

# INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

## CORRESPONDENCE

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*For Theory and Discussion*

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INTERNATIONAL

# COUNCIL

## CORRESPONDENCE

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The period of progressive capitalist development is historically closed. The decline period of capital, a permanent condition of crisis, compels to ever greater convulsions of economy, to new imperialistic and military conflicts, to ever increasing unemployment and to general and absolute impoverishment of the workers. Thus is given the objective situation for the communist revolution in the capitalist countries. For the working class, there is only the revolutionary way out, which leads to the communist society. No one can deprive the workers of this task, which must be carried out by the class itself.

The publishers of Council Correspondence see in the acting self-initiative of the workers and in the growth of their self-consciousness the essential advance of the labor movement. We therefore combat the leadership policy of the old labor movement, and call upon the workers to take their fate in their own hands, to set aside the capitalist mode of production and themselves to administer and direct production and distribution in accordance with social rules having universal validity. As a fighting slogan and statement of goal we propose:

All power to the workers' councils! The means of production in the hands of the Workers!

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY.

Recent developments in the policy of a number of Communist Parties have been labeled the August 4th of the Third International. Although this label has certain justification, it does not take into consideration the actual historical background of these developments. When the phraseology of the Comintern is disregarded and only the essence of its activity is considered, it becomes evident that the present action of the Comintern is a logical step in a process that was initiated in the first stages of the Russian Revolution by Lenin himself.

It is a well-known fact that the Comintern is completely dependent upon Russian Foreign Policy and in turn the latter is determined by the innerdevelopment of Russia as well as the position Russia takes among the capitalist powers. An outline of the development of Russian foreign policy will clearly illustrate this relationship,

#### THE PERIOD OF THE REVOLUTION

The Bolsheviks met the World War with a program for revolution in Russia which contained all the fundamental laws of insurrection and which--due to the necessity for the struggle against imperialist war--was internationalized. This program was not based on proletarian internationalism--as it was for example expounded by the German



"Left" around Rosa Luxemburg--but instead it was based on the social and political conditions of Russia and the position the Russian revolution would be required to take towards the imperialist policies of the European powers and their colonial suppression of the Asiatic peasant countries. Upon these basic conceptions Lenin built his theories which were to guide the bolsheviks and the international proletariat in their struggle against war and for revolution. The world war, he wrote, is an imperialist war which must be terminated by the anti-imperialist revolution of the working class. As this is an international task, it can be solved only by the revolutionary socialists in their own countries. For the Russians the situation is different. We must be content to accept the lesser evil, namely the overthrow of the czarist regime through the combined forces of the workers and peasants. Such a revolution, he continued, would merely be a radical bourgeois revolution but it might mean the beginning of the world revolution if other countries should follow our example. For example, the proletarian masses might rise against their capitalist exploiters in favor of a socialist revolution and the peasant and colonial countries in Asia, Africa, etc., might rise against their imperialist oppressors in favor of a national bourgeois revolution. Such developments might serve to initiate a general reorganization of the present ruling powers.

In the highly developed capitalist countries of Europe, the proletariat--a class--was thus looked upon as the advance guard of the world revolution while in agricultural and colonial countries the struggle was to be waged by "suppressed Nations". Lenin steadfastly believed that an amalgamation of these forces--regardless of the prevailing antagonistic contradictions--would serve the interests of the proletariat and the communist world revolution. As a result of these conceptions the bolsheviks deemed it proper to attack the Kerenski regime in 1917 under the following slogans: No separate peace with Germany; fraternization of the soldiers on all war fronts; ending of the war by international revolutionary action of the working class; disregard of all former and new annexations; self-determination of all national minorities up to and including national independence.

Having attained power, the bolsheviks immediately began to carry out this program. In a declaration of November 8, 1917, they proposed to all warring nations a "just and democratic peace". At the same time they appealed to the class-conscious workers of the three most developed nations, England, France and Germany, to give the Bolsheviks immediate support in their struggle. This was to serve a twofold purpose: first, a compromise with the capitalist powers in order to bring about peace,

and second, the utilization of the rest period thus won to arouse the proletariat against the master class speculating that the necessary world revolution would soon follow. Concrete reality soon proved, however, that their plans were ill-conceived and unworkable.

#### The First Defeat of the Bolshevik's Foreign Policy

The hope of the bolsheviks of a general soldiers' strike within the enemy armies was not realized. The Bolsheviks themselves were unable to continue the war. The old czarist army was smashed and demoralized; a new army could not be stamped out of the ground. Furthermore, their appeals to the European proletariat to rise against their governments met with no response. Consequently they began to question the hope of a speedy world revolution. Only one point in their program proved to be effective: the right of national self-determination led to the separation of the Russian border states, a move which proved to be very disastrous for the young Soviet Republic. These newly founded states suppressed at first the revolutionary movement within their own boundaries, and later on permitted the Entente and white guards to use their territory as a military base against the Soviet Union. These fateful developments forced the bolsheviks to enter into separate peace negotiations with Germany. At the conference of the two governments at Brest-Litovsk, the German generals demanded more than the bolsheviks were willing to concede, and Trotsky attempted to save his face with the counter-move: "Neither war nor peace". But when the German armies began to march again, the Russians were compelled to accept the German peace dictate under much worsened conditions.

Shortly before the conference at Brest-Litovsk, the executive organ of the soviets had invited the Entente to participate in joint peace negotiations, but in this note they included also the following passage: "Should the allied governments refuse again to participate at the peace conference, the revolutionary working class will face the task of wresting power from those who in blind stubbornness do not want or wish to give the people the long desired peace".

The Entente considered such a language an open challenge and an indirect declaration of war. All relations were severed and the Entente began at once the armed intervention which proved so disastrous for Russian internal development.

The bolsheviks, however, did not as yet abandon entirely the hope of world revolution. They frantically believed that the German workers would rally to their assistance as soon as the anticipated collapse of the German armies



would become an established fact. In the meantime, they considered it necessary to compromise with whatever States were willing to bargain with them and increase, at the same time, their propaganda among the European workers. The development of events after the collapse of the German war machine clearly convinced the bolshevik leadership, however, that the European proletariat was not ripe for the revolution and that for the time being, the hope for a speedy world revolution had to be given up.

### The Period of Civil War

The executive of the Soviets announced on November 28, 1917: "The leaders of the successful revolution do not need any approval of any of the representatives of the Capitalist diplomacy". Instead, the Russians cancelled all Czaristic Treaties dealing with the division of Persian and Turkish Territories and appealed to the masses of the working muslims to free themselves of their imperialistic exploiters. Their aim was to combat imperialism from both sides, to meet the very aggressive imperialist invasion against the Bolsheviks. The numerous counter-revolutionary manifestations were supported by the Entente powers with arms, money and special troops to the white Russian Generals. These powers were not able to wage a direct war against the Soviet Union due to the very critical situation within their own countries. But nevertheless they succeeded in occupying the border territories and gaining control of the Murman Railroad; they waged a direct war with the Czechoslovakian Army against the Soviets, cut off Central Russia from the Southern Russian corn supply, robbed a good deal of the Russian Treasury, destroyed Soviet councils and had many Russian workers shot to death.

The Bolsheviks fought the counter revolution with terroristic force and utilized all available resources in this obstinate fight. The period of war communism was introduced to further Bolshevik interests in the Civil War on the economic front. The revolutionary situation in many European countries was expected by Soviet Russia to introduce a Western European revolution which they believed was due. The Bolsheviks cancelled all war debts of the czaristic and Kerenski Governments, but were forced to make a concession in October 1918, declaring in a note to Wilson: "that they agreed for the present to participate in negotiations with such governments that do not yet represent the will of their subjects". They asked Wilson whether the U.S.A. and her allies would stop intervention "providing the Russian people would agree to make payment just as a kidnapped person would pay ransom to free himself". In January 1919 the Bolsheviks again negotiated with the government of the

United States: "We share your desire to re-establish normal relations between America and Russia, to abolish everything that may hinder these normal conditions". Beginning February 1919, the allies suggested that a conference be held at the Prince Islands with the aim of ending all intervention through direct negotiations with Russia, and the Soviet Government then declared in regard to the war debt problem: "to be ready to meet in this respect the demands of the Entente powers", and they suggested to guarantee their interest obligations by the supply of certain raw materials as equivalent. For the first time they offered economic concessions, and finally declared that they did not intend to exclude negotiations regarding the eventual annexation of Russian territory by the Entente powers".

All these offers could not prevent the continuance of the civil war, as the Entente Powers were set on the destruction of the Bolsheviks. They were in an extremely threatening situation when the first Congress of the 3rd International was called to be held at Moscow during March 1919. The foreign member parties represented there were very small and had to go through a number of decisive defeats. The chances for a direct revolutionary action by the new organization was very slight. But the situation was favorable and the first Congress was directed by the revolutionary slogans of Lenin: joint agrarian and proletarian revolution; change war into civil war, worker's councils, dictatorship: "the old capitalist order ceased to exist; it can't exist any longer".

A Bolshevistic socialization program was outlined and the relations between Socialist Russia and the triumphant imperialistic powers and their vassal states and countries of besieged imperialism were delineated. The newly founded League of Nations was considered to be an instrument of the holy Alliance of Capitalism to overthrow the workers' revolution; the epoch of world revolution was announced. The days preceding the first Comintern Congress were days of defeats in Europe. The March Revolt at Berlin, the Rate-Republic of Munich, the Hungarian Revolution were decisive defeats by the middle European counter-revolution against the revolutionary lefts isolated by the proletarian masses. The Russians as before were in a pressed position. Isolated, they believed the time was not ripe for a revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe. They started the Bolshevik tactics centralized at Moscow, with its methods so well proven on Russian soil. "Appeal to the Masses" was the slogan that made them trail quite unexpectedly along the path of a radically edged opportunism. At the time when by means of the bad bureaucratic methods of Radek and Levi the Communist Party of Germany was directed to parlia-



mentary action and participation in the work of the counter-revolutionary Unions and the ultra-left majority was ousted (fall 1919, Heidelberg Party Conference) they had not yet disposed of their illusions of a timely revolutionary advance. However, as direct experience showed that Lenin's methods, so infallible in Russia, did not work out in Western Europe with its highly developed Capitalism, Russia had to establish herself as a national state in the midst of her capitalist surroundings. Her Comintern policy became, without altering her Bolshevik line, a policy of deferring the West European Revolution. The revolutionary policy was never given up, but it was changed from a problem of hazardous venture to a question of an enterprise with a 100% success guarantee in advance. This meant, if not theoretically, so practically the absolute end of all revolutionary struggle.

#### The Turn Towards National Self-Assertion

By the end of 1919, the Soviet Government had succeeded in subduing by military force the counter-revolution at home, i.e. to repel the cloaked invasion of the Allies. The victory in the civil war, however, was accompanied by the defeat of the system of war communism. In the first place, the economic supply of the country diminished by 80%. Secondly, the proletariat began to rebel against the terroristic dictatorship of Bolshevism and to demand council-democracy. Furthermore, the peasants violently put forth their economic demands which they emphasized by acts of far-reaching sabotage. (The Kronstadt rebellion was a typical combination of the workers' political and the peasants' economic demands. Trotsky, through Stalin's assistance, made himself the slaughterer of the Kronstadt proletariat, surpassing a Noske in cold-bloodedness and savagery and thereby clearing the path towards fulfillment of the peasants' demands.) The new economic policy (NEP) flung the door wide open to small private capital, primarily of peasant and merchant character. A private economy of small capital, controlled by the state, was to insure the economic rise of the nation.

In foreign politics, the Russians adopted the policy of retreat, after having suffered a considerable military defeat in the war against Poland. In a proclamation to the "toilers" of the Allied countries of January 28, 1920, Tchicherin declared that Russia had no intention of expanding her power to any other foreign country or to force the Soviet system upon any people against their will. The appeal for the proletarian revolution assumed a meek and platonic character. Not the world revolution but the necessity to establish her place among the nations of the world, determined Russia's foreign policy.

