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WHY HITLER IN GERMANY?

By FRITZ HECKERT.*

IN Germany, the bourgeoisie has openly begun civil war against the proletariat, giving the signal for a new wave of world reaction and an offensive of capital. It has been the first to open fire, thereby bringing all class antagonisms to a state of extreme tenseness, utterly demolishing all social-democratic illusions about the possibility of peaceful development, and showing once again that violence is the main "argument" of the bourgeoisie. The events in Germany are a most important step along the path of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in central Europe, on the path of bringing nearer the decisive clashes between labour and capital.

The events now taking place in Germany clearly show by what means the bourgeoisie will fight at the moment when the question of the proletarian revolution stands on the order of the day, and by what means the proletariat must struggle against the bourgeoisie and its watch-dogs.

At the same time, the events in Germany show what the capitalist world will look like in the event of a new imperialist war, and in particular a war against the Soviet Union, what will be the position of the Social-Democrats, who have now openly gone over to the side of the Fascists in Germany, and why the Communists have been calling the Social-Democrats Social-Fascists for three years past.

Finally, the events in Germany acquire all the greater importance because the coming of Hitler to power is bringing the capitalist world into the zone of new imperialist wars.

The events in Germany are riveting the attention of the whole of the international proletariat; the same questions are agitating the class-conscious workers of every country:

(a) Why has German Fascism succeeded in coming to power?

(b) What is the outlook for further developments in Germany?

(c) Was the policy of the Communist Party of Germany correct?

I.—WHY WAS FASCISM ABLE TO GET INTO POWER?

This question cannot be answered unless we make a sober analysis of the distribution of class forces in Germany.

What, then, was the distribution of class forces in Germany, what was the rôle played by Ger-

man Social-Democracy in the setting up of the Fascist dictatorship?

Let us take the proletariat first.

In Germany, the resistance of the proletariat to Fascism was weakened by the fact that one part of the proletariat, the greater part, was duped by the Social-Democrats and followed the lead of the Social-Democrats, while the latter, in alliance with the bourgeoisie, carried on a continuous struggle against the other, smaller part of the proletariat, the Communist part, which *represents the only active and militant force against Fascism*. The greater grew the influence of the Communist Party and its organisational force, the more frantic became the efforts of the Social-Democrats to isolate the Communist Party of Germany and thus leave the working masses disarmed in face of the Fascist offensive.

The fact that Social-Democracy in Germany was able to disrupt the revolutionary unity of the proletariat paralysed and still paralyses the successful resistance of the working class to Fascism. In carrying out the social orders of the bourgeoisie, Social-Democracy split the ranks of the proletariat for the very purpose of weakening its fighting capacity. During its fourteen years' tenure of office in the Prussian Government, Social-Democracy, having at its disposal the apparatus of the state and above all of the police, was tireless in its efforts to break up the Communist vanguard, knowing that in this way it would weaken the proletariat as a whole, would strengthen the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and would pave the way for Fascism. At the same time, basing itself on the apparatus of the bourgeois state, Social-Democracy has striven to strengthen its influence among the working class and prevent the revolutionary unity of the proletariat as a class. After the shooting down of the workers on May First, 1929 (Zörgiebel), Social-Democracy suppressed the Red Front Fighters' League and gave complete freedom to the Steel Helmets and the Storm Troops. It placed all the armed forces of the state under the complete control of the feudal-monarchist officers of the Reichswehr. The police selected by Severing are serving present-day Fascism just as faithfully as they served the Prussian Government of the Social-Democrat Braun in his struggle against the class movement of the proletariat.

Simultaneously with this process, which we may term the military disarming of the proletariat, Social-Democracy disarmed it in a political sense also, lulling its vigilance to sleep by

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talk of the "state standing above classes." Gradually, it surrendered all gains which the proletariat had wrested for itself in the Revolution of 1918-19. Having drowned the proletarian revolution in blood by the hand of Noske in the first stage, then strengthening the position of the bourgeoisie by supporting capitalist rationalisation in the second stage, continuing to shift all the consequences of the crisis on to the shoulders of the toilers in the guise of the policy of "toleration" towards the Brüning Government and the policy of the "lesser evil" at the height of the economic crisis, Social-Democracy has cleared the path for the coming of Fascism and has ended by going over *openly to its side* at the present time.

But what effect did this policy of Social-Democracy have at the other pole, *in the camp of the bourgeoisie*? We know that in the 1918-19 Revolution, Social-Democracy did not touch the privileges of the bourgeoisie, not even those of the Junkers, who openly stood for monarchist reaction in Germany. The bourgeois republic of the Weimar Constitution, built by the hands of the Social-Democrats, rested in reality on the same social and economic basis as the Hohenzollern monarchy. And this circumstance alone rendered extremely unstable the whole system of bourgeois democracy resulting from the November Revolution and created a basis for the growth of chauvinism and Fascism. But, besides this, the whole post-war policy of Social-Democracy has helped to strengthen the economic and political position of the bourgeoisie.

In the economic sphere, this found its reflection, on the one hand, in the support given to the policy of systematic plunder of the working class by the bourgeoisie (reduction of wages and social benefits coupled with increased taxation), and, on the other hand, in the support given by Social-Democracy to the policy of direct financial aid for the big industrialists and agrarians.

In the political sphere, Social-Democracy throughout the whole of the post-war period has systematically strengthened the power of the capitalist state (the police, the Reichswehr, the building of cruisers, the growth of terrorism against the working class). This policy of Social-Democracy has helped to rally together the forces of large-scale capital, which, at the moment when the crisis was most severe, discovered in the Fascist dictatorship the most concentrated form of state apparatus of violence and terror against the working class and all the toilers.

Here lies the key to an understanding of why the bourgeoisie previously "collaborated" with Social-Democracy and why it has now decided to

pass on to the open forms of Fascist dictatorship in Germany.

Let us now turn to the question of the *urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasants*.

If the proletariat had not been weakened and its ranks split by Social-Democracy's criminal policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, its revolutionising influence on the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasants, who are being ruined by the crisis and driven into the struggle against the violence of trustified capital, could have been secured.

But what did Social-Democracy, as the ruling party, give to these intermediate strata, hesitating between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? The Weimar Republic? But the Weimar Republic meant the preservation of the capitalist system in the period of decay, with its intense crisis and savage exploitation, with its chronic unemployment continually increasing, with the progressive ruination of the peasantry and the hopeless pauperisation of the petty bourgeoisie. The Weimar Republic was a "political superstructure" of German capitalism in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, the sores and wounds of which in the eyes of the masses were identified with the political order which was created by German Social-Democracy as the result of its betrayal of the proletarian revolution. Finally, the Weimar Republic—and this is particularly important when we are speaking of the petty bourgeoisie—arose on the basis of defeat in the World War, and for the masses it represented the embodiment of the yoke of the Versailles Treaty and the enslavement of the German people by world imperialism.

The masses of the petty bourgeoisie lost their faith in this republic through their own concrete experience, because it presented itself to them more and more in its anti-popular aspect. The criminal nature of the policy of Social-Democracy lay in the fact that it advanced this fascisation of bourgeois democracy as a social ideal. While its policy impelled the masses more and more into a state of disillusionment with bourgeois democracy, it also, by its malicious slanders on the proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R., deprived them of any revolutionary outlook for a future escape from hunger and poverty.

The masses of the petty bourgeoisie, driven to desperation by hopelessness of the present and having no prospects for the future, have, thanks to the treacherous policy of Social-Democracy, clutched at a dream of the past, at the pre-war capitalism of the epoch of Wilhelm, when German imperialism marched to China, to Baghdad and to Africa, simultaneously bringing the Balkans within its sphere of influence. At the

same time, the yoke of the Versailles Treaty has fostered and inflamed those national passions on which Fascism has played. Not only the petty-bourgeois masses, but also a certain section of the proletariat, were caught up in a wave of chauvinism. Its ranks split by the policy of Social-Democracy, the proletariat was unable to beat down the wave of nationalism by a counter-acting wave of internationalism. It was this circumstance which made it possible for the German bourgeoisie, terrified by the militant spirit of the Communist section of the proletariat, to strengthen its political position and give the power into the hands of the party which was most hostile to the working class, the National-Socialists. Present-day German nationalism is a child of the Versailles Treaty, and it was French bourgeois democracy, the bulwark of the Versailles system, which gave birth to Hitler.

In this disposition of class forces, we must seek the answer to the question, first, why the German Communist Party was unable under present circumstances to put before the broad masses of the proletariat the question of the seizure of power, and secondly, why the Communist Party of Germany, which expected to carry the Social-Democratic workers along with it, was unable to carry through a decisive mass political strike on January 30, at the moment when Hitler came into power.

Such a strike on January 30 would have been more than an ordinary protest strike. If successfully carried through, it would not only have mobilised all the forces of the proletariat, but would have caused vacillations among the masses of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry who were supporting the Fascists, and would thus have become a prelude to mass revolutionary actions against the Fascist dictatorship. But it was precisely for this reason that the German General Federation of Trade Unions and the Social-Democrats refused to support the Communists when the latter called a strike, and disrupted the strike.

Fascism's dual line of development was already pointed out at the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.: in some countries (Yugoslavia, Italy, Poland) a declining, and in others, a rising curve. Among the latter group of countries was Germany. But even in this rising curve of German Fascism there were great oscillations and the symptoms could be observed of an internal crisis of German Fascism (the secession of the Otto Strasser group, the exit of Gregor Strasser, the dissolution of various Storm Troops, the sharp falling off of the vote cast at elections, etc.).

If before January 30 and on January 30 the German General Federation of Trade Unions and

the German Social-Democrats had accepted the proposal of the Communist Party to form a united front against Fascism and had jointly carried out a mass political strike, these processes of the internal crisis of German Fascism would have taken place at an accelerated speed. But the treachery of Social-Democracy gave a different turn to events . . .

That the Communists succeeded in carrying out separate strikes under these circumstances, in itself represented a big success. But, thanks to the treachery of Social-Democracy, they were unable to conduct a decisive mass political strike on January 30. Hence it is clear that, in view of the correlation of forces which had arisen, the German Communists could not raise the question of the seizure of power by the proletariat. We German Communists not only did not have the overwhelming majority of the toilers, but did not even have that of the proletariat on our side, as the Russian Bolsheviks had in October, 1917. A considerable section of the peasantry and of the urban petty bourgeoisie had not yet outlived their illusions in regard to nationalism. All the armed forces — the Reichswehr, the police, the Steel Helmets, the Storm Troops—stood opposed to the unarmed workers; whereas the Russian Bolsheviks had behind them, as we know, not only the armed workers but a considerable portion of the army and the friendly neutrality of the other part of the army.

It was this disposition of class forces which determined the temporary defeat of the proletariat.

Does this mean the end of the revolutionary upsurge in Germany, the end of the maturing of the revolutionary crisis there?

No, it does not mean this.

Despite all the horrors of Fascist terrorism, the German proletariat has not yet given real battle to the bourgeoisie. It has not capitulated to the Fascists and will not do so, in spite of the moral collapse and treachery of the Welses and Leiparts, who have capitulated and surrendered themselves to Hitler's mercy. The German proletariat at hundreds of different points is carrying on a partial struggle for its positions and its organisations. At the same time the working class of Germany is displaying those qualities of class firmness, endurance and ability to manoeuvre which are indispensable if, despite all provocations and betrayals, it is not to be drawn into a decisive battle under circumstances favourable to the enemy.

As for the Communist Party, it has not and will not allow itself to be isolated from the masses, despite the terrorism and provocation of Hitler and Göring. Never before has the Ger-

man Communist Party had such a moral hold over the working masses as it has now, when the Social-Democratic leaders are licking the boots of Hitler, while the Communists are unfurling the banner of irreconcilable struggle against bloody Fascism. All talk about the German Communist Party being crushed and dead in a political sense is merely the philistine gossip of dull-witted and ignorant people. No one can crush and kill a workers' party, unless the latter kills itself by its incorrect anti-revolutionary policy. Social-Democracy has been annihilated because it **KILLED ITSELF** morally and politically when it refused to fight Fascism, when it capitulated to Fascism and when it consented to enter into its service. The Communist Party is strong and invincible because it has never retreated and will not retreat from its revolutionary positions, because it has not capitulated and will not capitulate to the enemies of the proletariat and their bloody agents, the Fascists, and has all the time held aloft and will continue to hold aloft the banner of irreconcilable struggle against Fascism. It is precisely for this reason that the Communist Party is free from that moral quagmire and political pessimism which are contributing to the degeneration of Social-Democracy at the present time. It is just because of this that the Communist Party of Germany has never enjoyed such tremendous moral authority as it possesses now among the millions of the proletariat in Germany who have no desire to make peace with bloody Fascism.

That is why I consider that the present situation of the German bourgeoisie is unstable, that the proletarian revolution in Germany is bound to conquer, that Fascism must and will be smashed in Germany.

Only fools could think that in the conditions of the present crisis the bourgeoisie would be able to set up a firm hegemony over the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie for a number of years. Critical periods like the present period in Germany are characterised precisely by the fact that class shiftings take place here with extreme rapidity, that years and decades of ordinary normal times are here replaced by days and weeks. Who will dare to assert that the economic situation is on the upgrade in Germany and that the bourgeoisie will be able to solve the contradictions of German capitalism at home and abroad?

German Fascism cannot be compared with Italian Fascism. Italian Fascism came to power at the beginning of the period of capitalist stabilisation, German Fascism at the end of this period. Italian Fascism crept in on the ebb of a revolutionary wave, whereas German Fascism has come to power at a time when the wave of revolution

is on the upsurge. Italian Fascism was the Fascism of a country victorious in the World War, it was a participant and executor of Versailles; whereas German Fascism is an object of Versailles and has come into collision with ever-growing international difficulties from the very first steps of its existence. Italian Fascism came into being at a moment when the Versailles Treaty had fixed the stability of international relations for a number of years. German Fascism comes into power at a moment when the Versailles system of relations is breaking up. The German proletariat is large in numbers. It has passed through the school of the proletarian revolution of 1918-19, which, although unsuccessful, was nevertheless a revolution. The German proletariat has formed the most powerful Communist Party after the C.P.S.U., a thing which the Italian proletariat did not possess after the split at Leghorn.

Can the German bourgeoisie solve even one of the internal and external contradictions of German capitalism in the conditions of world crisis? Can it do away with unemployment, alleviate the extreme hardships of the workers, arrest the ruination of the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, start the mills and factories working, ensure the stability of German currency, win those foreign markets which are indispensable for German industry, or put an end to the Versailles system? It cannot! In the present world economic and political situation, the Fascist government is not in a position to solve a single one of these tasks. The events which are taking place in Germany represent not "the stabilisation" of capitalism but its dying convulsions.

Only a petty bourgeois could imagine that the path of the German revolution would proceed from one electoral victory of the Communist Party to another, without the bourgeoisie, taught by the lessons of the October Revolution in Russia, offering the most frantic resistance to the proletarian revolution. And this will be the case, not only in Germany, but in all capitalist countries, when the question of power is put pointblank. The way of the Communist Parties towards the winning of the majority of the working class is and will remain one of sanguinary battles.

2.—THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FASCIST DICTATORSHIP.

What is the outlook for German Fascism?

The breakdown of the Fascist regime in Germany depends above all on the rallying together of the proletariat as a class, by the German Communist Party winning over the majority of the proletariat to its side and obliterating the influ-

ence of reactionary Social-Democracy, which up to the present has carried the majority of the proletariat along with it. Nothing but the rallying of the proletariat as a revolutionary class force will accelerate the process of deserting the Fascists on the part of those sections of the peasantry and of the urban petty bourgeoisie who have hitherto followed them. Both these factors, which have a reciprocal influence upon each other and which heighten the militant activity of the masses, will, on the one hand, bring about a crisis of "leaders" in the ranks of the bourgeoisie and, on the other hand, will cause the disintegration of the lower strata of the Fascist apparatus of terrorist dictatorship.

