

# UNLEASH THE PROLETARIAN REBELLION!

THÄLMANN

*Organise the Counter-Offensive of the Proletariat!*

Comrades, the importance of the developments in Germany, the burning interest felt for Germany, has already found its expression in the fact that the debate on this question has occupied the largest amount of space, in the discussion at the XII Plenum. I do not want to repeat what has been said already about the developments in Germany but only to deal first and foremost with the latest developments in the German situation.

First of all, a few words about the organisational growth of the Communist Party of Germany in connection with some other Parties. Despite the strong fluctuation which is present, we are able to record a gigantic organisational growth of our Party; we can likewise record a favourable upward development in the Czecho-Slovakian Party accompanied by a simultaneous extension of its mass basis. But here we must say that the numerical growth of a party is not always a sign of its further penetration into the masses, or of its revolutionary consolidation among the proletariat.

We have seen, for example, in the results of the Prussian elections of April 24, that there were the beginnings of an isolation of the Party from the masses. This occasioned us to draw certain practical conclusions. During the three months which elapsed from April 24, till July 31, we won about 1,000,000 new votes, and by the use of special methods in the employment of the policy of the united front from below, by the campaign of the anti-Fascist Direct Action, we have won over to our side some class-conscious elements from Social-Democracy, together with active sections of the "Iron Front," which had still been regarded hitherto among the Social-Democratic and *Reichsbanner* workers as a militant anti-Fascist organisation. We can say: that the anti-Fascist Direct Action represented a great and swift success.

But when we set over against the successes of the German Party, the successes which can be recorded, for example, by the Polish and Czecho-Slovakian Parties in strike struggles, we must admit that both these Parties, in particular our Polish brother Party, have far excelled the German Party in the fulfilment of their tasks. The successes of the Polish Party, described here with interesting examples by Comrade Lensky,\* were gained in the face of very great and serious difficulties. These successes of our illegal Polish brother Party, must be an incentive and serve as

a special example, first and foremost to the German Party, but for all other Parties too, to learn from the Polish Party in this respect.

It is quite clear to us that the developments of the immediate future in Germany will bring with them, not only a deepening of the whole crisis, but also a rapid accentuation of class differences and a tremendous sharpening of the class struggle.

We must observe the new, the dialectic element in the process of these developments, because the Party is confronted perpetually, one could say hourly, with fresh tasks. The conditions of the development of Fascism are now different from what they were at the beginning of the period of capitalist stabilisation. With the ravages inflicted on economy, the accentuation of the crisis in the country, the foundations of Fascist dictatorship and, in connection with this, the continued strivings and efforts to consolidate it, are at the same time rendered more difficult. Fascism will encounter more and more difficulties, and more and more resistance, through the counter-offensive of the class front of the proletariat. We can state here, despite the fact that we must not for a moment underestimate the aggressiveness of Fascism, that the latter already bears within itself, strong elements of disintegration. Fascism is not only a product of putrefying capitalism, but also an expression of the accentuated class struggle of the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat, and, in particular against the revolutionary mass movement, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany. It is of the utmost importance to make full use of all the inner differences which may come to light within the camp of the bourgeoisie and its satellites, and strengthen the power of resistance of the proletariat, and the toiling masses. We must not, of course, treat the question in a mechanical and automatic way, as though Fascism would disappear from the picture of its own accord. Neither will it automatically retrogress in its development or collapse through the downfall of economy in connection with the accentuation of the world economic crisis; in this, the Communist Party represents the most decisive revolutionary factor on which the further development of Fascism, in the main, depends. On the basis of the experience gained during the first years of the development of Italian Fascism, various comrades, and in particular Comrade Ercoli, have here emphasised the

\*See No. 7/18.

great differences which must be kept in view, in comparing the present time with that period, in order to analyse correctly the character and development of Fascism. Fascism, after its seizure of power in Italy, was given more favourable conditions for consolidating its power (owing to the relative stabilisation which then set in) than German Fascism has to-day, at a time when capitalist stabilisation has come to an end. In addition to this, there is the fact, which has hitherto not been sufficiently emphasised, that our Parties have to-day become more mature, that they have grown, and now represent other factors than they represented at that time, during Fascism's period of development, at the beginning of capitalist stabilisation.

This is a fact of no small importance, since the bourgeoisie has to reckon with the Communist Party, every day and every hour. In the problems which now present themselves in Germany for example, the revolutionary ability of the Communist Party to mobilise and activate the masses plays a decisive part. From the strength and maturity of the Party proceeds the heavy revolutionary tasks allotted the Communist Party, as they have been formulated here at the XII Plenum. This severe assignment of tasks, at the same time, renders it easier for the German delegation to understand the criticism, to which our work has been subjected at the XII Plenum.

Bolshevik criticism of the work of the Communist Party of Germany can only be welcomed. This criticism helps us a very great deal; it has an educative effect, and gives us occasion to efface our weaknesses and the defects in the Party in conjunction with the Comintern. The comradely criticism to which the Russian Delegation have subjected the German Party, in particular in connection with July 20, is not only recognised by us in its entirety as correct and politically necessary, but it also obliges us to draw practical conclusions from it, for our further revolutionary work. When our Russian friends draw our especial attention — as, for example, Comrade Manuilsky has done — to the fact that fatalistic opinions are to be met with among individual members of our Party — opinions which make preliminary assumption that the victory of Fascism is inevitable and reconcile themselves to some extent also with the historical inevitability of a war—we must own that this criticism fits the facts, and has a very serious meaning. If, however, Fascism's tempo of growth in Germany has hitherto been more rapid than the forward march of revolution, that is not a clue to the further course of development in Germany. Let me say that the course of development in Germany can change very quickly.

German Fascism to-day is already being hemmed in and menaced by the resistance and by the onslaughts of the revolutionary proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party, though, of course, not yet to such an extent that its position is likely to collapse to-morrow or the next day. We have here to do with a wily and subtle class antagonist. We have, here, to do with a bourgeoisie which carries out its attacks against the working masses and against the proletariat in a manner suited to the changing situation — aggressive, bold, swift and surprising. The interesting happenings accompanying the dissolution of the *Reichstag*, the terrorist sentences which have been passed and the new emergency decrees which have been issued, afford us examples of the methods with which the Papen-Schleicher Government is attempting to carry through its plans of starvation and Fascist offensive against the toiling masses. The Government does not shrink from the most brutally aggressive action, and shows the most ruthless determination to attain a higher development of Fascist dictatorship.

We must be prepared for more surprises in Germany such as that of July 20. Despite the fact that our Party is capable of manœuvring, it still reacts far too slowly to all events. July 20 especially showed up our main weaknesses in a very sharp light. Such rapid and surprising changes of situation show us the necessity of creating within the Party, from top to bottom, such bases, such political prerequisites, as may render it possible to attain the highest revolutionary development and the rapid concrete application of the general line of the Party, to suit a given situation. We must answer the surprise blows of the class enemy with just the same quickness and determination, to force the bourgeoisie to beat a retreat. The most important problem for us is the task now set us at the XII Plenum, namely, to lead the masses on to the various forms of revolutionary class struggle, from partial struggles right up to the political mass strike, and the general strike in various districts.

In this correct assignment of tasks from the centre, the main point is to create the prerequisites for these struggles and actions not only in our Party and in the revolutionary organisations, but also among the great masses of the population. If the struggles in Germany remain isolated from the great masses of the people, if they do not have a profound and stimulating mass character, then the basic foundations of bourgeois class domination will not be shaken to their roots and the further development of Fascist dictatorship, will not so easily be brought to a standstill

or set back. On the basis of the criticism to which the German Party has been subjected here, we must try to locate the causes by which our weaknesses and defects and the Party's failure to function on July 20 are to be explained.

It would, of course, be incorrect to form a theory on the basis of the Party's failure to react on July 20, to the effect that the Party has lost its specific gravity as a militant organisation.

I could cite examples from history, showing how many of our best Parties have, in difficult situations, allowed a favourable moment to pass. Nevertheless that must, under no circumstances, be made a law in the Comintern. In such an accentuated situation as we now have in Germany, the weaknesses and defects of the Party find their expression more clearly, more ruthlessly and with a deeper imprint. This fact was borne out by the happenings of July 20 in Germany. Do you not agree that the causes for our failure to react sufficiently during the bank crash in July, 1931, and the issue of the emergency decree in December and January, are the same causes for those weaknesses which showed themselves with especial clarity on July 20? It would be a mistake not to say so openly here.

I want to add something to what Comrade Florin has already said, on behalf of the German Delegation, in regard to the lessons to be learned and the conclusions to be drawn from July 20.

It has been emphasised here, and borne out, that the Party's appeal for the carrying out of a general strike was not only correct, but necessary, since this slogan was suited to the given situation. Only we did not draw the conclusions from this correct line, for the carrying out of this line in revolutionary practice. We did not succeed in conducting demonstrations, partial strikes, protest strikes and mass direct action. A number of the defects and weaknesses which have here been noted cannot be separated from the inner Party life of the past.

Comrade Manuilsky has rightly spoken of certain fatalistic and defeatist tendencies in the face of Fascism. What fatalistic tendencies (though they do not of course dominate the Party) are still to be met with among us in certain cases? And in what does this defeatism and fatalism find its expression?

Such tendencies of opinion are to be met with; that the revolutionary crisis cannot begin until Fascism has developed the full extent of its power in Germany. It was no accident that certain sections of the unemployed voted for Hitler at the Presidential elections, because they believed that this course would bring us more rapidly to a revolutionary crisis. Among the Social-Democrats, and on the outskirts of our own Party, we meet

with expressions of the opinion that Fascism must "play itself out." These opinions, though they are insignificant within our Party, yet constitute an obstacle, to a certain extent, to the launching of movements for partial demands, and lead to an underestimation of the latter. Besides this, there are to be met with in our Party, and especially on its outskirts, people who say: If the Party is compelled to go underground, it will be possible to fight better against Fascism. Such conceptions at the same time provide the best field for the growth of tendencies towards the use of individual terrorism as a substitute for the revolutionary mass struggle against bloody Fascism. Then again, there are to be met with, petty-bourgeois views of a defeatist and pessimist nature which find their expression in such statements as: "If Fascism comes into power, it's all up with us."

