

India

Supplement

A Conversation With Indian Comrades*

By Orgwald

SOME CURRENT QUESTIONS

Question No. 1.—Should the Independent Labour Party desire to join the Communist Party, what should be the attitude of the Communist Party and how should it assimilate the members of the I.L.P. in Great Britain?

Answer.—The I.L.P. was part of the Labour Party, and it supported the two so-called Labour governments. The policy of the Labour Party, as well as that of the Labour government, was obviously discredited in the eyes of the more class-conscious elements of the workers, and these elements exert great pressure on the members of the Independent Labour Party.

In the I.L.P. an opposition was formed which began to express dissatisfaction with the policy of the leaders and after the fall of the second Labour government insisted on the I.L.P. leaving the Labour Party. However, the rank and file of the I.L.P. went further than that and insisted on discontinuing the tactics of collaboration with the bourgeoisie. They insist upon the I.L.P. fighting hand in hand with the Communist Party, which follows a correct programme and tactics and fights against the bourgeoisie.

In their desire to keep the I.L.P. intact and continue their old policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the I.L.P. leaders saw themselves forced to talk about a united front on an international scale. They approached the Second and Third Internationals, inviting them to form a united front, and in one passage of their appeal they spoke about the need for ending the class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Owing to the pressure of the rank and file of the I.L.P., the I.L.P. leaders were compelled at the Derby Conference of the Party, held on April 16-17, 1933, to support the proposal that the I.L.P. withdraw from the Second International. The question of affiliation to the Comintern was not on the agenda. That the I.L.P. leadership was acting under great pressure exerted by the rank and file of the I.L.P. is proved by the fact that at the conference the leadership was fighting against entering into negotiations with the Comintern on the question as to ways and means by which the I.L.P. might help the work of the Comintern. Nevertheless, the resolution was carried by the conference, but with a bare majority of four, a solid minority following the leadership.

As to the united front between the Communists and the members of the I.L.P., it is actually being established in some parts of England. The conference of the I.L.P. made a number of reservations in its resolution on the united front in Great Britain. Nevertheless, the united front between Communists and members of the I.L.P., as well as with workers following the I.L.P., is being established and extended in the common struggle with increasing effect.

On the question of supporting the organisations of the unemployed, the I.L.P. leaders tried to hoodwink the conference by introducing a resolution to support all the organisations of the unemployed. This would also include the strike-breaking organisations of the unemployed which were formed by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress with the specific object of breaking up the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, which is under the influence of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

However, the conference of the I.L.P. expressed itself in favour of supporting only the revolutionary organisations of the unemployed.

The conclusions to be drawn from this are that the I.L.P. leaders have not given up their policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and are against the united front. The leaders fear that if they do not make some concessions to the active revolutionary members of the I.L.P. then the I.L.P. rank and file, influenced by these revolutionary elements, will go over to the Communists. Hence the manoeuvres of the I.L.P. leaders, their half-hearted concessions; but these leaders will never go to the

length of uniting or amalgamating the I.L.P. with the Communist Party.

The Communists on their part should follow the tactics of exposing the inconsistency of the leaders. They should establish a united front and tell the members of the I.L.P. that if they wish to carry on the class struggle, if they are against class collaboration, the programme of the Comintern is based on just these lines. So that if they really wish to fight against class collaboration and against the offensive of capital, as well as against fascism, then they should join hands with the Communist Party, call a unity conference of both parties, and form a mass Communist Party in Great Britain.

Even if the leaders will not agree to that, a number of local branches may accept these conditions. At any rate, the world economic crisis is so keenly felt that even the powerful and clever British bourgeoisie is forced to put the screw more tightly on the workers, and this is the best argument in favour of the Communist tactics. Possibly the proposal to unite with the Communists will not obtain a majority in the I.L.P., but a number of influential local organisations may fight for unity, and, failing in their endeavours, will go over to the Communist Party. However, I do not think that this is going to materialise in the near future.

Question No. 2.—What are the tactics of the Indian bourgeoisie in the present stage in regard to the constitution and, in connection with this, what are the tasks facing the Communists in the struggle for national independence?

Answer.—Roughly speaking, the tactic of the Indian bourgeoisie at the present time is to hinder the masses of the people from fighting for the liberation of India from the British Empire, while accepting in fact the very limited constitution.

What does the native bourgeoisie get out of the constitution given by England to the Indian "nation" as a "gift"? It obtains a few "ministries" of second-rate importance, which will have to work under the control of the British, and will have the right to take part in the appropriation, under the control of the British officials and the Indian feudal lords, of 20 per cent. of the State budget of India. It was sufficient to throw before the Indian bourgeoisie in the domain of internal politics this bait for all the groupings in the National Congress to give up even Gandhi's "passive resistance." The elections to the "Indian Legislative Assembly" are to take place in 1934, or they may even be postponed till 1936, and already all the groups affiliated to the National Congress, the Rights, with Gandhi at their head, and the "Lefts," with Nehru and Bose at the head, are shouting about the necessity of taking part in the elections and are opposed to a mass movement against the constitution. The fear of the action of the masses entertained by the National Congress is so great that the acting president of the National Congress, Mr. Aney, upon Gandhi's advice, dissolved all the local organisations of the National Congress and appointed dictators in their place. The leaders of the National Congress, in view of the indignation shown by the broad masses of town and country who suffer economically from the crisis, are afraid lest the local amorphous organisations of the National Congress place themselves at the head of the mass movement. The dictators, as the true watchdogs of the bourgeoisie and the imperialists, are more reliable than the local committees of the National Congress which may be penetrated by representatives of the class trade unions, of the peasant organisations, and even by the Communists.

The fear of these leaders is not unfounded, since there is in the country a broad movement of the peasants against the taxes, rents and indebtedness, while in the towns there is a strike move-

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ment among the workers, and even the urban petty bourgeoisie is very restive.

These are the causes that prompted the Indian bourgeoisie to stop even its verbal "fight" against the imperialists (it never fought the imperialists by deeds). It needs the British bayonets, against the workers, against the "mob." As to the feudal princes and landlords, they have always supported the British in everything, and now in the villages they are backed by the British bayonets and the National Congress, which carries on an agitation against the peasant movement. All these are causes of an internal order. But there are also causes of an external political nature which compel the Indian bourgeoisie to try to curb the masses and they themselves go down on their knees before British imperialism. These causes are to be found in dumping. The fact is that the Japanese, Dutch and Belgian manufacturers at home and in the colonies are inundating India with cheap goods, such as piece goods, sugar, paper, etc. The Indian manufacturers suffer thereby, and they therefore appeal to the British bourgeoisie for help. The latter did not hesitate in coming to their "aid." They are prepared to introduce high tariffs on Japanese, Dutch, Belgian and other commodities, but not on British goods. The Indians must give preference to British goods. At the same time the British diehards frighten the Indian bourgeoisie with the fate of China, which is now being attacked by Japan, as if the British have not been doing for scores of years in India what the Japanese wish to attain in China. At the same time they repeat that they can prevent "anarchy" (revolution) in India. These are the causes that prompted the "irreconcilable enemies" of the British diehards—the Indian bourgeoisie—to come to terms.

Of course, all these Gandhis, Nehrus, Roys, Kandalkars and Joshis do not speak openly in the country about this agreement. On the contrary, the "Left" congressmen insist on a "fight" against the British, they are against the dissolution of the local organisations of the National Congress. They "violently" attack Gandhi, they look for new "Left" leaders, such as Bose, who at present stays abroad. They even threaten to form a Swaraj party on the lines of the Egyptian party Wafd, to fight British oppression, etc. (they only hide the fact that the Egyptian edition of the Swaraj party, i.e., the Wafd, long ago came to an agreement with British imperialism, just as their brethren did in India). The Communists should know how to discover these deals with British imperialism behind these phrases and expose them before the broad masses and carry on this ceaseless fight against these betrayers of the cause of the people.

There is a possibility that the Indian bourgeoisie, together with British imperialism, will accept the services of the "Left" reformists of the type of the younger Nehru or Bose and their "national revolutionary" party, when the old leaders of the National Congress, such as Gandhi, Aney and others have completely lost their influence over the broad masses.

The Communists must even now warn the masses of the betrayal that is being prepared with the launching of such parties. We know from the history of the second Russian Revolution (February, 1917), that a party under the high-sounding name of Socialist-Revolutionaries, which called itself the party which defended the interests of the peasants, a party that in the course of many years claimed to be a revolutionary party, using even terrorism against individual representatives of the Tsarist government, after it obtained power together with the Menshevik-Social-Democrats not only refused to give the land to the peasants, but even sent punitive expeditions against those peasants who seized the land before the October Revolution in 1917. During the October Revolution this party, together with the bourgeoisie and landlords, fought against the workers and peasants, and even now the leaders of this party are preparing abroad, together with the imperialists of all countries, to take part at the opportune moment in the attack against the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of the international proletariat. The new parties of the Boses, Nehrus and their like will do the same. And this will not hinder them from claiming that their party defends the interests of the peasants, workers and urban petty bourgeoisie. They have already proclaimed that they are drafting an economic programme for the "toiling masses." Even the provisional chairman of the National Congress, Mr. Aney, does not wish to be behind them in the "defence" of the interests of the workers. He has even agreed to be an arbitrator in the conflict between a textile company at Nagpur and three thousand working men and women who were

thrown out by the company and refused to accept a wage-cut to the extent of 30 per cent. Our benevolent gentleman will undoubtedly "succeed" in procuring a cut to the extent of not 30 but 20-25 per cent. of the wages of the textile workers, upon which he and his followers will pose as the defenders of the workers. The leaders of the National Congress undertake these manoeuvres in their endeavours to maintain their position. The policy of the National Congress has called forth a tremendous dissatisfaction in the country. In the papers and at meetings the policy of Gandhism is being discussed and summarised. Gandhism is now going through a crisis and the desertion of Gandhism by the masses is proceeding very rapidly. This crisis found its expression in the National Congress. Despite its dissensions with British imperialism, and while pretending to deplore the miserable value of the concessions made by British imperialism, the Indian bourgeoisie in its fear of the masses of the people, of a revolution by the people, made a further step on the road to an agreement with the imperialists for the purpose of fighting against the revolution. The trade unions and the Communist Party must carry on a continuous fight against all of them. The sooner the masses free themselves from the influence of these Nehrus, Gandhis, Aneys and Boses, the more rapidly will the working class of India, with the Communist Party at its head and attracting the peasantry to its side, succeed in throwing off the imperialist yoke and in settling with their own bourgeoisie.

Question No. 3.—While there are very few Communist groups in India, the movement is big, and we have to master this great movement with the small forces at our disposal. What is the most essential thing upon which we should concentrate, so that we may be able to lead this movement with the forces at our disposal?

Answer.—If we compare the two periods of the national revolutionary movement in India, i.e., the movement in 1919-20 and the great movement in 1929-30-31, then we can see a great difference between them. In 1919 and 1920 the movement was led mainly by the National Congress, for at that time the labour movement was not strong enough to put forward an organised leadership of its own of any description. However, in recent years (1928 and after) the movement had its origin mainly in big strikes led by trade unions. The Girmi Kamgar played an especially important part.

The Gandhites and the National Congress saw that if they did not take the national revolutionary movement into their own hands they would lose all their positions. The strike wave was so broad that its leaders could have carried the national revolutionary movement along with them. Therefore the National Congress, led by Gandhi, took upon itself the initiative in this "fight." Once more the National Congress succeeded in gaining the mastery of the national revolutionary movement, although this time it was not as easy as it was before, because now within this broad movement there were separate demonstrations of the workers and separate Communist manifestations directed against the National Congress and against its tactics of passive resistance. True, these demonstrations and manifestations were not large, but nevertheless the beginning of such a movement was there.

During the three years, 1929-30-31, and the first quarter of 1932, there were many strikes in India resulting in a loss of 17,167,000 working days. India occupies third place in the world strike movement. Owing to strikes, America lost during that period 20,934,000 working days, and Great Britain 20,321,000. Since the number of workers engaged in industry is many times smaller in India than the corresponding number in America and Great Britain taken separately, the number of working days lost by every striker in India exceeds many times the corresponding number in America and Great Britain.

This shows that the strike wave was very great. However, besides the strike movement there was also a big peasant movement. In many places the peasants not only refused to pay taxes but even came out against the landlords. Now suppose that under these conditions we had a militant mass Communist Party, connected with the factories and mills, with Communist fractions in all the mass organisations and in the first place in the trade unions, then this tremendous national liberationist movement would have obtained a new militant leadership from the Communist Party and would not have yielded such miserable results.

That is why the question of a Communist Party in India plays such an important part not only for the working class movement, not only for the peasant movement, but also for the broad masses of the Indian people, including the urban petty bourgeoisie. But

in India we are still without such a Party, which would have been the great factor in the work of leading the workers' and peasants' movement and also the movement of the urban petty bourgeoisie.

