speaking, in contradiction with the ruling interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has in its hands the monopoly of the entire industry, but in so far as industry is developed here, it will in no way bring a solution to the question of living conditions of the oppressed Negro majority, or to the agrarian question, which lies at the basis of the national question. On the contrary, this question is still further aggravated as a result of the increase of the contradictions arising from the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of the Negro peasantry and of a considerable portion of the Negro proletariat (miners, forestry workers, etc.) in the Black Belt, and at the same

time owing to the industrial development here, the growth of the most important driving force of the national revolution, the black working-class, is especially strengthened. Thus, the prospect for the future is not an inevitable dying away of the national revolutionary Negro movement in the South, as Lodestone prophesied, but on the contrary, a great advance of this movement and the rapid approach of a revolutionary crisis in the Black Belt.

6. Owing to the peculiar situation in the Black Belt (the fact that the majority of the resident Negro population are farmers and agricultural labourers and that the capitalist economic system as well as political class rule there is not only of a special kind, but to a great extent still has pre-capitalist and semi-colonial features), the right of self-determination of the Negroes as the *main slogan* of the Communist Party in the Black Belt is appropriate. This, however, does not in any way mean that the struggle for equal rights of the Negroes in the Black Belt is less necessary or less well founded than it is in the North. On the contrary, here, owing to the whole situation, this struggle is even better founded, but the form of this slogan does not sufficiently correspond with the *concrete* requirements of the liberation struggle of the Negro population. Anyway, it is clear that in most cases it is a question of the daily conflicts of interest between the Negroes and the white rulers in the Black Belt on the subject of infringement of the most elementary equality rights of the Negroes by the whites. Daily events of the kind are: all Negro persecutions, all arbitrary economic acts of robbery by the white exploiters (“Black Man’s Burden”) and the whole system of so-called “Jim Crowism.” Here, however, it is very important in connection with all these concrete cases of conflict to concentrate the attention of the Negro masses not so much to the general demands of mere equality, but much more to some of the revolutionary *basic demands* arising from the concrete situation.

The slogan of the right of self-determination occupies the central place in the liberation struggle of the Negro population in the Black Belt against the yoke of American imperialism, but this slogan, as we see it, must be carried out only in connection with two other basic demands. Thus, there are three basic demands to be kept in mind in the Black Belt, namely, the following:

(a) *Confiscation of the landed property of the white land-owners and capitalists for the benefit of the Negro farmers.* The landed property in the hands of the white American exploiters constitutes the most important material basis of the entire system of national oppression and serfdom of the Negroes in the Black Belt. More than three-quarters of all Negro farmers here are bound in actual serfdom to the farms and plantations of the white exploiters by the feudal system of “share cropping.” Only on paper and not in practice are they freed from the yoke of their former slavery. The same holds completely true for the great mass of black contract labourers; here the contract is only the capitalist expression of the chains of the old slavery, which even to-day are not infrequently applied in their natural iron form on the roads of the Black Belt (chain-gang work). These are the main forms of present Negro slavery in the Black Belt and no breaking of the chains of this slavery is possible without confiscating all the landed property of the white masters. Without this revolutionary measure, without the agrarian revolution, the right of self-determination of the Negro population would be only a Utopia, or at best would remain only on paper without changing in any way the actual enslavement.

(b) *Establishment of the State Unity of the Black Belt.* At the present time this Negro zone — precisely for the purpose of facilitating national oppression — is artificially split up and divided into a number of various states which include distant localities having a majority of white population. If the right of self-determination of the Negroes is to be put into force, it is necessary wherever possible to bring together into one governmental unit all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes. Within the limits of this state there will of course remain a fairly significant white minority which must submit to the right of self-determination of the Negro majority. There is no other possible way of carrying out in a democratic manner the right of self-determination of the Negroes. Every plan regarding the establishment of the Negro State with an exclusively Negro population in America (and, of course, still more exporting it to Africa) is nothing but an unreal and reactionary caricature of the fulfilment of the right of self-

determination of the Negroes and every attempt to isolate and transport the Negroes would have the most damaging effect upon their interests; above all, it would violate the right of the Negro farmers in the Black Belt not only to their present residences and their land but also to the land owned by the white landlords and cultivated by Negro labour.