Just as Lenin--before and during the Russian revolution--

developed a broadly conceived strategy of making use of the various class forces, so he developed now a strategy of making use of the various nations for the purpose of strengthening Russia's foreign-political position. With the renunciation of an immediate revolutionary world policy, was bound up the necessity of diplomatic security for the Soviet state. Russia started with the first Western securities. In the course of the year 1920, she gained final recognition by Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Finland. Those border states felt the immediate pressure of the Soviet state; they also had the urgent need for a counter balance in order to escape domination by the Western powers, at least to a certain degree.

This policy of the small nations, which--with the assistance of the Allies--two years earlier had put an end to the communistic revolution, caused Lenin to proclaim in the year 1920 the direct alliance with "the bourgeoisie of the small states". He declared that the Bolsheviks had been successful in winning for themselves not only the workers of all countries, but also the bourgeoisie of the small states, because imperialism was not only suppressing the workers of all countries but also the bourgeoisie of the small states. For this reason, the Bolsheviks "had won for themselves the wavering bourgeoisie of progressive countries."

In this period of growing alliances between the Soviet Union and the Bourgeoisie of certain capitalistic countries, the second congress of the Comintern convened. It laid the foundation for a revolutionary bluff-phraseology, which left the Comintern leadership free of all obligations. The manifesto of the congress announced the downfall of Europe and the world, and the uprising of the proletariat: "Civil war throughout the world is the order of the day". - For the rest, the congress directed its attention largely to the colonial East and proclaimed "a policy of concluding a close alliance between Soviet Russia and all movements for national and colonial liberation". Particularly did the congress recommend the organization of the peasant movement in the colonies with the aim of creating peasants' soviets.

This stand for an East-Asiatic revolution still implied a strong will for a peasant revolutionary attack upon imperialism. The decisions with regard to the Countries of Western Europe, however, were mainly of a different character. There the Russians were interested in founding for themselves a broad parliamentarian - trade union mass movement. "Penetrate the Masses" demanded their slogans, giving directions for the displacement of the old leadership and for creating bolshevist nuclei in the various reformistic labor organizations. The twenty-one conditions concerning the joining of the Comintern by new



parties brought forth no fundamental struggle on the question of tactics. Parliamentarism, trade-unionism and the ultimate demands for a proletarian dictatorship brought Centrists and Bolsheviks together. These twenty-one conditions, however, served the Russian leadership with regard to the mass parties of centrism that were to join the Comintern. The old leadership was to be disposed of, the centrist - democratic traditions within the organizations were to be destroyed. The lack of clear understanding among the followers of these parties rather benefitted the Moscow leadership, which intended to direct these organizations in the momentary interest of its complicated foreign policies, and, at the same time, aimed to make them the reserves for a future revolution. These two tasks necessarily contradicted themselves, which explains the duplicity of the Comintern policies and led to the disregard of the interests of the Western Europe proletariat. The core of all decisions of the second congress, however, is to be found in the following statement of the manifesto of the Communist International: "The Communist International has made Soviet Russia's cause its own."

#### ENTERING INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

Moscow's ideas of participating in International Diplomacy, born in 1920, blossomed out during 1921. The gradual consolidation of the NEP brought with it the first easing in the plight of this horribly distracted country. After the European situation, the Asiatic problem was of first importance. Soviet Russia began the diplomatic counter-attack against England's politics in Asia. In February and March 1921, the U.S.S.R. concluded pacts of neutrality and non-aggression with Persia, Afghanistan and Turkey. While Russia forsook old Czarist claims and agreements, it gained the assurance of mutual military support. Persia announced its readiness to admit Russian troops on Persian soil in case of a foreign (British) invasion. Afghanistan gladly accepted the promise of Russian money and material, and Turkey embraced the assurance of the "Nations of the near East of her freedom and independence and her self-determination in matters concerning her own form of state". Simultaneously, Soviet Russia procured recognition from Poland which was then trying to liberate herself from French domination, and finally, in November 1921, outer Mongolia was taken under Russian protection. Besides all these achievements, including annexing and Bolshevizing Georgia, the Soviet Union realized many political victories all along the Asiatic frontier, which in turn improved her position in the West as well.

The NEP Program, of course, included the commencement

of trade relations with capitalist states, as well as the invitation to foreign capital to invest in private concessions in the U.S.S.R. Europe, in turn, decidedly weakened by the World War, was in no position to do other than to finally accept the existence of Soviet Russia, and the latter's repeated assurances that economic relations would lead to mutual economic benefits.

In 1921 Russia had already concluded economic treaties with Great Britain, Germany, Norway, Austria and Italy, with Czechoslovakia following in June 1922. All these treaties, of course, brought de facto recognition of the U.S.S.R.; the German-Russian Agreement included even extra-Territoriality Rights for Russian trade representatives.

Russia, in turn, obligated herself to the strict enforcement of the so-called "Propaganda Clause", and in 1919 already announced her willingness to include in the general treaty with the Entente Powers this clause, i.e. "to abstain from interfering in their (Entente's) home affairs". In Germany, after the signing of the Russo-German Treaty of May 5, 1921, Russian representatives had to bind themselves to repress all propaganda against the German state or its institutions. A step further in that direction is illustrated by the pact with Czechoslovakia. Here the governments of the respective countries pledged "each to refrain from any propaganda against the government of the co-signer or against any of its institutions, and not to take part in any possible economic disturbances which might arise in either country."

Great Britain, finally in 1923, received from the U.S.S.R. the following declaration: Russia shall not support or finance any agents, organizations or institutions whose aim it is to create unrest in Great Britain, or any other part of her empire no matter how loosely connected, and to impress upon her officers to completely and permanently live up to this contract. (Memorandum of the Soviet Government of June 4, 1923.) It is well known that this very clause led to the severance of British-Russian relation in 1924 when England, basing her argument upon the fabricated letter of Zinoviev, tried to arrange a new contract. Directed against the Comintern, the new Pact, which was not accepted until 1929, would also include persons and organizations under direct or indirect control of U.S.S.R. and organizations which accepted money from those. The Soviet Union, of course, refuses with formal right to have any influence upon the Comintern, and this is sanctioned by all so-called experts of International Law.

Under this shadow, the Third World Congress of the



Comintern convened. Although at that time Russia had only started an international diplomatic apparatus, it nevertheless supplanted the comintern foreign office very soon. As world capitalism presently recognized the Soviet Union, Russia in turn gave up her faith in World Revolution and observed the rehabilitation of world capitalism. The perspectives of the Third Congress were greatly reduced when Zinoviev announced: "The Third International has her tactical principles adjusted to a slow development."

The relative consolidation of power of the Bourgeoisie brought about a renunciation of revolutionary activities of the Third International. By formally condemning Levy (Germany) the Comintern refused to support the March revolutionary activities in Germany and stated that the fight of the workers in the future could only be defensive, while the Congress theoretically decided against centralistic leadership in Italy, practically there were not many changes. In Germany, the C.P. amalgamated with the U.S.P. (Independent Socialist) while they refused to remain with the "Ultra Left" K.A.P. (Communist Workers Party). All these selected tactics, of course, brought the European C.P. toward the S.P. The possibilities of "United Front from above" and "the perspectives toward parliamentary Labor-Governments" were marked out, and it was under the influence of those tactics that Brandler before a German Court announced: "It is the goal of our party to establish the dictatorship of the Proletariat under the Weimer (German) Constitution".

#### Russia Becomes A Factor of International World Politics

"Without Russia there will be no restoration of world economy", Radek declared in 1920. This statement not only served the interest of Russian domestic economy, but also those of world capitalism, and enabled Russia to begin negotiations with Western powers. Having been successful in signing satisfactory commercial treaties with several smaller states, she began the fight for participation at the important international conferences. In 1921 she protested vehemently for not having received an invitation to the Washington conference which dealt with colonial policies (sphere of influence) in the Pacific Ocean, China, etc. Her protests were in vain; but in March 1922 she obtained admission to the conference at Geneva which dealt with the economic and financial restoration of Europe. Tchicherin, the Russian foreign secretary, declared in behalf of the Russian delegation: "Soviet Russia is of the opinion that the present time which makes possible the parallel existence of the old capitalist and the gradually developing new social order, necessitates close co-operation between the two social systems, in the interest of a general economic restoration". He continued to point out the reasons for Russia's

wish to obtain friendly relationship and commercial treaties with other powers. And because "the economic restoration of Russia--the largest country in Europe, with the greatest supply of natural resources--is the prerequisite for a restoration in all other countries" therefore Russia is willing to open its boundaries for international transit, to lease millions of hectares of soil for cultivation, and to grant extensive concessions in coal, forest and ore development. The Russian memorandum assured foreign entrepreneurs more than adequate guarantees and promised even to compensate foreign state subjects for losses suffered during the world war. By offering such concessions, Russia hoped to obtain capitalistic support for its own economic restoration. "The financial support from other countries is of utmost importance for the economic restoration of Russia" Tchicherin told Lloyd George, the leader of the British delegation, on April 20, 1922. The eight capitalistic delegations at this conference, however, demanded not only a number of political guarantees but also repayment of the czarist war debts which the Russians could not grant. Consequently, they arrived at no agreement. But in their final memorandum the Russian delegation declared again: "In order to bring about a mutual understanding, Russia is still inclined to grant far reaching concessions providing the other powers do likewise".

For Russia the conference at Geneva was not a success as far as financial support was concerned, but due to the antagonistic constellation of the European powers, it opened the road towards closer connection with Germany and soon afterwards the two governments signed the treaty of Rapallo. Germany recognized Russia de jure, and thereby won an ally in her fight against the Treaty of Versailles. Both governments renounced all claims regarding payment of war debts. "The Rapallo treaty opens the door to Russia for German capital", Preobrazhenski wrote in a pamphlet. The German capital, however, was not utilized in the interest of Russian restoration but instead was used for building German aeroplanes and poison gas factories. It is even suspected that there existed a secret clause in the treaty which called for close military co-operation in case of a German-Polish war similar to the one which called for combined military operation against France should Germany choose to liberate herself from the Treaty of Versailles.

The elimination of Germany as a possible aggressor thru the Treaty of Rapallo induced Russia to seek similar treaties with her border states. She offered to reduce her standing army to 200,000 but when the border states refused to discuss disarmament, Russia, in turn, refused to participate at a conference which was to discuss non-aggression pacts. Thru this maneuver, Russia indirectly



obtained for herself a *raison d'être* for the anticipated German-Polish war--a circumstance which seems to indicate the existence of the above mentioned secret clause. Russia thus became the partner of Germany, a state which bitterly struggled to restore its former imperialist position.

Strengthened by the Treaty of Rapallo, Russia began to exploit the capitalistic antagonisms between the great powers in order to obtain further concessions and thus fortify her own position. The Fourth world congress of the Communist international which assembled early in 1922 in Moscow was given the task of revising the "line" of the Comintern parties along these new developments, a task which--needless to say--was solved in an extraordinary fashion. More distinct than ever before was Russia the center, the alpha and omega, of international Bolshevik politics.

"The greater and stronger Russia becomes, the more powerful will become her revolutionary influence internationally", read the theses about tactics. Questions concerning the German situation were paid added attention and the resolution about the treaty of Versailles spoke of a people which "disarmed and deprived of all defensive means is at the mercy of the imperialist powers". This was said of a Germany whose rulers had just completed a bloody campaign against the revolutionary working class. The congress advised the German and French CP's to fight unitedly against the shameful treaty of Versailles. On questions regarding united front action it was considered important to fraternize on an ever broadening basis with social-democratic organizations. In conclusion, the thesis declared: "Since the CI emphasizes the slogan for united front action of all workers and since the CI permits her various sections to co-operate with groups and parties of the Second and Second-and-a-half Internationals, therefore the CI cannot refrain from entering similar agreements on an international scale". The Comintern was thus led close to the Second International whose immense parliamentary and moral influence--it was hoped--would accelerate the bolsheviks' endeavor to gain capitalist concessions. The result of this change in policy, the theory of a "workers coalition government", was developed. Such a coalition, the Comintern pointed out, not only could be possible but actually would be desirable as it is the logical step towards the complete abolition of the capitalist system.