What role should the Party play in the working class? The Party must mould the ideology of the working class and formulate its programme. The Party must draw up the strategic plan for a long span of time and lay down tactics to fit the events which are now taking place. The Party must build an organisation that should be linked up with the working class. In accordance with its adopted tactics the Party must put forward slogans that would immediately appeal to the broadest masses and explain to them what action should be taken up at the given moment. The Party must expose all those parties and groups which, though unauthorised, pretend to speak on behalf of the working class or of the Indian people, and whose interests they do not defend.

Have we such a party in India? I think that you will all agree with me that we have no such party, though the groups which work there have attempted to formulate a programme of action. However, the conditions which would compel one to recognise that there is a real Communist Party in India are still lacking.

What have we now in India? We have very good groups of comrades in several towns. In some places these groups even exist legally, the police know them; therefore, it is very difficult to carry on real Communist work. Some of the comrades work in the trade unions; occasionally, very seldom, they publish leaflets, but they do not constitute a Party. It is, therefore, quite proper for our comrades to raise the question what is to be done and what is the most essential thing upon which they should concentrate in order to form Party organisations and build up the Party.

In my opinion the primary duty of the Communists is to bring together all the groups in India—and on the basis of the programme which has already been drawn up and published and seemingly accepted by all the Communists—to decide what should be done to transform the groups into a real Communist Party of India. It is necessary to call a conference of representatives from the existing Communist groups and at this conference reports should be made on the position of the local Party organisations, and thereupon an exposition should be given of the situation in which India finds herself at the present moment. It would also be necessary to discuss the question of publishing a central organ of the Party, as well as the formation of an organisational or central committee of the Party. The task of such a committee would be to consolidate the existing local Party organisations and to form new Party organisations in places where they do not exist, to discuss and decide upon the important questions arising from the present situation in India and to prepare an All-Indian Party conference or congress. The conference will have to make clear its attitude to the question which is now one of the most important in India, i.e., the question of the constitution: should it be boycotted, ignored, or should a broad campaign be started against it and the workers called upon to strike in protest? Should protest meetings be called against the constitution or should we take part in the elections and try to elect people who could use even this narrow rostrum to intensify the fight for the independence of India?

Hitherto such a conference could not be called. The conference, however, is a maximum programme which however it will be necessary to carry out in the nearest future. We hear that in some towns in India there are isolated parallel Communist groups. It goes without saying that the minimum programme should be to unite first of all those groups which exist separately in one and the same town and this should be done without waiting for the conference. If for one reason or another it is impossible to unite all groups, it will be necessary to unite at least the best elements in them.

In accordance with a drawn-up plan it is necessary to force the work of uniting the separate groups or of creating Party organisations in each town separately. The existence of parallel groups in one and the same town and the general dissatisfaction caused by such parallelism is not peculiar to India alone, but can be observed also in other countries. But what is surprising is that there are no forces inside these groups that could take upon themselves the initiative in uniting these groups and creating strong local Party organisations. This is really surprising.

True, it is very difficult to work in India, because the British bourgeoisie possess wide experience and commands vast means and forces which it uses lavishly with the object of hindering the organisation of a Communist Party, which alone can organise the

real fight against British imperialism. It employs all and every means to prevent the separate Communist groups from uniting into one organisation.

British imperialism in India will take all measures to prevent the calling of a conference for the purpose of uniting the individual Communist groups, which now work in a primitive manner and are isolated. The very fact that a certain part of the Communists work legally and the police do not molest them prevents these Communists from fulfilling the tasks which should be obvious to every Communist. These Communists cannot take a single step without the police knowing it. Every Communist is followed by a number of spies.

The bourgeoisie, however, makes use of other methods, too: they send their agents, who pose as "Communists," to these groups to carry out the policy of British imperialism inside these groups; these agents work against uniting the groups and constantly sharpen the differences within them. There were cases (I will mention neither names of towns nor persons) when Communist groups torn by dissensions had split; when in both groups there remained only people who were of one mind, the groups should start working in real earnest with great energy, but nothing of the kind happened. No sooner was the split accomplished than new differences arose in each of the Communist groups. This proves that the British spies in Communist guise do their work exceedingly well.

Why do I tell you all this? Because most likely you, too, will come across such things, so do not despair. The movement will assert itself and the honest, energetic Communists will prove equal to the task and will overcome all the hindrances which British imperialism places in their way.

It is necessary at all costs to overcome all these hindrances, and the first step in this direction should be the merging of all the Communist groups in one organisation, first in individual towns and then all over the country. It is necessary to call a conference of representatives of these groups, and at these conferences it is necessary to agree upon a general programme, upon the question of tactics, organisation and slogans. On this basis work should commence according to plan. I repeat, it is necessary to carry out this plan at first in the cities and provinces and then all over the country.

Question No. 4.—How is the importance and the need for organisation to be proved?

Answer.—Let us imagine that at the factory where you work you have been successful in calling a meeting on some economic question. Now, if you come to that meeting unprepared you will see that the result will be chaos—there will be a general noise, nobody will know what to do and there will be no resolutions. To give your followers an object lesson on the importance and the necessity of organisation, you should organise them for the second meeting, assign to each of them some duty; one should be prepared to act as chairman, another should speak in the discussion, a third should bring in a resolution. And if there are a few more people to support your resolution, your followers will immediately see the difference between the two meetings. Let them compare the proceedings at these two meetings. They will immediately see how important it is to have an organisation, no matter how small it is. They will see that even a small organisation can achieve things which prove beyond the power of individual persons, although they may have made very good suggestions.

You may apply the same method at a trade union meeting. This will prove somewhat more difficult since there must be some leadership in a trade union. However, if you arrange the matter between you and prepare beforehand the proposal (provided, of course, that you know what is going on in the trade union) against the proposal which the leadership of the trade union has introduced, or which it is going to introduce, and if you have adherents among the members attending the meeting, you will see the results. This is an elementary thing which every one of you will understand. If you do it, you will see how many adherents you will win by your organised work.

Question No. 5.—How is a group of three or five Communists to commence work in an industrial town?

Answer.—If three or five Communists happen to be in an industrial town, what are they to do? First of all they must find work, preferably in a large factory or mill, get acquainted with the locality where they are going to work, find out how the workers live there, what wages they get, the situation in that industry, draw up an outline of demands, publish a leaflet addressed to the

workers and try to distribute it. If every one of the three or four comrades works in this way and assists the others, they will not fail to get results. They will hear the workers talk about the leaflet, they will know how the workers respond to it, they will hear their opinions, and it will not be difficult for them to find out who is really in agreement with them and who is able to do some work which they may propose. They will not even notice how a circle of people will have formed around them with whom they can conduct talks and chats.

When such an atmosphere is created around them, it will then be a question of getting in closer touch with these people. The comrades (from the group of three or five) will be able to invite a few people to a chat, conference, or mass meeting; however, the invitation to these chats or meetings should not come from the comrade who works with them in the same factory, but from a comrade of the group of three or five who works in another factory or mill. It is necessary that the workers should not know that the comrade who supplied the data, wrote and distributed the leaflets works in their factory or mill. The workers of a given factory or mill who attend the chats or meetings should not know in the first stages that the organiser of this conference is actually among them, and that he works together with them in the same factory. It is therefore necessary that at these meetings some other comrade of the group of three or five should speak and not the one who works at that factory, so that the latter comrade may not become prominent among his factory mates attending the meeting.

This we call preparing the ground for the formation of a nucleus at factories and mills and of a Party organisation in a big or small town. Imperceptibly every one of the three or five comrades will gain adherents. When they find that there are people who have grasped their principles, they should push them forward, giving them certain tasks such as the organisation of a trade union, of a workers' co-operative society, etc., and the best of the new comrades should be enlisted in the nucleus. However, the initiators from among the three or five Communists must remain inconspicuous in the eyes of the newly-enlisted comrades. For a time the comrades working in a certain factory or mill should abstain from making speeches, leaving it to those of the comrades of the group of three or five who work elsewhere. This is necessary in order that the comrades should not fall into the hands of the police before they have time to create a Party organisation. Every one of the comrades who works at the factory or mill will serve as the eyes and the ears of the organisation. Through them the organisation will distribute leaflets and carry out everything required by the Party organisation.

These are the first steps. Now the next action. If in that city there is some labour organisation, a trade union, a co-operative, a sport society, educational or some other organisation the comrades should join it and see what is going on there. They should get acquainted with people, talk with them, issue a leaflet, publish a small paper, openly if possible, since it will be easier to distribute such a paper. In general, people who are not acquainted with underground methods will find it easier to publish such a paper.

Thus the circle of comrades who may be drawn into the revolutionary movement will widen. It is necessary to work energetically in the trade unions, in the workers' organisations, where our people should show alertness and initiative; our comrades should prove that they are able to work, to express accurately their ideas, to bring up proposals without at first disclosing who they are, without showing that they are Communists or that they speak on behalf of the Communist organisation. However, if they raise questions in a proper manner, they are sure to gain adherents.

These are the organisational methods of work.

Question No. 6.—How is a town committee of the Party to be formed?

Answer.—Let us assume that three or five comrades have succeeded in carrying out what was set out above. They have grown to such an extent that in the trade unions and in the factories and mills they have gathered around them an active body of people and have small groups in the factories. Then all of them can take up the other tasks. They form a committee, so far not an elected one, they draw up a plan of work, publish leaflets and a small paper, and they distribute the work among themselves. One is appointed secretary, another is to keep in touch with groups at the mills, factories and workshops, etc., and some of them will maintain connections with the Communists who work in the trade unions, and so on.

The distribution of work is not a mere formality. The one who is appointed to work, for instance, in a trade union, to lead the groups at the factories and mills, etc., must study closely all that is going on in his section of work, in the factory, in the trade union, and so on, so that he should really become master of this work and be able to prepare questions and raise them at the Party committee meetings, so that the decisions of the committee upon them may be of real benefit to the cause. Only thus will the Party committee be able unmistakably to take the right decision in regard to each branch of the work.

All I have said about work in trade unions and in large factories and mills applies equally to all other branches of work.

I shall answer yet another question as to what is to be done if you find yourself alone in some town. This is much more difficult. You will have to work more slowly, get some work in a factory or mill, and then, by individual work and close study of people, recruit some three or five people. After that you act in the same manner as outlined for a group of three or five.

Question No. 7.—Should the trade union or the Party organisation be organised first?

Answer.—I think that no categorical answer can be given to this question. It is necessary to do both. If there is a group, it is necessary to proceed in the way I have indicated; it is necessary to form a Party organisation or a small initiative group for the purpose of forming such a Party organisation. If a group of comrades arrives in a town and settles there, Party and trade union work should run parallel. If there is no trade union organisation, then some comrade should be given the task of organising a trade union in the trade in which he works.

Let us take the following case. A comrade arrives in some town by himself and succeeds in finding work in some factory in an industry which is not organised. It will be easier for him to start with the organisation of a trade union. Since trade unions are not prohibited in India, he can speak openly about forming a trade union and about the tasks of such a union. He can call a meeting of workers of his factory who wish to join the union, send delegations to other factories working in the same or kindred trades, and in the process of forming the trade union organisations he will inevitably come in contact with a number of workers. He will have the opportunity of observing them, and is sure to find among them some brave enthusiasts and energetic young men, and thus he can get recruits for the forming of a Party organisation.

It all depends on the conditions prevailing in the given town. If you put the question theoretically, what is preferable or what is more important: to form first a Party organisation or a trade union organisation, the answer is of course: the Party. Trade unions are one of the proletarian organisations, and a very important organisation at that, but, nevertheless, it is an organisation only for the defence of the economic interests of the working class.

Side by side with the trade union organisations there is a number of other working-class organisations, such as co-operative, sport, International Labour Defence, International Workers' Relief, workers' anti-religious societies, musical and educational organisations. Only the Party organisation may give the line of action to the Communists and revolutionary workers who are members of these organisations. The Party organisation defends the interests of the working class as a whole, since the Party organisation is the vanguard of the working class and guides all the forms of the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system, whereas the trade union organisation (led by the Party through the trade union Communist fraction) serves as the transmission belt from the Party to the working-class masses and leads directly the economic struggle of the workers.

Theoretically, therefore, it is more important to form first of all a Party organisation, but if in some places at one time or another it is easier to form a trade union, then the forming of such a union should be taken in hand first of all. It will all depend on local conditions.

Question No. 8.—Who should be admitted to the Party? Is it necessary to know much about Communism before one is admitted to the Party?

Answer.—It is very difficult for me to answer this question. Usually it is required that a member of the Party should know the programme, the principles of the Party, should be a member of a Party organisation and work in that organisation. The Communist

Party of India has no programme yet, it has not even firm principles of policy. Probably not all the leading Communists know the programme, the rules and regulations of the Comintern and its most important decisions on India. It is obviously necessary to go by other standards. First of all it is necessary to admit comrades who are able to fight, who know how to fight and what to fight for, comrades who will not say things that are unnecessary, who can exercise revolutionary caution, and the comrades should be prepared to bear sacrifices. Those who join the Party must be ready to execute all the instructions of the Party organisations and be prepared, if necessary, to go to prison.

