

- INTERNATIONAL -

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Editorial Offices: Langeasse 26/12, Vienna VIII. — Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. — Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 64, Schliessfach 29, Vienna VIII. — Telegraphic Address: Inprecorr, Vienna.

The V. World-Congress of the Communist International.

Third Session.

Wednesday, June 19th.

The Session was opened by comrade Gebhardt (Germany). The Agenda was as follows:

1. Endorsement of the Agenda of the Congress.
2. Rules of procedure at the Congress.
3. Endorsement of the Credentials Committee.
4. Endorsement of the Commissions.
5. Report of the Executive Committee (Com. Zinoviev).

A motion by the Dutch Delegation to elect comrade Wynne to the Presidium was carried.

The Agenda of the Congress was accepted in the form proposed upon by the Enlarged Executive.

The Congress then adopted the rules of procedure.

The Congress then endorsed the Credentials Committee composed of the following comrades: Platnitsky, Trilisser, Vich, Valetsky, Amter, Terracini, Dimitrov, Maranne, Peckhardt, Stewart, Scheflo, Unger.

The Congress also endorsed the other Commissions.

The Congress decided to extend the Agenda in order to give comrade Ryazanov the opportunity to report on recently discovered and hitherto unpublished manuscripts by Engels.

Comrade Gebhardt thereupon called on comrade Zinoviev to deliver the Executive report. Comrade Zinoviev was enthusiastically cheered by the delegates on his appearance upon the platform. The delegation rose from their seats, singing the International. The full text of comrade Zinoviev's Report appeared in the last number (No. 40) of the Inprecorr.

Fourth Day, Morning Session.

June 20, 1924

Comrade Gebhardt (Germany) opened the session, and thereupon Comrade Stirner to announce the composition of the remaining commissions. The composition of the commissions was ratified by the Congress.

Comrade Varga

then gave his report on the

World Economic Situation.

The past three years proved, said Comrade Varga, that the basic idea of the theses of the Third Congress, namely, that the capitalist order of society is at present in a state of crisis, in which prosperity and crisis alternate, is correct. The idea of periods of crisis in capitalism is not easily defined. I would express it thus: that by a period of crisis in capitalism, one understands a period in which the contradictions of capitalist society reach such a point, that the unity of capitalist world economy is shattered, that production, which in normal capitalist conditions increases, stagnates, or declines, that in consequence it is no longer possible for the bourgeoisie to ensure to the proletariat a rising standard of living and that in consequence of this development the objective possibility of successful struggles for power is present. The bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats assert that the crisis of capitalist world economy is already overcome, or is about to be overcome. This opinion is false. In all probability the crisis will this year take especially severe forms.

In 1923, the best year of the post-war period, production did not reach the level of 1913.

In agriculture, it must be admitted that the area under cultivation is now to a large degree smaller than in 1913. The area under wheat in 1922 was less than before the war; for oats 13 per-cent, for barley 24 per-cent, and for rye 8 per-cent less. On the other hand, in the case of cotton, rubber, and other raw materials, we observe the conscious tendency of capitalism to restrict production, in order to raise prices. In the heavy industries, we find that coal production barely equals the pre-war level. The iron and steel industries are still far less productive than before the war. It is especially striking that the capacity of production in the heavy industries is not fully utilised. In England, out of 457 blast furnaces only 194 are in use; in America at the beginning of the present year, out of 420 blast furnaces only 270 were in use, in May only 230, and at the present moment probably not more than 200. In Germany heavy industry has been at a stand-still throughout the whole past year.

It is a mistake to speak to-day of the unity of world production, and to compare this production with that of previous years. Present world economy is divided fairly sharply into two parts: America and the settlement colonies of the British Empire, in which capitalism is still on the up-grade; and secondly, the old European industrial region in which capitalism is passing through a special form of crisis. An ever growing part of the total production comes from America, and an ever smaller one from Europe. In 1913, America's share in iron production was 40 per-cent and is now 62 percent; in steel 42 percent and now over 60 percent; in petroleum 65 percent and now 72 percent. To the same degree production in Europe has declined. In 1913, England produced 10.2 million tons of steel; now it produces only 7.6 million tons yearly. Germany in 1913 produced 19.2 million tons and now only 5 million tons yearly.

One of the most important features of this period of crisis, is unemployment. Peculiarly enough in the most important capitalist countries, where, during this period a recovery of capitalist economy is said to have taken place, the number of unemployed has remained almost stationary. The number of unemployed in Germany is at present given as between 4 and 5 millions. These are the official figures which, in reality, are probably too low. Before the war, unemployment was a transient phenomenon, but now it is permanent. In England there are large masses of workers, who have already been unemployed for three years, and whom capitalism, even during the period of prosperity which is now past, was unable to absorb.

I come now to a question which is being lively discussed especially in the German Party: the question of accumulation. Is accumulation at present taking place or not? We must here distinguish between the accumulation of wealth, and the accumulation of capital. By wealth, we mean accumulated products in their natural form and by capital, we mean parts of this wealth which, in the possession of capitalists can be used for exploitation. This question can be answered if we consider the amounts of savings deposits, capital issues, etc. In the present period of depreciation of money, however, these observations will be somewhat hypothetical. Besides this, the present interlocking of corporations makes it almost impossible to distinguish a new accumulation from the various methods of interlocking of stock and capital. One can, however, judge by various other indications, such as the initiation of new building construction and the amount of iron and steel production. If we do this, we see that in the United States, there has certainly been an accumulation of wealth. On the other hand, that cannot be said of European countries. The housing shortage has become an acute phenomenon in Europe, and capitalism has been unable to start building activity. That means that it is not in a position to undertake a normal accumulation of wealth with relation to capital. This question is often given a political importance which does not belong to it. Comrade Olivier wrote in "Le Vie Ouvriere" that the view of the Communist International on the world economic crisis, did not agree with the facts. During the war and in the period before the war, he said, capital accumulated so much, that there could now be no question of a crisis. It is naturally possible for an accumulation of capital to take place during a crisis, and for successful struggles of the proletariat to be thereby made possible, because this accumulation takes place at the expense of the middle classes. We have seen this in Germany, where the greater part of the reduced quantity of total wealth passed into the hands of the great capitalists. Accumulation thus took place, not by the gathering together of new values, but by the expropriation of great social strata. This was a situation favourable to the proletariat, because it placed the middle classes in a difficult situation.

On the other hand, the view of many German comrades that there is no accumulation, and that the fate of capitalism is already sealed, is very dangerous. Capitalism can be overthrown only by great struggles and sacrifices, even when it can no longer accumulate. If the proletariat does not, in the struggle by the use of force make an end of capitalism, the latter may remain as an organisation of power for the repression of the proletariat, even if it is no longer accumulating.

If we examine the economic situation of the past year, we see the following three great new phenomena: 1. The end of the existence of a united capitalist world economy; 2. A special crisis in the West European industrial countries within the general crisis of capitalist world economy; and 3. The agrarian crisis.

We must draw attention to the state of Russia, a giant country outside of capitalist economy, where the proletarian government is now so firmly established that even its bitterest opponents have no longer any hope of bringing about its downfall. Under the first point, there also falls the lack of a united movement towards a boom in capitalist world economy. Improvement of the markets in individual countries is usually secured at the cost of a relapse in other countries. Out of this complex came the boom which America experienced recently. This American boom is an absolutely isolated phenomenon. It is significant that, just when this boom had reached its climax, America's trade balance was passive. This proves that capitalist world economy is no longer a united whole.

France also has experienced a special boom, which was based upon the slow process of inflation, and also upon the necessity to rebuild the devastated areas. When this reconstruction is completed, this special boom in France will also come to an end.

A further characteristic feature of the decay of capitalist world economy is the currency position. A great deal is said about the stabilisation of the currency in Germany, Austria and Poland, but simultaneously with this stabilisation, a whole series of other countries have started upon the road of depreciation. There is now no single country in Europe, whose currency stand at par with the dollar. And the general development is not in the direction of improvement, but in the direction of depreciation. Another important point is the complete stagnation of the international movement of capital. In spite of the fact that capital in Europe costs 40, 50, and even 100 percent a year while in America it costs only 2, 3, or 4 percent, no capital is flowing from America to Europe because the security is not considered high enough. In connection therewith the gold reserves are flowing to the United States, where already such a reserve has been accumulated that it is not known just what shall be done with it. Banknotes in America are already covered by more than 80 percent of gold and if this process goes on, a state of affairs will occur when they will be covered by 100 percent of gold and the issue of bank-notes will no longer be a profitable business. At the same time, European exchange values, in consequence of lack of gold backing, going through the greatest fluctuations.

I now come to the peculiar crisis through which the industrial countries of Central Europe are passing. These countries were built up on the economic basis of the import of large quantities of food-stuffs, which were paid for by industrial products. During the past decades the possibility of this process has become smaller and smaller, because of industrialisation of the countries overseas and because of the agrarian crisis. We see that nowadays, all states are striving to set their own industries on their feet. Even the settlement colonies, are erecting tariff barriers against the industrial products of the mother country. By this process the basis for the industrial countries of Europe is continually narrowed. And in addition there is the agrarian crisis, which seriously reduces the capacity of the agrarian countries to absorb industrial products.

The basis of the agrarian crisis is the fact that, in all countries in the world, there is a great discrepancy between the price of industrial products and the price of agricultural products. This process ("scissors") was first noticeable in Russia and in America. It was at first considered a peculiar Russian phenomenon, but it was soon discovered that it was to be observed in almost all countries of the world.

The trustification of industry, which made great strides during the war and post-war period, is the chief cause of the agrarian crisis. Nearly all manufactured articles are at artificially put up monopoly prices, while prices in the agricultural industry are still regulated by the ordinary markets, as it is impossible to amalgamate the millions of agricultural producers into big concerns. The "scissors" of agricultural producers into big concerns. They become themselves do not constitute an agrarian crisis. They become an agrarian crisis only where rent, interest on loans, and other charges are so high that the producers are no longer able to produce because of the comparatively low price for agricultural products.

Many farmers have left their farms and a large number of others retained their farms because of the mercy of the lending banks which extended their credit rather than let all they advanced through the farmers. But in many cases these banks themselves went bankrupt.

In the European countries the agrarian crisis is also very acute. For a time, it was concealed by inflation, when agricultural producers could pay taxes, interest etc. in depreciated currency. But as soon as stabilisation sets in, the agrarian crisis comes to the surface in all its intensity. In some countries it is no doubt possible that the agrarian crisis will be only a passing phase. In Germany, for instance, protective tariffs can very much smoothen the crisis.