We must not underestimate the gravity of this lack of understanding of the importance and the necessity of launching local and partial movements and demonstrations, which constitute important revolutionary prerequisites and pave the way for the real decisive struggles of the working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In our Party we have waged a vigorous and consistent struggle against all these tendencies. But it must be said that it is not possible to get rid of these tendencies as they arise, quickly and along the *whole front*.

In addition, we must mention some other political factors: The accentuation of class contradictions in Germany, and the great and surprising political events which have occurred, have created and fostered an instinctive craving for great struggles, for the decisive struggle, among the entire working class, but especially among the organised Free trade union, and Social-Democratic workers. This fact can only be welcomed. But in consequence of our inability to develop this militant urge day by day, the great necessity of launching and carrying through partial and local movements, struggles and strikes in this peculiar situation is not recognised. It is no accident that the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, and above all the S.A.P., demagogically advocated the general strike, for a long time, in their agitation and propaganda in order that they might make it much more difficult for their own adherents to have an understanding, and a militant desire for the launching of partial struggles. But when Germany was brought face to face with the real issue on July 20, it was the leaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B., German Federation of T.U.'s, who gave their immediate, unconditional and active support to Fascism. This generally prevailing

state of feeling was itself still further fostered by the Social-Democratic "theory" that in a crisis, successful economic struggles are impossible. Even in certain sections of our own Party, there was not always a sufficient degree of clarity on the revolutionary value, on the great significance of the necessity of launching partial struggles and demonstrations.

Comrade Piatnitsky has, not without justice, referred to the importance of the social composition of the Party. The percentage of factory workers among our members has recently diminished. And, on account of this, we have to record an insufficient connection between the Party and the masses of factory workers. Especially in the large enterprises, our organisational and political consolidation leaves much to be desired. These facts constitute an important cause for a certain political preponderance of Social-Democratic ideology among the masses of workers in medium-size and large-scale enterprises. Besides this, we have the further great defect that our factory cells do not form that political and organisational centre in the various enterprises from which all important work ought to radiate. Above all, in the present situation, when we must react quickly, the factory cells must make themselves felt as political factors, and give expression to the leading rôle of the Communist Party, among factory workers, from the Central Committee down to the lowest factory unit.

The third defect is that especially on the question of independent initiative from below, there is an insufficient ability to make decisions among the different Party units. Not always, not in every situation, is it possible to give directives from the centre to the lower Party units. In such situations, as for example, that which arose on July 20, one cannot wait for directives from above. It is, of course, proper and necessary to do so, on all occasions, when such directives are given. But waiting for central directives from the Party can produce most fatal and harmful results both for the Party itself, and for the working class. We must note that, in such situations, the bourgeoisie does all it can to create certain obstacles, to set up barbed wire entanglements, cutting off from access to our organisations, and to the masses, and calculated to hinder the transmission of the directives from the centre. In dealing with this problem, we must raise the question of the personal responsibility of each functionary, to take suitable measures from below, even though this instant reaction should produce some minor mistakes in execution. But if the revolutionary preparedness of the masses is strengthened and steered by the leadership of the Party, such minor mistakes will not have

such a significance, as the great weaknesses, which manifested themselves among us on July 20.

It goes without saying, that the German Party will draw serious practical conclusions from the decisions of the XII Plenum. However, we would like to inform the XII Plenum that two days after the conclusion of the *Reichstag* elections of July 31 we had already registered the principal weaknesses in our Party work, at a national Conference attended by the political secretaries and the principal departmental leaders, in connection with the estimation of July 20, and had introduced suitable practical measures to overcome our weaknesses and defects, and prevent a repetition of the same on a future occasion. I want to quote from the uncorrected stenogram what was said on that occasion on the question of July 20:

"It can be said that there has never before been such a situation as at the present stage of development, when we have daily and hourly to reckon with new events in Germany. I therefore raise this question with such extreme sharpness, because the lessons of July 20 demand that we draw profound conclusions in the inner orientation of our whole Party and in the working class."

Another passage reads as follows:

"Our present conference must, in connection with the accelerated tempo of the Fascist measures, taken by the bourgeoisie, to carry out its programme, recognise the leading rôle of the Party. If the bourgeoisie succeeds in carrying through its programme of Fascist dictatorship without meeting with real and great resistance, and without fresh revolutionary attacks on the part of the proletariat, as unfortunately happened in Germany in the situation of July 20 and 21—I say unfortunately happened—if we, as a revolutionary Party, do not draw new and practical conclusions *within* the Party, from the happenings of July 20 and from the Party's failure to react instantly, then we shall experience sensational surprises in the further course of development. . . .

Viewed from this standpoint, I therefore hold that the events of July 20, and the Party's failure to react sufficiently, constitute a great warning for us."

Another passage reads as follows:

"I therefore hold that the conditions for the political mass strike, and besides this, for the general strike among the proletariat, were abundantly present on July 20, and that the rôle of our Party, as leader of the proletariat, would have been greatly strengthened, had it succeeded in launching strikes and street demonstrations in individual localities through

the independent initiative of our Party comrades in the various enterprises.

"In dealing with this problem, we must raise the question that the days of 1918 to 1919 are now over. In those years we could call a strike by means of leanets, but to-day the time is passed when strikes can be called by such means."

The final passage reads as follows:

"Our functionaries must be mobilised at certain strategic points in order that, besides meetings on the streets and at unemployment registry offices; demonstrations, direct action in factories and strikes may also take place. As a Party, we have undoubtedly lost prestige in the eyes of the Comintern since, during these days, we have by no means fulfilled our leading role as we should have done."

What special practical conclusions did we draw besides this from July 20? We raised the question with especial sharpness for Berlin. Not only because of the general importance of July 20, but because it was in Berlin that these happenings took place. If in Berlin, where the various enterprises were only in a very few cases informed of the events of the forenoon, we had succeeded in launching great demonstrations during the afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock—demonstrations which the police could not have left without interference—the S.A., Hitler "Storm detachments," Sections in Germany might well have been mobilised also for the attack; this would undoubtedly have led to cases of mass anti-Fascist direct action, so that July 20 might have placed the most favourable positions in our hands. We must draw the conclusions from these happenings, most especially in the case of Berlin, to prevent a further failure of the Party to react, and to function on future occasions.

There has been one good result from July 20 to which insufficient attention has been given, namely, that the state of feeling among the Social-Democratic workers tends to the view that in the present situation the only solution lies in great struggles. The state of feeling among these workers has to-day been so changed by the capitulation of Severing and other Social-Democratic leaders, that our slogan of the general strike, which we put forward for July 20, is now being recognised by these workers as a correct one. These workers now declare that the Communists were right when they advocated on July 20 a common struggle of the Free trade union, Social-Democratic and Communist workers, and the use of the weapon of the general strike. The state of ferment which is now growing apace in the camp of the S.P.D. and the Free trade unions, is also of great significance, because it penetrates to some

extent even among the heads of the Social-Democratic organisations, for example into the fraction in the Reichstag, despite certain manoeuvres made by the leaders of the S.P.D. of which we must take note.

[Comrade Thälmann then proceeded to analyse the class nature of the Papen-Schleicher government and the forces which support it: it constitutes a dictatorship of large-scale industry, of the great landowners and the *Reichswehr* generals in connection with the *Junkers*.

One of the main props of the government is the Chemical Trust (*I. G. Farbenindustrie*) but the government is also striving to get into contact with the heavy industry of Western Germany (incidentally by appointing Bracht, from the Catholic Centre Party, to membership of the Prussian Senate).

Comrade Thälmann further described the differences that are appearing in the camp of the bourgeoisie on account of the privileges which are granted by the government to the Prussian agrarians and to certain groups of the great capitalists. He then described the great influence enjoyed under the Papen government by the Nationalists with Hugenberg and the *Stahlhelm* movement at their head, and the fractional struggle for hegemony between them and the National Socialists. The former are fighting for the power of Hindenburg and the latter for the rights of the *Reichstag*].

The happenings in the *Reichstag*, and the fact that the Nazis and the Catholic Centre, as also the S.P.D., came forward ostensibly as representatives of the people's interests, show not only the contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie, but, also, at the same time, the subtle demagogy and the Fascist coalitions which are designed to further the whole process of the growth of Fascism, and to hinder the revolutionary upsurge and the further advance of our Party.

With the Hitler Party as its reserve force and the Catholic Centre and the S.P.D. (who, however, employ different methods) as its auxiliaries, the Papen-Schleicher government is launching a furious Fascist attack on the working class and the whole toiling population.

The tempo at which Fascist dictatorship in Germany develops further, depends, above all, on the extent and the strength of the resistance offered by the proletariat, depends on the strength with which the proletariat is led in its resistance, and in its counter-attack against the Fascist offensive, leading on to the immediate struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this, the political mass strike is the most important weapon of our struggle.

The situation compels us to learn our lesson quickly in the question of leading the masses on to the great decisive struggles.

[Comrade Thälmann went on to give a detailed analysis of von Papen's programme, dealing with the new emergency decree].

The new emergency decree, with its tremendous attack on the toiling masses and against the proletariat, signifies a comprehensive attempt on

the part of the German bourgeoisie to make enormous reductions in wages by playing off the factory workers against the unemployed, to smash social insurance and the right to collective bargaining, to give billions of marks in the form of state aid to the great capitalists under the pretext of "giving a fillip to business for the benefit of the whole population," to decrease its own difficulties and to betray the toiling masses and the proletariat.