All these resolutions were made to fit the German situation, and to suit the German military clique with whom the proposed secret military treaty was still an uncertainty. The CPG, however, began in impudent frivolity to prepare the stage for a national peoples front. Later,

at the party congress in Essen (1925), the CPG declared that until 1923 Germany was not an imperialist but a nationally suppressed country and the at that time expected war with France would not have been an imperialist war but instead a national war waged for the purpose of liberating a suppressed people. In such a case, it would have been the duty of the CPG to support it unhesitatingly. It seems hardly conceivable that the ECCI in 1923 considered it possible to carry its "socialism" on the bayonets of the red army to Germany, and after having succeeded in helping her to throw off the Treaty of Versailles undertake the difficult task of crushing the united German bourgeoisie. It is worthy to note that this ideology resembles to a hair the one expounded by the National communist, Wolfheim-Lauffenberg, in 1919. But even Lenin himself renounced whatever basic revolutionary ideas were left in the Comintern when he declared that socialism in the highly developed countries of Europe would not grow out of the capitalistic economic contradictions but rather thru imperialist exploitation of one state by another. (Coll. Works, Vol. XVIII, p. 136; Russ. ed.)

Having thus formulated the new slogans, the Comintern began to identify the German war for national liberation with the German workers revolution. Still greater stress was laid upon the necessity for united front action and parliamentary participation in coalition governments. This change in policy met with success in Thuringia and Saxonia (1923) where CP and SP members formed coalition governments. This sacrifice to their revolutionary principles was made, explained the communist leaders, in order to assure success for the real German revolution which was scheduled to break out in the fall of 1923. At the last minute, however, after all plans had been carefully worked out, the orders for the uprising were withdrawn "due to the treachery of the SPG and the inability of certain communist leaders". The fact however, is that the Comintern had suddenly discovered that an armed insurrection of the German proletariat would not lie in the interest of Russia's foreign policy and for that reason the German proletariat had to be sacrificed. With this step the Comintern, which for years had subordinated the world revolution to inner Russian development, completely abandoned the last straws of revolutionary class-consciousness. Russia realized that neither a war against France nor a revolution in Germany would be of any benefit to her. She accepted as the lesser evil the "status quo", and thereby laid the foundation for the now "famous" slogan of "socialism in one country".



### The Pacification of Russia's Western Policy

Although a quick economic recovery was achieved in the NEP period, the final results, nevertheless, were considerably below the Bolshevik expectations. The difficulties of construction increased; the first planned experiments were experiments outside of the economic system, and the foreign concessions continued to be of very moderate size. Therefore, the energies of the Bolsheviks were concentrated on the interior situation, and there the difficulties demanded their whole attention. Their foreign policies towards Western capitalism were of a purely diplomatic-defensive function: development of economic relations, protection against all disturbances and interferences, no matter whether of war-like or revolutionary character.

Russia's relations to Germany lost their former intimacy, although further cooperation was assured on a remote scale under the leadership of German "Reichswehr" circles. A German-Russian commercial treaty was signed in 1925 which for a long time occupied the first place in the Russian business. In 1926 there even resulted a non-aggression pact which evidently represented the continuation of the German-Russian cooperation in the Polish question.

Apart from this, further relations between Russia and other capitalist powers were developed. Still in 1923 it declared its willingness to participate in a conference for the restriction of sea-armaments. In the course of 1924 it finally succeeded in obtaining the official (.volkerrechtliche) recognition from a number of countries. Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Austria, Greece, Sweden, Denmark, Mexico, Hedschas, Hungaria, France, etc. resumed normal diplomatic relations with Russia in 1924. Beginning of 1925 Japan followed suit. Only the U.S.A., which was sufficiently occupied with its own internal problems, did not follow.

The fifth world congress of the Comintern, which took place in the summer of 1924, responded adequately to the "changed situation", i.e. the changed character of the foreign policies. Thus it took notice of the "beginning of a certain democratic-peace phase" in the world policies, and it praised the Soviet Union as the only country with a policy of "real peace". As usual, the responsibility for the German defeat was denied by the leadership of the Comintern. For this they held responsible, according to the resolution on the report of the ECCI, the "deceit of the leaders of the SPG and the inability of the leadership of the CPG." The united front tactics were now regarded as only "a revolutionary

method of agitation and mobilization of the masses"; the "right deviation" of Brandler-Thalheimer was recorded, (with the simultaneous election of Brandler as honorary chairman of the congress!); and the short era Ruth Fischer-Maslow was approved of to conceal the defeat of the Comintern. Practically, the strengthened "ultra left" phraseology was combined with purely parliamentary perspectives. Although the Socialist Parties were called the third parties of the bourgeoisie, the possibility of the formation of "workers' governments" in a "number of countries" was viewed visible. Such governments would "objectively" mean progress as they announced the decay of the bourgeoisie. The task of the "real followers of the proletarian revolution" would consist in "transforming the so-called workers' governments into 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'". However, the parliamentary-character of the Comintern doubtlessly reached the limit with the consideration of the German defeat. It was declared: "After the severest defeat of the revolutionary movement in Germany, after a subsequent inner crisis and after the most brutal persecutions, the Communist Party of Germany succeeded in quickly reassembling its ranks, created a strong and able leadership and demonstrated, through a brilliant election victory with three and three-quarter million votes, its revolutionary force as being larger and stronger than ever before". Thus the revolutionary movement in Germany in the autumn of 1923, defeated with the aid of the Comintern, gave the latter cause to celebrate the "revolutionary force" of an "election victory", which, incidentally, lasted only to December of the same year.

Having switched over to this course, the Comintern parties now represented nothing but a thorn in the flesh of the capitalist countries, operated in a half-putschistic and half-parliamentary fashion, and representing a reserve iron which could at a later time eventually again be used on the soviet anvil. In this course the leaders of the Comintern took care that the fire was properly banked. Already in 1925 the "ultra lefts" Fischer-Maslow were disposed of, an action which lead to the splitting off of the Trotskyan "Lenin Group" and which resulted in bringing the kowtowing Thalmann to the foreground. In reality, Russia tried to suppress any revolutionary movement. Although Germany did not represent any field for revolutionary action after the shameful and fightless defeat of 1923, England now became the place of an increasing crisis. Unable to build an effective C.P. in England, the Bolsheviks made every possible effort to find a counter-force against the sharp anti-Russian course of the English bourgeoisie. They accepted the ultra-reformistic trade unions as this counter-force and figured on their parliamentary influence. From 1925 to 1927 the glorious Anglo-Russian Committee was active,



the united front between the leadership of the Russian State and English reformism, as a united front against the anti-Russian diplomacy of England as well as against the English proletariat. In 1926 the gigantic English miners' strike took form, the largest workers' fight in English history. The British trade unions, allied with the Russians, suppressed the general strike and prevented extension of the fight to the front of all the English working class. During nine hard months of terrific struggling, neither trade unions nor the Bolsheviks came to the aid of the starving English miners who were giving their blood for the proletarian sake. Carefully avoiding any steps of attack, the Bolsheviks continued the activity of the Anglo-Russian Committee, as their diplomatic interests were worth far more to them than the interests of the English and the international proletariat. The Bolsheviks tried to avert any danger of war against their country, but simultaneously they prevented the European revolution which would threaten their shaking social system just as much as a military detonation.

#### Russia Turns East

Abandoning their hope for a speedy revolution in Europe, the bolsheviks began to direct their "revolutionary activities" towards the East. At the time the Comintern was calling off the German revolution in October 1923, they were busy organizing the first international peasant congress. With this instrument--the Peasant International--they hoped to embrace all colonial and half-colonial peasant countries and unite them--as they had done before with the Communist Parties--under the leadership of Moscow. In spite of the fact that their attempt met with little success due to adverse objective conditions, they never ceased to bend every effort toward achieving that goal. Even as late as 1928, the sixth world congress of the Comintern instructed the ECCI to renew its activity towards the founding of an international peasant soviet. We may recall here that the fifth world congress (Summer 1924) had already ratified the organization of the peasant international and had instructed its sections to work in closer contact with the peasant organizations in order to consolidate everywhere "workers and peasants blocs". These resolutions were made to fit the situation in China and to introduce the new policy under which the Chinese Communist Party was compelled to cooperate with the Chinese nationalist party, the KUO-MIN-TANG.

The theses condoning the new tactics frankly stated that "the Comintern had paid too much attention to the development in Europe" and that it is now of utmost importance to further the development of those mass movements in the

East which struggle to liberate themselves from the imperialist oppression and from which--as Stalin declared--would spring the decisive initiative for the world revolution. But also here the bolsheviks played a double role. While they endeavored to mobilize the peasant masses, at the same time they signed pacts of mutual agreement and understanding with the respective governments. In the pact with Turkey, they renounced all revolutionary activity because Kemal Pasha held the key position to Minor Asia about which a silent but bitter struggle was being waged between Russia and England. That under Kemal Pasha's regency every Communist was imprisoned or even hanged did not bother the Russian bolsheviks. The treaty with Turkey in 1926 followed the treaty with Afghanistan which provided mutual armed support should a third party trespass the borders of either of the two signatories. Russia thereby hoped to prevent England from using Afghanistan as a military base against her. A similar pact was signed in 1927 with Persia. These treaties were important to Russia insofar as they protected her South-Eastern frontier against an English invasion.

Of far greater importance, however, were the treaties she signed with China in 1924. The Chinese governments in Manchukuo and Peiping recognized her de jure. Russia annulled the czarist treaties, renounced all compensation due her for the boxer rebellion, and established China's right, on an equal basis, to the Eastern Railroad. This treaty brought about closer relationship to the Kuomintang which was openly supported by the bolsheviks. An harmonious co-operation between the Chinese Republic and Russia appeared to be a certainty.

#### The Betrayal of the Chinese Workers Revolution

The bolsheviks were victorious in Russia because they had been able to combine the interests of the workers with those of the peasants, and in their conception, the world revolution was merely a repetition of this procedure on an international scale. Although they had to realize that this policy was instrumental in the defeat of the European proletariat, they nevertheless hoped to employ it successfully in China.

Since 1925, the revolutionary movement of the Chinese proletariat had registered an hitherto unknown upswing, and China became the only country in Asia in which it was possible for the Comintern to build up a strong and active party. In conformity with the leninist-stalinist theory of the national liberation of imperialistically oppressed nations, this party--which had led heroic struggles against an infantile capitalism--was compelled to join the Kuomintang. The bolsheviks instructed the CPCh to organize united front bodies with the Bourgeoisie



and middle class. In 1926, the Kuomintang began in Canton the military offensive against the rebellious Northern provinces. Within two years they were the sole rulers of China. This speedy success had been made possible by the many revolts of the peasants and workers against the Northern generals. Shanghai was conquered in 1927, again with the aid of the workers who had risen against the Peiping troops. After the capture of Shanghai, the victorious Kuomintang general Chiang-Kai-shek demanded disarmament of the proletariat. The CPCh, following the advice of their Russian comrades, surrendered all weapons after which Chiang-Kai-shek ordered the persecution and beheading of thousands of rebellious workers. Moscow betrayed the proletariat of Shanghai because it considered a mutual understanding with the bourgeois elements and their butcher-general of greater importance. The CPCh had to remain within the Kuomintang but shortly later it was dealt another severe blow. Instead of attacking the Northern stronghold Peiping, Chiang-kai-shek's army marched against Wuhan where a communist government had been erected. The leaders of this government--all of them were former influential delegates to the Comintern--saved their necks by joining the invading hostile forces. This development must be considered as the logical consequence of the national policy the Comintern had pursued in China. Moscow tried to white-wash herself by expelling scores of 'unworthy' leaders.

