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Unemployment in the Present World Economic Crisis and the Tasks of the Communist Parties and the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement.

By O. Piatnitzky.

The Chronic Character of Unemployment.

1. Unemployment has Assumed a Chronic Form.

During the war of 1914—18, as a result of the shortage of labour power, an enormous number of women were drawn into industry. After the armies were demobilised and the war industry was converted into peace-time industry, an economic crisis occurred in 1921 which affected all countries except France who, with the aid of German reparations, was engaged in restoring those areas devastated by the war. The consequence of this crisis was an onslaught by the employers upon all the economic achievements which the working class had won after the war, and mass unemployment, sometimes diminishing, sometimes increasing, according to the prevailing economic situation. In certain countries unemployment has neither diminished nor increased right up to the present economic crisis: in England, for example, the number of unemployed since 1920 has never fallen below a million.

The mass unemployment during 1920—27 was enhanced still further by the structural unemployment, which resulted from capitalist rationalisation, chiefly along the lines of intensification of labour. Toward the end of 1928 and the beginning of 1929, when the economic situation in certain big capitalist countries (U.S.A., Germany and others) remained comparatively favourable, structural unemployment was already relatively high. In June 1927 unemployment stood at 8.8 per cent. in England and in February 1929 it was already 12.2 per cent.; in Germany for the same period the respective figures were 6.3 per cent. and 22.3 per cent. (or 2,622,000 unemployed): in U.S.A. there were 2.1 million in 1927 and 3.4 million unemployed at the end of 1928 and beginning of 1929.

From official sources, excerpts from which are given below, it can be seen how large was the number of unemployed as a result of capitalist rationalisation.

In an article published in No. 66 of the social-democratic "Leipziger Volkszeitung" dated 19th July 30 — "The Number of Unemployed in 1929 and 1930" — we read the following:

"According to the estimate of the Deutsche Konjunktur Institut, the index of production (taking the average for 1928 as 100) is as follows:

1st quarter 1925	the index was	85.0
2nd " 1925	" " "	86.3
3rd " 1925	" " "	82.6
4th " 1925	" " "	79.1

Whereas, in the 1st " 1930 " " " 93.6, and the average for April and May 1930 " " " 84.6."

This means that in April and May 1930 the index of production was equal to that of 1925. It was not so with the number of workers engaged in industry. The "Wirtschaft und Statistik", published by the official Statistical Board of Germany, in an article entitled "The development of the number of workers in Germany from 1925 to 1930" (No. 13, July 1, 1930, page 559) stated the following:

"Thus, at present there are 1¼ million less workers engaged in German economy than at the time of the industrial census of June 16, 1925".

This again means that between 1925 and 1930, rationalisation threw 1,250,000 working men and women out of work; and this elimination of workers from industry is proceeding uninterruptedly. For example, during the first quarter of 1930, the number of workers engaged in the coal industry in the Rhine district and Westphalia diminished by 15,000 and 25,000 men were put on short time. Meanwhile the productivity of

labour, which as against the 1913 figure was 143 per cent. rose to 155 per cent. in the first quarter of 1931.

The world economic crisis has brought very considerable unemployment in its train. According to figures of the Socio-Economic Department of the R. I. L. U., there were 34,545,000 workers entirely unemployed in 48 countries in January 1931 (including agricultural workers and, in England, railwaymen, who are not included in the official statistics).

Below are the figures for the individual countries:

USA	10,000,000
Germany	5,300,000
England	3,500,000
Latin America (19 countries)	4,000,000
Italy	1,800,000
Japan	2,000,000
Poland	1,100,000
Austria	550,000
Hungary	600,000
Czechoslovakia	750,000
Rumania	400,000
Yugoslavia	350,000
Bulgaria	200,000
Greece	150,000
Belgium	150,000
Spain	450,000
Portugal	350,000
Sweden }	300,000
Denmark }	
Norway }	
Holland	150,000
Finland	100,000
Latvia	40,000
Estonia	27,000
Lithuania	18,000
France	500,000
Australia	500,000
New Zealand	60,000
Canada	400,000
Mexico	800,000
	<hr/>
	34,545,000

Bourgeois and social-democratic scientists and economists looked forward to the spring of 1931 with very high hopes. They assured us that Spring would bring with it a considerable reduction in unemployment, and would thus show that the depth of the economic crisis had at last been sounded. Their predictions proved false, as can be seen even from official figures concerning unemployment during the first 5 months of 1931 in the more important countries (official figures do not include the total number of completely unemployed).

Germany 1931.

In January there were	4,887,000	unemployed
„ February „ „	4,971,000	„
„ March „ „	4,780,000	„
„ April „ „	4,358,000	„
„ May „ „	4,211,000	„

The decrease in the number of unemployed chiefly applied to the seasonal workers, and in no way to those working in the heavy industries.

England 1931.

In January there were	2,592,700	unemployed
„ February „ „	2,617,700	„
„ March „ „	2,581,000	„
„ April „ „	2,520,000	„
„ May „ „	2,532,500	„
„ June (end) „ „	2,664,889	„

France 1931.

In January there were	32,478	registered unemployed;	28,536	receiving unempl. benefit.
„ February „ „	55,723	registered unemployed;	40,766	receiving unempl. benefit.
„ March „ „	68,064	registered unemployed;	50,815	receiving unempl. benefit.
„ April	49,958	„	„	„
„ May	45,292	„	„	„

Piquenard, representative of the French Government to the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, declared that in beginning of 1931 there were 1 million short time workers in France, and 350,000 entirely unemployed. In actual fact there are no less than 500,000 entirely unemployed and over 1 million short time workers in France.

America.

(In America there are no statistics, but only the index of employment in big industry. Taking 1926 as a basis of 100, the index in January 1930 was 90.2.)

1931	Employment Index
January	76
February	77.3
March	78.1

The percentage of unemployment among trade union members, throughout all branches of industry in the U. S. A., according to the figures of the American Federation of Labour, are as follows:

In January 1930 —	20 per cent
„ January 1931 —	27 „
„ February —	27 „
„ March —	26 „
„ April (preliminary) —	25 „

Italy 1931.

In January there were	723 000	official registered unemployed
„ February „ „	765 000	„ „
„ March „ „	707 000	„ „
„ April „ „	670 000	„ „

Actually the number of entirely unemployed workers in Italy, including agricultural and other workers receiving no benefits, has not fallen as compared with January 1931.

The long anticipated Spring did not bring any considerable reduction in unemployment. The coming Autumn will probably bring an increase.

The world economic crisis continues as acute as before, and is spreading to more and more countries, with the exception of the USSR., which is passing through a period of prosperity hitherto unparalleled throughout the world, and is building up more and more new branches of industry. The end of the world economic crisis is not yet to be seen; but it is already possible to state with conviction that no industrial "prosperity", which the capitalist world may hope for, at the end of the economic crisis, can absorb the enormous army of unemployed; the more so since even during this most acute world economic crisis, the reduction of working days in the week is accompanied in the factories and workshops by continuous pressure by capital upon the working men and women in the form of increased rationalisation, by means of intensified labour and a longer working day. At the same time the capitalists have no intention of reducing their incomes. I. G. Farbenindustrie the big chemical combine in Germany paid out the same 12 per cent. dividends in 1930 as in 1929. The number of workers in this concern which in 1929 amounted to 131,750, decreased to 114,197 by January 1, 1931.

Thus mass unemployment has become a chronic phenomenon. The Communist Parties, the red trade unions and the revolutionary trade union opposition must take this fact into consideration.

In the early post-war years, under pressure of the revolutionary movement, State Unemployment Insurance was introduced in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia (1920) the workers being exempt from any payment of insurance subscriptions. State Unemployment Insurance, which was introduced at that time (August 1920) was widely practised in England; but in the years that followed, the ever increasing onslaught of the capitalists upon the achievements of the workers, which still goes on today, has reduced this social unemployment insurance almost to nil.

Unemployment Insurance.

Can the Unemployment Insurance that exists today in certain capitalist countries save the unemployed from poverty?

A cursory examination of this insurance scheme is sufficient to show that the answer to this question is in the negative.

According to information of the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, obligatory unemployment insurance exists in 9 capitalist countries, and affects a total of 34,628,000 insured persons. Below we give figures for these 9 countries separately:

1. Australia (Queensland) has approximately	137,000	insured.
2. Austria	1,300,000	"
3. England and North Ireland	12,100,000	"
4. Bulgaria	287,000	"
5. Germany	16,738,000	"
6. Irish Free State	284,000	"
7. Italy, approximately	2,600,000	"
8. Poland	1,033,000	"
9. Switzerland (9 cantons) approximately	150,000	"

It is worth while dealing more in detail with unemployment insurance in some of these countries.

Australia (Queensland).

Obligatory unemployment insurance in the sparsely populated State of Queensland (about 800,000 inhabitants, of whom approximately 135,000 workers are engaged in factories and come within the scope of unemployment insurance), on the basis of the law of October 18, 1922, and the amendment of the law, of April 28, 1928, is extended — regardless of the rate of wages paid — to all wage-earning persons over 18 years of age, whose wages, according to the law concerning the obligatory minimum wage, are regulated by means of collective agreements and decisions of the arbitration courts (herein are included State employees).

Unemployment insurance is not extended to agricultural workers (except to those engaged on the sugar plantations) or to domestic servants, brain workers, apprentices, agents, or to immigrants from Asia, Africa and the islands of the Pacific.

Unemployment insurance contributions are paid by the workers, the employers, and the State, at a rate of 6d. each per week per worker. Unmarried men and women, widows and widowers during unemployment receive benefits at the rate of 15 shillings a week. Married men and women receive 25 shillings a week and 4 shillings a week extra per child between the ages of 4 and 16. The total amount of insurance benefit may not exceed a weekly sum of 50 per cent. of the usual weekly wages. Insured persons begin to receive benefits only on the 15th day of unemployment and benefits are paid for a period not exceeding 15 weeks in a year. This period may be extended by the Unemployment Council "in cases of dire need".

Austria.

In Austria State unemployment insurance exists for factory workers and official employees, who have reached the age of 16 years, with the exception of agricultural workers, domestic servants, workers in small undertakings in purely agricultural districts, and apprentices until the last year of training. Unemployment insurance is divided into three classes: normal, first category crisis insurance, second category crisis insurance. Workers and employers pay an equal share of the contributions to the normal unemployment insurance fund (for the workers this amounts to a subscription of 20 groschen*) weekly for those who receive wages according to the lowest, first class, and about 101 groschen weekly for those receiving wages according to the highest, tenth class. The government

*)An Austrian "groschen" is equal to one-hundredth part of an Austrian schilling; the latter is equal to four-sevenths of an English shilling.

pays no contributions whatever but merely advances the expenditure on unemployment insurance (in 1930 the Government advanced for this purpose 50 million Austrian schilling). For the two forms of crisis insurance, the workers and employers contribute one-fourth each, the government one-sixth, and the provincial governments one-third of the total contribution. Contributions for workers and employers are fixed by the parity district industrial commissions (consisting of representatives of workers and employers). The maximum is fixed by law (not more than 45 per cent. of the entire amount of contributions paid by a worker or office employee on the one hand, and the employers on the other, into the sick benefit insurance fund); but the commission actually fix the maximum from 1 to 82 groschen monthly for those insured in the first class and from 12 to 110 groschen for those who receive wages according to the highest, tenth, class.