[Comrade Thälmann then explained in detail the meaning of the "tax coupons" (*Steuerergutscheine*) introduced by the new emergency decree. These represent on the one hand a surreptitious gift of 1½ billion marks to the big employers of labour, who, by increasing the numbers of their workers, receive a corresponding number of coupons freeing them from the payment of taxes, and, at the same time, obtain the right to raise assignments of work and to lower wages; on the other hand, they represent an "eye-to-business" measure designed to disseminate discord between employed and unemployed workers. Finally, the coupon system is a veiled form of inflation. Further the main aims of the decree against the workers are wage-cuts, longer hours and increased taxation. Special measures against the lower middle class include increased taxation].

The Party and the R.G.O. reacted at once to the Papen emergency decree, by holding meetings and framing resolutions of organisations and employees for a struggle and for the use of the strike weapon as an answer to the new emergency decree. We put forward slogans to mobilise the masses on the basis of the united front from below, for common resistance and attack. The principal slogans are: Direct action of the proletarian united front against the policy of starvation and emergency decrees: Down with the Papen Government! This latter slogan was united in our propaganda with another slogan expressing our ultimate aims: For the struggle for the workers' and peasants' republic! Other slogans are: Don't allow any reduction of wages or wages in the factories! Shortening of the working day only on condition of full wage compensation, etc. The slogan of the common struggle of the unemployed together with the factory workers and the appeal to the unemployed not to work in the enterprises without fixed wages, or for reduced wages, likewise form important factors in the mobilisation of the masses.

We demand that the sums given in the form of state aid to the amount of 2,200 billion marks to the great landlords and to large-scale industry, should be used for increasing wages and granting relief to the unemployed. Under these slogans we have already approached the lower units of the S.P.D. and the trade-union organisations, for the purpose of launching the common struggle of all workers irrespective of their political views, or adherence to political organisations, in order

to launch a mass offensive along the whole front against the Fascist programme of Von Papen.

Over and above the emergency decrees, the German bourgeoisie is trying, despite (and because of) the difficulties existing in the country, to carry through its plans more aggressively than ever before in the sphere of foreign politics. The demands for equality in armaments, which were laid down in the programme of the Papen-Schleicher Government, and which were drawn up in a special memorandum for the session of the Bureau of the so-called "Disarmament Conference" on September 21, met with a different sort of response in the various quarters of the world. Italy, for example, showed a semi-solidarity with these demands. England was at first reserved and then declared itself more or less openly against them. While France offered the most aggressive resistance to these new demands of German Imperialism. The world historical significance of these demands for equality in armaments drawn up by the Papen-Schleicher Government becomes the more accentuated on account of the new groupings and regroupings of forces which are taking place in the present changed situation at the end of capitalist stabilisation.

Comrade Pieck yesterday gave an analysis of the various most important demands in this armaments programme, on the basis of which the demands for armaments, are being more precisely drawn up to make a fresh attempt to undermine the Versailles system—attempts which we have already witnessed in the past at the time of the Brüning Government, when the German bourgeoisie vainly attempted to weaken France's hegemony in Europe, by concluding a treaty for a tariff union with Austria. Without doubt the new armaments offensive of the Papen cabinet signifies an intensification of imperialist aggressiveness on the part of the German bourgeoisie and an accentuation of the differences with France. Over and above this, the Papen government wants to divert attention from its home policy of starvation, repression, emergency decrees, etc., by arousing a fresh storm of chauvinist passions.

The section in the memorandum on armaments which deals with the question of the training of a Fascist militia in Germany, is of especial importance for us Communists. It is here quite boldly stated that the S.A. and S.S. detachments, together with the Stahlhelm, are to be officially incorporated in the army to keep down the revolutionary movement. It goes without saying that these detachments are also to find employment as troops in time of imperialist war. Thus the incorporation of the S.S. and the S.A. in the army is important for the German bourgeoisie, both in

a military sense, in connection with foreign policy, and also in connection with home affairs. It is thus no accident that the tremendous offensive of the Papen-Schleicher government is being carried through in conjunction with this programme of armaments for the home front and for foreign policy. By a skilful policy of utilising the various differences in the play of forces between the different imperialist powers, the German bourgeoisie is trying to get a hearing for its own policy and thus to attain certain concessions in respect of armaments and, at the same time, to be able to carry through the more easily its most brutal measures against the working class in its own country. The bourgeoisie is arousing chauvinist feelings; it pretends to be against the Versailles system, and by these measures it wants to distract attention from the brutal attack that is being made, by way of wage cutting, the abolition of social insurance, the smashing of the wages law and other measures.

The growth of the wave of chauvinism in Germany is closely connected with the further development of the crisis in the country itself. A new process of the pauperisation of the petty bourgeois and peasant sections of the population has now set in. The petty bourgeois and the poor peasants see their own existence threatened, not only by the present dominating system, by capitalism, but also by the further rise of the revolutionary movement, so that they believe that the proletarian revolution will destroy them and rob them of their property. All these facts create among the petty-bourgeois strata of the toiling masses, that state of feeling which is so calculated to assist the growth of the national Socialist movement.

We cannot in any way assert that the wave of chauvinism is, as yet, on the ebb. We must also take stock of the following facts: The demagoguery of the National Socialists makes full use of the way in which Marxism is being discredited by the leaders of the S.P.D. Leading members of the S.P.D. such as Vandervelde and Hermann Müller signed the dictated Versailles Treaty. From this fact the German Fascists attempt to prove that "Marxism" is responsible for the thralldom of the Versailles system. There can be no doubt that millions of the petty bourgeois masses are convinced of the correctness of this view.

Because of the fear of the petty bourgeoisie for the proletarian revolution, the Fascist mass movement, at the same time, constitutes the antithesis to the revolutionary upsurge, which is going on to-day under the leadership of the Communist Party. We may say, further, that the German bourgeoisie is making use of the Fascist mass movement, in the sphere of foreign politics to

bring pressure to bear on the powers which are its creditors.

Though the XI. Plenum severely and with justice criticised all false conceptions concerning the development of fascism (the "offensive theory" which taught that the way to fascism in Germany was barred, and the conception of fascism as a mere product of the disintegration of capitalism), since these conceptions represented a dangerous under-estimation of the possibilities of further development on the part of fascism—this XII. Plenum must with equal vigour reject and combat all attempts to under-estimate the elements of disintegration which fascism is showing under present-day conditions.

The most important phenomena of disintegration which can be noted at the present moment are:

Differences within the fascist camp; contradiction between the N.S.D.A.P.'s and the Stahlhelm. Differences between the leaders within the N.S.D.A.P. North German Union, Hitler, Strasser, Goebbels. Inner social contradictions, cleavage between officers and men accentuated by the incorporation of the S.A. and S.S. in the capitalist State apparatus. Open signs of disintegration, mutinies with political motive ever more clearly appearing. Protest against the negotiations between Hitler and the Catholic Centre, against the Papen programme, etc. Disillusionment at the practice of labour service. Resistance to military drill. Resistance to anti-Soviet course of policy. Intensification of difficulties through the constant increase of the immediate responsibility of the fascist organisation for the measures taken by the capitalist Government. Loss of confidence in Hitler, etc., in some parts of the organisation. Effect of revelations, etc.

In this connection we must take into account the points which Comrade Ercoli has dealt with in the experience of the development of Italian fascism. We ought even now to begin trying to undermine the principal foundations of fascist dictatorship in the mass movement. We must try to tear the great masses of the population away from the grip of fascist ideology.

As we intensify our militant anti-fascist mass struggle, the ideological mass struggle must become one of the most important weapons in the struggle against fascism. In this field we can already register some substantial gains.

In our struggle against the Versailles system, our standpoint in the question of national oppression, which is closely connected with international exploitation under the conditions of the Versailles system, has been developed by us in our emancipation programme. We have attempted to make an approach to the different sections of the population, above all, to the national socialist front, in order to win them over into the attacking front of the proletariat.

Such facts as Lausanne, the emergency decrees, the open support given to the national socialist movement by the capitalists, and, in addition to this, the revolutionary mobilisation for struggle which we have carried on among the petty bourgeois strata and the poor peasants—all these facts have considerably accelerated the accentuation of class contradictions.

The seriousness, and the sharpening of the present situation, compel us, not only to win over from the Social-Democratic camp, to tear out of this camp, ever fresh forces for the anti-fascist front, but also to win over to our side those forces, whose activity has been led into wrong channels, in the camp of the Nazis. Our ideological struggle against the million-strong National-Socialist Party must not, however, be waged for one moment without a simultaneous, a genuine and most bitter struggle against the hired assassins of the S.A. and S.S. detachments.

As far as Germany is concerned, it can be said that never before has a fascist dictatorship developed with such a great mass movement standing beside the S.P.D. as the National-Socialist Party now represents; and that at the same time the development of no other fascist movement hitherto, has yet been accompanied by such a strong Communist Party among the proletariat as is now actually to be seen in Germany.

Both those conceptions which were previously rejected by the XI. Plenum of an especial "offensive theory," as though the way were already barred to fascism in Germany, and also, those opinions which later made their appearance, to the effect that fascism had already conquered, and that the fascist dictatorship had undergone its full development, must be sharply rejected by the XII. Plenum. Both the over-estimation, and also the under-estimation of fascism leads to the most dangerous consequences.

A few further remarks about our struggle against Versailles. I think it can be said that our struggle against the dictated Versailles peace, and the Lausanne agreement has lately made considerable progress. Certain progress can be registered in the work among the office employees. The process of disintegration which is beginning in the Nazi camp, the advancing process of radicalisation, the growing mistrust felt among the masses for the policy of the National-Socialist Party, present us with new possibilities of strengthening our mass work in this field. In the countryside, the increasing distress of the small peasantry, and the agricultural labourers, present us with new possibilities of forming alliances with a view to strengthening our work in this field, also on the basis of the measures taken by the capitalist State, in the way of compulsion and taxation, and of the new emergency decrees.

The declaration of our programme for national and social liberation which was then published by us, and

our declaration which was adopted at the Plenum of the Central Committee in February, represented powerful weapons for us in the struggle against the Versailles System and those who support it. The new manifesto which has just been published, provides a clear answer to the programme of the Papen Government and indicates the way of common extra-parliamentary mass struggle and our further line of policy against the Versailles System. In our propaganda, we counter the imperialist armaments programme of the Papen-Schleicher Government, by our slogans for the arming of the proletariat.