The proletarian uprising of the Canton workers against the regime of Chiang-Kai-shek in December 1927--which was organized by Heinz-Neumann--was not only a hazardous adventure, but a deliberate crime. Thousands of workers lost their lives in what was known beforehand as a losing battle, and thousands of others were massacred after the struggle. The Canton Soviet of 1927 can be compared with the Paris Commune of 1871: both struck a deathly blow to the revolutionary working class. The defeats at Shanghai and Canton--instigated and provoked by the Comintern--choked the Chinese revolutionary movement.

Only very slowly and laboring under great difficulties, the CPCh began to rebuild the party but not any more as a workers organization but instead sought to recruit new members from the peasantry. Since 1930 she has been actively engaged in many peasant uprisings and was also instrumental in the formation of the so-called Soviet-China, which comprises a few provinces in the interior. Moscow managed to remain the adviser and guide, and at this front it is really aggressive. But as Russia's activity in Eastern Asia embodies grave consequences to English interests, the latter untiringly endeavors to head off the Russian drive by irritating diplomatic maneuvers in Europe which compel Moscow to act with utmost caution and further compromises to her Western neighbors.

Should China consolidate in one form or another, it is highly probable that Russia would completely abandon her interest in the Chinese revolution--certain recent events point already in that direction--and would confine herself to the "building of socialism" within her own boundaries. She would then--as far as Asia is concerned--follow the road she has pursued in Europe since 1923.

#### On the Way To the "League of Nations"

When--after a four-year intermission!--the sixth world congress of the Comintern assembled in the year 1928, the liquidation of the Chinese workers' revolution had only to be recorded. It had by this time been noted even in Moscow that the Kuomintang had "gone definitively over into the camp of the counter-revolution" and inflicted "severe defeats" on peasants and workers of China. The orientation upon the peasant movement was clearly expressed and entered as the last credit item in Comintern affairs: "The colonial countries are at present the most dangerous sector for the front of world imperialism", declared the Theses on the revolutionary movements in the colonies and semi-colonies. Accordingly, very detailed directions were worked out for bolshevist policy in the larger colonial and semi-colonial areas, and orders were given for the forming there of Comintern parties. It is a matter of note that the theses with reference to colonial policy occupy 45 pages in the official protocol of the congress, while the theses on tactics of the Comintern as a whole require only 31 pages. Moscow activity was therefore unequivocally directed toward the East, and in fact toward the peasant East.

If the Comintern adopted a more aggressive tone on the questions of European policy as well, that was, on the one hand, a natural consequence of the altered political situation in Russia itself; it was also, however, the new deceptive manoeuvre for distracting attention from the policy of drawing still closer to the bourgeoisie of Western Europe.

In 1928 the NEP-policy came to its final close. On the question of forced organization and concentration of industry and agriculture, the bolshevist government went over to downright state-capitalism, to the offensive. The first five-year plan was proclaimed, collectivization introduced, the struggle taken up against NEP-speculators, small traders and kulaks. In harmony with this intensified course of action, the sixth congress proclaimed the famous theory of the "third period", which was to lead to war between the imperialist powers and to



war against the Soviet Union as well as to the utmost sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism. The year 1929 was the year of the highest post-war boom of the capitalist countries; nevertheless in this same year the CP of Germany, for example, worked the revolutionary watchwords to death by means of continual calls for strikes or general strikes, calls which met with general ridicule. They drove the unemployed into senseless actions which used up their energies before the subsequent crisis began to require the throwing in of the proletarian forces. The rapprochement with the SP was broken off, this party was declared the representative of "social fascism", the trade unions were "split" by means of the "red union opposition" (RGO) fiasco, work in the factories was given up in favor of the exclusive organization of the unemployed.

At the same time, with the turn in German foreign policy, the sixth congress laid it down that the anti-soviet block of imperialist powers was completed. It needed this false and delusive thesis because the Russians, with the close of the Chinese adventure, had renounced all really revolutionary action on the part of the international working class and accordingly, wearing the halo of the five-year plan, shoved into the foreground the decorative slogan of "socialism in one country". World imperialism vs. Soviet Union: that became the formula of the Comintern's perspectives as simplified by the Stalinist regime, while at the same time the Soviet Union, for the same reason of furthering the five-year-plan policy, threw itself definitely into the course of economic and politico-pacifistic understanding with the imperialist world powers.

The efforts to get into the imperialistic-diplomatic business of the League-of-Nations countries were begun by the Russians even a number of years before this time. Participation in the first session of the preparatory disarmament commission was only formally declined in the spring of 1926, since the session was held in Switzerland and this country had still refused to give any satisfaction for the murder of Vorovski (1923 in Geneva). At the end of 1927, at the same time that Chiang Kai-shek was shooting down Neumann's insurrection in Canton, the Russians went into the preparatory disarmament conference. They threw havoc into international diplomacy with their proposal for the "complete abolition of all fighting forces on land, on sea and in the air", but soon fell in with the "reasonable" rules of imperialist foreign policy. As early as March 1928, they drew back, in the "securities committee" of the League of Nations, from their thesis of the complete to that of a partial disarmament. Litvinov explained: "Since our proposal for a complete and general disarmament has been met by most

of the delegations with the idea of a partial disarmament, the Soviet delegation has decided to look about for a common ground with the other delegations, even though it be on the restricted field of such a partial disarmament". The stage on which the groupings, coalitions and counter-coalitions for the future imperialist world war were forged and disrupted had been entered upon. The Russians displayed a very high degree of diplomatic skill in the fog of this and the following disarmament conferences, which in themselves were merely designed to conceal the continuous and intensive arming of all the participants, inclusive of the Soviet Union.

In the summer of 1928, the arming powers concluded the Kellogg pact, which was to be a many-sided agreement regarding the prohibition of war as an instrument of foreign policy, met with enthusiastic approval throughout the world, was signed by all the more important States and led practically to this: that, firstly, the States waged wars without a formal declaration to that effect (e.g., Japan in Manchuria), and, secondly, the League of Nations, in the case of any military conflict, declared its incompetence as sponsor of the Kellogg pact. Tschitcherin referred to the Kellogg pact as a part of the war preparation against the Soviet Union, with which expression he probably meant to explain and justify the adherence of Russia.

#### Peace Diplomacy in the World Crisis of Capitalism

The advent of the world crisis was accompanied by a great increase of economic and political uncertainty in world policy. Accordingly, the Russians intensified their endeavors to assure economic and political understanding with the capitalist Powers and to hold off all outer disturbances from their work of construction at home. The year 1929 saw the conclusion of an eastern Kellogg pact, in which Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Rumania and Russia undertook to recognize the Kellogg Pact independently of its ratification by the 14 States by which it was originally concluded. This eastern protocol was adhered to later by Turkey and Persia.

The economic business with the capitalist States made progress. In 1930 a trade agreement was entered into with England, and the one with Italy (dating from 1924) was considerably expanded. In March 1931 the Russians took part in the international agrarian conference at Rome so as to promote the export of Soviet cereals. They likewise participated in the agrarian and export conference at Stresa in the autumn of 1932. The relations with German capitalism became so close that in the spring of 1931 there journeyed to Moscow a number of big German industrialists who conducted negotiations regarding ex-



pansion of Germany's "russian business" and came away with over a half-billion gold marks in orders alone. The soviet orders provided 300 to 400 thousand german workers with "wages and bread", as the CP press of Germany proudly announced, and a part of the bankrupt german capitalism with profits and the possibility of existence, as the same press modestly failed to state.

The economic diplomacy of the Russians was mostly conducted, however, only in the interest of their political diplomacy. And in this latter field they were immeasurably more active. In the spring of 1931 they introduced in the european committee of the League of Nations the draft of a general non-aggression pact, which in autumn they laid before the League itself in the shape of an economic non-aggression pact. These drafts contained, like all the later agreements and proposals of the sort, a definition of the "aggressor". All these definitions were distinguished by a formal exactness which met with general approval. In exchange, the Bolsheviks practically struck from the soviet lexicon all the conceptions regarding the essence of imperialistic war as they had been entered there by Lenin. They broke up imperialist policy into an "aggressive" and a "defensive" one, and thereby went back to the shabby ideology with which parties of the Second International in the year 1914 justified their support of war being waged by their national and imperialistic bourgeoisie. And that was done for quite the same reasons, for the Russians were seeking alliance with imperialistic bourgeoisies, and they had to look in advance for the ideological justification of such a coalition policy with imperialist groups, a policy the practice of which had been delayed by the Social Democracy until the outbreak of the World War.

The Bolsheviks pointed the way throughout the world for the system of regional pacts which distinguishes the distracted foreign policy of imperialism in the world crisis. In the year 1932, they concluded the non-aggression pacts with the countries on the western border of Russia: Finland, Poland, Latvia, Estonia and Rumania (with the exclusion of the bessarabian question). This diplomatic act of securing the russian west boundary was followed by the conclusion of the non-aggression pact with France, which was ratified in February 1933. This diplomatic step released Russia from Germany and paved the way for the great change of front in european policy which was accomplished with Hitler's accession to power. Soviet diplomacy had well calculated the change of imperialist horses in soviet foreign policy.

In the year 1932 there were still in existence, besides, non-aggression pacts with a number of other countries:

with Germany, with Italy, with Turkey, with China, etc. Diplomatic relations with the government of Chiang Kai-shek, which had been broken off in December 1927, were likewise resumed in December 1932. The upheavals in the course of the world crisis led a number of other countries to recognize the Soviet Union definitively: Spain and the United States in 1933, Hungary, Rumania and Czechoslovakia in 1934. The recognition on the part of the three latter came about in the wake of the franco-russian alliance policy, while the U.S.A. became reconciled to the act because this country could no longer dispense with the Soviet Union in the game for pre-eminence in Eastern Asia, the game against Japan.

The sharp turn in german foreign policy--onto the line of Hitler's old plans for colonization in the East--brought about, in conjunction with the intensification of german arming activity, a reordering of the entire foreign policy of Europe. Since the methods of fascist domestic policy were also applied in german diplomacy, Hitler Germany did indeed offend its Versailles opponents, but nevertheless carried out its aims without delay. An essential success of this policy was the winning of Poland away from allegiance to the french policy. In consequence, Russia saw herself menaced anew on her western boundary. She countered by extending (April 1934) for a period of ten years the non-aggression pacts with the three baltic states. This diplomatic step was hastened by Germany's refusal to sign, as Russia had proposed, a protocol regarding the inviolability of the baltic states.

#### Entry Into the League of Nations

The Bolsheviks have been and are miles removed from conducting anti-fascist foreign policy. They have been emphasizing for years their good relations with Italy, a country with which, on the grounds of certain anti-german interests held in common, they concluded in September 1933 a new non-aggression and neutrality pact. If the Russians have turned from being an opponent of the League of Nations and made themselves one of its members, if from being an enemy of the Versailles treaty they have become its sponsor, if they have converted Germany from a support to a point of attack of their european diplomacy,--that was determined merely "thru certain changes in the policy of Germany", as Stalin declared at the 17th party congress of the CPSU in 1934. He further expressly stated that this diplomatic turn was not caused by the Fascists. On the contrary: "Certainly, we are far from being charmed by the fascist regime in Germany. Still, it is not a question here of fascism, as may be clear if only because of the fact that fascism in Italy, for example, has not stood in the way of the Soviet Union's establishing the best relations with that country." The question



is in general, he said, merely one of drawing closer to "these or those countries which are not interested in disturbing the peace". With which Italian fascism, just as in the minds of certain German pacifists, marches up as a defender of the "peace".