In the *economic* sphere, Fascism has propounded the principle of capitalist autarchy. But apart from the fact that *capitalist* autarchy is an economic absurdity, German capitalism, with its Fascist policy of autarchy based on the rigid application of import quotas, is faced with two internally contradictory and insoluble tasks—first, the necessity of forming a home market of greater capacity, and secondly, that of forcing its export trade. But how can the Fascist regime enlarge the home market when the country has 9,000,000 unemployed, when the wage-fund has fallen by half during the years of the crisis, when, in spite of tariffs and subsidies, the income from agriculture has fallen by over 30 per cent. during the last three years, when millions of small depositors are being robbed of their money by means of mass bankruptcies and, finally, when two-thirds of the apparatus of production is standing idle? The rigid application of import quotas in international commerce not only presupposes a cutting down of imports in every capitalist country, but it also leads to a limitation of exports. The German bourgeoisie cannot reckon on being allowed to close down its home market for imports and at the same time to maintain or enlarge its own industrial exports. But the reduction of exports will threaten the stability of the German mark. Even now the gold reserve in Germany, according to a statement by Schacht, has fallen from 3,300,000,000 marks to one-ninth of that figure. A sharp reduction in Germany's favourable trade balance during the years of the crisis — from nearly three billion marks to one billion — reflects a continuous and sharp process of decline in German exports. In January and February, the aggregate quantity of German exports fell by one quarter as compared with the average monthly level of last year. The menace to the "stability" of the German mark is becoming all the more serious since the U.S.A., in consequence of bank failures, has already virtually set about abolishing the gold standard,

thus increasing its power of competition on foreign markets. And here the German bourgeoisie comes up against an additional difficulty. In order to be able to compete with other capitalist countries on foreign markets, it must resort to inflation. But this will inevitably raise the question of terminating the moratorium which Germany received on private debts. The countries which have invested about seventeen billion marks in Germany in the form of loans will demand immediate payment. Fascism will be brought face to face with financial bankruptcy.

The development of the economic crisis in Germany likewise bodes no good for Fascism. During the two months that Hitler has been in power, the general economic situation has grown still worse. During February the output of iron fell by 15.7 per cent.; that of steel by 14.1 per cent.; coal by 8.1 per cent.; and coke by 9.2 per cent. The building industry is completely at a standstill. In the machine-building industry the proportion of unemployed workers declined from January to February, 1933. At the same time, the number of unemployed has increased by 275,000 between December, 1932, and March, 1933.

What can the Fascists give to the masses under such conditions? A further lowering of the standard of living of the working class, the abolition of social insurance, the introduction of forced labour paid at 40 pfennigs a day, a convict regime in the factories—can Hitler win over the German workers for the "Third Empire" by these means?

The whole social pyramid of capitalism is now pressing with all its force upon the proletariat. The whole of the parasitic apparatus of the Fascist dictatorship, which has already grown tremendously and threatens to grow still further, nourishes itself by sucking out of the 6,000,000 workers who still remain in industry a considerable part of the "surplus value." And this means that the German bourgeoisie, in order to protect its average rate of profit, will have to squeeze the working class still harder.

By introducing high tariffs on the chief food products, Fascism has virtually presented large subsidies to the agrarians and the kulaks, but by doing so it lowers still further the level of consumption of the masses of workers and urban petty bourgeoisie. The temporary preservation of the moratorium on taxes and private debts in the countryside until October 1 will not permit Fascism to solve either the question of peasant debt, or that of the burden of taxation which is strangling the peasants, or that of the ruination of the small peasant farms. Fascism cannot help

the ruined petty bourgeoisie of the towns either by looting Jewish shops or comic opera campaigns against the department stores. It will not be able to find places for the millions of petty bourgeoisie who are thirsting to become pensioners of the "Third Empire." The Storm Troops and the filibustering knights-errant of the "national revolution" who batten on the state pie will constitute a grievous burden for the state budget, which is already encumbered with a deficit of two and a half billions.

The disillusionment of the masses and their abandonment of Fascism are inevitable. And this abandonment of Fascism will prevent the stabilisation of the Fascist apparatus of violence and accelerate the process of its disintegration. In all probability, the disintegration will take the form of internecine squabbles between the three types of Fascism's armed forces — the Storm Troops, the Steel Helmets and the Reichswehr. At the same time disintegration will also set in among the governing "leaders," who will come forward with their various recipes for the salvation of Germany.

We will now pass on to the prospects for German Fascism in the sphere of *international relations with the other capitalist states and with the U.S.S.R.*

The German bourgeoisie, which systematically reduced and finally completely stopped the payment of reparations, is now carrying out, through the agency of Hitler, Schleicher's programme of arming Germany without waiting for leave. Preparations for a new imperialist war are going on at feverish speed. At the present time Hitler has developed a military force of a million men (300,000 in the Steel Helmets, 120,000 in the Reichswehr and 500,000 in the Storm Troops, not to mention the police who are armed according to the latest achievements of military technique). It is obvious that an armed force of a million men is needed by Fascism not only for the struggle against German Communism. As for the demagogic speeches of Göring and Hitler on the revision of frontiers, these for the time being are but a testing of the ground, for the German bourgeoisie understands that it will not be able to raise the question of frontiers in real earnest until Germany has armed itself without waiting for permission.

In what direction will the expansionist aspirations of German imperialism turn in the near future? Above all, we may expect, in the direction of uniting Austria to Germany. In the international situation which has now arisen, the plan for uniting with Austria, aimed as it is against the countries of the Little Entente first and foremost, would appear to be easiest of fulfil-

ment to German imperialism, which is afraid of a direct conflict with France over Alsace-Lorraine and with Poland over the Danzig Corridor.

But this plan, contrary to Fascist calculations, is in reality not at all an easy one, because it means war against Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, and consequently war against France.

If Fascist Germany thinks that it will get out of its present state of isolation with the help of Italy alone—and Italy is watching with suspicion the aspirations of German imperialism towards Austria, which opens the door to the Balkans—it will be quickly undeceived on this point. The breakdown of the Four-Power Pact, the plan put forward by Mussolini and MacDonald, shows that the overthrow of the Versailles system is impossible by peaceful means. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that German imperialism will receive some concessions, but these will not do away with the yoke of Versailles.

I have no need to mention the fact that the ratification of the Four-Power Pact, *which is directed against the U.S.S.R.*, is bound to impair relations with the Soviet Union, which in addition to everything else cannot remain indifferent when the German National-Socialists declare war on world Bolshevism and consequently on the Soviet system in the U.S.S.R., which is directed by the Bolsheviks.

The path of war is the most probable path of the Fascist evolution of Germany, the more so as the political atmosphere in Europe as a whole is charged with gunpowder.

How will the coming of the Fascists to power in Germany affect the *re-grouping of forces inside the workers' movement as between the Social-Democrats and the Communists?*

The fact that the German Social-Democrats have openly gone over into the camp of Fascism is sure to be of decisive importance in undermining the influence of Social-Democracy on the working masses, and that not only in Germany. Commencing from August 4, 1914, German Social-Democracy has pursued the policy of a *united reactionary front with the bourgeoisie* against the proletariat. It has done this at various stages of the bourgeois dictatorship in Germany with various fractions of the bourgeoisie, in every case coming out in defence of capitalism and struggling against the proletarian revolution. One after another, the reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie and landlords, down to the Prussian Junkers and inveterate monarchists like Hindenburg, have more and more become the allies of Social-Democracy in this reactionary front. And this in its turn has meant that Social-Democracy has passed on to

an even more reactionary policy. Proceeding in its downward career, it has reformed the "state standing above classes" in the direction of fascising it still further, ever more undermining the positions of the proletariat and strengthening the forces of the bourgeois dictatorship. Both in the uniform "socialist" government after the revolution on November 9, while saving the bourgeoisie from the revolutionary masses who were demanding the abolition of capitalism, and in the coalition governments of the period of capitalist stabilisation, and outside the government at the time of economic crisis, Social-Democracy in every case has invariably counterposed to the united revolutionary proletarian front, for which the Communist Party was fighting, its own reactionary front with the bourgeoisie. It supported the emergency decrees of Brüning and his government which took the line of repealing the "constitutional guarantees" of the Reichstag. At the presidential elections it formed an alliance with the monarchist Hindenburg, setting Hindenburg in antithesis to Hitler as the defender of what had been won in the November Revolution and the Weimar Constitution. It virtually supported the Papen-Schleicher government, which expelled it from the Prussian government on July 20. It paved the way for Hitler's advent to power, persuading the masses that it would be better for Hitler to take power in a "constitutional" manner without the resistance of the workers than as the result of a bloody struggle. Step by step it helped Hitler to climb into power, using its party and trade union apparatus to crush all the attempts of the workers to organise a mass struggle against Fascism. In proportion as the Fascist danger increased, ever-growing numbers of Social-Democratic workers began to feel that their leaders were leading the working class to defeat. With ever greater insistence they demanded that Social-Democracy and the trade unions should accept the repeated proposals of the Communist Party to organise a united front of struggle against Fascism. But Social-Democracy continued to defend its reactionary front with the bourgeoisie, especially under the form of the notorious "Iron Front." At the decisive moment, in order to appease the workers, the Social-Democrats declared that they were prepared to struggle against Fascism, but only at the proper time. They must wait a little longer! The president of the Metal Workers' Union, Urich, appealed to the workers to refrain from struggle until Hitler violated the constitution and adopted methods of violence. This was said at a time when the Fascist Storm Troops were already sacking workers' houses, beating up and mur-

dering not only Communist workers but members of the Reichsbanner organisation as well.

On January 30, Hitler came into power and the whole of the state apparatus together with the Storm Troops was hurled against the workers. In order to crush the spontaneous resistance which was beginning among the workers against the Fascists, Social-Democracy persuaded the masses to "keep to the Constitution" and reply to Hitler "with the ballot-box." In rejecting the proposal of the Communist Party to organise a joint political strike, *Vorwärts* wrote that to undertake such a strike would mean to "shoot into the air those cartridges which will be needed at a more serious moment." On February 28, the Fascists organised the burning of the Reichstag, and immediately an unrestrained orgy of terror began against the working class. On March 1, Social-Democracy announced: It is too late to resist Fascism; we must wait until Fascism falls to pieces of its own accord.

What is shown by all these indisputable facts, which have taken place before the eyes of all the workers? First, these facts show that German Social-Democracy has preserved to the end its loyalty to the *united reactionary front* with the bourgeoisie; secondly, that Social-Democracy step by step and in a methodical manner paved the way for the coming of Fascism and led it into power; thirdly, that it systematically disrupted the struggle of the working class against Fascism, resorting to any method to hinder the formation of a united revolutionary front of struggle of the working class against Fascism; fourthly, that the Social-Democratic policy of the united reactionary front pre-determined the open desertion of the Welses and Leiparts to the side of Fascism.

Did the Communist Party of Germany and the Comintern foresee the inevitability of this Fascist evolution of Social-Democracy? Did they warn the workers of it? Yes, they saw and warned them in advance! As far back as 1924, the leader of the international proletariat, Comrade Stalin, gave an estimate unsurpassed in its exactness and perspicacity of the evolution of Social-Democracy towards Fascism—an estimate which lies at the basis of the programme of the Comintern and the policy of the Communist Party of Germany.

"Fascism," said Comrade Stalin, "is the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie, which is based on the active support of Social-Democracy. Social-Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of Fascism. There are no grounds for supposing that the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie could secure any

decisive successes either in combats or in the administration of the country without the active support of Social-Democracy. There is equally small reason to think that Social-Democracy could obtain decisive successes either in combats or in the administration of the country without the active support of the militant organisation of the bourgeoisie. These organisations do not contradict but supplement each other. They are not antipodes but twins . . .”

Everything which has happened in Germany has fully confirmed the correctness of Comrade Stalin's prognosis. Hitler does not reject the support of Social-Democracy. Social-Democracy is already proving its readiness to participate in all the bloody crimes of Fascism against the working class.

The monstrous treachery of German Social-Democracy called forth such a storm of indignation among the workers of all countries that even the other parties of the Second International do not dare to come forward in its defence. But German Social-Democracy found one ally—Trotsky. As a political nonentity in the workers' movement, he has nothing to lose. He sticks like dirt to the Fascist jackboot in the hope that he can get himself talked about and at any price emerge from political oblivion, be it only for an hour. Like a pilfering marauder, he haunts every place where workers' blood has been shed, so as to snatch up some trifle with a view to political profit. The German working class is making bloody sacrifices. Hundreds of German Communists have been killed and thousands of Communists, including the best leader of the German working class, Comrade Thälmann, are in prison, but the ally of the Welses and the Leiparts, Trotsky, is here on the spot to absolve the Social-Democrats of the responsibility for the advent of the Fascists to power in Germany and lay it at the door of the German Communists.

In the *Manchester Guardian* of March 22, the Social-Fascist Trotsky declared that the reason why Hitler had come into power was that the German Communist Party had not formed a united front with the Social-Democrats on the only programme acceptable to Social-Democracy—"the defence of parliamentary government and of the mass trade unions." In trying to rig up this rickety platform after Hitler has already got into power, a platform which Wels himself did not dare to propose to the Communists, Trotsky teaches the revolutionary workers of Germany with the exuberance of Tartarin of Tarascon that "it is impossible to imagine Social-Democracy without parliamentary govern-

ment and mass trade union organisations," and that it is precisely these two factors that distinguish Social-Democracy from Fascism.

But the actual meaning of the Hitlerite-Trotskyist platform of the "united front," which was devised in order to justify German Social-Democracy, is shown by the facts and events which were taking place at the very moment when Trotsky was writing his article. Trotsky brought forward the defence of "parliamentary government" as the first point in his united front platform. At this very time the Social-Democrats in the Hitlerite Reichstag were interpreting Trotsky's proposal by recognising the Fascist gang of murderers, the deadly enemies of the working class, to be a "constitutional and parliamentary government." Trotsky put forward the defence of Leipart's trade unions as the second point in the common united front of Communists and Social-Democrats. And at this very time, Trotsky's ally, Leipart, was handing over the trade unions to Hitler, declaring that the German General Federation of Trade Unions accepts the reorganisation of the trade unions on the Italian model. "The social tasks facing the trade unions must be carried out, no matter what the government régime may be," writes Leipart. "The trade unions are always prepared to collaborate with the employers' organisations. They recognise government control . . . They are in favour of government arbitration. They offer help to the government and parliament (i.e., the Hitlerite Reichstag) with their knowledge and experience."

Thus, facts have rudely revealed the real counter-revolutionary idea of the "platform" of Trotsky, the Social-Hitlerite, who tried to prove that Social-Democracy and Fascism are not twins but antipodes.

But what would such a platform of the united front mean, even if Social-Democracy were prepared to fight for it in practice? It would mean nothing more or less than the defence of the government of Brüning, Papen and Schleicher, the defence of the trade union bureaucrats of Leipart. For the Communist Party, it would mean a desertion to the position of the Welses and Leiparts, a renunciation of Marx and Lenin, a desertion to Hindenburg. It would mean going over to the position of the united *counter-revolutionary* front with the bourgeoisie, going over, in the last analysis, to the side of Hitler. Trotsky, the confederate of Hitler, is trying under the guise of a platform of the united front, to foist upon the German working-class that Social-Fascist tactic of the "lesser evil," that *reactionary united front*, which brought Hitler to power.

As for that united revolutionary front which

the Communist Party prepared for and organised in hundreds of places on the basis of a real struggle of the working masses, the Social-Fascist Trotsky recommends us to replace it by the reactionary united front with the bourgeoisie, and this at a moment when the masses of Social-Democratic workers are coming to realise by virtue of bloody experience all the consequences of this reactionary united front. Trotsky tries to suggest to the German workers that the intransigence of Comrade Thälmann prevented Wels from struggling "for parliamentary government and mass trade unions." And this at a time when in the Fascist Reichstag Wels was openly and cynically declaring that: "*The Social-Democrats are those who helped to promote Hitler to his present position,*" that "the Social-Democrats fully subscribe to the programme of foreign policy outlined by Hitler in his declaration." This at a time when Wels, Stampfer and others were going abroad at the behest of Hitler to persuade the workers to stop protesting against the Fascist terror. "You have come too late," ejaculated Hitler to this rotten treacherous rabble, "but still you have come." The Welses and Leiparts, however, do not come alone. They come to Hitler with Trotsky. It was he, Trotsky, who, carrying out the social orders of Hitler, tried to sling mud at the only party which is struggling against Fascism in the most difficult conditions.