In our struggle against Versailles, we must speak a comprehensible language—a language which the middle strata of the toilers can also understand. We must carry out genuine mass struggles in order to bring these strata of the population into line behind the revolutionary proletarian vanguard in the struggle against Versailles.

As daily problems arise in connection with the Versailles Treaty, we must react to them day by day in the sense of our liberation programme among the broad masses. To counter the German bourgeoisie's imperialist demands for armaments, we must openly show our revolutionary face both to these demands and to the pacifist demands for disarmament. We must refer to the fact that had the German bourgeoisie been disarmed by the proletariat in 1918, had the dictatorship of the proletariat, based upon the armed workers, been ruthlessly carried through, we should have had no emergency decrees, no von Papen, and no shameful payment of tribute.

We must rid many of our comrades of certain inner inhibitions which they still possess, of certain "apprehensions" that we may have borrowed certain sections from the National-Socialist demands and inserted them in our liberation programme. We must fill the whole Party with a much stronger consciousness that we were and are the first and only opponents of the Versailles System in Germany and that this was so long before the Nazi Party ever existed. We must see to it most carefully that we bring our struggle against wage robbery and emergency decrees into the correct relation with our struggle for liberation from the fetters of the Versailles Treaty.

We must succeed in directing the hatred felt by the petty-bourgeois masses against the Powers to whom they pay tribute, first and foremost, against their own Government, against their own bourgeoisie, and its lackeys, in order to make the true connection of things clear to the masses. It is our task to enlighten the wide masses as to the close connection between the function of gendarme, fulfilled by their own bourgeoisie in its carrying out of the policy of plunder, and the reparations paid to the Powers victorious in the war.

The German Party must concern itself more with the question of the German population in neighbouring countries, and further with that of the working German population abroad. We must not leave them a prey to the National-Socialists, but must emphasise the fact that they will not enjoy the full right of self-determination, and to join the future German Soviet State, until the chains of the Versailles system are broken asunder by the German Soviet republic of the future. In the same way, we must concern ourselves more with the winning over of oppressed foreign minorities in Germany, as, for example, the Polish workers.

Our common struggle, together with our French brother Party, against the Versailles system must be given yet stronger expression and popularised among the masses.

For the tenth anniversary of the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923, the German delegation makes the following proposal: In January, 1933, on the occasion of the anniversary of the occupation, to hold a great campaign in Germany and France, with great mass meetings at which former French soldiers, and German workers, from the formerly occupied territory shall speak on our common revolutionary and proletarian struggle for liberation, and against the Versailles system. In January, 1933, a common manifesto to be issued to the German, French, English, Polish and Belgian proletariat containing a pledge for common fraternal struggle against the shameful Versailles Treaty with special emphasis on the slogan: "The enemy is in your own country!" Our French brother Party is developing especially serious propaganda in the army. ("What has the soldier gained from the Ruhr adventure?" etc.) In addition to this, great demonstrations in the neighbouring countries are to be organised, under the slogans of the struggle against the Versailles system, and for the international revolutionary struggle for liberation.

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Comrades, I want now to deal with the question, in how far the leaders of Social-Democracy, and their policy, have undergone a swing towards fascism, in the development towards fascist dictatorship in Germany. It must be realised that, despite the fact that the bourgeoisie is removing the Social-Democratic leaders from the most important posts in the State and administrative apparatus, the S.P.D. is again and again being drawn into this process of greater fascistisation—the process of fascistisation among the leaders of the S.P.D. is taking on a higher form. German Social-Democracy has attempted, and to a certain extent it has succeeded, in enlisting the working-class in the further process of higher fascistisation, by means of "Left theories" and demagogical manœuvres. (Toleration of the Brüening Government, election of Hindenburg, etc.) The main

efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders are directed towards supporting fascism, diminishing its dangerous character, and keeping the masses from waging decisive struggles against the employing class, and the fascist dictatorship in general. What have been the various stages of development in the attitude adopted by the S.P.D.? For a long time, while developments had not yet taken on such a sharp turn, Social-Democracy attempted to treat fascism in general, as a trifling matter. Until quite recently Social-Democracy described fascism as a mere movement of the petty-bourgeoisie, without laying stress on its financial dependence on large-scale industry, or making mention of the fact that fascism is first and foremost a movement of violence and terrorism in the hands of the great capitalists.

Social-Democracy's policy of consistent toleration towards the Brüening Cabinet was and still is an active help for fascism. Under the specious slogan of a struggle against fascism, and with the aid of the theory of the "lesser evil," the Brüening Government was tolerated for years, and in this manner the way was paved for the Papen Cabinet, and for fascism. Parallel with this, the Social-Democrats kept up a talk about the "danger of a Nazi *Putsch*" and this, at a time when there could be no talk of any such danger from this movement. Social-Democracy put forward two "theories." The first "theory" was that of letting the National-Socialists "play themselves out." The second "theory," which is connected with the first, takes the view that a possible Schleicher-Hitler Government, and an actual Papen Government are after all better than a "pure" Hitler Government. In this manner the way is being paved for the toleration of such a Cabinet. So we see how, in theory and practice, Social-Democracy supports all measures of fascistisation. Not till quite recently did the bourgeoisie attempt, by making propaganda for the so-called "third front," which was to extend from Strasser via Stegerwald to Leipart, to create certain approaches to fetter millions of workers to the policy of fascist dictatorship, especially on the trade union front. The description of the Papen Government as a "Government of Hitler barons" was made by Social-Democracy with the express object of veiling and concealing this Government's dependence on large-scale industry. This fact is hushed up, because the aim is to keep the organised masses of Social-Democratic and Free trade union workers from a genuine struggle against the offensive of capital. The leaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B. are thus attempting to prevent a struggle in the factories against the Papen Cabinet.

Every fresh stage in the support of fascism by Social-Democracy is accompanied by a certain amount of "social" demagoguery and by suitable demagogic phrases. In the past the catchword was the so-called "free people's State" and "State

capitalism" as a transition to a "development to socialism." In this way the S.P.D. attempted to rivet its fetters, theoretically and practically, upon the masses of the population, to guarantee support for the purpose of fascisation. In recent times, the S.P.D. has attempted to make headway with certain treacherous "Left" manœuvres and with the slogans of the "reconstruction of economy," of "socialist action," etc. There was even a spurious use of the phrase "socialist construction"—under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, let it be noted. Recently we have witnessed various efforts at feelers and agreements between the fascist and social-fascist economic theoreticians. It is a generally known fact that a partial agreement has already been reached between the National-Socialists and the Social-democrats, in the question of compulsory labour service, and in the "plans for the provision of work." The important fact for us is that this process of fascisation on a higher plane, in the camp of the S.P.D. will have profound new changes as its consequence. Various comrades have already quite rightly referred to the fact that the process of radicalisation, and to some extent also the process of cleavage in the S.P.D., in Germany, will have a different development from that in Italy, Poland and other countries. The leaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B. are already beginning to work hand in hand with the fascist dictatorship. In many places members of the S.P.D. were ejected from the positions they held in the State administration, it is true, but such leaders of the S.P.D. as Noske and Zörgiebel still occupy their State posts, even under the Government of fascist dictatorship. Among the members, as also among the middle and lower cadres of functionaries, this policy of their social-fascist leaders, is producing a profound new process of radicalisation. All this gives us abundant opportunities for deepening and successfully consolidating our revolutionary mass work within the S.P.D., and the trade union movement. Precisely at the present stage of development in Germany fascism and social-fascism are appearing in their true colours as "twin brothers," as Comrade Stalin once acutely emphasised, though this does not imply that they have reached absolute agreement. In the resolution it is rightly stated that fascism and social-fascism cannot be treated as synonymous. The peculiar methods of betrayal, the peculiar tactical measures taken by these two wings of fascism must be concretely demonstrated. At the present stage of progressive fascisation, any weakening of our struggle in principle against Social-Democracy, as representing the main social support of the bourgeoisie, would be a grievous mistake, especially because the neglect of this struggle might produce new and dangerous illusions among the masses, to the effect that the Social-Democratic Party is an anti-fascist force. The specious opposition of the S.P.D.

the fact that it stands outside the Government, the fact that the policy of the S.P.D. is adorned with trappings of "left" demagogy, makes it the more difficult for millions of workers to understand the policy of class betrayal pursued by their own leaders, and confronts us with a serious duty of laying bare all these facts to a much greater degree, of exposing their class causes and setting them in a true light.

In accordance with the Party line, and with the help of the Comintern, and of the resolutions that have been passed, our Party has of late been combating, with great success, all tendencies to weaken the struggle in principle against Social-Democracy, and has fought with all severity against all conceptions that the main offensive within the working-class ought no longer to be directed against Social-Democracy and against all deviations in this field.

After the coming into power of the Papen Government, certain tendencies to deviation from the general line of the Party in this fundamental question of our policy and tactics manifested themselves among individual comrades in Germany. Our Party leadership set its face severely against the attitude which found its expression in an article entitled "Change of System"; this article was put before the secretariat, and its publication prevented. This article contains, besides a number of other incorrect formulations, one absolutely false formulation, namely, "that the bourgeoisie is temporarily renouncing the co-operation of Social-Democracy as its main social support." In this we see a wholly inadmissible estimation of the role of the S.P.D. in the present situation. The tactical conclusions which have been drawn from the false estimation of the rôle of the S.P.D. in the above-mentioned article, are substantially on a par with the proposals of the Berlin district leadership—proposals which were made to the Social-Democratic Party with a view to the holding of joint demonstrations, and which were rightly rejected by the Central Committee of our Party, and corrected in the case of Berlin.

The article contains among other things the following passage :

"At the present time the 'democratic' tendency is no longer the dominant one; it is now the fascist wing (?) against which the main onslaught of the revolutionary mass struggle must be directed.

"It lies in the nature of things that in directing this offensive we should on occasion come into the same line of action in which the specious Social-Democratic opposition is operating (!).

