

ALL SECTIONS OF THE C.I. CAN AND MUST BECOME REALLY MASS PARTIES

By O. PIATNITSKY

WHAT are the main reasons for the *weak growth* (C.P. of Germany, C.P. of U.S.A., C.P. of Austria) and in certain sections of the C.I. (C.P. of France, C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia, C.P. of Great Britain) even *the loss of membership*?

This question is being debated in the Comintern and its sections. Many comrades, while agreeing that the causes of weak growth and even of loss of membership by the C.I. sections in the capitalist countries are the bad work of the sections and their incapacity to *reinforce organisationally their growing political influence*, demand proofs that these are the *main* reasons and that there are not other still more weighty causes, which, however, they are unable even to name.

We will endeavour to prove on the basis of facts, that *it depends only upon the Comintern sections themselves to increase the membership, to retain the new members made, and thereby to reinforce their political influence organisationally.*

When the C.I. sections organise campaigns that can be understood by the masses, at the same time mobilising all Party organisations to carry them out, they will encounter the resolute support of wide sections of the masses. Look at the facts:

(a) The *C.P. of China* has had and still has to work in the industrial centres under the unprecedented terror of the Kuomintang and the Imperialists, and despite this, there has not been a single case where the masses have not followed the Party when it has organised anti-Kuomintang or anti-Imperialist demonstrations that have been well-prepared. On May 30th, 1929, the anniversary of the 1925 shootings, the C.P. of China organised strikes and demonstrations in Shanghai. The Kuomintang and Imperialist authorities mobilised all their forces to prevent the Communist Party carrying through this campaign; the entire police force was standing ready; demonstrations and strikes were forbidden under pain of death. Under cover of a semi-legal

committee of representatives of social organisations, organised in connection with the murder of a Chinaman by a British soldier, the Communist Party convened a conference of the delegates of 60 Trade Unions, students and Communist organisations which prepared the May 30 strikes and demonstrations. The working masses rallied. Mass demonstrations in which scores of thousands took part were held in the main streets of Shanghai. The demonstrations lasted several hours, and two Kuomintang newspaper offices were smashed up. The dockers, many textile mills, the postal workers and students struck work. The Kuomintang Postal Workers' Union and the universities, whose students struck on May 30th, were dissolved and closed down by the Kuomintang. This action, prepared energetically and competently, in Bolshevik fashion, by the C.P. in Shanghai, after a long absence of open activity, immediately raised the authority of both the Communist Party and the Red Trade Unions throughout the whole of China. New members joined both the Party and the Red Unions. (Up till then, the latter had an even smaller membership than the Party organisations.) The May, 1929, demonstrations in Shanghai were thus to a certain extent a turning point in the extension of the activities of the C.P. and the Red Trade Unions in all spheres of Party and Trade Union work in China.

(b) On the eve of May 1st, 1930, the Calcutta Committee of the C.P. of India got out several leaflets, appealing to the workers in the Party's name. It called upon the workers to strike on May 1st. A handful of Party members carried on energetic activity among the workers of the factories and mills. As a result the workers of the biggest factories in Calcutta came out on May 1st.

(c) The C.P. of Poland has to work under the very difficult conditions of Fascist Terror. Working in the Secret Police are members of the P.P.S. (Polish Socialist Party) who, knowing the active workers of the C.P. of

Poland in person, betray them to the police. The Polish prisons are filled to overflowing with members of the C.P. of Poland. In spite of this, during big campaigns, such as the elections of factory delegates, sick-fund committees, municipal councils or Sejm deputies, or campaigns for strikes and demonstrations, if the Party organisations are very active, the workers not only vote for the C.P.P. candidates, but take part in the demonstrations. And they do that despite the fact that nearly all demonstrations end by demonstrators being arrested, beaten up or shot by the P.P.S-ites or the police.

At the big "Parovoz" works in Warsaw, where the C.P.P. had strong influence, Party work at one time for various reasons became very feeble and the P.P.S-ites succeeded everywhere in squeezing out the Communists and their sympathisers. The Warsaw organisation of the C.P.P. gave attention to the "Parovoz" works, strengthening the Party activities there. As a result, the Socialists were very soon swept out of all their positions and our Party not only won back its old positions, but strengthened its influence.

Facts concerning the activities of the legal Communist Parties testify to the same thing. We need only refer to a few examples.