Unemployment insurance is divided into 10 classes, according to the amount of wages of those insured (the majority of workers receive a rate of wages ranging from the 7th to the 10th class). Insured persons receive unemployment benefit only in the event of their having, during the year preceding their unemployment, worked a minimum of 20 weeks without a break in a factory where all the workers and employees are entitled to receive unemployment benefit on the 8th day of unemployment, and are entitled to it for 12 weeks in the year (this period may be extended to 30 weeks). Persons insured according to the normal rate of unemployment insurance and who receive an average weekly wage of 6,48 schillings (first class) are entitled to a weekly benefit of from 4,30 to 5,80 schillings, according to the number of members in the family. Insured persons receiving an average weekly wage of 43,20 schillings (highest, tenth class) are entitled to benefit of from 13,8 to 21 shillings, according to the size of the family. Insured persons whose wages range between the 2nd and 9th classes are given more or less relief according to the amount of their unemployment insurance contributions.

Upon the expiration of the period during which an unemployed person is entitled to receive normal unemployment benefit, he may during the course of a further 22 weeks receive crisis benefit of the first category, and then, for 26 weeks more, crisis benefit of the second category, if a special commission decides that he is "in acute need". Unemployment relief is denied to persons in whose family any member is already bringing in wages or in receipt of unemployment relief. Before January 1, 1931, crisis benefit amounted to a weekly sum of 90 per cent. of the benefit paid to insured persons according to the "normal" unemployment insurance; but since January 1, 1931, crisis benefit of the first category has been reduced by 10 per cent. and of the second category by 20 per cent., and for persons under 25 years of age, even by 30 per cent. For unemployed persons receiving crisis benefit of the first category, a curtailment of the period of payment has been introduced since January 1, 1931, from 22 weeks to 12 weeks. (This curtailment was introduced by the district industrial unemployment parity commissions, that means, with the consent of the representatives of the reformist trade unions who, at the same time, are members of the Austrian Social Democratic Party). Normal unemployment benefits cannot exceed 80 per cent. of the last weekly wage of the unemployed—usually benefit amounts to one-third or one-half of his wages.

The minimum cost of living, according to the official minimised figure, amounts to 43 Austrian schillings per week, and the unemployed worker with a large family receives an average of from 5,80 to 21 shillings weekly. The Austrian Government, not without the cognisance and consent of the socialdemocratic party, has introduced into Parliament a Bill which still further cuts down unemployment insurance benefit.

England.

Unemployment insurance is extended to all working men and women who have reached the age of 16 years and earn an annual wage of not more than £250. Agricultural labourers (including forestry workers and market gardeners) domestic servants, employees in State enterprises, hospital nurses, army employees, policemen, teachers, casual workers and fishermen, do not come within the scope of unemployment insurance.

Contributions are paid into the insurance fund by insured men between the ages of 21 to 65 years, at the rate of 7d. per week, and by women of the same age of 6d. weekly; the employers contribute 8d. weekly for insured men between the ages of 21 to 65 years and 7d. for women of the same age; and the State pays 7½ and 6½d. respectively for these categories.

Young persons, male and female, between the ages of 18 and 21 years pay 6d. and 5d. respectively; the employers 7d. and 6d. and the State 6½ and 5½d. per week respectively.

Juveniles boys and girls pay 3½ and 3d. respectively; the employers contribute 4 and 3½d. and the State 3¼ and 3¼d. respectively weekly.

On the 7th day of unemployment, the insured person is entitled to normal benefit for a period of 26 weeks (this period can be prolonged in exceptional cases to 44 weeks) if the insured person has paid in not less than 30 contributions during the preceding two years. The benefits are as follows (weekly):

Age	Men	Women
16 years	6 shillings	5 shillings
From 17 to 18 years	9 "	7/6.
" 18 to 21 "	14 "	12/6.
" 21 to 65 "	17 "	15/-.

Adult dependents are entitled to a benefit of 9 shillings, and children to 2 shillings weekly. The average insurance benefit of an unemployed man with a family of three persons ranges from one half to three quarters of his wages. The minimum cost of living of an English family (with three children), calculated on the basis of the official (therefore minimised) cost of living index of the Ministry of Labour (1913 is taken as the basis of 100; the figure for the beginning of 1931 was 150), is equal to 55 shillings weekly. The unemployment benefit paid to such a family amounts to 32 shillings a week for unemployed men and 30 shillings for unemployed women. Juveniles receive 6 shillings (boys) and 5 shillings (girls) weekly; and unmarried adults over 21 years of age receive 17 (men) and 15 (women) shillings weekly in unemployment benefit. Thus the minimum and maximum unemployment benefit in England is 5 shillings and 32 shillings weekly.

Bulgaria.

Under the law of 1925 unemployment insurance in Bulgaria covers all those working for wages with the exception of agricultural labourers, domestic workers and employees of State institutions and enterprises.

According to this law the workers, the employers and the State each pay an equal amount of 1 leva (one leva is equal approximately to one farthing) weekly; the State incidentally pays its contributions very irregularly. Since the end of 1930, in fact, it has failed to pay in a sum of 18,000,000 leva.

While unemployed, insured persons, under this law, are entitled to receive insurance benefit from the 9th day of unemployment to the extent of 10 leva daily for single and 16 leva daily for married persons for a period of 12 weeks (the average wage in Bulgaria is 60—80 leva daily); and this is granted only if the insured person has paid in 52 contributions during the preceding two years and is registered at the Unemployment Bureau of the regional Labour Exchange. However, since 1928, by order of the Ministry of Labour, insurance benefit is paid out only to those unemployed persons who have been dismissed from work on a mass scale (no less than 50 per cent. of the workers of the given enterprises). Thus, those dismissed individually are not entitled to insurance benefit at all. Moreover, seasonal workers (tobacco-workers, builders, etc.) are also deprived of benefit as well as persons whose contributions, although deducted from their wages, have not been paid in to the fund by the employers. Actually the unemployment insurance act passed in 1926 has been completely annulled by order of the Ministry of Labour.

Germany.

1. Normal Insurance of Workers.

All persons working for wages, who are entitled to sick insurance are also entitled to unemployment insurance, if their wages do not exceed 3,600 marks (one mark is approximately one English shilling) for workers and 8,400 marks for other employees. The following persons are not included in the scheme of insurance:

- agricultural labourers (not working on a yearly contract), fishermen and foresters;
- apprentices,
- workers of school age,
- persons working less than 24 hours weekly (but not those who work on short time); or persons receiving less than 8 marks weekly;
- persons working in aid of the unemployed;
- middlemen, distributing work to be carried out in the home;
- casual labourers.

Insured persons and employers pay together 6½ per cent. of the basic weekly rate of wages each side paying 50 per cent. of the total amount of the contributions. The State pays no contributions. Only in the event of a deficit in the unemployment insurance fund, does the State make a grant to cover the deficit, and this not to the full extent of the deficit, but to an extent fixed by Parliament or by decree of the President of the Republic on the basis of Paragraph 48 on the Constitution.

Insured persons are divided into 11 classes according to their wages. The percentage of insurance benefit to the basic wage, according to classes is as follows:

Class of Wages	Weekly Wage in marks	Average Rate of wages	Benefit paid in per cent to the basic rate of wages
1	Up to 10	8	75 = 6 marks weekly
2	10—14	12	65
3	14—18	16	55
4	18—24	21	47
5	24—30	27	40
6	30—36	33	40
7	36—42	39	37,5
8	42—48	45	35
9	48—54	51	35
10	54—60	57	35
11	Over 60	63	35 = 22,05 weekly

Insured persons receive an additional 5 per cent. of the basic wage for dependents to the maximum number of 5. The total sum must not exceed:

Class of Wages	Maximum Relief in per cent to the basic rate
1—2	80
3	75
4	72
5—6	65
7	62,5
8—11	60

Working men and women in the above-mentioned categories may receive insurance benefit, on attaining 16 years of age, if for the previous two years they have been employed for 52 weeks in an enterprise where the workers are entitled to unemployment insurance. Unemployment benefit is paid from the 3rd to the 14th day of unemployment (varying according to the different unemployment categories) for a period of 26 weeks in the year (in special cases the period may be prolonged to 39 weeks). Insured persons who have

paid less than 26 weekly contributions are deprived of insurance benefit. Those of them who have paid 26 weekly contributions and belong to the 7—11 wage classes, receive less than the fixed rate of benefit; the 11th class, for example, instead of 22,05 marks only receives 17,85 marks weekly, and so on.

2. Crisis Benefit.

Certain categories of unemployed upon the expiration of the term when benefit is paid under the normal insurance, are entitled to crisis benefit. This benefit is paid for 32 weeks, although the term of payment may be extended to 45 weeks in the case of unemployed over 40 years of age. The extent of crisis benefit for unemployed persons with dependents, belonging to the 1st to the 5th classes, is the same as that for normal unemployment insurance; unemployed of the 6th class receive crisis benefit to the extent paid to the 5th class of normal unemployment benefit; the 7th to 8th classes the same as the 6th normal; and the 9th to the 11th class, that of the 7th normal insurance.

Unemployed persons without dependents receive benefit as follows:

5th class crisis benefit is equal to the 4th class normal benefit; the benefit of the 6th to 11th classes equal that of one class lower than the class of unemployed insured workers with dependents. If the unemployed persons have any other source of income, the insurance benefit is cut off. The fund for payment of crisis benefit is composed of a government contributions of four-fifths and a contribution from the local municipal authorities of one-fifth. Unemployed persons cut off from crisis benefit can, for a very short period of time, receive a very low rate of poor relief from the local municipal authorities.

According to official statistics there were 4,357,000 unemployed in Germany on January 1, 1931. Of this number, unemployment benefit was paid to 2,155,000 working men and women, crisis benefit to 667,000 and 1,535,000 persons were compelled to apply to the local municipal authorities for poor law relief. The extent of relief extended to the unemployed by the local municipal authorities is left to their own discretion, and many local authorities make such relief dependent upon performing some sort of task work. Over 700,000 unemployed have received no relief at all.

Since January 1931, however, the position of the unemployed in Germany has become considerably worse. The Emergency Decree, issued recently by the President of the German Republic, has cut down all forms of insurance benefit by 5 per cent, has instituted a crisis tax over a period of 1½ years, which chiefly affects workers' wages, has deprived all persons under 21 years of age of any kind of unemployment relief, has made insurance for seasonal workers and married women still more difficult to obtain, and has lengthened still further the waiting period before the first insurance benefit can be obtained, besides making other difficulties for the workers in connection with insurance.

The miserable rate of insurance benefit paid even before the introduction of the new dictatorial Decree, can be judged from the fact that 42 per cent. of those to whom unemployment benefit was paid, received relief ranging from only 6 to 13,20 marks weekly, whereas, according to the calculations of the German statistician, Kuczynski, the minimum cost of living, based upon official statistics, for the first half of 1930, was 49.65 marks weekly. Since then the position has become still worse.

Italy.

Unemployment insurance is extended to all persons working for wages, with the exception of employees earning over 800 lira (a lira is approximately 2d.) a month. Agricultural workers, except those working on machinery (the 1924 law extending unemployment insurance to a section of the agricultural workers has never really been put into operation), persons guaranteed permanent work in State institutions and private enterprises, persons working in the home, domestic servants, theatre and cinematograph workers, official members of the staffs of State and municipal institutions, and casual and seasonal workers employed for less than 6 months in the year, are deprived of the right to unemployment insurance.

Insured persons and the employers each pay 50 per cent. of the contribution to the insurance fund. The State pays no contribution, despite the fact that this insurance is called "State" Insurance.