"A number of measures which we have recently taken both in the province of parliamentarianism (?) and also in the extra-parliamentary struggle, clearly show the changed tactics which we have begun to employ.

"But, above all, the demand of the Berlin-Brandenburg district leadership to the 'Iron

Front' movement, to hold a joint demonstration against fascism, is most appropriate here."

In this we see the continuation of the false judgment of the rôle of the S.P.D. The proposal made by the leaders of the Berlin district to the "Iron Front" was sharply criticised by us, because it expressed an over-estimation of the degree of maturity attained by the Social-Democratic workers, and an under-estimation of our own power among the working-class, for the organisation of widespread demonstrations of the united front from below, coupled with a surrender in the face of certain sentimental feelings in favour of unity which are to be met with. It is quite clear that we could not allow an article containing such distortions of our Party line to go out into the Party, or to the wider public, unless we wanted to create the greatest confusion and chaos.

I want to add a word or two on the various grouplets which we have in Germany, in the form of the S.A.P., the Brandlerists, and the Trotskyists. These "left" branches of social-fascism—the S.A.P. and the Brandler group—have openly shown their social-fascist face precisely in the final period. Comrade Stalin's most important letter to the magazine *Proletarian Revolution*\* was of great assistance to all Parties, and especially to us in Germany, in the struggle against "Right" opportunism and "Left" sectarianism, against the hidden remnants of Luxemburgism and Trotskyism; meanwhile, however, the examples given above show that, unfortunately, the significance of this letter has not everywhere been grasped in good time and in its full content. There existed a great lack of clarity in our own ranks, in the judgment passed upon Luxemburgism, and also in the question of Trotskyism as a counter-revolutionary ideology. In the question of making a correct estimation of Centrism, the historically important letter of Comrade Stalin helped us to correct, and abolish with all speed, the vagueness to be met with in the German Party, and the mistakes made in the *Rote Fahne*. In view of the powerful growth of fascism in Germany, petty bourgeois persons from the ranks of the renegades, and the factional groups very easily lose their nerve and develop the most counter-revolutionary theories. These factional groups, although they are organisationally very weak, can cause, and have already caused, temporary confusion, in certain situations, among individual sections of the working-class. Recently these persons frequently raised the question of the "alliance of the K.P.D. and the S.P.D." and, the question of "common voting lists" at the presidential elections before us, and the working-class. Trotsky wants, in all seriousness, to see the Communists going hand in hand with the murderers of

Liebknecht and of Rosa Luxemburg and beyond this with Herr Zörgiebel, and with any police president whom the Papen regime chooses to leave in office, for the repression of the proletariat. Trotsky has attempted, on more than one occasion, to lead the working-class astray by his writings, by demanding negotiations between the leaders of the K.P.D. and the S.P.D. Among other things he said as follows, to quote him word for word:

"One must actually declare complete readiness to form a bloc with the Social-Democrats against fascism. . . . One must compel Social-Democracy to form a bloc against the fascists."

This policy would mean that we would abandon our correct Bolshevik policy, and adopt one which would be even much worse than that which manifested itself most crassly in 1923, in the German Party, in the policy of the Brandlerists, in the question of the false theory of the State, the erroneous policy of the united front, and the policy of a bloc with the "Left" Social-Democrats.

We, and the German revolutionary proletariat, received a crushing reminder of the fatal character of this "Left" Social-Democratic policy, in the defeat sustained in October, 1923.

In his writings, which are imbued with the most profound hatred against the Comintern, Trotsky further upholds the thesis that "victorious fascism will one time or another fall a victim to the objective contradictions and to its own insufficiency."

This fatalistic thesis that fascism has already triumphed over the working-class, this dangerous and defeatist Trotskyist "theory" is further accompanied by Trotsky's demands that the formation of a Hitler Government in Germany should be signalled by the Red Army's marching upon Germany, that is to say, declaration of war upon Germany by the Soviet Union. This "radical" proposal constitutes a provocation which, objectively, is in no way surpassed by the criminal acts of Gorgulov, Vasilyev, Stern, and the rest. Trotsky, who has placed himself at the head of the counter-revolutionary vanguard against the Soviet Union, dares to reproach the Comintern with "capitulating in panic before fascism."

A similar tendency may be observed among those renegades, formerly Trotskyists, around Urbahns, who spread their literary filth in certain localities in Germany, with their paper *The Banner of Communism*. They, too, want to produce confusion among the revolutionary workers. *The Banner of Communism* even contains the following demand:

"The Communists must and should set a goal for the workers. This goal is now the Government of the Weimar coalition, which is possible with the help of the Communists."

According to this, the K.P.D. ought to form an "alliance" not only with the social-fascists, but also

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with the Centre Party of the great capitalists such as Klockner and Louis Hagen, with the Centre Party of Herr Papen, Herr Bracht, Prince von Löwenstein, etc. To what depths these renegades have now fallen is shown by their counter-revolutionary attitude.

The party of Seydewitz and Rosenfeld likewise upholds, in conjunction with the Brandlerists, the slogan of an "alliance between the S.P.D. and the K.P.D." in Germany. The last Reichstag elections, at which the K.P.D. received eighty-nine mandates, while Sedewitz and his friends of the S.A.P. did not receive a single mandate, have already shown the significance of these "splinter" groups.

However, it would be an act of negligence to forsake, or to relax the struggle against renegacy. It must be realised that, as "left" branches of social-fascism, with their theories adapted to the backward conceptions of many sections of the proletariat, these persons may still, at certain times, and in certain situations, cause confusion and do political damage.

The policy of Social-Democracy in supporting the measures of the fascists, is already meeting with strong resistance in its own ranks.

Especially during recent months, the best hated people among the German proletariat are the S.A. and S.S. detachments, the murder troops of fascism. Everywhere where we have had to do with a mass attack of these terrorist groups, where we have succeeded in getting rid of the tendencies to individualist terrorism, and, aided by the resistance of the real revolutionary masses, have succeeded in setting in motion a mass front from all sections of the workers—everywhere where we have done this, we have immensely strengthened our authority among the entire working-class of the district in question and have carried out direct action of the united front on a broad scale. We have not only had success at the elections, but we have also been able in many cases to launch economic strikes for partial demands, demonstration strikes and even political mass strikes. Through the campaign for anti-fascist direct action, we have drawn over to our side many Social-Democratic, free trade union and even Christian workers by forming mass self-defence organisations, so that these organisations come to represent a real weapon of defence and attack in the hands of the proletariat under the leadership of the "Anti-Fascist Direct Action." Political questions are already beginning to be discussed far more eagerly in these organisations. An approach to the militant revolutionary point of view is being made. We are fully justified in asserting that, in this field, real progress is to be recorded. Let us take one or two examples showing the composition of the self-defence organisations. I take Hamburg as an example.

One group contains 125 non-Party workers, 10 Social-Democrats and 65 Communists. In

another group there are 15 non-Party workers, 20 Social-Democrats and 30 Communists. In a third self-defence organisation there are 56 non-Party, 24 Social-Democrats and 30 Communists, while in another group we have 158 non-Party members, 6 Social-Democrats and 96 Communists.

In the Düsseldorf district, in Cologne and also in the Ruhr district, we have succeeded in drawing larger numbers of the Christian workers into these mass self-defence organisations. For example, in the city district of Rosenhügel in Remscheid, we have an organisation consisting of 75 members, of whom 40 are Catholic workers, and 20 members of a bourgeois defence union. The decisive problem for the Party now consists in directing the profound hatred, the militant initiative and the genuine aggressive spirit which the militant proletariat feels against the most hated class enemy, against the attacks of the Papen Government, and of the capitalist system in general, in order that we may succeed in launching genuine mass direct action among the unemployed, and more especially in the factories against the new and subtle methods of wage-cutting which are being employed. For example, in places where there have been really serious anti-fascist offensives, we can point to great protest demonstrations, and mass direct action which have had a political character, and which have also led among different sections of the industrial workers to the launching of certain movements. At the present time we can say that there have been new forms of struggle, on a higher level, of a similar character to those in Poland: A detachment of the League for Struggle Against Fascism marches into an enterprise with the red flag; a speech is made, and the employees of the enterprise are enlightened politically, and encouraged to call a strike in the enterprise against the policy of emergency decrees. A few months ago in Wuppertal, we succeeded in getting nine enterprises, each employing at least 300 men, to come out on strike in an anti-fascist gesture of protest. The strike was immediately carried out by all nine enterprises as one man. We must give more scope to such examples and improve upon them.

The working-class is beginning to realise from its past experience that in view of the accentuation of the crisis, etc., the policy of the S.P.D. offers no avenue of escape from the crisis. The Social-Democratic workers are already beginning to-day to pay far more attention to the slogans of the Communist Party, both those expressing immediate demands and those embodying our ultimate aims. In this way the positions which our Party holds within the working-class are being considerably strengthened.