(d) The small C.P. of the U.S.A. (after the expulsion of the Rights it had 8,000 members), freed from the opportunist leadership of the Lovestonites, carried on widespread and energetic activity in all spheres of Party work. The Communists, along with the members of the Trade Union Unity League, organised new class Trade Unions, prepared and led strikes of miners, dockers, textile workers, etc. At the call of the C.P. of America and the T.U. Unity League, following the preparatory work undertaken by the latter, 1,250,000 workers in all industrial towns of the U.S.A. came out on to the streets on March 6th, on the International Day of Struggle against unemployment. In the process of organising class trade unions, leading strikes and preparing demonstrations, the C.P. of America has had some success in recruiting new members. According to information not yet verified by the E.C.C.I. the Party increased its membership by 100 per cent. during these campaigns.

(e) In Czecho-Slovakia, at the very height

of the inner-Party crisis, when the Rights openly revolted against the Party, mobilising their supporters in the Trade Unions, co-operatives, Parliament, Senate, municipalities, newspapers, etc., the C.P. developing an extensive electoral campaign in 1929, directed against all bourgeois and social-democratic Parties as well as against the Right renegades, received 750,000 workers' votes. Some semi-social-democrats and passive elements left the Party, but in exchange a large number of revolutionary workers flocked to the Party and helped the C.P.Cz. to operate the policy of "class against class."

(f) In all campaigns conducted by the C.P. of France, active assistance is rendered by hundreds of thousands of non-Party sympathisers. Last year, when the French bourgeoisie tried to lay their hands on *l'Humanité*, believing that the C.P.F. would not be able to pay at once all the debts to the Workers' and Peasants' Banks, workers collected several million francs in support of the paper within two to three months. Thousands of non-Party workers organised "*l'Humanité* Defence Committees," chiefly in the factories. The bourgeoisie retreated. It had not expected such an outburst of indignation amongst the workers throughout the whole of France.

The Red Trade Unions in France, which are under the influence of the C.P., have prepared and led several thousand strikes during the last two years. When the unorganised workers become convinced that the Red Trade Unions are really leading the class struggle, they will willingly join these trade unions. In Belfort, where 13,000 metal-workers and textile-workers were on strike, 2,400 new members joined the Metal-workers' and Textile-workers' Unions after the end of the strike. In Gise, after a strike in which 1,100 metal-workers had participated, 90 per cent. of the strikers—about 1,000 workers—joined the Metal-workers' Union.

(g) The C.P. of Great Britain, during the General Strike and Miners' Strike, carried on energetic work and therefore succeeded in recruiting more than 6,000 members for the Party (increasing the membership by more than 100 per cent.) In many mining districts the Party organisations during the strike could

not keep pace with all the applications for membership. After the defeat of the strike, the number desiring to join the Party decreased. During the recent woollen strike and lockout, in which the C.P. of Great Britain, creating Committees of Action and Strike Committees, energetically fought the employers and the reformist trade union bureaucrats, many men and women strikers joined the Party.

(h) The C.P. of Germany at the 1928 Parliamentary elections received 3,230,000 working class votes, while the paying membership of the Party was 130,000. This gives on an average 25 votes for a Communist candidate, for every one Party member. It is to be hoped that at the coming elections in September of this year, the Party will receive about 4,000,000 votes.

In 1929 the C.P. of Germany for the first time began to apply the tactics of independent leadership in the economic struggles, defeating the strike-breaking efforts of the trade union bureaucrats and putting forward its own independent candidates at the Factory Committee Elections (up to 1929 at the Factory Committee Elections the Communists fought inside the trade unions to get their own candidatures included in the lists put forward by the trade unions). In 1929 the C.P.G. put forward its own independent candidate lists in more than 120 average-sized and large enterprises, and received in these places almost as many votes as were received by the social-democrats, viz.: In 104 factories the reformists received 121,236 and the trade union opposition 116,730; in the same factories in 1930, the reformists received 106,902 votes (14,334 less than in 1929) and the Communists received 110,028 (6,702 less than in 1929).

In 1930 the C.P. of Germany already put forward its own lists in more than 1,200 average-size and large undertakings employing a total of two-and-a-half million working men and women; at the same time in 700 of these factories the Party received more votes than the social-democrats, and in many of these 700 received an absolute majority over the votes given for all lists. The number of votes won by the Red lists from the social-democrats and reformists in one group of fifteen factories alone—in the Ruhr, Rhine and Upper Silesian

areas, amounts to 12,667. (In 1929 the reformists received 23,390 votes in these factories, while in 1930, when the C.P.G. put forward its own lists, they received 13,403.) The C.P. of Germany altogether had 7,000 members of factory committees and 4,000 candidates.