The agrarian crisis has an enormous political significance, for it is an important factor in bringing the lower and middle classes of the peasantry close to the proletariat. It also enables us to get into closer political contact with these sections of the population.

The industrial crisis itself is also an important cause of the agrarian crisis. The fact that there are always millions of unemployed, and that wages have been forced as low as in the last few years has decreased the demand for articles of food and other necessities of life in enormous degree.

All these examples, which give an idea of capitalist economy, go to prove that the clash of class interests has become very acute indeed. To my great surprise, Hilferding shares my views on this subject. How does this acuteness manifest itself?

1. The concentration of production, the centralization of wealth and trustification have made great strides forward during the past few years. This was accompanied by an extensive expropriation of all middle classes of society, especially in countries with inflated currency. The gulf between the small group of dominating capitalists and the middle and petty-bourgeoisie is becoming wider. An increasingly large section of the petty-bourgeoisie is becoming proletarianised and a prey to capitalist exploitation.

2. Parallel with this, we see that the interests of big capital in the various countries interlace. On the one hand, there is the combination of the interests of Morgan, Creuzot, and Stinnes, and on the other hand of the interests of Rockefeller and those of capitalist groups of various European countries. In this process dependence of the European nations on the United States is becoming more and more evident.

Immediate Prospects.

One of the most serious crises the United States has ever known is just beginning. This crisis could be foreseen, in fact expected it at the end of 1923. According to news received in America, there is an unprecedented decrease of production in the United States. For instance, the Steel Trust worked at full capacity in March, while its production fell to 60 percent of capacity by the end of May. There are one million idle motor cars. Building construction fell in May by 23 percent and in New York even by 70 percent etc.

American manufactured articles are now thrown on the European industries. We therefore see that, if European industries were not affected by the American boom of 1923, the present crisis is bound to be felt by them. The American bourgeoisie refused to believe in this economic crisis. This optimism was shared even by the section of the Communist Party. The crisis became a moot question among American comrades. Comrade Pepper maintained that the crisis was not so serious, but his views were not shared by the majority who predicted the crisis much later. This majority based its attitude on a report. There was no justification for this, as this report related to the year 1923 and not to 1924.

We are of the opinion that a general world crisis is impending. This is vigorously contested by the social democrats. They believe that the solution of the reparations question will improve conditions in Europe. This makes it incumbent on us to pay a great deal of attention to these politico-economic questions which are closely connected with the reparations question.

At first efforts were made to obtain reparations from Germany in foreign exchange. But this attempt led to the collapse of the German currency. It undermined German capitalism and brought with it the danger of a proletarian revolution or a capitalist coup d'état. It soon became evident that the reparations question could not be solved in this manner. It was, however, not only an economic question, but also a question of political power. The reparations conditions are calculated to subordinate Germany as an independent State and to turn it into the object of the plans of the big imperialist powers. There were two conflicting opinions on the matter. First, the conception of the military and heavy industry circles of

France which was as follows: dismemberment of Germany, incorporation into France of the Ruhr and of the left bank of Rhine, economically, as well as politically, establishment of a West European heavy industrial centre, and French hegemony over the Continent of Europe.

This imperialist conception constituted a great danger for Great-Britain, as it might result not only in a military, but also in an economic supremacy of France over Great-Britain. The other, the British conception took into account that the present military superiority of France made it impossible for Great Britain to oppose the imperialist French designs by force. Therefore Great Britain is content to incite Germany and France against each other in order to weaken them both and to be able to dictate terms. This policy is meant to ensure on the whole a victory for Great Britain. For although France had won a military victory in the Ruhr, and although passive resistance broke down prematurely because of the treachery of the German bourgeoisie, France could not maintain its position economically. Naturally, Great Britain wanted also to weaken Germany. If the burden of reparation were to be made comparatively easy for the German bourgeoisie, German industries would compete with British industries, as the German bourgeoisie was able to pay all its international debts during the period of inflation.

The "Experts' Report" is an attempt of the Entente-bourgeoisie to solve the reparations question in common. It pursues a double aim: 1) to prevent the proletarian revolution or a national revanche action and to let the German bourgeoisie live, but 2) to live in such a way that the Entente bourgeoisie keeps the control over Germany in its own hands, thereby preventing dangerous competition on the part of the German bourgeoisie. This would convert Germany into a colony of the Entente bourgeoisie.

Politically the defeat of the French policy of coercion and the victory of the English-American line of policy, represents a coalition from Morgan to Paul Levi, for the prevention of the proletarian revolution.

But the essential conditions of recovery will be lacking since Germany will be unable to sell abroad, without a severe crisis in English and French industry, the goods necessary for the payment of reparations. Thus, I do not believe that Hilferding's hopes are justified.

It is interesting that the Social Democrats are so optimistic. It is certainly natural since the business of the Social Democratic Parties is to induce the masses of the proletariat to refrain from revolutionary methods. This optimism of the Social Democrats is not shared in English economic circles. In the statements of leading English political economists, we find a complete hopelessness. In connection with this there is in England on the one side a revival of Malthusianism, and on the other side, emigration to the colonies is being preached. America, on the other hand, is prohibiting immigration. This shows, that the bourgeoisie of the United States itself does not hope for an unlimited continuation of the upward tendency. Politically, this prohibition of immigration represents a coalition between the aristocracy of labour, the Fascist organisations, and the American upper bourgeoisie against the revolutionary working class elements, or those inclined towards revolution.

The social democrats draw pacifist conclusions from the international bourgeoisie. They believe that this interlocking has progressed so far, that there will be no more war. That, however, is just as incorrect as the assumptions of Norman Angell were before the war. We must not over estimate this interlocking. It is not so far advanced as to have overcome the conflict of interests.

Summing up, we may sketch the following outlook for the year 1924-1925: severe crisis in America, together with a worsening of the economic situation in Europe. The possibility of successful proletarian struggles remains. And it depends upon the Communist Parties what form these struggles will take. If, however, we do not succeed in uniting the working masses in building up the steel framework of the Party, and in winning over the peasants, this objective possibility may pass by. And then comes the possibility—I say possibility and not probability—that capitalism will temporarily find a way out of this crisis at the cost of the proletariat. The task of the proletariat is to make use of the possibility of revolutionary struggles, and to prevent this second possibility (applause).

Fifth Session, Afternoon.

Comrade Gebhardt opened the session. The congress confirmed the composition of the Souvarine commission. The Chairman of the Commission will be Comrade Stewart; the Secretary, Comrade Rienzi.

The Congress then adopted a Manifesto to the Proletariat of the World against the Oppression of the Peoples of the Orient, which had been drawn up by the French Delegation.

Manifesto Against the Oppression of the Peoples of the Orient.

In the struggle for emancipation, the working class of all countries is subjected to the merciless persecution and the brutal punishment of the ruling classes. The international bourgeois clique knows no mercy or pity when dealing with its class enemies. It takes cruel vengeance for every attempt upon its power and upon its world possessions.

The oppressed peoples of the Orient and the Eastern Sections of the Communist International are especially subjected to the furious vengeance of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which in its expressions of malice becomes more merciless as the hour of its overthrow inevitably approaches.

The cable has just brought terrible news from China. On May 26, after cruel tortures, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Railwaymen's Union, Yanteshen, and four other workers, were executed in Hankow.

The imperialists of all countries have long ruled on the territory of enslaved and dismembered China as in their own countries.

In the interests of its selfish policy of ruthless exploitation and inhuman oppression, international imperialism is artificially supporting the cliques of hostile generals and egging them on to unprincipled internecine warfare, the burdens of which are borne by the toiling masses of China.

Generals Wu-Pei-Fu, Chan-So-Ling, and the others are merely the tools of Western European and American imperialism. Behind the back of each of these generals stands a group of imperialist powers.

International imperialism is preventing the development of China with every means in its power. Every attempt to emancipate the millions of the population of China from the oppression of the foreigners is regarded by them as a crime, worthy of death.

The full responsibility for the blood of our Chinese comrades lies upon world imperialism.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist International utters its protest against these brutal punishments and calls upon the Chinese Communist Party and its fraternal party, Kuo-mintang, steadfastly to continue the fight for the great cause of the emancipation of the millions of China from the barbaric and merciless yoke of capitalist oppression.

Long live the emancipation of the oppressed peoples of the East!

Long live the alliance of the enslaved peoples with the workers and peasants of the West!

Long live the International Revolution!

Treint:

The Congress then proceeded to the discussion of the two reports already heard. The first speaker was Comrade Treint:

France is resorting to inflation in order to repay her short term obligations (treasury bonds and the Morgan loan). She is entering on a period of high cost of living because prices on her markets are tending to rise to the level of world prices.

These two phenomena mutually react and are resulting in the reduction of real wages, the proletarianization of the middle classes, and are producing an acute class struggle between communism and fascism.

In these circumstances the Party must be prepared for its tasks and will be so if it rallies round the Left, the strength of which has been emphasised by Comrade Zinoviev. The latter in his statements on international questions at the Congress, has pointed out the way for the French Party. It is strong enough to attract the party without the necessity for the formation of fractions.

The fight against the Experts' Report must be not only a French and a German fight, but a fight of the whole Communist International, and must consist not only of negative criticism but positive slogans. The World Congress must adopt a resolution on this subject before separating.

Zinoviev touched on the question of trade-union unity. Trade-union unity is not a question of principle but of tactics. If historical circumstances place trade-union unity and the interests of the revolution in contradiction, we shall choose the revolution.

But we are not in such a situation. Between two revolutionary waves, the one of yesterday and the one of to-morrow, it is to the interests of the reformists to limit the field of action of the communists, maintaining or creating schism in the trade unions.

We must return to international trade-union unity in order to convene a world congress of all the trade-unions with the right of all tendencies to be organised in a united trade-union international.

Thus we shall unmask the manoeuvre of our reformists who say, "First realise international trade-union unity".

Our Communist parties have grown. They are capable of working in the trade unions.

On the question of the united front they are in complete agreement with Zinoviev. The Labour Government is a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat intelligible to all workers; it is a synonym for the beginning of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

That is why we approve of the decision taken at the Moscow Conference in September 1923 to form a Labour Government in Saxony. The fight was decisive, it was a question of utilising Saxony as a place d'armes for communist action.

We formally condemn the Saxony errors. No appeal was made to the masses, Soviets were not set up, the proletariat was not armed. All that was done was to form parliamentary combinations with the left social democrats, whereas at the first act of treachery they should have been imprisoned or shot.