To what depths can unprincipled people like Mr. Trotsky descend!

But the Social-Democrats are being beaten up at this moment. Yes, they are being beaten. But first, it is the Social-Democratic workers and not the Welses, Leiparts and Löbes who are being beaten up. No one has touched them or will touch them, because these people form the reserve of the Fascist "national revolution." Though the Fascists persecute Social-Democracy as a party, they "beat" it as they would beat a faithful dog which has fallen sick. They "beat" it because they know that it is incapable of resistance, that if it is well thrashed, it will come all the quicker to the service of bourgeois dictatorship, even in its open Fascist form. This method of political animal-training for the Social-Democratic leaders is also calculated to create the impression among the workers that Social-Democracy is being whipped for its defence of the workers' interests. It is thrown out because its services are no longer needed in their previous form. But Fascism needs the trade unions, and it takes the Social-Democratic bureaucrats into its service.

The bankruptcy of German Social-Democracy, the strongest party of the Second International, is

the bankruptcy of the whole policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie which was and is pursued by the Second International. It is the bankruptcy of the Second International itself.

The present fascisation of German Social-Democracy is not a chance episode. It is the path travelled by all Social-Democratic parties under conditions similar to those obtaining in Germany.

At the same time the advent of Fascism to power in Germany signifies how bankrupt is the Social-Democratic legend that the working class can win power by peaceful parliamentary methods. After the experience of Germany, it has become plain to the broadest masses of Social-Democratic workers that the bourgeoisie will never allow the working class to become master of the country, even if it has a majority in parliament, supposing that were possible anyhow.

The events which have taken place in Germany have struck a cruel blow at the democratic illusions of the working class in capitalist countries.

Like the imperialist war of 1914-18, Fascism is teaching the masses that it is necessary to break with bourgeois legality and pass on to the methods of violence and civil war. These lessons, which have been bitterly learned by the working class of Germany, will not leave the Second International unscathed. They will undermine its influence among the masses, as did the imperialist war of 1914-18 and the October Revolution in Russia.

The Second International has entered upon the period of its decline. The processes of the disintegration of the Second International will proceed both at the top and from below. They will proceed at the top along the line of the re-grouping of the forces of social imperialism around the struggle of capitalist countries for or against the Versailles system. German Social-Democracy, which is trying with all its might to find a place for itself in the system of the Fascist dictatorship, is already talking a common language with Hitler on questions of foreign policy. At the same time French and British Social-Democracy are putting forward a new ideological smoke-screen for the imperialist policy of their bourgeoisie in the form of the thesis on the "struggle of democracy against Fascism." The accusation that German Social-Democracy has capitulated to Fascism will serve, in the mouths of the British Labourites and the French Socialists, as an additional argument for the aims of the imperialist policy of their own capitalist governments.

But it is not this rotting away of the Second

International which will decide its fate. The death-blow at the Social-Fascist international will be struck from below by those Social-Democratic workers who have been in its ranks for many years and who will draw political conclusions from the bitter experience of the German workers. This change of front on the part of the masses is beginning and will continue to express itself ever more strongly in the urge towards a united front with the Communist workers. Even at the present time, a united front of struggle of the working class against Fascism is being formed in the factories of Germany. Such was the case at one of the great plants of the A.E.G. (German General Electric), when, after the distribution of Communist leaflets, the Fascist Storm Troops attempted to occupy the plant and were expelled by the workers. Such has been the case in scores of places where the Communist and Social-Democratic workers have acted side by side together with non-party workers in defence of their class organisations, their imprisoned comrades, etc. The same thing is taking place in several different countries, where the workers, on the basis of the united proletarian front, are showing their fighting solidarity with the German proletariat.

In these conditions, the rôle and significance of the U.S.S.R. becomes still greater as the main bulwark of the international proletariat against world reaction. The bourgeois dictatorship in its naked Fascist form will, in the consciousness of every worker, be contrasted more glaringly than ever to the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union. The bankruptcy of German Social-Democracy, the unbridled terrorism of the Hitler dictatorship, the ruin and poverty which bourgeois dictatorship, whether in the form of the Weimar Republic or in the form of Hitler's "Third Empire," brings to the masses—all this will impel millions of toilers to take the only correct path—the path of struggle for the proletarian dictatorship.

3.—WAS THE POLICY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY CORRECT?

The correctness of this policy in the present concrete situation is determined by three conditions.

1. Did the C.P.G. take into account the headlong nature of the Fascist offensive, and did it promptly mobilise the masses who follow it to resist this offensive.

2. Did it pursue a systematic, stubborn and tireless policy of drawing the widest possible masses of Social-Democratic and non-party workers into the anti-Fascist struggle?

3. Did the Party reorganise itself in the new

conditions of unprecedented Fascist terror, fighting as it retreated, reorganising its ranks with the minimum of losses under the given conditions?

Who can deny that the Communist Party of Germany clearly saw the approaching Fascist danger, that it warned the broad masses of this danger, that it mobilised the masses for a struggle against it at all stages of the Fascist offensive? The coming of Hitler to power did not take the Communist Party of Germany by surprise. Even before Hitler came into power, the Party carried out about three hundred political strikes by its own forces in all places where its influence proved sufficient for this. After Hitler came into power, when the Fascist gangs had organised the massacre at Eisleben, when they murdered in the streets every day dozens of workers belonging to the anti-Fascist front, the revolutionary workers under the leadership of the Communist Party offered a stubborn resistance to the Fascists. Strikes like those in Stassfurt, Harburg and Lübeck are models of the genuine revolutionary front of struggle, when the Communist workers by their example drew the Social-Democratic and unorganised workers into the struggle. The funerals of the workers who had been murdered by the Fascists became a tremendous demonstration where members of the C.C. of the Communist Party of Germany delivered speeches.

In spite of the severe terror, the Party organised a mass meeting in Berlin during the election campaign before February 28—a meeting which took place under the threat of a Fascist massacre and at which Comrade Wilhelm Pieck spoke. On January 25, the Party organised a tremendous demonstration in Berlin, about which even the scoundrel Stampfer of the *Vorwärts* wrote that it was the greatest sight he ever saw. After February 28, when an orgy of arrests, murders and tortures of Communist workers set in, there were numerous fights between the workers and the police and Storm Troops in the streets of Hamburg. In scores of places, the workers, led by the Communists, are resisting the Fascists.

While mobilising the workers who followed its lead, the Communist Party did not forget at any stage of the struggle that it was necessary to draw the Social-Democratic and non-party workers into the struggle. By persistent work it created a network of anti-Fascist committees in the most important districts, and wherever possible it formed self-defence detachments in which it was not only Communist workers who took part.

The Party did not confine itself to the organisation of the revolutionary united front of struggle

from below. Again and again, before the whole German working class which was striving towards unity, the Communist Party made the proposal of a united front against Fascism to the German Social Democrats and the reformist trade unions.

After July 20 the Communist Party publicly proposed to German Social-Democracy and the German General Federation of Trade Unions to reply to von Papen's *coup d'état* by a mass political strike. It is well known that German Social-Democracy rejected the proposal, while the General Federation of Trade Unions described this proposal as a provocation.

Later, when the Fascist bid for power had grown stronger, the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition of Berlin appealed to the Berlin Trade Union Council, to the Metal Workers' Union and the German General Federation of Trade Unions, even before January 30, to begin a joint struggle against the capitalist offensive and the Fascist terror; but this offer, too, met with a refusal.

Finally, the Party repeated its proposal to German Social-Democracy with just as little success on the question of a mass political strike on January 30. The Social-Democratic leaders rejected the proposal of the Communist Party.

In these decisive days, when the Communist Party of Germany made a fighting retreat under conditions of unprecedented Fascist terror, the C.C. of the Party did not abandon its post for a minute. It remained in the very midst of the working class. And this will be remembered by the German proletariat. The proletariat will not forget that their glorious leader, Comrade Thälmann, is at present in jail because, despite the fact that many of his comrades urged him to leave Germany for the time being, Thälmann nevertheless remained among the German workers. The German proletariat will not forget that there was not a single case of mass resistance to the Fascists by the workers when Communists were not in the front rank, and there has not been a single clash with the Fascists in the streets, in the factories, in defence of workers' homes, trade unions, etc., when the Communists have not shown the most devoted loyalty to the cause of the working class.

The wave of terror and mass arrests is dealing blows at the Communist Party of Germany. But the arrest of a few thousand Communists cannot kill a Party which has some five million people behind it. In place of the arrested members, the politically developed and highly cultured working class of Germany will put forward new forces, and is actually doing so. Even now the Party has succeeded in overcoming the grievous

consequences inflicted by Fascist terror upon it. Having grown accustomed to work in legal and semi-legal conditions for a number of years, the Communist Party of Germany is reorganising itself for the new conditions of illegality. The central organ of the Party, the *Rote Fahne*, is appearing illegally. Hundreds of comrades are distributing the Party paper and Communist leaflets in the working class quarters at the risk of their lives. The workers take them under their protection against the Fascist Storm Troops. There can be no doubt that the Communists of all countries, looking with pride on our Party, not only endorse its political line, but organise support for its struggle. The five million votes obtained by the Communist Party in the conditions of the most frightful terror, when every person who voted for the Communists did not know whether he would reach home alive, is a proof of the profound trust of the working masses in our Party.

Strong in the confidence of the masses, the Communist Party of Germany clearly realises the necessity of *keeping cool and not permitting its ranks to get into confusion*. We German Communists can find the leading threads of our tactics and strategy under the present exceptionally complex conditions in the clear and precise instructions of the Leninist Comintern—instructions in which the whole heroic work of the C.P.S.U. under the most difficult circumstances has been summarised. The Party will act most resolutely against those liquidationist tendencies which are inevitable in the conditions of Fascist terror, and also against "putchism," sectarianism and petty-bourgeois adventurism, which are "liquidationism turned inside out."

In all sections of the Party, the question of leadership is now the central problem. Our Party can only ensure the firm leadership of the masses if it has an illegal apparatus for Party leadership. The Party understands that at moments like the present the workers expect leadership above all else. The chief task of this leadership in the near future will be a most stubborn *struggle against the attempts of the Fascists*, supported by the treachery of the Social-Democrats, *to penetrate into the midst of the working class*. The Fascists, who are driving masses of revolutionary workers out of the factories, will replace these workers by Storm Troops and provocateurs, will try to seize the factory committees and fascize the trade unions. Each of these positions in the factories, in the trade unions, in all the workers' organisations, acquires the most profound importance for the Party at the present time. And here a broad basis is created before the Party for forming a united front with the Social-

Democratic and unorganised workers. In this struggle, the Party will be able step by step to obliterate the influence of reactionary Social-Democracy and the fascized trade union bureaucrats. In developing this struggle, the proletariat will gather its forces to pass from defence to attack.

The fighting spirit of the Communist Party of Germany has not and will not be broken by terror. We German Communists remember the lessons of the Russian Bolsheviks, who, under the heel of Tsarism and its Black Hundred "Storm Troops," did not think of losing heart or faltering, but organised the struggle of the proletariat so as to win victory in the October

Revolution. We remember these lessons and are inspired by them. The German Communist Party is the party of a numerous and highly developed proletariat in an advanced capitalist country, a party which has been under fire in civil war, a party which has thoroughly mastered the lessons of three Russian revolutions and the experience gained by the Bolsheviks. It will emerge from the present trials still more steeled, strengthened and able to fight. It will confidently lead the working class, united under its banner, carrying the masses of the toilers along with it, to the final victory over Fascism and capitalism.

THE I.L.P. CHANGES ITS LINE.

By WILLIAM RUST.

THE Independent Labour Party has now decided to leave the Second International and to approach the Comintern "with a view of ascertaining in what way the I.L.P. may assist in the work of the International." This decision was reached by the 41st Annual Conference (April 15th-18th), which was the scene of sharp political differences, and hotly contested debates on the problems now confronting the working class.

The decision to leave the Second International was unanimously adopted, as no one dared to raise a voice in defence of this social-fascist organisation, whose most important affiliated organisation, the German Social-Democracy, has openly gone over to fascism. But the resolution in favour of approaching the Comintern was carried (83 votes to 79) only after a very keenly-fought-out debate, during which most of the leaders strongly opposed the resolution, and appealed to the conference to support the line of calling an international conference of "left" socialist parties.

This was not the only issue upon which the delegates refused to accept the advice of the leaders. The conference decided to send greetings to the revolutionary National Unemployed Workers' Movement, and rejected the amendment which wanted the conference also to extend its greetings to the splitting unemployed organisation formed by the trade union bureaucracy. An attempt to introduce revolutionary changes into the constitution was defeated by 90 votes to 86, as the leaders had mobilised all of their forces against the amendments.

Apart from these controversial issues, the conference also unanimously decided to extend the

united front with the Communist Party of Great Britain, by struggle against the Means Test, wage-cuts, etc. It also called on the workers to rally in defence of the Soviet Union.

This conference of the I.L.P., which met at an historical stage in the international class struggle, thus took a number of remarkable decisions which clearly have an important bearing on the development of the revolutionary working-class movement in Britain. Most important of all is the resolution in favour of approaching the Comintern.

Neither was it a surprise development. During recent months the feeling has been growing amongst the I.L.P. members that the only logical outcome of disaffiliation from the Labour Party (carried last August by 241 votes to 142) was affiliation to the *Communist International*, and the setting up of a united Communist Party in Britain, by uniting with the Communist Party of Great Britain. In February last the London and Lancashire divisional conferences carried resolutions in favour of approaching the Comintern amidst the enthusiasm of the assembled delegates. Those members of the I.L.P. who were still wavering about what to do were undoubtedly greatly influenced by the call of the Communist International for united front action, which came at the same time as the terrible treachery of the German Social-Democracy gave the final proof that the policy of reformism leads to fascism.

The Communist Party, and together with it the mass of members of the I.L.P. and other active and militant workers, is struggling for the unity of the proletariat, seeking to re-establish this

unity on the only possible basis—the revolutionary class struggle.

Why is this old-established party of “left” reformism—the Party which cradled MacDonal and Snowden and at one time played a dominating rôle in the Labour Party—now repudiating its past and acknowledging, even though with much confusion and uncertainty, the Marxism which it once denounced?

The answer is that this most active, thinking section of the reformist workers has been profoundly influenced by the historical development of British capitalism, which, instead of “evolving” gradually to “socialism,” as foretold by the theoreticians of reformism, sinks deeper into crisis and savagely attacks the living standards of the working class. It is also explained by the profound revolutionary influence brought to bear on the British working class by the successes of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., which has abolished unemployment, built up a powerful modern industry and is firmly moving towards classless society under the leadership of the C.P.S.U. It is likewise explained by the systematic work of the C.P.G.B., which has shown the workers the revolutionary way out of the crisis. But the last impulse bringing about a big change in the ranks of the I.L.P. was undoubtedly the coming of fascism to power in Germany and the shameful capitulation of German Social-Democracy to the terrorist dictatorship of Hitler. This is why, in Britain, the country where the reformist leaders openly dared to pour scorn on all of Marx’s teachings, important sections of the working class are now eagerly turning to Marxism-Leninism, are becoming ever more convinced of its soundness as the only proletarian guide to action.

When the I.L.P. disaffiliated from the Labour Party at the special Bradford Conference last August, the leadership announced that the Party had accepted the principles of Marxism, and now stood for a revolutionary policy. Paton, the secretary, declared that the Party which was “social reformist” had now become Marxist, and Fenner Brockway, the chairman, insisted that the “I.L.P. has burnt its boats.”

After these forced admissions of the Party leaders, the members of the I.L.P. could no longer doubt that the Communists were right in always estimating the I.L.P. as a reformist party, the “left” wing of the Labour Party in which it had played a great part, especially during the formative period of that organisation. During the 1929 General Elections, in which the Communist Party fought independently for the first time under the slogan of “Class against Class,” the I.L.P. acted in full agreement with the Labour Party, and

made its main slogan the return of a second Labour Government. And although the I.L.P. leaders denounced the “splitting tactics” of the Communist Party, it was precisely the imperialist anti-working class policy of the Labour Government which compelled the I.L.P. to make its break with the Labour Party.