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Comrades, now the question of the inner development of the Party, the struggle for the carrying out of the general line of the Comintern, in connection with certain facts regarding the inner life of the Party. In

view of the complicated situation created by the struggle against the bourgeoisie, against the National-Socialist movement and against Social-Democracy, our Party, under the leadership of the Comintern, has become more mature, has grown strong both within and without. Our Party has at its disposal hundreds of thousands of proletarian fighters; it has also cadres of tried and trusted functionaries, many of whom have also had experience of the days when the Party was illegal. Standing side by side with the Party, we have great anti-fascist mass organisations which have not only been strengthened politically, but have also grown in the organisational sense, especially in recent times. The fact that our ideological offensive has presented us with great possibilities of accelerating the process of disintegration which is to be seen in the camp of the S.S., the S.A. and, above all, in that of the *Reichsbanner* movement, by the holding of special discussion evenings, by the distribution of printed matter, etc., opens up new prospects for our success in the mass anti-fascist struggle. The League for Struggle Against Fascism, and other mass organisations have recently enjoyed great success. The electoral victory which we won on July 31 represents a break-through of the mass strength of the Communist Party of Germany, and has a great extra-parliamentary significance, which can only be under-estimated and belittled by those who have no understanding of the conditions of the revolutionary advance in Germany, and for the upward curve of revolutionary development. Anyone who wants to under-estimate or depreciate the increasingly leading rôle of the K.P.D., anyone who tries to weaken this leading rôle under the difficult conditions of the present situation—such a person can have no understanding of what it means to have won 5,300,000 votes in an electoral struggle, waged according to principle, against all our class enemies. We cannot, however, enhance these successes unless we are able, seriously, and with revolutionary fervour, to find new methods of revolutionary mass work, and by means of new forms of struggle, to counter the attacks of the fascist dictatorship by mass attacks of the proletariat with increasing boldness and courage. It is quite true that the results of the election only give a limited picture of the course of development. Of much greater importance is the general state of our revolutionary work and the general position of the Party among the masses. At the national conference of political secretaries on August 3, we said “that we have beaten Social-Democracy at the *polls*, now we must stem its mass influence in the *enterprises* and *trade unions* and defeat it there, too.” Despite the desperate manœuvres of our antagonists, despite the unexampled pressure of the class enemy on our front, despite all acts of provocation and all attempts to decimate and demoralise the revolutionary vanguard of the

German proletariat, we have nevertheless grown and increased in the fire of the class struggle.

I now want to refer to certain connections between questions of inner Party life, questions of the inner development of the Parties, with the general situation. It is quite inevitable that the turning points of political and historical development should again and again evoke special phenomena of an inner Party nature, vacillations which have their roots in an insufficient understanding of the new conditions, under which we have to perform our work. The greatest danger, for example, which we must envisage to-day is the under-estimation of the revolutionary possibilities, capitulation before the class enemy, loss of courage in the face of the tremendous tasks with which history has confronted us. But it is also our duty most severely to combat and to overcome the other danger—that of specious revolutionary exaggerated phraseology, and sectarian isolation from the masses.

Our Russian friends have already spoken about the differences of opinion with Comrade Neumann, but I think that it is necessary to throw more light upon these examples, by producing new facts, and to show where the points of political difference with Comrade Neumann, and certain other individual functionaries lie.

Let us take up the question of the carrying out of the decisions of the Comintern, in connection with the XI Plenum. In this field of the carrying out of the decisions of the XI Plenum, have we not had a certain amount of vacillation and vagueness in the German Party, with regard to the question of the development of fascism? Of course we have! These vacillations have their roots still further back. Such facts as, for example, in the question of the under-estimation of the National Socialist movement. Comrade Neumann said in regard to the formidable success of the National-Socialists at the *Reichstag* elections on September 14, 1930, that this was “Hitler’s best day” and the climax of this movement. This led to an incorrect estimation of this great mass movement, and to a temporary neglect of our work among these masses. Neumann went from one extreme to the other. In December, 1930, i.e., some three months after the *Reichstag* elections, he obstinately adhered to the standpoint that “fascist dictatorship has already come”—how could we then make it possible to convince the masses, to mobilise them and activate them for the struggle against the different forms of the further process towards fascist dictatorship. Thus, at the very outset, there were great differences of opinion. When we further attempted to find formulations in a less rigid application of the policy of the proletarian united front—for example, “We stretch out our hands as brothers to the Social-Democratic workers”—this was in many cases greeted with ironical observations such as

“following in the wake of the Social-Democratic workers,” as Comrade Neumann described it.

NEUMANN (interjecting): Where?

THALMANN: You expressed yourself against the formulations more than once in the pamphlet, on the speech delivered in the *Sportpalast*.

NEUMANN (interjecting): I was speaking of the S.A.P. leaders, of following in the wake of Seydewitz and Rosenfeld.

THALMANN: These other calumniations spread by you, and other comrades, concerning that passage in the speech are unjustified. The passage has everywhere been established to be correct and politically faultless, as against your false conception of it. What was said there was a self-evident observation, and a perfectly correct one, but what you falsely described there as “following in the wake” not only of the “left” S.P.D. leaders, but also the Social-Democratic workers, only strengthens the impression of the German delegation that you are not in agreement with our correct mass tactics.

In connection with the application of the policy of the united front, we have had questions that have already been criticised here. The question as to whether we formulate it “united revolutionary front” or “united Red front” or “united proletarian front,” etc.—that depends on the special situation obtaining in the different countries. But when we had in Germany such views as those upheld by Neumann, that the slogan of the “united Red front” should be changed to the slogan “Red workers’ front” in order that, as he alleged, the character of the hegemony of the proletariat might find more sharp expression, that means nothing more than rendering the urge of the masses towards unity more difficult and excluding important sections of the population from the united front. The slogan of the “united Red front” constitutes one of the most important weapons for winning over the unorganised and Social-Democratic workers, and over and above this the toiling strata of the population, for the united proletarian front to fight for their own demands.

In the province of inner-trade union work such incorrect slogans were to be met with as the slogan upheld by Neumann “Smash the A.D.G.B.!” The appeal which was temporarily put forward to bar contribution payments in the enterprises was likewise false. Comrade Neumann, and other comrades too, were then upholders of the view that we ought to found Red trade unions, or Red federations, without first having certain prerequisites for a genuine mass basis for them.

NEUMANN (interjecting): Never!

THALMANN: I know for certain, and I had expected that everything I said about your political mistakes would be described by you as a lie. When the letter of the R.I.L.U. on inner-trade union work appeared in the autumn, you said “it contained

nothing new,” thereby belittling the importance of the letter.

For quite a long time in our struggle against the National-Socialists, we had the false slogan “Beat the fascists wherever you meet them!” At the XI Plenum, and in the German delegation, this slogan was not yet recognised as a serious mistake. Comrade Neumann was of the opinion that this slogan ought not to be described as a mistake, but as a slogan which was no longer expedient, no longer suited to the situation. What was the meaning of this slogan “Beat the fascists wherever you meet them!” It made our work among the anti-capitalist adherents of the Nazis everywhere more difficult, and in addition to this we were hampered in the genuine ideological mass struggle against the National-Socialists. With the growth of fascism we could not for a minute cease, without infinitely weakening the militant mass struggle, to make an approach to this million-strong movement in order to tear away the proletarian elements and the anti-capitalist adherents from this front with much greater mobility and aggressiveness.

In the development of the ideological offensive in the ranks of our own Party, with a view to clearing up and getting rid of the erroneous measures in the carrying out of the decisions of the XI Plenum, our difficulties were often increased by this. In the question of passing judgment on weaknesses and defects, of exercising a genuine self-criticism in the Party to efface these basic weaknesses, there was no agreement between Comrade Neumann and us. Violent differences of opinion resulted in this field. Not once did Comrade Neumann show any deep understanding for the fact that theory and practice are a unity, that, in view of the accentuation of the whole situation and the sharpness of the struggle in principle against all our class enemies, we must attempt to have complete clarity precisely in the basic questions, in order to fulfil in practice also the larger revolutionary tasks with which we are confronted.

Five or six months after the session of the XI Plenum, in checking up and examining the decisions then passed, in the carrying out of our revolutionary work, we had to record that, in different questions, we were not in complete accord with the formulation of the problems as they were put at the XI Plenum. When we began to correct our insufficiently clear conceptions in certain individual questions, and when we began to make a fresh ideological breakthrough in the Party, we again witnessed resistance in this province, more especially in the case of Comrade Neumann, who was not convinced, and who did not show understanding for the necessity of clarification in regard to the basic questions of the XI Plenum.

After the appearance of such an extraordinarily important letter as that addressed by Comrade Stalin

to the magazine *Proletarian Revolution*, the *Rote Fahne* published this letter with an introduction which was revised and edited by Comrade Neumann, and which contained two grave political mistakes; these had to be corrected by the Central Committee, a fact to which Comrade Ulbricht has already referred.

One of the passages reads as follows:

"In this development, our Party has defeated the Right opportunism of the Brandlerists, and the veiled 'Left' ideology of swamp Trotskyism."

Thus Trotskyism is here presented, counter to the clear words of Comrade Stalin, not as the counter-revolutionary vanguard of the bourgeoisie, but as 'swamp ideology.' The S.A.P., the "Left" branch of social-fascism, is similarly estimated in the following false manner:

"Once again a Party, to be sure a small Party, of Centrism, an organisation which occupies an unprincipled position between revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, and social-fascism, is attempting to hinder the Social-Democratic workers from going over into the camp of the Communist Party."

Comrade Neumann has thus completely misapprehended the Stalin letter in the most essential points and in its great significance, and has displayed great frivolity in questions of theory.

In the case of Comrade Neumann, we have also to note a dangerous tendency to gloss over and to some extent to take refuge behind objective difficulties—precisely the tendencies which were decisively rebuffed by the XII Plenum. The weaknesses of Party work were attributed by him in the main to *objective* factors (in contradistinction to the resolution of the February Plenum of the Central Committee). At the February Plenum we said as follows on this question:

"I have already . . . referred to the fact that it is inadmissible to make use of objective difficulties, as an excuse for passivity, for insufficient struggles etc. In the discussion on this question, there has been, it is highly gratifying to note, a complete consensus of opinion. In regard to the question of the additional difficulties of the crisis, such as unemployment, etc., in their relation to the leadership of strikes, we have already shown that they, on the one hand, render the leadership of strikes more complicated, but that on the other hand these objective factors render the leadership of mass struggles more easy. We must keep both sides of the process continually in view—not only the difficulties but also the revolutionary factors which result from one and the same fact. Such a way of putting the case is also necessary in considering the international significance of the German revolution.

"In view of the great difficulties which arise for the German revolution on the basis of the Versailles system, in view of which the German

proletariat not only comes up against the front of the German bourgeoisie, but also against the larger front of the victorious powers throughout the whole world, the revolutionary factors in Germany are also increasing at the same time within the bounds of this Versailles system."