We are against the Saxonisation of the united front. The united front is a tactic for the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses and not an organised alliance with social-democratic leaders.

There is an international Right which has revealed itself on the German question and on the English question.

The Communist International must carry on the fight against all digressions either to the Right or to the Left. But the principal danger is on the Right, whereas at the Third Congress it was on the Left.

We cannot apply the same tactics in 1923 as we did in 1921. We cannot act in the same way towards the Party of March 1921, which was crushed owing to the errors of the Left, as towards the mass revolution of October 1917, which failed owing to opportunist errors.

Labour governments and Left Blocs result in bourgeois democracy finding an echo within our own parties.

The Second International will compromise itself more and more, will leave room for the rebirth of the ideology of the Second International, of which there is a danger even within our ranks.

The fight against the bourgeoisie means more than a fight against social democracy, exteriorly, and a fight against the right within the International.

We are also: Against the debolshevisation of the Russian Party. For the Bolshevisation of the fraternal parties.

For the realisation of the world Bolshevik Party. For the Communist International, animated by the spirit of the world revolution, must become.

Comrade Rwal (Germany):

Germany is passing through a period which has not yet come to an end. Since the October period the German Party and the Communist International put the question of the seizure of power as acute. But the Party was not in a position to make objective use of this period. In Germany there is not a single class-conscious worker unaware of the fact that at that time the fight could have been taken up, and that it should not have been evaded. And if it so happened as it did, it was the result of a very big mistake of—we may perhaps say—the best part of the Second International. Because the comrades who have committed these mistakes may well be the best part of Third International.

The net result of the events has been the consciousness of the independent role of the Party. Under an opportunistic leadership even the best of tactics would ruin the Party. This lesson has cost us dearly; but the crystallisation of a truly Bolshevik Party is worth even such a price.

Hitherto the Party, from the standpoint of organisation, was rather a Social Democrat machine than an iron Bolshevik organisation. Every honest worker is aware to-day of the fact that the Party must seek support in the most important centres. Our task is to unite the two revolutionary poles of Germany, from the Ruhr district to Upper Silesia, from Hamburg on to Halle and Bavaria, with Berlin as the centre creating something like a German Leningrad and Moscow. Until now the Party could not put up a better fight than because it acted on a wrong basis.

In the immediate future we shall be faced, with a new favourable situation. Then we shall not say again that it is easier to capture the power than to retain it; we shall no longer evade, but engage in the fight.

Comrade Zinoviev was right in saying that the international situation is favourable. In Poland there was the Kow revolt, but they lacked the same thing as we did, iron Bolshevik leadership. And knowing as we do that the Polish Party leaders have supported the German right wing, we do not consider it an accident that they have committed the same mistakes.

Politically, as comrade Zinoviev pointed out, the most important country is England of course. Yet at the same time we must emphasize that the German revolution, too, is not far off.

The German revolution is closely connected with the actions of the Polish and Czechoslovakian Parties. It took the Polish Party two months to decide to disallow Krulski's vote in support of six months' military duty, although delivered some fine revolutionary speeches in Prague. Such questions are of paramount importance to us in Silesia.

We have already started a fight against the "Experts' Report". We have strikes in the Ruhr lasting for weeks; we are fighting in Upper Silesia. The peasants are backing us, and tens of thousands of women join with us in the fight. We may further record an active fight against fascists. We have not yet won the eight hour day, but we shall win it and this will frustrate the plans of the experts.

Comrade Murphy (England):

Comrade Zinoviev's main point appeared to be the question of the united front. It appeared that many comrades were still in doubt about this policy, or wished for its modification. He had the support of the British Party in stating that it would be a great mistake to drop it. Many of the mistakes that had been committed under this policy were due to the fact that most of our Parties were only just becoming Communist Parties. Comrade Zinoviev had said that the most important task was the creation of a mass party in Great Britain. This was impossible without the maintenance of the united front. In reply to the criticism of Comrade Zinoviev with regard to the Kelvingrove election and of the Newbold, I must state that the British Party admitted its errors and weaknesses but there was another side. The British Party accused it of responsibility for the defeat of labour at Kelvingrove by making the election "too communist" and thereby awakening the distrust of the masses in the Labour Government.

It was important to distinguish between the British Party's relations to the Labour Government and to the Labour Party. Comrades abroad, who seemed to confuse these two points, demanded that the British Party should leave the Labour Party because of the actions of the government. I admit that the attitude of the Party, in the first days of the Labour Government, was weak, inclining merely to go with the tide of popular opinion and to demand only the fulfilment of the election programme. But as time passed, and the Labour Party became more corrupt and was revealed as the tool of the bourgeoisie the Communist Party's opportunities for criticism developed.

To demand the abandonment of the united front on grounds such as those given was an error. The Labour Party was not identical with the Labour Government, but was the organised working class movement in Great Britain, and those who proposed leaving the Labour Party, were proposing that we should leave the working class.

If we dropped the united front, what was to become of the minority movements? I support the claim that the British Party, although small, is becoming a mass party, by the instances of its activity in the recent railway strikes, and in securing the election of A. J. Cook as the miners' secretary. The united front was fundamental to the existence of the British Party, and could not be discarded.

Jacquemotte (Belgium):

In the report of the Executive Committee Comrade Zinoviev reported the progress made in the organisation of our parties. This progress has been unequal and, to all appearances, there has even been in certain countries, a standstill. This is especially true of Belgium where our membership does not exceed 500-600. But appearances can be deceiving. One cannot judge the importance of a Communist party solely by the size of its membership. Zinoviev only mentioned Belgium to point out the possibility of the formation of a labour government in the future under the leadership of Vandervelde. We would have preferred to have been reproached for passivity or inactivity, for in this case at least, it would have been proved that the Belgian party exists for the International. The Belgian bourgeoisie has attached more importance to the existence of our party than has the Executive. At the time of our campaign against the occupation of the Ruhr, the government, just as in France engineered a plot against us which, by the way, failed miserably.

We have profited by this offensive of the bourgeoisie to enlarge our influence in the working class. We have thus been able to change our central organ, "Le drapeau Rouge", from a weekly into a daily, and it has been appearing as such since January 1st, 1924.

Comrade Zinoviev spoke with justification of the attitude of our British Party towards Mac Donlad's government: In Belgium the coming into power of a Labour government under Vandervelde is not out of the question. The next election or a political crisis within the Belgian bourgeoisie can lead up to it. We think that we must not wait for the event to happen to outline our line of tactics in accord with the International.

Not long ago on the occasion of the campaign against the "Experts' Report", our German Party convened an international conference of the western countries to which the Belgian Party was invited. Resolutions were passed. In spite of our numerical weakness, our Belgian section has shown a certain amount of activity during the last twelve months. With the support of the International, we shall be able to improve on this and to form in Belgium a real communist mass-party, provided we do away with all sectarian tendencies which have not yet quite disappeared.

Comrade Petrovsky (Russia):

Expressed himself as in full general agreement with comrade Zinoviev's analysis of the British problem, but added his opinion that the MacDonald Government was not now so popular as at first among the British workers. The latest evidence showed that, while the MacDonald government was gaining popularity in bourgeois circles there was among the workers, a growing disgust with it. The growth of the so-called left-wing movement also showed that there was something new stirring in the ranks of the workers, which was bringing them under the influence of the revolutionary movement.

Sixth Session

Moscow, June 21, 1924.

Comrade Treint opened the Session at 11 a. m. The discussion on the report of the Executive was continued. Comrade Rossi (Italy) was the first speaker.

Rossi (Italy)

In the article of Lenin which Comrade Zinoviev advised us to read, we can find nothing which might serve to condemn the position taken up by the left wing of the Italian Communist Party, since this wing always resolutely fought the extreme phraseology of the left. All the more, when it was necessary to expunge one of the worst features of the Italian revolutionary movement.

I want to say at once that our point of view from the time of the very formation of Communist Party was to strive to break all relations with the opportunist centrist leaders and to take the greatest possible care that the frightful malady of opportunism and centrism did not appear in the ranks of our party and from thence in the Communist International.

The Italian Question, like all questions agitating various parties in the Communist International, is the result of disagreement regarding the general tactics of the Communist International and regarding their particular application.

We reject the interpretation which the Enlarged Executive of February 1922 gave to our own theses on this subject; this interpretation is incorrect as anybody can see who takes the trouble to read the original text of the own theses.

We believe that we furnished one of the first examples of the application of the united front from below. All differences on this question within our party are the same as within other parties of the Comintern, between the opportunists seeking for collaboration and even liquidationism, and those who are seeking to maintain the revolutionary line within the party and among the masses, and to secure the autonomy of a Communist Party.

Comrade Zinoviev declared that the E. C. C. I. sometimes made mistakes in the definition on this slogan. But on this subject the last clear word has not yet been said. We must add that the effective form of slogan of the workers' government is the forcible seizure, the direct seizure of political power by proletariat. If we cannot have an exact definition in this sense, it would be better to reject the slogan when we draw up the balance sheet of the profit and loss of this slogan, it must be admitted that the losses are greater than the gains.

The process of development of a Communist Party is both organisational and political. But if it is admitted that the creation of communist parties results and results in the creation of real situations and real movements arising in the course of the class struggle, the creation of the parties becomes a definitive fact.

We are often referred to the lessons of Lenin regarding the flexibility of revolutionary activity, compromises, tactical flexibility, what many call the opportunism of Lenin. But the dexterous and daring tactics of a great leader never loses sight of the aim and who retains all his energy. But the danger is that a thousand small Lenins are sprung up in the Comintern, who are abusing the compromise weapon of Lenin. It is a weapon which Lenin knew how to use but which in the hands of these people may lead to the defeat of the proletarian revolution.

The present period is characterised by stabilisation of the economic situation, as Comrade Varga informed us. Politically this phase coincides with the formation of bourgeois social-democratic governments and represents a halt in the armed class-struggle. This break may be the forerunner of a new revolutionary wave, but it may be also utilised by the social democrats and the bourgeoisie to sever the workers from the revolutionary party.

In this phase liquidation tendencies arise and we observe how certain pseudo-communist leaders fraternise with the opportunist enemy and the centrists during the course of the struggle. It is essential that the party should have

which will always distinguish it from all other proletarian or so-called proletarian parties. It is essential that the communist party should have its internal organised discipline which will give its militants a truly Marxist and communist education, not only intellectually but also morally.