There was not a single revolutionary campaign (parliamentary and municipal elections, demonstrations, factory committee elections, calls for strikes, etc.), that was not able to rally large numbers of the masses, once the Communist Party had made preparations in good time and sufficiently skilfully arranged for the participation of all the auxiliary organisations. All the revolutionary campaigns, particularly the strikes led by the Communist Party (beginning with the Ruhr strike struggle at the end of 1928 right up to and including the Mansfeld strike) have been accompanied by the recruitment of new members to the Party and Trade Union Opposition.

As is known, the workers of the whole world warmly responded to the call of the C.I. to demonstrate on the International Day of Struggle Against War (August 1st, 1929 and 1930) and on the Day of Struggle Against Unemployment (March 6th, 1930). What is more: it is characteristic that the "class against class" tactics, as expressed in the Communist Parties coming out against all bourgeois Parties, including the "Socialists," was supported energetically by the workers of Germany, France and other countries, whereas the operation of such tactics met with resistance on the part of some of the leading members of the C.P.s of Germany, France, Great Britain, America and other countries. It would be possible to cite many other facts from the life of all sections of the C.I., confirming the assertion that when the Communist Parties prepare and lead revolutionary campaigns, the working masses actively support them and the best elements of the working class make endeavours to join the only working class Parties—the Communist Parties.

WHY DO WE LOSE RECRUITS?

Unfortunately, it must be admitted that the C.I. Sections often not only fail to retain new members, but also lose old ones. Why? We will try and explain the reasons for this.

(1). The Party organisations in all sections of the C.I. in capitalist countries develop their activities from one campaign to another, instead of carrying on steady systematic work among the masses.

(2). The Party organisations do not pay sufficient attention to the training of new Party members. In the majority of cases they are not drawn into Party work, because the cell bureaux, the secretariat and bureaux of district committees and of other local Party organisations seldom function as permanent Party organs and general meetings of the cells and local Party organisations meet very seldom and when they do they are as a rule badly prepared. Even plenums of Party Committees are a very rare occurrence. All these meetings are substituted by meetings of the local and district active functionaries, which, moreover, are summoned insufficiently frequently and which, in fact, replace both the meetings and conferences of district and local organisations. As a result, such an important institution in Party structure as the meeting of the active functionaries, instead of bringing questions already discussed before the cells, meetings of district or sub-district Party organisations, for further elaboration, and thus livening them up, making them permanently functioning organs — actually replace them.

(3). But so long as the Party Committees and the general meetings of cells and local Party organisations do not function, it is quite easy to understand why the factory cells have not yet become the basic Party organisation in the factories and works. There are many factories and works where there are Party members, who do not form factory cells. Moreover, not all Communists are members of the factory cell already existing in the factory where they work, but belong to the residential Party groups. This even continues at the present time, in spite of the fact that the social-democrats, for whom the residential basis is the main form of Party organisation, as also the national-fascists, are beginning not by words, but by deed, to transfer their operations to the factories, in order to combat the Communists. (They are organising their factory cells and publishing factory newspapers.)

(4). In the absence of permanent activity by the cell bureaux, the secretariats and the bureaux of Party Committees, in the absence of collective guidance and control of the work by the local and district Party organisations, it is inevitable that insufficient attention is paid to the work of the existing factory and street cells. It also means insufficient attention to factory newspapers and to the local Party press in general, as also to the work of the Red Factory Committees, the revolutionary and trade union delegates. Furthermore, the Communist fractions in the factory committees, and in the reformist and Red Trade Unions, and in general all Communist fractions in mass workers' organisations are left without Party guidance. If we add to that the absence of proper self-criticism, it becomes clear why red tape and very often bureaucratic practices develop in local and district Party organisations.

(5). It is only by such abnormalities in the work of the local Party organisations that we can explain the cases, to be observed everywhere in all sections of the C.I., where Party Committees find out about economic conflicts in the factories, when they are already ended, as in the majority of cases the Communists working in these factories either pay no attention at all to what is going on in the factories, or else act on the off chance without the guidance of the various Party organisations, which often leads to various forms of opportunism in practice.

We will illustrate this by facts cited from the practice of our sections. On January 26th, 1930, the Marx cell of a provincial organisation of the C.P. of Poland passed a resolution in which it states:—

“We, members of the C.P.P., lodge a complaint about the dilatoriness of our leaders, who have forgotten about our cell for several months now and it has not been assisted by anyone. We categorically demand some sort of guidance for a definite period, otherwise we will have to abandon our fighting position, which we have been using up till now to fight for a workers' and peasants' Government.

“We demand that this resolution be sent to the C.C. . . .”

“At the time of the ‘three L’s’ campaign (Lenin-Liebkecht-Luxemburg) our cell was

assisted by a member of the District Committee, Comrade X., who instructed us to hang up our banners during the 'three L's' campaign and to write up slogans on the houses, which we did.