(c) Right of Self-Determination. This means complete and unlimited right of the Negro majority to exercise governmental authority in the entire territory of the Black Belt, as well as to decide upon the relations between their territory and other nations, particularly the United States. It would not be right of self-determination in our sense of the word if the Negroes in the Black Belt had the right of determination only in cases which concerned *exclusively* the Negroes and did not affect the whites, because the most important cases arising here are bound to affect the Negroes as well as the whites. First of all, true right to self-determination means that the Negro majority and not the white minority in the entire territory of the administratively united Black Belt exercises the right of administering governmental, legislative and judicial authority. At the present time all this power here is concentrated in the hands of the white bourgeoisie and landlords. It is they who appoint all officials, it is they who dispose of public property, it is they who determine the taxes, it is they who govern and make the laws. Therefore, *the overthrow of this class rule* in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination. This, however, means at the same time the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding itself the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the beginning that no armed forces of American imperialism should remain on the territory of the Black Belt.

7. As stated in the letter of the Polit. Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. of March 16th, 1930, the Communists must ““*unreserv-*

edly carry on a struggle” for the self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt in accordance with what has been set forth above. It is incorrect and harmful to interpret the Communist standpoint to mean that the Communists stand for the right of self-determination of the Negroes only up to a certain point, but not beyond this, for example, to the right of separation. It is also incorrect to say that the Communists are so far only to carry on propaganda or agitation for the right of self-determination, but not to develop any activity to bring this about. No, it is of the utmost importance for the Communist Party to reject any such limitation of its struggle for this slogan. Even if the situation does not yet warrant the raising of the question of uprising, one should not limit oneself at present to propaganda for the demand: “Right to self-determination,” but should organize mass actions, such as demonstrations, strikes, tax-boycott-movements, etc.

Moreover, the Party cannot make its stand for this slogan dependent upon any conditions, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negroes in the Black Belt adopts the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded), etc. It goes without saying that the Communists in the Black Belt will and must try to win over all working elements of the Negroes, that is, the majority of the population, to their side and to convince them not only that they must win the right of self-determination, but also that they must make use of this right in accordance with the Communist program. But this cannot be made a *condition* for the stand of the Communists in favour of the right of self-determination of the Negro population; if, or so long as the majority of this population wishes to handle the situation in the Black Belt in a different manner from that which we Communists would like, its complete right to self-determination must be recognized. This right we must defend as a free democratic right.

8. In general, the C.P. of the United States has kept to this correct line recently in its struggle for the right of self-determination of the Negroes even though this line — in some cases — has been unclearly or erroneously expressed. In particu-

lar some misunderstanding has arisen from the failure to make a clear distinction between the demand for “right of self-determination” and the demand for governmental separation, simply treating these two demands in the same way. However, these two demands are not identical. Complete right to self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should *make use of this* right under all circumstances, that is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States. If it desires to separate it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States it must also be free to do that. This is the correct meaning of the idea of self-determination and it must be recognized quite independently of whether the United States are still a capitalist state or if a proletarian dictatorship has already been established there.

It is, however, another matter if it is not a case of the *right* of the oppressed nation concerned to separate or to maintain governmental contact, but if the question is treated on its merits; whether it is to work for state separation, whether it is to struggle *for this* or not. This is another question, on which the stand of the Communists must vary according to the concrete conditions. If the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communist Negroes will not come out for but *against* separation of the Negro Republic federation with the United States. But the *right* of the Negroes to governmental separation will be *unconditionally realized* by the Communist Party, it will unconditionally give the Negro population of the Black Belt freedom of choice even on this question. Only when the proletariat has come into power in the United States the Communists will carry on propaganda among the working masses of the Negro population against separation, in order to convince them that it is much better and in the interest of the Negro nation for the Black Belt to be a free republic, where the Negro majority has complete right of self-determination but remains governmentally federated with the great proletarian republic of the United States. The bourgeois counter-revolutionists on the other hand will then be interested in boosting the separation tendencies in the ranks of the various

nationalities in order to utilize separatist nationalism as a barrier for the bourgeois counter-revolution against the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship.

But the question at the present time is not this. As long as capitalism rules in the United States the Communists cannot come out against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the United States. They recognize that this separation from the imperialist United States would be preferable from the standpoint of the national interests of the Negro population, to their present oppressed state, and therefore, the Communists are ready at any time to offer all their support if only the working masses of the Negro population are ready to take up the struggle for governmental independence of the Black Belt. At the present time, however, the situation in the national struggle in the South is not such as to win mass support of the working Negroes for this separatist struggle; and it is not the task of the Communists to call upon them to separate without taking into consideration the existing situation and the desires of the Negro masses.