We have followed the crisis in the German Communist Party which was so rich in experiences and lessons. We must declare there are differences of opinion on several important points between us and the German left which today has a majority. But we accept certain portions of the criticism which the German comrades have made of the recent events; for on certain points they agree with us. And we express the hope that the comrades of the German Left will show themselves capable of giving the heroic proletariat a strong Lenin lead.

Smeral
(Czecho-Slovakia)

Since the last Party Congress our Party organised a number of actions and carried on systematic work. It goes without saying that it has also made mistakes. An analysis of our actions and an exposition of what should have been done, but was left undone, gives scope for criticism. But the examples cited by comrade Zinoviev have been partly misunderstood and partly over-estimated. His estimate of the attitude of the leading body on the Party in the election campaign in Carpathian-Russia is not true to facts.

In his article, comrade Hula did not draw the conclusion imputed to him by comrade Zinoviev.

Already at the last Party Congress, the leaders of the party took the initiative on the national question. Our parliamentary fraction made itself heard and felt on questions of national oppression of minorities and of persecution of the population of Slovakia. Neither have we been idle in the question of the factory councils' movement. It is also to the initiative of our Central Committee that the Party is reorganised on a factory nuclei basis, which was not any means an easy matter. The peasant question also received the attention of the leading organ of the Party, and can say without exaggeration that, apart from the Russian and Bulgarian Parties, we, of all Communist Parties, are possible for the organisation of the largest number of peasants. With the exception of the economic crisis and unemployment, there have been no serious external conflicts internal shocks in the Czech Communist Party. I daresay, no other country were the illusions to which the establishment of a Communist Party gave rise as great and general as in Czecho-Slovakia. If, in spite of all this, the Czech Communist Party has today a membership of 130,000 in a country with 13½ millions inhabitants; if it is avowedly the strongest workers' party which in some parts of the country has gained control over the peasantry, it seems that this does not tally with the accusation of apathy against the leaders of the Party. Our campaign against corruption has led to a severe crisis in the coalition government and in the various government parties. That 40% of the enfranchised soldiers voted for our candidates at the last municipal election, shows that our propaganda within the army has not been without success. Another proof that our Party is by no means passive, is the number of soldiers who are now in prison.

With respect to comrade Zinoviev's criticism of the results of our last Party Congress (held in the beginning of January 1923) on the workers' government; I should like to say that when we drew up these theses, we were of the unanimous opinion that they were in full accord with the resolutions of the Fourth World Congress. These theses were adopted unanimously and with the approval of the representatives of the Executive. I do not wish to imply by this that these decisions and theses of the Comintern and of the Party are to be our only guide also in the future. We look upon the workers' government as a long-lived institution, not as a means of evading a revolutionary fight however. In connection with united front tactics, all our efforts to establish an united front from the top have failed. On the other hand, we have already had some success in united front tactics from below.

Radek

Comrade Zinoviev's speech, which in my opinion, represents the annulment of the resolution of the Fourth Congress on the united front has induced me to put my point of view, which, because of the unanimous decision of the Russian Communist Party against my views I should otherwise have hesitated to do.

Four questions are presented here. 1) How did our united front tactics arise, what were they, and what are they? 2) What experiences have we gained in the last year with regard to the united front particularly in Germany? 3) What is the present situation, and what is to be done? 4) What is the situation in the Communist International, and how must communist tactics be defined within our parties?

Comrade Zinoviev makes two assertions in explanation of the history of the united front. The first is that in the year 1919-1920, the Communist International in the West, outside Russia, consisted of small propaganda parties and groups, and that we first became mass parties in the year 1921. This statement is incorrect. In 1919 our small communist party in Germany stood at the head of greater revolutionary mass struggles than since the year 1920. In Bavaria we conquered power and defended it. We had our small Hungarian Party which achieved power and defended it by arms for four and a half months.

What is the united front and what is the watchword of workers' and peasants' governments? For Zinoviev this is quite simple. The Russian peasant understands no Latin, he does not know what the dictatorship of the proletariat is, and this watchword has therefore been translated, first into Russian, then into German and into English etc.

On the basis of our Latin we have, in the years 1918, 1919 and 1920 torn away great masses of the social democrats, and after the Halle Conference we became a mass party. Since then however, in the year 1921, we translated the Latin words "dictatorship of the proletariat" into German we sit at each Congress and attempt to explain to ourselves what this translation means. With the year 1920, with our defeat in Poland, our defeat in Italy, with the world economic crisis, which made plain the way for the capitalist offensive, began the so-called new stage, which we announced at the Third World Congress. We said to ourselves, now call together again the masses which are in retreat, and out of sentimental socialists we must make communists and hard fighters. To this end we first adopted the united front, and secondly, sought for the watchwords for this united front. The situation was not, in general, immediately understood by the comrades. It is a historical fact that a number of comrades considered the "open letter" of January 8 as opportunistic back-sliding. Only as a result of the intervention of comrade Lenin were directions for the united front and the "open letter" included in the resolutions of the Third Congress.

What, comrades, was the position of the workers' and peasants' government question at the Fourth Congress? Comrade Zinoviev has explained here how much he felt that the watchword of a workers' government as a coalition with other workers' parties, might be opportunistic. But he gave way; but so it came about that, in the meeting of the Commission at the Fourth Congress, Gretchen, under the flattery of Faust, sinned for a moment; Comrades, however flattering the role of Mephistophiles or even of Faust may be to me I must uproot this legend. Here is the first draft of Comrade Zinoviev's resolution. This draft contains unfortunately, not only the first transgression of comrade Zinoviev who wrote:

"When we are defending the united front, communists must not hesitate under certain circumstances, to form a government in conjunction with non-communist parties". The second passage is much better. It says: "Communists do not hesitate to make agreements with other parties, even if the leaders of these parties are social democrats or even Christian socialists."

Up to this day I think it is sensible. This mention of Christian socialism came from a preference for certain leaders of the German centre, who had said that it was possible that even the Christian socialists might take part in a workers' government.

In this resolution comrade Zinoviev's two transgressions, as I have calculated, multiplied into seven transgressions. All were, as usual, the results of the first sin. The form of

With regard to the question of membership of the British Party comrade Petrovsky observed that the estimated figure of 3,500 was not so small considering the conditions and considering also the fact that the Independent Labour Party had also a comparatively small membership.

Referring to comrade Zinoviev's criticism on the Kelvin-grove election campaign, comrade Petrovsky pointed out that while this much criticised campaign was going forward, the Communist Party's conference was taking place in Manchester and this conference passed a resolution declaring the MacDonald government a sham, and pointing out that it was following in the footsteps of Scheidemann and Noske, the German social democratic executioners. Comrade Petrovsky also quoted from the Independent Labour Party newspaper "Forward" to show that in this election the forces of the I. L. P., and the Labour Party were, on the one side, appealing to the bourgeoisie and on the other the Communist Party was appealing to the workers.

Comrade Murphy was right when he said that to break away from the Labour Party was to break away from the working class movement. The leaders of the Labour Party would be glad if we did this and we ourselves would be forsaking our best field of activities. The tactics of the united front had not always been correctly carried out; there had been many mistakes; but it remained true that in the future the field of the labour movement would be the field of our battles.

Finally comrade Petrovsky dealt with the question of the communist press in Britain. The power of the bourgeois press monopoly was, he declared, stronger in Britain than in any other country. Nevertheless the attempt to establish a communist workers' daily should be made, for it was a shame that in Britain there should be only one daily, and that not that the herald of the workers, but the herald of the servants of the king.

Comrade Roy (India)

said that the emphasis on the importance of the English question, in comrade Zinoviev's speech was opportune but belated. The stronghold of bourgeois dictatorship was now England, and if we did not take note of this we should not reach our desired goal of world revolution. The English bourgeoisie was now taking the lead towards the recovery of the bourgeoisie throughout the world. Hence the necessity for a strong British Communist Party, but a statement of the necessity left us a long way from achievement of the fact. It was a complicated task. Comrades Murphy and Petrovsky had not pointed out the facts quite clearly. He wondered also if the difficulties in England were clearly recognised by the Communist International.

We tended to forget the fact that the British Isles were only the apex of a much greater economic and financial domain. If we ignore the existence of the roots which fed this central body we should continue to make mistakes. We must remember the historical development of the British working class. We know that the British Labour movement developed simultaneously with the British imperialism. The British proletariat is soaked through and through with the spirit of British imperialism. The British Communist Party must get to grips with this fact. Hitherto the British Party has failed to find the way to grapple with this problem and the Communist International has not showed it the way. To give this lead to the British Party is now the task of the Communist International.

Comrade Roy challenged Comrade Petrovsky's statement that the British working class was showing dissatisfaction with the MacDonald Government. While we knew that the British working class would develop in a revolutionary direction, we must be realists, and admit that at present that class was still faithful to its reformist leaders and even to the bourgeois system of government.

The task of the British Communist Party transcended the boundaries of the British Isles. Because of the fact that the British bourgeoisie depends upon the existence of a proletariat which is bribed at the expense of workers in the other parts of the British Empire, the British Party must make its activities "imperial" in scope. The formation of the desired mass Communist Party could not be accomplished only by activity in England, but must be achieved by activity throughout the Empire.

the resolution makes it clear to us also that the Leipzig and Prague resolution is nothing more than a repetition of this resolution, and that the object is now the ending of this resolution.

This resolution unites a warning against the dangers of the united front with the clear perception that we may perhaps be forced, by a number of transition stages, to a struggle for the dictatorship.

Bukharin, in his report to the Russian Party Congress last year, represented the failure of the left wing comrades to perceive that one must proceed to the dictatorship. (Freimuth: On the contrary).

We shall see. Freimuth says that he will proceed through dictatorship to the Saxon workers' government. (Freimuth: You say that).

At the IVth. Congress of the Communist International we declared that in the interests of the revolution it might be necessary: 1. To propose to the mass of the workers to enter into a coalition even with the Social-Democrats. 2. To be ready in certain circumstances actually to carry out in practice and not merely to agitate for it. And how was that understood? It is not only comrade Smeral who does not find himself in a very cheerful position at the moment who had reason to excuse himself on the ground that he was seduced. Quite a number of the comrades have been seduced by the influence of our comrade Zinoviev. I have in my hand an article published by comrade Kleine on the first of February 1923. In this article which is a polemic against the "Left" written before the party congress and before Brandler's thesis had been published he says:

"The readiness which recently we have so often shown to take the final decisive step by joining the common fight for the interests of the proletariat in company with the reformist parties, is not a trick, it is not a tactical manoeuvre, but a sheer fact. And in the same way the possibility which we have faced of a workers' government is not a trick or an artifice."