The Labour Government’s wage-cutting policy, its attack on the unemployed, oppressive policy in the colonies, the piling up of armaments, and finally the handing over of the reins of office to the “National” Government, aroused a great feeling of protest and sharp disappointment in the ranks of the working class. But in the I.L.P. this process went further. The members were not disposed to listen to the specious excuses that it was only a minority government, or that the renegades, MacDonal and Snowden, were to blame and not the remainder of the Cabinet. On the contrary, the majority of the I.L.P. members saw in the record of the Labour Government the proof that reformist policies, no matter how operated, lead to the triumph of the capitalists, and the defeat of the proletariat. More and more the I.L.P. members began to proclaim that only the class strength of the workers can defeat the capitalists. They demanded a break from the Labour Party on the grounds that it had betrayed the fight for socialism and had in no way been “purified” by the departure of MacDonal and Snowden.

It is significant to note that just as the demand for approaching the Comintern emanated from the local organisations, so did the slogan for the disaffiliation from the Labour Party arise from the same source, despite the opposition of the leaders. But, by the time of the special conference last August, the majority of the leaders had gone over to the camp of the disaffiliationists, and it was only the open right wing group which split away and formed the Socialist League as an organisation affiliated to the Labour Party.

But disaffiliation did not mean that the members of the I.L.P. regarded their problems as settled. Disaffiliation was not looked upon as a mere organisational change, neither was the adoption of a “revolutionary policy” regarded as a new scrap of paper. A new intense discussion started in the ranks of the party and the members more and more orientated their daily activity on the class struggle.

What should be the policy of the new I.L.P.? Around this issue a sharp conflict has developed in which the lines of difference are now becoming very clearly drawn. On the one hand there is the “middle line” camp which claims that the policy of the I.L.P. must be distinct from the Labour Party on the right, and the Communist

Party on the left. According to this view the Labour Party advocates the democratic method, the Communist Party the method of dictatorship, but the I.L.P. stands for "preparing the mind and organisation of the working class to be ready to use both Parliament and direct action in a crisis for socialist ends." (*New Leader*, March 31st, 1933.)

On the other hand, there is the revolutionary camp which, step by step, is advancing to the position that the I.L.P. cannot hang suspended between reformism and revolution, but must ultimately decide to unite with the Communist Party of Great Britain, which is fighting under the leadership of the Communist International.

But whereas the first camp includes the leadership, which follows a definite line against the Comintern, and is in control of the Party machine, the second has not yet clearly worked out the policy of revolutionary struggle, and has not yet rallied its forces strongly enough to carry the entire party with it. The movement is often spontaneous in character, and the unofficial Revolutionary Policy Committee, although criticising the line of the leadership, is not itself entirely free from reformist illusions.

The most recent and authoritative exposition of the "middle line" policy was made by Brockway in his presidential address to the Annual Conference of the I.L.P., when he took as his favourite theme the peaceful character of the British revolution. According to Brockway:

"The alternative to arming an untrained working class and throwing them against machine guns and trained troops is to disarm the possessing class by withdrawing the working-class support on which they depend. When that development occurs the victory of the working class is won."

How the chairman of the I.L.P. reconciles this statement with his estimation "that the British possessing class has the mentality of fascism," it is difficult to imagine, but, in any case, it is clear that he has a very strange idea about class relationships in Britain. However, this idea of Brockway has nothing in common with the proletarian Communist view of the state of affairs. To talk about withdrawing working-class support from the capitalists is nothing but bourgeois trickery of the working class by "left" phrases. The intense capitalist propaganda carried on by the "National" Government and the determined attempts now being made to corrupt the unemployed by means of the Social Service schemes should at least teach the thinking observer that the fight for the masses intensifies as the struggle sharpens. The pleasant picture of a 100 per cent. revolutionary working class peacefully

collecting the revolvers of the bourgeoisie in the West End does not exist outside of Brockway's imagination. In reality the possessing class will inevitably have on its side part of the population including the upper strata of the working class which it has corrupted, it will retain some sections of the armed forces, organise its fascist bands and terrorise the masses.

In addition the bourgeoisie will have the state apparatus on its side, which it will use in order to mobilise the forces of reaction. The bourgeoisie will only be disarmed when the workers who have withdrawn their support decisively impose their will by reason of superior might. But in Brockway's opinion the problem before the workers is not how to fight for the overthrow and break-up of the capitalist state, but "the first urgent constructive task of Socialists is the preparation of the mind and organisation of the working class for the new function which it will have to fulfil."

Having also assured his supporters that "the revolution which we have in mind is industrial in character" (*i.e.*, not requiring a political revolution, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the destruction of the state machine of the bourgeoisie), Brockway then finds no difficulty in sketching an easy transition to Socialism through the medium of Workers' Councils which will be able to carry on the present-day struggles and "be ready to administer the new economic system on behalf of the workers when victory is won."

Brockway made an indirect reference to the State, but only with the object of dismissing the significance of the revolutionary struggle of the workers for power. Speaking on the importance of a Socialist majority in Parliament, he declares that such a Government, formed by peaceful parliamentary elections, would have the advantage of controlling the armed forces, the police and the Civil Service. Brockway persists in the old ideas of MacDonald and Co., believing that a parliamentary "socialist" government will be able to control all of the generals, admirals, judges, police inspectors, bishops, etc., and does not understand that these gentry in practice hold the real power in their hands, and will not release it unless the armed workers, under the leadership of their Party, tear this power out of their hands.

In another part of his speech Brockway drew a terrifying picture of the ferocity of the British ruling class, but he has stopped short at explaining how this murderous gang is to be called to heel by his Socialist Government.

Brockway's position is not an impossible "middle line." His definition in reality, but essentially, is the same as the classical line of reformism: bring about socialism through the

capture of the state by a parliamentary majority. All that Brockway does is to give his own special reasons why the working class shall not base its policy on the class struggle, and fight for the forcible overthrow of the capitalist state.

Do not fight and crush the bourgeoisie, but "withdraw support" from them; do not smash their state, but "control it" through parliament; do not organise to crush the counter-revolution by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but trust to economic administrative councils.

This is a policy for leaving the working class to the mercy of the bourgeoisie. It panders to the most vulgar parliamentary illusions, from which the working class must be rescued, and plays directly into the hands of the Labour Party with its promises of a third Labour Government which will take prompt measures for "socialism."

This is a bankrupt policy which the realities of the class struggle in Britain have already exposed. The militant workers of Britain, who are leading the struggle against the vicious capitalist offensive, a struggle which brings them into increasing conflict with the forces of the capitalist state, are not to be diverted from the revolutionary road by such balderdash.

This "middle line," which is in essence the old reformist line merely covered up with "left" language, might have been heavily defeated at the conference if a clear fight had been organised against it. As it was, the demand of the Revolutionary Policy Committee for the inclusion of the dictatorship of the proletariat was only rejected by a narrow majority.

The Revolutionary Policy Committee would have had greater success if they had really campaigned before the conference for a clear line of revolutionary struggle, and against all opponents of revolutionary policy. Their draft constitution certainly contained the demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but in general it was a rather mixed dish of revolutionary and reformist ideas, and contained, for example, the following statement regarding electoral activity:

"The existing organs of national and local governments being part of the machinery of capitalism, such organs cannot be employed as the main instrument for the capture of power by the working class, and the I.L.P. will work alternatively for the creation of direct workers' councils. The propaganda and tactical value of the electoral machine and of such positions as can be won in parliament and on local governing bodies will be used as a means to this end."

If the organs are not the MAIN instrument, then what kind of supplementary instrument are they? Also, what is the "tactical value" of the

electoral machine as a means of capturing power apart from its importance as a propaganda tribune? This ambiguity in a constitution which also omits any definition of attitude towards the capitalist state can lead to big misunderstandings, especially as it is precisely on this issue of the rôle of the state, electoral activity and the use of the parliamentary tribune for the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses, that so much confusion exists within the I.L.P.

Let us turn to the meaning of the leaders' "middle line" shown in daily practice. At the conference, one of the London delegates criticised the National Council on the grounds that "the Party had been giving the workers no lead in disputes but only generalisations about socialism." This is an absolutely justifiable criticism of the I.L.P. leaders, although the rank and file have been throwing themselves heart and soul into the economic struggles.

The old I.L.P. had frankly looked upon the class struggle as an obstacle to the achievement of its plans for transforming capitalism by evolution and was only grudgingly prepared to recognise the significance of the class struggle under the pressure of the workers from below. The new "middle line" is really only a method of covering the continuance of the reformist line with revolutionary phrases.

Just as the leaders of the Labour Party conceal their betrayal of workers' interests with proclamations about the "end of reforms" and that the fight for the universal demands of the workers against the capitalist offensive, against fascism, should be laid off as hopeless, so the *New Leader*, the official organ of the I.L.P., argues that sectional strikes are hopeless and only the "struggle for socialism" is of any avail.

"Sectional disputes yield very little. A general upheaval might win all, if carefully planned and resolutely developed to meet the needs of the present situation." (*New Leader*, October 28th.)

We know that this "general upheaval" is not understood by the leaders of the I.L.P. as literally as the revolutionary workers understand it, but, as we have seen from the articles of Brockway, as the coming to power of a new, third Labour Government through a majority at the elections.

The comments of the *New Leader* on current movements were not hastily, badly formulated opinions, but represent a definite policy, as is shown by the line taken in articles expounding the general policy of the I.L.P. According to these articles the fight against the capitalist offensive or for improved conditions is reformist, and the Communist Party which puts forward immediate demands, therefore, "an anti-revolutionary force"! (December 2nd). The objection to the

struggle for immediate demands is based on the conception that the capitalist "either gives out his superfluity or pays up as an insurance policy to stave off revolution. *To-day he has no superfluity, therefore there is an end of concessions* (our italics) . . . to concede the possibility of winning concessions under capitalism is virtually to abandon Socialism" (December 16th).

The complete idea is presented here. The poverty-stricken capitalist has nothing to spare and if he had the workers would win concessions from him and not fight for socialism.

The "superfluity" argument shows that the approach is from a purely capitalist angle. The question of concessions is considered not from the standpoint of the interests of the working class but from the point of view of the capitalists who are fighting to transfer all the burdens of the crisis on to the working class, for a further increase in the rate of exploitation of the working class.

This is unadulterated capitalist propaganda, worthy of the British Empire Union or Economic Study Club. The world economic crisis has certainly skimmed off the profits of the capitalists, but it is also true that huge profits are being maintained by the big trusts and financial oligarchy through merciless exploitation and by attacks on the living standards of the working class. Look at the swollen war budget, the high bank dividends, the railway companies' £26,000,000 profit and the £350,000,000 paid out as interest and sinking fund on the National Debt. The reports of 1,998 companies published in 1932 reveal a net profit of £143,315,094, after the payment of debenture interests, etc. (*Economist*, February 18th). Oh, the poor capitalist!

The capitalists are transferring the burdens of the crisis on to the shoulders of the masses. Pauperisation is the fate of the working class under capitalism. Pauperisation takes place because the capitalists more and more seek a solution of the crisis through the intensified exploitation and oppression of the workers, and with the aid of the state apparatus, which is in their hands, they are carrying on the offensive against the working class. This is the Marxist theory of the relative and absolute impoverishment of the working class, which the Communists were teaching when the I.L.P. leaders were bleating about Fordism.

But Marx never taught that the workers could not struggle against the capitalists for reduced hours, for higher wages, against wage cuts, for social insurance at the expense of the capitalists, etc. Marx always looked on this struggle as an inseparable part of the struggle of the working class, subordinated to the general task of prepar-

ing for the proletarian revolution. Through the struggle the workers gain great revolutionary experience and their class-consciousness deepens. The reform is not an aim in itself, but only a by-product of the revolutionary struggle.

The *New Leader's* line of propaganda plays directly into the hands of the strike-breaking Labour leaders and helps to hold back the workers from the struggle. It is directly against the fight for socialism because only through the daily struggle is created the class might and consciousness necessary for the overthrow of capitalism, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Latterly the leaders of the I.L.P. have let this policy drift into the background and have come to an agreement with the Communist Party for the organisation of the united front struggles of workers. This has taken place under the pressure of the members of the I.L.P. and is expressive of a growing feeling of the futility of the policy so loudly advertised after the disaffiliation conference.

In any case, no member or leader of the I.L.P. can deny that the party has got itself into a position when it hangs suspended between the Communist Party and the Labour Party. The membership is the lowest on record (fewer than 10,000 actually paying dues), and over 200 branches have been dissolved during the last twelve months, a loss that cannot be solely accounted for by the split following disaffiliation from the Labour Party.

Amongst the membership there is an increasing realisation that unless they enter the ranks of the Communist International they will be doomed to sectarian isolation. That is why the majority of the members have already decided to approach the Communist International despite all the arguments about "Moscow dictatorship." The Comintern enjoys a great prestige amongst the members of the I.L.P. and persistent slanders have not shaken their confidence in the International of Lenin and Stalin.

The principle of International discipline for which Marx — the founder of the First International—fought so bitterly is certainly strongly upheld by the E.C.C.I. But why do the I.L.P. leaders turn this principle into a "dictatorship" bogey? Every I.L.P.er can discover if he so desires that the E.C.C.I. consists of the representatives of the national sections, that the line of the Comintern is always adapted to the given countries and that every Communist Party freely discusses policy and tactics. Behind the talk of the "dictatorship" of the Comintern is really the desire to fight on the side of their national bourgeoisie, and against the Marxist-Leninist prin-

ciples of proletarian internationalism and against the power which such a centralised organisation as the International gives to the working class in its struggle with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The formation of the Communist International was the first step in restoring the unity of the working class which had been destroyed by the treachery of the Second International when social democracy went over to the camp of the bourgeoisie on the outbreak of the world war. By years of valiant struggle for the interests of the working class, by rigid adherence to the basic

principles of Marxism, by a refusal to tolerate opportunism, the Communist Party has made great strides in re-creating the unity of the working class.

Now the turn of the I.L.P. towards Communism makes it possible to carry this policy of unity a step forward in Britain, the stronghold of imperialism. And not only a step forward, for if in Britain all revolutionary workers come together in one united Communist Party, based on the policy of the irreconcilable class struggle, it will indeed be a turning point in the history of the working-class movement.

THE SECOND COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL.

By BELA KUN.

The "Prosperity" and the beginning of the end of the Second International.

THE Socialist and Labour International, known as the Second International, has entered a new stage of its *disintegration*. Its greatest, erstwhile, most powerful, national section, the *Social-Democratic Party of Germany*, in fact, no longer belongs to the Second International. In the official organ of *Austrian Social-Democracy*, the Vienna "*Arbeiterzeitung*," of February 7th, 1933, the most prominent leader of *French Social-Democracy* — Leon Blum — records that:

"The relations between the German Party and the International have virtually ceased."

The leader of the Austro-Marxians, Otto Bauer, found nothing to say on this most important event in the life of the Second International. The split was recorded in the leading organ of the Second International by a *Frenchman*. There could be found no *German Social-Democrat*, not even one from Austria, who dared to place the "responsibility" for the disintegration of the Second International on the German Social-Democrats. The Frenchman's definition, on the other hand, was supposed to maintain the appearance that nevertheless there is some sort of internationalism in the Second International. The fact, however, that the disintegration of the Second International has begun, could not be concealed, as little as it was possible to conceal the organisational dissolution of shipwrecked Social-Democracy in Germany. A section of the Second International which, although having a smaller membership, played a very active part in the international sphere, the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain (I.L.P.), has, at its last

Party Conference, officially declared its withdrawal from the Second International.

The Finnish Social-Democratic Party, too, threatens its official withdrawal from the Second International.