Our comrades will say that too much is required from a member of the Party. In six months' time, when Party organisations and a centre to guide them will have been established with a definite programme and principles of policy of their own, it will be possible to open wider the gates for the admission of workers into the Party. But at present you must try to discover real leaders who could create the Party organisations, and therefore you must be very strict when accepting members into the Party.

However, when you will have formed your organisations, you can enlist those who really wish to fight for the working class interests against the bourgeoisie and against landlordism and British imperialism. But it will be very difficult to recruit new members of the Party into the Party organisations before initiative groups are formed for the purpose of establishing local Party organisations. Not every new member of the Party can help in the carrying out of these tasks.

How should the work of recruiting into the Party proceed in the factories and mills? When groups (nuclei) consisting, let us say, of three persons have been formed (I spoke of such groups previously) they can keep the active workers under observation, see how they work in the factory, watch whether they are not agents of the employers or of the Indian police, or have some relatives among them, whether they understand what is going on, whether they respond to the agitation and carry out one or other of the errands transmitted to them by the Party group through some of its members, and without having been told that the errand emanates from the Party group, whether they know how to hold their tongues, whether they are able to learn, and so on. When the results of the observation on these points prove satisfactory, these workers may be accepted as members of the nucleus of the Party.

According to circumstances, different tests should be applied to members joining the Party. Particularly at the beginning you should not strive for quantity but for quality. When the skeleton of the organisation is ready, then broaden out your organisation.

Question No. 9.—How is an active Communist to behave in the case of a few Communist groups fighting each other?

Answer.—It is very difficult to answer this question. Sometimes it is better not to join either side, but to establish contacts with both groups and carry on a unity campaign. Sometimes it is better to join the organisation which is more closely connected with the masses and work inside that group for unity.

This unity should under no circumstances be carried out mechanically. It is necessary to study the ideology of these groups, their platforms, the principles that divide them, to analyse what they say and what they do, and so on. Under no circumstances should questions of principle be glossed over. It is better to unite adherents of both groups who hold correct views rather than unite all people indiscriminately. If, for instance, the smaller group, which is not connected with the masses, pursues a correct line while the second group, which is connected with the masses, follows a wrong line, it would be necessary to persuade the smaller group to join the larger group with the object of fighting there in order to rid the group of its incorrect ideology.

Thus the question, though simply put, is not so simple to answer. It is necessary to act in accordance with local conditions, but there should be the greatest elasticity in the matter. One should not join a small group which is not connected with the masses and is isolated merely because it follows a good and correct line of policy. Unless one believes that one may succeed in persuading this group to unite with the other, to join this group would mean to condemn oneself to inactivity and to idle talk; one should go where there are masses, even if these masses are under the influence of a group which follows a wrong line. This refers exclusively to Communist groups, but not to the existing reformist groups of the renegade group of Roy. Communists can have nothing to do with such groups.

Question No. 10.—How should the work be done so that our comrades may not get into the hands of the police? Generally, how should we do our work so as to avoid arrest, and keep the leadership intact?

Answer.—As far as I know the conditions in India, it is necessary to build up underground Communist organisations. For an underground organisation it is easier to work in the prevailing conditions in India, easier to move from one place to another and easier to meet because the police do not know all the comrades. And it is impossible for the police to shadow all the Indians. In so far as the activities of a good many of the comrades will not be known, there will be no very strict watch over them.

If so, is it necessary to throw out the comrades who work legally and are known to the police? Of course not. If in some big town a good Communist is known to the police and he is left unmolested by them, he must leave that town. He should not work in a ward of a town where he is known. He should move in circles where he is unknown. He must go underground. The comrades that are most needed must be transferred to the underground.

If a comrade is not one of those who are needed most, he may remain in his legal position and in this case it is necessary to give him some legal work, such as the publishing of a legal paper, or work in the legally existing trade unions, and so on. It is necessary to watch his work and control him. How is this to be done? It is necessary as far as possible to avoid taking him to meetings of the organisation. It is better to instruct some member of the committee to keep in touch with this comrade. Any comrade who knows his bearings more or less could be charged with this task and meet the comrade in such places as would not draw attention. (If, for instance, the comrade in question has some small business, one could come to him as a customer at a time when nobody is there. While buying something he could have a talk with him.) Generally ways and means of meeting such a comrade will be found.

In towns it is necessary to give European quarters a wide berth. It is necessary not to be prominent and always keep to places where there are many Indians. It is better to live in Indian quarters among the Indian population and, if necessary, to sleep out in the streets at night together with the workers. This is not very pleasant, but it cannot be helped. It is necessary to bear in mind that the less Communists are distinguished from the other Indians who live there, the better it will be for their work, the easier for them to carry out their task.

Question No. 11.—Would it be correct to build up the Communist Party first in one province and then start building it up in the whole country, or is it necessary to build up the Party simultaneously in a number of the most important provinces?

Answer.—This depends on the forces at your disposal. If these forces are few, it would be necessary as a start to build up the organisation only in one province. But if there is a decent number of forces and there is a centre which is able to dispose of these forces, direct them and distribute them, then, of course, it will be necessary to start founding Communist organisations in almost all the provinces and particularly in the most important industrial districts where there is not only a textile but also a metal industry.

If the forces are adequate and if there is a Party centre which can dispose of these forces, then it is obvious that in the first place it is necessary to consolidate that centre, so that it may lead the movement of the whole country. If there is no such centre it is necessary to form it.

In my opinion it is necessary to strike out in two directions simultaneously, to unite the separate groups in each province and to call a conference of representatives of those provinces where Communist groups or Party organisations have already been formed. At this conference it is necessary to form a Party centre for the whole of India.

Question No. 12.—What are the difficulties in the way of forming a centralised Party in India, how are these difficulties to be overcome, what are our tasks and what shall we begin with?

Answer.—In my opinion, the forming of a centralised Communist Party presents no difficulties, but what is difficult is the forming of Party organisations and uniting the different groups in one and the same town. When this task is achieved in the most important provinces, it will be possible to create a centralised Communist Party. There is the problem in a nutshell.

Question No. 13.—Should we practise the sending of representatives of Communist groups to other towns to build up Party organisations there, and what should be their tasks?

Answer.—This, again, will depend on the forces at the disposal of the Communist groups. First of all it is necessary, of course, to send comrades to industrial towns and industrial provinces. I would not give these comrades the title of representatives. Representatives may be sent to towns where there are Party organisations for the purpose of negotiating with these organisations, for the purpose of establishing connections with them and the organisation which they represent, for the purpose of assisting in the calling of some conference to elect a Party committee, for the purpose of controlling the work of the local Party groups, for establishing contacts between the Party centre and the Party organisation of the province, and so on. Such comrades could be sent to assist those comrades who have made it their aim to form Party organisations in towns where no such organisations exist, and where there is not even a beginning of a Party organisation. Such comrades must settle there and begin their Party work, and when Party organisations are formed the latter should be connected with the provincial Party committee. The provincial committee will then decide whether to leave these comrades at their work or send them to some other place.

Question No. 14.—Should the Party offer material aid to many of the comrades or rather request that the comrades should find work; and what should be done in case of unemployment?

Answer.—The Party is not obliged to help anyone materially. On the contrary, the members of the Party must give aid to the Party. When the Party organisation disposes of some funds, it should, of course, maintain as many Party functionaries as may be necessary to organise the Party work well. Therefore, it is obvious that the first duty of the comrades is to find work, but such work as will leave them time for Party work.

What should be done in case of unemployment? Well, what would the comrades do if they were not members of the Party organisation? They would get along somehow. So they will have to manage things in the same way. At any rate, if the Party organisation works among the workers, and the workers see that the Communists are doing good work, the workers will help the Communists in every way. They will offer them meals and sometimes even clothes and so on. The Russian and Chinese Bolsheviki, too, had very hard times. In India at least one can sleep out in the open, because it is not cold there, but it was more difficult for the Russian Bolsheviki who had to look for shelter. Nevertheless, they managed it somehow. Some comrades helped them, some workers used to give them shelter and they managed to work under these conditions. I think that the same can be done in India. This is no hindrance, if there is only a desire to work and if one knows what he is coming up against and what he is to do.

When workers' organisations, trade unions, and educational societies are organised, the workers will willingly join these organisations, and the Party functionaries will be able to get paid jobs in these organisations.

Here is an instance from Spain, where there is also great unemployment. The Communist paper was fined by the government to pay a heavy sum of money and the Communist Party announced that if 40,000 pesetas were not paid within 48 hours the paper would be closed. The workers collected the money and the fine was paid in time. I am convinced that if the proletarians of India see that such and such a Communist paper and such and such a Communist organisation help them and defend their interests, they in their turn will assist the comrades, enabling them to exist and work in the Party.

Question No. 15.—How did the Bolsheviki educate and train the workers into leaders, and what is the best means to prevent the leaders from becoming separated from the masses in the Party and in the trade unions?

Answer.—Here two questions are mixed up together, but they can be combined. There is no such factory for turning workers into leaders, but if the workers work well some of them will develop into practical organisers, propagandists and writers. The Party organisation must place these working class members of the Party in such conditions of work that will not lead to their premature arrest. But I do not suggest that one should evade arrest if such evasion is harmful to the necessary work. For instance, suppose it is necessary for some of them to speak at a big meeting where there is a possibility of having the Party line carried and winning over the workers. In such a case one should take the risk and be prepared to go to prison for a while, and upon leaving prison to

start work again. It is necessary to send these working men to apply themselves to all the branches of Party and trade union work. It is necessary to learn how to put questions properly, to choose rapidly and correctly the right moment, to correct the line in good time, to write a good article, good not in the sense of style—although good style would not be a bad thing, either—but in the sense that the questions in the article are put in a proper way so that they are quite plain to the workers. They should work all the time among the masses. They should be made to understand that they must have an ear for what the masses say, but they should not always do what the masses propose. On the contrary, they should tell the masses what the masses have to do. Then real leaders will arise from the workers themselves. With such workers the Party and trade union organisation will not be isolated from the broad masses, and there will be no separation of the leaders from the mass of workers. Then the problems which you now raise, namely, to prevent such separation, will cease to exist.

One cannot make a leader out of a worker who is class conscious and analyses events, but fights shy of work. The Russian Bolsheviki had a school that turned working men into leaders. At the time of strikes, demonstrations, meetings, distribution of literature, and so on, the workers would fall into the hands of the police who usually beat them up and threw them into jail. There the workers would meet experienced Bolsheviki who would give them a bit of their mind, and sometimes even teach them to read and write. And the workers would come out of prison, or, if sent into exile, return from exile, having acquired some knowledge, sometimes quite a good deal of knowledge, in addition to the experience which they had prior to their arrest. With such an equipment they would take up revolutionary work. These were the elements which produced working men leaders who bore the brunt of the fight waged by the Bolshevik Social Democratic-Labour Party, later the Russian Communist Party, and who took part in and organised the October Revolution. Some of them are now in leading positions in the Soviet economic, Party, trade union, and kolkhoz institutions engaged in the work of socialist construction; we see the same in other countries.

I think that India, too, will give us leaders coming from the working class. I am sure of it.

Question No. 16.—How should the Central Committee work when it is in part composed of workers who do not know English, of comrades who speak Hindi or other native languages? Under such conditions will not the intellectuals always be the leaders? How should we help the workers in this matter?

Answer.—Why should the Central Committee be obliged to use the English language? If the majority speak Hindi, then this language should be used and translations should be made from this language into the other languages, including English. Language difficulties should not be a hindrance to common work. On the Executive of the Comintern and on the Central Council of the Red International of Labour Unions there are representatives of many parties and trade unions, who speak many different tongues. At the Plenums and Congresses of the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. translations of speeches and reports are made into eight or ten languages. At the closed conferences to which outside translators cannot be invited, the translations from one language into another are done by those members of the conference who know languages.

In my opinion the language difficulty should not be a hindrance to the promotion of leaders from among the workers. The language difficulty should not serve as a reason for the intellectuals to be the sole leaders. It will all depend on the knowledge, ability, energy and experience of the workers who sit on the Central Committee.

Even before 1905 our Russian Bolshevik comrades had committees whose leaders were workers and not intellectuals. There is no reason why India should not have such committees. In the last few years there were big strikes in India. Surely some of the leaders in these strikes were workers. That you failed to find out these working men leaders, that you failed to recruit them into the movement and help them to get acquainted with Communist literature is a different matter altogether. And, finally, is it so difficult to learn English? Special care should be taken to teach really revolutionary workers with practical experience who apply correct tactics in the fight. It is necessary to teach them English, give them a political education and help them to become real leaders.

By its number of languages India may be compared with auto-

cratic Russia, where 110 languages were spoken. Nevertheless, Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, Georgians, Armenians and many others worked in common, fought hand in hand in a glorious way. Differences of language are no hindrance to common work. What we require is real, good workers who know their task and are willing to work, workers who have had the experience of organising strikes, demonstrations, who have organised the peasants in the villages against the landlords. There is nothing terrible if they do not know the English language. Why should it be a rule to speak English on the Central Committee, why not speak Hindi or some other language?