Unemployment insurance contributions and the payment of relief are divided into three groups as follows:

Group	Insured persons with a daily wage up to	Insured persons and employers each pay a fortnightly sum of	During unemployment insured persons receive daily
1	4 lira	0,70 lira	1,25 lira
2	4—8 lira	1,40 "	2,50 "
3	over 8 lira	2,10 "	3,75 "

Insurance benefit cannot exceed 50 per cent. of the daily wage. The average wage in May was 15 to 25 lira daily. The payment of relief begins on the 8th day of unemployment and is paid over a period of 90 days for insured persons who have paid in 24 fortnightly contributions, and of 120 days for those who have paid in 36 fortnightly contributions.

The miserable rate of unemployment insurance benefit paid, even were it paid during the entire period of unemployment, is obvious from the fact that the official minimum cost of living for a family of five persons in Milan is 240 Lira a week.

Here are the prices of certain articles of food in Italy:

1 kilogram	potatoes	cost	1,15	at the beginning of	1931
1 "	white bread	"	2—2,20	" "	" 1931
1 "	sugar	"	6,90	" "	" 1931
1 "	milk	"	1,52	" "	" 1931

Poland.

Unemployment insurance in Poland under the law of 1924 is extended to all persons over the age of 18, who are working for wages under agreement, including workers in State enterprises, brain workers, actors, journalists, officers of the mercantile marine, seasonal workers employed for over 6 months yearly. Agricultural and forestry workers, domestic servants, seasonal workers employed for less than a stipulated period of the year, unskilled workers, railwaymen, builders and road-menders, are deprived of the right to unemployment insurance.

Contributions to the unemployment insurance fund and the payment of unemployment benefit are divided into two groups: manual labourers and brain workers:

Insurance of Manual Workers.

By whom paid	Amount paid in contributions	Proportion of total contributions
Insured persons	0.45 per cent of wages	one-sixth
Employers	1.35 " " " "	three-sixths
State*)	0.90 " " " "	two-sixths

The percentage of contributions is calculated on the wages not exceeding 5 zloty daily (a zloty is approximately 5d.). During unemployment, insured persons receive:

Single persons . . .	33	per cent of wages	Up to 3.3 zloty daily
Persons with 1—2 dependents . . .	33.5	" " " "	" " 3.5 " "
Persons with 3—4 dependents . . .	44	" " " "	" " 4.4 " "
Persons with over 4 dependents . . .	55	" " " "	" " 5.5 " "

The maximum wage upon which benefit is calculated is 10 zloty daily.

This starvation benefit is paid out to registered unemployed persons, who have worked for no less than 20 weeks during the year preceding unemployment. Benefit commences with the 11th day of unemployment, and is paid to single persons for 13 weeks in exceptional cases relief may be extended to 17 weeks) and to married persons for a period of 6 months (which in exceptional cases may be prolonged to 9 months).

*) The State is entitled to place half the burden of the insurance expenditure upon the local municipal authorities.

Insurance of Brain Workers.

Brain workers and employers pay together from 2 to 3 per cent. of the monthly wage into the insurance fund (the State does not pay any contribution to the insurance fund of brain workers). The contributions are divided as follows between employees and employers:

Monthly salary in zlotys	Percentage paid by the employer	percentage paid by employee
Less than 60	100	—
From 60—400	60	40
" 400—800	50	50
Over 800	40	60

The rate of relief paid to these insured persons is proportional to their average wage during the past 12 months. For single persons 30 per cent. of this wage; married persons 40,8 per cent. The minimum unemployment benefit paid amounts to 30 zlotys monthly.

According to official Polish statistics, the minimum cost of living for a family of five persons in Warsaw is not less than 9 zlotys a day or 270 zlotys monthly. The actual average wage is 45 per cent. below the minimum cost of living. The average unemployment insurance benefit paid in all groups is equal to 40—42 per cent. of existing wages. But even this miserable dole, on some pretext or other, is not given to all insured persons. According to official statistics, during May of last year, only 50 per cent. of the registered unemployed were in receipt of relief in Warsaw, and only 30 per cent. in Zhirardowe. From July 1 of this year, the Government proposes curtailing the unemployment benefit by 15 per cent.

Belgium — Czechoslovakia — Norway.

Besides the nine countries where State insurance exists, there are three other countries—Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Norway, where trade union unemployment relief funds exist for trade union members only; these funds receive a grant from the government and the local municipal authorities; the system is called the Ghent scheme. Trade union members either pay special contributions to the insurance fund (in Belgium the insurance funds are separated from the unions, and controlled by the Ministry of Labour; the trade union members in employment pay 1,75 francs weekly, a Belgian franc being equal approximately to three halfpence), or the contributions paid by them to the trade unions include a payment to the insurance fund (Norway and Czechoslovakia). The governments and the local municipal authorities contribute to the expense of unemployment relief to trade union members to the extent of from 50 per cent. (Norway and Czechoslovakia) and 75 per cent. (Belgium).

The period during which benefit is paid and the restrictions connected with the payment of benefit to insured persons is, generally speaking, not different under the Ghent system from those prevailing in the nine countries already mentioned. Similarly, under this system, the rate of benefit paid differs in the different industrial groups. In Czechoslovakia, the benefit paid to insured persons earning an average of 150 krona weekly (a Czechoslovakian krona is approximately five farthings) averages between 12 and 24 krona. For the skilled upper strata of workers (members of the more wealthy trade unions) benefit amounts to 30—40 krona weekly. In Belgium skilled workers with large families (metal workers) receive benefit of 47—50 per cent. of their wages weekly, or from 25—27 francs. The upper strata of workers (printers' union) in Norway receive benefit during unemployment of 30—40 krona weekly (one krona in Norway being approximately one shilling) for a period of three months; after a break of six months, during which the unemployed person receives no relief, he may receive additional benefit for a period of two months. Printers in Norway earn an average of 95 krona (from 75 to 140 krona) weekly; their unemployment benefit is therefore equal to about 30 per cent. of their normal wage. Other unions pay out an even lower scale of relief.

In Czechoslovakia, the Government makes a grant only to those unions recognised as such by the State (the struggle for the recognition of the red trade unions still continues, as recognition would bring a government grant in its train). Recently the Congress of Red Trade Unions in Czechoslovakia was closed down by the police. The Ghent system is very advantageous to the bourgeoisie: the employers pay nothing, the State helps only trade union members (the percentage of workers organised in trade unions in all countries is not large), and finally, in circumstances of chronic mass unemployment, not one trade union, however wealthy, can pay unemployment relief to its members for any long period. And as soon as the trade unions cease the payment of relief, the Government also stops its grant.

A very miserable scale of relief to the unemployed is also paid in

France.

In France the number of totally unemployed persons increases every day, despite the fact that the employers and the State are artificially reducing the number of totally unemployed, by increasing the number of short time workers. Even official statistics state that in January 1931 there were 350,000 totally unemployed and one million short time workers in France. Both figures, however, are an underestimate of the true position. The "Humanité" of June 25, 1931 reported that there were 665,000 totally unemployed and 3,506,800 short time workers in France in May 1931. The "Humanité" compiled these figures on the basis of the investigations of the factory labour inspectors.

The employers and the government adopt these tactics of artificially reducing the number of totally unemployed by increasing the number of short time workers, because of their fear of increased revolutionary outbursts on the part of the French proletariat. Furthermore, short time workers are given no relief whatever.

As soon as unemployment set in, the French Government assigned 100 million francs as a grant to the local municipalities and departments for the relief of unemployed persons. (Rural districts with a population of 5,000 and over, themselves afford relief to the unemployed; and smaller rural districts, with a population of less than 5,000, are afforded relief from the regional departmental institutions.) The municipalities and departments pay out relief to the unemployed only in cases where the latter have worked for six months and at the same time have been living in the given district or department for a like period. (It is often the case that a man may work in one locality and live in a different one). The worker has to present a certificate to the effect that he became unemployed as a result of lack of work.

Foreign workers, who comprise no less than one-fourth of the French proletariat, are unlikely to get any assistance, for they are simply turned out of the country on various pretexts as soon as they are no longer required. In order that a foreign worker may receive unemployment insurance he must, besides satisfying the conditions indicated above, be in possession of a certificate from his employer to the effect that "he gives no cause for anxiety"; in other words, a certificate of political reliability. (Usually the employers refuse to give them such a certificate.) Benefit is given on the 7th day of unemployment over a period of 150 days, to the extent of a maximum of 7 to 8 francs (the French franc is equal to about 2d.) daily; while the average wage in the region of Paris is about 50 francs daily. Only a few hundred communes out of a total number of 37,000 have any unemployment insurance funds.

In the vast majority of countries, no unemployment insurance exists at all. In countries like India, China and the United States, in which there are at present tens of millions of unemployed, there is no State unemployment insurance.

What conclusions can be drawn from the position of State unemployment insurance in those countries where it exists?

1. In all countries — with the exception of the U.S.S.R. where working men and women are entirely exempt from

contributions to the social insurance fund, since all enterprises and institutions make this contribution on their behalf — a large percentage of the wages of working men and women and other employees, is deducted and contributed to the unemployment insurance funds.

2. Not all workers come within the scope of unemployment insurance. Only in the U.S.S.R. are all categories of wage and salaried workers, including agricultural labourers and domestic servants, paid insurance benefit during periods of unemployment.

3. The period during which benefit is paid in all capitalist countries is short, and the relief itself totally inadequate especially when we consider the long protracted character of unemployment at the present time (in all countries unemployment has grown enormously since 1928; in England the figure for unemployment has never fallen below 1,100,000 since 1920), the end of which is still not in sight; moreover even in the most favourable economic situation, if it ever sets in, unemployment will not be abolished altogether.

4. Hunger stalks through all countries where there is no insurance (in the U.S.A. a considerable amount of the savings of the workers and other employees have been lost in the banks which became insolvent during the present crisis). Poverty, disillusionment and starvation prevail in all countries where there is no unemployment insurance.

5. In England, Germany, Poland and other countries, where unemployment insurance exists, a considerable worsening of the position of insurance has taken place, and will still take place in the future, in the form of shortened periods of payment of benefit, lower scales of benefit, the disqualifying of whole categories of workers entitled to relief — single persons, married women, seasonal workers, etc. In certain countries, as in Germany where measures in this direction have already been put into operation by the Hindenburg Decree (this section of which has been in operation since July 1, 1931) the employers' organisations are already demanding the abolition of unemployment insurance (the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Rhine District — heavy industry — is demanding a sharp curtailment of unemployment relief — benefit must be paid only in cases of acute need and only to persons in dire distress). Not only the German government, but others also, are taking the path recommended by the Rhine employers.

6. The wages of workers still engaged in industry have been reduced by the employers of all capitalist countries during the last two years by from 10 per cent. (England) to 50 per cent. (German textile workers). In addition the wages of the workers are being reduced (by the State) as a result of indirect taxation, high tariffs on articles of necessity, increased contributions to insurance funds, and special extra taxation on wages. All these factors help to lower wages and reduce the consuming capacity of the broad masses, this together with increased working hours and the introduction of new rationalised methods of production which intensify labour, in its turn brings about a considerable increase in unemployment in all countries. Similarly, the worsened position of unemployment insurance and the disqualification of a large number of unemployed persons fully entitled to benefit as a result of the expiration of the stipulated term of such benefit, also lowers the consuming capacity of the workers. And this latter circumstance, again, increases unemployment.

It is only in the U.S.S.R. that wages are steadily increasing and the consumption of products and commodities of prime necessity by the broad toiling masses in town and village is increasing daily.