Comrade Neumann also opposed a later criticism which appeared in the *Internationale*, of an appeal of the Central Committee, in which the incorrect slogan of the "triple alliance of the toilers" was allowed to pass under his control. He opposed a self-criticism of the Party leadership, of the incorrect estimation of fascism, which the XI Plenum had corrected. He opposed a well-grounded and absolutely necessary criticism of the literary work of individual comrades (Langner for example), thus disclosing a petty-bourgeois feeling of false loyalty towards his friends. In all these points we had sharp differences with Comrade Neumann.

Many political points of difference have in the past not been openly brought to light in regard to the question of unity of leadership. If differences of opinion arise in regard to questions of tactics, that is understandable and can often happen. But when these differences of opinion are of such a character that the carrying out of the general line of the Party is thereby weakened, that the revolutionary mass policy does not attain a Bolshevik character, does not attain revolutionary maturity, when in addition to this we are lagging behind the favourable objective conditions in our methods of the application of the tactics of the united front not only in the trade unions and in the factories, but also among the unemployed, then it is necessary, as was done in the article published in the *Internationale* in December, 1931, to make a serious ideological thrust and breakthrough, against the will of Comrade Neumann, and of other comrades in this field. The facts and the successes we have gained have justified us; for the few months which have elapsed since the launching of the "Anti-Fascist Direct Action" campaign have already shown that we are tackling with much greater courage and much greater intensity the tasks of tearing the masses away from Social-Democratic ideology and enlisting them in the revolutionary class front. Such elasticity as we have to exercise to-day in the application of the policy of the united front results in a higher stage of maturity in the Party, and a strengthening of our capacity to manoeuvre.

Besides Comrade Neumann, there are certain other comrades in our Party, who not only spread their false conceptions abroad among the members, but also undertake disorganising measures calculated to depreciate the work of the Party leadership. In this difficult and accentuated situation, when the bourgeoisie and its satellites are everywhere attempting to discredit and belittle the authority of the Party leadership, the taking of disorganising measures amounts to an attack on the unity and solidarity of

the Party as a whole. When this activity, moreover, takes on the larger form of a factional activity, then I think, comrades, you must agree that we have here to deal not only with a breach of revolutionary discipline, but with a contempt for the statutes and the basic organisational maxims, with a violation of the fundamental principles of the Party. If Comrade Neumann, as a member of the Central Committee, again takes such shameful steps against the unity of the Party, and continues in the way that he has taken, this will very soon spell certain political death for him.

Comrades, those who interfere with and sabotage the work of the Party and of the Young Communist League, those who further attempt to discredit the leadership of the Party—such persons will not and should not cause us to shrink from taking organisational measures.

It is not a question here of a struggle of individual comrades among one another, or of a quarrel between individual comrades, as is sometimes falsely and demagogically stated; it is here a question of political problems in the mass policy and in the improvement of our entire Party work. Here, it is not a question of subsidiary problems, it is a question of the basic problems involved in the decisions of the Central Committee, which in the present especially intense situation confront the leadership with such tasks and conditions, that they are in no way justified in allowing any relaxation of revolutionary discipline, or of the Bolshevik principles of organisation. From this standpoint also, we have felt obliged to draw the appropriate conclusions for the more active carrying out of the line of the Comintern, and of the decisions adopted by our Central Committee, and to introduce such measures as may give us increased assurance that the decisions of the Comintern may be carried out with the whole power of the Party.

I want also to mention here that certain attempts were made to discredit the absolutely correct statements of our February Plenum of the Central Committee, on the question of State capitalism. The resolution on the first point of the agenda of the XII Plenum, confirms the fact that the judgment passed on the question of State capitalism as given by the K.P.D. in the C.C. Plenum of February, 1932, is perfectly correct.

Comrades Kuusinen and Chemodanov have already mentioned the fact that there were one or two difficulties in the policy of our Young Communist League, that there were cases of resistance to the line of policy laid down by the E.C.C.I., the Y.C.I. and by our C.C. We have to do here with certain reflections of the questions already dealt with. The Comintern, together with the Y.C.I. and the German Party leadership, is of the opinion that there have been recently various deviations and vaguenesses to record in the Young Communist League of Germany in regard to the carrying out of the general line of the Party. We must further note that precisely at the

present time any tendency to a further alienation of the Y.C.L. leadership from the Party, must be most sharply combated as a most dangerous manifestation. This alienation was not to be met with in the whole of the Y.C.L. leadership, nor in the lower sections of the German Y.C.L. We therefore hope that the relations of the Y.C.L. to the Party may the more quickly be put upon such a basis that we can together defeat the class enemy on the different fronts.

In order to improve the work of the Young Communist League, we will probably not be able to avoid taking certain organisational measures, which will assure that the decisions of the Comintern and the Party may be carried out. The strong attitude adopted by the Y.C.I. and the Party towards the Y.C.L., together with certain decisions which we are making here, will make it possible to bring the Y.C.L. once more into complete alignment with the whole policy of the Party within the shortest possible time.

Summing up, we have to recognise the following in the German Party: July 20 showed up the weaknesses and defects of the Party, in a sharper light than has been the case in previous events.

We must therefore try, in view of the greater demands with which our Party is confronted by the present objective situation, to be much more vigilant, much more responsible and much more active in the question of really carrying out the decisions and the tactical measures, in order to approach more closely to our main strategic aim—that of winning over the majority of the working-class for the struggle for political power.

Comrades, what conclusions are we to draw in the field of general political measures and in the field of inner-Party measures?

The main point is to make the German Party a really powerful fighting Party. The tendency which is occasionally to be met with, and which is fostered by the bourgeoisie, with its miserable deception of parliamentary elections—the tendency to employ mere propaganda and agitation—must be overcome. We must have an inner process of transformation among the responsible Party workers. Every Party member must become fully conscious of his tremendously responsible work.

The leading Party committees must take on the form of genuine collective organs; they must acquire the capacity for direct action, and must undergo a process of qualitative improvement and strengthening. We will likewise attempt to improve the fraction leaderships of the mass unions to be able to concentrate the whole force of all proletarian organisations, at the necessary moment on to the strategically important key-points.

We will do all we can to see that the leading committees of the Party get into better immediate contact with the masses. For this, what is necessary first and foremost, is a change in the methods of work. We want to do away with the system of long-

winded and tedious instructions, and to mobilise our members by concentration on a few decisive main points.

We have already begun—and we are continuing this process—to diminish the upper apparatus of the Party in size, and to extend and strengthen the lower apparatus of functionaries. The comrades in the German delegation have seen in their visit to the Moscow factory “Dynamo” how the reorganisation of the Party apparatus, which followed the speech of Comrade Kaganovich accompanied by the strengthening of the lower cadres, produced brilliant progress and an improvement of the results of work.

Of extraordinary importance is the strengthening of independent initiative among our lower leading committees and lower organisations. We are going to impress them with the greatness of their immediate responsibility in the coming struggle. July 20 showed up the great lack of independent initiative in our Party. As we have to daily reckon with surprises and with sudden great attacks from our opponents, etc., the rapid and immediate reaction of our cadres is a matter of life and death necessity for our revolutionary policy. Comrade Stalin said in 1929 in the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.:

“Time does not wait—and we must not allow events to take us by surprise.”

We want to do everything to convert our cadres into a strong fighting Party—eager for the attack and always ready for the offensive, and capable of manœuvring—a Party which will make it impossible for the bourgeoisie and for Social-Democracy to repeat what happened on July 20.

In the measures we are taking in the immediate future, we will lay especial stress on the task of awakening independent and revolutionary initiative among our illegal factory cells which are working conspiratively.

These cells ought to be in permanent connection with the Party and the masses. The inner life of the Party cells must be considerably improved, must grow and develop, for without an improvement in the life of the lower Party units, we will not get rid of the strong tendency to fluctuation. We do not want in the future to conduct our policy of concentration on the large enterprises as we have done in the past—sporadically and by the temporary establishment of a shock brigade—but by establishing our best comrades for a considerable period of time, during which a pertinacious, steady and persevering work will be carried on in order to strengthen and develop the mass influence of our cells.

In making further use of the counsels and decisions of the XII Plenum, we will try to raise the level of our Party members in order that they may be in a position to take the necessary measures with more quickness and resolution. The more we concern ourselves with carrying out among the masses the correct general line of the Party and thereby promote

the ideological offensive and Bolshevik self-criticism, the more will those weaknesses and defects of July 20 and the existing gulf between the resolutions adopted and their carrying out, disappear.

Finally, we will immediately commence, with political severity, but in a thoroughly comradely way, to assist the German Y.C.L. and promote the process of assistance by certain working measures in order to make the Y.C.L. a mass movement of the young proletariat, a powerful instrument against fascism and a reservoir of active young revolutionary and socialist fighters, while destroying the mass influence of the S.A.J.

Finally, the ever nearer approach of the suppression of the Party demands, that we combine the utilisation of all legal possibilities as closely as possible with illegal work, in order to create the necessary conditions that the lower Party units may have a certain assurance, that when the new measures of suppression are issued the Party may be ready to strike in order to fulfil its class tasks. The fact that the *Rote Fahne* and other newspapers have been suppressed for four weeks, while the *Anti-Fascist Direct Action* and other mass sheets and journals have been suppressed for six months, etc., coupled with the accentuated degree of the whole process of fascisation, compels us to take all steps necessary to secure and to carry out illegal work.

Now a few words on the question of the higher stage of our struggle against the measures of fascist dictatorship and on the task with which our Party is confronted in the struggle, for the revolutionary way out of the crisis and the workers' and peasants' republic.

I have already said that with the introduction of the Anti-Fascist Direct Action we have found the first methods and forms of struggle for the mobilisation of the masses—forms which show a higher degree of the development of capacity for struggle in the proletariat and the Party.