Question No. 17.—What should be the position of a bureau of a provincial Party committee when its resolution is voted down by the majority of the committee?

Answer.—Such cases when a decision of a bureau is considered to be wrong by a majority of the committee, are very rare. If the conflict arose over a very serious question of principles, then it is obvious that the bureau will have to be re-elected. It may happen that the bureau refuses to carry out a policy imposed upon it by the committee, a policy which it considers wrong, and in that case it will itself submit to re-election. The Central Committee may learn of the conflict either from the bureau itself or from individual members of the committee without receiving the minutes of the meeting, and the Central Committee may repeal the wrong decision of the committee. In such a case the Central Committee would have to send somebody to explain to the committee that its decision was wrong. Should the committee insist upon its point of view, the Central Committee would have the alternative of either dissolving the committee, which it is fully entitled to do, or of proposing to the Party organisation to elect a new committee.

Question No. 18.—What are the weaknesses in the Punjab provincial Communist Party, and how are they to be overcome?

Answer.—I think that these weaknesses have their origin in the composition of the population in the Punjab province. The population there is mainly engaged in agricultural and handicraft pursuits, there are few industrial districts, and the village itself is of a chequered nature. How are all these heterogeneous groups to be organised, what demands should be advanced, how are we to get them interested? On this it is very difficult for me to say something definite. The weakness of the organisation there springs from this heterogeneousness, but I am not cognisant of the exact facts of their weaknesses.

ON THE PARTY PRESS

Question No. 19.—How should a paper be organised, what shall we do in places where the population speaks something like ten languages? Shall we publish the paper in one centre or rather send the articles to the provinces to have them reprinted there? How shall we organise the editorial board of such a paper? If we have no possibility of publishing more than one paper, should we issue a paper that is published openly, or one that is not?

Answer.—I think it is necessary for you first of all to make up your mind as to whom exactly you are going to influence by your paper. At first you should publish a paper for the workers of the large factories and mills. Then, when the Communist forces increase and the connections with the workers, who speak other languages, widen out, it will be necessary to try and translate the paper and have it published also in other languages. The paper should be published in the language spoken by the overwhelming majority of the workers of the given industrial town or province. Leaflets should be published for those workers who speak a language in which a paper could not be published owing to language difficulties. The work should always be arranged in accordance with the available forces. It should be borne in mind that by publishing a paper for the bulk of the workers, the Party organisation and the Communist groups will gradually extend their influence and their connections among them, and through them the Communists will most certainly have the possibility of getting in touch with the workers who speak other languages.

As to the composition of the editorial board, it should be formed of persons who know the respective language and environment which the given paper is to serve. That does not necessarily mean that the editorial board must consist of persons of the given nationality. But what is necessary is that on the editorial board should be those comrades who know that language and are able to write in that language; this will avoid the need for translations, which take up an enormous amount of time. It

is necessary to watch that the paper contains articles which explain to the workers in a popular language every important fact and every event. This is particularly necessary when it is intended to organise a demonstration, a strike or similar action. Should it be impossible to find an adequate number of comrades who can write in the language in which it is decided to publish the paper, it will be necessary to put on the editorial board comrades who do not know the respective languages, and in that case it will be necessary to have the articles translated.

Now the question is: what paper should be issued first: one that is published openly or one that is not? In the latter case it can be published at a very small expense. It would require the help of a few comrades only. Such a paper could be printed in a very primitive fashion. The comrade who writes for the paper could print it, too. Apart from this, such papers have the advantage that one can write in them anything one wishes.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to publish a paper openly if the necessary forces are available. Such a paper requires greater forces, as nobody will read it if it is badly printed. It must be printed well. The reading matter must be written very cautiously. A paper published openly can get a large circulation. It can pay its way, and, what is of chief importance, can maintain a much bigger staff of writers and correspondents than a paper which is not published openly. Such a paper creates and trains a greater body of active workers because it is read by a much greater number of workers.

It is very difficult for me to answer the question as to what is preferable: a paper published openly or one that is not. One cannot be substituted for the other. Each has its positive and negative sides. The best is to have both, but if there are not sufficient forces for both papers, it is best to organise the paper which the Party organisation can bring out with the available forces.

The central organ of the Party must not appear openly anyhow. If the Party is underground, it must speak all it thinks through its central organ. This, however, does not mean that the Central Committee may not publish another paper openly which will not call itself the Party organ.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTY ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNIST FRACTIONS IN THE TRADE UNIONS TRADE UNION QUESTIONS

Question No. 20.—What should be done to make the comrades understand the difference between a fraction in a trade union and a Party organisation? How should they work?

Answer.—How are fractions organised in the trade unions? Communists, and sometimes also trustworthy sympathisers, who are on some branch committee of a trade union, are organised into a fraction of this trade union branch. The fraction decides on questions connected with this trade union branch. The Communists of the fraction, if they form a minority in the trade union branch, arrange among themselves how they are to work, what propositions they are to make, and how they are to vote on this or that resolution introduced by the leaders of the union, and so on. But if the Communists, together with their sympathisers, are in a majority in the trade union branch, they should arrange among themselves about the proposals to be brought up before the committee on which there are also non-Party members. Such Communist fractions may, in accordance with the number of Communists on such a trade union committee, elect either a secretary or a leadership of three comrades who shall prepare the material for the meetings of the Communist fraction and shall be responsible for the calling of the fraction meetings.

Now, suppose this trade union branch committee calls a general meeting of members of the town or of the district. Then, quite irrespective of whether there is a majority of Communists on the committee or not, the Communists shall, before the general trade union meeting takes place, have a general meeting of all Communist members of this trade union and the Communist members of the committee should make a report to this meeting upon the nature of the general trade union meeting to be held, at which non-Party members will be present, too. The Communists should be told what resolutions will be submitted to that meeting, so that they know how to act and vote at that meeting. Prior to the general trade union meeting the Communists must decide as to the attitude they are to adopt in regard to the resolutions which will be submitted to the general meeting, so that the Communists are able to carry out the decisions adopted at their meeting and, before the

trade union meeting takes place, and at the meeting itself, to carry on a campaign in favour of these decisions among the non-Party members. The questions which come up for discussion at the trade unions and the fractions are mainly connected with trade union life, trade union tactics, trade union organisation, trade union demands and trade union struggle.

Now let us take the Party organisation. The latter, although it gives great attention to trade union questions, does not limit its work to trade unions, it has other tasks besides. It discusses, it must discuss and decide on questions connected with the fight against imperialism, such questions, say, as the attitude to the constitution, to passive resistance, to the tactics of the National Congress, to unemployment, to taxes, to self-government, to the Co-operative Movement, to education, to the sale of peasant property to the usurer, etc. One may cite a hundred questions, including trade union questions, which are part of the work of the Party organisation; the Party organisation must formulate its attitude to these questions, which it must discuss and decide upon. The Party organisation must publish literature on all such questions and must provide its speakers at meetings.

A Communist who, for instance, is in the fraction of the Metal Workers' Union, is at the same time a member of his Party organisation and belongs to the Party cell at the factory or mill where he works. He discusses in his Party organisation all the questions which I have just enumerated, but at the same time, being a member of the Metal Workers' Union, he discusses at the Communist fraction as a member of this fraction, the question of how to carry into life the decisions of the Party organisation and also questions which are connected with the Metal Workers' Union or even questions which are connected with the trade union movement in general. The Communist fractions must bring up for discussion in the Party organisations trade union questions such as trade union tactics and all important questions of trade union principle. The Party organisation must decide on the tactics and policy to be pursued in these great questions before they are taken up by the trade unions, and the Communists of, say, the Metal Workers' Union, Woodworkers' Union, etc., must give effect to these resolutions of the Party organisation in their trade unions.

Thus the Party organisation guides the work of the Communist fractions.

A plain example, showing the difference between these two organisations and their tasks, is sufficient for any comrade to understand that the Communist fractions are not to be confused with the Party organisations.

Question No. 21.—Should we unite with the Kandalkar Girni Kamgar?

Answer.—Generally speaking, one could agree to unite all trade unions of various tendencies in a given industry. Hence it follows that one ought to unite with the Kandalkar Girni Kamgar trade unions, too. However, it is essential that Communist work should be carried on within the Girni Kamgar and generally within the united and separate trade unions (in all trade unions of all tendencies). One should fight there for Communist influence, gain adherents and organise Communist fractions.

There is one condition which would justify the existence of two unions in one industry, namely, when it is impossible to turn the united trade unions into class organisations of the working class, into organisations which would really fight for the interests of the workers. But in order to convince the working masses, it is necessary first to organise united trade unions, and in those industries in which parallel unions exist, as, for instance, in the textile industry, it is necessary to unite them, and inside these united trade unions endeavour to turn them into class organisations of the workers. And only when this proves impossible should revolutionary trade unions be organised separately, and everything should be done to turn them into mass organisations. It is necessary that the work in the revolutionary trade unions should be well conducted, so as to beat the reformist trade unions by this good work. That means that we must have at the head of our unions energetic and efficient revolutionaries.

Question No. 22.—As soon as the Communists begin to consolidate their influence in some trade union, the reformists and the national reformists immediately try to expel the Communists or to split the union. What should be done in such circumstances?

Answer.—I think this is an exaggeration. We know of the split which occurred at the General Trade Union Congress at Calcutta. In my opinion the Communists there yielded to provocation. They

were drawn into a discussion of insignificant but provocative questions before the opening of the Congress. What were the questions upon which the Congress had split? These were questions of who should be chairman, of confidence in the chairman, and of how the mandates were to be distributed. This gave the splitters the opportunity for which they were looking, they isolated us from the masses who followed their lead and effected the split. But if, instead of this, the Communists had raised the question of the attitude to the general railwaymen's strike, for which the railwaymen were then preparing on many of the lines, and if the Communists had worked out a plain and popular programme of trade union work for the next six months, the Kandalkar and the followers of Roy and Bose would not have succeeded in splitting the Congress and ejecting the Communists.

Just compare the resolutions of the two parallel congresses which met immediately after the split—those of the revolutionary trade union congress and of the reformist. On a number of important questions the resolutions were almost similar. How is this to be explained? It is explained by the fact that the reformists wished to confuse the workers so that they should not see the difference between the reformists and the revolutionary trade unions, and they succeeded in that. The Communists failed to expose the reformists and the national-reformists. Where the Communists work well and manage to get on their side the majority or at least a considerable number of members in a particular trade union, is it possible that the reformists will be able to expel them? No, the reformists will be afraid to expel them from the union. But if the Communists will give first place to such very "important" questions as who is to be chairman, or whose mandate is legitimate and whose is not, then of course the reformists will be able to expel them, because such questions are much too difficult for the great mass of rank and file members.

Consequently, it all comes to the question of the methods of work in the trade unions. If the Communists will raise big questions, important questions, which closely affect the masses and are clear to the masses, and if the Communists will constantly work among the masses, it will not be possible for the reformists to expel them. And if, in spite of all that, they are expelled, then the great mass of members will follow them. This is precisely the task.

Question No. 23.—Strikes in India break out easily. In view of this, is it necessary to make special preparations for a strike and carry on special work among the workers, or could one call a strike within two or three weeks? What should be the minimum time necessary to prepare a strike?

Answer.—I do not think the conditions in different factories and mills in all seasons are such that the workers would come out on strike at any time. Even assuming that the workers are always on strike, what of it? To begin a strike is not everything, it is necessary to have good leadership, and that the leaders should be connected with the workers. It is necessary that the leaders defend the demands of the workers well, it is necessary that the leaders organise the participation of the workers in picketing, and keep off the strike-breakers. It is necessary that the leaders gauge in advance the right moment for taking up negotiations with the employers. The strike leaders should not allow themselves to be tricked by the employers, and finally it is necessary that the leaders show great elasticity; they should stop the strike at the proper time, even if it is necessary to make certain concessions and sometimes it may be necessary to call off the strike without having gained anything, in which case all the workers should return to work in order to prepare for a new struggle.

I will say even that much. Not always must Communists call a strike. On the contrary, sometimes they should hold the workers back from striking. If the Communists have made a preliminary study of the situation in a given industry, and if, let us say, there is a crisis when unemployment is great and there are unsold stocks, the employers are not reducing the conditions of the workers, then the Communists must abstain from calling strikes. And generally, if it is a foregone conclusion that the strike will be lost, since it will play into the hands of the employers, a strike should not be called. Different methods of struggle should then be employed. And there are such methods besides strikes—the Italian "strike," i.e., sabotaging work, that is to say, if the boss pays 20 rupees a month, he shall get 20 rupees worth of work and not a penny more.