"Simply because the workers' government is not as yet a proletarian dictatorship but only the government of a labour party which has to rely on the extra-parliamentary fighting organisation of the United Front, deviations in its policy are inevitable."

That is what comrade Kleine said before the Party congress. Since that time we have been through our experiences in Saxony and our chairman, comrade Treint, has written an article on the results of the elections in France. This article ends with the words: "The Workers' Government is a step towards the dictatorship." He has also written an article for the special congress number of the "Communist International" in which he again says that it is not a dictatorship but merely a stage forward. Yesterday he got up here and said he was "in perfect agreement with Zinoviev, that his form of workers' government is admirable that, in short the Workers' Government is the dictatorship of the proletariat in evolution."

But it is not a question of who is in the wrong and who is in the right. Comrade Zinoviev is quite right when he says that at the IVth. Congress we took a step which was opportunistic whether we knew it or not; we can still learn something from that.

I will now pass to the second part of the Report—to our experiences.

After the incidents in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Communist Party proposed to the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party, which had at one time supported Zankov, to form a bloc. That is the first point. Next we decided here that the German Party was to take part in the Saxon government. After the defeat in Saxony our French comrades, with our consent, offered to form an election alliance with the Social Democratic Party in France, where this is only possible by putting forward common tickets.

Now for the third point to be explained: how are the Social Democrats to be unmasked? We know that the Social Democrats can and will never fight. But we propose to them that they should fight with us in order that we may then unmask them. Comrade Treint knew perfectly well that the Social Democrats would never join with us in forming a bloc, and so we were able to permit ourselves the luxury of offering them this union. They have refused it, therefore,

they now stand unmasked. But we rather spoil the effect of this unmasking when we announce beforehand: "Our object is not a common struggle, what we are out for is to unmask you." The whole point of our tactics in the United Front consists in our being genuinely and honestly ready to go a bit of the way with every working-class party which is ready for a fight.

Comrades, if the Executive allowed the Bulgarians and the French to do this, it cannot turn round now and say: "This was a proposal made with good intentions, but we knew all along that it would not be accepted."

In September we decided that the German comrades should enter the Saxon government. They did enter it and the whole Executive was convinced that they had managed the affair very badly. We had suffered a crushing defeat. And what did Comrade Zinoviev write about our entry into the Saxon government after this defeat? In his pamphlet "The problem of the German Revolution" he says in introduction, which was written after the defeat:

"The comrades who look only at the situation in Germany from the point of view of Saxony are making the mistake of provincials; they have not got their perspective right. Saxon experiences were not accidental, and they were useless to the party. The most important task in Germany is to capture the workers who support the Left wing of the Social Democracy—the present Left wing of the Social Democracy is playing the same part as the Independent Socialists played in 1920. The masses of the workers are clinging to the Left social democrats as they might cling to a buoy still hoping to get salvation without the bloodshed of a civil war. All these sections of the working class we have held us communists responsible if we had refused to try in company with the left Social Democrats to bring the country out of its crisis by peaceful means."

Even after the Saxon experiences comrade Zinoviev did not hold our entry into the government to have been a mistake, but even though it brought defeat to our party regards it as a great victory.

Comrades, I come now to the examination of the Saxon experiences. What did they consist of? Comrade Zinoviev does not criticise the Communist Party for not deciding to enter upon the struggle for power in October. He says in his thesis that it was right to avoid this, because we had no arms. He says, too: "Since uprisings and civil war are undertaken in order to provide opportunities for a revolution, death but in order to win victory, it was wise not to attack them." How does he criticise the attitude of the Party? He says that when we went into the Saxon government it became evident that we could not grasp power, we could at least have demanded the arming of the proletariat, the socialisation of industry, and that if the Social Democrats would not join with us in fighting for this, we should have broken with them and left them. He criticised Fritz Heckert for making a speech in which he said that he stood for the constitution. Comrade Heckert should not have said that. It was nonsense to say that because his adversaries did not believe him. All over the country the party had its manifestoes—"Workers, Arm Yourselves."

What is the lesson of the experiences in Saxony? The lesson which we must learn if we are to avoid further defeats? The lesson is, first, that one can not take a jumping-off ground. One cannot all at once enter upon the fight for power, enter upon actions which take a considerable time for their development, and which involve the masses of the people.

The second lesson is still more important. I am in complete agreement with comrade Zinoviev that one cannot enter into a United Front from above unless one has first entered into a United Front from below which we have not done. And it was the United Front from below which we have not organised; our factory councils were divided into bits, were nothing but separate atoms. The Central Committee governing the factory councils was no better than a puppet and we had not bound them to our party.

If the Saxon government had supported itself on the congress of factory councils...

(Severing: "Why was it not called together?")

That is just the mistake which I admit.

(Severing: "We asked for it six times!")

That points the moral: without a mass organisation, a workers' government is doomed to death. It must end either with a fight or with a defeat.

What light have these experiences to throw upon the questions whether in certain circumstances we should enter into a coalition government with the S.D. In order to further our revolutionary ends? Comrade Zinoviev has not told us clearly here, whether he excludes the possibility of our entering a coalition government with the S.D. in the future. We are stronger than we were in Saxony. The German Left refused to consider this question. What is the view of the Executive?

I do not think that comrade Zinoviev will refuse to consider this problem, for to do so would mean that we relinquish all hopes of fruitful mass agitation among the social democratic workers and can show them no way of escape.

Now I want to say a few words about the organisation of the Revolution. The organisation of the revolution means that correct communist tactics are adopted from the first moment when even a group of communist workers are occupied in rallying the workers for the revolution in organising them for the fight, and in organising preparations for the fight until they become so wise that they grow into the party of the revolution. Or it may mean that we have reached a situation when we can calculate within a given time, that is to say, at a moment not far off, in the next months, or in the next weeks, we shall enter upon the decisive battle. To say this means that, one must force the pace of the struggle to an extraordinary pace, it demands the most intensive concentration upon military preparations—for if anybody says that one can get hold of arms, he is very much undervaluing the experiences of revolutions, and also the experiences of the Russian revolution.

Comrade Zinoviev has said in his report that in the important centres in France and Germany we are advancing rapidly winning the majority of the proletariat. That is the goal of the question. If comrade Zinoviev asserts that, he is mistaken. And this error together with the idea of our comrades, who declare that they are ready every day, to take up the struggle for complete power... (Interruption: "Ready, ready!") one is not ready to do that which one cannot do.

Comrades, in what does the error in judging the situation consist? Comrades have said, "We have suffered a tremendous defeat in Germany" and, having said that, they are still of opinion that nothing has changed that to-morrow we shall again be ready. That is the greatest illusion that can be entertained.

If the French comrades were so strong, why was there no demonstration in Paris, when the Ruhr workers were shot by the French troops? Comrade Treint writes very recently in an article in the "Communist International": "The great majority of the French proletariat is still filled with pacifist and democratic illusions." And in Germany? Comrades, that the Congress will have the opportunity of considering in Commission one fact after another, only the present transient situation in the German Party, that which is developing.

A fraction numbering sixty-two people representing four hundred workers who have been through all the tribulations of legality. They enter the Reichstag for the first time, and do we see? We hear a few parliamentary speeches I do not describe here.

Then the Experts' Report, which is to enslave the proletariat, comes before the Reichstag it is the report of the Communist Party, entering parliament as agitators, to spout general speeches, but to give an answer which is echoed in millions of hearts of the Germans. And you have not done that.

Pass to a wider question, our work in the trade unions. The central question here is: shall we capture the trade unions? Shall we draw the masses together, or not? That is decided by whether we are a radical party protesting against the system, or whether we are a mass party preparing for the revolution. I beg comrade Lozovsky who perhaps knows more about trade-union affairs to come up here and say what he thinks about the direction our work is taking in the trade unions.

There is in the German party, a terrible passivity. This is very strongly emphasised in an article by a Berlin comrade in the "Funke" (The Spark). It is the one serious phenomenon which must be examined.

Comrades, you will say that the capitalists throw our comrades out of work, they become unemployed and cannot pay their contributions; they leave the trade unions. You will say that Amsterdam is kicking us out. That is true. The question only is: if we shall avoid everything which would make that easier for them or shall we do everything to make it impossible for them.

Comrades, the resolution of your party conference on the trade-union question, clears the way for leaving the trade unions.

And now, comrades, the factory councils. Comrade Zinoviev has referred to a report by comrade Varga. I do not know what is the date of this report, and if it reviews the recent period. The result of the elections in recent weeks shows that in a number of towns we have suffered great losses. The Congress had to examine the direction of development of the Party. The development of its which you accept on the basis of your theoretical attitude, on the basis of your judgment with regard to the ripeness of the situation with regard to the relations of force, is such that you might cut the party away from its basis. There is a danger of the determination of the party's circle of influence in the near future. And that is the greatest danger that can threaten us. The Communist International has carried through great struggles at almost all its Congresses. The novel point now is, unfortunately, that disagreements have crept into the ranks of the comrades who have hitherto been common representatives of the Russian Party. At the end of his speech, comrade Zinoviev raised the question of official or correct communist discipline. If we, in the Communist International, rely only on official discipline we would be an official framework, but not a living international. This minority, whatever it is, whatever direction it adheres to, must not only submit to the resolution of the Communist International, but has also the duty, between the Congresses, of carrying out the international resolutions in organisation and agitation.

The Russian comrades, who very often, like all of us, may take mistakes are practical exponents of the working class movement. And if comrade Zinoviev declares a thousand times that he will nevermore make a coalition with the social democrats he will come to the day when it will be necessary; he will only declare that the situation has changed, and that it is only a manoeuvre while the other, the wicked one, has opportunistic designs. The result of the discussion of differences should still allow everyone who may disagree with this or that decision, to remain in the party, subject to its discipline. We must not hesitate at criticism, otherwise we would be an organisation of cliques which carries on its business behind the recess. But after we have fought here, we have the duty and the opportunity to work positively, wherever the Executive of our party places us, and to leave it to time and their experience to show whether we have erred in one respect and they in another.

Seventh Session.

June 22, 1924.

Com. Ruth Fischer (Germany):

The German Party expects from this Fifth World Congress international judgment on the experiences in Germany. The German Party is considered, next to the Russian Party, to be the most experienced party and the most capable of struggle. And what the German Party has experienced in recent years places it next to the Russian Party. And if this party can make such catastrophic mistakes, as were made last October, the International must seriously examine the causes which led to this. The causes do not rest with individual persons but are much deeper; opportunistic mistakes, which are also present in other parties, the resistance to which is the chief task of the International.