"... However, when we asked Comrade X. to teach us what to do, and to speak to us on the subject, he said he would willingly help us, but he had nothing new for us, as the District Committee had not met for more than three months. Therefore, we ask, already for the second time, that greater attention be paid to our training, so that we can really represent our Party . . ."

"... You should teach us how to become experienced and to adapt ourselves to the struggle. We are already quite well aware how to hang up flags on telephone wires and how to chalk slogans on walls. But we not only do not know how to beat our opponents at meetings and conferences, as we do not know what their Parties stand for, but we do not even know the aims of our own Party . . ."

"... We demand that we be given systematic guidance and not as before once a month or once every three months."

The resolution cited above, unfortunately, is not a peculiarity of the provincial organisation of the Polish C.P. referred to. The same inattention to party cells, the same absence of guidance of the lower Party organisations, particularly the factory cells, on the part of the higher Party Committees is a frequent occurrence in both the legal and illegal Communist Parties in all capitalist countries.

Many Party organisations of the C.P. of France learnt only from the Party newspapers how many groups of workers, from what factories and towns in France had contributed to the *l'Humanité* fund, and in which factories the workers had formed *l'Humanité* Defence Committees.

Furthermore, many Party organisations of the C.P. of France saw in the *l'Humanité* Defence Committees the danger of the formation of a Labour Party which the renegade groups (the "Workers'-and-Peasants' Party"-ites, excluded from the C.P. the Trotskyists, etc.), could utilise against the C.P.F. instead of taking into their hands such a remarkably broad mass movement, organising it, and directing it along correct

channels; instead of, on the basis of this movement, getting into contact with the factories (where the C.P.F. has very poor contacts) turning these committees into permanent organs informing *l'Humanité* what is going on in the factories, increasing our circulation through them, and, finally, drawing the best elements of these committees into the Party and the Red Trade Unions—instead of doing all this, many local Party organisations did not pay sufficient attention to the *l'Humanité* Defence Committees, despite the fact that instructions were issued about this in good time. As a result, these committees began to disappear just as spontaneously as they sprang up. And *l'Humanité*, instead of extending its circulation after such a mass response among the working class, lost many readers as compared with those it had before the campaign. Not only the circulation of *l'Humanité* was diminished, but the membership of the Party also decreased as a result of such a passive and inept approach to the mass movement.

PIATNITSKY'S

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The central organ of the C.P. of France, *l'Humanité*, is once more experiencing financial difficulties. We are convinced that the workers of France will rally to the appeal of the C.C. of the C.P. of France and *l'Humanité* to support the paper. Permanent committees for assisting, defending and informing *l'Humanité* should be formed in the factories, and the local Party organisations and Red Trade Unions should be instructed as regards the formation and direction of such committees.

In the Lower Reichenau and Blaistadt, in the Teplicsk district of Czecho-Slovakia, the owners of two glass factories employing 2,400 workers, informed the factory committees that they would have to dismiss a section of the workers temporarily as they wanted to repair the glass baths. One of the factory committees in Lower Reichenau agreed to the dismissal of the workers, who were not members of the Red Trade Unions (in these two factories 1,600 members of the Red Glassworkers' Union were at work). Without preparing a strike, the local leaders of the Red Glassworkers' Union commenced negotiations with the bosses for the liquidation of the conflict, thus sowing confusion among the workers. When it transpired that the bosses would not make any concessions, the Red Glassworkers' Union declared a strike, without having made any preparations, and, without asking the strikers, the strike-leaders gave orders for the furnaces to be extinguished, which played into the hands of the owners, who were interested in the works being temporarily brought to a standstill. The strike lasted six weeks and was lost.

As a result of this strike all the members in these two factories left the Red Glassworkers' Trade Union: 700 of them went over to the Fascists and 120 joined the Catholic Trade Unions.

The German social-democrats and the reformist trade unions have betrayed the interests of the working class during the 1914-1919 war and also since the war right up till now. They shot the revolutionary workers in 1919-1921 on a larger scale than in 1929. But then, while taking vengeance against the vanguard of the working class and its Party (the murder of Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg,