This question was formulated as though the workers were ready to strike at any moment. In reality, however, it is not so. When Communists start work in a factory at a time when the workers of

that factory have decided upon a strike, the Communists will not be able to come out against the strike, since they will not have had the time to make a preliminary study of all the conditions of which I spoke previously. It is obvious that they will have to take all possible measures to make the strike a success, but if they have worked at that factory for some time and have made a study of the prevailing conditions then, before commencing the strike they should devote their attention to the question of leadership, and to the conditions under which the strike is to be carried on. If the conditions are not suitable, it is necessary to discuss the question with the Communist comrades in the factory, to consult the trade union fraction and the Party organisation. If they all come to the conclusion that the strike must not be called, then the Communists should come out against the strike. But it is quite a different matter if a political strike breaks out in the country, or in a town, or in an entire industry. In that case the Communists in the factory must call for a strike, irrespective of the situation in the given industry, and must do all they can to bring out as many workers as possible to join the strike.

Question No. 24.—What line should Communists follow during a strike when the reformists are in a majority while the Communists are in a minority on the strike committee, or have no representatives at all there? Under what conditions will they be justified in forming their own strike committee?

Answer.—A strike committee is elected at meetings. It is necessary for the Communists to organise their followers so that even if they fail to get a majority they should at least be represented on the strike committee. If they are at all represented on the strike committee, they should put forward their tactics against the wrong tactics of the reformists. The Communist proposals should be made known among the strikers. In the event of the Communists being weakly represented on the strike committee, it will be necessary to carry on a wide agitation, a general as well as an individual agitation, against the reformists, to demand the calling of a general meeting at which they should put the Communist tactics in opposition to those of the reformists, and demand the election of a new committee, etc. Should the majority be against the Communists proposals, the Communists should not rest, but continue to expose the reformists in their betrayal of the interests of the workers. The Communists cannot elect their own strike committee if they are in a minority at the meetings of the strikers. Should the meeting express its wish to elect a new strike committee while the old committee declines to lay down its mandate, the new strike committee elected at the meeting should assume full power and inform the employers that all negotiations with the old strike committee will have no effect whatever, and their decisions will be null and void. But what is most essential is that the new committee should work better and more efficiently than the reformist strike committee.

Question No. 25.—What form should the trade unions assume where, owing to the prevailing terror, it is impossible to do the work openly?

Answer.—If there are regions in India where trade unions are not permitted by law, it is necessary to form underground trade unions. These would be small organisations which, however, may lead large masses of workers at the moment when the movement broadens out. When an underground trade union prepares a strike at a factory and the mass of the workers at that factory are ready, they should be advised to elect a strike committee to lead the strike. The underground trade union can lead the strike through the strike committee elected by the workers before the strike, and this leadership of the underground trade union may be exercised without attracting attention. But if the movement is big and the members of the trade union exercise a great influence on the workers of the factory involved, the workers may be told openly that the leadership of the strike is in the hands of the underground trade union.

What legal possibilities are there in a district where the trade unions are not permitted by law? One can organise a mutual aid society, and if it is possible to organise such a society in one industry then mixed mutual benefit societies can be organised covering several industries. Such societies could provide aid in case of a strike, in the case of total or partial disability, in the case of death of some member of the family, in case of travelling from one city to another and finally even unemployment benefits.

If there is a possibility of organising such a society in a particular industry and the leadership of this society will be in the

hands of Communists and their sympathisers, then the underground trade union which exists in that industry can make use of this society as a legal possibility. If there is no underground trade union in that industry, then this mutual aid society may in fact, unofficially, become the trade union, in which case the leadership of the mutual aid society must organise quietly, so as not to attract the attention of the authorities, small groups inside the society which will perform the duties of underground trade union organisations.

If permission to form such a society in a particular industry is not granted, a very likely contingency, then it should be possible unofficially to organise the members of each of the industries which are affiliated to the general mutual aid society of mixed industries into a branch of the main mutual aid society. In this way, it may be possible to penetrate into the other industries and work there. This may be the beginning of the organisation of trade unions in each industry and may lay the foundation for a lead of the masses in particular industries.

Question No. 26.—How should the financial affairs of underground trade unions be managed, and how should their minutes be kept?

Answer.—Names of comrades should not figure in accounts. Everything should be put in figures—Nos. 1, 2, 3, and so on. The names of these comrades should be kept by the secretary in cypher showing that comrade so-and-so is No. 1, comrade so-and-so is No. 2, and so on. The object upon which the money is expended, the amount of membership contributions paid in, amounts paid as a donation, and so on should be indicated in the income and expenditure. The same thing with the minutes: Present, Nos. 1, 2, 3, etc., such-and-such questions were discussed, this and that was decided, No. so-and-so was instructed to do this and that, and so on. So that if the minutes fall into the hands of the police they should not be able to decipher them. Minutes could be abandoned altogether, and only a record of the adopted resolutions should be kept. But then it will be necessary to establish a strict watch over the carrying out of the decisions adopted.

Question No. 27.—How is a seamen's union to be organised?

Answer.—It is, of course, necessary to form an initiative group, composed of seamen, who should undertake the task of organising a trade union in one of the ports. They must establish contacts with steamers registered in that port and with the dockers. When these connections grow wider, the initiators, who organised the union in that port, should send to each steamer seamen to carry on the work among the crew and form small groups of the given trade union on these vessels. It is most essential that there should be an embryonic organisation of such a union on the steamers. At first one port should be organised, and then one should get in touch with the others. In this way a seamen's union will be organised.

Question No. 28.—What is the best way to carry on the work on plantations, where admission to outsiders is prohibited?

Answer.—I do not quite understand the question. Are these plantation workers cut off from all the world? During holidays outsiders no doubt could come to the plantations, or the workers of the plantations could go elsewhere. Now, if it is impossible to get through to the plantations, then one could try to influence the workers when they are not on the plantation, or one could penetrate to the plantations under the guise of a "relation," since relatives are permitted to visit the plantations. Again, one could send some skilled workers who would begin to work there in the way indicated before, when I spoke about starting work in a factory. It is impossible that there should be no means of penetrating into the plantation, either through some workers or "relatives." In one way or another, a way can be found to the plantation.

I think that even being outside, one may know well what is going on at the plantation. Very likely there is a number of people at the plantation who come and go, bringing merchandise, transporting goods, people who do repairs, bricklayers, carpenters, etc. You could bring your influence to bear upon the plantation workers through their agency, and through them distribute leaflets, etc. The work on the plantations must be organised specially.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Question No. 29.—What is the best form of Communist work in the national reformist parties of India? What are the best methods to apply in the work of liberating the workers from the influence of the National Congress?

Answer.—In India there is the National Congress whose membership consists of different organisations, as well as of particular individuals. But even if there were several national reformist parties in India, the question would still arise about forms and methods of Communist work.

The Communist Party as such cannot join those organisations. It cannot take upon itself the responsibility for the treacherous policy and for the half-hearted struggle which the national reformist parties might lead and which the National Congress does lead in respect to British imperialism. It cannot take upon itself the responsibility for the duping of the masses practised by the National Congress. Therefore the Communist Party as such cannot join these organisations, but they may be joined by the non-Party mass organisations that are under the influence of the Communist Party. For instance, if there are mass organisations connected with the Party, such as the Anti-Imperialist League, or even some trade unions' organisations, they, being non-Party mass organisations, could join such national organisations.

Thus, the Communists could influence the rank and file of the national parties and of the National Congress through these organisations. They could come out with criticism, and put forward proposals to wage a real fight against British imperialism. The leadership of the national reformist parties and of the National Congress would not support these proposals and would thus discredit itself. The organisations that are close to the Communist Party could propose to organise demonstrations against the constitution, against one or another of the acts of the government, against the shooting down of Indian peasants by the British, against the suppression of peasant uprisings, etc. The leadership would, of course, refuse to organise such demonstrations and so on, and would thus discredit itself. The Communist Party, together with all the revolutionary organisations, could organise and carry through a mass demonstration despite the National Congress and the national parties. The masses would then see that there is a party and an organisation which really fights against imperialism.

The working masses, and even the peasants, really wish to fight against British imperialism. The more so that the methods of fight employed by the National Congress have so far yielded no tangible results. If within the National Congress there were revolutionary trade union elements, or such an organisation as the Anti-Imperialist League, which would advance their own tactics, their own methods of organisation, their own resolutions against those of the leadership, then the masses would follow them.

Only by such methods of work, only by merciless criticism and by organising the fight in real earnest, can the masses be freed from the influence of the leaders of the National Congress, and not only the working masses, but also the peasantry, and even the petty bourgeoisie. If inside the National Congress, led by Gandhi, there were groups which, along with the special agents sent by the National Congress with the object of requesting the peasants to pay taxes, would send their own representatives who would advance our slogans and agitate against paying taxes, etc.; whom do you think the peasants would follow—those who ask them to pay taxes, or those who advise them not to pay taxes? Up till now all the national organisations, including the "Left" in the National Congress, never fought British imperialism, let alone the bourgeoisie and the landlords in India. Moreover, together with the National Congress, they fooled the masses by their "passive resistance" to the measures of British imperialism. By that subterfuge they kept the masses back from fighting.

The method of exposing the National Congress and its "Left" members has nothing in common with the tactics of the renegade Roy. The latter proposes to support the "Left" national-reformist and turn the bourgeois National Congress into a revolutionary party. The renegade Roy is thereby confusing the workers and peasants, he is trying to turn the working class into an appendage of the reformist bourgeoisie and prevent the organisation of a Communist Party and the establishment of the hegemony of the working class in the mass anti-imperialist and agrarian movement.

In India special agents of the National Congress go round the villages inviting the peasants to boycott British and foreign goods in general, and to buy only goods of native manufacture. These agents are practically the agents of the Indian bourgeoisie. Now, if within the National Congress there were elements who would show that all this was done in the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie, which pays low wages to the workers, does not carry on a

real fight for freedom, and so on, would that not free considerable sections of workers and peasants from the influence of the National Congress? Only thus, when the Communists will work well among the masses who follow the National Congress, will they free the masses from the influence of the national reformists of all shades and at the same time consolidate their own influence over the working class and peasant masses.

Question No. 30.—England has now offered a draft of a new constitution. But the revolutionary workers, as one may see from the press, speak only about economic struggle, about the strikes of the textile workers, and so on. Is that correct? What is more important, to carry on a fight against the constitution and for the freedom of the country, or to organise a strike of textile workers against lowering of wages and against discharges?

Answer.—I find it difficult to say which is the most important. Nothing will come out of a fight against the constitution, where the workers have no experience of economic fights in the defence of their interests. You cannot separate the economic fights from the political fights. If you analyse the big movements of the past you will always find that both methods of fight are interlinked and merge into one another.

Let us take the example of tsarist Russia—what came first, the political mass fight or the economic? The Party carried on a political agitation which trained and united the vanguard of the working class. But how did the movement of the broad working-class masses come about? When an economic strike was brewing somewhere, partial demands would be advanced, demands which in comparison with the political tasks confronting the workers were small. These demands, such as an increase of wages, a reduction of working hours were understood by the wide masses of the workers. Therefore in the first place only these demands were formerly advanced and served as a starting point for the further development of the mass struggle, and not the immediate fight against autocracy. It seemed that these were small demands, but, if the workers in Russia had not learnt to go on strike for such demands, they would no doubt never have succeeded in overthrowing autocracy with such comparative ease.

How did these events happen? Take the big strike in the South of Russia in 1903. The strike originated as a mere economic strike. During that strike the Party organised big demonstrations of strikers together with workers from other industries not involved in the strike, the police interfered, made arrests, and began to beat up the workers. Then even the most backward workers, who probably never thought of fighting against autocracy, whose only wish was to get a little more wages, and to work a little less, saw ranged against them the whole power of the State, the police, the governor, and so on. And helped by the Party organisation of the Bolsheviks they came to realise that in order to improve their economic position it was also necessary to fight against the system, i.e., against autocracy and capitalism.

Thus a movement which began as an economic strike turned under the influence of the Bolshevik Party, and of the action of the police into a big political fight. If the workers had not had that experience, if the masses themselves had not had that lesson, would they have joined in such big numbers the political demonstrations? Of course not. There were cases, for instance, in 1904, when political strikes were organised and economic demands were advanced, and vice versa, there were cases of economic strikes when the strikers advanced political demands, which included the liberation of the arrested comrades, freedom of strike, freedom of combination, speech and press. Both these methods of struggle were interlinked. And because of this they have succeeded in permeating the workers' demands with a political spirit.

Take another instance from the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, such as January 9, 1905, when the agents provocateurs and the priests, in order to thwart the influence of the Bolshevik Party among the workers, organised a workers' procession to the tsar in order to submit to him a petition to improve their lot. At the meetings where the demands to be included in the petition were being formulated, members of our Bolshevik Party would stand up and propose demands which formed part of the minimum programme of the Bolshevik Party, and with these demands the workers went to the tsar.

Three years of proper work on the part of the Bolshevik Party, during which economic demands of the workers were blended with political demands, and economic struggles turned into political struggles, proved sufficient to win the broad masses

of the Petersburg proletariat for the minimum programme of the Bolshevik Party. The same was the case in other towns besides Petersburg.