The change of front on the part of bolshevist foreign policy was therefore the consequence of the change of front on the part of German foreign policy. The Russians were zigzagging between the imperialistic Great Powers in order to put thru their "peace policy"; that is, in order to bring about and support that coalition of powers which at any given moment may appear the most reliable for warding off a military attack on the SU and for isolating any aggressive powers--today, Germany and Japan. France, on her part, as the main pillar of the bankrupt Versailles system and, standing next door to Germany, the most directly menaced by Hitler, became one of the main champions of understanding with Russia. She was able to plan her great counter-moves against the new German foreign policy, if not without casualties, still on the whole in accordance with the recipe of a preventive military encircling of Hitler Germany (Poland is a big hole in this ring). In the autumn of 1934, on France's initiative, Russia was invited by 30 states to join the League of Nations. The invitation was opposed by only three of the small European States, which could still afford to preach the rescue of capitalist morality from Bolshevism: fascist Portugal, half-fascist Holland and democratic Switzerland. Pravda of Sept. 18, 1934, gave as the grounds for the invitation into the League of Nations, the fear on the part of the inviting capitalist Powers that "the anti-soviet plans of the adventurist elements among the imperialists might be the prelude to a new world war directed also against a number of imperialist Powers". Izvestia, however, explained on the previous day that the capitalist world is divided into two groups: one which at present wants peace, and another which is looking for the war adventure. The Powers adhering to the League of Nations were henceforth, after the withdrawal of Japan and Germany, regarded as the peace group (Italy-Abyssinia!). Stalin, on his part, explained that with the adherence of Russia, the League of Nations could have a certain braking effect "for postponing or preventing the occurrence of warlike actions". Litvinov, finally, pointed in Geneva to the international cooperation of the SU with the predominant part of the capitalist Powers on the economic, artistic, social, scientific, and political fields, a co-operation which had now been crowned by the common goal of the "organization of peace".

After the impotence of the League of Nations in all questions of assuring the peace and preventing any warlike attacks in all the years of its existence had by

this time been revealed to even the rosiest of the pacifist-optimists, the pacifistic effectualness of the League was at last discovered by the Bolsheviks. Behind their peace protestations there certainly stands a knowledge about the facts. But they are carrying on in capitalist diplomacy, and it demands that offensive as well as defensive military alliances be clothed with pacifist phrases.

While the entry into the League of Nations has brought the Russians a great number of further diplomatic successes, among which the politico-commercial rapprochement with England is rated as one of the most important, practically it has above all legitimized the co-operation between Russia and France. For one thing, Russia was concerned with the continuation of the security policy on her western boundary, so that as early as December 1934 negotiations were started with a view to the eastern pact, which was to be guaranteed primarily by France. These endeavors, which for the present have miscarried, owing to resistance of Germany and Poland, the Russians have not yet given up. The real, essential point of joining the League of Nations is, however, the alliance with France, which doubtless is based upon a military agreement and provides for mutual security against a German aggression.

But, true to the very methods of imperialist diplomacy, Bolshevism from the earliest times of its existence has had two irons in the fire. For a long while the Comintern was this second iron. That, however, is past. Today the Russians are concerned with keeping their hands free for new readjustments of their foreign policy, for broadening and altering their alliance front between the imperialist Powers themselves. This has been confirmed in the first place by their east-asiatic policy, insofar as their dealings there have been with Japan. Since the beginning of the Manchurian advance, they have endeavored to come to an understanding with Japan (sale of the Eastern Railway for a song) and to bring about the conclusion of a non-aggression pact. But the European policy of the SU is likewise a policy of attempts at rapprochement with its principal adversaries of the moment. The former co-operation between Russia and Germany is unforgotten in Moscow; unforgotten the speculation on the plans of the bourgeois wing of the Reichswehr generals, which still represents Schleicher's conception of a co-operation with Russia (the imperialistic German bourgeoisie has no desire to conquer a "colonizing land" in the East; it is looking for imperialistic goals). The Bolsheviks are counting upon a possible break-thru of these forces in Germany, Molotov declared at the 7th Soviet Congress in January 1935 that "we had and have no other desire than to continue maintaining good relations with Germany. Everyone knows that the Soviet Union is filled with a



profound impulse to develop its relations with all States, those with fascist government not excluded". The "ultra-nationalistic race theories" of the National Socialists, Molotov emphasized, "naturally" form no hindrance to the development of the russo-german relations, and added: "Altho we have no very high opinion of these 'theories', we do not conceal our respect for the german people as one of the greatest peoples of the present epoch". The question is merely as to "what precisely is at the basis of the foreign policy of present-day Germany", namely, the question whether Hitler's conception of german foreign policy still holds.

#### The Inner-Political Presuppositions of the Latest Phase of Russian Foreign Policy

The actual line of russian foreign policy at any given time is thus in large measure determined by the momentary constellation of the imperialist Powers. The measure in which the Bolsheviks carry on this foreign policy depends, however, on their inner forces. And these in turn have recently been subject to significant shifts.

The regime of bolshevist absolutism has passed a critical point. In accord with its origin and its conditions of social equilibrium, in the first period of its development, it supported itself decisively upon the russian working class. The proletariat appeared as the politically and economically privileged (even tho very modestly privileged) class. The absolutistic regime of Bolshevism supported itself predominantly upon the industrial class in order to form a counter-weight to the peasantry, which numerically constituted an unprecedented majority, and in order to build up the industrial state-capitalism at forced tempo. The industrializing of Russia, however, made it possible, in turn, to destroy the private capitalism of the peasants and to collectivize the land. An agrarian collective capitalism arose which, on the one hand, was capable of defending its own interests as against the state apparatus as well as against the working class, and which, on the other, was able to become the supporting foundation for the state apparatus itself.

With the successes of the policy of the second five-year plan, the Bolsheviks have announced the transformation of Russia from an agrarian into an industrial country. Between the years 1928 and 1934 the russian proletariat increased from 17.3 to 28.1 percent of the total population. The number of collective peasants mounted from 2.9 to 45.9 percent, while the number of individual peasants declined from 72.9 to 22.5 percent. The working class, to be sure, still constitutes a minority of the population. However, it is not only highly organized industrially; it also turns out today the predominant part of all soviet

products. This preponderance, however, compels the absolutistic regime of the Bolsheviks to draw up the agrarian class as its main support, to shift the center of gravity of the state apparatus to the weaker side, so as to maintain the equilibrium of the two classes and thereby, for the absolutistic peak of the pyramid, the possibility of governing.

The russian collectivized peasantry becomes the privileged class of the Soviet Union. While the industrial ascent of Russia down to the year 1928 was accomplished at the expense of the peasantry, the collectivizing itself was accomplished at the expense of the proletariat. The billions invested for the sake of russian agriculture had to be withdrawn from the industrial sector of the russian economy, and are in themselves sufficient to explain in large part the tense social situation in which the russian proletariat found itself in spite of all five-year-plan successes. The doing away with bread cards and the succeeding rise in the price of bread was a present to the collectivized peasants, to whom in 1932 Stalin had promised "well being". In the last four years, the government has expended about five billion rubles for organizing the machine and tractor stations, a sum which had to be raised by russian industry. The money indebtedness of the collectives to the State down to the year 1933, amounting to a total of 435 million rubles, was struck off the books at the end of 1934, the money accordingly presented to the peasants as a gift.

Ostensibly, the collective enterprises, as even the Men-shhevikess Domanevskaya has now discovered, are of socialist character. Stalin had, however, as early as the 17th<sup>th</sup> party congress, declared that the petty-bourgeois equalitarianism of the communes must be liquidated. The agricultural collectives are guilds, which leave considerable play to the collective ownership of the peasant. In Feb. 1935, at the congress of the collective peasants, model statutes drafted by Stalin for the collective enterprises were adopted. These statutes have deeded the land to the collective enterprises for all time, as was declared by the secretary of the Moscow party organization (v. Rundschau, 1935, No. 28). The nationalized soil has been made the private possession of the peasant collectives. "Every collective peasant feels now," the secretary said further, "that the general assembly of the members of a collective economy is master over the collective-economy property, that no 'plenipotentiary' of any sort can exclude him from the collective economy, that he has an equal voice in determining the common affairs of the collective economy." The sharpest tones were adopted in condemning the "absolutely inadmissible blundering intrusions into the life of the collectives" on the part of "certain party organizations", to whom it was made



clear that "people who infringe the collective-economy statutes cannot be tolerated either in the party apparatus or that of the soviets". The collective peasants, unrestricted masters of their properties, were accordingly released from the tutelage of the party organs. The "leading role of the proletariat" over the peasantry was thereby definitively abolished.

And as it has been economically, so also politically. Hand in hand with this astounding reform of the collectives went the abolition of the formal disadvantaging of the peasantry on the political field. The 7th soviet congress introduced equal, direct and secret suffrage and thereby a sort of "soviet parliamentarism" by means of which the weight of the peasantry can be thrown into the scale in all cases of voting. The future soviet congresses will therefore, just like the congresses of the parliaments which are subordinated to them, be dominated by peasant majorities. The peak of the bolshevist state apparatus thereby frees itself from the pressure of the proletariat, a pressure which it once needed in its apparatus but which would now necessarily turn out to be too dangerous for it. For in spite of all dictatorial securities, the soviet regime after all exists only on condition of utilizing the country's mass forces, to which it has to render account simultaneously and between which it has to manoeuvre.

The transition of the bolshevist system of absolutism on to the peasantry as its main support meant, however, the deprivileging of the party strata of proletarian origin. It represents, moreover, such a break with the party tradition that it could not come off without producing inner convulsions in the party apparatus, regardless of the fact that this party had already been purged dozens of times. Stalin was obliged once more to oppose his party in order to break its conservatism. He did this with the usual bolshevist ruthlessness, in that he introduced, if not the gradual and complete dismantling of the party apparatus, yet after all the further depoliticizing of the party. If the predominance of the proletarian class in soviet absolutism consisted in the factual superiority of the party apparatus over the state apparatus, while Stalin combined and dominated both, the predominance of the peasantry in the soviet system will bring it about that the state apparatus takes a position above the party apparatus.

So far, this fundamental upheaval has brought forth two measures of the greatest significance. The first was the liquidation of the union of old Bolsheviks; that is, the destruction of the center of the "proletarian"-revolutionary tradition of the CPR. (According to bourgeois press reports, Krupskaya was also taken into custody.)

The second of these measures was the reorganization (as it was shamefacedly expressed) of the Young Communist League. Heretofore, this League was organized according to the "production principle" like the CP itself and anchored in the factories. It rated as one of the party's most spirited weapons in the factories and played an important part there as organizer of the shock brigades, as gatherer of the state loans, etc. It was a lively political instrument of the bolshevist party; perhaps the liveliest, for the youth organization was always at the same time a center of the most various oppositions and an exponent of "bolshevist self-criticism", of which nothing more has been heard for some time. As the relatively weakest link of the party, the Young Communist League had to knock under first. As early as Feb. 22, 1935, hence directly following the 7th soviet congress, which elevated the peasant class to the throne, its "reorganization" was decided upon. This decision was complied with by the June plenum of the central committee of the youth organization. The social-democratic standpoint, that the youth organization has no political, but only educational functions, was here converted into fact. The youth organizations in the factories are being broken up. The YCL is being redistributed into seven sections: working-class youth, peasant youth, young pioneers, students, school children, leading YCL organs, juvenile work of the state and trade organizations. Politically, the YCL is thereby liquidated, and the field that is left to it is the youthful idyl: "Like a provident gardener," writes Pravda in an editorial around the middle of June, "it is called upon to bring up millions of people, to form their view of the world, to instruct, to nourish and to cherish them."