This autumn we may anticipate a marked increase in the number of unemployed in all capitalist countries, especially those of central and Eastern Europe (Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Rumania and so on) as a result of the sharpening of the economic crisis in these countries (the bankruptcy of the largest banks and industrial and commercial undertakings).

Only in the U.S.S.R. is there no unemployment, on the contrary there is a shortage of labour.

The Attitude of the II and Amsterdam Internationals and of their Chief Parties and National Trade Union Centres to Unemployment Insurance and Wage Cuts.

In consequence of the deep dissatisfaction of the broad toiling masses as a result of the lowered standard of living, and under pressure of the rank and file membership of the social-democratic parties and reformist trade unions, the Second and reformist trade unions, the Second and Amsterdam Internationals set up a joint commission to investigate the problems raised by the economic crisis and unemployment.

This commission met on January 21 and 22, 1931 in Zürich. It published its platform, advocating the necessary measures to be taken to emerge from the crisis. This manifesto, before being endorsed by the two Internationals, was not only published fully in "International Information", the bulletin of the Second International, but extracts from it concerning wages and unemployment insurance were published by all the socialdemocratic, reformist and bourgeois press. The Executive Committee of the Second International not only endorsed this "radical" platform but went further on one point. The platform contains a point concerning the introduction of the 5-day week (40-hour week), while nothing is said about maintaining wages at the old level. The Second International in its resolution endorsing the platform of the Zurich commission emphasises the necessity of introducing the 5-day week, without a cut in wages, i. e. it actually reiterated the slogan put forward by all sections of the Comintern and the Profintern on February 22, 1931—the International Day of Struggle against Unemployment.

In this platform concerning wages, the working day and unemployment insurance, we find the following "radical" paragraph:

Wages Policy.

... "The working class must put up determined resistance to these efforts to lower wages, firstly because they may bring about a further increase in the number of unemployed, secondly because they worsen the social position of the toilers and thirdly, because as a consequence of rationalisation, the share of wages in the cost of production for the last year was reduced without this . . .

Therefore the struggle against the reduction of wages and for their increase is the immediate task of the working class during the period of economic crisis also."

"Shorter working day.

... "The menacing growth of unemployment throughout the world already brings to the forefront broader demands. In order that it may be possible, by shortening hours of work, to considerably relieve the surplus labour market, a curtailment of no less than a complete working day must be made. The institution of the five-day (40 hour) week, exceedingly expedient from the point of view of the interests of production, must therefore become the basic demand of the trade unions of all lands."

Unemployment insurance.

... "The working class must demand that the government take immediate, effective measures to introduce, or widen the scope of obligatory unemployment insurance. The scope of this insurance must be widened to include also persons employed on a short working day."

One would expect that after the most important parties of the Second International and the national trade union centres affiliated to the Amsterdam International, had adopted such "radical" decisions, they would immediately begin to fight against wage-cuts, against worsened conditions of unemployment insurance, and for the introduction of unemployment insurance in those countries where none up to now exists (France and so on).

The "Labour" Party and Trade Unions of England. On July 8, 1931, the Miners 7½-hour Act passed by the Conservative Government immediately after the general strike and miners' strike expired. This meant that the English miners, from July 9, had the legal right to the 7-hour working day.

A better opportunity for the "labour" party and trade unions to put through, at least partially, on behalf of the miners the decisions of their international concerning the 40-hour week could hardly be imagined. The Conservative Government made it easy for them by refraining from making this Act operative for a longer term. During the General Election the "Labour" Party promised to repeal the Baldwin act. But when the "Labour" government came into power, it merely shortened the working day by half an hour, reducing it to 7½-hours. But the fact is that in many places the miners work still an eight hour day. And the eight hour day Act is still on the statute book of the country. The "radical" decisions of the internationals, in which the "labour" party and the General Council of Trade Unions in England play by no means a small role, are passed to hoodwink their members and the workers who still support them, and not for the purpose of putting them into operation. These decisions are against the interests of the bourgeoisie, therefore the representative of the "Labour" government at the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, to avoid all competition, proposed that a convention be signed for the introduction of an equal working day of 7¼-hours for the miners of England, France, Belgium and so on. This would make it possible for the "Labour" Government to leave in force the law passed by the Conservative Government. There has not been one large strike of late in England, not one lockout of any dimensions, aiming at considerably lowering the wages of the workers (even by 15 per cent.), in which the "Labour" Government and the trade unions have not actually taken the side of the employers. And if the employers have not always been able to lower wages to the extent they wished, it is only because the workers, trade union members, fought solidly and staunchly against a decrease in wages, without any support from and against the wishes of the leading organs of the trade unions. In many cases the trade union members by means of a referendum prevented the trade union bureaucrats from negotiating with the employers.

During the election campaign in 1929, the "Labour" party made the following promise concerning unemployment insurance:

"The Labour Party will take every step in its power to ensure that the provision for unemployment is humane and adequate, and will meet the additional cost by State grants, so that it falls neither on the workers' contribution nor on the cost of production.

"It will introduce such amendments as are necessary in the Unemployment Insurance Acts, in order that the needs of the insured unemployed worker shall be fairly met, and will extend the principle of unemployment insurance to sections of the population such as agricultural workers and domestic servants, at present outside its scope."

How did the "Labour" party (the trade unions are collectively affiliated to the "Labour" party) carry out its promises?

1. The old insurance scheme worsened by the Conservatives, granted unemployment benefit to working men and women over 16 years of age. The amendment to this law passed on March 13, 1930 lowers the age to 15 years;

2. The amendment raises the scale of benefit as follows:

Men of 17 years	— from 7 to 9 shillings daily:	women, from 5 to 7½
" " 18 "	" " 10 to 14 "	" " " " 8 to 12/—
" " 19 "	" " 12 to 14 "	" " " " 10 to 12/—

3. Adult dependents received an increase in the weekly relief granted of from 7 shillings to 9 shillings. Among the dependents having the right to insurance relief are now included the father and mother of the insured person, if they are in need of support.

But on the other hand the "Labour" government introduced unfavourable changes in the insurance scheme, which far outweigh the improvements just mentioned.

Not only did it not abolish the "not genuinely seeking work" clause, which made it possible to disqualify a worker from benefit, but it used this paragraph itself, in order to refuse benefit, during the period from November 1929 to April 1930, to 630,522 unemployed persons; it cut down the period over which benefits are paid, which made a considerable economy at the expense of the unemployed; it introduced into the law a paragraph by which, after receiving benefits for two years, an unemployed person has the right to receive benefit only after paying insurance contributions

for a course of 30 weeks. But all these unfavourable changes were not sufficient for the bourgeoisie. The Federation of British Industries demand that unemployment relief be cut down, as well as the number of persons entitled to it. Therefore the "Labour" Government, not without the agreement of its party and the General Council of Trade Unions, appointed a Royal Commission of representatives of the three parties — conservatives, liberals and labour — to examine the question of finding ways and means of covering the deficit due to the increase in unemployment. The Royal Commission found a very simple, and expedient method of getting money. Instead of increasing the number of persons entitled to unemployment relief, as the "Labour" Government promised — to include agricultural workers and domestic workers — the number is cut down by extending benefit only for a period of 26 weeks, which immediately reduces the number of persons receiving benefit by not less than 250,000. The Commission proposes to lower the scale of relief for the dependents of unemployed persons who are working short time, and for married women and seasonal workers. Moreover, the Royal Commission proposes to raise the workers' unemployment insurance contributions from 7 to 9d. weekly. Instead of the promises of the "Labour" party to bring in measures to improve the insurance of unemployed persons which will not "become a tax upon the workers", the Royal Commission appointed by the "Labour" government proposes to lower the expenditure on unemployment insurance by £31,800,000 per annum, chiefly by cutting down relief and increasing the workers' contributions to the insurance fund.

The pride of the Second International, the **social democratic party of Germany** and the actual leader of the Amsterdam International — the German General Federation of Trade Unions, have sent their representatives to Zürich, to the Commission of the two Internationals, which following immediately after the deception and physical annihilation of the working masses by the social democratic party and trade union members — the police socialists of the type of Zörgiebel and Severing — was to set up a platform which should serve to throw sand in the eyes of the revolutionary workers and unemployed.

The German social traitors know how to manoeuvre and mislead the broad masses of toilers. In the period during which the German social demonecrats have been in power, the government (Müller) has passed innumerable finance laws, worsening the position of the working class; it introduced customs duties upon foodstuffs of prime necessity, increased the indirect taxation upon products and commodities of General consumption, lowered the workers' wages by means of compulsory arbitration etc. The reformist trade unions in Germany, under the leadership of the social-democrats, have broken and betrayed all the strikes the German workers have conducted against reductions of wages. On the question of unemployment insurance, the Social Democratic Party and the reformist trade union bureaucracy made the following unfavourable changes long before the dissolution of the Reichstag and the calling of the new elections:

1. By order of the Minister of Labour, the social-democrat Wissel, from October 1, 1929 on, several professions were disqualified from unemployment insurance: waiters, musicians, Dockers, charwomen and so on.

2. Wives and husbands, parents, brothers and sisters are compelled themselves to maintain their unemployed relatives. Wives are deprived of insurance benefit.

3. In cases where a worker voluntarily leaves his work or loses it through a fault of his own, the first payment of unemployment benefit is due only after the expiration of 8 weeks from the first day of unemployment.

4. The term of work necessary to qualify for unemployment benefit is increased from 26 to 52 weeks.

5. Unemployment relief is payable only after the expiration of 14 days from the first day of unemployment.

On February 5, 1929, the Social Democratic Party of Germany Proposed in the Reichstag:

1. That crisis benefit be extended to all professions.
2. That the period during which crisis benefit is paid be extended to 52 weeks.

3. That persons over 40 years of age, in receipt of crisis benefit, should receive it during the entire period of unemployment.

At a meeting of the Social-Political Commission of the Reichstag in February 1929, the Social Democrats voted against their own proposals.

On July 26, 1930, with the consent of the Social Democrats a new change in unemployment insurance, unfavourable to the young workers, was introduced. Young persons under 17 years of age were disqualified from relief. Persons with very little employment, working not more than 24 hours a week and earning not more than 45 marks a month were also disqualified. Persons voluntarily leaving their work or losing it through a fault of their own are entitled to unemployment relief only after 6 months have expired from the date of unemployment.

The unemployment insurance contribution was increased from 3½ to 4½ per cent.

The dissatisfaction among the workers with the policy of the social Democratic Party has spread both among members of the reformist trade unions and among the members of the party. To allay this dissatisfaction the Democratic Party has resorted to manoeuvres; it has adopted an "opposition" attitude towards the Brüning government. The Social Democratic Party has spoken against taxing the wages of office employees and against other proposals of the government. Finally it has proposed that the Reichstag repeal the first Decree of the Brüning government, passed on the basis of Paragraph 48 of the Constitution of the German Republic; and this proposal was adopted by the Reichstag with the vote of the Social-Democrats, Communists, Fascists and Nationalists. Brüning was compelled to dissolve the Reichstag. The Social Democratic Party adopted a "revolutionary" programme in order to hoodwink the masses. As a result it lost only 613,000 votes (in the 1928 elections it received 9,151,000 and in 1930 8,536,000 votes). The broad masses who supported the Social Democratic Party during the elections, believed that it would renew the struggle against the Brüning Government after the elections; but the Social Democratic Party voted against the proposal of the Communist fraction in the new Reichstag to annul the very Decree which had been rejected by the old Reichstag i. e. its own proposal. All their "opposition" was a manoeuvre to check the process of disintegration among the rank and file of the Party. After the opening of the Reichstag, the Social Democratic Party voted against all the proposals of the Communist fraction to improve the position of the unemployed. Here are a few of the proposals made by the Communist fraction:

On December 12, 1930. The Communists proposed that winter relief to the extent of 40 marks be given to each unemployed person, and 12 marks to each dependant. The Social-Democrats voted against it.