The workers' government was already put forward as an agitational watchword, and reconciliation with the left wing elements was already attempted, only because it had behind it the feeling of revolutionary workers. And that was symptomatic in the Fourth World Congress. The Leipsic and Prague Party Congresses, however, reached decisions which were the opposite of those of the world congress. The Leipsic Congress drove the Party to the verge of a split. Radek was not only silent about that, but he concealed an important episode in the Fourth World Congress. When the false news came that Brandler and Böttcher had already entered the Saxon Government, the German delegation was prepared to allow all the conditions, the arming of the workers, and the factory councils' congress to lapse. Only the Executive prevented that. Under the leadership of Brandler, the German party has developed so that the danger of the separation of left groups has arisen. Brandler was prepared to abandon the Berlin, Hamburg, and some Ruhr organisations, in order to realise his objects. The Executive prevented that.

It is now a question what manoeuvres are permissible and what are unpermissible. It is a question of right wing digressions, which were present in the Germany Party, and not of individual backslidings. What Brandler and Radek built up was opportunism which has revealed itself in the action in Saxony. The policy which the Communist Party put forward to the social democrats had been worked out years before and it tended not to the dictatorship of the proletariat, not to the struggle for power, but to compromises. The conviction which lies at the basis of this policy is that these comrades have lost their faith in the European revolution.

This gave rise to the conception that the German Communist Party cannot fight without the social democrats, that it is not an important factor in the workers' movement and that it is only an appendix of social democracy.

This conception gained more and more ground. It resulted in avowedly liquidating tendencies (Levi, Friesland) and was given a definite form in the theses of the Leipsic Party Congress on workers' government within the framework of bourgeois democracy. Already the Rathenau action foreshadowed the Saxon policy, the weakening of communist principles, alliance with the German Socialist Party. Already in April 1923 Brandler advocated a policy which, in conjunction with social democracy and also with the support of the aristocracy of the working class, attempts to establish the workers' government in the framework of democracy.

Such attempts are of course nothing new in the Labour movement. When in 1918-19 the idea of proletarian dictatorship took possession of the workers of Europe, the cunning Austro-marxists attempted to steer clear of revolution by declaring that democratic means must be tried first, and proletarian dictatorship be resorted to only if they failed. They did not declare themselves against the principle of proletarian dictatorship. Brandler used exactly the same language in 1923: "From the viewpoint of revolutions as well as of counter-revolution, a democratic republic does not lend itself to the establishment of class dictatorship."

This systematic revision of communism, which the Executive considered as mere inaccuracies of style, as clumsy formulae, had also their economic counter-part in the proposal of 51% confiscation of capital. None of us were against partial demands in general. But the question is that the slogan of the 51% confiscation of capital was so discredited in the eyes of the workers that it could not expect to meet with any response. Moreover, Radek and other comrades did not use this slogan as a tactical slogan for the purpose of agitation but made it into an economic transition programme of the workers' government. This, comrades, is a far more important phenomenon from the international point of view than the Fourth Congress realised.

What we, as the German Party have to face, is not isolated events, not questions of particular manoeuvres, not whether we shall still be able to employ this or that manoeuvre in the future, but the fact that out of these experiences a definite theory has been evolved, and reformist principle has been laid down, by which not only our Party, but the whole International is in danger of being infected.

In the theses of the Fourth Congress there were also all kinds of confused formulae. The conception of a Labour Government as the coalition of labour parties, is also the conception of the liquidation of our Party, if it is laid down in the form of definite principles. The Independent Socialist

Party was liquidated step by step, also on the basis of the united front. But it is more important to deal with the practical results. At a moment when a process of disintegration is setting in among the social democrats one cannot wean the masses from their social democratic leaders by oneself embracing social democratic ideology. The only way we can succeed is by explaining to them as clearly as possible our definitely communistic attitude.

These questions must stand in the forefront of the considerations of our Congress.

Nobody has anything to say against Zinoviev's formula of the worker's and peasant's government as a pseudonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nobody will refuse to let it stand as the aim of our agitation. But only on condition that we hold firmly to it, and leave no possibility of backsliding into coalition government, or of any slackening in the tasks of the party.

It has often been said that the German Left was against the united front tactics in themselves, but what we were always asking was, what is the united front and what is it to be? We have already seen so many stages in the united front, that we can now distinguish three of them.

The first stage was an attempt to rally the masses and form a proletarian organisation to fight for the demands of the day. In this stage negotiations between leaders make their appearance. We do not reject negotiations with leaders, but the paradox lay in the fact, that as communists our object in entering into negotiations with leaders, is to separate the masses from these very leaders, and not to form treaties with them. The Right, however, actually reproached us with entering into negotiations solely in order to break them off! In the second stage, for which the Rathenau affair was typical temporary unions were entered upon with the social democracy.

The third stage was Saxony. Here the crime of opportunism which had existed for years makes its real appearance. The revision of the communist theory of the State, reaches its most extreme form in the famous thesis on the victory of fascism over the November Republic. This thesis is an attempt to represent fascism and the November Republic as two opposing forces, and not as different forms of the same capitalist dictatorship. Here, the Russian Party opposed Radek and disavowed him as an opportunist.

It must be remarked here that this is not peculiar to Germany but that in the whole International the use of tactics of the united front in this manner has been attempted.

When things have gone so far that comrade Wynicki could state in Holland in the year 1922, that the communist and the social democrats were both Marxist parties, and they both have their roots in the working class movement, and that they were only opposed regarding methods, are at the beginning of the complete liquidation of the Communist Party, and this must be resisted with the strongest means.

For the German Party it is not a matter of abandoning the united front. We do not reject the calling together of the masses for the struggle, the propaganda of the proletariat, the establishment of the united front in the factories, every manoeuvre which leads to the mobilisation of the masses. What we want is resolutions that exclude Radekism, these digressions on the question of the Workers' Government and the United Front, which lead in the direct of coalition and alliances.

I pass now to the question of events in Germany, principally the question as to what circumstances have led to the Party veering round. It was not by chance that the old Central Committees of Saxony and Thuringia wished to start the movement, for there the possibility existed of coalition with the left social-democrats. The result of concentration of the movement in Saxony and Thuringia is a complete cleavage in the German Party. Our party is in a stage in which its leaders were completely cut off in Berlin, Cologne and Wasserkante. Only the intervention of the Communist International prevented our best leaders leaving the Party.

When comrade Radek declared today that the misdeed in Saxony consisted in that we could not find support in the working masses, that is a perversion of the truth. The decision for the workers' government was that we must have a Congress of factory councils. Five times the left wing of the party centre demanded that the congress of factory councils in Saxony should be called. Comrade Brand-

however, has resolved to call the factory councils congress in all districts, only not in Saxony and Thuringia, because thereby the alliance with the social democrats might be disturbed. The mobilisation of the masses was sacrificed to the desire not to break the connection with the social democrats. During the time of the greatest difficulties of the bourgeoisie, our whole policy was based upon the idea: Do not let yourself be provoked; and the theory was: It is far more difficult to hold the workers back from the fight, than to lead them into it. We had power then as never before.

During the strike in May, it was a part of Radek's policy to hinder every tendency of the movement to come to a decision. On Brandler's orders we had to call upon the masses to return to work. On the anti-Fascist day we wished to organise a huge demonstration. But it was forbidden by Brandler and Radek.

After the Cuno Strike, which was the beginning of the weakening of the German working class, the working class for the first time put the question as a question of power and not only of our economic demands, that they wanted to overthrow the government. Thereupon Brandler told us that the next period would be one of a left social-democratic-trade union government and that we could not plan upon a fight for power.

Comrades, I declare in the name of the whole German delegation that the more remote October becomes, the more profoundly do we become convinced that in October the party should have fought and should have fought (applause). And if then could not fight, it was because it was afflicted with opportunist Radekist malady which had undermined it.

There were two culminating points in October which we must deal with in order to show where the Radek policy led us. The Chemnitz and Hamburg Conferences met on the same day. At Chemnitz, under the leadership of Brandler and under the influence of Radek, it was decided to retire in the night. The workers submitted to this decision with clenched teeth and the Hamburg workers had attacked the bourgeoisie with their naked hands. This most strikingly reveals the deep clef between our membership and our party leadership. In October all the comrades suddenly came to realise that we did not put an end to this policy, we should overthrow the party. Radek at that time wanted to postpone the question. If the January Conference of the Executive Committee had not set about the question of healing the rift in the German party to-day would not have been a healthy party. Berlin and Hamburg would have severed themselves from the party. The party was saved only because the Executive dropped the Right leadership.

I must say Comrades, that the attitude of Radek on Russian and German questions depends a good deal upon other. It is a conscious attitude, aiming at the liquidation of communist policy. I know, comrades, that much uncertainty exists within the International regarding our party. It is a change that proceeded from the very depths. Nobody called the present leadership, nobody displaced the old leadership. The party simply drew conclusions from the situation. The fact, comrades, that we so quickly overcame the situation shows how great the strength of our party is.

I will now deal with the so-called ultraleft digressions tendencies to which Zinoviev and Radek referred. Speaking from the point of view of organisation, there are no such tendencies. There are certain manifestations of disintegration which are inevitable with such a rapid change of front, manifestations which we in fact regard as menshevist but which cloak themselves as "ultra-left". The present leadership immediately took up the fight against these tendencies with every possible energy. At the Frankfurt Party Congress, clear and definite attitude was taken up towards these tendencies, as well as in the instructions to the Congress delegates. The greatest danger does not lie in the "ultra-left digressions" but in the fact that the Right danger in the party, although it has not crystallised out ideologically, will not be overcome.

I will explain to comrade Radek what we mean by that we are ready to lead a fight for power every day. The proof of that is the policy we pursued in Halle-Fuerstenwalde. We came in for plenty of blows, but we can guarantee himself against blows and even after we have seized power, we shall no doubt often get knocked down. Anybody who wants to be guaranteed against coming any blows is pursuing a reformist policy which results in getting plenty of them. Since, Halle we have had no

more difficulties among the mass of the Party, because the workers have now real confidence in the Party, and they know that the Party keeps its promises. We shall never learn how to fight fascism out of books, but only from experience. I am coming now to the metal-workers' Congress. Radek's version is—that Dissmann proposed at this congress to adopt a joint list with the communists but that the wicked communists would have nothing to do with his proposal. The fact is that at the Congress Dissmann was on the point of veering round towards the Ebert-camp.