Tyschko and other Communists and revolutionary workers) the social-democrats and reformists maintained their influence over a considerable section of the workers, hypocritically posing as the defenders of their every-day interests, passing, under pressure from the masses, of course, and with the object of retaining influence over them, the law on the eight-hour day, on factory committees, on improved social insurance, and in the first years following the war the trade unions sometimes even declared strikes (the general railway strike at the beginning of 1922, etc.). During the last two years, however, the social-democrats have exposed themselves as the *open* betrayers of the working masses, as the direct agents of the bourgeoisie also in the sphere of the attacks on the standard of living of the workers. While in power, the social-democrats, and hence, also the reformist trade union bureaucrats, openly worsened all the social insurance laws, particularly the law on unemployment insurance. In 1930 they exempted the bourgeoisie from payment of taxes on milliards of money, at the same time assessing the broad masses of toilers with millions in the form of indirect and direct taxes, and the introduction of high duties on food products. The social-democrats and the reformist trade unions assisted the bourgeoisie in carrying out rationalisation at the cost of the working class, in increasing not only the intensity of labour, but also in lengthening the working day, in lowering not only real but also nominal wages. The social-democrats closed down revolutionary mass organisations and shot down unarmed demonstrations of workers and unemployed. To expose the leaders of the reformist trade unions and social-democrats in 1929-1930 was, therefore, much easier than in 1919-1921, for, during recent years their treacherous and counter-revolutionary policy has become more and more frank, more and more clear to the broad masses of workers.

All the more unexpected, then, were the results of the election of the factory committees in 1930 in a large number of big enterprises in Germany. In twenty large undertakings, employing about 200,000 workers, in fifteen of which there were formerly Red factory committees, the C.P. of Germany lost 22,379

votes (38,743 in 1930 as against 61,122 in 1929), while the reformists gained 1,990 votes (52,944 in 1930 as against 50,954 in 1929).

In the nine Berlin undertakings included in this group, eight of which formerly had Red factory committees, the C.P. lost 11,599 votes (18,467 in 1930, as against 30,066 in 1929), while the reformists gained 2,719 votes (24,762 in 1930 as against 22,043 in 1929).

An examination of the reasons for the loss of votes by our Party and the gain of votes by the reformists and social-democrats in these twenty large undertakings will enable us to determine the cause why the C.P.G. does not increase its membership and does not check the fluctuation in membership. What are these reasons?

(1). At the Opel Works, in which 7,000 workers are employed, a strike broke out at the beginning of 1930 which created a great deal of noise in the German and Soviet press. The Workers' Factory Committee at the works was in the hands of Communists (in Germany the workers and the employers have separate factory committees, the works committees of the employees and of the workers forming a general factory committee). The workers of the Opel Works were very discontented with the wage rates and with the sweated conditions of labour (Americans had become proprietors of the works, and the American method of intensified labour was introduced, while the low German wages were retained). The management sacked 200 workers, afterwards recruiting 50 new workers. Upon the protest of the workers' committee against the dismissal of these workers and the taking on of new ones, the management dismissed the chairman of the workers' factory committee. The workers in some shops, incensed by this provocation of the management, downed tools and come out into the factory yard. A meeting was started which continued a long while and the workers of other shops also gradually began to join in the meeting. No guidance whatsoever by the cell nor by the workers' factory committee was felt. The speakers said a great deal, and in general quite correct things about the Young Plan, the internal and international situation of Germany, etc., but did not provide any answer to the question which urgently

confronted the workers of the factory: What practical steps should be taken now, this very moment? Instead of taking the leadership into their hands, instead of providing slogans of action to the masses awaiting such leadership, the workers' factory committee went off to negotiate with the management of the works. Is it surprising, after that, that the management succeeded in bamboozling the workers, dragging out the negotiations, under various pretexts until such time as permission was received from the Franco-British Occupation Commission to occupy the works with German gendarmes (the locality in which the Opel Works are situated was then still occupied by the Allied troops)? The meeting continued to go on after the arrival of the gendarmes, who, after surrounding it, began to seize various active workers out of the crowd. The workers were in a fighting mood, but there was an absence of leadership and of slogans comprehensible to the masses. One worker suggested pushing the gendarmes outside the gates and his proposal was taken up by the whole mass of workers, who immediately began to use pressure and pushed out the gendarmes who had wormed their way in among the workers around the meeting, and among those emerging from the shops. After the appearance of the gendarmes, the works management broke off negotiations with the factory committee, but the latter, instead of steering the workers' indignation in a correct direction, and indicating how they should act, began to persuade the workers "not to allow themselves to be provoked." The majority of the workers went home to dinner without receiving any indication as to what they were to do. They came to work the next day. When the factory committee began to appeal for a strike, the workers stated that they could not count on there being a leadership for this strike. One-and-a-half months after this "strike" the elections to the factory committee in the Opel Works took place, giving the C.P.G. a decrease of 1,804 votes, while the social-democrats and reformists gained 419 votes as compared with 1929.