On March 5, 1931. The Communists proposed the abolition of the waiting period between the beginning of unemployment and the day when relief is paid. The Communists proposed the abolition of restrictions in questions of unemployment insurance for women; that employers be taxed to compensate for the expenditure on unemployment insurance. The Communist fraction proposed that crisis benefit be paid for the whole period of unemployment without a necessitous test, and to extend the period of benefit from 26 to 39 weeks. They also proposed that the crisis benefit fund be increased from 400 million to 800 million marks.

The social-democrats voted against these proposals.

The Social Democratic Party of Germany and the reformist trade union bureaucracy are manoeuvring and engaging in double-dealing not only in the sphere of politics. They do the same sort of thing during economic struggles. In September 1930, the employers of the Berlin metal works announced heavy wage cuts. The trade union opposition launched a broad campaign among the Berlin metal workers against any lowering of wages. The Berlin metal workers responded to this campaign; they were very determined in their struggle. Had the resistance of the Berlin metal workers to this wage cut been successful, it would have been the signal to organise resistance against the employers throughout the whole of Germany. The reformist trade union bureaucracy realised this. The conflict was handed over to the Arbitration Courts by the Minister of Labour.

When the Arbitration Court on October 10 announced the decision to reduce the wages of men by 8 per cent. and of women by 6 per cent., the indignation of the workers was so great that the reformist leaders were obliged to take a ballot vote on the question of the acceptability of this decision. At the same time they admitted workers not organised in the metal workers' union to the ballot vote, reckoning that this section of the workers, who had received no relief from the trade unions during the strike, would vote against a stoppage, and for continuing work, even under the conditions laid down by the arbitrators. Their calculations proved wrong however. The vast majority voted for a strike. The reformists then hastened to declare the strike, calling it for October 14 and thus anticipating the revolutionary trade union opposition which, before the referendum had called the strike for November 3. The strike began in a fine spirit, for the indignation of the metalworkers at the decision of the court of arbitration was very great, and the trade union opposition began a successful campaign to continue the strike. The metal workers employed by non-federated firms joined the strike. Later, the Social Democratic fraction in the Reichstag introduced a motion that the arbitration decision be declared non-obligatory. This raised false hopes in the ranks of the metalworkers. The reformist metal workers union then negotiated with the employers to transfer the question to a new arbitration commission, on condition that both sides — the trade union and the owners — agree in advance to submit to this second arbitration decision, but that in the meantime, the employers withdrew their demand for a reduction of wages, and the trade unions call upon their members to return to work.

The reformist, social democratic press trumpeted the news of the brilliant, hundred per cent. victory of the metal workers. The trade union opposition was not in a position to persuade the majority of the striking metal workers that this agreement was rank treachery. Whereas during the ballot vote the vast majority voted for a strike, now, during the second ballot vote the majority were in favour of discontinuing the strike. When the workers went back to work, the court of arbitration decided to reduce wages by 8 per cent. and the representative of the trade unions, a member of the Social Democratic Party, voted for this wage-out. It was only by such trickery that they were able to smash the strike.

During the January strike of the miners, the reformists and Social Democrats openly, hand in hand with the police and coal magnates, without any manoeuvring whatsoever, carried through a wage-out, despite the fact that the trade union opposition exhibited considerable energy and skill in organising this struggle.

The result of these two acts of treachery has been that the trade union opposition has been able to create a Berlin Union of Metalworkers and Ruhr miners Union, each of which has about 20 thousand members; but the reformists were able to smash up two strikes by using different methods each time.

Inside the Social Democratic Party a strong movement has begun against the policy of the party. Members of the Social Democratic Party have begun to transfer to the Communist Party of Germany. Inside the Socialist Youth League also there is strong opposition against the line of the Social Democratic Party. Over 30 per cent. of the membership of the Social Democratic Party and the reformist trade unions are unemployed, and they are also affected by the ever worsening condition of unemployment insurance; consequently the social-tricksters at their recent Leipzig Congress, put the following paragraph about unemployment insurance in their general Congress resolution:

"In the face of the direst need, the present scale and scope of social insurance must be especially guaranteed. The existing level of social insurance can be maintained, however, only if, side by side with the coming improvement in the Reich budget, the budgets of the communes and national social insurance administrations are consolidated at the same time.

Social democracy would stubbornly resist any settling of the insurance question which, instead of trying to find the means required for social insurance, were to attempt to cut down relief and thus lower the already miserable standard of living of the poorest of the poor.

"Similarly the Party Congress is opposed to any solution of the question which threatens persons disqualified from unemployment benefit with yet more unfavourable changes. The Congress considers that, as heretofore, it is necessary to strive for the unification of crisis relief and local unemployment relief into a single all-German system of social unemployed insurance."

These points were put in the resolution for the express purpose of deceiving the Congress and the rank and file members of the Social democratic Party, for the leaders of the Social democratic Party and the reformist trade unions were perfectly well aware that a new Hindenburg dictatorial Decree was to be expected which involves new burdens, (according to the calculations of the economist and statistician Kuczynski, as much as 1026 million marks in the coming 9 months alone, 86 per cent. of which fall on the shoulders of the workers, small and middle class employees and officials) to which the Social Democrats agreed. Not one of the Finance Decrees yet promulgated (this decree is the fourth published on the basis of Paragraph 48 of the Constitution) has been so cynically and frankly directed against the workers as this last one. It frees the coal kings of all payment of insurance contributions to the unemployment fund for those miners who work underground; it lowers the rate of income tax for certain groups of merchants, gives all kinds of financial facilities to banking enterprises, etc. The landlord and rich peasants also are not forgotten. For them the interest on credits granted to them by State institutions has been lowered, etc.

As against the relief afforded to the capitalists and landlords, the Decree introduces several changes worsening the position of the workers. First of all, benefit paid to unemployed persons has been lowered by 5 per cent. for all groups; this reduction amounts to 40 pfennigs in the case of persons entitled to benefit under class 1 (6 marks weekly), and a reduction of 3 marks 15 pfennigs for those entitled to benefit under Class 11 (22 marks 5 pfennigs). The Decree further disqualifies from benefit all working men and women under 21 years of age, and also married women; insurance for seasonal workers, builders, market garden hands, dockers is also worsened (their benefit will be reduced to the crisis rate, and will be paid over a period of only 20 weeks instead of 26 weeks as before). Relief will in future be paid on the 7th instead of the 3rd day of unemployment for persons with large families, and at the end of three weeks instead of two weeks for single persons. Moreover, under the new Decree, it will be possible to compel unemployed persons to perform task work to greater extent than before the publication of this Decree. The Decree not only affects the unemployed. It worsens the situation of office employees and workers in employment. For persons still at work the Decree provides for a reduction in wages of from 4 to 7 per cent. for State and municipal employees; by the introduction for a period of 18 months (from July 1, 1931 to December 31, 1932) of a cynical, class crisis tax, to cover all persons in receipt of wages and paying income tax.

This is how the crisis tax distributes the burden among the propertied and non-propertied classes:

Yearly income to the extent of (marks)	Landlords and rich peasants have to pay (marks)	For big and petty bourgeoisie have to pay (marks)	For workers and office employees have to pay (marks)
2 000	—	13,35	25
5 000	—	42,80	100
7 500	11,25	101,70	250
10 000	40	139,20	350, etc.

This crisis tax is expected to produce 775 million marks. It would be difficult to find a worse case of double-dealing and trickery on the part of the German Social-Democratic Party (and the social democrats of other countries, of course, are no better). In June, at its Congress, the Social-Democratic Party passed a "revolutionary" resolution and at the same time consents to Brüning's dictatorial Decree directed against the workers and office employees. The "Left" Social-Democrats, who uttered "oppositional" speeches before and during the Congress, voted with the majority of the Congress and the

leadership of the Social-Democratic Party, although they were already fully aware of the nature of the impending Decree of Brüning. Was it possible for the German Social-Democratic Party to obstruct the passing of this Decree, even by Parliamentary methods? Of course it was, if only for the reason that since the National Socialists (fascists) and allied groups have left Parliament, the Social-Democratic Party and the German Communist Party have a majority in the Reichstag.

At the meeting of the Reichstag Commission the German Communist Party demanded the immediate convocation of the Reichstag for the repeal of the Decree, but the Social-Democratic Party voted against this proposal. Such insolent, bare-faced action on the part of the Social-Democrats made even the bourgeoisie anxious: the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" on June 17, 1931 advised the Social-Democratic Party to take up a more oppositional attitude towards the Government, in order to avoid being routed by the Communist Party which was gaining strength and winning over large numbers of Social-Democratic workers. This would be a disaster, said the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" not only for the Social-Democrats, but also for the whole bourgeoisie.

It did not take long to convince the Social-Democratic Party. It issued a manifesto on the Brüning Decree in which it resorted to the most outrageous deceit, and declared that the "Social-Democratic Party and the free trade unions are organising for a fight against the emergency Decrees", "the workers, office employees and government clerks, who are most cruelly affected by this unfortunate Decree, are all turning their gaze to the Social-Democratic Party. Again Social Democracy stands ALONE in its fight against this Decree."

In order to hide their energetic and active participation in the work of lowering the standard of living of the working class and reducing them to poverty, the Social-Democratic Party of Germany sometimes refers to the horrible misery of the workers in its press, at public meetings, trade union meetings and even at its own party meetings; it does this to divert the fury of the masses away from itself, from the real culprits guilty of causing this distress. Here is a fine example of the trickery of the German Social-Democratic Party.

The day following the publication of the dictatorial Decree, having in view the intense indignation caused among trade union members by the Decree, the central organs of the German trade unions of workers and of other employees (in Germany there exist two centres — one for the workers trade unions, the A.D.G.B. and another for the clerks — the A.F.A.) held a joint meeting, which passed and afterwards published the following foully hypocritical declaration:

"The executives of both trade union Federations do not deny the necessity of demanding sacrifices from the whole people for the purpose of reanimating German industry and thereby alleviating unemployment and also of restoring equilibrium in the national budget. However, the emergency legislation contains such an accumulation of social injustices as must of necessity call forth the resistance of the whole working class masses. The consequences of the practical operation of this Decree will be fatal to industry and, consequently also, to the financial situation. The trade unions are doing all in their power to attain such modifications in the emergency legislation which are absolutely essential."

This "radical" resolution is accompanied by a no less shameful demagoguery on the part of the trade union press, which in turn launches a campaign against the Brüning emergency legislation. And this in spite of the fact that almost all the trade union leaders are themselves members of the Social Democratic Parliamentary fraction, and solidly supported the measures taken by the Brüning government.

In view of these circumstances the immediate task of the German Communist Party, of the revolutionary trade union organisations, the red trade unions and other similar mass proletarian and semi-proletarian organisations in Germany is to leave no stone unturned in their efforts to unmask more energetically, more skilfully than ever before, the shameful leadership of the social democrats party and the reformist trade unions, before the workers, the working women and

employees still in work, before the unemployed, and before the toilers in the villages. The degree of disintegration of Social Democracy and the reformist trade unions in Germany is till insignificant, if we take into consideration their treachery and the general radicalisation of the working masses. It is absolutely necessary that this disintegration be increased by organised, systematic methods of work and that the German Communist Party and the revolutionary trade union movement gain strength accordingly.