Radek had much to say about the unsatisfactory results of the factory councils' elections. The results were unsatisfactory in Königsberg where Brandler's followers identified themselves with the social democrats. How is it that he did not mention the election successes in Berlin, Upper Silesia, Cologne, etc? Our influence among the masses is as great as before. Attempts are made to minimise our successes. Why was no mention made of Oppeln where we polled 90% of the total vote?

A few more words about our Party. We go about our work in a business-like fashion and recognise our weak points. Occasional defeats are of course not out of the question.

I am coming now to the attitude of the German Party towards the trade-union question and to the attitude of the Executive. In this connection we are always sinners, even the comrades who do not belong to the extreme left. But we cannot help saying that the policy of the Profintern was extremely vacillating and nowhere is a vacillating policy as perilous as on the trade-union field.

With regard to the trade-union question, we have now overcome the greatest difficulties, and at the Frankfurt Party Congress the party took as strong a line against the tendency to leave the unions. If we were really to enter into a period of democratic pacifism, nothing would be more dangerous than the breaking up of the trade union movement.

We have stated in our theses that the English question is a central point for the Comintern. We cannot however ignore the fact that Germany, also, in consequence of the attempt to carry out the Experts Report, is confronted with the period of most severe struggle. We are entering upon a period of concealed inflation. The currency is stable, it is true, but the capitalists are carrying on an enormous number of lockouts. The Fifth World Congress must not be deceived by Herriot and MacDonald into thinking that a similar situation will be impossible before the Sixth World Congress. We desire the Fifth World Congress to give clear instructions for each country regarding the questions of the United Front and the Workers' Government.

The declaration of Comrade Smeral has given us Germans cause for wonder. We are not in a bourgeois parliament, to make such diplomatic statements. Brandler has also constantly declared that he is completely in agreement with the Executive. We hope that we shall not see Saxony on an international scale, or on a Czecho-Slovakian scale.

I should like to say a few words about our British Party. In my opinion, the inexperience of our Party is responsible for the weakness of its attitude towards the reformists. The impression I got of the British comrades is as follows. Every member has two memberships cards, one of the Communist Party and one of the Labour Party. It seems to me that the member belongs to the Labour Party on week days, and on Sundays, by way of rest and recreation, plays a little with the communists. If our party does not give up its slackness in the fight against the Labour Government, it will get into serious difficulties. It seems that the criticism of MacDonald amounts to this: "Dear MacDonald, can't you be a little more radical?" The last strike wave has shown that it is possible to organise the left wing of the Labour Party. The World Congress will also have to go into the question of parliamentary work in Great Britain. In his election programme, Ferguson stated that he was opposed to the Experts' Report, but not by a single line did he show that he was in opposition to MacDonald on this subject.

We come to the Italian Party. At the Fourth Congress we were in favour of fusion and in our opinion the Communist International must do everything possible to facilitate unity and collaboration in the Italian Party.

We want the Fifth World Congress to work out concretely the practical tasks of the individual sections and to take up a clear stand against Radekism on an international scale. Let the resolutions against these opportunist digressions be as united as they were at the 13th Congress of the Russian

Communist Party. The highest aim of every Communist worker in Germany must be to make the German Party a united Iron Bolshevik party, and to make the World Congress not a conglomeration of various opinions, but a great step towards a united Bolshevik world party.

Comrade Wenzel (Czecho-Slovakia) made a declaration on his own behalf and that of Comrades Vercik, Fried, Culen and Mayerova, in which they express their disapproval as to the answer the majority of the Czecho-Slovakian delegation gave to Comrade Zinoviev's statement that there exist opportunist tendencies within this party. These tendencies should be rejected.

Nuen Ai Quack (Indo-China):

I wish to draw the attention of the Congress to the colonies. The destiny of the world proletariat depends greatly on the colonies. The Colonists provide the imperialist powers with food and soldiers. Therefore, if we want to make a successful attack on the imperialist powers, we must attack them in the Colonies. I agree with comrade Treint that a rising revolutionary wave is to be expected in France. But I do not agree with him when he says that there is a danger of fascism in France. The French bourgeoisie does not stand in need of fascism for it has black troops at its disposal. According to official statistics, there are in the French army 458,000 and 206,000 coloured soldiers of different types. But in reality, there are more coloured soldiers, as the term of military service is longer than that of white soldiers. More attention must be paid in future to the colonial question by the French and British Communist Parties.

Boschkovitch (Yugo-Slavia):

states in the name of the Balkan delegation (Bulgaria, Yugo-Slavia, Roumania, Greece, and Turkey) that they agree with the analysis given by Comrade Zinoviev in his speech yesterday, but at the same time—"the congress must discuss the Balkan question a little more in detail, as it is of great importance and difficulty to us. The world-wide conflagration began in the Balkans. The present situation is no better than it was in 1914. The Balkans are on the International highway; they act as a bridge over which the imperialists penetrate to Asia Minor and Africa. The interests of England, France, and Italy cross each other here. Besides rivalry exists between the Balkan States themselves.

"The Romanian government is provoking a war; it is bringing pressure to bear on Yugo-Slavia to form a military alliance against the Union of Soviet Republics. The French and English imperialists created the Balkan states as their vassals and as a result, national oppression, reaction, and white terror rule supreme.

"The national and agrarian problems are the most pressing questions at the present time, and the Balkan Communist Parties are combining these two questions with the problem of the workers' and peasants government and the work of preparing the ground for realising the Balkan Federation of Workers' and Peasants' Republics.

Hrsel (Y. C. L. Czecho-Slovakia):

welcomed the statement of the majority of the Party Delegation as an attempt at an approach to the policy of the Communist International. But this attempt had not been a successful one. He thought the reason was that it contained a weakness similar to that in the statement made by the minority of the Delegation. The Party Delegation ought to have given quite unambiguous replies to the clear questions put by Comrade Zinoviev with regard to the opportunist tendencies in the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia. True, the statement made by the majority of the Party Delegation is in favour of a revision of the United Front, but it should have declared itself first and foremost, in a clear and definite fashion, against the opportunist tendencies present in the party. The fact that the Delegation has not done this is no accident, but a proof of the fact that opportunist tendencies do exist in the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia. Not only the article written by Comrade Hula, which Comrade Zinoviev quoted, but also other articles by him, and together with various statements made by the parliamentary fraction, prove the presence of these opportunist tendencies.

Moreover, even where the majority of the Party Delegation does declare itself in favour of a revision of the Prague resolutions, their declarations remains indefinite. Our Congress is not concerned with revising the meaning of the tactics of the United Front but with securing it in false interpretations. In criticising the particular problems of work in the Party, Comrade Zinoviev was in no way casting doubt upon the successes which the Party had won. He was only drawing attention to certain questions which are related to the whole policy of the Party in regard to the leadership of joint revolutionary struggles, and to the preparation for proletarian revolution. These questions have not received enough attention from the Party. It is just in these questions (rural and national questions, factory nuclei, activity of the Party centre) that the presence of the opportunist tendencies may lead to a certain passivity. It is a fact the Party has done too little with regard to these questions, and that a daily political direction of the whole movement from the Party centre has been too often lacking. Comrade Hrsel then gave a whole number of examples of the insufficient activity of the Party in these fields, and mentioned the attitude of the Party at the time of the incident in Germany last October, and its attitude to the German, the Russian questions in general. When Comrade Zinoviev, drawn attention to the apathy of the Central Committee, certainly had not meant that the Central Committee had done nothing at all. But a certain apathy is there, and manifest itself partly in the illusion that, because the masses are passive, the Party can do little. Comrade Zinoviev was right when he attacked this apathy, and indicated the necessity it to be overcome. The Young Communist League of Czecho-Slovakia is on the whole in agreement with the remarks of Comrade Zinoviev.

Eighth Session.

June 23, 1924.

Comrade Kolarov, opening the Session, called Comrade Brandler.

Brandler:

The October events were judged, and we were damned, without any of us having even made a report. accusations made against us are: firstly, that we betrayed the revolution, that we could have fought, but backed like cowards; secondly, that on account of social democratic petty-bourgeois deviations from true communist policy, we mismanaged the whole affair that we were obliged to retreat in the October fight; we are accused of revisionism of Leninism and of the Lenin theory of the State; thirdly, should have fought even though the prospect was of defeat, since our whole policy from the time of the Third and Fourth Congresses was false and we could make only by fighting.

We confess ourselves guilty of having applied and carried out the policy of the Third and Fourth Congresses with our strength. We do not regret this; we regard this as correct, both as to the past and the present. Of course the changed situation makes changes in tactics necessary. This has nothing to do with the change in policy. We do not think that the October defeat cannot be ascribed to the pursuit of this policy and that legends have been deliberately circulated regarding the factors which led to the defeat. It is this to the fact that passion prevents our comrades from seeing things as they really happen.

In my opinion, we suffered defeat because we set ourselves a wrong task—to attack instead of defending ourselves at a time when the enemy had the initiative because we used wrong methods and because we had falsely estimated the relation of forces. We alone are not responsible for the errors. We are all responsible—the Left, the Centre, the right and the representatives of the other parties who took part in the decisive discussions. We worked out the policy in common and we were led into the defeat because we failed to adhere to the plan too long.

Our policy began after the Rathenau crisis, when we set ourselves three tasks: (1) the party had recovered since the March action but was not yet capable of fighting, and therefore had to make it capable of fighting, a) by pro-

or illegality, b) by creating the organisational and ideological conditions for the civil war. That was in August, 1922. (2) As regards reorganisation, our proposal to transform the party into a social-democratic electoral organisation into a real party, rooted in the factories, at that time met with very little response. (3) To the organisational preparation for the civil war belong the organisation of the sympathisers in factory councils, the control commissions, and the proletarian work. Our whole party duty was to carry through this work. For this, Zinoviev rebuked us with being revolutionary theoreticians. I simply cannot understand this reproach. We are of the opinion that the party could enter the struggle with any hopes of success only if it were organised and were equal to the fight. If we lead the working class into the fight without making the maximum of preparations, if we do not get them to strike, the masses will not hold the bourgeoisie responsible, but us. We have done more practical work in organising the revolution than those comrades who merely talk of organising the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The cleavage between the Berlin organisation and the other districts already existed. We were not responsible for it. We made it our duty to heal this cleavage. Therein we committed a most decided and serious error. There were two ways. We could have mended the cleavage by taking the leading comrades of the Berlin Opposition, Maslow and Ruth, and healed the cleavage; or we need not have taken them and have healed the cleavage without them. For reasons, which the leading comrades are acquainted, we chose the second way.