The situation in the Negro question of the United States, however, may undergo a radical change. It is even probable that the separatist efforts to obtain complete State independence of the Black Belt will gain ground among the Negro masses of the South in the near future. This is connected with the prospective sharpening of the national conflicts in the South, with the advance of the national revolutionary Negro movement and with the exceptionally brutal fascists aggressiveness of the white exploiters of the South, as well as with the support of this aggressiveness by the central government authority of the United States. In this sharpening of the situation in the South, Negro separatism will presumably increase, and the question of the independence of the Black Belt will become the question of the day. Then the Communist Party must also face this question and, if the circumstances seem favourable, must stand up with all strength and courage for the struggle to win independence and for the establishment of a Negro republic in the Black Belt.

9. The general relation of Communists to separatist tendencies among the Negroes, described above, cannot mean that Communists associate themselves at present, or generally speak-

ing, during capitalism, indiscriminately and without criticism with all the separatist currents of the various bourgeois or petty-bourgeois Negro groups. For there is not only a national revolutionary, but also a reactionary Negro separatism, for instance, that represented by Garvey; his Utopia of an isolated Negro State (regardless if in Africa or America, if it is supposed to consist of Negroes only) pursues the only political aim of diverting the Negro masses from the real liberation struggle against American imperialism.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the “right of self-determination” slogan is a truly revolutionary slogan only in connection with the demand for complete separation. *The question of power is decided not only through* the demand of separation, but just as much through the demand of the *right* to decide the separation question and self-determination in general. A direct question of power is also the demand of confiscation of the land of the white exploiters in the South, as well as the demand of the Negroes that the entire Black Belt be amalgamated into a State unit.

Hereby, every single fundamental demand of the liberation struggle of the Negroes in the Black Belt is such that — if once thoroughly understood by the Negro masses and adopted as their slogan — it will lead them into the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the ruling bourgeoisie, which is impossible without such revolutionary struggle. One cannot deny that it is just possible for the Negro population of the Black Belt to win the right to self-determination already during capitalism; but it is perfectly clear and indubitable that this is possible only through successful revolutionary struggle for power against the American bourgeoisie, through *wresting* the Negroes’ right to self-determination from the American imperialism. Thus, the slogan of right to self-determination is a real slogan of national rebellion which, to be considered as such, need not be supplemented by proclaiming struggle for the complete separation of the Negro zone, at least not at present. But it must be made perfectly clear to the Negro masses that the slogan “right to self-determination” includes the demand of full freedom for them to decide even the question of complete separation. We demand freedom of separation, real

right to self-determination, wrote Lenin, “certainly not in order to ‘recommend’ separation, but on the contrary, in order to facilitate and accelerate the democratic rapprochement and unification of nations.” For the same purpose, Lenin’s Party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, bestowed after its seizure of power on all the peoples hitherto oppressed by Russian Tsarism the full right to self-determination, including the right of complete separation, and achieved thereby its enormous successes with regard to the democratic rapprochement and voluntary unification of nations.

10. The slogan for the self-determination right and the other fundamental slogans of the Negro question in the Black Belt does not exclude but rather pre-supposes an energetic development of the struggle for concrete *partial demands* linked up with the daily needs and afflictions of wide masses of working Negroes. In order to avoid, in this connection, the danger of opportunist back-slidings, Communists must above all remember this:

(a) The direct aims and partial demands around which a partial struggle develops are to be linked up in the course of the struggle with the revolutionary fundamental slogans brought up by the question of power, in a popular manner corresponding to the mood of the masses. (Confiscation of the big land-holdings, establishment of governmental unity of the Black Belt, right of self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt.) Bourgeois-socialist tendencies to oppose such a revolutionary widening and deepening of the fighting demands must be fought.

(b) One should not venture to draw up a complete program of some kind or a system of “positive” partial demands. Such programs on the part of petty-bourgeois politicians should be exposed as attempts to divert the masses from the necessary hard struggles by fostering reformist and democratic illusions among them. Every positive partial demand which might crop up is to be considered from the viewpoint of whether it is in keeping with our revolutionary fundamental slogans, or whether it is of a reformist or reactionary tendency. Every kind of national oppression which arouses the indignation of the Negro masses can be used as a suitable point of departure for the development of partial struggles, during which the abolition of such oppression, as

well as their prevention through revolutionary struggle against the ruling exploiting dictatorship must be demanded.