#### The Liquidation of the Comintern

With the accomplishment of this inner-political turn--the political NEP-turn of Stalin's--the last traditional restraints have fallen which had previously still existed with respect to bolshevist foreign policy by reason of the existence of the communist parties in Europe. The co-operation of russian state-capitalism with the monopolistic and in part openly fascist imperialism is henceforth unimpeded by any exterior consideration whatsoever. The embarrassing revolutionary phraseology can finally be discarded.

Hitherto, the "world revolution" was at least on paper recognized as the first and most essential guarantee against an intervention on the part of imperialist Powers. Practically, the Bolsheviks relied, however, exclusively on their diplomacy and on that institution which was rendered possible with its aid: the highly organized and technicized Red Army. The late acting president of the Soviet of people's commissars, Kuibushev, has even



clothed this undisguisedly in words. In January 1935, at the third soviet congress of Moscow, he stated: "While we are fighting for peace on the international arena, we must nevertheless consider that the best assurance against a war, against an intervention, is as before the increasing might of the armed defender of our Fatherland, the Red Army of Workers and Peasants".

Even before this time, the proletarians who joined the communist parties in good revolutionary faith and took upon themselves the martyrdom of the fascist terror no longer counted among the Bolsheviks. In general, they were remembered with declarations of sympathy or protest resolutions which were not allowed to affect in the slightest degree the policy of concluding pacts of peace and friendship between the "Fatherland of all Workers" and their fascist oppressors. Occasionally, however, the hired writers of the Bolsheviks also expressed their sentiments more openly. Thus, on the occasion of the conclusion of the new non-aggression pact with Italy, Peri wrote in the Rundschau (1933, No. 33) with a shameless cynicism of which the equal would no doubt be hard to discover: "On the part of our italian brothers in arms who are suffering in the penitentiaries and on the islands of exile, the fact that their torturers are compelled to deal with the representatives of that revolutionary order for whose triumph the noblest of our comrades have offered up their freedom will be interpreted as an incentive to resistance and to struggle." The communist worker had accordingly long been abandoned when the Comintern was still conducting the "anti-fascist" pseudo-struggle against those Powers which were already tied up in the closest manner with the Soviet Union.

With the latest franco-russian pact, however, in which it was no longer a question of a diplomatic agreement, but of direct military co-operation, the leaders of Bolshevism were obliged to give up even the appearance of a "revolutionary" equivocalness. Obviously, the French insisted upon guarantees against a disturbance policy on the part of the CP of France. Stalin gave them. He assured Laval, on the occasion of his visit to Moscow, that France is naturally obliged to adopt measures in the interest of her military defense. Izvestia wrote on May 16: "The task of the public opinion of both countries is the support of the policy of their governments, which is the policy of peace and of defense."

The pact with France was followed by that with Czechoslovakia, which forthwith adhered to the franco-russian pact by reason of her menaced position between Hitler Germany and contested Austria. The Izvestia presented the grounds for this new alliance (until 1934 no diplomatic relations had existed between the two countries)

in the following words: "German fascism, in order to conceal its policy of conquest, may fashion a theory according to which the slavie peoples supply the manure of history. But the Soviet Union, while taking no stock in any sort of pan-slavic masquerades, vouches in every manner that it deems the defense of the slavie peoples, who are in danger of being attacked, as no less well grounded and worthy of support than is the defense of France".

Since the remaining apparatus of the Comintern parties no longer has any life of its own, the readjustment of their policy to the new situation was not accompanied by the slightest inner difficulties. The policy of military alliances with capitalist States required the liquidation of the disturbance policy of the Comintern parties in the countries in question. Moscow carried out this liquidation, which presages the early end of the european CP's in general. The way to this end is twofold. In the first place, it was necessary that the french and czech parties should swing into the line of national defense. That occurred promptly. Of course, the french CP was faced with the difficult task of combining this line with the traditional anti-militarism of the french working masses. It spoke cautiously and diplomatically. "The mutual assistance embraces the corresponding measures for the defense of peace", wrote Magnien on May 16 in L'Humanite. "In order to preserve the peace, a Bolshevik should do everything", declared Vaillant-Couturier, two days later in the same sheet. He compared the pact with the New Economic Policy (NEP). It was a question, he said, of gaining time in order to postpone the war and protect "our socialist Fatherland". No other reasons, he added, are discoverable in the words of Stalin. Furthermore, it was protested that the CPF remains the defender of the french soldiers and wants to win the army. Practically, however, all that remained to do was to demand that the fascist and reactionary officers be driven out of the army, since one could not after all confide to them the serious defense of the USSR.

In Czechoslovakia, where nationalism on the one hand and the social-democratic tameness of the CP on the other were considerably greater, the matter was rendered easier. Sverma, a newly elected parliamentarian of the CPCz, declared on May 24 at a CP meeting in Prague that the czech communists, in case the czechoslovakian army would fight consistently against german imperialism, would support this struggle and come out for the army. He declared himself in favor of maintaining the independence of the czech nation, which could be assured by an army purged of fascists.

In order to make this "defence-of-the-fatherland" policy



effectual in the policy of the allied capitalist nations, in harmony with the designs of soviet diplomacy, the Comintern would once more have to seek out the corresponding parliamentary field. That meant practically that the Comintern parties had to be annexed to the Social Democracy of the countries in question. The united front with the heads of "social fascism" became all of a sudden the one and only line-true watchword of the various CP's. In France there arose the "front commun", releasing waves of enthusiasm and fake activity. If the negotiations as a whole did not proceed so smoothly as might have been expected, this was owing to the fact that differences arose regarding the question of the extension of this front. While the CP wanted to draw in even the left-bourgeois parties (if coalition anyhow, then all the way to the democratic bourgeoisie!), the Social Democrats opposed to this their traditional No, and thus acquired among the french workers the reputation of being the most radical, the "leftest" of all the parties. However, Blum, at the congress of his party in Muhlhausen (June 1935) could not deny "that the declarations of Stalin are in accord with the decisions adopted regarding the national defense by the french Socialist Party in Tours three years ago and consequently served the future organizational unity of socialists and communists. In case of a german invasion, all proletarians would rise against the outer enemy, for the defeat of France would mean the defeat of Russia". (NZZ of June 13.) It is quite conceivable that Moscow will even decree the direct liquidation of its european offshoots, if things go still farther. If the Bolsheviks succeed in winning an indirect influence upon the social-democratic parties, without being responsible for them, that will be the most favorable to the plans of Moscow in the present world situation. (This tendency to combine by moving to the side of the Social Democracy is not confined to the Muscovites, but is running thru all the various bolshevist currents. The Trotskists of France, of Switzerland, etc., are already in the Social Democracy, and in other countries they are working in a similar direction. The CPO of Schaffhausen (Switzerland) accomplished its union with the SPS at the beginning of July 1935.)

The procession to the Social Democracy has been followed by the swiss CP without reserve. After a campaign in opposition to the social-democratic and trade-union "crisis initiative", shortly before the vote was taken it issued a call for support of this initiative. The situation, naturally, had "fundamentally changed". The SPS had, to be sure, proposed an extensive elimination of Parliament for the carrying thru of the initiative, but the Federal Council (Bundesrat) had in mind still more extensive full powers for itself. So the CPS preferred, in accordance with the approved social-democratic recipe of the lesser evil, the half to the three-quarter dictatorship. This

tumble was followed by the offer of a united front to the SPS, which in turn was followed by preparations for the dissolution of the red-union opposition (RGO) in Basel. The SPS set five conditions; among others, the liquidation of the RGO and other such separate CP organizations, suspension of all attacks upon the social-democratic policy, particularly upon the social-democratic functionaries in the administrative apparatus, and unconditional assent to the swiss "Plan of Labor". The CPS had as a matter of course to subscribe to all this. It was even obliged to swallow the ironic remark of the SPS executive committee to the effect that at any rate no co-operation with bourgeois parties was involved, such as had been demanded by the french communists.

Just as down to the year 1932 it was "social fascism", so at the present time the "united front" has become the axis of all CP policy. Bela Kun, in a long article in No. 11 of the "Communist International", analyzed the tactic and the successes of the various CP's on the occasion of the united-front demonstrations on May 1. As to the german question, he expatiated as follows: If the majority of the SPG executive committee in Prague is really trying to support the imperialist war policy of Hitler Germany, in order to get back into the game, then there is need for establishing a much closer contact between the communists and the left members and groups of the SPG, for the creation of "lively examples of the united front" and for strengthening the broad mass pressure upon the SPG executive committee in Prague". These interesting disquisitions demonstrate, first, that the CP must be in very poor standing with the german workers, for otherwise it would not turn to the SPG executive committee after it had declared, following Hitler's victory: The SPG remains the principle enemy. They prove, furthermore, that the Comintern is here "fighting" merely for a bit of influence upon the remaining props of a social-democratic apparatus which history has already shown the door, an apparatus which at the time the Kun article was written was putting an end to the struggle of the "Leftists" for their share of the million marks in the possession of the party's executive committee, in that it threw these latter out of its enterprise for compensating its own services with respect to the german workers. Besides, at the present time the german secret police (Gestapo) has gone a long way in wiping up the illegal SPG apparatus, made further numerous arrests and thus reaped the harvest which had been prepared for it by two spies in the central committee of the SP in Germany. At the moment the SPG central committee, according to our certain information, no longer has any connections whatsoever toward Germany, and has decided not to attempt making any for some months to come.



## Conclusion

Thus the foreign policy of the Soviet Union has logically, growing out of the original situation of the Russian revolution, ended up as a link in the system of imperialist alliance policy. Corresponding to the momentary needs at the different halting places along this way, it has directed the communist parties, on the back of the European proletariat, up to the point at which their political liquidation in favor of the national-reformist policy of the Social Democracy has already become merely a question of form. This is not taking place without the recent illusionary working up of the "united-front" enthusiasm of a European proletariat which in the present period of universal counter-revolution and reaction has run hopelessly into the blind alley of national limitation. Its further course can only be a further bit-by-bit collapse. A sound class-reaction against the continuing ideological and practical decline is at the moment not yet visible in the European countries even in the most modest beginnings. It appears that Social-democratism and Bolshevism must continue their work of destruction of any proletarian force of action even to the bitter end before the proletarian turn becomes at all possible. But the world situation is overloaded in such a way with economic and political difficulties, counter-forces and contradictions that this proletarian turn will in the long run unavoidably come about. The ruins of all "old" labor "movement" will make the path of the resurgent an incomparably painful one, but they will also finally leave it clear.

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## CURRENT TRENDS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Despite the gradual trend toward equalization of the economic-social structure of Europe, the distinction between industrial capitalist Western Europe and overwhelmingly agricultural Eastern Europe is still apparent. Czechoslovakia reaches into both divisions. Its western part is highly industrialized and its history is closely interwoven with that of middle Europe, while its eastern part embraces the typical agrarian characteristics of eastern Europe. This contradiction between the East and West constitute one important problem of Czechoslovakian politics and economy.

The other problem is that of nationalities. Czechoslovakia is not a unified national state. It is inhabited by approximately ten million Czechoslovaks (Czechs and Slovaks because of different historical background do not yet constitute a unity, although that tendency exists), three and one quarter million Germans, 700,000 Magyars, 400,000 Ukrainians, and 60,000 Poles. The "national antagonism", especially between the Germans and Czechs, is fundamentally but the conflict between more or less independent capitalist groups for a share in the state control, as well as over internal and foreign markets. The larger part of the proletariat as well as the petty bourgeoisie was dragged into this conflict. This national competition seems to be refuted by the interlocking of German and Czech capital in the monopolistic organizations, but in reality the struggle is merely resumed on another plane, within the monopolies.