And now let me come to an important political fact. When we entered the government, we greeted him with a mass organisation of the workers such as has never before been realised. In reply to his government declaration, the Factory Council Congress drew up its programme for saving the German proletariat. We exerted the maximum of energy in order to carry through this program. In many parts of Germany we succeeded in organising the periphery and in creating nonparty class-war organs. In the Ruhr the Rhine, Westphalia, Upper Silesia, and in Central Germany, our organisational work was very successful. In the left centers, in Hamburg and Frankfurt am Main, where the power of the state had not been so much enfeebled, we suffered defeat.

When the Ruhr was occupied, we issued the slogan: Fight Poincaré and Cuno. We carried on this propaganda with greatest energy. It met with great response, but we were unable at first to undertake action. On this occasion we had led the Ruhr workers for the first time. We however, did not dare risk smashing up the German workers in a fight with the German and French bayonets. It became quite clear that both bourgeoisies were seeking to come to an understanding in order to prepare a bath of blood for the workers. The German bourgeoisie wanted to throw responsibility for the situation on to the shoulders of the working class. We did not regard retreat in this fight as opportunist, but as communist duty. The rallying of the sympathisers reached a culminating point on the anti-fascist day. We issued the slogan in order to see what we could do ourselves without the aid of the social democrats, and there is not the slightest doubt that we can record a success. Naturally at the first mobilisation we did not want to fight since the organisational conditions for it were still lacking. When the situation came, we issued the word to hold the demonstration in the Ruhr, Upper Silesia, and Central Germany, but to protect them with weapons, but in the other districts to hold the demonstrations indoors.

Now as to the October defeat. We believe that, just as the murder of Rathenau and Erzberger, elementary preparations for a fight could be made among the masses, which could be developed by our class war organisations and transformed from defence into attack. We then spent four weeks in Moscow in order to discuss the political situation, and just in these four weeks that the comrades who now rebuke us so bitterly, had the leadership in their hands. It was at this time that the decisive errors were committed. By return to Germany nothing remained but to order the fight on political grounds, for preparations had been insufficient and the elementary will to fight was lacking. The Saxon Government was made in spite of my opposition and the opposition of the Saxon comrades. I regard this as one of my greatest errors that I allowed myself

to be dissuaded and withdrew my objections. It was to be our duty in the Saxon Government to win time. That was the decisive error. The initiative was in the streets at the time of the Cuno strike. It was our mistake that, in spite of our weakness in Berlin, we dared not undertake the attack against the Coalition Government. The second opportunity was offered for seizing the initiative at the time when the state of siege was declared. The working class felt itself so strong that it believed that the government with or without the state of siege, was unable to do anything. At the third opportunity, when the law for extraordinary powers was passed, preparations for the fight were completely lacking. The factory councils of Berlin, Dresden, and Hamburg, welcomed the proclamation of extraordinary powers, believing that they were directed against petty-bourgeois fascism.

Finally, as to the so-called parliamentary comedy in Saxony. We entered the Saxony Government in order to protect our base, 1) by arming the proletariat and, 2) by securing supplies. At the Chemnitz Conference it was obvious that the workers still believed that the march of troops into Saxony was directed against Bavaria. At the conference I declared: "Behind this fact lies the greatest betrayal that the social democrats had even been guilty of." If we had risked the fight we communists would have gone forward alone to a bloody defeat, a more terrible White Terror than the Hungarian proletariat had to suffer after the overthrow of the Soviet Republic. Wide sections of the petty-bourgeois population were ready to smash the working class of Central Germany decisively. They were prepared to reach an understanding with the French at any price in order to crush the working class. We cannot deny that our control commissions were responsible for the fact that these sections passed over to the enemy's camp. Our control organs took up the fight against the petty-bourgeoisie much more severely than against the big capitalists. What was our mistake, historically speaking? Trotzky and Radek were of the opinion that if we had realised in good time that an agreement between the French and the German bourgeoisie would lead to a three-months' acute crisis, we could have attacked; if we had been able to carry through all our measures i. e. if we had been a Bolshevik Party. In other words we could have made an uprising, even though we were unable to arouse the elementary will to fight in the masses or to organise defence. Within two months we would not only have been in a position to organise the defensive but would even have been able to proceed to the offensive.

We are not defeated because we had to retreat. It was only due to the spirit of panic that was created by the fight for power within the party that we were brought to defeat. This is clearly shown by the fact that up to December we could show a flow of members into the party. With the struggle for the party leadership began the spirit of panic. The result is seen in all the elections we have since had. Everywhere we have to record a decrease in votes and the results will still be seen when we are no longer made responsible for policy. The present policy will make it very difficult to win new sympathisers. The fighting strength of the working class is still unbroken, but the fighting capacity of the Communist Party has been damaged by the panic.

We shall not be able to make the German Communist Party a real revolutionary party capable of fulfilling its duties until we clearly admit the errors which really led to the October defeat.

Thalheimer (Germany):

Comrade Zinoviev said that he does not like to see diplomatic tactics used towards the Communist International. Well, I will not speak like a diplomat. Criticism here of the activities of the International has been too brief, although this is more necessary than ever now when we miss the authority and firm leadership of Comrade Lenin.

We have suffered heavy defeats in Bulgaria, as well as in Germany, and have criticised the leadership of the Bulgarian and German Parties very sharply indeed. But we must admit that in both cases the Communist International was also at fault. In both cases preparations were not made in time, and foresight was lacking. I will deal here only with Germany. The Executive Committee has not, as yet taken full advantage of the lessons of the German events. Of great importance for the future is the question of organizational interference by the Communist International in the leadership of the various Sections. None of us will deny that such interference is necessary

under circumstances. But neither in October, nor prior to October, nor in January, was this interference fruitful, but was fatal and detrimental to the Parties. I want to refer to Lenin's dictum on continuity of leadership: "Continuity of leadership must not be interfered with without a good reason."

The old guard in the Russian Party is held in great respect, and rightly so. But the International fails to see that it too has definite Communist traditions embodied in its various leading sections. And when it is said that these sections represent social-democratic traditions, we are compelled to declare that these are not only leading, but middle sections in the Party, who have built the bridge between the Second and the Third International. And there is a great difference between having accomplished this themselves, and having received it ready made. But there is also another set of leaders, who did not take part in the fight against Kautsky, and who even went with him part of the way. Can we here really say that one section embodies Social Democratic traditions, while the other section embodies freedom from such traditions?

The leadership of the Russian Party in the International is an historic necessity. The other parties will become its equals only when they have established proletarian dictatorship in their respective countries. But there must be a transition period.

The main fight of the International must be the fight against reformism, against the democratic-pacifist wave which is again very strong to-day. But this wave, too, cannot be overcome merely by agitation, especially to-day, when this wave is also spreading in Germany. The Amsterdammers have certainly gained ground since the spring of 1924. The question is if the parties are adopting right methods for counter-acting this wave. I do not think they are.

There are, of course "right" perils in the Party. But it is not true that there is a right group. I do not see the left perils first and foremost in Boris, in Korsch, and in the extreme left, but in that which both have in common, namely, in their inability to overcome reformism. The fear of a spectre prevails in the International as though this would take the form of a right group in connection with the Russian opposition. This is a spectre which does not exist. We dissociated ourselves definitely from the viewpoint of the Russian opposition, on the Russian as well as on the German question. But I must protest against the talk of Radekism. Radek has served the German Party well in its most critical period.

I do not think that the present lines of the German Party and of the Communist International are correct, and I am afraid that it will lead the Party on to sand banks. I do not think that the organisational interference in the leading Party organs was right. I see dangers ahead, and I say, beware of these dangers. Nevertheless, declare that, as disciplined fighters, we will submit implicitly to the decisions of the Communist International, and that we shall do our work faithfully, wherever the Comintern will send us.

Kleine:

Just before the entry into the Saxon Government there existed among us serious differences of opinion concerning the question of the united front. We said at the time: we have

only two weeks time. In this time we must, regardless of Mueller, prepare for the civil war. The left Social Democratic leaders will stand by us in this. We must together with nonparty and social democratic workers proclaim ourselves revolutionary government. But the leadership was vested in the comrades of the right, who at that time rejected the conception. They subordinated the whole policy to the block of the reformist leaders. The fear for the destruction of the block went so far, that comrade Brandler cancelled the signature of communist ministers to the appeal of the Communist Party Central.

What we lack is the Bolshevisation of the European parties, and the organic union of the parties with the millions of workers who now vote for us; we also need to struggle further in order to gain over a larger majority of the proletariat. The situation in October was not as Brandler says. When Brandler says that the workers were in favour of the state of siege, he is forgetting the great meeting in Berlin of the officials of the Social-Democratic Party, which declared itself in favour of a general strike, and he is forgetting the attitude of the workers in Saxony, Thuringia, and Upper Silesia. The Chemnitz Conference was a failure because the ministers spent hours in explaining everything they had done to improve the situation, and everything that they were going to do. Brandler, at that time, treated the Social-Democrats with the greatest tenderness, and did not strive to define the difference between us and them clearly and precisely. At that time there was a whole wave of social battles in Germany, but we put an end to these strikes and said to the masses: Wait, be patient, to-morrow the decisive blow will come. The party is preparing for the final struggle. The question was either the struggle or else bankruptcy for the Party. Two days after the Chemnitz conference we were asking the question: to fight or not to fight? At that time we were demanding the final struggle. It was Radek who said: Either the final struggle or else retreat. We know that we may ten times again get into a position where retreat is obviously necessary. But all the same there are situations where a Communist Party cannot announce: We are retreating because we are too weak. Neither the proletariat nor the party itself has been able to understand the retreat in October. It was more than a retreat; it was a panic-stricken collapse. And this collapse led to the crisis within the party. If we are discussing it so passionately to-day, that is because we know that many sections of the Communist International have not yet drawn the right lessons from the events in October. It is the important sections—Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, France and Poland—which will have to conduct a joint campaign which must follow a clear political direction, and be moulded together as if they all made up one district.

The basic question of the V. World Congress is not the danger of losing the capacity to manoeuvre and of forsaking the tactics of the united front, as Radek claimed, but: we must manoeuvre and carry out the tactics of the united front without thereby losing either the independence or revolutionary initiative, as well as the power to exert criticism against reformism.

The party must learn to carry out the tactics of quering the masses in such a way that we win them more easily than we have done in the past.