The Social Democrats and reformist trade unions of ALL other capitalist countries in the world are no better than the "Labour" party and trade unions in England and the Social Democratic Party and reformist trade unions in Germany.

The "left" Social Democratic Party of Austria protested against the worsening of the unemployment insurance scheme, contained in a new bill submitted to Parliament, in order to hoodwink the workers. The new government will pass it, no doubt, with the unanimous vote of all bourgeois parties together with the Social Democratic Party, in order "to save the country from ruin". In the autumn of 1930 the Austrian Social Democrats organised a referendum among the workers of Austria against the worsening of the unemployment insurance legislation and for old age insurance. During this referendum 1,666,000 signatures were obtained, while at the same time representatives of the reformist trade unions — members of the Social Democratic Party — in several industrial regional insurance commissions were voting for a reduction in insurance benefits for the unemployed to come into force on January 1, 1931, which we mentioned in the section on unemployment insurance in Austria. Only in Vienna, where the Social Democrats have the entire situation in their hands, the representatives of the trade unions voted in the parity industrial commission against any worsening of the unemployment insurance scheme, and the commission therefore had not the power to introduce these intended reductions. Thereupon a Commissar was appointed by the government, apparently not without the consent of the Vienna Social Democrats, who, together with the representatives of the employers, introduced on March 1, 1931, the cutting down contemplated by the Government. The Social Democratic Party, of course, took no steps whatever against this, although in Vienna it is master of the situation. Moreover, after the deterioration had been carried out, the representatives of the trade unions again joined the parity commissions as though nothing had happened. And in Austria the trade unions did not fail to "threaten" to adopt decisive measures against worsening of the unemployment insurance: at the conference of representatives of the trade unions of Austria, a decision was made to "obstruct by all means available both inside and outside of Parliament any attempts to pass this law" which would worsen the position of unemployed insurance. When, however, Parliament actually worsened the existing legislation, they did absolutely nothing to prevent this, and the representatives of the trade unions even voted with the rest for this bill.

The Czech and German Social Democrats of Czechoslovakia are members of the coalition government.

The Minister of Social welfare and member of the German Social Democratic Party, named Czech, together with both the Social Democratic fractions in Parliament, declared and voted against the proposal of the Communist fraction in Parliament concerning the abolition of the Ghent system and the institution of State insurance at the expense of the employers and the State.

On the proposal of the Food Minister, the Social Democrat Bechyne and with the votes of the Social Democrats it was resolved to cut down unemployment relief, which was given in the form of food (soup kitchens and the distribution of bread) and also to curtail public works by 20 per cent.

The government, with the agreement of the Social Democratic Party struck out from the local municipal budgets all items of expenditure on relief for the unemployed and on the organisation of public works. All these measures against the unemployed (all strikes were betrayed in the same way) did not prevent the Social Democratic press and their agitators talking about the interests of the workers.

The Socialist Party of France does not lag behind its sister parties in this hoodwinking and betrayal of the interests of the working class.

On April 26, 1930, the French Government passed a muddled, ambiguous law about insurance in case of sickness, accident, death and old age. According to this law, insurance in case of sickness gives the insured person the right to medical assistance and medicines for 15—20 per cent. of the nominal price. During sickness the insured person can, over a period of 6 months, receive from 20—50 per cent. of his average daily wage, if he has paid contributions for not less than 3 months before falling sick. The overwhelming majority of persons falling sick actually get no relief, since the money is paid out only on the 6th day of sickness.

The workers and employers pay equal contributions of 8—9 per cent. of the wages into the fund.

The majority on the boards of the chief insurance offices is composed of representatives of the employers, experts and officials and the minority of representatives of the reformist and christian trade unions.

Antonelli, a socialist, was the reporter in Parliament on this law. All the socialists voted together with the bourgeoisie in favour of it (550 deputies voted for, and 20 against, including the Communists).

The Socialist and reformist trade unions were in favour of the workers paying contributions into the insurance fund.

Georges Bouisson, secretary of the reformist trade union Federation, and chief of the social-economic department of the Federation, wrote the following in the central trade union organ — the "Peuple" of December 2, 1930: "The Bill provides for workers' contributions. Organisations affiliated to the confederation collect these contributions. They have always demanded the right of the workers to pay their own contributions, and thus do away with the slavish, charity-like nature of social insurance and make it a true act of human solidarity. We advocate workers' contribution and we demand that the workers pay these contribution in exchange for the benefits ensuing from this law."

Leon Blum, the leader of the socialists, defended this attitude to the "morally ennobling" nature of workers' contributions in the "Populaire" — the central organ of the Socialist party.

But the workers of France have their own opinion about workers' contributions: in the autumn of last year they began to revolt spontaneously against these contributions, called a strike (over 100,000 workers, chiefly textile workers in the North of France, went on strike), which in certain places became general. The socialists and the reformists, under the pressure of the workers, took over the leadership of this movement. Unfortunately the Communist Party and the red trade unions in France did not sufficiently unmask these social-swindlers, otherwise the latter would not have been able to act as leaders of the heroic strike against wage-cuts of the same textile workers in the North of France, which has been going on now for over a month, and which they have already partially betrayed. The socialists and reformists are doing their best to completely betray this strike, just as they did during the miners' strike and many other strikes that have taken place during the last few years.

State insurance against unemployment, as we have already indicated, does not exist in France. The relief afforded by the communes is insufficient and voluntary. The communes may pay relief or may not. The extent of relief afforded is also left to the discretion of the communes.

The Communist Party and the red trade unions have been carrying on a campaign for State unemployment insurance for all working men and women to the extent of their full wages and for the whole term of unemployment, at the expense of the employers and the State. This campaign developed very considerably during February 1931 before the International Day of Struggle against Unemployment; the centre of the reformist Confederation of Labour therefore issued an appeal containing slogans of this kind: "Down with revolutionary manifestations organised by Moscow". "Down with the grave-diggers of the Russian proletariat". "Long live the unity of the French workers, aiming at internal peace and a general resumption of

work". "Long live peace between the social classes" (this appeal was printed in the "Volonté" of February 26, 1931).

The appeal called forth the indignation of the workers, and consequently Jouboux, this scoundrel of a socialist, leader of the reformist trade unions, printed an article in the "Depeche de Toulouse" on March 5, 1931, in which he demanded a higher scale of unemployment benefit, the introduction of unemployment insurance throughout the whole of France, the payment of benefit to short time workers also combining these measures with the organisation of public works, and emphasising the fact that the demand for unemployment insurance is the basic demand of the reformist trade union centre. But this "radical" article was their last word. Neither the socialist party, nor the reformist trade unions have elaborated or submitted to Parliament, or published any draft Bill for unemployment insurance. All that is known is that a certain deputy of Paris, who managed to get a seat in Parliament with the assistance of the Socialist Party, addressed a letter to the chairman of the Council of Ministers (published in "Peuple" of February 17, 1931) soliciting assistance for merchants and manufacturers who are experiencing financial difficulties, in the form of long-term credits; he then asks for the "creation of a market for those branches of industry producing articles of luxury, i. e. jewellery, objects of art, cabinet making, morocco goods, toys, etc.". He further draws attention in his letter to the fact that France enjoys enormous colonial possessions. By means of an appropriate well organised propaganda (as in Indo-China, where propaganda was carried on among the workers and peasants with the help of machine-guns—O.P.) France could very considerably extend the sale of manufactured goods from all branches of industry in Paris" etc.

The French socialists, in order to retain their influence upon the workers, do not participate in the Government in France. They put themselves at the head of strikes, in order to prevent the Communists from leading them; they "advocate" peace, in order to render it easier for themselves to spread foully calumnious lies against the U. S. S. R. and to help the French Government in preparing war against the U. S. S. R. It is very difficult to unmask the French Socialists, because of their skilful, cunning double-dealing; so much the more stubborn, therefore, should be the work of unmasking them, carried on by the Communist Party and the red trade unions of France.

The Communist Parties, the Red Trade Unions and the Trade Union Opposition and their Struggle against Unemployment. The Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement are leading the Joint Struggle of Unemployed and Employed. Shortcomings in our Work.

From the very first appearance of mass unemployment, the Communist parties, the Red Trade Unions and the Trade Union Opposition formulated both the general and specific demands of the unemployed: the general demand was for unemployment insurance for all men and women working for wages, regardless of whether they were totally or partially unemployed, regardless of age; payment of benefit to the extent of the full living wage during the whole period of unemployment, at the expense of the employers and the State. The following are some of the partial demands of the unemployed which the Communist Party advocate: special grants, exemption from payment of rent, gas, electricity, water etc. during unemployment, free distribution of foodstuffs, fuel, etc. according to local circumstances and the time of year.

The Communist Parties, the Red trade unions and the trade union opposition have been leading the fight of the unemployed for all these demands.

They have been linking up the struggle of the unemployed with that of the employed workers, which has produced excellent results; the unemployed actively assist striking workers

by agitating for them and helping to picket, etc. Despite the enormous unemployment, the unemployed workers have not up to now taken to strike-breaking during strikes, even in countries like America, where there is no unemployment insurance

In order to improve the organisation of this joint struggle of the employed workers and the unemployed, two international days of struggle against unemployment have been organised and carried through — on March 6, 1930 and February 25, 1931.

The Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement has truly succeeded on an international scale in rousing and bringing forward into the struggle broad masses of unemployed workers; and thanks to this struggle the unemployed in several countries have been given temporary assistance by the governments, and municipal authorities.

The Communist Parties and revolutionary trade union movement alone are working among the unemployed and have any influence on the unemployed workers' movement. All the attempts in this direction made by the social-democrats, socialists, reformist trade union bureaucrats and national socialists (fascists) have up to now been abortive.

Yet when all is said and done, it must be stated that:

1. The unemployed workers' movement cannot yet be considered a mass movement—if we take into consideration the enormous number of persons without work; there are thousands in the unemployed workers' movement, but there are millions of unemployed;

2. There is a dangerous gap between the struggles of the workers in employment and the unemployed: in Germany enthusiastic demonstrations of the unemployed, are continually taking place but there are no strikes of any great importance. The struggle of the unemployed is not always supported by means other than strikes of workers engaged in industry. In Bitterfeld (an industrial town in middle Germany) for example, during a period of 4 weeks (in April and May) the unemployed carried on a struggle against a reduction in the scale of benefit. They besieged the town hall and twice succeeded in getting their unemployment benefit on the old scale. When the police interfered during the third siege of the town hall, the unemployed did not retreat but continued their struggle, in spite of collisions with the police, but since the movement obtained no support from those engaged in industry, it broke down.

In England, France and to a lesser degree in the United States, on the other hand, big strikes frequently occur but there is an almost complete absence of demonstrations and other forms of struggle on the part of the unemployed.

This sort of thing is very dangerous, for the bourgeoisie and the reformists can more easily deal with each movement separately than they could if the two movements—of the unemployed and employed—proceeded simultaneously.

3. Finally, the unemployed organisations—committees and councils of unemployed—in the majority of cases work extremely badly.

All this can be explained by the fact that the Communist Parties, Red trade unions and trade union opposition work badly and inadequately among the unemployed.

Despite the fact that in the Parties and organisations indicated there are sufficient forces available, the work has been, and is still, carried on among the unemployed in general, and not chiefly among the entirely destitute sections of the unemployed — and it is to this section that the majority of the unemployed belong.