From this you will see that your question is wrongly formulated. You must not consider these two aspects as contradictory. There is nothing to hinder the Communists from turning a textile strike or a metal strike into a political strike against the constitution. Nobody, and least of all the workers, will deter the Communists from doing it. It all depends on the Party organisation, on the Communists, and on their ability to work. It should be made plain to the workers that they can greatly and lastingly improve their position only under a workers' government. The question of a rise in the wages of textile workers should be linked up with the necessity to fight against the miserable constitution of British imperialism and for a revolutionary democratic government of the workers and peasants, which will develop into the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Question No. 31.—What should be done if some members of the National Congress form a "Left" party? They write about it in the papers. How are we to judge whether it is "Left," or not, and what are we to do?

Answer.—Evidently there is something behind it, and there is a tendency to form a "Left" grouping either in opposition to or as a part of the National Congress. Gandhi gave up even passive resistance. This evidently means that he supports the constitution. There may be some elements in the National Congress who are not in agreement with the constitution. It is even possible that some groups inside the Congress will attempt to change the leadership of the National Congress. However, outside the Communist Party and the Communist groups, there are hardly any organised elements who really wish to carry on the fight against British imperialism to the end.

When I speak of Communists and Communist groups, I do not mean to say that they are the only people who really wish to and do fight against British imperialism. It is possible that some pseudo-"Left" leaders of the National Congress will form some such party with a high-sounding name, which will lavishly use radical phrases so as to keep the masses from turning their back upon the Congress, so as to prevent them from looking for new leaders, so as to prevent the revolutionary masses from joining the really revolutionary organisations, or to be more exact, the Communist Party.

How are they to be detected? In the situation which we have in India this is very easy. One should find out what they say and what they do. If they call a general strike against the constitution, the Communists will support the strike. If the strike succeeds, the Communists should in the process of the strike advance new demands as for instance, the demand for the liberation of the arrested comrades, universal suffrage for all toilers, the withdrawal of the British troops, etc.

Should the new party call demonstrations against British imperialism, the Communists will not be against it. Should they call big meetings against British imperialism, the Communists will have to put forward their speakers to show the masses the way to get rid of both British imperialism and the native bourgeoisie. At the demonstrations too the Communists should march separately with their own slogans and streamers. They should endeavour to act independently, and independently to call demonstrations, etc. Should the new "Left" party decline to support our demonstrations, it will only prove to the workers that it is not much better than the National Congress.

If, however, the so-called "Left" party keeps on talking about fighting British imperialism without calling strikes and demonstrations against that imperialism, the Communists will have to expose it. The new "Left" party may call for the boycotting of British goods. Such methods of struggle are employed by the National Congress too. It is, of course, a measure that hits the British, and therefore it is not advisable for the Communists to come out against it.

The bourgeoisie of India strove to confine the national mass movement to the economic boycott of British goods and to deprive the boycott of its revolutionary character. The National Congress was against mass picketing, against dockers' strikes, etc., against every revolutionary method of carrying on the mass struggle. The Communists, who do not refuse to support the boycott, set themselves the task of developing the revolutionary struggle to higher revolutionary forms of mass movement, such as political strikes, refusal to pay taxes, rent and debts, calling of demonstrations,

general political strike, etc. But the reformist National Congress is mortally afraid of such methods. That is why it is necessary to expose the reformist meaning of the boycott. The Party should explain to the masses in popular form that the reformist method of fight merely favours the Indian bourgeoisie, which only cares for its profits, since the boycott of British goods, while increasing the demand for home goods, leads to an increase in the profits of the Indian bourgeoisie, which, moreover, systematically continued to reduce the workers' wages.

The Communists should judge these parties by their deeds and accordingly determine their attitude towards them. These "Left" parties may appear revolutionary, but they will never go farther than the National Congress people. The Communists will have to show to the masses the half-heartedness of these parties, and point out the Communist path, the path of the revolutionary struggle of the working class.

Question No. 32.—Should the Communists remain loyal to their former revolutionary organisation, pending the formation of an All-Indian Communist Party?

Answer.—The question of loyalty is not clearly formulated. Communists place the fight for Socialism and Communism above everything else. This fight can be waged and is waged by the working class only under the leadership of the Communist Party. Therefore the Communist Party and its members fight not only for the independence of the country from imperialists, for the democratic tasks of the revolution, for the abolition of the yoke of landlordism, for satisfying the most urgent needs of the workers, but also for Communism. For the purpose of accomplishing these tasks, the Communist Party draws into the struggle the toiling masses of the whole country.

Therefore, the Communists must be guided by the principles, decisions and directives of the Communist Party, and submit to its discipline. The supreme law for a Communist is loyalty and devotion to the Communist Party. The Communists are first of all members of the Communist Party, and this should be their starting point in all their work. Does that mean that the Communists must not take part in, or belong to national revolutionary mass organisations, in order to fight the imperialists? Not at all. But the Communists must explain to the members of those organisations the Communist Party's point of view on this fight. They must introduce in these organisations their own proposals and keep on persuading the members of these organisations to follow the line put forward by the Communists. The revolutionary struggle of the toiling masses will only benefit by it, because the masses will see more clearly the path which it is necessary to follow in order to achieve the expulsion of the imperialists from the country, the transference of the land to the peasants, the satisfying of the needs of the workers (eight-hour day, increase of wages, organisation of factory committees, social insurance against sickness and unemployment, disability, etc., at the expense of the manufacturers, bankers and the State), the right to strike, the freedom of association, speech and press, and the formation of a workers' and peasants' revolutionary government—in short to achieve a complete victory of the workers and peasants. To gain such a victory it is necessary to consolidate the real militant alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and to win over on their side the urban poor under the hegemony of the working class and the leadership of the Communist Party. The members of the Communist Party, including those that are members of the proletariat and national revolutionary mass organisations, must not lose sight of the final aim and must persistently carry out the decisions and directives of the Party organs.

Question No. 33.—How are we to win over to our side audiences of meetings organised by the National Congress?

Answer.—We should take the example of our Russian fraternal Party and do it in the way the Bolsheviks did. In Russia after the February Revolution there were many parties. Even among the so-called socialists there were two big parties—the social-democratic Mensheviks and the socialist revolutionaries. These two parties were actually in power and the Bolsheviks were in opposition to the provisional government. All these three parties were connected with the workers and fought each other for influence over the workers. I repeat, the Mensheviks and the socialist revolutionaries were actually in power. They were in a majority in the soviets of the workers' and soldiers' deputies, and, nevertheless, the Bolsheviks managed to win their audiences from them.

How did they do it? First of all by timely organisation. The Bolsheviks generally were famous as good organisers, far superior

to the Mensheviks and to the socialist revolutionaries. Now, when there was to be a meeting at some factory, or at some of the barracks, or in the open air, the Bolsheviks would come in an organised body and distribute their people throughout the hall or meeting place.

The first business of the meeting would be to elect a chairman or a presidium. The names of the comrades the Party wished to be elected to these posts would be known to the Bolsheviks present beforehand, and they would shout out these names, saying: we propose comrade so-and-so as chairman or member of the presidium. And straight away they would begin an agitation, dwelling on the merits of this comrade, saying that he conducts meetings well, that his voice carries far and everybody will be able to hear him, etc., and as a result the nominees of the Party would be elected. Then, during the meeting the followers of the Bolsheviks would demand that comrade so-and-so be allowed to make a report, or a co-report; they would also try their best that our Bolshevik comrades should get the concluding word, etc. Now, when some opponent would take the floor, the chairman—the nominee of the Bolsheviks—would immediately write down the name of some of our comrades to follow the speakers, so that the opponent's speech should not remain unanswered. Against every proposal of the Mensheviks and the social revolutionaries, the followers of the Bolsheviks would come out with their counter-proposals, with their own resolutions, etc.

Thus the Bolsheviks, by dint of good organisation and by the force of their ideology, won audiences from their opponents. I do not know of any better methods. I think this is better than taking platforms by force and ejecting opponents from the hall. These last methods may create the impression that Communists are not strong in arguments against their opponents and therefore resort to force. This does not necessarily mean that force should never be used.

Question No. 34.—Against what parties, organisations and groups attempting to influence the working class should the fight be carried on, so as to help the Communist Party of India to turn into a real Bolshevik Party?

Answer.—The main tasks confronting the Communist Party of India are—the fight against British imperialism, the fight against the landlords, the feudal princes and the Indian bourgeoisie. For that purpose it must in the first place organise the working class, drawing the class-conscious vanguard of that class into the Communist Party and the broad working-class masses into the class labour organisations, primarily into the trade unions. Unfortunately, the class enemy realised long ago (while not all the Communists realise it even now), that if the working class of India has a real Communist Party, the fight against all the enemies of the Indian people will assume really huge dimensions. That is why the class enemy has taken every step to hinder the creation of such a party. With the help of the police a "Communist" Party was formed which did absolutely nothing for the working class. In this manner the class enemy wants to discredit the real Communist Party in the eyes of the workers. However, this trick of the British imperialists has been exposed. Now the class enemy does everything possible to sow discord among the numerous Communist groups which exist in many towns of India so as to hinder them from uniting into an all-Indian Communist Party.

The class enemy—British imperialism, the landlords, the feudal lords and the Indian bourgeoisie, realising the great attraction which trade union organisations have for the workers and fearing that the Communists would create proletarian class trade unions, have instructed their agents—the reactionary lawyers of the type of Joshi or Giri who represent the interests of British imperialism, the liberal Gandhists of the type of Mehta, the "Left" reformists of the type of Bose, Kandalkar and others to organise trade unions, in which the posts of chairman and secretaries are held by these "labour" leaders. When these so-called "labour" leaders of the trade unions saw that the Communists began to work successfully inside the trade unions (Girni-Kamgar, etc.) and to win the sympathies of the rank and file trade unions, at the head of which were Bose, Kandalkar and Co. they caused a split at the Calcutta Congress of the all-Indian trade unions. Thus, they succeeded to a certain extent in keeping out the Communists from a number of trade union organisations. The conditions of labour of the Indian workers were bad as they are. Wages were very low even before the world crisis. In recent years the con-

ditions of labour grew still worse and wages dropped still lower. The workers are fighting en masse against this deterioration of their position, but the trade unions at the head of which are the agents of the class enemy, all these Joshis, Kandalkars, Roys, Boses, Nehrus and their ilk are hindering the organisation from carrying on a real fight against the employers. In the absence of a militant united Communist Party of India these agents of the class enemy have carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner the order given to them by their masters to disorganise the ranks of the organised workers and thereby to hinder the successful struggle against the employers. The broad masses of the Indian people hate the British bourgeoisie which holds hundreds of millions of the Indian nation in a state of starvation, since they are pumping out hundreds of millions of pounds from the country, and sending them to England. The British bourgeoisie knows well that the fight against it is inevitable. Therefore, it prefers to have as leaders of the national "fight" against British imperialism ideologists of the Indian bourgeoisie of the type of Gandhi, and "Left" National Congressmen of the type of Nehru (Jr.) and Bose. The British bourgeoisie knows well that with the organisation of a real Communist Party and with the formation of really proletarian class trade unions, the real fight against British imperialism will commence. Therefore it winks at the "struggle" of the National Congress carried on in the form of a campaign of "passive resistance," which inflicts no harm upon British imperialism, while making difficult the organisation of a real struggle of the masses of the people against British imperialism, a struggle which spontaneously flares up in spite of the wishes of the Congress leaders.

All these Ghandhis, Nehrus, Boses and their like organise the campaign of "passive resistance" so as to create an appearance of a fight and thereby sow illusions among the masses, posing as the real champions of the cause of the people.

The Indian papers recently are full of news about the confiscation of property and the driving of the peasants off the land for non-payment of taxes, rent and debts.

Here are a few facts.

The "Times of India," in its issue of March 31, 1933, write:—

"For default in the payment of revenue due in March 1, 96 estates and 1,188 khas mahal tenures have been advertised for sale." (In Putni.)

The "Advance," in its issue of April 21, 1933, communicates from Comila:—

"About 18,000 Tamadi rent and money suits were filed in the Civil Courts . . . as against 12,000 last year."

The "Liberty," in its issue of April 21, 1933, writes (from Munshiganj) (Dacca District) about the extraordinary high number of cases lodged at court, mostly in connection with non-payment of rent. This year such cases reached 4,339 as compared with 2,550 last year. Of these "about 90 per cent. are for recovery of rent and the rest on simple and mortgaged bonds."

The same paper writes in its issue of April 22, 1933:—

"More than 5,000 rent suits were filed in the Civil Courts.

Besides these a large number of certificate cases were filed against the tenants of the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad."

Further, the same paper in its issue of June 8 writes that the property of 12 villages in Debra Thana was confiscated for non-payment of taxes.

The courts usually give their judgment in favour of the landlords, of the State and of the money-lenders. The property of the peasants is confiscated or sold for a song.

The same paper, in its issue of April 22, 1933, writes that the collecting Panchayet attached . . . movables worth Rs. 10 belonging to R. C. Maity, of Dhanyagher, for his tax As. 8.