(c) Everything should be done to bring wide masses of Negroes into these partial struggles. This is important — and not to carry the various partial demands to such an ultra-radical point, that the mass of working Negroes are no longer able to recognize them as *their own*. Without a real mobilization of the mass-movements — in spite of the sabotage of the bourgeois reformist Negro politicians — even the best Communist partial demands get hung up. On the other hand, even some relatively insignificant acts of the Ku Klux Klan bandits in the Black Belt can become the occasion of important political movements, provided the Communists are able to organize the resistance of the indignant Negro masses. In such cases, mass movements of this kind can easily develop into real rebellion. This rests on the fact that — as Lenin said — “Every act of national oppression calls forth resistance on the part of the masses of the population, and the tendency of every act of resistance on the part of oppressed peoples is the national uprising.”

(d) Communists must fight in the *forefront* of the national-liberation movement and must do their utmost for the progress of this mass movement and its revolutionization. Negro Communists must *clearly dissociate* themselves from all bourgeois currents in the Negro movement, must indefatigably oppose the spread of the influence of the bourgeois groups on the working Negroes, and in dealing with them must apply the Communist tactic laid down by the Sixth C.I. Congress with regard to the colonial question, in order to guarantee the *hegemony of the Negro proletariat* in the national liberation movement of the Negro population, and to co-ordinate wide masses of the Negro peasantry in a steady fighting alliance with the proletariat.

(e) One must work with the utmost energy for the establishment and consolidation of *Communist Party organizations* and revolutionary *trade unions* in the South. Furthermore, immediate measures must be taken for the organization of proletarian and peasant *self-defence* of whites and blacks against the Ku Klux Klan. For this purpose the Communist Party is to give further instructions.

11. It is particularly incumbent on Negro Communists to criticize consistently the half-heartedness and hesitations of the petty-bourgeois national-revolutionary Negro leaders in the liberation struggle of the Black Belt, exposing them before the masses. All national reformist currents as, for instance, Garveyism, which are an obstacle to the revolutionisation of the Negro masses, must be fought systematically and with the utmost energy. Simultaneously, Negro Communists must carry on among the Negro masses an energetic struggle against nationalist moods directed indiscriminately against all whites, workers as well as capitalists, Communists, as well as imperialists. Their constant call to the Negro masses must be: *revolutionary struggle against the ruling white bourgeoisie, through a fighting alliance with the revolutionary white proletariat!* Negro Communists must indefatigably explain to the mass of the Negro population that even if many white workers in America are still infected with Negrophobia, the American proletariat, as a class, which owing to its struggle against the American bourgeoisie represents the only truly revolutionary class, will be the only real mainstay of Negro liberation. In as far as successes in the national-revolutionary struggle of the Negro population of the South for its right to self-determination are already possible under capitalism, they can be achieved only if this struggle is effectively supported by proletarian mass actions on a large scale in the other parts of the United States. But it is also clear that “only a victorious proletarian revolution will *finally decide* the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country.” (Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress.)

12. The struggle regarding the Negro question in the North must be linked up with the liberation struggle in the South, in order to endow the Negro movement throughout the United States with the necessary effective strength. After all, in the North as well as in the South, it is a question of the real emancipation of the American Negroes which has in fact never taken place before. The Communist Party of the United States must bring into play its entire revolutionary energy in order to mobi-

lise the widest possible masses of the white and black proletariat of the United States, not by words, but by deeds, for real effective support of the struggle for the liberation of the Negroes. Enslavement of the Negroes is one of the most important foundations of the imperialist dictatorship of U.S.A. capitalism. The more American imperialism fastens its yoke on the millions strong negro masses, the more must the Communist Party develop the mass struggle for Negro emancipation, and the better use it must make of all conflicts which arise out of national differences, as an incentive for revolutionary mass actions against the bourgeoisie. This is as much in the direct interest of the proletarian revolution in America. Whether the rebellion of the Negroes is to be the outcome of a general revolutionary situation in the United States, whether it is to originate in the whirlpool of decisive fights for power by the working-class, for proletarian dictatorship, or whether on the contrary, the Negro rebellion will be the prelude of gigantic struggles for power by the American proletariat, cannot be foretold now. But in either contingency, it is essential for the Communist Party *to make an energetic beginning now — at the present moment — with the organization of joint mass struggles* of white and black workers against Negro oppression. This alone will enable us to get rid of the bourgeois white chauvinism which is polluting the ranks of the white workers of America, to overcome the distrust of the Negro masses caused by the inhuman barbarous Negro slave traffic still carried on by the American bourgeoisie — in as far as it is directed even against all white workers — and to win over to our side these millions of Negroes as active fellow-fighters in the struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power throughout America.