The economic differences of West and East, and national disunity, existed before the founding of the republic, but the difficulties arising out of the breakup of the old Austrian economic entity developed with the republic. In the old Austria, which formed an economic unity with balanced industrial and agrarian production, industry was centered chiefly in the Sudete countries. (Sudeten: mountain-chain). Excepting that part which found a sale in foreign markets, Austrian industry found a market for its goods in the agricultural belt. What is now Czechoslovakia supplied over 50 percent of all the industrial production of the old Austria - some industries as high as 100 percent. After the breakup of the empire, Czechoslovakian industry retained but a fourth of the former markets, as the other offshoots of the Austrian empire immediately raised tariff walls under whose protection they started their own industries. The export to these former countries, thus impeded, formerly the exclusive domain of Bohemian industry, now also had to meet the sharp competition of the great capitalist countries in these territories, whose position here was now consider-



ably improved. The relative over-industrialization of Czechoslovakia determined economic policies and influenced the relations between the different bourgeois factions.

A number of problems also result from the international position of Czechoslovakia. Deriving its existence as a state from the Versailles treaty, and its basic imperialist setup, any shifting of the then existing powers affects it closely. Czechoslovakia's vulnerable position and its economic implications complicate further the problems arising from its international position and, consequently, also the internal political situation.

All these problems, however, are secondary to the general social antagonisms that also rock the foundations of the other capitalist states. The causes of the apparent confusion in the social conflicts of Czechoslovakia lie in the interlocking and interaction of the general conditions of the world crisis with the special conditions peculiar to the founding and development of the Czechoslovakian state.

The wave of international crisis reached Czechoslovakia from one to one and a half years later than the surrounding countries. Then it progressed sharply and rapidly. First hit and hardest was the export industry, situated almost entirely in the Northwestern border territories inhabited by Germans. In contrast, the industries in the interior largely supplying the internal markets have held up fairly well. Recently published statistics estimated unemployment in thirteen districts preponderantly German, with a total population of 1,068,629, at 119,265; while thirteen districts preponderantly Bohemian, with 1,178,834 inhabitants gave only 51,949 unemployed. Unemployment in the German border districts was more than twice that of the Bohemian, namely 11.15 percent as against 4.4 percent.

But even the unequal force with which the crisis struck various sections of industry failed to halt the trustification efforts that had been initiated as early as the pre-war period in the Sudeten countries. After the war, this trend continued and by 1933, in the midst of the crisis, there were 538 registered cartels. The vertical organization of industries by the banks has proceeded even more rapidly. Four to five Prague banks, through direct ownership or large investment in the most important industries, control four-fifths of the total Czechoslovakian production.

The growing power of the monopolies is increasingly manifested in politics. Banks and other business concerns, over the heads of the "peoples' representatives", try to use the state apparatus for their momentary interests. For example, it is no secret that the success of the

greatest bank, "Zivnostenska banka", which controls the greatest industrial concern is mainly due to the fact that the financial and trade policy of the state was in the hands of its representatives who ruthlessly subordinated the economic policy of the state to its immediate financial interests. Similarly the agricultural ministers used their office to further the interests of the well concentrated agrarian industry.

In contrast to the era of liberal capitalism, when the state is almost exclusively the instrument of political power of the bourgeoisie, monopoly capitalism now seizes it increasingly for its immediate economic purposes. Thus the state exerts its full force upon capitalist production and distribution in order to keep their contradictions within bearable limits and, simultaneously, further the monopolistic trend. In a small way as yet this expresses itself in the economic legal measures of the past years, i.e., the wheat monopoly, compulsory lumber syndicate, etc.

Almost at the outset of the crisis, following the elections, a coalition government was formed, consisting of Czech Agrarians, National-Democrats, People's Party, National Socialists (Benes), the Czech and German Social-Democrats and the German Land League. The government tried to counteract the growing difficulties with the usual deflationist methods; (salary reductions for government employees, reducing the budget, etc.), which, of course, merely intensified the crisis. From the first, the government, due to its heterogeneous composition, could not reckon on more thorough measures. When the advancing crisis nevertheless indicated the necessity of such measures, open disagreement broke out in the coalition. The group urging a devaluation of the crown to revive the export trade had a majority but met stiff resistance by the National Democrats, representing finance capital and the importers of foreign raw materials who felt their interests endangered by currency devaluation. Before the passing of the devaluation laws, this group demonstratively withdrew from the government. The remaining government parties now formed a closer coalition of agrarian and reformist parties. Resulting from this close co-operation were a number of "planned economy" reforms (grain monopoly, public works loans, public works programs, etc.), which was to culminate in a sort of state capitalism (for example, the nationalization of mines.)

The new reformist practice of the labor parties now found its ideological expression in the theories of "planned economy". A theoretical re-orientation further became necessary with the collapse of the German (in Germany) social democracy, the chief representative of



the traditional reformism of the Second International. In order to win the vacillating masses of petty bourgeoisie and farmers for the interests of the reformist labor movement, a "class-coalition" was sought in the formation of a bloc surrendering all class characteristics for the purpose of effecting the structural (state capitalist) reform of capitalism. The labor movement, demoralized by the collapse of the middle European labor parties, through this program was to be shown a new way out, while at the same time a mass basis for the struggle against Fascism would be formed.

The National-Socialist victory in Germany had far-reaching consequences for the internal and external politics of Czechoslovakia. It now found itself adjacent to a state from whose imperialist urge for expansion it had everything to fear. Its immediate reaction to provocative advances of Germany was a closer support of French imperialism and, consequently, of Russia (diplomatic recognition, non-aggression and military assistance pact) as well as closer connection with the states of the little entente. A further effect on foreign policy was clouding of diplomatic relations with Poland which had established friendly relations with German imperialism.

The ideological result of Hitler-German activity was an intensified nationalism by the Czechoslovakian bourgeoisie which could operate under the mask of anti-fascism. In the reformist labor parties, Hitlerism resulted in a panicstricken flight to the institutions of the "democratic" state as refuge from the fascist wave. The anti-fascist struggle represented no struggle between groups fighting for their definite capitalist interests, but a struggle for the preservation of certain governmental principles. Followed to its logical conclusion this conception leads to the support of a war of prevention "in order to bring freedom (at the point of French and Czech bayonets) to Germany".

Internally the Hitler overturn in Germany led to the dissolution of the German National-Socialist Labor Party and the German National Party. The leaderless and partyless fascist masses sought and found cover in the German Turnbund whose social structure and aims most closely approximated those of the dissolved parties and thus was best fitted to act as a substitute organization for the old swastika parties. Its membership was fairly identical with that of the two outlawed parties, in addition to a powerful reserve of youthful elements that had been radicalized and thrown into politics by unemployment and the crisis. The political character of the Turnbund was indistinguishable from that of a swastika party. Hypernationalism, anti-Semitism and close petty bourgeois connections characterized both. This similarity to the

old fascist parties threatened to result in the prohibition of the Turnbund as well, so a form of organization equally capable of carrying on the fascist campaign and yet sufficiently camouflaged to avoid dissolution under the anti-fascist laws had to be found. The most essential fascist activities were to be carried out illegally, in underground agitation, whispering campaigns, etc.

The needs of Czech fascism thus found expression in the organization of the Sudete Home Front (SHF) which soon boasted of a following greater than that enjoyed by the former National-Socialist organizations. In contradiction to swastika traditions, the SHF professed a burning love of democracy and international peace; innumerable loyalty demonstrations for the Czechoslovak state were organized and every connection with the forbidden parties, and especially with the Third Reich was avoided. Thus equipped the SHF was the more active in advocating the ideology of its predecessors although in diluted form but enriched with the freshly imported "people's community religion" and a leader cult centered around one Konrad Henlein, a Turnbund functionary who was being primed as a Sudete German Hitler.

The new foreign policy of Russia after the Nazi revolution in Germany led to a change in the communist tactics in the countries of Russia's allies. In Czechoslovakia this tactic met with difficulties as the government Socialist parties emphatically refused union with the Communists; on the other hand, the united front here would have signified the Communist endorsement of the government which so far seemed inopportune to them. But concessions in this direction have already been made by the CPC.

In May 1935, when the diplomatic bonds between Russia and Czechoslovakia were tightened by a military assistance pact, the CPC declared itself ready to co-operate with the bourgeois parties in parliament and to defend the capitalist state. Parliamentary Representative Sverma on May 24, 1935 declared: "...German Fascism can be defeated only thru class war within Germany and, by war, thru armed force. The Czechoslovak Communists in case of consistent war by the army against German imperialism would support that war and the army". "We are for the maintenance of independence of the Czechoslovak nation", he added, "which can be guaranteed by a strong army, freed of Fascist elements in which workers enjoy all political privileges. We demand the restoration of the suffrage to the members of the army. We urge the Socialist parties to form an oppositional united front to carry on the fight against Fascism. We will support the Socialist parties in the government in all measures intended to combat Fascism, and to secure



concrete advantages for the workers. In foreign policy we will support everything intended to support the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet Union and to frustrate the war plans of Hitler-Germany."

The complicated transitional character of the general social situation is reflected in the results of the last elections (May 1935). The total result is undeniably a swing to the right. Also, the difference of social development in German and Czech Czechoslovakia becomes more apparent. While conditions among the Czechs seem to have remained about the same, among the Germans there occurred a complete political overturn. The tremendous growth of the Sudete German Home Front to the strongest party in the state formed the real sensation of the elections and gained importance far beyond the boundaries of the state.

The swing to the right is seen in the loss of votes and parliamentary seats of the proletarian parties which altogether now have 14 seats less than formerly. Compared to 41.6 percent of all seats held formerly, they now control only 35.6 percent. The full developments are not so apparent in these totals as a study of the individual national groups reveals.

Changes among the Czechs, despite the sixth year of crisis, are so insignificant that the stability of the old party system seems to be exceptional when compared to international developments in general.

In contrast to the largely German border territories, the inner part of Czechoslovakia, especially Slovakia, is but little industrialized. Such industry as exists is largely for domestic consumption and was hardly affected by the crisis. Besides, industry in the Czech interior has experienced an entirely different development from that of the border districts. The latter are part of the west European economy which had its decisive development in the last half of the 19th century. Now, as formerly during its rise, industry in the border districts follows the decline of Europe's capitalist west. But the agricultural Czech interior belongs to the European east which experienced a period of industrialization after the war. Political independence, the accompanying tariff and trade barriers, now separating the old economic units, led to the development of an economy serving various political and military interests arising out of the new setup that centered more in the interior and the east. This industrial development further moderated the effects of the crisis on this section of Czechoslovakia which had suffered least from the first because of the structural nature of interior and eastern economy. Also, the munitions industry located in the Czech districts and operating at high capacity for years reduced unemployment of the Czech

workers. Consequently, the fascist ideology, the ideology of capitalist decline, remained negligible among the Czech masses.

Thus the comparatively insignificant effects of the crisis on the Czech districts produced no radical change in the traditional party system. However, the crisis still had enough effect in the Czech districts to cause the formation of rudimentary fascist groups that already have expressed themselves in the elections. Czech fascism so far consists of two tendencies: the National Union (Marodni sjednoceni), and the Fascist Party of Gajda.

The reasons for the growth of Fascism, however, are in the economic conditions of the Sudete-German districts. The crisis here manifested itself in an extraordinary impoverishment of the masses. The decline of the highly developed export industry of the border districts struck down the whole economy and social life. The ruin of the export industry involved that of all other branches of production. Important production centers of finished goods, textiles and glass are veritable industrial cemeteries. Even better situated districts such as the soft coal mines in the northwest and the connected industries show a severe decline and unemployment problem. Some industries have been idle for years with no hope of resuming operations. The industrial shifts of the post-war period on the continent, and overseas the tariff, valuta and autarchic policies of most countries have destroyed a whole series of industries. Frequently the paralyzed plants are broken up and transferred to other countries (textile industry), a part of the border industry is moving into the interior leaving an army of unemployed without hope ever to be re-employed, certain only of continuing life under the most miserable conditions.