The same paper, in its issue of May 14, 1933, writes that for non-payment of a collective fine of one rupee and two annas by Haradhan Giri, a bullock worth 12 rupees was confiscated.

It goes without saying that in many provinces the peasants are resolutely resisting these forced sales by auction and confiscation of property and the driving of the peasants off the land. In many places the action of the peasants assumes the form of a local uprising.

Now the Congressmen—both Right and "Left"—in their fight against the revolution, as the devoted agents of British imperialism,

of the native landlords, feudal lords, and the bourgeoisie, send to the villages their agents, who, on behalf of the National Congress try to persuade the peasants to pay their rents, their taxes and their debts. The Communist Party of India must unceasingly carry on a campaign explaining in a popular manner to the broad masses of the workers and peasants and to the petty bourgeoisie of the towns who are desirous of fighting against the foreign yoke, the necessity of fighting also against the National Congress and its leaders, Ghandi, Nehru, Bose, Kandalkar and the others, who have entrenched themselves in the trade unions. At the same time it is necessary that the Communists should organise trade unions in unorganised industries and develop the existing trade unions into militant mass organisations: they should help the workers to fight against the worsening of the conditions of their labour, against wage cuts; they should undertake the defence of the interests of the unemployed, they should form committees in the villages for the purpose of organising the resistance of the peasants, and they should take an active part in the fight against British imperialism. In carrying out these tasks, in strengthening its influence among the masses, and in waging a fight against the reformists—both Right and "Left"—the Communist Party of India will develop and grow strong.

THE COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TO THE WORKERS' PARTIES AND THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' PARTIES

Question No. 35.—What should be the attitude of a Communist to the workers' parties and the workers' and peasants' parties, and how should he work inside these parties?

Answer.—First of all it is necessary to analyse the composition of these parties, their programme, and find out whether they are mass parties, or parties only in name, i.e., parties with leaders but without members. Only after these questions have been cleared up can the Communists and the Communist organisations decide upon their attitude to these parties. If, for instance, a workers' and peasants' party is a party only in name, but in reality has neither workers' nor peasants and is led by reformists or reactionaries, then our attitude will be against such a party and the Communists should expose it.

However, in regard to a party which has among its members workers and peasants, a party whose leadership is reactionary, a party which speaks one thing, and does another, the Communists should work inside it, exposing its leaders, trying to overthrow them, and elect others in their stead who could carry out the work and who would draw up a revolutionary programme and fight for the interests of the workers and peasants.

I wish to emphasise that I do not propose to form a workers' and peasants party. I am only answering the question which was put to me as to what should be the Communists' attitude to the existing workers' and peasants' parties.

Question No. 36.—Labour parties and socialist societies are at present being formed in the country. There are honest workers to be found in them. May one join these organisations in order to work among them?

Answer.—In regard to the labour parties I said elsewhere that it was necessary to watch their leaders and see what were their objects. As to socialist societies, if it is a case of a society whose object is to study, let us say, social science, organise evening schools and Sunday schools, and if there are workers there, then of course it is necessary to join them, but if it is a social-democratic organisation or a party with a social-democratic programme, like that of the parties affiliated to the Second International, a programme which preaches class collaboration and is opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, then under no conditions should Communists join it. It is necessary to carry on an irreconcilable ideological fight against that organisation or party and call upon the workers to withdraw from them.

Question No. 37.—What should be the attitude of the Communist to the legally-existing Workers' Party in Calcutta?

Answer.—I do not know much about the activity of this Workers' Party, but the information we get shows that it mainly occupies itself with economic struggle. This, of course, is not bad. Insofar as it exists legally, it is restricted in its activity by police conditions; still, while it exists it is necessary to turn it into a mass organisation; if possible, prompt it to strike a political path so that it considers and decides political questions, calls upon the workers to demonstrate on the First of May, organises meetings on big

occasions, etc. If the Communists can use this party as a legal possibility for their work, they should actively work inside it.

If this party devotes itself exclusively to the economic struggle, it would be necessary to direct it along the lines of the trade union movement. If it is impossible to direct this party into a political channel, too, and use it as a legal possibility also politically, then it should become a centre, a unifying centre of the Calcutta trade unions.

It goes without saying that if this party is captured, let us say, by British agents, it may become a mousetrap for the Communists and the attitude of the Communists towards it will then be different. They will have to expose it.

Under the conditions prevailing in India, it is possible that a party which was all right in the beginning, and was really anxious to fight for the interests of the workers, may be captured by the British imperialists who will have the leaders removed, others put in their place so as to turn the policy of the party in a completely opposite direction. Therefore one should not base oneself only on what I said as to the necessity of working there, but one should find out on the spot what is going on in that party.

The Communists in Calcutta must find out who are the leaders of that party, what is its programme, whether it is possible to work there, and accordingly decide upon their attitude towards it. They should also bear in mind the methods to which the fascists resort, for instance, in Germany. They publish papers under old titles which formerly commanded influence and authority among the masses. The same methods are applied by the British imperialists in India.

If the party remains such as it is at present, it will be necessary to support it, to work in it, to do everything to make it a mass party, and in accordance with conditions concentrate the party exclusively on trade union activity—that is, if police conditions make it impossible to direct it also into a political channel.

QUESTIONS OF THE PEASANT MOVEMENT

Question No. 38.—How shall we organise the peasants in purely agricultural provinces?

Answer.—First of all it is impossible that there should be no small industrial towns in agricultural provinces. Obviously there are such towns, though they may be small. If there is no such industrial town, then there may be some harbour town. This industrial city, or harbour town, where workers are concentrated, should, of course, serve as a centre with which the village Communist groups should be connected. In India, one may and should work among the peasantry in the same way as the Bolsheviks worked among the peasants, namely, through the medium of the town workers.

In Russia, in times of unemployment, the workers who were connected with the village would go back to the country. During big strikes the police would send the workers back to their native villages. Then, a good many workers would go to the villages on holidays. I presume that the same thing is taking place in India. And these workers could be used to carry the Communist influence to the peasants. The local committees of the Bolshevik Party, as we know from the history of our fraternal Party—the Russian Bolsheviks—during the tsarist regime used to send special literature and leaflets for the peasants with workers going to the village for their holidays. The same methods could be adopted in India. The workers in India are connected with the village, during strikes they are expelled from the towns and sent back to the village. Work could be done through them, they could connect the peasant groups with the Party organisation of an industrial town, situated in a peasant district.

Question No. 39.—Can a peasant committee in the village replace the Party organisation?

Answer.—No. The Party organisations differ from the peasant committees by the tasks which they set themselves, as well as by their composition. The task of the Party organisation is not only to fight against the landlords and against British imperialism in India, but also against the whole bourgeois system. The Party organisation admits as members mainly workers, of course, such as are in agreement with the principles of Communism and are fighting for their realisation. The work of the Party organisation is of an immeasurably wider range than that of the peasant committees, which are elected by the masses of the peasants in the villages for the purpose of hindering the sale of

the peasants' property for arrears in the payment of taxes, of fighting against usurious rates of interest and for the confiscation of land, and other peasant demands. These two organisations—the Party organisation and the peasant committees—are not to be confused.

If the Party organisation in the village will work well, it will be able to guide the work of the peasant committees through its members, the committees will then be the real organs of the peasants, and the peasants will defend them against any repressive measures which the authorities may take. This is going to be the case, provided the committees really manage to organise the work properly.

Question No. 40.—In the villages in India there are, apart from peasants, also people engaged in handicraft, semi-handicraft trades, who work partially on the land and partially as agricultural labourers, pariahs, etc. Evidently it will be necessary to consider the question as to how they are to be organised. There is also the question of how we are to organise the village committees and who is to join them, how to organise the peasantry in purely agricultural provinces, with whom the local peasant organisations are to be connected, and who among the peasants should be organised in the first place, and so on.

Answer.—In my opinion, it is necessary to organise first of all the agricultural labourers, the semi-agricultural labourers, the semi-handicraftsmen and the poor peasantry in general. Obviously, it will be much easier to organise them than the remaining mass of peasants. In the first place, they should be freed from the influence of the kulaks and of the rich. The latter hold them in bondage, advancing them corn and money on condition that they work for them as payment for the advance made. In general, it is difficult to say anything definite on this subject. Each village has its particular features, but in the main it is necessary to take first the most impoverished part of the peasantry.

What slogans would serve best to unite them? In the cases of agricultural labourers such a slogan would be: increase of wages and general improvement of conditions of labour; in the case of the poor and middle peasantry, the slogan should be: exemption from payment of debt to the usurers, from payment of taxes and rent, and also the slogan: fight against sale of their property, refuse begar, refuse to serve the landlords and the government officials gratis, against the excessive water tax, etc., and, finally, the slogan of fixing a higher price for agricultural produce sold by the peasants to the middleman.

There are many concrete slogans which will carry the masses of the peasants in every village. In any village one may find elements which can be easily organised in the first place, elements which can lead this or that dissatisfied section of the peasants. They should be advised to elect militant organs to carry on the fight for their demands. Such organs would constitute peasant committees.

Once the Communists get the possibility of speaking to the peasants, and conduct the election of committees, it is obvious that they will be able to influence the composition of such committees. They must see that there are revolutionary elements in these committees and mainly elements which would be able to fight for their interests. In order to give effect to the programme of maximum demands for the peasants (i.e., agrarian revolution), it will be necessary to draw into the struggle the most impoverished peasants and agricultural labourers. This, of course, does not mean that the door should be closed to the representatives of the middle peasantry. On the contrary, they should be drawn into the fight without fail, but they should be in a minority on the peasant committees.

Question No. 41.—What should be the tactics of the Communists in the event of spontaneous peasant risings such, for instance, as happened in Kashmir and Alvar?

Answer.—These tactics should be different in accordance with local conditions. If Communists arrive at a moment when the rising has already broken out, they will have to join in to extract as many concessions as possible from the provincial authorities and from the British government.

But if they happen to come before the outbreak of the uprising it is better to hold back the masses from isolated spontaneous action, so that the movement obtains the widest possible

range. In the past the British were able to suppress such uprisings with comparative ease, because such uprisings were isolated and broke out at different times in different places.

Question No. 42.—In the Indian village, apart from the peasant, there are also agricultural labourers. Is the union of agricultural labourers to be organised separately from the peasants' committee? Should water-carriers or grass-cutters who sell the grass be admitted to the union of agricultural labourers? What should be done with a poor peasant, who buys a donkey for 50 rupees, and earns his living by carrying things? What should be done with toddy-drawers who sell the toddy to the shopkeeper? Could we consider them as agricultural labourers?

Answer.—There is a difference between the tasks of a union of agricultural labourers and a peasant committee. Their composition, too, is different. A peasant committee is elected by a majority of the village. A peasant committee may put forward demands in which the majority of the village, including the agricultural labourers, are interested, as for instance, the confiscation of land. Only regular agricultural labourers or those who mostly work on hire in agriculture are admitted as members to the union of agricultural labourers. The demands of the union—higher wages and general improvement of the conditions of labour are demands presented to the landlords and the kulaks.

I think that a water-carrier or shepherd should be organised with agricultural labourers. This is a particular kind of agricultural labourer. As regards those who cut grass for sale, it is necessary to find out to whom they are selling the grass—to the kulaks, the rich, the landlords, or to the poor peasants. The decision will depend on this; if they sell it to the kulaks and the landlords, they could be organised on the basis of demands such as reduction of rent for meadows and an increase in the price of grass. But if they sell the grass to the poor peasants, they should be organised on a different basis because the Communists could not advance in regard to the poor peasants the same demands as those advanced in regard to the kulaks, i.e., the Communists could not allow them to pinch the poor peasants.

In the case of peasants who buy a donkey and carry, say, bricks, they could be organised with the object of raising the rate of carriage. But it is necessary to find out to whom they sell the bricks, and for whom they carry them. Upon this will depend the Communist approach to them. If they carry bricks for the poor, it is understood that it would be impossible to demand that the poor should pay more for the carriage.

As to toddy-drawers, it is necessary to consider what they get from the shopkeepers and at what price the shopkeeper sells it. Accordingly, they may be organised with a view to obtaining more money for their toddy.

Are toddy-drawers and those who carry bricks and even those who sell grass kulaks? Of course not. They are the poor who eke out an existence by such earnings. Such elements may be elected to peasant committees, and they should be invited to meetings at which such committees are elected. They are semi-proletarian elements, but still they are not agricultural labourers. They should not be organised in one union with the agricultural labourers. If there is a strong union of agricultural labourers, with a strong leadership, different sections could be formed and, in particular, sections for such semi-proletarian elements, sections that would make it their aim to help and improve their position. Such peasants, no doubt, form a large percentage in the villages. They should be freed from the influence of the kulaks and usurers, who are undoubtedly duping them.

Question No. 43.—The Punjab Workers' and Peasants' Party is in effect a peasant party, and a party of handicraftsmen, while the workers' and peasants' societies are mainly composed of peasants and artisans. How should the handicraftsmen and agricultural labourers be organised so as to secure the hegemony of the working class in the village?