(2). In the Berlin Transport Society (trams, 'buses, etc.), in which 24,922 workers and employees are employed, the C.P. received an absolute majority of votes in the factory com-

mittee elections of 1929 (10,747 votes, as against the 5,934 of the social-democrats and reformists). The social-democratic management began dismissing the revolutionary workers and taking on their own supporters in their place. In doing this they did not encounter any real protest on the part of the factory committee. It was as a result of this that at the elections to the factory committee in 1930 the reformists received 10,147 votes, while the C.P.G. lost 4,430 votes.

RED UNION ERRORS

(3). The C.P.G. lost many votes in the twenty factories enumerated above, for exactly the same reasons. The Red factory committees in these works did not carry out a correct Party line; their activity represented a striking example of the Right deviation in practice: they not only failed to organise a struggle against dismissals, wage cuts and longer hours, but, in certain cases even gave their assent to dismissals of workers. As a matter of fact the Red factory committees in these enterprises did not differ very greatly, in their work, from the reformist factory committees. The reformists, in taking part in the dismissals of workers, tried to get the unorganised workers sacked along with the revolutionaries, as these were the least desirable from the point of view of the trade union bureaucrats. The Red factory committees agreed to the dismissal of those with small families only instead of organising the masses for a systematic and resolute struggle against dismissals of the workers in general. In particular, in agreeing to the dismissal of organised workers, but objecting to the dismissal of the unorganised, the Red factory committees drove the organised workers into the arms of the reformist trade union bureaucrats.

In one very substantial respect the practical work of the Red factory committees did differ from the Reformist factory committees and trade union bureaucrats in many of these twenty enterprises. The reformist factory committees and functionaries conducted a savage campaign against the Communists; the Red factory committees, cells and individual Communists, on the other hand, did not carry on a systematic, resolute, and intransigent campaign against the reformists and

social-democrats, although the Communists had an abundance of popular literature, exposing the social-democrat traitors, while the latter only had falsehood and slander to use against the C.P.G. The errors of the Communists, their passivity and bad work in the factories—opportunism in practice—were utilised by the reformists and social-democrats, who, moreover, in order to draw the workers over to their own side, carried on detailed routine work visible and comprehensible to the masses. But these errors of the Communists were not only exploited by the social-democrats; they were also made use of by the open fascists of all shades, who had, of course, the full support of the social-democrats, in the fight against the revolutionary workers. At many factories and works where the C.P.G. lost votes at the factory committee elections, the fascists gained. The latter, with the aid of the terrorism of the Government and the employers, are beginning to get an ever stronger hold on the factories, issuing factory papers and forming their own cells, through which, by means of vile demagoguery and slanders against our Party, they lead astray the non-class-conscious workers.

We do not doubt that in the coming Reichstag elections campaign the C.P.G. will carry on a vigorous campaign against the social-democrats and national-socialists (fascists), but that is not enough. It is necessary that the Communists and the revolutionary workers, under the leadership of the C.P.G., carry on a continuous, energetic and many-sided fight in all working-class organisations, particularly in the factories and in the unemployed organisations, not only against the social-democrats, but also against the fascists.

* * *

The question is being debated in Party circles as to what was the nature of the errors committed by the revolutionary T.U. opposition and the Party cells, which led to the loss of votes in a number of big undertakings in Germany during the recent factory committee elections—were they political or organisational errors? There must, of course, be a proper study of the causes of the errors made in order to rectify them and avoid them in the future. But it seems to us that the very way the question is presented is incorrect. Policy is in-

separable from organisation and vice versa. Certainly, in the factories mentioned above the Red factory committees, the cells and individual Communists have not carried out the correct Party policy (it is very significant that that C.P.G. achieved the greatest successes in those factories where the Red factory committees, the cells and individual Communists carried out uncompromisingly the Party tactics of class against class); thus the errors committed are of a political nature. Would these errors of the Red factory committees in the large factories have helped to bring such losses of votes to the Communist Party, and consequently a weakening of the C.P.'s position in these factories if the Party cells had done good organisational work, if they had guided the Communists in the Red factory committees, and the Communist T.U. and revolutionary delegates in these factories? There are factories where Red factory committees already exist, but where the Communists are not yet organised into Communist cells. For factories of that category this question should be formulated: could such errors have been committed by the factory committees if properly functioning cells had existed? Of course not! For the cells would either have compelled the Party members belonging to the Red factory committees to correct their line and carry out the Party tactics or else they would have informed the workers that the Communists in the factory committees were conducting not the Party but reformist tactics, and the authority of the C.P.G. would then by no means have suffered in the eyes of the workers, despite the gross errors of individual Communists. The errors of the Red factory committees were not committed on the last day before the elections, but many months earlier. Why were they not rectified in time, or else why did not the cells or the local Party organisations dissociate themselves from them? Here the fault mainly lies in the bad organisational system, the organisational form of the Party organisations and sections of the C.I. Up to now the Communists working in the factories are not everywhere organised in cells, and not even all the Communists in factories where cells exist, are members of these cells. As a rule the cells in the factories carry on their work among the working