In the Social-Democratic Party of Czechoslovakia, influential organisations declared that they are not in agreement with the decisions of the Executive of the Second International. The Pilsen organ of the *Czecho-Slovakian Social-Democratic Party*, *Nova-Doba*, has already presented an ultimatum to the Zurich International. On the one hand, because of the lack of clarity of the attitude of the Executive to German Social-Democracy. In this ultimatum it threatens:

"The Czech Social-Democratic Party wishes that the Zurich Executive would openly declare to Mr. Wels that the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, as a result of its attitude to Hitler and Zurich, has consciously abandoned the principle of international workers' solidarity. *According to the actions of the Zurich Executive, the Czech Social-Democratic Party will adjust its relations to the international.*"

In still more energetic tones this organ expresses its dissatisfaction with the Second International on the question of the united front. As regards this question, it fully adopts the arguments of the condemned Otto Wels, who justifies his secession from the Committee of the Second International also by saying that the Second International has commenced a manoeuvre insupportable in Social-Democracy, by not rejecting "*on principle*" the offers of a united front made by the Communist Parties to the Social-Democratic Parties, but prohibited negotiations on united front action in the various countries on the pre-

text of the necessity for preliminary negotiations between the two Internationals.

On the other hand this ultimatum is supported by the argument that these decisions of the Central Committee of the Second International—

“are not very clear and leave room for two interpretations. They do not emphasise the basic and fundamental differences between Communistic tactics and the principles of Social-Democracy, which are based unshakingly and permanently on democracy.”

Thus, according to the Social-Democratic newspaper, no manoeuvres are admissible in the question of united front, as there is a danger to Social-Democracy that the workers will really unitedly wage a struggle shoulder to shoulder against Fascism. This organ furthermore explains that it should be said clearly and openly :

“that it (i.e., the Second International) will not negotiate in any circumstances with the Moscow International . . . according to the attitude of the Zurich executive to the demand in principle of the healthy socialist movement in Czecho-Slovakia, we should also definitely adjust relations to the International.”

This Czech journal from which we have cited these lengthy quotations is not of merely local importance. Its point of view is a direct reflection of the *opinion of the War Industry* both on this question and in the sphere of international politics. Behind this paper stands the Czech member of Parliament, Pick, who, only a short time ago, was a member of the administrative board of the big armament plant, the Skoda Works, as a trustee of the biggest armament trust, the French company, Schneider-Creuzot.

The president of the Second International, Emile Vandervelde, although striking a somewhat softer tone than the directly paid agent of the French armament industry, has again found his old war-time position in regard to German Social-Democracy. He reproaches his German colleagues for making “Deutschland, Deutschland über alles” once again the leading principle of their policy.

The sister organisation of the Second International—the International Federation of Trade Unions, also called the Amsterdam International, which has just removed from Berlin to Paris—is also in the course of disintegration. In fact, the German free (reformist) trade unions no longer belong to any international organisation. On the proposal of the well-known chief physician of sick capitalism, Tarnow, the Wood Workers’ Trade Union has officially severed its relations with the International Organisation of Wood Workers. Other trade unions are following suit. The

reformist Trade Unionist leaders in France, headed by Monsieur Jouhaux, already leave no doubt that they are as little prepared to collaborate with the German trade unions now as during the imperialist world war.

The *disintegration* of the Second International has commenced, it proceeds—its collapse is still to come.

The beginning of the *end* of the Second International followed almost immediately on the period in which its leaders boasted the “greatest prosperity” of the Socialist Youth International. Less than two years ago, at the time of the Vienna Congress of the Second International, Emile Vandervelde chanted hymns of the “blossoming forth” of the Second International, of its “power.”

“Notwithstanding Communist splitting, the International presents in 1931 a numerically incomparably greater power than in 1914. There is hardly any of its great parties which has not, in one form or other, participated in the government . . . Without exaggeration, it may be stated that the majority of the members of the Executive of the Socialist Labour International are former or future ministers. This is doubtless a proof of increased power . . . ”

The power of a “socialist,” of a “Labour International,” is determined here by the weight of the ministerial portfolios held by Labour leaders in bourgeois cabinets. The power of the Second International is determined by the degree of participation by its leaders in bourgeois governments.

Vandervelde speaks of “increased power.” “Increased power”—*but of which class?* Naturally, Vandervelde does *not* put this question. To put this question would be to answer it. If it were true that the power of the Second International had increased at the same time as their parties became part and parcel of the specific national bourgeoisie, and its leaders participated in bourgeois cabinets, this “increased power” of the Second International would only mean increased power of the bourgeoisie. Increased power of the Second International means increased power of the international organisation of imperialism, of the *League of Nations*, of which the Second International has been a branch from its very re-establishment after the world war.

Naturally, Mr. Vandervelde does not mention a single word about this. He is also silent on something else. If it is true that the membership of the Social-Democratic Parties in 1932 was larger than in 1914, it is also true that it was smaller than in the first post-war period, and since the beginning of the economic crisis (i.e., also in

1931) the membership and influence of the parties of the Second International decreased continuously, generally speaking at the same rate as the power of the bourgeoisie weakened, while at the same time the influence of the Communist Parties increased.

One fact, however, Mr. Vandervelde could not conceal. At the same time, when with lawyer's acrobatics, he constructed the thesis of the "increased power" of the Second International, he was already compelled to admit the existence of symptoms of disintegration in the Socialist Youth International, along the lines of the National bourgeoisie. In the very same article in which Vandervelde made his exalted declaration on the "prosperity" of the Second International ("Kampf," July—August, 1931), he was forced to allow the layman a glimpse behind the scenes of the Second International. This peculiar "internationalism" contained even, in the heights of its prosperity, the well-developed seeds of disintegration of the Second International. Vandervelde boasted this "internationalism" of his International as follows:

"I could cite new proofs from all countries showing to what extent we are to-day, now that Social-Democracy has become a real mass party, *up to our necks in social patriotism*. When some time ago in the *Belgian Chamber* we accomplished our international duty in the struggle against armament credits (i.e., when the Social-Democratic Party manoeuvred to precipitate the fall of the Government and thus be able to create a new Government Coalition in which the Social-Democratic Party would be included—B.K.), *a Social-Democratic member of the Chamber declared that since the War he had never shaken hands with a German; at almost the same time, one of our German comrades, in a commission of the Reichstag, stated that in the question of national defence, he stood on the side of General Groener against the Communists*, and one must have read the speeches delivered at the last French Party Conference in Tours, to realise against which resistance, Leon Blum, Lebats, Vincent Auriol and Paul Faure had to fight *when on the same question of national defence, they make efforts to have unanimous resolutions passed.*" (Italics by me.—B.K.)

To illustrate this "internationalism" on the part of the Second International and its sections, it suffices to complete this description of Vandervelde by stating that the unanimous resolutions, for the adoption of which Leon Blum and his comrades exerted themselves, by no means exclude the "duty of National Defence." On the contrary, on the question of National Defence,

Leon Blum and his comrades are *no less* on the side of General Weygand, President of the French Military Council, against the French Communists, than their German colleagues were on that of General Groener and are standing to-day on that of Hitler.

*New developments on the road of betrayal—
fresh disintegration.*

The policy of the Second International and all its parties in the post-war period was to *declare permanent the policy of August 4th, 1914*. This also applies to the time when the Second and 2½ Internationals were still marching *separately*, in order to fight *jointly*—along with their respective bourgeoisie — against the revolutionary liquidation of the consequences of the war, against the Proletarian Revolution. It was likewise after the merging congress of the Second and 2½ Internationals in 1923, when they considered the time ripe to openly unite in their collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Open and concealed class collaboration, co-operation with their own bourgeoisie in all questions of national and international policy, support for all essential measures for the bourgeoisie aimed at overcoming the post-war crisis of capitalism at the expense of the toilers—from Government arbitration in strikes to the suppression of the economic struggle by armed force, disarmament of the working class, surrendering of their arms to equip the Fascist hordes, condemnation of *proletarian force*, while supporting the armed force of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary working class, support of the international organisation of imperialism, of the League of Nations, on the basis of the Versailles robbers' peace system, and support—concealed or open, according to circumstances—of the preparation of the imperialist war for the re-distribution of the world—this has been the work of the Second International in the post-war period, from its re-establishment to its second disintegration.

The road of betrayal of the Second International is the old road, often trod before. But on this old road the Second International has achieved new, tremendous "successes."

During the war, *Lenin* summed up the disintegration of the Second International in 1914 in the following manner:

"The collapse of the Second International came into the clearest relief in the flagrant betrayal by the majority of the official Social-Democratic parties of Europe of their convictions and of their Stuttgart and Basle resolutions. However, this collapse, which means the complete victory of opportunism, the transformation of the Social-Democratic parties into

national liberal labour parties, is only a result of the entire historical epoch of the Second International, which covers the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The objective conditions of this epoch—a transition period from the completion in Western Europe of bourgeois and national revolutions to the beginning of socialist revolutions—gave birth to and matured opportunism . . .

“The crisis that was created by the great war has torn off the coverings, has cast away the conventions, has opened the abscess that had long ago become ripe, and has shown opportunism in its true rôle as an ally of the bourgeoisie.” (Page 52. Little Lenin Library, Vol. 2. “War and the Second International.”)

Thus Lenin said that the collapse of the Second International is “only a result of the whole epoch of the Second International at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.” But this epoch yielded something new in the way of betrayal, namely, the “collapse of the Second International.” At present we can observe a new stage in the betrayal of the Second International, which finds its expression in the incorporation of the German Social-Democratic Party in the system of open Fascist dictatorship. It is no accident that this new stage in the betrayal of the Second International coincides with its second disintegration. In fact, both phenomena are a result of the sharpening of all contradictions—in the domestic as well as in the international spheres. Both are a result of the fact that we are entering a new cycle of revolutions and wars.

Since its re-establishment, the Second International² was no more than a *formal* linking up of nationalist Social-Democratic parties, each one of which fought against the revolution of the working class in its own country, against the national revolution in the colonies of its own imperialism, in co-operation with its own bourgeoisie. Each one of its sections has helped its own capitalism, weakened by the war, to get on its feet again at any price, at the expense of the working class. The object of the organisation of these parties internationally was—apart from misleading the working masses striving to international solidarity in struggles against capitalism by means of a fake proletarian internationalism—the *same* object as that which actuated the imperialist powers to collaborate internationally: an endeavour to create the international prerequisites for overcoming the post-war crisis of capitalism by “pacifist” means. The organisation of the League of Nations was part of the Versailles system to protect the Versailles robbers’ peace

treaty, to lead the struggle against the proletarian and national revolutions. The international organisation of the Social-Democratic parties had as its object—just as the international collaboration of the imperialist bourgeoisie—the *international assembling of forces to fight against the Soviet Union*, against the proletarian and colonial revolutions, against world bolshevism.

To further the national imperialist interests of its own bourgeoisie within the scope of this international organisation was the object of the various Social-Democratic parties of the Second International, just as it was for the Governments of the various imperialist powers in the League of Nations, where the policy of various imperialist countries was not infrequently represented by “former and future” Social-Democratic ministers who are at the same time “former and future” members of the Executive of the Second International. The members of the Executive of the Second International were, for the duration of their ministerial posts, exempted from the exercise of their functions in the Executive (this was a concession to the “principle of the class struggle”), to enable them to pursue their principal occupation, the representation of the interests of their own bourgeoisie in the League of Nations. The Hendersons, De Brouckères, Paul Boncour and other leaders of the Second International, including Vandervelde, presided alternatively at the bureau of the Second International and its commissions, and the Council and commissions of the League of Nations.

It is no accident that the disintegration of the Second International becomes apparent at a moment when the preparation of the imperialist war and the parcelling out of China has already proceeded to such an extent that the existence of the League of Nations has been jeopardised, by the withdrawal of Japan, the collapse of the Disarmament Conference and the negotiations on the creation of an organisation of the leading imperialist powers standing over the League of Nations. It is no accident that the sharpening of imperialist antagonisms which has already arrived at a decisive stage, as well as the regrouping of the imperialist powers under the shadow of direct war preparations for reshaping the world, for the alteration of the Versailles frontiers and the spheres of influence in the Far East, as laid down in the Washington Treaty, accentuated at the same time the antagonisms within the Second International. *With the crisis of the League of Nations, with the breakdown of the Disarmament Conference, the disintegration of the Second International has begun too.*

When the Second International—by uniting the open Social-Imperialists and the former social-

pacifists—was stuck together again, the words uttered by Kautsky in 1914—"the International can only be an instrument of peace"—were still in the minds of many Social-Democratic workers. They still remembered how the International was broken by the first breath of wind of the imperialist world war, they remembered how in the trenches they were driven to despair, not only physically by the hardships of war, but also morally by the policy of "carrying on" of the Social-Democratic parties. The adoption of the Constitution of the Socialist and Labour International was part and parcel of the international deception of the Social-Democratic parties. This is nothing but a poor imitation of the League of Nations statutes; it contains, however, one point in which the Social-Democratic leaders promise the working masses who follow them that the International would stick together, even in the event of war. This famous fourth point of the Constitution reads as follows :

"The Socialist and Labour International is not only an instrument for the tasks in peace time, but equally an indispensable instrument during war."

However, the Second International cannot even last out the period of peace. It is already in the course of disintegration before the military advance of the imperialist armies has set in; a sudden turn, a regrouping of the imperialist powers, for the direct preparation of the war, sufficed to compel some Social-Democratic parties, such as the German Social-Democratic Party, to *come out openly for the war aims of their bourgeoisie* and to force the Second International into a new period of disintegration, on the eve of a new cycle of wars.

Save what can be saved.

Various parties of the disintegrating Second International are still trying to save all that is possible, so to speak, to comply with the "honour" of the Socialist and Labour International. The disparity in the development of the domestic and foreign policy of the various imperialist powers makes it necessary also for the various social-democratic parties to adopt correspondingly different attitudes to the question of the International. Whereas the German Social-Democratic Party, after the taking of office by Hitler, is *no longer* able to maintain even a particle of internationalism, the French Social-Democratic Party is still able to continue its support of the war policy of the Left Bloc government under the mask of Pacifism. That is why Otto Wels and the German Social-Democratic Party *had* to take the initiative in destroying the Second International, and Leon Blum and the French Social-

Democratic Party are able to appear in the part of saviours of internationalism.

Otto Wels, President of the German Social-Democratic Party, was the *first* to resign from the Bureau of the Second International. His withdrawal was approved by the Executive of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany on the following grounds :

"The Executive considers the attitude of Wels justified, because the decisions of the Bureau of the Socialist and Labour International, besides political measures, also deal with organisational measures which have been adopted without the collaboration of German Social-Democracy. The German Social-Democratic Party must decline responsibility for the decisions thus adopted."

The capitulation of the German Social-Democratic Party to Hitlerite Fascism and the actual withdrawal of German Social-Democracy from the Second International effected thereby, have evoked the dissatisfaction of the Social-Democratic parties of the Versailles persuasion to exactly the same extent as their own bourgeoisie is dissatisfied (notwithstanding their class solidarity with the campaign of Hitler against the Communists), and therefore opposes the Hitlerite plans for revision of the Versailles system. The Social-Democratic parties of Versailles tendencies express the self-same dissatisfaction. But, to save the face of the Second International, and maintain their common front against the Communists, they are extremely careful in manifesting this dissatisfaction.

A number of Social-Democratic Party Conferences have taken place since the withdrawal of the German Social-Democratic Party from the Second International (France, Switzerland and Austria), but not one of them has murmured a single word of such a great event as the virtual withdrawal of the strongest section from the Second International.

Even the resolutions of the Bureau of the Second International, which, for Wels and his Party, were the *official* reason for their withdrawal from the Socialist and Labour International, do not contain one seriously critical word on the policy of German Social-Democracy to the Hitler Government, not to mention a *definite condemnation* of its open support of Fascism. The first of these resolutions—which were the reason for the withdrawal of Wels—gave a lukewarm reply to the speech of the Reichstag incendiary, the present Premier of Prussia, Goering, delivered by the latter at the Press Conference on the "scare propaganda" against the Hitler Government, in which he spared no threats against international social-democracy on account of the

“scare propaganda.” The second decision referred to the appeal of the Communist International, proposing to its sections to submit united front proposals to the Social-Democratic parties for waging a common struggle against fascism and the offensive of the capitalists. The decision of the Bureau of the Second International prohibits the Social-Democratic parties from organising common actions against fascism, as well as the conduct of negotiations on the establishment of an anti-fascist united front—under the rather obvious pretext that such negotiations on a national scale should be preceded by negotiations between the Communist International and the Second International.