In the work among the unemployed, the organisation of demonstrations and processions has always predominated, and still predominates, without this method of work being linked up with the organic, permanent activities of the committees and councils of unemployed, such as fighting, against the eviction of unemployed, against the introduction of new rationalising measures and a longer working day in the factories, which throws ever fresh armies of workers on to the streets; the organisation of demonstrations is not linked up with the creation of children's dining-rooms, with the organisation of systematic, powerful pressure upon State, and municipal institutions with a view to obtaining from them temporary grants for the unemployed or the introduction of unem-

ployment insurance, the organisation of the unemployed to help in strikes of workers in the factories and so on. In a word the demonstrations are not linked up with the organic, persistent work on all questions which might be of interest to the broad masses of unemployed and the employed. In this connection it should be mentioned that the slogans of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement are frequently too abstract and incomprehensible, and thus unsuitable in mobilising the unemployed and drawing the broad masses of unemployed into movement.

The relations existing between the revolutionary trade union movement and the unemployed workers' movement have also not helped to broaden the unemployed workers' movement. In England a National Unemployed Workers' Committee has existed for many years, but until recently it has not had either formal or actual connection with the Minority Movement and the struggles of the workers. In Germany, until quite recently the unemployed workers' movement was attached to the trade union opposition, and in America it was attached to the weak red trade unions, which have few members. The alliance with the „red trade unions“ and „revolutionary trade union opposition“ drove away the unemployed who belonged to other political parties and to the reformist, catholic and other trade union organisations.

When we bear in mind the shortcomings indicated above, it becomes clear why the unemployed organisations — committees and councils of the unemployed —, have not yet drawn in the broad masses of unemployed workers. At the XI Plenum reports were given concerning the following number of committees of unemployed and of their influence upon unemployed workers who participated in the elections to the unemployed workers committees: at the time of the XI Plenum in April 1931 there were in Germany 1,400 unemployed workers' committees elected at the labour exchanges by 300—400 unemployed persons; revolutionary trade union opposition groups existed in 600 labour exchanges, with a total membership of 30,000. In Czechoslovakia there were about 1,100 unemployed workers' committees, with over 150,000 unemployed members. In America at the end of 1930, there were less than one hundred committees with a few thousand members; in England there were 152 local organisations of the unemployed, with approximately 20,000 members. In France, although a few unemployed workers' committees existed, they could boast of only an insignificant number of unemployed members. In Austria there were an insignificant number of committees with at most 20,000 unemployed members out of a total number of 400,000. Of the countries where the Communist Parties are illegal, the Communist Party of Poland and that of Bulgaria had, and still have considerable influence among the unemployed; but in view of the fact that the existence of legal unemployed organisations there is extremely difficult, there are organisations like committees or councils of unemployed in these countries or in others where the Communist Party and the revolutionary movement as a whole are underground organisations. Only in Poland this year have strikes of employed workers, enthusiastic demonstrations of the unemployed, and even struggles on the part of the poorest peasantry against taxation taken place simultaneously.

In the work among the unemployed, several Right-opportunist and „Left“ sectarian mistakes were made by the local Party organisations and the revolutionary trade union movement, which in their turn also did not help to broaden the influence of our organisations among broad sections of the unemployed.

What should be the Form of Unemployed Organisation; what should be their Concrete Nature and what should be the Relation between the Unemployed Workers' Movement and the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement?

Despite the fact that there is mass unemployment in all the capitalist countries, for two years now spontaneous action on the part of the unemployed has played a predominant role, there is still no definite form of unemployed workers' organisation. Uniform, correct relations between the revolutionary trade union movement (red trade unions and the trade union opposition) and the unemployed workers' movement have not

yet been established, and, finally, two years work among the unemployed has not given the existing committees and councils of the unemployed any truly concrete nature, of the sort both necessary and comprehensible to the unemployed.

Despite the fact that all attempts on the part of the reformists, Social Democrats and National Socialists (fascists) to gain influence among the unemployed workers have up to now been unsuccessful, and the Communist Party, red trade unions and trade union oppositions primarily work among them, nevertheless the movement of the unemployed — meetings, demonstrations, processions, hunger marches, organised re-instatement in their homes of persons thrown on to the streets for inability to pay rent, supply of food, self-taxation, exertion of pressure upon the municipalities in order to compel them to grant relief to the unemployed — all this movement has been organised by the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movements, on too small and insignificant a scale.

In the struggle of the unemployed for State insurance, for temporary relief, for an increase and against a reduction in the scale of relief, against hunger, cold, poverty and misery, the element of spontaneity still predominates.

Of course, the insignificant achievements of the unemployed workers is largely due to the weak development of the work. Indeed, during the last two years nowhere has there been any improvement in the existing legislation concerning unemployment insurance; on the contrary the laws were worsened in all countries where unemployment insurance exists. In no country, where there was no insurance, has such insurance against unemployment been introduced during this period. Despite the fact that the situation of the unemployed in these countries gets worse every day, and unemployment affects all strata of those working, skilled and unskilled workers, members of all parties and trade unions, nevertheless, absolutely nothing is being done to maintain the unemployed and they are plunged more and more into appalling misery. In the United States, for example, where there are at least 10 million unemployed at present, there are at best not more than a couple of hundred committees with a few tens of thousands of unemployed members.

The unemployed committees and councils do not work regularly, in spite of the fact that thousands of workers are unemployed for long periods. In the work of the committees and councils, in the majority of cases, abstract agitation and the organisation of demonstrations and hunger marches predominate. The relations between the revolutionary trade union movement and the unemployed workers' movement was not correct; in England right up to the beginning of this year there existed a secluded organisation of unemployed with a strict membership, with membership cards, with subscriptions, and with no connection with the revolutionary Minority Movement and with the strike movement of the English proletariat. Consequently, the work of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee was confined to defending the interests of its members against administrative organs dealing with questions of unemployment insurance (granting of the right to receive benefit and investigating protests in cases of disqualification from unemployment benefit). In America and Germany the committees and councils of the unemployed were part of the red trade unions and trade union opposition, which restricted the basis of the unemployed movement, for unemployed persons who were supporters and members of other trade unions and of other parties hesitated to join the unemployed movement, which was part of the Red trade unions and the trade union opposition. since it is well known that the latter come under the ideological leadership of the Communist Parties.

Hence, it is essential that before the autumn of this year radical changes be made in the practical work and forms of organisation to be instituted among the unemployed workers on the basis of the decisions of the XI ECCI Plenum and the Executive Bureau of the Profintern; for from all accounts it is already clear that the number of unemployed is increasing. In those countries where unemployment insurance exists, it is being worsened in all respects, and this circumstance will make itself felt chiefly during the autumn; the position of the

unemployed persons in receipt of benefit or disqualified from benefit or who have never yet received any benefit at all, will become decidedly worse this autumn, for to the existing poverty and hunger there will be added the lack of dwellings, fuel, light, warm clothing, etc.

This makes it incumbent upon the Communist Parties, the red trade unions and the trade union opposition to make a sharp turn in the work among the unemployed and in coordinating the struggle of the unemployed with that of the employed workers against the lowering of their standard of living (reductions in wages, increased working day, the introduction of new methods of rationalisation, in the form of increased intensification of labour, etc.).

What Sort of Unemployed Organisations Should Immediately be Created in order that they may take in all the Unemployed?

All workers and office employees who are out of work in all countries come to the labour exchanges in order to register themselves, to obtain benefit, to find work, or they apply to the departments of the municipalities engaged in the work of affording relief to the unemployed or "poverty-stricken", or they march to the factory gates, to the free or cheap soup kitchens for the unemployed, to the bread line where bread, coffee and soup are served to the unemployed, to the hostels, etc. In all these places where the unemployed come together, groups of unemployed members of red trade unions, trade union opposition and Party members, living in the street where the labour exchange is situated, etc., should be formed and, under the leadership of the local street nuclei, Party committees and trade union organs, they should call meetings of all the unemployed workers of the given labour exchange, etc. regardless whether they belong to the trade union, to political parties or to the red political parties and trade unions or not. At these meetings the initiative groups should formulate the demands of the unemployed workers and propose that committees be elected to organise and lead the struggle of the unemployed. It is very unlikely that the initiators of the unemployed organisations will fail to be elected on to the unemployed workers' committee.

The unemployed workers' committees elected in one local or district of the town should then send its representatives into the unemployed council of the given local or district. Representatives of the local and district councils of unemployed form the town, provincial, etc. councils of unemployed, up to the national councils. These committees and councils of the unemployed must not only work well, but they must report to their electors on the work they have done.

It goes without saying that the meetings of the unemployed workers at the labour exchanges, at conferences of representatives of unemployed workers' committees in the locals and districts and towns, can re-elect their committees and councils if they are inactive, or if they carry out an incorrect policy.

Only this form of activity can ensure that the unemployed movement becomes a broad one, and can guarantee that they will not be converted into secluded leagues of unemployed. Moreover, the committees and councils of unemployed will be under the permanent control of the unemployed workers themselves and this will compel them to be active. It is unwise, therefore, to have membership cards and membership subscriptions for the unemployed, which of course does not exclude the possibility of making collections or instituting voluntary subscriptions in aid of the unemployed organisation. It would be extremely useful if the unemployed workers' committees were to register the unemployed members under a few more important headings (Party and trade union membership, profession, in which factories previously worked, etc.).

It is obvious that it is not enough to have committees and councils of the unemployed. In order that they may draw in the unemployed and lead millions of unemployed masses, they must truly defend the interests of the unemployed, and the latter must see and understand the use of having such

organisations. For this purpose the activities of the committees, especially of the unemployed councils, must be of a concrete nature, useful and intelligible to the unemployed workers.

What Can and Must the Committees and Councils of the Unemployed Do?

The committees of the unemployed in places where unemployed persons are gathered together must be centres for the carrying out of the instructions of the councils, both in the sphere of struggle, the organisation of processions, hunger marches, demonstrations, etc. and also in their ideological and practical activities: they must popularise the fighting slogans of the unemployed, explain the causes of unemployment, indicate ways and means of improving the position of both unemployed and employed, defend the interests of the unemployed at the labour exchanges when persons are disqualified from benefit, when benefit is reduced; they must prevent that unemployed workers be sent to work at rates below the trade union minimum, or to perform forced labour; they must prevent work being given out of turn; they must fight against incivility on the part of labour exchange officials, demand good waiting rooms for unemployed persons awaiting registration, etc.

The unemployed workers' committees should organise the distribution of literature among the unemployed, arrange for them evenings for cultural and educational purposes (lectures, cinemas, and so on) with the assistance of the trade union and Party organisations.

The unemployed committee should form their own self-defence units from among the more active unemployed workers for use as pickets during strikes and for re-instating in their homes unemployed persons evicted from them. Certain of the functions carried out by the unemployed committees attached to the labour exchanges are not suitable for committees organised in the hostels, dining-rooms or food distributing centres. On the one hand, the functions of such committees at hostel etc., differ from those in labour exchanges. But on the whole, the functions of these committees as they are set out here can be adopted by all unemployed workers' committees, regardless of where they are situated.

Communists, members of red trade unions and of the trade union opposition, who are working among the unemployed, must recruit from among them members for the Party, the red trade unions and the trade unions opposition. Only part of the activities which the unemployed workers' committees could undertake are given here.

As for the unemployed workers' councils, their field of activity is wider than that of the committees.

The councils should, besides appointing members for the leading organs, seek out responsible, energetic workers from among their midst for leading work in the commissions (or departments) attached for work to the unemployment workers' councils.