But those remaining employed fare little better. The wages, already low before the crisis (among the lowest in all Europe), have so far been reduced to an average 50 percent. Short-time employment is the rule, (one day a week in many plants and others close down for weeks on end), and contributes to lowering the living standard of the employed almost to the level of that of the unemployed.

The chief strength of the fascist movement, its very foundation, consists of the mass of the impoverished petty bourgeoisie and peasantry. The decline of the export industry, partly of a pettybourgeois nature, poor business in general, reduced purchasing power of the masses, taxation, etc., brought small tradesmen, merchants, and the craftsmen to the verge of ruin. The young intelligentsia found no more room in the declining



economy and saw every opportunity of rising barred to it. The German small farmers in the less fertile border districts were injured by the agrarian measures of the in favor of large farmers government. These groups that usually turn to the state for help in a crisis had scant hope from a state that furthered the rising Czech competition that threatened them.

The Germans in Czechoslovakia see the solution to their troubles in Fascism. The Sudete German party has had a degree of success unprecedented in fascist history. It polled 70 percent of the German vote, not only thru reduction of the other bourgeois parties, but thru great inroads into the support of both proletarian parties. The confidence of Henlein's followers in finding what seemed to them new and basic methods for their relief thru the People's Commonwealth (Volks-gemeinschaft), social and national utopias, public works program to employ 300,000 Sudete-German unemployed, and similar proposals, gave an immense impetus to their propaganda. Their apparently revolutionary demand for a change in the political, economic and cultural setup was opposed by the Social-Democrats with the conservative slogan of the defense of democracy in the state and a few social-political crumbs. In view of the terrible misery of those affected, that meant merely the retention and defense of their misery. Consequently large parts of the working class, tired of the unsuccessful reform policy of the Social-Democrats, and the sterile phrase-mongering of the Communists, set their hopes in the new rising movement whose spirit and far-reaching demands promised a decided improvement in their lot. Only with all these contributing factors was it possible for the Sudete-German Home Front to overcome the strong socialist traditions and to become the strongest party of Czechoslovakia.

The election results of the Communists also demand attention. There are a number of differences between the CCP and those of the other European countries. The Czech Social Democracy from which it sprang in pre-war times already had been one of the rightest parties of the second international, supporting the position of unconditional co-operation with all classes of the nation. There was practically no Marxian opposition in its ranks. After 1918, following the national revolution which retained all other features of capitalism, a radical tendency developed which, however, lacked a fundamental, revolutionary orientation. It was similar to the Independent Socialist Party tendency in Germany though stronger reformistic and nationalistic tendencies existed here. But while the third international has split the Independent S.P. in order to exclude the too reformistic elements, shortly after it accepted the whole Czech Left bag and

baggage. Junction of the Czech with the German Communists of the country, ideologically more advanced owing to a different historical background, added little to theoretical unity and clarity though a degree of uniformity in concepts and tactics took place thru the years. The lack of theoretical clarity among the party membership formed the basis for frequent serious internal crises that convulsed the party structure until the strong party bureaucracy succeeded in enforcing the strong discipline and rules of Bolshevik organization. Yet, to this day, the party apparatus must compromise with the ideological backwardness of the membership. Thus the policy of the party central committee consists of constant shifting between the now reformistic, now radical desires of the membership on the one hand, and the pressure of the Comintern for defense of the state interests of Soviet Russia on the other hand, though Russian interests more and more tend to support the reformism of the party. This shifting soon became the characteristic of the whole policy of the CCP which evaded all fundamental decisions of theory or practice.

In distinction to the Social-Democracy, the Communist movement in Czechoslovakia is not organized into national groups, but embraces members of all nationalities in one unit. The peculiar national composition of Czechoslovakia explained previously, expresses itself in the thought and action of the various groups and only with due consideration to this can the Communist election results be correctly estimated.

The Communists secured a total increase of 96,289 votes as compared to 1929, or 12.78 percent. As the number of votes had increased by 11.45 percent, the percentage of increase was only 1.33 percent.

The growth of the Communist, almost entirely in eastern Slovakia and Karpatho-Russia, can be traced to the almost complete absence of industry. Even agriculture there is very backward. Conditions generally approximate those of the Balkans and a number of east-European states. The greater part of the population suffers much as a result of the backward social conditions and the ruthless exploitation and oppression by the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie.

Although the remnants of feudalism had been removed by the land reform--the expression of the bourgeois revolutionary character of the Czech national revolution--and the Czech peasantry had become conservative, sufficient vestiges of feudal conditions remained in the east to maintain the desire for a bourgeois reconstruction of agriculture. The smallness of the farms, infertility of the soil, dependence on the few but all-powerful landed proprietors, and the backwardness of their productive methods, coupled with ad-



ministrative oppression (taxes, tax foreclosures, political chicanery, etc.,--this part of the country is treated almost like a colony) have created misery that is almost unbearable. Communist success here is due primarily to the protest of the peasant population against these conditions. In addition it is the expression of the agrarian-revolutionary ferment of the peasantry of this as well as other eastern countries as the Communist Party unreservedly supports all interests of the peasant population. To the Karpatho-Russian peasants, as to the Russian peasants, the Communist party appears as the sole leader of their social and national struggle.

In Czechoslovakia the crisis appeared later than in the other countries, and earlier in the border districts than in the interior and eastern parts of the republic. The political effects were the later and unequal process of fascization. Following the later outbreak of the crisis, it may be assumed that the low point will be reached at a later period than in other countries. The momentary stabilization of the crisis in Czechoslovakia has obviously not occurred at its lowest point. A further, possibly sudden, collapse is to be expected, especially in the Czech districts. The political effect of a further collapse undoubtedly will be a greater and more effective fascization of the country.

The rise of a real fascist movement among the Czechs must intensify the problem and danger, but also the difficulties, of Fascism in the republic. So long as Fascism was essentially the affair of the minority nation, the decisive policies of the government were but little influenced by it. With the rise of fascism in the majority nation, all internal problems (above all, that of the relationship of the two main nationalities, which may result in a struggle to determine the dominance of the two fascist movements) renewed and intensified will become the order of the day.

The conquest of the state by the monopolistic great-bourgeoisie proceeds more rapidly than the formation of a mass basis for the petty bourgeoisie. The horizontal and vertical trusts embrace owners of both nations and all fractions and constantly expand their operations. In the International Industrial Association (SVAZ PRUMYSLOVNIKU) for example, the bourgeoisie has an instrument equally potent politically as economically thru which, forced by economic necessity, it demands with increasing insistence absolute control of economy and the state, violently demands the abolition of democratic vestiges and forces thru more and more measures for the fascist reorganization of the state. The time is rapidly approaching when the bourgeoisie with its trusts can exercise unlimited control of the state and thru it dictate its political

and economic measures. But even in the unified dictatorship of monopoly capital, the rivalry of the two national capitalist groups and the different capitalist fractions (industrial, agrarian and finance capital) will continue. The conflict for a share in the fascist rule will flame anew in the economic associations and the state bureaus and administrations. In this struggle, the various national groups of capitalists will seek allies among the petty bourgeoisie of their own country ruined by capital concentration and crisis. Nationalism is the inevitable basis for a fascist mobilization of the petty bourgeoisie in Czechoslovakia. To large sections of the petty bourgeoisie, the maintenance and extension of their reduced basis for existence will appear possible only at the expense of the other nationals. Thus the intensified crisis will widen the gulf between the two large nations of the state and finally two strong fascist mass movements will confront each other in an embittered struggle. But as fascism indicates the greatest centralization of state power in the hands of the ruling class, and every independent movement within the regime that conflicts with the interests of the ruling fascism becomes a menace for the whole dictatorship, fascism is confronted with the insoluble problem of chaining the very forces it is constantly forced to unchain. Just as the growing class antagonisms constantly force the fascist state to adopt more rigorous measures to maintain its supremacy, so the growing and diverging forces of the nationalities will necessitate increased pressure by the state. The exact manner in which Fascism will try to reconcile the national conflicts with absolutist state centralization cannot be foretold as yet. A part probably will be played by the state bureaucracy whose great power, uncontrolled chicanery and ruthlessness already indicate its possible position.

In general, fascization is a manifold contradictory process that will be even more complicated and difficult of comprehension in the Czechoslovak state of conflicting nationalities than elsewhere. The working class is inactive and helpless in relation to the task of revolutionizing the capitalist system. It confronts the powerful new problems with the traditional methods, organizations and ideologies that arose from almost entirely different conditions, and which are completely insufficient to stop the onslaught of the class enemy. The greatest and deciding part of the working class is still in the camp of reformism. Attempts to change the policies of the reformist parties among the Czechs are not apparent, while but a weak tendency in this direction is noticeable among the Germans. What oppositional activity exists within the German Social Democracy is very indefinite and is rather a sign of disintegration of the old ideology than a new orientation. Among all these efforts, the group known as the "Socialist Action" has assumed the most definite forms and gained the most influence. Although



membership in this group is forbidden to party members, and representatives of "Socialist Action" can agitate illegally and under cover, only certain parts of their program have influenced definite, not uninfluential party circles. The ideology of "Socialist Action" is made up of a mixture of plan-reformist, Bolshevik and fascist elements. No uniform development tendencies are discernible because it harbors too many contradictory trends. Opposed to its "radical bolshevist ideology", its character on the basis of most of its program planks and methods discloses a strong fascist strain. Of course within the oppositional forces of reformism, especially among the youth, there are numerous elements honestly seeking a really revolutionary method. However, all too often their lack of clarity makes them the tools for the centrist or half-bolshevik aims of the experienced opposition politicians.

The other wing of the labor movement, that of the Communists, has long ceased to represent a revolutionary factor. Their great turn-about shift, occurring just during the last election, that they were compelled to make in the diplomatic interests of the Soviet Union has stripped them of the last bit of revolutionary significance. Now that they have committed themselves to national defense and, with certain reservations, to support of the government policy (in their repeated united front proposals to the Social Democrats they have emphasized these willing concessions) their fundamental line is undistinguishable from that of the reformists. Like the latter, they have become a conservative factor in the state. Committed to support the ruling political system, even before formation of parliamentary "anti-fascist united front", they, like the Social Democrats, will be involved in the state collapse. More unsteady ideologically and far less prepared organizationally than its Reichs-German sister party, the Czechoslovak Communist party too must collapse miserably in the coming attack of the class enemy.

On the whole, it becomes apparent that even the so-called "island of democracy" will be unable to arrest the international process of fascization. The same developments here as elsewhere will shake the existing organizations and ideologies of the working class. At first this expresses itself in parliamentary defeats as a result of which must come the recognition that the historic task of the proletariat cannot be accomplished thru parliamentary-reformist and bolshevist methods and organizations. In the further course of fascization, the bourgeoisie, obeying the political and social imperatives of this process, must put an objective end to the parliamentary labor organizations of all tendencies. This objective end of the contemporary labor movement does not mean its subjective end, however. For, despite the destruction of their organizations by the class enemy, the old ideology will continue to survive among sections of the masses. The intensified oppression and exploitation, however,

destroys the old ideology and prepares the basis for new class action and class consciousness. Sooner or later the class activity thus developed must result in a new organization and ideology adapted to the changed conditions. The practice of the class struggle itself will necessitate organizations in which the militancy of the masses finds direct expression and in which the germs of the new society can be developed. A truly revolutionary ideology must come on the basis of this practice in combination with the total experience of previous class struggles. This new working class ideology can have no room for the illusion of a reformist transformation of existing society, nor for the idea of passive subordination of the classes under the leadership and control of an "advanced guard" and their mobilization for objectives incompatible with their class interests. But, most important, every revolutionary ideology, particularly in nationalistic Middle and Eastern Europe, will have to include and maintain an uncompromising internationalism.

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