The second stage consists in bringing the Anti-Fascist Direct Action into the factory. The new factors in the political developments in Germany, the measures taken by the bourgeoisie and the fascist Parties, compel us all the more to aim at a broad development of mass initiative, in order to lead the masses on to great political mass struggles, to mobilise them *en masse* against wage robbery, and the policy of starvation and the armaments policy of the present Papen Government. The brilliant example of our mass defensive struggle against fascism at Altona met with a lively response among all anti-fascists throughout the length and breadth of Germany, and put fear into the hearts of the bourgeoisie. In truth, the prevention of the fascist demonstration and the violent fighting and shooting which went on for hours on end in the working-class districts, was a blazing signal for the anti-fascist mass struggle.

The Social-Democratic Party has now introduced a so-called "Socialist Direct Action," and wants to hoodwink the masses once again by this stratagem. The Hitler Party speaks with vulgar demagoguery of the "struggle against reaction." With the aid of the attitude of specious opposition adopted by the National-Socialists and the Social-Democracy, the bourgeoisie is trying to attain a consolidation and development of the fascist dictatorship against the proletariat, making more pronounced use of the Nazis for terrorist measures of violence, and at the same time utilising the S.P.D. as their main social support against strikes, etc.

The Nazi paper, the *Preussische Zeitung* writes as follows on the question of coming to an agreement with the leadership of the A.D.G.B.:

"One should especially read the programme of the trade unions . . . A common way is being found to pure authoritarian socialism. A gulf is revealing itself between the trade unions and the Jewish-Moscovite (!) leadership of the Red front. The trade union officials, who have not yet become bureaucrats and who have behind them a lifetime of service to the working-class, know that they may just as easily be strung up on the next lamp-post one day by the R.T.U.O. at the command of the Jews. There has always been a contradiction between world economy, world revolutionaries, the Bolshevik radical strata among the litterateurs, and the trade union officials. In circumstances when the connection between things is being destroyed by an irresponsible murder campaign of the Jewish-controlled Red Press, at a moment when one-third of the German people threatens to place itself under the leadership of the Red Comintern in Moscow, the responsible elements in the trade union movement have at length recognised their duty—to preserve the German workers from destruction by Moscow and from destruction by reaction. This quiet united front of the socialists (!) is now being formed. It will usher in a great process of understanding. We have now to sweep away misunderstandings . . . ."—*Preussische Zeitung*, Sept. 3 and 4, 1932.)

We thus see, on the one hand, how seriously this National-Socialist paper judges the more rapid rapprochement of the National-Socialists with the leaders of the A.D.G.B. And how, on the other hand, fascism is possessed with fear for the revolutionary movement in Germany.

We must, as a Communist Party, really and truly carry on the struggle against the class enemies on the various fronts by organising mass direct action in the factories, and at the unemployment registration offices. We must understand how to raise the revolutionary power of the masses, and their confidence in victory, and how to rally ever broader masses around our Party.

Against the German bourgeoisie's programme of

starvation and war, against the lying promises of the National-Socialists, and the new deceitful manoeuvres of the social-fascist leaders, we set our programme of the revolutionary way out of the crisis as a programme of daily struggle, inseparably connecting the struggle for immediate demands, with the ultimate revolutionary aim of our proletarian struggle.

In the struggle against the armaments programme, in the struggle against the programme of starvation and emergency decrees of German imperialism, we have issued a manifesto in which are contained, in their essence, the most important slogans for partial demands, but in conjunction with the slogans for ultimate aims, to raise on this basis the question of the struggle for the social and national liberation of the toiling people in the present period.

Our new manifesto contains our attitude in principle to the emergency decree and to the armaments programme of the bourgeoisie. It fixes the responsibility for the wage-cuts upon the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B., makes the proposal to all workers organised in the S.P.D., the free trade unions and the Christian trade unions, to form a broad united front for action, proposes the fighting alliance of the factory workers with the unemployed, and contains, above all, once more the revolutionary battle-cry, for the social and national liberation of Germany, from the yoke of Versailles.

Almost all the speakers have emphasised how extraordinarily complicated are the conditions under which the Communist Party of Germany has to solve the tasks confronting it.

We are fighting under the conditions of an economic crisis which has taken on peculiarly severe forms in Germany, against a bourgeoisie which possesses great experience and an extraordinary capacity for manoeuvring, against the double exploitation by both German and international finance capital. In our references to the Papen programme and to the Schleicher armaments programme we have shown how German imperialism is trying to better its condition, how it is able to strengthen itself in the play of forces of imperialism by an unbounded exploitation of the masses, by a further development of fascist dictatorship, how it is trying to improve its position by an increase of imperialist armaments.

Even at the second World Congress, Lenin spoke of how the imperialist robber treaty of Versailles and the system of slavery which Versailles signifies, are approaching their inevitable downfall in connection with the growing strength of the socialist Soviet Union and the growth of the contradictions in capitalist countries.

To-day, at the end of capitalist stabilisation and with the transition to a new cycle of a series of wars and revolutions, we can already see in actual fact that the Versailles system is growing more and more brittle through the accentuation of the internal and external contradictions of imperialism, through the

increasing revolutionary upsurge, through the mighty progress of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. The key-point of the whole Versailles system is Germany. This country can now show new facts indicating the accentuation of the already existing contradictions. We are not fatalists, and therefore we know how great is the responsibility which the German proletariat and the Communist Party bear before history.

If we try, with our own strength, with revolutionary initiative and with implacable clarity, really to improve our methods of work, if we create a preponderance of the revolutionary forces as against the forces of fascist dictatorship, then without doubt, in view of the peculiar intricacy of the situation in Germany, of the accentuations which are taking place within the country, we will succeed in hastening on the process of development of the German revolution.

From agitation and propaganda, we must go on to the real launching of struggles and direct action. The mass strike, and the political general strike represent our main weapons of struggle at the present stage. We must unleash the forces of resistance, and proletarian rebellion against fascist dictatorship on all fronts. It cannot be denied that despite great weaknesses and defects in our work, the German Communist Party has grown and marched forward.

Our task now is not only to make good the loss of tempo which has been sustained, but with all our strength to fortify our own forces, and those of the proletariat in the revolutionary advance against the fascist dictatorship.

Germany's transition to revolution, the victory of the proletariat over bloody fascism, may represent a decisive factor for the preponderance of revolution over counter-revolution and fascism throughout the whole globe.

Germany's decision will inevitably draw other countries into the whirlpool of severe conflicts.

But precisely because the situation is so complicated, because Germany constitutes a key-point of extraordinary importance for the further development of history and politics—just for this reason we must set our face against any ultra-simple view of the path of development of the German proletarian revolution. Let our comrades at this Plenum not forget what was once said by Comrade Lenin when he drew a comparison between the German and the Russian revolution, when he declared that in Russia it was easier to seize power, but more difficult to carry socialism into effect.

In Germany, he said, it is the opposite! There, it is more difficult to seize power but carrying socialism into effect is easier in this country than in Russia. In Germany, despite all difficulties in the camp of the class enemy, despite the differences within the camp of the bourgeoisie, we still have the strongest fascist power in the world. This does not mean that this power may not suffer losses to-morrow

or the next day in position and in strength. It does not mean that the splits and cleavages in the camp of the bourgeoisie may not produce new and surprising conflicts, within quite a short space of time. That is indeed not only probable but even certain. We must and shall measure our power with this antagonist, if the proletariat is to be victorious. When we are faced by such a strong fascist power and if we want to fulfil the great historical tasks which have here been set us by the XII. Plenum, we must carry the whole Party along with us, activate the last member of it, to be able to lead the proletariat to victory in the revolutionary clashing of class forces.

If the last few weeks have shown us that the rise of the wave of fascism has already begun to ebb, this does not represent more than a small beginning in the improvement in our revolutionary mass work. We believe that in the further course of development we will make fresh progress in the struggle against fascist dictatorship, by means of the inner strengthening of the Party, and by developing higher revolutionary forms of the offensive of the proletariat. The XII Plenum, of the Comintern, and our Russian brother Party have provided the German Party by their fraternal Bolshevik advice, with valuable weapons for the struggle against fascism and capitalism. Both for Germany and for other countries, indeed, for the whole world, a thorough analysis has been given of the present situation and the revolutionary tasks have been assigned in connection with the decisions of the XII Plenum. We want to say quite openly that the Bolshevik assistance rendered by the Comintern has greatly aided us, strengthened and steeled us in the Bolshevik sense, especially during the recent period in Germany in view of the difficult problems we have had to face. Herr Trotsky recently had the face to say as follows :

"The Comintern, however, does not want—more properly speaking, is afraid—to render an account in regard to the actual character of the present world situation. The presidium of the Comintern takes refuge in hollow agitational pamphlets. The leading Party of the Comintern, the C.P.S.U., has not taken any definite stand. It is as though the 'leaders of the world proletariat' had their mouths full of water! They remain intentionally silent. They have set about digging themselves in. They hope to mark time. They have replaced the policy of Lenin by the policy of Vogel and Strauss."

We have only the most profound contempt for this utterance of a counter-revolutionary. The growing authority of the Comintern, the gigantic extent of its efforts, the deepening of its influence among the revolutionary proletariat of the world and the growth of revolutionary forces, are clearly reflected at this XII Plenum. Germany is the country in which under certain circumstances, the die may be cast in the immediate future. It will be our task not only to

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inflict one or two wounds upon fascism ideologically, at this or that point, not only to tear away the mass of its adherents from Social-Democracy, not only to let loose mass struggles for wages and bread, not only to attain a higher level of the revolutionary struggle—over and above this, we must bring the masses nearer to the decisive struggle for proletarian power, win them over and activise them for the great struggle for the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Germany possesses a mighty significance for all Central Europe! If we succeed in storming the fortresses there, in overthrowing the fascist dictatorship, and setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat

that will mean not only the victory of the revolution in Germany, but the victory of the revolution in all Europe; it will mean rendering the greatest revolutionary support for the accelerating of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. (*Applause.*)

This is how we formulate our tasks. Such are our victorious prospects! Thus do we set about carrying out the decisions of the XII Plenum. Thus do we fight, shoulder to shoulder with our brother Parties under the leadership of the Comintern, with Comrade Stalin at the head, for the victory of socialism! We shall and must be the victors! (*Loud applause.*)