The following Committees should be created:

Food Committees for organising cheap or even free dinners for children, and unemployed persons in acute need, from the funds collected among the employed workers and those unemployed in receipt of unemployment benefit. In organising these soup kitchens attention must be paid to public control on the part of the unemployed and employed workers themselves. In raising the question of soup kitchens in the meetings, and in collecting funds for their organisation, it must be explained that these soup kitchens are in no way adequate to mitigate the need of the vast masses of unemployed. The State and the employers are obliged to provide for the unemployed, and to create unemployment insurance funds. Nevertheless soup kitchens of this kind can partially help to mitigate the distress of those in special need, if only temporarily.

Organisation committees—for the establishment of close contact with the unemployed workers' committees, for organising processions, hunger marches, demonstrations, picketing and self-defence units, etc.

Cultural and educational, newspaper and literature committees.

Housing committees, whose duty it is to register all persons evicted from their homes and organise their reinstatement; to control the supply of living rooms for unemployed persons by the municipality; to take note of all empty houses into which unemployed persons could be sheltered in case of necessity; to see that gas, electricity, water etc. be freely supplied to the homes of the unemployed who have been unable to pay the rates in arrear.

Committees for the defence of the interests of the unemployed, in countries where insurance benefit is paid to unemployed persons, poor law relief paid out etc.

In view of the fact that it is left entirely to the discretion of the local and municipal authorities as well as the insurance organs and poor law guardians, to pay relief in the manner they think fit, and that attempts are frequently made to make use of the misery and hopeless position of unemployed for their own political purposes, the committees of defence in the guardians' offices and in the courts where complaints of the unemployed are examined, should organise a system of information, should give advice, consultations, etc. in order to mitigate the hard lot of these unemployed.

Industrial control committees, whose duty it is to control cases of dismissal from work. There are hundreds of cases where employers dismiss workers in order to introduce overtime for the men who remain in their employ, without even paying overtime; measures of rationalisation are introduced which result in intensification of labour, or workers are dismissed while other workers are taken on again at worsened conditions of labour.

In countries where factory and workshop committees are in existence on the basis of existing legislation, it has occurred that reformists and shop stewards consent to the dismissal of workers and the engagement of new workers, etc. The control committees must ascertain facts of this kind and mobilise public opinion among the unemployed and employed workers to prevent such actions on the part of the employers and reformist factory committees.

Finally, the **trade union committees**; these committees could and should play the most important role at the present time. In all countries there is a large percentage of unemployed among the organised trade union members of all shades. In Germany in February 1931 there were 34.8 per cent. totally unemployed and 19.2 per cent. short time workers among the members of trade unions. Moreover also the sections of the skilled workers have been affected by unemployment. In America the percentage of unemployment among the members of the most reactionary trade unions in the world (the American Federation of Labour), which include only the well paid, skilled workers, is as high as 30 per cent in many industries (the general percentage for all trade unions is 27).

In other countries the percentage of unemployment among trade unions is just as high.

In the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the percentage of unemployed members exceeds 30, which actually means that 50—60 per cent. of the members of the Social-Democratic Party working in the factories are unemployed, for almost half a million of the members of the Social-Democratic Party are employed in State, municipal, trade union, cooperative, sports and other similar institutions, who are not threatened by dismissal and cannot be counted. The unemployed members of the Social-Democratic Party are chiefly those working in the factories or in factory offices. (In certain localities the unemployed members of the German Communist Party amount to 80—85 per cent.

The task of the trade union Committees in the unemployed workers' councils should be to ascertain the trade union membership of unemployed persons, to collect information concerning cases where the trade union organs have betrayed the interests of the working class as a whole, or of individual groups of workers (in regard to wage cuts carried out among the metal workers, the miners, the textile workers, worsening of the system of insurance, brought about with the help of the

social-democrats and reformists, and affecting the building workers, youth, etc.). The members of Catholic trade unions in Germany should be reminded of all the emergency decrees and other measures which considerably worsen the position of both employed and unemployed workers, and which were put into operation by the Centre Party headed by the Catholic Brüning, with the support of the Catholic trade unions, etc.

Such unmasking of the treachery of the trade union organs should be carried out all along the line, from the factory and workshop committees and shop stewards to the Federation of the trade Unions in the given country, always bearing in mind the political parties to which these trade union Federations are affiliated (Social-Democratic, Catholic Centre, National Socialist, etc.).

This information material concerning the treachery on the part of the trade unions with an exact indication of the place, time, the trade unions, the political organisations which committed them and so on, with a proper commentary should be made known to all unemployed persons, especially members of the reformist trade unions and of all anti-Proletarian political parties. The unemployed should be informed of the position taken up by the red trade unions, the trade union opposition and the Communist Party on all questions of policy and tactics, especially on questions concerning reductions in wages, worsened conditions of insurance, and relief to the unemployed. The work among unemployed members of anti-proletarian parties and nonclass trade unions should be carried on lines which will convince and prove to these workers the correctness of our position and not by means of shouting and abuse. It will then be possible to organise the members of non-class trade unions and political parties and through them and by means of their speeches at meetings of the trade unions and political organisations, to inform the rest of the membership of these organisations of the treachery committed by the reformists, Catholics, social-democrats and national socialists.

It will be easier to prove the correctness of the position of the Communist Party, the Red trade unions and trade union opposition to the unemployed members of non-proletarian parties and trade unions, than to convince those members of these parties and organisations who are still at work in the factories and workshops, although it is possible and necessary that we work among the latter also.

The work of the Communist Parties and trade union opposition inside the reformist and other anti-proletarian trade unions has considerably slackened during the last few years in all countries. By means of the unemployed members of the trade unions it will be possible, and it is essential, to organise revolutionary activity inside the trade unions under the leadership of the Communists and members of the trade union opposition.

To unmask before the working men and women the trade union bureaucrats in the anti-proletarian trade unions and Social-Democratic Parties — these pillars of bourgeois dictatorship who advocate a lowered standard of living for the working class — is the foremost task of all class-conscious, revolutionary workers.

The unemployed workers' movement, the committees and councils of the unemployed and their committees, especially the trade union committees, must energetically, skilfully and immediately work for the fulfilment of this difficult, but necessary task.

The committees, councils and commissions of the unemployed must coordinate all their work with the struggle of the employed workers and work in close conjunction with them.

Owing to the mass unemployment, the connection between the Communist Parties and the trade union opposition on the one hand, and the employed workers in the factories on the other, has been weakened; the immediate task of the Communist Parties and revolutionary trade union movement is therefore, at all cost, to restore this link and strengthen the work among men and women still working in the factories. This is essential both for the organisation of resistance against the attacks of the bourgeoisie, who throw the whole burden of the world economic crisis upon the workers, as well as for the

organisation of a joint struggle of employed and unemployed for the introduction of unemployment insurance in countries where it does not yet exist, and for resisting attempts to worsen the existing system of insurance. The Communist Parties, red trade unions and trade union opposition must strengthen this link and coordinate the struggle of employed and unemployed by means of its unemployed members. Through the unemployed workers' committees and councils the link must be strengthened with the factories and work consolidated inside the non-class trade unions. This must and can be achieved, given the will and ability to achieve it.

What should be the relation between the Red Trade Unions and the Unemployed Workers' Movement — the Committees and Councils of the Unemployed?

In certain countries (Germany, America and so on) the unemployed workers' movement was created by the red trade unions and trade union opposition, in order the more easily to coordinate the struggle of the employed and unemployed workers, and to guarantee good, firm leadership of the unemployed workers' movement. Joint struggle can be achieved by means of good work on the part of the committees and councils of the unemployed. As for the leadership, perhaps it would be better if the unemployed movement were attached to the red trade unions and trade union opposition. But first of all it is still possible to get good leadership of the unemployed workers' movement without the label "attached to the Red trade unions", and secondly — and this is most important — this label prevents the unemployed workers' movement from becoming a truly mass movement (in Czechoslovakia the unemployed workers' movement is not attached to the red trade unions. The Communists and members of the red trade unions before the XI. ECCI. Plenum worked fairly energetically inside the unemployed workers' movement; consequently the movement embraces as much as 40 per cent. of the unemployed.)

It cannot and must not be a formal question of subjecting the unemployed workers' movement to the Red trade unions or trade union opposition. The German reformist trade unions are formally labelled „free“, i. e. not affiliated to any political party; but in actual fact they carry out the social-democratic line of betraying the interests of the working class. The fact that the reformist trade unions are formally called „free“ and the policy of social-democracy has always been served up to the masses as „free“ has helped them to become mass unions, and they still, unfortunately, remain mass unions, despite the fact that the leadership daily betrays the interests of its members and of the whole working class. Apparently the name is of some significance.

Finally, how can the unemployed workers' movement work well when attached to the red trade unions, if the latter are themselves very weak (American)? The label „attached“ cannot decide the question.

It is essential that the unemployed members of red trade unions, trade union opposition and Communist Parties be united, receive constant, correct leadership by the Party and trade union organs; that they take upon themselves the initiative in creating unemployed workers' committees and councils, inside which they must work energetically and skilfully. Then

the unemployed workers' movement as a whole, the committees and councils and their commissions respectively, will in truth be subordinate to red trade unions, the trade union opposition and even the Communist Parties. And it will never occur to an unemployed worker to abandon the unemployed workers' movement because its policy is in agreement with the policy of the revolutionary trade union movement and the Communist Party. The main thing is not to advertise the fact that you are „attached“, but to work truly well in the interests of the unemployed and carry out the correct revolutionary, proletarian, class line of the Comintern and the Profintern on the question of the struggle against unemployment.

The whole situation calls for work from the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organisations among the unemployed, not only because the Bolshevik-Leninist slogan declares that Communists must work there where the masses are to be found, not only because 50 per cent of the industrial proletariat form an army of totally or partially unemployed workers.

First of all the very nature of unemployment must be borne in mind — mass chronic unemployment, without any prospects of a speedy decrease, amidst a most profound world economic and agrarian crisis, sharpening contradictions among the imperialists and contradictions between the imperialists and the USSR., which may bring about war between the imperialists or an attack by the imperialists against the USSR.; secondly the situation is characterised by unprecedented political reaction, in which Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions take part; thirdly, the semi proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements, in the search for a Party which will defend their interests, follow the demagogic phrases alleged to be directed against capitalism (follow the fascists in Germany and Austria, and the Pilsudski clique in Poland, etc.); fourthly at a time when all the bourgeois papers and all bourgeois and socialist parties spread calumnies about Soviet „dumping“ and „slavedriven“ labour, inciting the workers and peasants of capitalist countries against the USSR. as the cause of all their misery — in these circumstances the Communist Parties, the red trade unions and trade union opposition and allied organisations must organise and lead the struggle of the unemployed, unmask the culprits who have reduced them to their state of misery and are worsening the position of the workers, in order that the socialists and fascists and kindred parties shall not use the unemployed who in many countries are on the verge of starvation and poverty, by offering them small concessions (charity, free soup kitchens, etc.) for the purpose of fighting against the employed workers (e. g. to act as strike-breakers during strikes) and attacking the USSR. (recruiting of volunteers for anti-Soviet armies).

The Communist Parties, the red trade unions and trade union opposition must strengthen their work among the unemployed and organise a simultaneous, joint struggle of employed and unemployed for their common, immediate interests. In this way they will be able to turn out the reformists and social-democrats from the positions they still hold among the working class in many capitalist countries, and to win over the majority of the working class for the struggle against the capitalist system and for the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.