

The Communist Party of Palestine and the Arab Revolt.

By Bob (Jaffa).

Under extraordinarily difficult conditions the C. P. of Palestine has succeeded in convoking an **enlarged plenary session of the C. C.**, at which the rôle and the tasks of the Palestinian working class and of its Party, the C. P. of Palestine, in the Arab revolt were discussed. The mere technical side of convoking such a meeting proved a very complicated matter under the general conditions of state of siege, and specially severe persecution of the Communists.

In view of the tremendous chauvinism prevailing as a result of the rebellion having been deflected in the direction of pogroms and national struggles, in view of the practical division of the cities and the country into national "zones" (entailing danger to any Jew entering an Arab zone and vice versa), and in view of the unscrupulous agitation on the part of the national leaders on either side, the very fact of Jewish and Arab workers meeting together constituted a considerable risk. The plenum was, however, able to establish that the Party members have effectively resisted the general mania of chauvinism. In this national conflict, unchained by reactionary hands, the C. P. of Palestine proved, as in times of "peace", to be the one and only refuge of internationalism, with full agreement between Jewish and Arab workers. In particular, the activity of the Arab members had increased during the days of rebellion; they agitated for the diversion of the movement into purely anti-imperialist channels and for the union of Jewish and Arab workers to this end.

The items of the agenda were as follows: 1. The international situation, the revolt in Palestine, and the internal situation in the Party. 2. Orientation towards the Arabs and questions of organisation.

In connection with the first question it was established that upon the whole the directives of the C. C. were correct and that it was quite in keeping with the interests of the working class of Palestine and in those of the revolutionary movement to look upon the present upheaval as a national one, while opposing its reactionary character in so far as it had been diverted in the direction of pogroms, at the same time to broaden it and put forward anti-imperialist fighting slogans. Similar approval was expressed of the denunciation of the rôle played on the one hand by the British-Zionist provocationists and on the other by the feudal-clerical Arab leaders, as also of the true designs of the British imperialists, Zionists, and treacherous Arab bourgeoisie. Nor did the C. C. fail to note the deep social roots of the movement and its **agrarian character**, which fact was expressed in the emphasis laid on agrarian slogans.

The C. C., it is true, committed a number of mistakes, which it readily admitted in the theses submitted to the Party organi-

sations. The rate of development was far more rapid than the Party leaders had expected; the wheel of the Party to the Left and its consequent practical adaptation to the tasks of a revolutionary situation came too late and, greatly impeded by discussion with the Right Opposition, were not effected with sufficient thoroughness, so that, added to the organisational weakness of the Party at the outbreak of the rebellion, there was also an insufficient fighting ability. But since the revolt on August 23rd was nothing but the first stage of the great revolutionary movement preparing in all Arab countries, these mistakes might well be made good by a proper and consistent line of activity on the part of the Party.

Events, it is true, have shown that alongside the predominant majority of the Party that had drawn the appropriate lessons from the recent sanguinary events, there were Right opportunist elements who were utilising the occasion to make a general attack on the directives of the Party and the C. I. These elements had taken advantage of the fact that the C. C. had contented itself with opposing them ideologically and had not taken organisational measures for their removal from the Party ranks, to undermine the discipline of the Party and to go to lengths which are altogether tantamount to a liquidation of the revolutionary Party line.

The Right opportunists opposed the Left orientation of the Party, scoffed at the third period as an invention of the C. I., denied the radicalisation of the masses, opposed the demonstrations, on May 1st and August 1st, and declined to accept the revolutionary principles of the Communist Party structure.

During the recent events, the Party committee at Haifa, where the Right is most influential, decreed off-hand that the appeal of the C. C. of the C. P. of Palestine, which spoke of the emancipatory movement of the Arab masses, was wrong, since there had been no such movement but only pogroms. In imitation of the outcry of the Zionist and Poale-Zionist agitational apparatus, these "Communists" merely underlined the instances of national fights and cruel assaults, purposely overlooking all social motives of the movement and the anti-imperialist outbreaks in places where there was no Zionist "barrier", denying the possibility of the working class (C. P.) undertaking the lead in the movement, and finally declaring that the only possible tactics would have consisted in remaining at home and waiting for the end of the pogroms, and that the best thing the Jewish workers could do would be to quit Palestine altogether.

The Haifa Committee, however, did not content itself with this intelligent "analysis" of the movement, but started to act openly against the C. C. It simply suppressed the Party appeal and thus gave the enemies of the Communists the possibility to start a terrible campaign of agitation against them and to awaken distrust of the Party among the workers who had until then sympathised with us.