If these decisions involved an “interference in the internal affairs” of the German Social-Democratic Party, this “interference” could only be interpreted in the sense of the German Social-Democratic Party being prevented from conducting negotiations with the German Communist Party in regard to a common struggle against the dictatorship of Hitler. Who has ever seriously believed that the leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party intended to wage a struggle against fascism, must have been convinced by the events in Germany that Social-Democracy must necessarily collaborate with *every* party of the bourgeoisie, to save capitalism. The National-Socialist Party is as small an exception to this rule as any other party. The decisive days of July 20th, 1932, and January 30th, 1933, when the German Social-Democratic Party flatly rejected the offers of the Communist Party to organise a general strike against Fascism, leave no doubt that the Social-Democratic Party Presidium did not even dream of entering into negotiations regarding the proposals of the Communist Party for a united front, or for organising an anti-fascist struggle.

And after February 27th, after the provocative firing of the Reichstag and the beginning of the vicious terror of German Fascism, the German Social-Democratic Party has not only renounced any, even the feeblest opposition to Hitlerism, but even accepted the despicable task of denying the unheard-of terror of the fascists to world public opinion.

The German Social-Democratic Party protested against interference *into the internal affairs of Hitlerite Germany on the part of the Bureau of the Second International, into the common cause of Hitler and German Social-Democracy*. German Social-Democracy, in fact, has become no less than part and parcel of the Hitlerite régime — notwithstanding everything. The form of this incorporation with the Hitlerite party of the bourgeoisie is different from that utilised in the period

of Ebert and the first period of the presidency of Hindenburg. This form was changed, and drastically at that, when the Social-Democratic leaders, both small and big guns, were ousted from their well-paid jobs in the state apparatus, in the municipal services, in the health insurance, etc., and even removed from the trade unions. The self-dissolution of the “Reichsbanner,” of the trade unions, and, for that matter, even of Social-Democratic party organisations, is a proof that the Social-Democratic Party is no longer capable of breaking its connections with the bourgeoisie, in view of the imminent danger of the Socialist Revolution—notwithstanding the victory of Fascism. Incapable of severing these connections, despite the raging of the most unrestricted fascist terror against Social-Democratic workers and Social-Democratic organisations.

The internationalism of Social-Democracy presents merely a temporary and moreover *superficial* connection between the Social-Democratic parties of various countries, *whereas the nationalism of Social-Democracy, their dependence upon their own bourgeoisie, is part of the essential character of Socialism-Fascism*. This is why the German Social-Democratic Party has offered no resistance whatever to the pressure of its own bourgeoisie, represented at the moment by Hitler, to strike *the first blow* at the tottering structure of the Second International.

“The Socialist and Labour International is a living reality only to the extent to which its decisions on all international questions are binding on all its parts,” declares the rules of the Second International. “Every decision of the international organisation means, therefore, a self-agreed restriction of the autonomy of the parties of the various countries.”

There is not a single case in the whole history of the Second International in which this “self-agreed restriction of the autonomy of the parties of the various countries” has become a fact. No Social-Democratic Party has allowed itself to be restricted in its national interests, but in those cases in which the bourgeoisie desired this.

Even at present, in time of peace, the German Social-Democratic Party is not prepared to allow itself to be restricted in its autonomy with regard to its support of Hitler and of the imperialist war which is being prepared by fascist Germany by any non-German force, any International. Even the most outrageous fascist terror on the part of Hitler, which does not stop with the Communists, will not be able to deter it from this. This is a matter between itself and Hitler, who, after all—and *this is recognised even by Leon Blum*—came to power by “democratic means.”

The disintegration of the Second International,

started by the German Social-Democratic Party, must nevertheless be explained away to the masses. The Second International must be defended, must be saved, somehow.

Leon Blum contends that even after the withdrawal of the German Social-Democratic Party the Second International can still be useful. Peace still exists. The French War Minister, Painlevé—who has held this post many a time before—declared, only a few days ago, in the French Chamber, *that this summer it will not yet come to a war.* Until the autumn, perhaps even later, the Rump International may still be utilised as an instrument of peace. Even in war times it may serve for winning certain “neutral” Social-Democratic parties to the side of French imperialism and its allies. By defending the “international spirit” French Social-Democracy may succeed in maintaining the illusion to the Social-Democratic workers that it votes for the war budget of French imperialism only by way of exception, in order to save precisely the pacifism of France, this “entrenchment of democracy” in Europe.

Therefore a fairy-tale must be created to conceal the dissolution of the Second International which fully reflects the separate imperialist groupings. There are forces at work which try to explain this dissolution by tactical differences in opinion between German Social-Democracy and the Social-Democratic parties of other countries. Leon Blum writes in the “Arbeiterzeitung”:

“This virtual breaking-off of the relations (i.e., between the German Party and the Second International—B.K.) corresponds, in fact, to a difference of opinion existing between them, to a difference in tactics.”

This means to say that German Social-Democracy goes *too far* in supporting its own bourgeoisie, the other parties, on the other hand—at least those grouping themselves around democratic France—are not willing, or do not like, to go as far as their German comrades. They do not support fascism and will not support it, even if their bourgeoisie resort to the methods of fascism.

The question is put thus: *Fascism or Democracy.* On *this* question there are supposed to be tactical differences in opinion between the Second International and German Social-Democracy. The putting of the question in this way and the political and tactical consequences deduced from it, are then to draw the tactical line of demarcation between Leon Blum and Otto Wels, Jouhaux and Leipart, Vandervelde and Stampfer.

The fairy tale ascribing the dissolution of the Second International to *tactical differences of*

opinion between its national sections is the last means by which the dying Second International is to be kept alive, at least, for a short time, until the beginning of the imperialist war. *Nothing, however, contradicts the truth more than this fairy tale.*

The reason for the disintegration of the Second International is *not* that its national parties apply *different* tactics, and that owing to this, *differences of opinion* have arisen between them. The tactics of Social-Democracy can alter to suit time and place; its basic principles, however, remain the same. On the contrary, the reason for the fresh disintegration of the Second International is at present, just as during the war, that all its parties apply the *same* policy, that their attitude to their own bourgeoisie, their own proletariat, the war preparations of their own and the foreign bourgeoisie, Fascism and the Proletarian Revolution, is one and the same. This attitude, these tactics, *are expressed in a more or less developed form*, corresponding to the degree of imminence of the revolution in each country and in the various foreign relations of the individual imperialist countries. The basis of this policy, however, is the same. Solidarity with their own bourgeoisie — hostility towards the Proletarian Revolution in each country.

Thus, as time proceeds, it is *not the difference in tactics* which becomes unbearable to the Second International, but the *similarity of attitude* on the part of the Social-Democratic parties in each country to their own bourgeoisie. It is this which was expressed in the fresh disintegration of the Second International, in a new stage of history, in which the post-war crisis of capitalism has reached a point at which the old connections and relations between the individual imperialist powers are relinquished; a point at which the bases of the Versailles system have already been undermined, the re-grouping of the imperialist world in connection with the outbreak of the imperialist world war has been placed on the order of the day, and the existence of capitalism is threatened by the transition to a new cycle of revolutions and wars. This is *precisely the end of capitalist stabilisation.*

Those leaders of the Second International who believe that their political-business interests still require a stock of the article, “Social Democratic Internationalism,” are now endeavouring to explain away the withdrawal of German Social-Democracy from the Socialist and Labour International, its open solidarity with Hitler’s policy as borne out in Potsdam, its defence of Hitler’s dictatorship before international public opinion in denying the “scare propaganda,” as an isolated lapse of German Social-Democracy. The lost

virginity of German Social-Democracy is mourned by many leaders of the Second International. The most agile parliamentarian-lawyers' acrobatics are resorted to, to remove the common responsibility of the whole of the Second International for the German Social-Democratic Party—or, at least, for its present actions—from the Second International and its sections. The whole of the Social-Democratic press has been mobilised to make it plausible to the workers in France, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, England and other

countries, that the road of German Social-Democracy from Weimar to Potsdam, from Ebert to Hitler, is the road of the lone wanderer. The fairy tale of the "poor sinner of a German Social-Democratic Party" pursues the aim of saving the honour of the Second International as a whole.

Every Communist must say: "Be on your guard, Social-Democratic workers, *the road of German Social-Democracy is the road of the whole Second International.*"

(To be concluded.)

THE GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE FASCIST DICTATORSHIP.

By S. SCHWAB.

WITH the victory of Fascism, a new stage in the development of the proletarian revolution in Germany has set in. The wide expansion of the Fascist dictatorship in Germany is the result of the bewilderment of the bourgeoisie who were terrified by the tempestuous growth of the revolutionary upsurge of the proletariat and the approach of its capture of power, which was revealed, among other symptoms, by the shifting of forces between the July and November elections. This process was furthered, moreover, by the difficulties and contradictions within the bourgeoisie itself. The wide expansion of the Fascist dictatorship in Germany is an effort on the part of the bourgeoisie to force a way out of the crisis by the application of *new methods* of their class rule. The German bourgeoisie, after its boundless repression and exploitation of the German working class, is now endeavouring to secure this way out mainly in the international sphere, and all the internal measures of the Fascist dictatorship are more or less measures for the preparation, organisation and accumulation of all available forces for actions of foreign policy for the re-establishment of Germany as a great imperialist power, and the crushing of Bolshevism on an international scale.

Contrary to those measures *in principle* which the German bourgeoisie applies to the revolutionary section of the working class—the hounding of the German Communist Party and the revolutionary mass organisations into illegality, the assassination and the confinement of thousands of Communist functionaries in concentration camps, the hangman's noose and long terms of incarceration for Communist propaganda—their procedure against social-democratic and certain democratic organisations, as well as against

democratic-liberal and pacifist sections of the bourgeoisie—is determined exclusively by *tactical* considerations.

The National-Socialist Party rejects parliamentary and democratic methods of disguising the class rule of the bourgeoisie as a rule, and sets itself the task of making the working class fascist. At present it proceeds against the Social-Democratic Party to compel it to range itself at once into the system of open Fascist dictatorship; and utilise the Social-Democratic organisation for the strengthening of the Fascist dictatorship, under the control and leadership of the Fascists. The Social-Democratic Party, which capitulated to Fascism, carries out this task, and in this way remains even now the main social support of the bourgeoisie. Through the realisation of the notorious "Gleichschaltung"* the bourgeoisie endeavours to bring the masses under its immediate command and leadership. The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie demands the liquidation of all

* "Gleichschaltung": The unification of the administration or a unified *Régime* means the following: Corresponding to the Reichstag elections of March 5th, 1933, the National Parliaments and Municipal Councils were also submitted to a revision; the Communists were expelled, so that a Nationalist majority resulted in all Parliamentary institutions. Despite the existing Constitutional stipulations the independence of the separate States was completely eliminated. A Government Commissar was appointed in control of each separate State by the National Government, who is responsible to it. He names the Presidential Minister of the country concerned and sanctions the appointment of the remaining Ministers. Parallel with this reorganisation of the Parliaments and Constitutions of the separate States a corresponding reorganisation of all the public bourgeois organisations, employers' organisations, etc., took place. National Socialists have been placed at the head everywhere. The "unification" of the Trade Unions is now in full cry.

centres of force, still existing outside the system of the Fascist dictatorship.

The rule of Fascist dictatorship secures for the bourgeoisie a temporary strengthening of its class forces through the highest possible concentration of its power and repressive apparatus, the winning of the majority of the petty-bourgeoisie and certain sections of the working class, as well as the application of the methods of Fascist terror. This strengthening, however, is opposed by contrary symptoms; the impossibility of overcoming or even alleviating the economic crisis. On the contrary, we find a super-reactionary economic policy which leads Germany to an economic catastrophe; the weakness of the influence of the National-Socialists amongst the skilled workers and in the factories, along with a growing resistance of the workers; the impossibility of eliminating the national oppression of Germany along with the sharpening of all the contradictions of the Versailles system, and an extreme aggravation of the relations with the Soviet Union. All this impels the German bourgeoisie, at an increased rate, on the road to finding a way out of the crisis by means of war, the conditions of internal and external politics for war being, however, much more disadvantageous to Germany than in 1914. Through the methods of Fascist dictatorship, the bourgeoisie itself is bound to contribute to the destruction of the democratic illusions hitherto existent in the German working class. By its endeavours to get the masses under its direct leadership, the bourgeoisie draws at the same time a sharper line between the class fronts and places, on its own account, the decisive struggle on the order of the day—against capitalism and for communism—and this in a country with a strong Communist Party, with a proletariat which, for more than ten years, has had revolutionary experience, and has the tradition of its class organisations of more than half a century behind it. The impossibility of overcoming the economic crisis or of alleviating it along with a sharper crystallisation of the revolutionary class front and the fact—more and more obvious to the masses—that the bourgeoisie has not succeeded in crushing communism or destroying the Communist Party, is continually causing new vacillations among the petty bourgeoisie, paralysed still for the moment by national and social demagogy and the prospect of war adventures—albeit slowly and for the time being hardly visible.

The temporary increase in the power of the bourgeoisie is opposed, to an incomparably larger extent, by symptoms of the accelerated and farther-reaching rotting process of capitalism. Fascist dictatorship in Germany for the bourgeoisie means a step forward into the absolute

clogging up of all ways out of the crisis, while for the working class it means a step forward into the determination of its tasks in the preparation of the proletarian revolution.

* * *

The Bolsheviks were guided by the following tactical axioms in 1918:—

1. During the period of preparation which resulted in the October Revolution, the party, in all its activities, was relying upon the spontaneous onrush of the revolutionary mass movement.

2. By thus relying on this spontaneous demonstration of the masses, the party secured for itself the exclusive leadership of the revolutionary movement.

3. This leadership made it possible for the party to organise the political army of the masses for the October rising.

4. Such a policy could have no other result than that of placing all the preparations for the October insurrection under the leadership of one party, the party of the Bolsheviks.

5. The consequence was that, after the October revolution, political power fell into the hands of one party exclusively, namely, the party of the Bolsheviks.—(Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I., page 201. Modern Books, Ltd.)

The undeviating maintenance of this tactic ensured the Bolsheviks the victory in October. Their strict observance to-day by the Communist Party of Germany is a prerequisite for the preparations of the smashing of Fascism and assumption of power by the working class in Germany; these points, particularly in their first parts, are the basic principles of current Communist tactics, in close connection with the central main task of winning the majority of the working class and the directives which Lenin gave us in 1917, for the tactics of the Bolsheviks in a period similar to that which the German Party is now passing through to-day.

* * *

The forms and methods of the illegal struggle which the German Communist Party is now compelled to put up against the Fascist dictatorship, are not new to us. These methods have been transmitted through the application of the experience acquired in a number of countries, where the Communist Parties exist illegally, and have become familiar to us. Although the German Party lacks experience in the direct practice of illegality—(its illegality in the period of 1923-1924 cannot be compared by any means with its present status)—and owing to the inclination to legality, which has prevailed for so many years, and, above all, the unforeseen scope of the bourgeoisie's attack certain symptoms of weakness

appeared, these could be rapidly overcome. The preparation of the Party for its illegality, carried on continuously for a long time and more strongly controlled by the Party committees, has decisively contributed to maintaining the Party's ability of action and showing the masses, in a tangible way, after the first few weeks of Fascist terror, that the endeavours of the Fascist dictatorship to crush the Communist Party were doomed to failure.

* * *

Although it is asserted in the Fascist daily press, for agitational reasons, that the German Communist Party has disappeared, the bourgeoisie does not deceive itself for a moment on the fact that it has not succeeded in driving out the Communist Party. The organ of Vice-Chancellor Von Papen, "Der Ring," of April 7th, 1933, is compelled, albeit wrathfully, to declare in a long article on "The Situation of the Struggle against Communism": "The German Communist Party has not, like the through-and-through pacifist-reformist German Social-Democratic Party, presented a single miserable picture of decay, has not given up the achievement of its objects: the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, the struggle for a Soviet Germany. Naturally, the German Communist Party, already in closest touch with the Communist International and the Communist Parties of the adjacent countries, is busy creating new conditions for agitation and action.