Answer.—First, it is not necessary at all that the hegemony of the working class should be secured in each village. This is not the task of the Communist organisations in the village. It is necessary to secure in the country the hegemony of the working class in the revolutionary fight against British imperialism, against the native bourgeoisie, against the landlords and the feudal lords. The working class must lead in this fight the peasantry

and the urban petty bourgeoisie. This, however, does not mean that the hegemony of the proletariat is to be established in every village.

How should the handicraftsmen, the peasants and the agricultural labourers be organised? I think it would be necessary to organise them separately. The agricultural labourers should be organised in trade unions, the handicraftsmen should be organised according to their clientele. Those who work for the towns, for some big firm, for a shop, should be organised separately on an economic basis, they should advance the demand to be supplied with better material, to be paid higher rates, etc. This is in relation to handicraftsmen who do not exploit outside labour. In the case of handicraftsmen employing outside labour, it is necessary to organise the workers employed by them in trade unions.

How about the peasants? It is not our business to organise the kulaks; they will take care of themselves. The Communists must organise the poor and even the middle peasants around the slogans: the land to be transferred to the peasants, exemption from taxes, cancellation of debts, reduction of rent, or complete stoppage of all payments of rent in accordance with local conditions. How should they be organised? By forming peasant committees, which should organise the fight for these demands. Would handicraftsmen and agricultural labourers have the right to participate in the election of these committees and also to be represented on them? Of course they would, and not only would but should. They would add revolutionary vigour to these committees. If the agricultural labourers join the peasant committees together with the poor (and they are sure to be in the majority on them)—so there you have the hegemony. This, of course, does not mean that the middle peasants and the small handicraftsmen in the village are not to be drawn by them into the fight and into the peasant committees.

Question No. 44.—There is an emigrant revolutionary peasant organisation abroad which sympathises with the Communist Party. It has means, and desires to utilise the available forces for organising an All-Indian Communist Party. But it wishes to begin with the non-industrial provinces. Would that be correct, and if not, what should be the attitude of the other Communist groups to this party?

Answer.—Of course, that would be wrong. The work should be carried out mainly in industrial districts, but it is not necessary to quarrel with them if they wish to spend their forces and means in an irrational way. It is necessary to try to come to some understanding with them, that they should send, say, 60 per cent. of their forces and means to industrial centres, and 40 per cent. to non-industrial centres. But if it is impossible to persuade them, then let them do as they wish. I, personally, believe that it is possible to persuade them.

THE STUDENT YOUTH

Question No. 45.—What was the part played by the student youth in Russia, what is to be done with the student youth in India, and what forms should the work among them assume?

Answer.—The part played by the students' organisations in Russia was different at different times. In the period prior to 1905, the students in Russia played a great role. In February-March, 1902, the student youth developed great revolutionary activity. This was to be explained by the fact that up to 1905 the autocracy in Russia based itself mainly upon the landlords. Even the bourgeoisie was dissatisfied with tsarism. This, of course, had its reflection upon the youth, and in particular upon the student youth, which was concentrated in big numbers in the universities. Furthermore, the reaction was so oppressive that the students could not obtain in the universities what they desired. They were not permitted to listen to lectures of liberal professors who could impart some knowledge to them. They were not allowed to listen to the lectures of professors who were masters of their subjects, even if the subject had nothing to do with politics, because the government would dismiss professors from their chair for belonging, say, to the liberals. The students were not allowed to read the books they wished to and they were arrested like the workers for reading prohibited books.

This situation gave the opportunity to the revolutionary elements among the students to call upon their fellow students to take part in manifestations directed against the government, and in many cases their appeals met with success. The arrests among the students forced the latter to resort to sharper methods of fight,

including street demonstrations. In punishment they were handed over to the military authorities to serve in the army as common soldiers. They were thrown into prison. There they came in touch with the political prisoners, and in consequence a good many of these students joined the revolutionary and socialist parties.

The Bolshevik Party formed fractions composed of student social democratic elements in the universities and high schools (until the October Revolution the Russian Communists called themselves social-democratic Bolsheviks), and utilised the best of them in the work of conducting workers' self-education circles and even social-democratic circles. A good many of the students were members of social democratic committees. Some would be sent to meetings, and those who could not be used as speakers would be given technical work, such as printing and distributing literature and collecting money. The Party would make use of the living quarters of these students for Party purposes, such as trysts, etc. This was prior to 1905.

Already in the course of the revolution of 1905 and in the following years, when even the liberal bourgeoisie, after it had obtained a semblance of parliamentarism, had virtually gone over to the side of tsarism, the mass of the student youth left the revolutionary movement. Only those of the social democratic elements remained who were really connected with the revolutionary working class movement. After February, 1917, and during the October Revolution, the great bulk of the students opposed with arms the working class and the revolution.

The situation in India resembles the situation which the Bolsheviks had in Russia before 1905. The independence movement seized upon the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, and even upon a section of the bourgeoisie itself, that section which manufactures goods that have to compete with British goods, and is discontented with the existing regime. The petty bourgeoisie took part in the movement of the National Congress, and sometimes figured even as the advance guard of the National Congress. The students in India now play approximately the same part as that played by the students in Russia prior to 1905. The Communist Party can look for followers among them. It can utilise them just as the Bolshevik Party did in Russia before 1905, but under no circumstances should it draw them into the Party on a large scale.

This does not mean that particular elements might not be admitted to the Party and even to the leading organs of the Party, but that may be done only after they have been tested for a certain time by actual work and after they have proved that they are really imbued with Communist ideology, and that they are capable of making sacrifices for the Communist Party. They can be admitted to the Party then, and even given responsible work.

Question No. 46.—If a comrade arrives at some place where there is a student organisation, and without any further ado he starts off with a speech, and there is a danger of his being arrested before he gains any influence, what should be done, how should the propaganda be carried on under these conditions?

Answer.—First of all, nobody demands that when a comrade comes to a town and happens to be at a students' meeting, that he should immediately start off with a speech. One must know where this is happening and why this meeting was called, what groupings there are among the students, etc. It is obvious that first of all it is necessary to become acquainted with all these details and only then one may make a speech. When the comrade has found out what is going on, he will surely find some revolutionary elements, who sympathise with the Communists, with whom he could discuss his speech.

It is not even a question about the speech, but about rallying the best elements around him. Sometimes one could put into the mouth of somebody else who is well known to the masses things one wants him to say, without his even noticing it. This may have a greater effect than if the comrade, whom nobody in the audience knows, is to make the speech himself.

Propaganda and agitation should be carried on with a knowledge of the environment, with a knowledge of the questions which interest the masses involved, with a knowledge of the questions the urgency of which is most keenly felt by the masses. From these questions one can pass on to general political subjects, and even to specific points in the programme of the Communist Party.

RELIGION

Question No. 48.—How should we fight in India against the multitude of religions?

Answer.—It is, of course, necessary to fight religion in India, but I think we have more important tasks now. It is necessary to organise trade unions, Party organisations, to turn the trade unions into mass organisations, and, by increasing the influence of the Communist Party in the mass labour organisations and the influence of the latter over the broad masses, to fight religion. But to commence fighting religion now means to commence to fight with all the religions existing in India, since Communists cannot remain neutral to any religion; then the Communists may find themselves alone and completely isolated from the masses. Therefore at the moment the question of religion is not a pressing question. In the first place it is necessary to strengthen the influence of Party members over the members of trade unions, over the members of the mass labour organisations, over the members of those organisations which are close to the Communists, and only then try in a scientific and popular way to free at least the active body of workers from the religious narcotic, and through them to influence the broader sections of the masses. I repeat: this question is not on the order of the day. So far the Communists in India have neither a strong centralised party nor consolidated trade unions nor big mass organisations. They do not possess sufficient influence among the working class, nor is their influence among the peasants sufficient, and so it will be necessary to wait with the fight against religion. Certainly we must explain that the so-called Hindu-Moslem strife is in the interests of British imperialism, landlords and reactionaries, and is instigated by them in order to divide the ranks of the toiling masses.

Question No. 49.—What are the tasks in workers' religious organisations?

Answer.—What organisations are they? Are they founded exclusively on a religious basis, and only for religious purposes? I doubt that a workers' society could be formed for specifically religious purposes on a religious basis. For that purpose there are special workers' temples, mosques, etc. Obviously, apart from religious questions, these workers' religious organisations occupy themselves with some other questions, such as mutual aid benefits, benefits in case of death of some members of the family, or some other economic questions which unite the members of this organisation.

If the workers' organisation is formed exclusively for religious purposes, it is necessary to join it in order to try and make it take up the economic struggle, and at first religion should not be touched. The organisation should be urged to form a mutual aid fund, a fund for unemployment, a fund for assistance during strikes. Work there should be carried on very cautiously. I do not think the workers will decline the advice to form various benefit funds. It is necessary in this way to win these organisations.

But if these organisations are of a mixed nature, i.e., both religious and economic, it will be necessary to join them, and work in them. Possibly it may be very difficult to win the workers of these organisations, but they must be won, for British imperialism is using religion as tsarist Russia did, for the purpose of fomenting and stirring up dissensions among the different nationalities. In Russia this was practised in respect to the Turkomans, Armenians, Poles, Jews, etc. British imperialism employs the same methods in India. It incites the followers of one religion against those of the other. There is a special organisation of Moslems. This hinders the joint struggle of the workers.

The Communists must endeavour to destroy such organisations from within. But they should not begin with religion; let them at first start with economic and political questions, with economic interests that affect the masses directly, and point out to them the necessity of forming trade unions jointly with other workers for a united struggle against their common enemy, who is to be found in all religious denominations. After the Communists have succeeded in forming an organisation uniting workers of various religious denominations, they will have to start very cautiously a fight against all religions.

Question No. 50.—How is the Party organisation to be built up in those districts where there are religions which are hostile to one another?

Answer.—I understand your question in this way: are not the Party organisations in those places to be built up on the line of religious divisions, i.e., should separate organisations be formed for the workers of each religion? No, even if the organisation at the beginning is very small, it should nevertheless be built to

include Communist followers from all religious denominations, however difficult that may be. Communists are determined enemies of all religions, Communists are avowed internationalists. One of the greatest slogans of the Communist International is "Workers of the World, Unite!" because the workers in all countries are faced by one common enemy—the bourgeoisie. The common enemy of the workers in India, irrespective of the religious denominations to which they belong, is the Indian bourgeoisie, which exploits the workers and supports the British imperialists. In order successfully to carry on the fight against the native bourgeoisie it is necessary to organise a strong Communist Party comprising workers of all nationalities in India irrespective of the religious denominations to which they belonged before they joined the Communist Party. Therefore, the very existence of a Party organisation, and of workers' organisations generally such as trade unions, etc., uniting on an economic and political basis followers of different religions, shows the possibility of joint and common struggle of workers belonging to different religious denominations.

If the Party organisation of the Communists is built up on the principle of religious divisions, it will cease to be a political class organisation, it will no longer be a Communist organisation, and to this Communists can never agree.

THE FIGHT AGAINST PROVOCATION

Question No. 51.—What should be done in the case of a provocateur who betrayed a group of comrades, but had not yet been exposed and continues to work with those who are still free? What should a new comrade arriving in that place do, and what should he begin with?

Answer.—I do not understand. If the comrade who just arrived knows that there is a provocateur among the group, then at the beginning the best thing for him to do is not to join that group at all. He could go to some factory, start work there, look around himself, find out who was left from the former group, who are the new people who joined after the arrest, get in touch with those who joined later, and together with them decide on the measures of removing the suspect. However, in practice, it is necessary to say that it is very difficult to establish the identity of the provocateur. There were cases when people suspected of being provocateurs were removed, but later it was disclosed that the real provocateur remained in the organisation. Such mistakes are inevitable.

Appeal of the China League of Left Writers to the Artists, Poets and Writers of the Whole World

Shanghai, January, 1934.

Under the bloodthirsty Kuomintang the toiling masses of China are faced with the alternative: revolution or death.

Revolution, which is a matter of life and death for the oppressed masses, is going on parallel with the disintegration of the Kuomintang rule. The deepening economic crisis in the country, the ever-increasing revolutionary upsurge of vast masses of workers and peasants and the swing to the Left of the intellectuals revealed the complete bankruptcy of the Kuomintang rule. A huge triumph of the revolutionary workers and peasants is undoubtedly evident.

In its death throes the reactionary Kuomintang is once again resorting to its old policy of wholesale massacre. Following the numerous kidnapping and murders in the last few years, the Kuomintang is now organising a fresh wave of savage terror reminiscent of the ancient despots of China. In one night December last 200 citizens, professors and students, were kidnapped by the Shanghai Bureau for Public Safety for no reason whatever. The terror is raging all over the country. Culture and human lives are being destroyed.

We call upon you to support us in our fight. We call upon you in the name of human civilisation for comradely support in our fight against the Kuomintang rule, which is doomed to perish. On to the struggle against the fascist Kuomintang white terror and against the fascist terror throughout the world!

China League of Left Writers