In such circumstances the plenum was obliged to call the members of the Right Opposition sharply to account. The verdict was unanimous and fully in accordance with the recommendations given to the C. C. of the C. P. of Palestine by the Eastern Secretariat of the E. C. C. I. in a letter of August 13th (only received during the rising). Adherence to the Right ideology was declared to be incompatible with membership of the C. P. and the C. C. was called upon immediately to cleanse the Party of all representatives of opportunism and of petty-bourgeois Poale Zionism.

At the same time, the attitude of the semi-Right (conciliationist) elements was refuted. These elements are only "partly" in favour of the Right, as in the question of radicalisation, of the 1st of August, and the like, and also oppose severe organisational measures against the Right danger.

A kind of "platform" of this directions was recognised by the plenum to have been embodied in the article by Comrade Alini (formerly the leader of the Right Opposition) in No. 50 of the International Press Correspondence, which, it is true, does not oppose the principles of workers' and peasants' government, agrarian revolution, and a firm stand against the treacherous national bourgeoisie — principles which Alini was once wont to assail — but professes to see a danger in "over-estimating the radicalisation of the working masses". Now it has been just the mistake on the part of the Party that the radicalisation of the masses was often underrated, while the situation was ripe for a far more energetic and comprehensive offensive of the workers than was initiated by the Party after its orientation to the Left. According to the resolution of the plenum, the con-

ditions could only remain in the Party if they abandoned the standpoint and began to fight in word and deed against the Right danger.

In regard to the second item of the agenda, the plenum was of the unanimous opinion that the rate at which the Party was extending among the Arab working class must be accelerated to the utmost. The objective presumptions for such an extension are given in the serious revolutionary excitement of the masses and the treachery of the national Arab leaders. By enlarging its Arab cadres, the Party may play an important part in the next stage of the revolutionary development. The British Government and the reactionary circles connected with it know very well, and the greatly increased persecution of the Party is to be ascribed to fear of the growth of the revolutionary workers' movement and of Communism.

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The Independent Trade Union of Indonesia and Its Suppression.

By M. Musso.

Up to the time when the **Sarekat Kaum Buruh** Indonesia was suppressed nearly eighteen months have elapsed and in this short period the movement, succeeded in extending its influence very rapidly among the Indonesian working class.

The mass character of the union frightened not only the government but also the nationalist parties, which were engaged in organising trade unions. From the very beginning of its existence not only the police were combating this independent union, but also the **nationalist trade unions** and **native social-democratic unions**.

The report of the Dutch government on the suppression of the **S. K. B. I.** revealed that the organisers of the union were communists, remnants of those who were participating in the uprisings during 1920 and who could not be arrested or banished to **New-Guinea**, because there were not evidences enough against them. The most important leader of this union was **Marsudi** who before the insurrection of 1920 was already discharged from his post as a postal worker in Surabaya on account of revolutionary propaganda among the postal workers. Later when the postal workers union the **Sarekat-Postal** and the **C. P. I.** were driven underground (1925) Marsudi became the active Secretary of the postal-workers union, of which Musso was the chairman.

Right from the beginning of the existence of the union Marsudi launched the slogan, that the union was fighting for the economic interests of the workers, and it had nothing to do whatever with politics.

This non-political character of the trade union was of course very dangerous and Marsudi understood this very well. Therefore, at meetings and in the organs of the union, the leader, although not directly and plainly, advocated the uncompromising class struggle. From the legal standpoint the authorities were powerless in face of the organisation of Marsudi.

Marsudi was fighting at all cost to preserve the independence of the union. He clearly emphasised, that every worker could be a member of the **S. K. B. I.** irrespective of race or creed. This tactic was mainly directed against the **nationalist trade unions**, which organised only **native workers** and against the **Sarekat-Islam trade unions**, which accepted only **Mohammedan workers** as members.

The campaign of slander carried on by the treacherous nationalists furnished the government with a pretext to suppress the **S. K. B. I.** and arrest a number of its leaders.

According to the law there were no grounds for summarily arresting the leaders of the **S. K. B. I.** before the court, but the Dutch authorities made use of the despotic power of the government general to banish them to **New-Guinea**. Banishment orders were issued against **Marsudi**, the chairman of the **C. C.** as well as against **Gunarjo** and **Mulyono**, both members of the **C. C.** **Aliadirejo**, the local leader of the railway and tramway workers of Surabaya, was ordered to be exiled to the malaria-ridden district of **Boven-Digul** amidst the jungle of **New-Guinea**. The jurist **Sumantri** had first to undergo his punishment, after which he would be sent to the place of exile.