"In fact, the German Communist Party is already on the job to carry out these Comintern directives. On the one hand, a whole series of measures may be observed and as far as can be ascertained, i.e., as visible to a considerable extent, also discovered by the authorities, these measures aim at insuring the organisational prerequisites for the widest agitation possible, even under the most difficult conditions of illegality. It is not opportune to give a detailed description of this activity and its partial successes, as this would entail the danger of making propaganda for an adversary, robbed of any possibility of carrying on public agitation. It suffices to know that the active membership of the German Communist Party asserts itself under cover and 'illegalises' its action to an ever-increasing extent." It must be ascribed solely to the preparations for the illegality that of the members of the 23 Party district secretariats so far only very few could be arrested and that these secretariats, albeit under more difficult conditions, can carry on their work to its fullest extent. Among the members of the Party district committees—about 700 in the whole of Germany—the percentage of those arrested, taking into account that the

illegal life of these comrades meets with considerable difficulties, is comparatively low. The greatest losses have been suffered by the Party in its lower and middle cadres of functionaries. But even here, it would have been possible to restrict these losses to a minimum if a better link between legal and illegal work had existed in the past, and if certain forms and methods of illegality had been applied in carrying on legal work. This weakness in the linking up of illegal and legal work reveals itself also at the present time in the fact that our comrades experience difficulties in taking sufficient advantage, in their illegal status, of the possibilities of legal work which, however few, are available.

The adaptation of the lower organisational units has asserted itself best. It is true that when strict illegality set in, this adaptation had not yet been effected in all districts, but it had already progressed somewhat.

Only one example, to show to what extent this adaptation has been successful, taken from a district which started the adaptation of its lower organisational units in December and January and had completed it to a large extent when the illegality set in. When Hitler assumed power, this district had 36,000 registered members, 26,000 to 28,000 of whom had regularly paid their monthly members' dues in the past. In the month of March—the month of the most bloody terror—this district has collected its membership dues from 20,000 members. Where, Mr. Trotsky and Mr. Hitler, is the crushing of the Communist Party to be seen here?

It has come as no surprise to us, and on the whole we were also prepared for the fact, that there were certain cowards and even deserters, and that owing to the retreat of the petty-bourgeois and intellectual strata, many of the possibilities for illegal work created in the period of preparation cannot be utilised. Under the blows of the counter-revolution the real revolutionary kernel of the German working class is being crystallised, this iron cohort of the hundreds of thousands, hardened in the fire of the class struggle, who are the bearers of the proletarian revolution in Germany.

There are cases where, after the arrests of all Party functionaries of the revolutionary mass organisations in some locality, non-party workers place themselves at the head of the organisation, laboriously re-establish the broken connections and carry on the work of those arrested. This is the heroism of the German working class which no Hitler can suppress or Trotsky lie out of existence.

* * *

Just as the Bolsheviks in 1917 had a great ally,

the desire of the masses for peace and the demand of the toiling peasants for land, the German Communists have a series of allies in their struggle against the Fascist dictatorship, the most important among which are the enormous proportions of the anti-capitalist sentiments among the masses, their great desire to emerge from the crisis and its misery, and their embitterment against armaments for the war for the rich and intervention in the U.S.S.R., which still exists, notwithstanding all chauvinistic stampedes.

However, there are a whole series of conditions under which we German Communists must take up the struggle for power, which are incomparably more difficult than those prevailing in Russia in 1917. It would be erroneous to want to draw a parallel between the situation in 1917, when, amidst persecutions and slander, the Bolsheviki were preparing their October revolution in illegality, and the present situation in Germany. The German Communists must gain the active support of the majority of the working class under much more difficult conditions. At the present time only a small part of the poor peasantry stands in our camp. The war had given arms to the Russian worker and poor peasant, he had but to turn his gun in the other direction. We, on the other hand, must first obtain our arms in the struggle. The Russian Revolution was carried out against a bourgeoisie, which it was comparatively easy to conquer, because it was a weak and demoralised bourgeoisie. We, on the other hand, are compelled to capture power in the face of the best organised bourgeoisie and the most highly concentrated state apparatus of the whole world. The totally different character of the situation results in much more difficult, much more complicated tasks for the German Communist Party, notwithstanding the existing training of the German working class, and the existence of a revolutionary mass organisation.

A leading idea, which Lenin gave to the Russian Bolsheviki on their way to the October Revolution of 1917, is of decisive significance to-day for the German Communists as well. Lenin declared in a letter on the political situation, written in July, 1917:—

“Neither adventurous undertakings, nor insurrections, nor partial resistance, nor hopeless sporadic attempts to oppose reaction can remedy the situation. What can help is a clear understanding of the situation, the endurance and steadfastness of the workers’ vanguard, preparation of forces for the decisive struggle, for whose victory conditions at present are terribly difficult, but still possible, if the facts and trends here enumerated coincide. No constitutional or repub-

lican illusions of any kind; no more illusions of a peaceful way; no sporadic actions; no yielding *now* to the provocation of the Black Hundreds and Cossacks; but gather the forces, reorganise them and steadfastly prepare for the decisive struggle, if the course of development permits it on a real mass national scale.”—“Towards the Seizure of Power.”

During the last few weeks the German working class has performed many heroic deeds, not only Communists, but Social-Democratic and non-party workers, too; 53 Trade Union and People’s Houses were occupied by the Fascists, but about 20 of these were defended by the working class, arms in hand, to the last gasp. In this respect we frequently observe a false heroism, with a lack of real mass action, in that a few determined workers try, in vain, to substitute this mass action by their courage. But especially in Saxony we could also observe a whole series of genuine mass actions, thousands of workers defending their houses for days on end, and where Fascists have not yet succeeded, up to the present moment, in taking possession of these houses, or could only do so with the active assistance of officials of the reformist organisations. In Hessen, we witnessed the siege of whole villages, and new methods of alarming whole working class urban districts by factory whistles and bells, as soon as the Fascists dared to penetrate the streets of those districts.

The character of the actions of the workers organised, under the leadership of the German Communist Party, was revealed most clearly in actions in factories aimed at protecting the red members of their Factory Committees. The workers in a considerable number of factories in a whole series of districts, struck en bloc, or threatened to strike, and it was thus possible, in nearly all cases, to liberate our functionaries from the clutches of the murder gangs by these mass actions. In numerous cases, the factory workers openly showed the class enemy their class-consciousness by adopting resolutions against the Fascist dictatorship, for the release from prison of Comrade Thälman and the other arrested comrades. A factory meeting, such as that of the Stuttgart tramways, called by the National-Socialists to mobilise the tramway workers for the Third Empire, but which at its close demanded the immediate release of the arrested members of their shop committee, and of all other political prisoners—a resolution moved by a non-party worker—shows that the workers know how to struggle in accordance with the new conditions.

True, it would have been necessary, in many of these actions, to make another step forward, and there is no doubt that in many factories,

where possibilities were available, not everything feasible has been done. Apart from those cases, where a direct open retreat from the class enemy or open failures occurred, we must at present judge the actions of the working class on a different scale, and apply criticism different from that applicable, say, at the time of the Schleicher Government. The Communist Party Committees at the present time have greater responsibility in estimating how far a certain action can and should be carried on in a factory. At times it will be necessary not to utilise all available possibilities to the full, especially in those factories where, up to now, we have been weak. On the other hand, the feeling must be inculcated, not only into the workers participating in the action, but into more extensive strata of toilers that at the head of the action there is a leadership which acts quietly but with determination, self-confidence and cold-bloodedness—this feeling, which to-day is more necessary than ever, that even in larger actions this leadership does not lose its composure and can act efficiently. To transmit this feeling of surety and determination to the whole working class is one of the essential tasks of the German Communist Party at the present moment.

In nearly all parts of Germany, we had during March, apart from the direct actions against Fascist terror, elections to the factory committees in the majority of factories. It is an avowal of their defeat in the working class, that the Fascists were compelled to prohibit the continuation of these factory committee elections, postpone them till autumn and remove the Red members and part of those elected on trade union lists from their posts by a dictatorial decree, replacing these members by the followers of their Party. This brutal force had to be resorted to by the Fascist Dictatorship, after it had tried to win over the workers by threats and propaganda in vain. An example from a factory in Central Germany shows the resistance they encounter even from workers, who, in the past, were not amongst the most advanced politically. At this factory, the first factory committee elections were declared void. The second elections were fixed to take place during the sharpest terror. The representatives of the red trade union opposition retreated and were not prepared to run their own list again; then the revolutionary women workers indignantly parted company with their trade union colleagues and compiled a red list, consisting exclusively of women workers, and in this way won a complete victory. The fact that in March in the Ruhr district 150,000 miners cast 18,000 votes for independent red lists, although the number of red lists had already been drastically

restricted, that notwithstanding the terror, factory workers ran red lists in hundreds of cases throughout Germany, all this is no less proof than the above example of the slow but steadily recovering militant force of the German working class. True, in this situation, it must be carefully considered whether red lists will not enable the class enemy to proceed against our officials more easily. True, in most cases, it is more effective, and from the point of view of the creation of a united front of the working class even more valuable, to fight for the correct composition of the official trade union lists with more determination and energy. But the fact that we have received the absolute majority of the workers in a whole series of large plants, and that it was possible to obtain top votes for our lists in more than a dozen large works; all this is proof that our comrades have acted correctly in these cases, in estimating the spirit of the factory workers and defiantly opposing their red lists to those of the "fascised" trade unions and the National-Socialists. Every step which the working class advances under our leadership in this situation must not only be supported but immediately consolidated organisationally by us, transforming it into concrete action of struggle.

* * *

The German working class is not being beaten. Mr. Goebbels' broadcasting station is forced to announce that leaflets of the prohibited Red Front Fighters' League and Communist Party appear in all localities. The bourgeois press writes long editorials on the increasing activity of Communist officials and appeals to the Government to proceed still more firmly against the Communists. Communism lives in the German working class.

"Two principles, like Ormuzd and Ariman (*the good and the evil spirit*) will confront each other in the shape of two classes, advocating two opposite ways out of the general crisis: war and Fascism on the one hand, the revolution on the other hand."

(Manuilsky: *The End of Capitalist Stabilisation*. * Speech delivered at the twelfth Plenum of the Communist International Executive Committee).

We do not know whether the German proletariat, having passed through the bloody terror of the fascist dictatorship will also have to traverse a bloody war for the rich, before being able to proceed to the proletarian revolution. But we do know that in mobilising the masses for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship we are struggling, at the same time, against imperialist war. That in concentrating the task of the

* Communist International, No. 17-18, 1932.

Communist Party on the most decisive task—at the present time the uniting of the majority of the working class under the leadership of the German Communist Party on the basis of the united front tactic—we are creating at the same time the prerequisites for the proletarian revolution in Germany which are still as yet lacking.

The winning over of the majority of the decisive strata of the German working class by the German Communist Party is the key to the position. Only by winning over the social-democratic workers can we win over the petty bourgeoisie and peasants, thereby creating the prerequisites for the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Under the aggravated conditions of Fascist dictatorship, many forms of the creation of a united front have become impracticable and impossible. On the other hand, there are dozens of new points of contact and possibilities of creating a united front from below. By whom this united front will be led is no longer an open question. This is decided by the leadership in the actions against the Fascist dictatorship, and we have the greatest initiative, the best experience, the best possibilities of preparation and the greatest moral force because of our strong political and organisational backbone.

The social-democratic workers are to-day again meeting in small groups, at their factories, in pubs, and at their homes. They are discussing things and the majority of them are prepared to struggle. Many of them are not clear in their own minds and perhaps the majority of them are convinced, even to-day, that one should fight for democracy. But the best elements among them are prepared to struggle. And only this is essential for us. The illusions and confusions which even now exist in the minds of social-democratic workers can only be removed when these workers stand shoulder to shoulder with us in the struggle. The Second International is making various attempts to win over these groups of social-democratic workers and again rally them. In a few cases, there are attempts by social-democratic officials to work illegally after our example. We need not fear these efforts and attempts, as long as we link up these social-democratic workers with us, in our actions. What we must give to these groups of social-democratic workers is a feeling that behind every Communist there is a strong organisation which organises the struggles in a planned way, giving him directives, controlling him, and supervising each one of his steps. Besides their embitterment against their leaders, it is this feeling which will lead them to us. Doubtlessly, prerequisites for the winning over of whole *organisations* and groups of social-democratic workers now widely

exist. From central Germany, it is known that the whole Social-Democratic Youth organisation of a large district has passed over to the Young Communist League. Every copy of our illegal pamphlets must be brought into the hands of social-democratic workers. We have at present a monopoly of conducting the struggle against the Fascist dictatorship, and it is essential to utilise this monopoly to the full, and show it to the social-democratic workers.

A further directive in the creation of a united front must be: Work conspiratively against the class enemy, act openly towards our class. A united front which, ushered in by conspirative negotiations, remains illegal even to the working class and is anonymous in its actions, loses a considerable part of its value. To show this united front to the working class in the day to day struggle is a basic prerequisite for a progressive offensive against Fascism. The unified fighting front, made tangible to the proletariat in dozens of localities and districts, raises the moral and material militant force of the whole class a hundredfold.

The forms of the creation of a united front are as diversified as the forms of struggle, and those of the organisational rallying of the workers at the present moment.

They range from the participation of social-democratic workers in sticking posters or in protecting distributors of leaflets, to the uniting of whole factory staffs and working class districts in the struggle against Fascism. Two conditions must, however, be observed in this respect by the Party: (1) The united front is not sectarian, its creation has to be effected, if possible, on a basis ensuring a quick and accelerated growth of the movement, i.e., most effectively on the basis of legal or prohibited working class organisations, trade unions, sport associations. With regard to this the Party has as its task to take charge of the conspirative protection and the safety of the leadership. (2) It is especially important in the present situation that every political organisation or rallying of workers for the struggle should be founded on a factory basis. The few weeks of experience of the working class in the struggle against the Fascist dictatorship and of the requirements of strict illegality has proved sufficiently that the only stronghold is the factory. The factory is the starting point for the daily struggles as well as for the final struggles for smashing the Fascist dictatorship.

One prerequisite for the formation of a united front and for the liquidation of the splits in the working class, which cannot be taken too seriously by the Party organisation, is to accelerate the entrenchment of the Party in the factories

and to create, to the largest extent possible, a link between the work at the Labour Exchanges and the work in the factories, in creating a united front and in adapting its organisations to illegality. A further prerequisite is an astute and rapid reaction by the Party to the smallest daily demands of the workers, so as to come to political mass strikes and the general strike by taking up the small demands and the economic struggles, by an adroit linking up of the economic demands with political ones.

The bourgeoisie, with the help of the social-democrats, who split the working class, has succeeded to effect a separation of the proletariat from the toiling peasant masses and the petty-

bourgeois strata in the cities. We can only liquidate this isolation of the working class from these strata, if we overcome the split in our own class. These wavering strata of the petty-bourgeoisie must first see a power, before being prepared to join it. While displaying the strength of the German working class, we must formulate our demands for these strata, so that right here, in the process of development of the proletarian revolution, the hegemony of the proletariat over these strata may be assured, so that the whole strength of the proletariat and its allies can be directed towards overthrowing the Fascist dictatorship.

DOWN WITH THE BOURGEOIS-LANDLORD MONARCHY! DOWN WITH BOURGEOIS CLASS JUSTICE!

(Speech of Comrade Haku Sano in the Tokio Court on July 14, 1932, on behalf of 184 other "accused" Communists. Comrade Sano is a gifted leader of the Japanese Communist Party and the International Communist Movement. — Editor).

FROM the very beginning of this trial we have been fighting stubbornly for an open trial, and demanding the right of free speech for the declarations of the accused. In our evidence, we openly and most persistently declared that this public trial of our comrades is part of the common class struggle. It is absolutely obvious that it is not we, Communists, who are guilty, but that they, the bourgeois-landlord oppressors, are the guilty ones.

In his indictment the Public Prosecutor referred to class legislation as "unchanging and permanent" and laid on record that the Communists acted "against the will of 70 million of the population." By means of declarations of this kind and of other abstract, lying and reactionary phrases, he tried to prove that this trial by the Mikado's court is nothing to do with the class war at all. But just think of the circumstances under which the present court examination is taking place. It is going on in circumstances of a sharp intensification of the contradictions between two systems—between the system of decaying capitalism and rising Socialism. In order to facilitate the conduct of predatory warfare against the Soviet Union, which is being prepared by the ruling classes, the oppressors and exploiters of workers and peasants, this trial has

been organised to force the Communist Party, the leader of all the exploited, to keep silence.