men and women badly, they do not distribute the work among their members and in the majority of cases do not organise into fractions the Communists in the factory committees or in the revolutionary delegates' organisation—and as a result of this they either have no control over them at all, or else control them badly. Could the factory cells work so badly if the district committees or Party committees with which they are connected (or should be connected) paid more attention to them, instructed them, controlled their work, in other words lead the work properly? Of course not. It is clear, therefore, that the organisational system that continued to be in practice is useless. It must be changed. Certainly, to carry on Communist work among the masses in the factories, in the face of growing rationalisation, decreased production and mass dismissals, in face of a savage police espionage system in which the social-democratic bureaucrats take part, in face of steadily growing unemployment—is very hard. This is particularly so where the old social-democratic traditions are preserved, where the Party organisation is on the residential basis and not according to the place of work of the Party member. Proofs exist, however, that these difficulties can be totally overcome. Indeed, there are cells even in the biggest factories and works, which work very well and which consequently carry the majority of the workers with them. Indeed, the C.P.G. was able to mobilise at the last factory committee elections an army of 12,000 Communists and revolutionary workers and employees, working in more than 1,200 big and average-sized factories to put them up as candidates for the factory committees (of these 12,000 candidates only 300 deserted, 7,000 being elected as members of the factory committees and 4,000 as substitutes). If the work is organised competently the factory management and spies need not know all the members of the factory cell, but the candidates put forward for the factory committees on behalf of the C.P.G. or the trade union opposition are bound to be known to the entire counter-revolutionary band, for their names are displayed openly. Our candidates thus risk losing their jobs at a time when unemployment is rampant, risk

being expelled from the trade unions, etc.; nevertheless, the C.P.G. was able to participate in a most important campaign, putting forward its lists in more than 1,200 factories. Does this not prove that with resolute desire, with adequate skill and with correct leadership, the existing difficulties can be overcome? Of course no struggle, least of all the class struggle, can avoid sacrifices. But the workers of the whole world, particularly the Communists, have proved more than once that they are not afraid of sacrifices. Until such time as the Communist Party transfer the centre of gravity of all their Party and T.U. work right into the factories, they will not be able to liberate quite large sections of workers from the influence of the reformist trade union bureaucrats and the social-democratic party, and here and there from the influence of the national-fascists; in other words, they will not be able to win the majority of the working class.

The Social-Democratic Party of Germany up till now has been organised on the residential basis. Only during the last few years, in order to fight the Communists, has it begun to form cells in factories and to organise factory newspapers. But in spite of this, and even with the residential basis, the S.D. Party has strong connections with the factories through the "free" Amsterdam trade unions, the leaders of which are social-democrats. The reformist "free" trade unions have their delegate-representatives in all factories. These delegates are elected in the factories and work by the members of the trade unions. The trade unions put forward their own panels. At the elections of the factory committees, the reformist trade unions, in putting forward their own panels, appeal for the support of their own members among the workers and employees, who number a total of nearly six millions. If the figures published by *Vorwaerts* are correct, the S.D. Party had 1,032,119 members on March 31st, 1930. Even if we reckon that of this number only 300,000 members of the S.D. Party work in factories, the reformists still have an adequate number of candidates for the elections of the factory committee and T.U. delegate-representatives. The social-democratic and reformist trade union press, the T.U. apparatus, the appara-

tus of the insurance funds—all composed of members of the S.D. Party, the factory committees and T.U. delegates, also comprising mainly members of the S.D. Party, confuse and deceive large numbers of workers in the factories, at trade union meetings. Here they do not immediately encounter the necessary, systematic and organised retaliation of the Communists, as there are either no Party cells at all in the factories, or else they are badly working. The position is no better in regard to the work of the Communist fractions and the trade union opposition inside the reformist trade unions.