The public prosecutor works on two lines.

First of all he prosecutes Communists, throws them into prison and demands that severe sentences be brought in against them; at the same time he visits the prisoners in their cells and holds "secret conversations" with them, trying to make them take the road of "liquidatorism" and thus bring confusion into the ranks of our revolutionary organisation.

Secondly, through the court—the weapon for operating bourgeois policy and bourgeois legislation—the prosecutor tries to justify the political system of class oppression and force and to assist it in putting through its policy.

In his summing up the public prosecutor demanded the death sentence, life imprisonment and other severe punitive measures against the Communists. He tries to justify his argument by hiding behind the law. Let us examine a few of his arguments. Over and over again he repeats that there were "attempts to abolish political forms of rule," and "denial of private property rights," etc. All our objections, refutations and explanations have done nothing to convince the public prosecutor. What does this mean? It means that from the very beginning of the trial the attitude of the public prosecutor to the Communists was based on a strictly defined policy directed against the working class. The public prosecutor brings up the accusation of "attempts to change the constitution," and "the denial of private property rights," etc., as his main reasons

for bringing in heavy sentences. But what is an "attempt to change political forms of rule?" Apparently this is intended to mean an attempt on the part of the Communists to overthrow the military-police monarchy. However, the public prosecutor, fearing above all to explain this Communist slogan to the toiling masses of Japan—the slogan to overthrow the military-police monarchy and the bourgeois-landlord oppressors—limits himself to just a few words on this point. He also makes use of nebulous expressions like "attempt to change political forms of rule," to render the real aims of the Communists more obscure.

What is the "denial of private property rights?" The Communists demand nationalisation and socialisation only of the large means of production and landed property, which are used by a handful of capitalists and landlords, to exploit the toiling masses of Japan. However, by his demagogic utterances the public prosecutor depicts the state of things as being that the Communists want to confiscate all the articles of consumption of the whole people as well, to frighten the class-unconscious section of the population away from the Communists. Later on in his statement the public prosecutor tries to calumniate the Communist Party, by describing it as an organisation of plotters. However, in actual fact, we are not conspirators. Our party is a broad, open, organisation of the proletariat which has popularised its programme and policy among the toiling masses, and is heading the struggle of the proletariat. Could one expect such active work among the masses as our party is doing, from a "conspirative" organisation? At the present time we are forced into an illegal existence because of the present relation of class forces.

A truly "conspirative organisation" is one like the terrorist "League of Blood Brotherhood"* which aims at personal revenge. The public prosecutor tries to frighten the masses away from the Communists, by pretending that the party of the proletariat is a conspirative terrorist organisation. The prosecution in its indictment against the Y.C.L. makes its programme, policy and activities identical with the programme of the party. Yet, can we say the party and the Y.C.L. are identical? Is the Y.C.L. a party organisation? On the whole, the entire arguments of the prosecution are politically reactionary and directed against the working class. The indictment is full of all kinds of insinuations and falsifications, and aims at destroying the link between the party

and the masses. It establishes, moreover, that the crime of the Communists is tantamount to violation of the civil peace. That is very well put!

By means of civil war we Communists aim at overthrowing the bourgeois-landlord rule and setting up a workers' and peasants' soviet government. If this is a crime against civil peace, then why is the accusation not made against us on this point? The answer is quite obvious. We are not accused of violating civil peace for fear of revealing the aims and class character of the Communist Party to the masses.

We are also accused of "calling in the enemy from outside." What is the meaning of this accusation? No doubt the public prosecutor is here referring to the fact that the Communist Party is a section of the Communist International which, he imagines, is controlled by the Russians. But it should not be forgotten that this accusation is an absolutely exact expression of the desire of Japanese imperialism to rush into a rapacious war against the U.S.S.R.—the fatherland of the toilers of the whole world.

The public prosecutor demands imprisonment of the accused for a sum total of 1,023 years, besides the additional death sentences and life terms of imprisonment. Ferocious sentences of this kind are especially important at the present moment, for by passing these heavy sentences the court tries to create a precedent for using the death sentence and life imprisonment against the Communists, and thus to prepare strong resistance to further revolutionary activities on the part of the masses.

We must fight to the utmost against these harsh sentences. When Sacco and Vanzetti were sentenced to death in America, the workers, not only of America, but also in London, Berlin and Paris and all the large centres of the world delivered a mass protest against the verdict. We also organised a demonstration of protest in our country, and the accused know it. Now we must once more organise the same sort of demonstration and even more powerful ones, to protest against the sentences passed upon our comrades; we must smash the plotting of the class enemy to create a "court precedent." The prosecutor has demanded the death sentence for Comrade Mitamura because during the arrest he offered armed resistance. Comrade Mitamura was carrying out his party duty in illegal conditions, and in using his weapons when the enemy fell upon him: he was at the same time defending the party. This should be estimated as a political act. And only from this point of view can the accusation be levelled against Comrade Mitamura. In certain

* A secret military-fascist organisation which during 1932 carried out several political murders.

circumstances it is quite possible and permissible for a Communist to turn to force of arms and shoot at the enemy. And only a degenerate petty bourgeois can assert that a Communist in no circumstances should make use of weapons. Kuroda, who intentionally killed Sendzi Yamatoto, a revolutionary member of parliament, was sentenced to only seven years' imprisonment. We see here an immeasurable difference in the approach to Kuroda and towards Comrade Mitamura. We protest with all our might against the severe sentences of the class court, and demand our immediate and unconditional release.

However, you will not be successful in smashing our party either by harsh sentences, or persecuting its members. True, there have been found within our ranks those who, like the small group of "liquidators," took fright at the heavy punishment that awaited them, and turned traitors. But they form only an insignificant handful, who have already left the arena of class struggle. We are not afraid of heavy sentences. Of course the revolution demands sacrifices, and death is the greatest sacrifice. The whole of the world revolutionary movement during the last thirty years clearly shows that the blood of our comrades, who have fallen at the hands of the class enemy, has only steeled and strengthened our party. Did not the death of Comrade Vatanabe, who fell in Kiilung, Formosa, help to strengthen our party? Our Chinese and Korean comrades are themselves becoming convinced on their own experience that these sacrifices strengthen the party. Only in circumstances like this can our party be the leader of the working class.

Our party is a party of action. It cannot grow strong on the basis of mere phrases. Loyalty, self-sacrifice, enthusiasm, an unconquerable spirit and courage are demanded of Communists. These qualities are the most important in the present historic stage of development. We are not afraid of severe sentences. And we declare here that we shall fight on with invincible determination.

There are two dangerous tendencies in connection with the question of the attitude of the prisoners of class struggle to sentences passed upon them. There is first of all the position taken up by the anarchist Taiiro Furut: "Once you have fallen into the hands of the class enemy, do not resist." That is nothing but a refusal to fight against the class enemy. It is complete capitulation. Objectively it amounts to retreating from class positions—though, of course, the position of the anarchists is not a class position at all. It is the duty of every proletarian to fight to the end against reactionary violence. We Communists demand, and fight for, our immediate, uncon-

ditional release. We demand that we be allowed to return to the bosom of the working class.

The second dangerous tendency is the stand taken up by certain of our comrades that, in view of the existing relation of class forces, heavy sentences are inevitable. Of course, it is essential that a correct estimation be made of the existing relation of class forces. But to abuse this estimation would already amount to defeatism. The viewpoint that with the existing relation of class forces, when the enemy outweighs us, it is inevitable that one or two of our leaders should be sent to the gallows, amounts to betrayal of the working class. We must, on a class basis, educate the masses who are relentlessly exploited, by showing them living examples of this kind.

Now, on the question of organising class battles. The advanced section of the proletariat should always be responsive and flexible in its attitude to the masses. The working class of Japan is fighting not only against the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie and landlords, but also against the power of reactionary feudalism. Actually Japan has not yet passed through the stage of bourgeois revolution. All kinds of feudal institutions in the hands of the ruling classes are used as a weapon for suppressing and enslaving the toiling masses of Japan.

Chernyshevsky wrote that slavery reigns in Russia—"from top to bottom—all slaves." And Lenin in the same connection wrote that these were words which expressed true love for the fatherland, "love in anguish as a result of the lack of revolutionary spirit among the masses"; he wrote that these words were not only an expression of a fruitless feeling of sorrow, but an expression of indignation against the system of slavery. "They are words of true love for the fatherland," said Lenin.

The mission we live to fulfil is the building of socialist society. The position of Russia in Chernyshevsky's time is somewhat different from the position of Japan to-day, and therefore one cannot make literal use of Chernyshevsky's words in Japanese circumstances. But, nevertheless, freedom in Japan is extremely restricted. The civil freedom of ordinary bourgeois society does not exist in Japan. People who have been abroad feel this restriction of freedom very keenly. Actually the Japanese people are driven behind prison bars. Ever since the Meiji restoration the workers have been deprived of the right to call strikes. This government has reduced the masses to death by starvation, this government keeps almost all the population in a condition of slavery, this government is conducting a rapacious war, is attacking the land of the Soviets, and trying to throttle the Chinese revolution. Moreover, this

same government, the government of the bourgeoisie and landlords, is prosecuting Communists, committing them to trial, and bringing in harsh sentences against them. This government is trying to fool the workers and is dooming the peasant masses to death by starvation. Hunger is not a natural thing. Hunger is a deeply social phenomenon.

Before allowing our Counsel for the Defence, Fiuzu, to make his speech, the President of the Court asked him whether in his defence he intended basing himself upon the constitution. The defence answered in the affirmative. This trial is formed of a bourgeois-landlord bloc, which is directly guided in the spirit of the monarchist institutions. We are judged in the name of the Mikado. This fact gives the masses the possibility of easily understanding the real nature of the monarchy. And this is propaganda of a profoundly edifying nature in favour of the Communist Party.

Comrade Kokurio will make reference later to the false evidence in the Court last year. I dwell briefly on certain points. *Your court is a class court.* This has been absolutely clear from the beginning of the trial. The class court is a weapon in the hands of the reactionary bourgeois-landlord classes, by means of which these classes try to legalise their position as exploiters and bloodsuckers.

Bourgeois upholders of the law declare that all are equal before the law. But in society where one class exploits the other, there exists only formal, and not true, equality. And it would be self-deceit to assert that actual equality really exists. The difference between the lives of the rich and those of the poor is too great. And the law cannot, to the slightest degree, either augment or mitigate this difference. Consequently the court cannot destroy this existing social inequality.

The court declared that it had put the Communist Party in the dock. But the Communist Party cannot be put on trial. The Communist Party is an enormous world-wide organisation. It exists in over sixty countries of the world; and in Japan it is steadily increasing all the time. In reply to our assertion that the Court is not an institution standing over and above classes, Chiyodayo (the Court of the Mikado) and a representative of the court, not only during this trial, but also in the course of examining other cases against Communists, is making use of new tactics. It is now behaving towards us as though we were ordinary criminals. This is an expression of the revenge which the bourgeoisie feels towards the working class. Judge Ogonuki has made use of a new term—"incorrigible criminals."

If the word "criminal" can be used towards a Communist, then at any rate it would have been more suitable to use the expression "political criminals." The attempt to introduce this new term—"incorrigible criminals"—is an expression of the desperate effort being made on the part of the ruling classes to reduce the Communists to the level of ordinary criminals. First of all an abstract term is used, and then facts are dragged in to suit the term.

The Japanese prisons are weapons of terror: 13-hour working day; it is prohibited to read books (except reactionary and religious literature); heavy punishments, etc. It is quite possible that in consequence of long years spent under the yoke of this régime certain of our comrades become depressed and begin to waver. But it would be wrong to take this as a sign of weakness in our ranks. On the contrary, the estimation you have made in this connection is only proof of your desire to justify the system of terror in your prisons and to keep the Communists as long as possible in confinement. You declare that the workers join the revolutionary movement out of a feeling of heroism, and that the intelligentsia do so for sentimental reasons. This is not true. Life itself thrusts the advanced section of the working class into the revolutionary movement. They go forward led by revolutionary theory. Revolutionary theory and practice forges stoic Communists from among the workers. The intelligentsia join the revolutionary movement not for sentimental reasons, but because life compels them to do so. A large section of the intelligentsia is now becoming proletarianised. And so the best of them self-sacrificingly take the side of the revolutionary movement. These honest intellectuals refuse to play the rôle of lackey for the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes, and so join our movement. Of course, among them are not a few who waver, but they leave us during the course of the struggle. This was the case, for example, with the group of "liquidators" which formed itself in our ranks.

In discussing the question of white terror, the Judge declared: "Your iron discipline is worth nothing if the members of your organisation divulge all the truth when they are threatened with torture." In these words the Judge confirms the fact of all the tortures and bestial punishments that are meted out by the class court. In our ranks there may be people who give away the secret affairs of the party, but this does not mean that one can talk about the lack of discipline and weakness in the party as a whole. Our party imposes the corresponding disciplinary penalty upon all those who betray party secrets. But this is already a question of inner party

affairs. The Judge referred to the behaviour of Suekichi Maniva as being not suitable for a party member, when he fabricated a list of party members. Indeed, this was an impermissible act of treachery. At the meeting of the Party Central Committee it had been decided that no list should be made of party members. It is said that before the revolution Comrade Stalin kept in mind the names of three thousand party members. Never before, nor since this case with Maniva, have we ever kept a list of party members, and the fact that this list has now come to light is because Maniva made it himself. This act must be reckoned as a falsification on his part. And in accordance with our discipline, an act of this kind is very heavily punished. Our party is the party of the working class. Our actions, therefore, are correct and merit no punishment whatsoever.

In our previous speeches there are certain things which require more precision. There are other comrades besides myself who consider it desirable that these amendments be introduced.

The Japanese Communist Party was founded in July, 1922—on July 15th, a memorable day for the party. To-morrow, by accidental coincidence, we shall celebrate the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Japanese Communist Party. The prosecution has distorted the history of our party by declaring that it has been in existence since 1925. When you look back and return to that memorable day there is much to be remembered. There was a time when there were deviations in our party. It was at the time when there was a predominance of petty-bourgeois intellectuals in the party's ranks. To be more exact, our party was passing through the "yamakovism" and "fukumotoism" periods. But thanks to the pressure brought to bear inside by the working class, and thanks to the guidance of the Communist International, these mistakes were quickly corrected. From that moment and to the present day, the history of our party has borne the stamp of revolutionary tradition. Our Communist Party has always stood at the head of the working class, even when it had a membership of not more than 100; it has always main-

tained and still maintains an indissoluble link with the working class. It is difficult to estimate to the full the enormous rôle which the unswerving direct leadership of the Communist International and the close link with fraternal parties in China, Korea and Formosa, have played in the work of strengthening our party. If we look ten years ahead into the future, we can say with confidence that in Germany, where a revolutionary crisis is ripening to-day, there will be a Soviet Government, and its influence on Western Europe will be immeasurably great. In the East, through the heroic, revolutionary movement of the Chinese masses, a Soviet Government will be established over vast territories, from which all the imperialist oppressors will be banished once and for all. In India a victorious revolution will free the country from the chains of British imperialism. And, finally, the Soviet Government will also be established in Japan.

To-day in Japan all the premises for a revolutionary crisis are growing. Side by side with the cruel economic crisis there has already begun a counter-attack of workers and peasant masses. However, there can be no victorious revolution without a strong Communist Party. There have been examples in the past of objectively favourable revolutionary situations which did not, however, bring in their train victorious revolutions. In Western Europe in 1848 and in Tsarist Russia in 1860-70, there were revolutionary crises, but the revolutionary movement of the day was unsuccessful, because of one subjective fact—there was no strong Communist Party.

Our main tasks to-day are the following :—

To overthrow the monarchy.

To destroy the private ownership of the land by parasitical landlords.

The seven-hour working day and radical improvements in the living conditions of the working class.

Our task is to overthrow the military-police monarchy and convert the imperialist war that is taking place into a civil war. Our revolution is the people's revolution, for rice, for land, for freedom, and for Soviet Japan.