The Social-Democratic Party efficiently and skilfully manoeuvres both at the centre and in the localities. While at the head of the German Coalition Government it prepared all the financial legislation which shifted on to the shoulders of the masses all the unbearable weight of the Young Plan, the responsibility for the acceptance of which lies entirely with the social-fascists. Even after the bourgeois parties became strong enough to get on without the participation of the social-democrats in the Government, the social-democrats actually continued to collaborate with the Government in the offensive against the workers' living conditions. Both in their speeches and in Parliament they opposed the Government, but in practice they kept away from the Reichstag a certain number of S.D. deputies to make sure that although having verbally opposed it the law would not fail to get passed at the time of voting. Now, when the S.D. Party realises that the workers are beginning to understand these treacherous games (in the elections to the Saxon Landtag, the S.D. Party recently lost 51,000 votes) and when the Brüning Government will not make any concessions to the Party, it has tried another trick. The social-democrats tabled a motion in the Reichstag for the abrogation of all the financial legislation that had been introduced on the basis of paragraph 48 of the Constitution by the President of the German Republic. By this gesture they assured for themselves a platform for deceiving the workers at the forthcoming elections when they would say: You see how we, the social-democrats, defended the interests of the masses. The active social-democrats in the factories act in exactly the

same way. As soon as they see that the workers, despite their resistance and sabotage, are beginning to fight, the social-democrats immediately try to get hold of the leadership of the movement, drawing up corresponding demands, while at the same time their colleagues in the central and region trade union headquarters either openly betray the strike or else quash it by an arbitration decision, the arbitrators in most cases, also being social-democrats. Such hard-baked politicians, who, unfortunately, still retain influence over large numbers of the workers can only be fought successfully by flexible, well-functioning Communist fractions in the trade unions and Party cells in the factories, strongly connected, permanently guided and controlled by the district committees and Party committees.

CUT OUT "SPHERES OF INFLUENCE"

The Party organisations of the C.I. sections should at all costs put an end to social-democratic traditions in the sphere of "dividing the spheres of influence" between the Party and the trade unions. According to them the Party is engaged in the political struggle and the trade unions in the economic struggle. The social-democrats and reformists can indulge in such a system because the S.D. politicians and the reformist T.U. bureaucrats are so remarkably unanimous in the sphere of betraying working class interests and are assured the full support both of the State apparatus and of the whole administrative apparatus of the factories and works. It is quite a different matter with the Communist Party. Just as it is harmful to separate politics from organisation and vice versa, one cannot divide the sphere of influence between Party organisations and the trade union opposition or the Communist fractions in trade unions. The Bolshevik Party organisations can only successfully win the majority of the working class and become its leaders, when every Party member, no matter where he works or to what workers' organisation he belongs, carries out the policy and decisions of the Party, according to the plans drawn up by the Party organisations. For this it is essential that all fundamental questions, including the trade union question (the conducting of strikes, drawing up of demands, conclusion of

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wage agreements, etc.) be discussed by Party organisations, so that all Party members, no matter where they are working are able to carry on work on the basis of these decisions, making them concrete, in accordance with the conditions in which they have to work. For the better putting into effect of Party decisions, and successful work, Party organisations, above all factory cells, should distribute the work among all Party members in such a way that all Party members who are in unions, on trade union committees, on factory committees, who are T.U. delegates, get together into Communist fractions which should work under the guidance and control of the corresponding Party organisations (fractions of factory committees, fractions in the institution of T.U. or revolutionary delegates in the factories, factory cells, etc.).

That work can only be carried on successfully in that manner is proved by an analysis of the last factory elections and the collective-agreement campaign in Germany. Many Party organisations of the C.P.G. were overconfident in the ability of the trade union opposition to prepare for the conclusion of new collective agreements in the most important industries (engineering, textiles, etc.), as also the ability to lead the work in the Red factory committees, and what is more left the T.U. opposition without adequate control on the part of the Party organisations. What kind of election results were obtained in a number of big factories and how the Red factory committees worked, we have already shown above. The trade union opposition prepared for the

conclusion of the new collective agreements very late in the day, and in a very inefficient manner. This German experience—and not only the German — clearly demonstrates the need to put an end to social-democratic traditions in the sphere of dividing the work between the Party organisations on the one hand and the trade union opposition and fractions in the trade unions on the other.

* * *

Ever since the Third Congress (1921) the Comintern has been fighting for the carrying out of the Bolshevik organisational principles in the Party structure of the C.I. sections. Since 1924 the C.I. sections have had undoubted successes in this field. The danger of imperialist wars and of attacks on the U.S.S.R., the collapse of the precarious capitalist stabilisation owing to the world economic crisis, the rise of the revolutionary movement—all these things make it essential for all sections of the C.I. to increase their membership, to retain and train the newly-made members, to stop the fluctuation of the membership, to intensify the fight against the reformists and the fascists, and to secure better preparation of the independent leadership of all activities of the workers, in spite of and against the reformists. For this it is necessary to liquidate the social-democratic traditions remaining in the Communist Parties, to reinforce the work in the reformist, Catholic and other mass reactionary trade unions, and to transfer the centre of gravity of Party and trade union work to the factories, forming new factory cells and improving the work of the existing ones.